

Gas cylinder blast injures 23
Anees Takar

MARDAN: A gas cylinder explosion in Mardan's Shankar Yahya Jadid area left 23 people injured including 19 children with many in critical condition. The incident occurred on Katlang Road when a gas cylinder exploded inside a shop owned by Haji Muhammad, while it was being refilled. The explosion took place near a madrassa just as the students were leaving after their classes.



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Erdogan says UN and Western values are ‘dying’ in Gaza

UNITED NATIONS: Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has lashed out at the United Nations for inaction on Gaza and accused Israel of turning the Palestinian territory into the "world's largest children's and women's cemetery".

Speaking at the UN General Assembly in New York on Tuesday, he said, "In Gaza, not only are children dying, but also the United Nations system. The values the West claims to defend are dying, the truth is dying, and the hopes of humanity to live in a more just world are dying — one by one." "I am asking you bluntly here: Are those in Gaza and the occupied West Bank not human beings? Do children in Palestine have no rights?"

An outspoken critic of Israel's offensive in Gaza, Erdogan also chastised the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for dragging the Middle East region deeper "into war". He urged the international community to stop "Netanyahu and his murder network," comparing the prime minister to Adolf Hitler. "Just as Hitler was stopped by the alliance of humanity 70 years ago, Netanyahu and his murder network must be stopped by the 'alliance of humanity'," he said.

The Turkish president called for an immediate ceasefire in Gaza, where Israeli military operations have killed at least 41,467 people. In Israel, the number of those killed in the Hamas-led attacks on October 7 was at least 1,139, while more than 200 people were taken captive. "An immediate and permanent ceasefire should be achieved, a hostage-prisoner exchange should be carried out, and humanitarian aid should be delivered to Gaza in an unhindered and uninterrupted way," Erdogan said. Other regional leaders also spoke out against Israel's war on Gaza at the UNGA on Tuesday.

Jordan's King Abdullah II ruled out the possibility of his country becoming an "alternative homeland" for the Palestinians, warning that their forced displacement by Israel would be a "war crime." He said he was responding to proposals floated by "extremists who are taking our region to the brink of an all-out war". The monarch urged the international community to join "a massive relief effort to deliver food, clean water, medicine and other vital supplies" to the Gaza Strip, where nearly a year of war has triggered "unprecedented suffering." — Aljazeera



UN chief warns Lebanon on 'brink'

UNITED NATIONS (AFP): The UN chief warned world leaders on Tuesday that Lebanon was on "the brink" as clashes escalated between Israel and Hezbollah, ahead of US President Joe Biden's final appearance at the global body's signature annual event.

The gathering of dozens of world leaders, the high point of the diplomatic calendar, comes as Lebanese authorities say Israeli strikes killed 558 people — 50 of them children. "We should all be alarmed by the escalation. Lebanon is at the brink," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said. The annual flurry of speeches and face-to-face diplomacy kicked off as Lebanon's Prime Minister Najib Mikati headed to New York after UN Security Council member France called for an emergency meeting on the crisis. As the toll in Lebanon climbed and focus shifted away from the situation in Gaza, Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian condemned "senseless and incomprehensible" inaction by the UN against Israel. The EU's top diplomat Josep Borrell warned "we are almost in a full-fledged war."

The United States, Israel's closest ally, again warned against a full-blown ground invasion of Lebanon, with a senior US official promising to bring "concrete" ideas for de-escalation to the UN this week. It is unclear what progress can be made to defuse the situation in Lebanon as efforts to broker a ceasefire in Gaza, which Israel has relentlessly pounded since October 2023, have come to nothing. Guterres cautioned against "the possibility of transforming Lebanon (into) another Gaza," calling the situation in the embattled Palestinian territory a "non-stop nightmare."



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Biden seeks to calm Mideast tension

NEW YORK (Reuters): US President Joe Biden addressed world leaders at the United Nations for the final time on Tuesday, declaring that Russia's war in Ukraine has failed and that a diplomatic solution between Israel and Lebanon's Hezbollah was still possible.

With four months left in office, Biden stepped up to the green-marbled lectern at the UN General Assembly with wars in Ukraine, the Gaza Strip and Sudan still raging and likely to outlast his presidency, which ends in January. He sought to calm tensions as the nearly year-long war between Israel and Palestinian militants Hamas in the besieged Gaza Strip now threatens to engulf Lebanon - where Israel targeted more than a thousand Hezbollah targets on Monday. "Full scale war is not in anyone's interest, even if situation has escalated, a diplomatic solution is still possible," he told the 193-member UN General Assembly.

To a round of applause, Biden called on Israel and Hamas to finalize the terms of a Gaza ceasefire and hostage release deal put forward by the US, Qatar and Egypt. Biden's presidency has also been dominated by Russia's February 2022 invasion of Ukraine. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy was in the assembly hall to hear Biden speak and emphasize US support for his country.

"The good news is Putin's war has failed at his core aim. He set out to destroy Ukraine, but Ukraine is still free," said Biden. "We cannot grow weary, we cannot look away, and we will not let up on our support for Ukraine, not until Ukraine wins with a just, durable peace," he said.

Russia controls just under a fifth of Ukraine, including about 80% of the Donbas area. Russian forces have begun storming the eastern Ukrainian town of Vuhledar, a stronghold that has resisted Russian attack since the beginning of the war, according to Russian war bloggers and state media. Biden is due to hear from Zelenskyy about a new Ukrainian peace plan when they meet in Washington on Thursday.



WANA: General Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff interacting with troops during his visit to South Waziristan.

Bilawal advocates setup of constitutional court

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has emphasized the urgent need for reforms in the "fractured" judicial system, ensuring that every citizen receives their fundamental right to timely justice. He reiterated his resolve to establish the constitutional court to ensure that no elected Prime Minister is ever unjustly hanged again. He also clarified that his party stands against any legislation aimed at benefiting or harming an individual.

In a statement issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, the PPP Chairman highlighted that under his proposed amendments, the constitutional court would provide equal representation to all provinces, with the position of Chief Justice rotating among them.

While addressing the Sindh High Court Bar Association here on Tuesday, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari stated that he belongs to the family and party that gifted the country its Constitution.

He remarked that their history includes facing authoritarian regimes, where they witnessed the whims of dictators dismantling the 1973 Constitution

with just a blink or a gesture. He added that they also witnessed how judges allowed dictators to undertake actions that kept democracy and the Constitution at bay for decades.

Chairman condemned the tearing apart of the nation's Constitution, adding that the saddest part was that judges permitted dictators to amend it. With a touch of irony, he noted how they were once labeled as corrupt to the extent that the Constitution and laws didn't seem to apply to them. He said that in Pakistan's democratic system, judges could only tolerate one instance of a Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO), yet during the first PCO oath, democracy and the Constitution appeared unthreatened.

He recalled the generational sacrifices made by his party for the restoration of democracy so that people could elect representatives who would make laws according to their will. He mentioned that Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto signed the Charter of Democracy (CoD) to ensure that if Pakistan's system were to be corrected and democracy restored, agreements like the Charter must be implemented. He added that after passing the 18th Amendment and restoring the 1973



Constitution, they fulfilled Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's unfinished mission.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari pointed out that former Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry was not a revolutionary but a PCO judge. He said that long before the Justice Chaudhry's tenure, Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto decided to establish a constitutional court, initiate judicial reforms, and ensure timely justice for the people.

He stated that they have learned from the past, expressing great respect for the legal community. He stressed that lawmaking cannot happen through courts, yet judges, through Articles 184 and 186, have granted themselves the power to legislate. He said that if the citizens of this country are to receive timely justice, and there is to be no disparity between provinces, then a federal constitutional court is essential.

Pak Army to provide all out support to KP police, says COAS

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: General Syed Asim Munir, Chief of Army Staff (COAS), NI (M), visited Wana, South Waziristan District, where he received a comprehensive briefing on the prevailing security situation, ongoing counter-terrorism operations, and development initiatives.

During his interaction with officers and troops, COAS appreciated the high level of preparedness and exceptional morale to counter hostile threats. He reaffirmed Pakistan Army's unwavering commitment to thwarting the nefarious designs of hostile forces and their facilitators.

COAS paid heartfelt tribute to the security forces and law enforcement agencies (LEAs) who have made ultimate sacrifices in the line of duty. He emphasized that Pakistan Army will continue to provide steadfast support and technical assistance to LEAs, particularly KPK Police, to enhance their capacity.

COAS also acknowledged the pivotal role of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in maintaining peace and advancing various projects under the South Waziristan Integrated Development Plan. He underscored Pakistan Army's dedication towards leveraging its resources for the prosperity and development of the people of KPK.

Furthermore, COAS expressed gratitude for the tribal elders' invaluable support in combating terrorism and their unwavering backing of Pakistan Army. Upon arrival, COAS honoured the martyred by laying floral wreath at the Shuhada Monument. COAS was warmly received at Wana by Commander Peshawar Corps.

SC reserves verdict on Punjab's petition

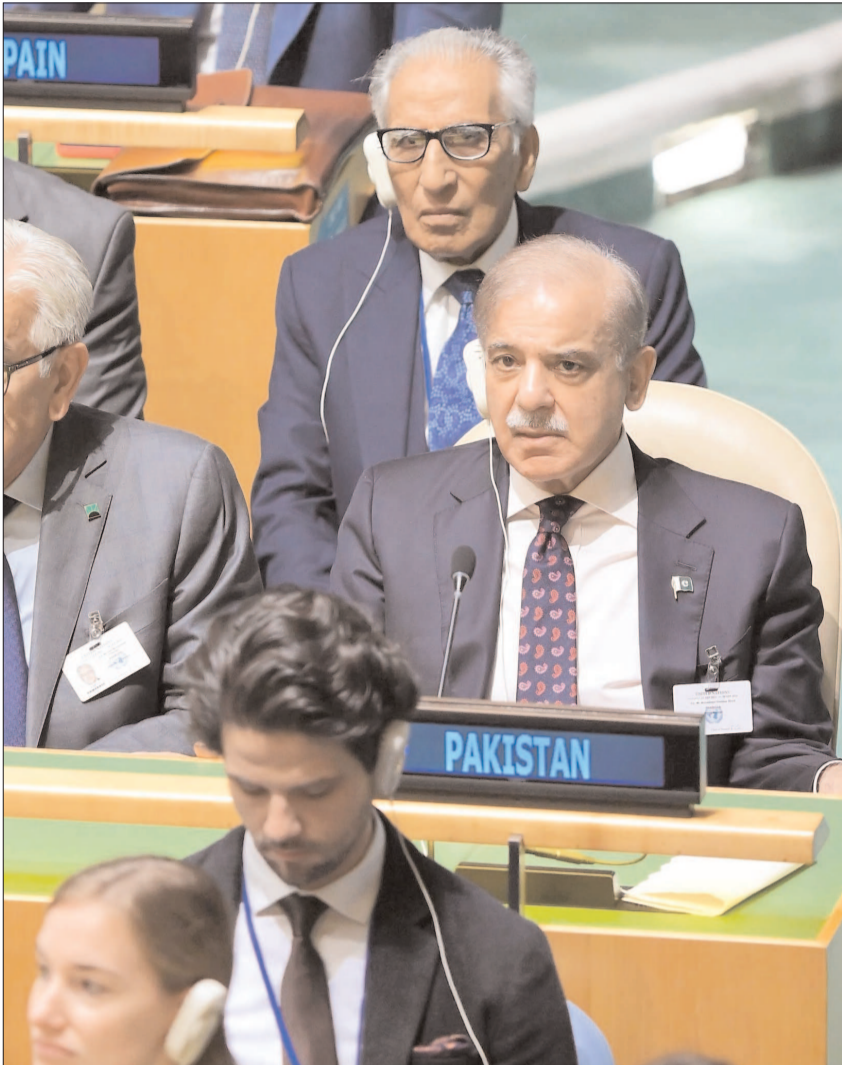
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Tuesday reserved its verdict on the appeal of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) against the decision of Lahore High Court (LHC) about the formation of election tribunals in Punjab. A five-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa heard the appeal.

During the course of proceedings, Chief Justice Isa observed that the number of election tribunals depended on the number of cases. It would be unfair if the number of judges were less than that of cases. The court did not know that how many election cases were pending in Balochistan or Punjab province, he added.

The CJP said that the Commission should ensure the establishment of the rest of the tribunals within a week. Addressing Salman Akram Raja, the chief justice asked whether he needed two judges for the tribunal and whether he was supporting the LHC's previous decision. Justice Aqeel Abbasi remarked that as per the ECP's reply, the issue of election tribunals had been resolved in consultation with the LHC.

The ECP's lawyer said that the LHC chief justice had maintained four tribunals while the four new ones would be set up by the Commission. Chief Justice Isa observed that the ECP's job was to conduct elections, while it was the high court which would settle a dispute if any. He directed the commission to start working on the notification of tribunals from today. Later, the court reserved its verdict on the plea. It may be mentioned here that previously the apex court had directed the ECP to hold a meeting with the LHC chief justice for resolving the matter.



NEW YORK: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif attending the inaugural session of United Nations General Assembly session.

PM reaches US to attend UNGA inaugural session

NEW YORK (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif reached the United Nations headquarters to attend the inaugural session of the 79th UN General Assembly (UNGA) on Tuesday.

Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar, Minister for Federal Education and Professional Training Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Special Assistant to the PM Tariq Fatemi, and Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Munir Akram accompanied the PM.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will attend the opening session of the 79th United Nations General Assembly being held today marking the beginning of the annual gathering of world leaders.

The prime minister, along with a high-level delegation, arrived here in New York on Monday evening to attend the annual session of the 193-member UN General Assembly and address multiple other meetings, besides meeting the participating leaders on the sidelines. Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Information and Broadcasting Minister

Attaullah Tarar, Federal Education and Professional Training Minister Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, and Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi are members of the prime minister's delegation.

He will hold an informal interaction with the world leaders at a reception hosted by the UN Secretary-General for the dignitaries participating in the UNGA session. He is also set to meet with President of Maldives Mohamed Muizzu and discuss ways to promote bilateral cooperation.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif felicitated Dr Harini Amarasuriya on becoming Sri Lanka's Prime Minister, expressing the confidence that the multi-faceted cooperation between Pakistan and Sri Lanka would grow during her tenure.

"Congratulations to Hon. Dr. Harini Amarasuriya on assuming office as the new Prime Minister of Sri Lanka. I wish her all the success. I am confident that the multi-faceted cooperation between Pakistan and Sri Lanka will grow during her tenure," the prime minister wrote on his X account.

No peace sans resolution of Kashmir, Gaza issues

NEW YORK (APP):

Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Tuesday that durable peace in the world was not possible without permanent resolution of Palestine and Kashmir issues.

Talking to media outside the United Nations General Assembly, he said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had raised both issues at all international forums. He said on Palestine issue, the PM had stated that war crimes were being committed in the area, genocide of armless

Palestinians was being committed and the world should take notice and bring the perpetrator Israel to justice. He said the Prime Minister had also made clear that Pakistan wanted restoration of pre-1967 borders in which Jerusalem should be the capital of Palestine.

"We want immediate ceasefire in Gaza and accountability of the aggressor Israel for war crimes and genocide being committed in Palestine", he remarked. Tarar said that Pakistan had dispatched humanitarian aid through ships and C130s. Moreover Pakistan had offered to give admission to Palestinian medical students in Pakistani institutions, so that they could complete their education without any hindrance.

He said the Kashmir issue would figure in the Prime Minister's engagements in the United Nations. Besides, he said climate change was a major issue for Pakistan which contributed only 2 per cent of the gas emissions but had to bear the brunt of adverse effects of the climate

UN's Pact for Future must implement commitments: Asif

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Pakistan has called the UN's Pact for the Future, which is aimed at transforming the multilateral system, an expression of the international community's collective determination to respond to global challenges, and called for upholding the commitments made in the game-changing document.

"The Pact will be transformative only if we translate the commitments undertaken into concrete action," Defence Minister Khawaja Muhammad Asif told the Summit of the Future on its second and concluding day. At the outset of his remarks, he emphatically warned that "no sustainable development can take place till tragedies like Gaza are perpetuated by the developed world." Sunday's comprehensive pact, which world leaders approved by consensus, aims to strengthen global governance and tackle key challenges facing humanity, including sustainable development, international peace, and technological innovation, youth and future generations and transforming global governance. It also proposes detailed action plans to address these challenges.

change. He said the UN secretary general had himself visited Pakistan and himself saw the impact of climate change in Pakistan due to heavy floods.

He further said that Pakistan had also badly suffered in the war against terrorism and it was still suffering in this war launched by the western powers. The minister said that after 2018 Pakistan was isolated on foreign policy affairs as Pakistan's friends both in East and West were unhappy. He said now the warmth in relations with all friendly countries was restored and cooperation was showing surge. He said that talks with the International Monetary Fund had been concluded and final endorsement was due shortly.

He said there was also good news about Pakistan's economy and the world should come and invest in Pakistan to take advantage of its huge potential. He said that Bloomberg had termed

the Pakistan stock market as an emerging stock market and Moody's and Fitch had upgraded its rating.

He said there was good news that inflation had fallen to 9.6 per cent whereas exports have increased by 14 percent. Information technology exports have touched the 3.1 billion mark and remittances have also shown an upward trend. He said that the entire world could share in the economic revival of Pakistan. To a question, he said that during the PM's visit, meetings will be held with doctors, bankers and representatives from other walks of life.

Elaborating on Pakistan's isolation in the past, he said that during the PTI rule on the one hand China-Pakistan Economic Corridor was shut down and on the other the US was accused of toppling its government and even friendly countries in the Middle East were not happy with the foreign policy of the then regime.

Iran envoy calls on FBR chief

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of Iran to Pakistan Dr. Reza Amiri Moghaddam called on Chairman Federal Board of Revenue Mr. Rashid Mahmood Langrial on Tuesday at FBR HQs. During the meeting, the two sides discussed matters pertaining to customs, cross border trade and management for smooth flow of bilateral trade between the two countries.



LAHORE: Artist gives final touches to her artwork during the Calligraphy Competition organized by The Knowledge of Art Academy in collaboration with The Book Studio and The Formanite School System.

CM chairs cabinet meeting, approves major projects

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif presided over 16th provincial cabinet meeting in which the recruitment of 7,354 College Teaching Interns (CTIs) was approved across Punjab.

CM Maryam Nawaz Sharif sought a comprehensive and uniform housing policy across Punjab. The cabinet paid tribute to the police personnel on performing duty in Rahim Yar Khan and Katcha area. The cabinet approved special allowance for police personnel on performing duty in the Katcha area.

The Chief Minister stopped increasing hostel charges for working women across Punjab. The CM commended Irrigation Minister Kazim Pirzada and the Irrigation Department for no loss of life being caused due to the recent floods. The cabinet approved the issuance of Rs. 500 million 'Endowment Fund for Writers Welfare' under the auspices of the Information and Culture Department.

The cabinet, appreciated the peaceful conduct of MDCAT exami-

nation in Punjab. It was apprised in the meeting that controversial questions are being raised on the conduct of MDCAT examination in other provinces besides Punjab.

The Chief Minister sought a monthly package plan for the differently-abled visually impaired persons. The cabinet approved a special court for persons with disabilities under the Punjab Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities Act. Conditional approval was given to delegate the powers of Sub-Registrar to the Tehsildar and Naib Tehsildar. The CM Punjab directed the Board of Revenue to submit a five-year comprehensive housing policy to the Cabinet.

The cabinet rejected the Working Women's Hostels policy for increasing charges by the Women Development Department. An approval was given to sign an MoU between the Government of Punjab and the United National Office for Project Services (UNOPS) during the meeting. An approval was granted to include Lahore Knowledge

Park (Nawaz Sharif Limited City) Bedian Road under the scope of Punjab Central Business District Development Authority. The Cabinet approved the nomination of Member of Gujranwala Development Authority and Vice Chairman of WASA Gujranwala.

An approval was granted to delegate the powers of Sub-Registrar to the transferee of land of legally recognized authority. The amendment of the exchange policy with government land and housing schemes and the reissuance of funds for the up-gradation and construction as well as rehabilitation of tertiary care hospitals of specialized health-care and medical education were approved during the meeting. The cabinet approved the request to provide financial assistance for the treatment of Syeda Sara D/O Syed Mian Abu Bakar Kaka Khel. Under the Muslim Family Laws Ordinance 1961, an approval was granted to amend the notification to allow Assistant Director Local Government to perform duties as Chairman of the Conciliation Council.

Chinese university delegation visits PDMA office

LAHORE (APP): A delegation from Central South University of China, including Professor Dr. Wu Lakshan and Dr. Syed Amir Mehmood from Punjab University, visited the PDMA office to discuss critical issues such as early warning systems, disaster risk reduction, and climate change impacts in Punjab.

The delegation highlighted ongoing collaboration on advanced early warning systems, which aim to benefit not only Pakistan but also neighboring countries.

Director General Irfan Ali Kathia provided insights into PDMA's operations, emphasizing the importance of 24-hour communication across districts and the agency's readiness for challenges like floods, dengue, droughts, and heat waves. He noted that this year's monsoon rains exceeded expectations but praised preemptive measures that ensured effective drainage and timely rescues.

The delegation also shared updates on their risk assessment initiatives, with Dr. Lakshan noting that under the One Belt One Road project, efforts will be made to enhance disaster reduction systems in Pakistan.

He acknowledged the significant threats posed by climate change, including glacier melting and increased lightning strikes, and committed to providing support to PDMA in mitigating these natural disasters.

Lady Constable shot dead over marriage feud

LAHORE (INP): A Lady Constable was allegedly shot dead over marriage feud in Harbanspura area of Lahore on Tuesday. Inspector General Punjab Police taking notice of the incident directs to arrest the culprit.

According to 24-year-old Lady Constable Saman hailing from Shahdara area of Lahore who came to the locality with a friend on motorcycle was firstly tortured by the youth in a park after which local people gathered at the scene.

The accused dispersed the people through aerial firing, shot dead Saman and sped the scene of crime.

JI to hold countrywide protests against high power cost

LAHORE (INP): Emir Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Hafiz Naeemur Rehman on Tuesday said that the party will hold countrywide protest demonstrations against increase electricity costs and the Independent Power Producers (IPPs) on September 29.

Addressing a press conference in Lahore, he said that IPP have received Rs 2,000 to 2,400 billion annually since 2000 while the salaries class was burdened with fuel price adjustments and TV taxes in electricity bills.

On the other hand, Hafiz Naeemur Rehman said that landlords and IPPs enjoy tax exemptions.

The current system cannot be overlooked as it was struggle for rights of 250 million people and for personal gain, he added.

The JI leader also recalled the 13-day sit-in held in Rawalpindi during

which the government agreed to demands in front of the nation but failed to fulfill its promise of conducting a forensic audit of IPPs.

"Today is the 46th day, and nothing has been done," he said, reiterating the plan for mass protests on Sept 29.

Hafiz Naeem mentioned that their membership campaign continues to gain momentum, and sit-ins are planned on major highways. He urged the government to refrain from actions that might disrupt democratic processes and vowed to escalate the "Give Rights to the People" movement into a new phase of resistance.

He also noted support from traders and stated that a referendum will be held from October 23 to 27 to decide whether people should continue paying electricity bills, given the

substantial payments already made under capacity charges.

The JI chief warned that the referendum will be historic and could lead to further action, including a wheel-jam strike or even a million march, possibly escalating into a long march towards Islamabad if the government does not address IPP issues.

He criticised the government for fake claims of a decrease in inflation, calling it a manipulation of numbers. He called for an immediate reduction of the interest rate to 10%, with plans to gradually eliminate it.

Hafiz Naeem also condemned Israel's recent attacks on Lebanon, dedicating a week in solidarity with the people of Gaza, Palestine, and Lebanon, paying tribute to their resilience against aggression.

Sindh CM hails safe city project progress

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that the work done so far was a significant step toward establishing Karachi as a safer city through enhanced surveillance and response capabilities.

"I have got the work on the long-awaited Safe City Project in Karachi, Phase-I significantly accelerated," he said and added that the project, aimed at enhancing public safety and security in the metropolis, has reached several key milestones.

This emerged in a meeting held at CM House on Tuesday. It was attended by Minister Home Ziaul Hassan Lanjar, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh and others.

The IG Police briefed the CM on the project's progress and informed him that 1300 Cameras will be installed at different locations. It was disclosed that all 300 pole site surveys and 18 Point of Presence (POP) site surveys have been completed. Under the civil work, Right-of-Way (ROW) approvals from all relevant stakeholders have been obtained and foundation excavation and digging have been completed at 200 pole sites.

The CM was told that 50 poles have been installed so far, with ongoing work at the remaining sites. The CM was informed that the Control Room and Data Center equipment, along with a Video Wall, have

been installed at the Central Police Office (CPO), receiving live monitoring through 35 cameras at 7 locations.

As far as equipment is concerned, the CM was told that all shipments [of equipment] from Hikvision, Huawei, Vertiv, POP sites, and Optical Fiber Cables (OFC) have been received and safely stored. The CM was told that five Emergency Response Vehicles (ERVs) have been procured and branded. To a question, Mr Shah was told that the allocation of 18 POP sites within police stations has been completed, with groundwork started following surveys and renovation estimates.

Commissioner chairs traffic committee meeting

LAHORE (APP): A weekly meeting of the Traffic Coordination Committee, chaired by Commissioner Lahore Zaid Bin Maqsood, was held to address traffic flow issues in the city. During the meeting, the commissioner announced the launch of a pilot project involving the establishment of traffic camps at 13 key locations throughout Lahore. These camps will be staffed with personnel from the Traffic Police, municipal corporation.

Rs434 million allocated for Islamkot water plant: Ghani

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh Minister for Local Government and Public Health Engineering, Saeed Ghani, has said the provincial government has allocated a sum of Rs434 million for the restoration of reverse osmosis water filtration plant in Islamkot, as this allocation is not for any new development project.

The Local Government and Public Health Engineering Minister informed this while answering queries of the lawmakers during the ques-

tion hour of the Sindh Assembly's session on Tuesday.

He told the concerned legislators that Islamkot's RO plant is a mega water filtration facility having the capacity to filter 1.5 million gallons of water daily. He said the RO plant had been non-functional due to various technical issues.

He informed the house that the Engro Corporation had asked the Sindh government to sanction Rs 1400 million for the revival and operation of the RO

plant. The then-provincial cabinet approved the grant, but another assistance of Rs 600 million couldn't be provided, which was required to operate the plant for four years.

He told the house that the former caretaker Sindh chief minister during his visit to Islamkot, formed a committee to evaluate the financial support required to restore the plant. The committee, in its report, recommended that the revival of the plant is possible for Rs 434 million.

Sindh Madressatul Islam University produces its 1st PhD

KARACHI (PPI): It is a great achievement for Sindh Madressatul Islam University (SMIU) that it has produced its first PhD-Mr. Abdullah Ayub Khan in the field of Computer Science. The Thesis Final Defence of the PhD scholar was held on Tuesday at the Seminar Hall of the university which was chaired by the Vice Chancellor Dr. Mujeeb Sahrai.

The PhD scholar Mr. Abdullah Ayub has done his PhD on the subject of "Digital Forensics Integrates with Blockchain Hyperledger and Challenges" under the supervision of Dr. Aftab Ahmed Shaikh, Dean Faculty of Information Technology of SMIU, while the co-supervisor was Dr. Asif Ali Laghari, Assistant Professor at the Department of Computer Science of SMIU.

Talking in the seminar Vice Chancellor Dr. Mujeeb Sahrai said Mr. Abdullah

Ayub Khan is going to be the first PhD in the history of SMIU which is an honour for all of us, the vice chancellor, faculty and other stakeholders. Congratulating to Mr. Abdullah Ayub, his PhD supervisor Dr. Aftab Ahmed Shaikh, co-supervisor Dr. Asif Ali Laghari, Director Post Graduate Studies Dr. Zahid Ali Channar, Advisor on Academics Dr. Abdul Hafeez Khan, Dr. Muhammad Adnan Khurshid, Assistant Professor, and all faculty members Dr. Mujeeb Sahrai said the first PhD degree is a remarkable addition to the history of SMIU and this great institute will produce more PhDs in the fields that could benefit the country in real terms, in the near future. He said Sindh Madressatul Islam had received university status in 2012, now it has come out from its formative phase and is producing graduates in various disciplines.

BUSINESSMEN FORUM



سرحد چیمبر انتخابات 2024-26ء



برزنس مین فورم
(سینیئر ایلیاس احمد بلور گروپ)
امیدواران برائے
کارپوریٹ گروپ

امیدواران برائے
ایسوسی ایٹ گروپ

VOTE
25 ستمبر 2024ء
صبح 8 بجے سے 5 بجے تک

PAF BASE, PESHAWAR TENDER NOTICE : BWO FLT

PAF Base, Peshawar requires different Conservancy items (Mops, Surf, Wiper, Limestone, Acid, Brooms, Plastic Lota Plastic Dustbin, Brush, Toilet Rolls, Soap, Hand Wash, Sanitizer, Sweep, Neel, Steel Dustbin, Vim Powder, Drain Opener, Trolley (for housekeeping), Floor Polish, Liquid & Powder etc) for Financial year 2024-2025. Last date for submission of tender applications is **11 October, 2024**, at 1000 Hrs. Tenders will be opened on the same day, at 1200 Hrs. The Officer Commanding reserves the rights to accept / reject any / all tenders, on technical grounds.

Note: Quotations may be sent in favour of BWO, PAF Base, Peshawar. Detail specification may be obtained on Tel No: 091-9505031-5037, Mobile: 0323-9411312.



PIC makes medical history with super saturated oxygen therapy



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Peshawar Institute of Cardiology (PIC) has achieved another significant milestone, becoming the first institution in South Asia to successfully introduce the advanced international cardiac treatment method, "Super Saturated Oxygen via the TherOX Device." This achievement brings a new era of hope for heart patients in Pakistan.

Spokesperson, Ms. Riffat Anjum, the successful implementation of this treatment method marks a pivotal moment in the institute's commitment to providing world-class cardiac care. Super Saturated Oxygen therapy has proven effective in timely treatment and preventing further damage to the heart after a heart attack.

PIC has successfully performed five procedures using this cutting-edge therapy within three days,

treating three male and two female patients.

Dr. Abid Ullah, Associate Professor and Head of the Cardiology Department at PIC, explained that Super Saturated Oxygen therapy delivers a high volume of oxygen to the small arteries of the heart using the TherOX machine. This therapeutic intervention is particularly beneficial for patients who have suffered a heart attack.

Dr. Ali Raza, Assistant

Professor and Interventional Cardiologist, highlighted the importance of this treatment. "Heart attacks can lead to slow heart pumping and weakness of the heart muscle," he explained. "Super Saturated Oxygen therapy can help improve heart health and reduce the risk of further damage." Dr. Raza emphasized that while this treatment is widely practiced in developed countries, PIC has made it accessible in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, demonstrating the institute's commitment to bringing advanced medical care to the region.

Expressing pride in the entire hospital team, Dr. Abid Ullah said, "We are proud to have a team at PIC capable of introducing every type of international treatment. PIC has quickly become a source of pride for Pakistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. We are dedicated to serving the people, the country, and the province's progress."



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur addressing Excellency Award Ceremony held in connection with World Tourism Day.

KP is preferred destination for tourists: Chanzeb

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Adviser to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Tourism, Culture, Archaeology, and Museums Zahid Chanzeb has said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is the preferred destination for the domestic and international tourists and visitors owing to its abundant natural beauty, scenic sites waterfalls and lush green pastures and thick mountainous forests.

"The Nishtar Hall, Peshawar, has been reopened after extensive renovation and refurbishment costing Rs117 million. The historic cultural venue will now serve as a hub for artistic and cultural events in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa," Zahid Chanzeb said while addressing a ceremony held in connection with the World Tourism Day here.

He said that the revenue generated from Nishtar Hall would be dedicated to the welfare of senior artistes, particularly those above the age of 60, adding that these funds would primarily be allocated for their medical treatment and well-being.

He said, "The renovation of Nishtar Hall is an important step towards fostering and preserving the region's rich artistic heritage."

Zahid Chanzeb also announced that artistes would receive a 50 percent concession in rental fees for

using Nishtar Hall, making it more accessible for local talent.

"Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is rapidly emerging as a prime tourist destination, and cultural preservation is key to our vision," he added.

The ceremony, which was part of the Tourism Excellence Awards on the World Tourism Day, was also attended by Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur as chief guest.

Provincial ministers, including Minister for Higher Education Meena Khan Afridi and Food Minister Zahir Shah Toru, Advisor on Works and Communication Sohail Afridi, Secretary Tourism Dr Muhammad Bakhtiar Khan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture and Tourism Authority (KPCTA) Director General Tashfeen Haider, Director General Archaeology Abdul Samad Khan, KITE Project Director Tauseef Khalid, Peshawar Commissioner Riaz Mahsud, Director Generals of all authorities, media-persons and artistes attended the event as well.

Recounting achievements of the Tourism Department, Zahid Chanzeb said that over 10 million tourists had visited the province's scenic spots during the last three months, marking a resurgence in the local tourism industry.

He said that giving the Tourism Excellence

Awards was meant to acknowledge the services and contribution of the individuals they rendered for boosting tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He added that they honoured key players with awards for their services in the fields of hospitality, adventure tourism, media, and tour guides in the sector.

Journalists from print and electronic media were awarded the Tourism Excellence Awards to recognize their contributions to promoting tourism through their respective media outlets.

They recipients of awards included: Arshad Aziz Malik, President of Peshawar Press Club and Resident Editor of Jang Group, Peshawar, Farzana Ali, Bureau Chief of Aaj TV, Amjad Aziz Malik, administrator of China Window, a Chinese cultural centre in Peshawar, and senior journalist, for attracting over 200,000 tourists to the center, Mumtaz Bangash, Bureau Chief of 92 News, Imran Yousafzai, Bureau Chief of GTV, Muhammad Irshad, Senior News Editor at Daily Mashriq, Ismail Khan, Resident Editor of Dawn, Irfan Khan, Head of News at PTV, Fareedullah, Senior News Editor at Daily Ausaf.

Additionally, personalities from various sectors of the tourism industry were also awarded for their outstanding contributions.

Among them were: Kiran Afzal, Senior Private Sector Specialist from the World Bank Group, Aftab Rana, a prominent figure in the tourism industry, Shehzada Sirajul Mulk, representing Hindukush Heights Hotel, Asif Ikram, from Serena Hotel Peshawar, Irani Bibi, from Kalasha Guest House.

In the adventure sports category, notable awardees included: Babar Khan from the Frontier 4x4 Club, Khalid Khalil from Adventure HK, Shehzada Sikandarul Mulk from the Polo Association, Yousaf Akhtar, representing Pakistan Bikers, along with other individuals, who contributed to adventure tourism in the region.

These awards recognized their efforts in promoting tourism and providing exceptional services in various sectors, contributing to the growth and development of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's tourism industry.

The evening concluded with a musical performance and an art exhibition, which highlighted the province's commitment to reviving cultural vibrancy.

The reopening marks a new era for Nishtar Hall as it continues to be a beacon of art and culture in the region, offering local artistes a platform to showcase their talent while contributing to the preservation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's cultural heritage.

Full Court Reference honors Justice Shahid on retirement



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A full Court reference was organized to honor Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shahid Khan on the occasion of his attaining age of superannuation. The event was graced by the presence of the Hon'ble Chief Justice, honble Judges, the Worthy Registrar, the Advocate General, the Deputy Attorney General, representatives from the KP Bar Council, the President of the Peshawar High Court Bar Association, the Director General of the KP Judicial Academy, the District & Sessions Judge of Peshawar, Principal Officers of the Peshawar High Court, former Judicial Officers, and members of

the legal community.

In his address, Mr. Fida Gul, President of the Peshawar High Court Bar Association, paid homage to Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shahid Khan, reflecting on his distinguished judicial career. The Deputy Attorney General, Mr. Sana Ullah, also honored his lordship, elaborating on the significant contributions to justice throughout his tenure. The Advocate General of KP, Mr. Shah Faisal Utmankhel, remarked that "32 years of delivering justice is a remarkable achievement and a proud moment for any Judge." He emphasized that the contributions of his lordship to the justice system will be fondly remembered.

Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shahid Khan expressed his heartfelt gratitude to the Hon'ble Chief Justice, Judges, and the legal fraternity for organizing such a dignified ceremony in his honor. Finally, the Hon'ble Chief Justice acknowledged the tireless efforts of Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shahid Khan in serving justice to society.

He assured that every Hon'ble Judge of the Peshawar High Court is committed to delivering justice effectively and as a priority.

His lordship noted that the 32 years of service by Hon'ble Mr. Justice Shahid Khan will be regarded as a significant milestone in the pursuit of justice by the Peshawar High Court.

Agreements signed with provinces to modernize TVET institutes

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A major step in the development of employable skills for youth in the country was taken on Tuesday, with the signing of agreements to transform selected model Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) institutes into four Centres of Excellence (CoEs) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Gilgit Baltistan.

Through provision of modern equipment, improved curricula and trained teachers these centres of excellence will be providing state-of-the-art skills training to youth, in line with requirements in the labour market.

Establishment of the Centres of Excellence in Pakistan is a recognised flagship intervention under EU's Global Gateway initiative, in which the EU leverages public and private sector investments across the globe.

Co-funded by the European Union and the Federal Republic of Germany, the initiative is implemented by GIZ and the British Council in close collaboration with NAVTTC as part of a broader strategy to strengthen the TVET sector and enhance youth employment opportunities.

The signing ceremony was attended by the Secretary of Education, Ministry for Federal Education and Professional Training Mohyuddin Ahmad Wani, European Union Deputy Ambassador Philipp Oliver Gross, NAVTTC, the TVET Sector Support Programme, and high ups of the governments of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan and Gilgit Baltistan.

Ihtisham briefed on EPI

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A comprehensive briefing on the Expanded Program on Immunization (EPI) was held under the chairmanship of Advisor Health, Ihtisham Ali.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Health Adeel Shah, Director General Health Dr. Muhammad Saleem, Director EPI Dr. Arif, and other relevant officials.

During the briefing, Dr.

Arif provided key insights into the EPI's achievements, highlighting that 1.2 million children are vaccinated annually against 12 vaccine-preventable diseases. Additionally, the same number of pregnant women receive tetanus vaccinations annually. These efforts have contributed to a 17% reduction in neonatal mortality in Pakistan.

Advisor Ihtisham Ali was informed that the average attendance of vaccinators has increased to 89%,

and the provision of POL (Petrol, Oil, and Lubricants) to vaccinators has significantly improved their attendance. Since May, there has been a steady improvement in outreach vaccination campaigns, which have now reached 53% coverage.

The briefing also highlighted that the EPI program has allocated PKR 237 million for POL in the current fiscal year, out of which PKR 9 million has already been released.



PESHAWAR: Members of Peshawar Nursing Action Committee protesting in favour of their demands.

Police nab two smugglers, recover 71 liquor bottles



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Capital City Police arrested two individuals allegedly involved in alcohol smuggling via rickshaw within the Agha Mir Jani Shah police station.

Acting on a tip-off, a police team led by Superintendent of Police (SP) City Ihsan Shah and

supervised by Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Yakatoot Circle Touheed Khan conducted raids across the city, arresting Muhammad Shah and Danyal. The suspects took orders from clients and attempted to supply liquor via rickshaw, but police foiled their plans.

During the raid, police recovered 71 liquor bottles from their possession. The arrested individuals are Muhammad Shah, son of Shah Muhammad, and Danyal, son of Muhammad Zaman. A case has been registered against them, and further investigations are ongoing.

All Teachers Association delegation calls on Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): A delegation of All Teachers Association of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tuesday called on Governor Faisal Karim Kundi at the Governor's House.

The delegation, led by President Mian Faik Zada Kakakhel, discussed various educational issues and challenges faced by teachers in the province.

During the meeting, the delegation raised concerns about the state of educational institutions, demands for salary and benefits increases, the impact of pension reforms, and other related issues.

Governor Kundi assured the delegation that promoting peace, women's empowerment, and youth engagement are among his top priorities, and that appropriate measures would be taken to address teachers' issues at the federal level.

He emphasized that teachers are the architects of the nation and mentioned that provincial assembly member Ahmad Karim Kundi of PPP would play a role in supporting these concerns.

Ahmad Karim Kundi expressed his full support for the teaching community during the meeting.

The All Teachers Association officials appreciated the Governor's interest and commitment to education.

KPWEN urges urgent legislation

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Women Entrepreneurs Network (KPWEN) has called for immediate amendments to the KP Commerce and Trade Act 2021 to formally open easy window of registration with the Women Chambers of Commerce and Industry (WCCI) in the province. This critical demand was voiced during the first quarterly meeting of the network held with the participation of key stakeholders, including government officials, private sector representatives, and women entrepreneurs and business community. The meeting aimed to strengthen and empower women-led businesses across KP by fostering collaboration and advocating for policy and legislative reforms. The network stressed the need for a dedicated KP Commerce and Trade Statistics Act, which would facilitate the formal registration of Women Chambers of Commerce and ensure a supportive policy framework for women entrepreneurs. Such measures would not only enhance women's representation in business but also unlock opportunities for growth and development in the provincial economy and revenue generation.



PESHAWAR: A delegation of Professional College of Medical Sciences Peshawar, visited Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassemia Center and blood transfusion services Peshawar. They visited different sections of Hamza Foundation, took great interest in digital Laboratory, Blood bank and highly appreciated the welfare services of the organization. Delegation also requested to the management of Hamza Foundation to sign a MOU to provide technical training support to their students of BS MLT final and previous year.



In brief

Pakhtun Culture Day celebrated F.P. Report

MARDAN: Like other areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakhtun Culture Day was celebrated with great enthusiasm in Government Higher Secondary School Baghdada Mardan. On the occasion of this day, the Pashtun culture was paid tribute in a rich way, the host of the culture day ceremony was Ashraf Ali, the principal of the school, which is an important part of the cultural traditions of the Pakhtun. In the ceremony, the students of the school presented a wonderful Atnar dance, Ashraf Ali while addressing the students and teachers said that the purpose of celebrating the Pashtun Culture Day is to keep alive the history, traditions and culture of the Pashtuns. Have to keep. This day gives us an opportunity to stay connected to our roots and be proud of our identity. Pashtun Culture Day not only highlights the importance of customs and traditions but also conveys a message of unity, peace and pride in one's identity.

Crackdown against outlaws F.P. Report

TOBA TEK SINGH: Police operations against criminal elements is continued to ensure public safety at priority, on Tuesday. Station House Officer city police station Kamalia Raja Zahoor said that police is conducting operations against drug dealers, gambling mafia and criminal elements on daily basis. In addition, our police patrol the streets and there is a significant reduction in street crime. We are working to eradicate crime in Kamalia and provide justice to the people. In the end, he said that the doors of my office are open to the public.

Two shot dead in Gujrat

GUJRAT (INP): Unidentified gunmen shot dead two people and injured another here on Tuesday and escaped the scene, police said. The incident took place Dinga area of Gujrat where unknown armed men sprayed bullets at three motorcycle riders. As a result of firing, Muhammad Afzal and Fazl Hussain were killed on the spot while and another sustained bullet wounds. The attackers fled the scene after committing dual murder. The bodies and injured were moved to hospital for medico-legal formalities. The police registered a case into incident and started investigations.

Handicraft exhibition held F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The district administration of Dir Lower on Tuesday organized a handicraft exhibition to celebrate women's week under the public agenda of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Deputy Commissioner Mohammad Arif Khan and District Social Welfare Officer Mohammad Zaib Khan supervised the event held at Government Sentinel Model School Timargarh. For women empowerment, the event aimed at developing cottage industries and providing a platform for the women in Dir Lower district to start profitable home businesses. The exhibition recognized the immense talent of women in homemaking, showcasing the handicrafts produced by the skilled women of Dar es Salaam. This was the first handicraft exhibition for housewives in recent history. The best items of home handicrafts will be exhibited in the provincial and central level exhibitions.

Provision of health care facilities top priority: KP CS

F.P. Report

SWABI: The Chief Secretary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, has pledged to expedite the ongoing development projects at Bacha Khan Medical Complex (BKMC-MTI) in Swabi and Gajju Khan

Shahid Nisar Khalid, welcomed the chief secretary. The Chief Secretary visited various hospital areas, including Intensive Care Unit (ICU) Dialysis Unit, HIV/Family Care Center, Infectious Diseases, and other areas of the hospital, Said BKMC Spokesperson. Dr. Khalid Masud pro-

vided a comprehensive briefing on the healthcare services offered at BKMC. He emphasized the urgent need for advanced medical equipment, specifically MRI machine, CATH lab, and an additional CT scan for Emergency department. HD also highlighted the issue of electricity fluctuations, which disrupt health-

care delivery, said spokesperson. The Chief Secretary assured the hospital administration of full cooperation from the provincial government. "To improve patient care and the operational capacity of BKMC, the KP government would support the administration in installing medical equipment and urgently address the electricity supply issues", Said CS KP.

The spokesperson further mentioned that Dean Prof. Dr. Shams-Ur-Rehman informed the Chief Secretary about the construction delays on the college's purpose-built building, which have been halted for several months due to financial constraints. The Dean stated that despite these challenges, our medical college has achieved a 100% pass rate in the Khyber Medical University (KMU) annual examinations for three consecutive batches. Additionally, the Dean provided an update on the Nigar College of Nursing, emphasizing its role in addressing the nursing staff shortage. Spokesperson added.



Medical College (GKMC-MTI). During a visit to the hospital, the Chief Secretary, accompanied by the Deputy Commissioner Swabi, reviewed the progress of projects.

Dean GKMC, Prof. Dr. Shams-Ur-Rehman, Hospital Director BKMC, Dr. Khalid Masud, and Medical Director, Prof. Dr.

vided a comprehensive briefing on the healthcare services offered at BKMC. He emphasized the urgent need for advanced medical equipment, specifically MRI machine, CATH lab, and an additional CT scan for Emergency department. HD also highlighted the issue of electricity fluctuations, which disrupt health-

SIEHS-1122 expands emergency services

F.P. Report

KASHMORE: The Sindh Integrated Emergency & Health Services (SIEHS-1122) officially launched its emergency services in Kandhkot Kashmore today, a significant milestone in enhancing the region's healthcare infrastructure. This expansion ensures the provision of rapid and life-saving emergency medical care to the community, further reinforcing Sindh's pre-hospital care network. SIEHS is a non-profit organization established by the Health Department of the Government of Sindh.

Brig. Tarique Quadir Lakhia, CEO - SIEHS, acknowledged the collaborative efforts behind the successful launch, stating: "Our expansion to Kashmore is a testament to the unwavering commitment of the political leadership and the invaluable support from the regional key stakeholders. Their shared vision has played a pivotal role in advancing healthcare access across Sindh. With a single call to 1122, residents can now receive timely, life-saving care, which is crucial in critical moments."

This initiative is a key

element of the Government of Sindh's broader mission to improve healthcare access across the province. By extending its services to Kashmore, SIEHS ensures that the residents can benefit from a robust pre-hospital emergency response system to prioritise their health and safety.

As part of its ongoing efforts, SIEHS remains committed to revolutionising healthcare, bringing essential emergency medical services to even the most remote areas of Sindh, in line with the vision of a healthier and safer province.

Christian blames ex-MPA for grabbing land

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Residents of Christian colony in Landi Kotal alleged the former Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) Wilson Wazir for grabbing their joint property and asked to restrict him of allegedly the illegal act.

Addressing to news conference in Landi Kotal press club, district Khyber on Tuesday Malik Ghaffar Masih, Indriyas, Pastor Jorge Masih, Aurangzeb Masih, Axel Masih and others said that in 2018 Christian colony had been built with the government financial support on 8 Kanal land, bought jointly by the 21 local Christian families.

Twenty-one houses (quarters) had been constructed and allocated to



the respective families while a piece of almost 70 Marla land had been reserved for the community gathering site, they added. They went on that now the former MPA Wilson Wazir claimed possession of approximately 70 Marla joint land and threatened them of bad consequences, if opposed.

The ex-parliamentarian intended to sell the piece of joint land and threatened them to vacate their houses

in the colony, if they could not accept his ownership of the property. They demanded of Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector General Frontier Corp, Commandant Khyber Rifle and Deputy Commissioner, Khyber to take notice of the unlawful act of the influential ex-MPA, confine him of selling joint property for his own interest and save them of his atrocities.

Residents framed public servants as incompetent

F.P. Report

TAKHTBHAI: The Takhtbhai city is plagued by darkness, profiteering, and lawlessness. The city is gripped by illegal profiteers and hoarders, leaving citizens helpless. Butchers, transport owners, and traders are exploiting the vulnerable and poor citizens.

The city faces severe load shedding of electricity and gas, making life miserable. The administration is ineffective, and officials are

indifferent. The only functioning aspect is the air conditioning in their offices. Political and social circles in Takht Bhai have urged Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur to take immediate action, the residents blamed.

According to details, widespread power outages (Lundkhwar, Shergarh, Hathian, Jalala, Takht Bhai City). Skyrocketing inflation in markets. No check and balance on profiteers. Citizens suffer at the hands of transporters and butch-

ers. Daily clashes between drivers and owners. Hoarders, including hotels and mega marts, exploit citizens.

Administration absent; students forced to visit offices daily for document, processing. Local leaders demand immediate action from Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur. DC Mardan to take notice. End to profiteering and, lawlessness. Resolution of load shedding issues. The situation in Takht Bhai demands urgent attention.

Residents demand provision of services

F.P. Report

BUNER: Deputy Commissioner Buner held 'Kuli Katcheri' while the residents of Chinglai (Dhok) village of Khudokhail upheld their grievances and flayed negligence in public services delivery which has multiplied the miseries of people at large, on Tuesday. The local elders repre-

sented public and presented collective issues of the Dhok (Chinglai) following the DC Kashif Qayyum gave instructions to solve some problems immediately and issued instructions to the relevant department's heads for quick solution of others problems. AC Khadukhel, AAC, DSP, SHO Chenglai and heads of other departments were

specially called in the open court to listen to the problems of the people and take appropriate measures to satisfy them.

The local dignitaries mentioned the collective problems being faced by them. They asked for uninterrupted supply of electricity, playgrounds, roads, streets, drinking water and electricity.



HYDERABAD: Students of Government Girls Urdu Primary School Hali Road studying on the floor, due to non availability of furniture.

Student's kidnapping foiled in Swat Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: Swat police on Tuesday foiled an attempt of kidnapping a seventh class student and arrested two kidnappers.

Police said the incident took place in Shalpin area of Khwazakhela tehsil, Swat where a student of seventh class named Usman was maltreated and injured by two accused, identified as Najib Ullah and Akhtar. The accused then put the boy in a sack and tried to kidnap him.

Upon hue and cry of the child, local people were alerted and called the area police for intervention. The police rushed towards the scene and recovered the child from the sack in injured condition. Both the would-be kidnappers were arrested and the injured child was shifted to hospital for treatment. Police said a case has been registered against the accused and they were being further investigated.

2 more cops removed from service F.P. Report

BANNU: District Police Officer (DPO), Bannu, Zia Uddin Ahmad has terminated the services of two more police officials and suspended 10 others for not complying with the departmental orders.

According to Bannu police spokesman on Tuesday, with this new development the number of total terminated police officials reached to 13 in Bannu as the other day 11 police officials were removed from service over refusing polio team security duty in Lakki Marwat district. Those terminated today included constables Israr Khan and Arif Khan.

PPs ends pen down strike Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: Like other districts of the province, the Public Prosecutors in Kohat, on the assurance of the quarters concerned, also called-off their 7-Days long pen-down strike on Tuesday.

Due to their long pen-down strike and boycott of the court proceedings, the citizens have faced severe problems and difficulties in the courts.

On this occasion, Public Prosecutors Bilal Wazir, Imran Farooq, Zahoor Khan, Amjad Khan Naumana and others thanked the government for accepting their genuine demands and said they will work with full dedication to the entire satisfaction of the high-ups and all possible legal support will be ensured.

DC visits RHC Gumbat, Khushal Garh check post: Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram on Tuesday visited Rural Health Center (RHC) Tehsil Gumbat where he reviewed attendance of staff, cleanliness condition, pharmacy, wards and other facilities being provided to the patients. He also directed the authorities concerned to ensure timely provision of better treatment facilities to the patients. He strictly directed staff to ensure their presence in the hospital all the time and improve public services and sanitation conditions.

VC KKKUK inaugurates academic block at campus

F.P. Report

KARAK: The Vice Chancellor Khushal Khan Khattak University-Karak Professor Dr. Naseer Ud Din inaugurated new Main Campus academic block of the university here on Tuesday.

The new academic block main campus is equipped with modern facilities where students are provided with the best learning environment, stated the press release, adding that this was an important step towards providing educational infrastructure and best facilities for the students of Khushal Khan Khattak University.

Registrar of the university Dr. Ghani Ur Rehman, Campus Coordinator Dr. Nazir Ur Rehman, Director works Mir Salam Khan, Director P&D Muhammad Rashad, Treasurer Hafiz Muhammad Ismail, Deputy Director Audit Farid Jalal, Director QEC Dr. Muhammad Anwar, Heads of Departments, faculty members, administrative officers and students of the University were present on the occasion.

Addressing the participants of the inaugural ceremony the Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Naseer Ud Din highlighted the importance of this development. "The inauguration ceremony of



Academic Block represents a significant step forward in our commitment to academic excellence", said the Vice Chancellor adding that, "this facility will feature modern classrooms, advanced laboratories, and dedicated research spaces, all aimed at fostering a culture of innovation and academic growth".

The Khushal Khan Khattak University has been a beacon of higher education in the region, offering a wide range of academic programs tailored to meet the needs of its diverse student body. The development of the new campus is a strategic initiative to increase the university's capacity and elevate the quality of education it provides, he added.

Speaking on the occa-

sion, Registrar Dr. Ghani Ur Rehman also emphasized the project's significance, stating, "This new academic block is a promising prospect of our strategic plan to expand and enhance our new campus facilities. It will serve as a cornerstone for future academic achievements and will support the holistic development of our students."

Academic Block is part of the initial phase of the new main campus development plan, which includes various academic and administrative buildings, recreational facilities, and student accommodations. The project aims to create a comprehensive and sustainable educational environment that will benefit both current and future generations.

Multan students protest: Agriculture varsity closed

F.P. Report

MULTAN: A large number of students from the Muhammad Nawaz Shareef University of Agriculture in Multan have launched protests following the tragic death of a female student Minahail who was involved in a motorcycle collision with a university bus.

The incident occurred Monday, and tensions have escalated as students gathered outside the university to voice their anger, chanting slogans against the university administration. In response to the protests, the University of Agriculture has been closed for two

days in mourning for the deceased student.

The university spokesperson confirmed the closure, expressing deep sorrow over the loss and stating that this decision was made out of respect for Minahail. The bus driver involved in the accident, identified as Amir, has been suspended as investigations continue. The protests have intensified, with students demanding accountability and better safety measures from the administration.

A 5th semester student of the Bio-Chemistry Department of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif University of Agriculture

died after her motorbike hit a varsity bus coming from the opposite direction on Monday. Rescue 1122 sources said Manahil, 21, was daughter of Shaban of Doulat Gate. The body was shifted to Nishtar Hospital. Shah Shams Police Station House Officer (SHO) Rao Mehtab told that they had reached the spot after the accident, adding that her motorcycle hit the bus and fell down. Resultantly, she was run over by the bus and died on the spot, he added. The police officer said that the girl's father had informed him that he did not want to lodge a complaint with the police.

Continuation of anti-dengue campaign directed

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Deputy Commissioner has directed the all-government departments to continue its anti-dengue activities effectively and warned the officers and officials to submit factual reports regarding anti-dengue activities while strict departmental action would be taken against those focal persons and users who found in uploading fake data or activities.

While addressing the meeting of District Anti-Dengue Committee, DC directed the officers to ensure checking of cleanliness in business centres, tyre shops, hotels and other places so that growth of dengue larva could be contained. He said that violation of anti-dengue SOPs would not be tolerated and directed the anti-dengue teams to seal shops and business centers, hotels and other places who found involve in ignoring anti-dengue measures.

DHO Dr. Faiq Ali Tarar informed the meeting that special anti-dengue wards

had been setup at DHQ hospital Hafizabad and THQ hospital Pindi Bhattian to treat likely dengue patients free of cost. ADCG Hamadullah, AC Sohail Riaz, CEO Health Dr. Umar sharif, DHO Dr. Faiq Ali Tarar, CEO Education Muhammad Anwar Javed and other officers attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, President of Awami Mahaz Hafizabad Rana Khalid Mehmood has said that due to surprise visits of DC Hafizabad Abdul Razzaq, performance of offices, hospitals and other institution is improving day by day while open door policy is also providing opportunities to common people to approach concern officers for presenting their complaints and problems without any reference or recommendation.

While addressing a meeting of Awami Mahaz Hafizabad, he lauded steps taken by the district administration for providing relief to people. The meeting demanded to remove concreted encroachments built by influential personalities which are creating hurdle pedestrians passing thorough bazars and streets as well as causing traffic mess.

Symposium on mother health held: PODA Pakistan (Non-Government Organisation) have arranged a workshop with collaboration of Sahar Welfare Organisation Hafizabad on the topic of problems of reproductive health of girls and their resolution. Addressing the workshop, speakers said that underage girls never become a health mother and appropriate interval in birth of children are essential for mother health.

They said that underage marriages were dangerous for mental and physical health of girls while today girls were consuming sub-standard food which were causing problems of their reproductive health. Speakers said that it was need of hour to amend Child Marriage Act 2015 and fixed marriage age of girls in the Punjab 18-year-old.



Egyptian warship offloads more arms to Somalia

MOGADISHU (Reuters): An Egyptian warship has delivered a second major cache of weaponry to Somalia including anti-aircraft guns and artillery, port and military officials said, in a move likely to stoke further friction between the two countries and Ethiopia.

Ties between Egypt and Somalia have grown this year over their shared mistrust of Ethiopia, prompting Cairo to send several plane loads of arms to Mogadishu, Somalia's capital, after the countries signed a joint security pact in August. Ethiopia angered Mogadishu by agreeing a preliminary deal in January with the breakaway region of Somaliland to lease land for a port in exchange for possible recognition of its independence from Somalia.

Egypt, at odds with Ethiopia for years over Addis Ababa's construction of a vast hydro dam on the headwaters of the Nile River, has condemned the Somaliland deal. The Egyptian warship began unloading the weapons, one diplomat said. Security forces

blocked off the quayside and surrounding roads as convoys carried the weapons to a defence ministry building and nearby military bases, two port workers and two military officials told Reuters.

Nasra Bashir Ali, an official at Somali Prime Minister Hamza Abdi Barre's office, posted a photo on her X account of Defence Minister Abdulkadir Mohamed Nur watching as the ship was being unloaded.

Somaliland was concerned the weapons could land in the wrong hands, including the al Qaeda-linked al Shabaab group, its foreign affairs ministry said in a statement. "A shipment of Egyptian military aid has arrived in the Somali capital Mogadishu to support and build the capabilities of the Somali army," Egypt's foreign ministry said in a statement.

The shipment "reaffirms Egypt's ongoing central role in supporting Somali efforts to develop the national capabilities necessary to fulfil the aspirations of the Somali people for security, stability, and development," the statement added. Egyptian

media reported that Egypt's embassy in Mogadishu had warned its citizens not to travel to Somaliland, due to the security situation in the region. Ethiopia has at least 3,000 soldiers stationed in Somalia as part of an African Union peace-keeping mission (ATMIS) fighting Islamist insurgents, while an estimated 5,000-7,000 troops are deployed in other regions under a bilateral agreement.

Somalia has called the Somaliland deal an assault on its sovereignty and says it wants all Ethiopia's troops to leave at the end of the year unless Addis Ababa scraps the agreement. Egypt has, meanwhile, offered to contribute troops to a new peace-keeping mission in Somalia, the African Union said in July, though Cairo has not commented on the matter publicly. Ethiopia's government did not immediately respond to Reuters' request for comment, but has in the past said it cannot stand idle while "other actors" are taking measures to destabilise the region.

Snowstorms batter South Africa's coast, leave 2 dead

JOHANNESBURG (AP): Unseasonably late snowstorms battered coastal areas of South Africa over the weekend, killing two people and forcing the closure of some of the country's major highways.

The deaths were attributed to hypothermia after the two people were stuck in vehicles stranded by heavy snowfall on the N3 highway, which is the major route to the coastal city of Durban. One of the victims was a 39-year-old woman stuck in a minibus. The province of KwaZulu-Natal and Free State were worst hit by the storms, and officials warned that some areas could experience flooding as the snow starts to melt. The crops of many farmers were buried under snow for two days.

Emergency personnel were towing dozens of trucks and other vehicles that were stuck in the snow, while others distributed food and warm beverages to drivers who had been stranded for hours. Motorists were warned to drive carefully in areas that have been cleared. Schools were closed in KwaZulu-Natal, where the provincial minister for cooperative governance, Thulasizwe Buthelez, warned that communities along the Tugela River may experience flooding. "As schools remain closed, parents are urged to keep children away from unguarded bodies of water, including rivers and dams," Buthelez said.

Ukraine accuses Russia

THE HAGUE (AP): Ukraine accused Russia of seeking to illegally seize control of the strategically important Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait, as hearings opened in a high-stakes arbitration case between Kyiv and Moscow.

The hearings at the Permanent Court of Arbitration are the latest in a string of international legal cases involving Russia and Ukraine linked to Moscow's 2014 annexation of Crimea and its 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine, even as fighting continues to rage on battlefields in Ukraine. "Russia wants to take the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait for itself, and so it has built a great gate at the entrance to keep international shipping out while allowing small Russian river vessels in," Ukrainian representative Anton Korynevych told a panel of arbitrators.

The gate he referred to is a bridge built by Russia across the Kerch Strait after the annexation of Crimea. The \$3.5-billion, 19-kilometer (12-mile) bridge linking the Black and Azov seas carries road and rail traffic on separate sections and is vital to sustaining Russia's military operations in southern Ukraine. "The bridge is unlawful and it must come down," Korynevych told the arbitration panel.

Ukraine filed the case in 2016, two years after Russia annexed Crimea. It accuses Moscow of subsequently breaching a United Nations maritime treaty by building the bridge, barring Ukrainian fishermen from waters they traditionally fished, damaging the environment and plundering underwater archaeological sites. Kyiv is seeking unspecified compensation. Russia insists the arbitration court does not have jurisdiction. It says that if its five judges decide they do have jurisdiction, the court should dismiss Ukraine's claims. "Ukraine's accusations in this case are, of course, completely groundless and hopeless," Russian Agent Gennady Kuzmin told the panel. He argued that the Sea of Azov and Kerch Strait constitute "internal waters" that are not covered by the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the treaty Ukraine alleges Russia is breaching.



HONOLULU: Police officers talk to demonstrators sitting outside a medical center, where unionized nurses have been locked out since going on a one-day strike, United States.

Texas man set to be executed for killing his infant son

HOUSTON (AP): A Texas man with a long history of mental illness who has repeatedly sought to waive his right to appeal his death sentence faced execution Tuesday evening for killing his 3-month-old son more than 16 years ago.

Travis Mullis, 38, was condemned for stomping his son Alijah to death in January 2008. His execution by lethal injection was set to take place at the state penitentiary in Huntsville. Authorities say Mullis, then 21 and living in Brazoria County, drove to nearby Galveston with his son after fighting with his girlfriend. Mullis parked his car and sexually assaulted his son. After the infant began to cry uncontrollably, Mullis began strangling his son before taking him out of the car and stomping on his head, according to authorities.

The infant's body was later found on the side of the road. Mullis fled Texas but was later arrested after turning himself in to police in Philadelphia. Mullis' execution was expected to

proceed as his attorneys did not plan to file any final appeals to try and stay his lethal injection. His lawyers also did not file a clemency petition with the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles. In a letter submitted to US District Judge George Hanks in Houston, Mullis wrote in February that he had no desire to challenge his case any further. Mullis has previously taken responsibility for his son's death and has said "his punishment fit the crime."

In the letter, Mullis said, "he seeks the same finality and justice the state seeks." Galveston County District Attorney Jack Roady, whose office prosecuted Mullis, declined to comment ahead of Tuesday's scheduled execution. At Mullis' trial, prosecutors said Mullis was a "monster" who manipulated people, was deceitful and refused the medical and psychiatric help he had been offered.

Since his conviction in 2011, Mullis has long been at odds with his various

attorneys over whether to appeal his case. At times, Mullis had asked that his appeals be waived, only to later change his mind. Shawn Nolan, one of Mullis' attorneys, told the 5th US Circuit Court of Appeals during a June 2023 hearing that state courts in Texas had erred in ruling that Mullis had been mentally competent when he had waived his right to appeal his case about a decade earlier. Nolan told the appeals court that Mullis has been treated for "profound mental illness" since he was 3 years old, was sexually abused as a child and is "severely bipolar," leading him to change his mind about appealing his case.

"The only hope that Mr. Mullis had of avoiding execution, of surviving was to have competent counsel to help the court in its determination of whether he was giving up his rights knowingly, intelligently and voluntarily and that did not happen," Nolan said. Natalie Thompson, who at the time was with the Texas

Attorney General's Office, told the appeals court that Mullis understood what he was doing and could go against his lawyers' advice "even if he's suffering from mental illness." The appeals court upheld Hank's ruling from 2021 that found Mullis "repeatedly competently chose to waive review" of his death sentence. The US Supreme Court has prohibited the application of the death penalty for the intellectually disabled, but not for people with serious mental illness. Mullis would be the fourth inmate put to death this year in Texas, the nation's busiest capital punishment state, and the 15th in the US Mullis' execution is one of five set to take place in the US within a week's time. The first took place when South Carolina put inmate Freddie Owens to death. Also Tuesday, Marcellus Williams was scheduled to be executed in Missouri. Executions are scheduled for Alan Miller in Alabama and Emmanuel Littlejohn in Oklahoma.

10 arrested outside hospital as labor dispute involving nurses escalates

HONOLULU (AP): Ten people, including a recently elected state lawmaker, were arrested outside Hawaii's only women's and children's hospital, where unionized nurses have been locked out since going on a one-day strike during contract negotiations.

Those arrested sat and blocked the driveway of Kapi'olani Medical Center for Women & Children on morning and refused to leave after officers issued warnings. Honolulu police spokesperson Sarah Yoro said in an email. More than 600 nurses have been locked out since they went on a one-day strike earlier this month. Since then, nurses and supporters have been demonstrating and holding signs outside the

hospital, which said it would continue to provide care with a temporary workforce.

The nurses want to see safer nurse-patient ratios, said Rosalee Agas-Yuu, president of the Hawaii Nurses Association. The contract expired last year. Both sides met through the weekend and contract negotiations were set to continue, Agas-Yuu said. "All they want to do is just go back to the bedside and take care of the patients," she said of the nurses.

Demonstrators calling attention to the lockout sat at the hospital's entrance as buses with the temporary out-of-state nurses arrived, Agas-Yuu said. None of the people arrested are active nurses, she said. "We

respect the right for peaceful protesting, but any demonstration cannot negatively impact patient care," hospital CEO Gidnet Ruscetta said in a statement. "Access to our medical center must remain open for our community. We will rely on the Honolulu Police Department to take appropriate action." According to a police arrest log, Kim Coco Iwamoto, a Democrat recently elected to represent part of Honolulu in the state House, was among those arrested and cited for obstructing.

Iwamoto said she plans to address staffing ratios for nurses at the state Legislature. Ikaika Hussey, who recently won the Democratic primary for a

state House seat, was also arrested. He and others were engaging in "classic civil disobedience," he said after being released from a cellblock. He said his decision to participate came from thinking about the hospital's founder, Queen Kapi'olani.

"She would be disappointed in how her namesake has become, you know, sort of anti-worker," he said. This wasn't the first arrest for Lori Treschuk, who said she's been arrested at other protests for other causes. But this was extra personal for the 77-year-old retired nurse. "I just feel so much for the nursing staff," she said. "I know how stressful it is even on a quote-unquote good day."

30 bodies found on a boat along a migrant route off Senegal

DAKAR (AP): At least 30 bodies were found on a boat drifting off the coast of Senegal's capital, the military said, as the number of migrants leaving West Africa increases. The navy was informed of the vessel's presence and sent out a boat patrol to the area, 70 kilometers (38 nautical miles) from Dakar, Ibrahim Sow, spokesperson for Senegal's military said in a statement.

"So far, 30 bodies have been counted," Sow said. The advanced state of decomposition of the bodies is making the identification process very difficult, the

military said, adding that investigations will provide more information on the death toll and the boat's origin. Earlier this month, a boat carrying 89 people on board capsized off the coast of Senegal. At least 37 people died, according to Senegalese authorities. Many of the migrants leaving West Africa through Senegal flee conflict, poverty and a lack of jobs. Most head to the Canary Islands, a Spanish archipelago off the coast of West Africa, which is used as a stepping stone to continental Europe.

Since the beginning of the year, more than 22,300

people have landed on the Canary Islands, 126% more than the same period last year, according to statistics released by Spain's Interior Ministry. Last month, the Senegalese army said it had arrested 453 migrants and "members of smuggling networks" as part of a 12-day operation patrolling the coastline. More than half of those arrested were Senegalese nationals, the army said. In July, a boat carrying 300 migrants, mostly from Gambia and Senegal, capsized off Mauritania. More than a dozen died and at least 150 others went missing. The

Atlantic route from West Africa to the Canary Islands is one of the deadliest in the world. While there is no accurate death toll because of the lack of information on departures from West Africa, the Spanish migrant rights group Walking Borders estimates the victims are in the thousands this year alone. Migrant vessels that get lost or run into problems often vanish in the Atlantic, with some drifting across the ocean for months until they are found in the Caribbean and Latin America carrying only human remains.

Major Hurricane John hits Mexico's Pacific coast

MEXICO CITY (AFP): Hurricane John slammed into Mexico's southern Pacific coast as a major Category 3 storm, bringing warnings for residents to seek shelter indoors. John came ashore near Marquelia in Guerrero state, packing maximum sustained winds of around 120 miles (195 kilometers) per hour, the US-based National Hurricane Center said.

"Damaging hurricane-force winds, life-threatening storm surge and flash flooding are ongoing," it warned. "Slow-moving Hurricane John will bring very heavy rainfall to coastal portions of south-west Mexico through the upcoming week," according to the NHC, which put John in the third-highest category on the five-step Saffir-Simpson scale. "This heavy rainfall will likely cause significant and possibly catastrophic, life-threatening flash

flooding" in the southern states of Chiapas, Oaxaca and Guerrero, it said.

A hurricane warning was in effect from east of Acapulco to Bahias de Huatulco on the Pacific coast. "After landfall, the system will rapidly weaken over the high terrain of southern Mexico," the NHC said. President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador earlier warned people living along the affected coastline to be prepared. "Seek higher ground, protect yourselves and do not forget that the most important thing is life; material things are replaceable," he wrote on social media platform X.

The National Civil Protection agency issued a red alert, telling people to stay indoors and keep away from windows. Authorities in Oaxaca said they were opening temporary shelters, suspending school classes, closing beaches and mobilizing

machinery in case needed to clear roads. The international airport in the tourist resort of Puerto Escondido suspended all flights. In Guerrero, authorities said around 300 temporary shelters were ready if needed.

Restaurant workers were seen bringing furniture in from beaches, while fishermen returned to shore. Hurricanes hit Mexico every year on both its Pacific and Atlantic coasts, usually between May and November.

In October last year, Hurricane Otis, a scale-topping Category 5 storm, left a trail of destruction and several dozen people dead after slamming into the beachside city of Acapulco in Guerrero. Otis rapidly intensified within hours from a tropical storm to the most powerful category of the five-step Saffir-Simpson scale, taking authorities by surprise.

court orders arrest of Venezuela's president

BUENOS AIRES (AP): A federal court in Argentina ordered the "immediate" arrest of Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and Interior Minister Diosdado Cabello for alleged crimes against humanity committed against dissidents.

The court order came in response to an appeal by Argentine prosecutor Carlos Stornelli after a previous ruling dismissed the complaint against both Venezuelan leaders. Federal court members Pablo Bertuzzi, Leopoldo Bruglia and Mariano Llorens ordered that "the arrest warrants for Nicolás Maduro and Diosdado Cabello be executed immediately, and that their international arrest should

be ordered via Interpol for the purposes of extradition to the Argentine Republic," according to the resolution.

The order comes hours after Venezuela's Supreme Court issued an arrest warrant for Argentina's President Javier Milei amid a controversy between the two countries over the detention in Argentine territory - and delivery to the United States - of a cargo plane that Washington says was sold by a sanctioned Iranian airline to a Venezuelan state-owned company. The tit-for-tat heightens the tensions between Venezuela and Argentina that have been brewing since far-right Milei assumed power in December and that has led

to a breakdown in diplomatic relations.

The case against Maduro and his right-hand man was brought before the Argentine courts by the Argentine Forum for Democracy in the Region, FADER, in early 2023, taking into account Argentina's jurisprudence on human rights and the principle of universal jurisdiction that allows action to be taken against crimes against humanity, even if they have been committed outside its borders. According to the plaintiffs, a systematic plan of repression, forced disappearance of persons, torture, homicides and persecution against dissidents has been in place in Venezuela since 2014.

China 'firmly supports' Lebanon

HONG KONG (Reuters): China's Foreign Minister Wang Yi told Lebanese Foreign Minister Abdallah Bou Habib that China firmly supported Lebanon in safeguarding its sovereignty and security and strongly condemned violations after Israel's large scale airstrike.

Wang and Habib met in New York where they exchanged views on the situation in the Middle East, according to a statement from China's Foreign Ministry. Israel's military said it launched airstrikes against Hezbollah sites in Lebanon, which Lebanese authorities said had killed 492 people and sent tens

of thousands fleeing for safety in the country's deadliest day in decades.

Wang said no matter how the situation changes, China would continue to stand on the "side of justice and on the side of Arab brothers, including Lebanon". "We pay close attention to the development of the regional situation, especially the recent explosion of communication equipment in Lebanon, and firmly oppose indiscriminate attacks on civilians," Wang said, according to the statement. China has been working for peace in the Middle East and will continue to work with

Arab countries and the international community, he said.

Fighting violence with violence will not solve problems in the Middle East but will cause greater humanitarian disasters, Wang said, according to the statement. The international community should unite, "with the current situation a manifestation of the spillover of the Gaza conflict". China's position is for a permanent ceasefire and the full withdrawal of troops to effectively implement a two-state solution, Wang said.

Anti-money laundering group suspends Colombia

BOGOTÁ (AP): The Egmont Group, an international organization created to combat money laundering, said that it has suspended Colombia's access to its global information sharing platform, after President Gustavo Petro shared confidential information that Colombian officials had obtained from the group.

The Egmont Group said in a statement that Colombia's government will no longer have access to a secure web used by the group to share data on financial crimes and

that can be accessed by 177 member countries. The group said the measure will remain in effect while it further investigates the situation. Earlier this month, Petro read out information from a document obtained through the Egmont Group suggesting that in 2021, Colombia's government, which was then headed by conservative President Iván Duque, paid an Israeli company \$11 million in cash to acquire Pegasus spyware.

Petro made the revelation during a nationally televised speech,

where many expected him to discuss a truckers' strike instead. The president said that the spyware was used by Duque's conservative administration to spy on activists and members of left-wing parties that opposed his government, including Petro himself. Duque administration officials have denied the charges.

Pegasus is able to gather information from cellphones undetected and control a cellphone's camera and microphones. The software was developed by an Israeli com-

pany and has been used to target more than 50,000 politicians, journalists and human rights activists by at least a dozen governments, according to a report published by Amnesty International and 18 media organizations in 2021. Security analysts have said Colombia's suspension from the Egmont Group's information sharing platform weakens the nation's capabilities to detect illegal transactions made by drug trafficking groups, and other criminal organizations.

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Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town, Peshawar.

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

The horrors of Gaza could be repeated in Lebanon

DEADLY Israeli bombings of schools in Gaza, attacks in the West Bank, a wave of indiscriminate sabotage explosions across Lebanon, dozens of rockets fired into northern Israel by Hezbollah and a Houthi missile breaching Israel's air defences – these are just some of the major but incremental steps taken towards full-scale war in the Levant over the past 11 days. This train of events ought to alarm the international community as it meets at the UN General Assembly in New York.

Yet, despite being faced with the dire consequences of such a war – more lives lost, populations displaced, infrastructure destroyed and economies ruined – the actors involved seem intent on intensifying the tension. Yesterday, Lebanon's Health Ministry reported at least 100 people dead and more than 400 wounded, including children, women and paramedics, in an extensive Israeli air assault on southern Lebanon and the Bekaa Valley. Earlier, Hezbollah deputy leader Naim Qassem said the Iran-backed militants had entered an “open-ended battle of reckoning” with Israel. Israeli media outlets on Sunday quoted the country's Prime Minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, as saying a plan to use siege tactics against Hamas in northern Gaza, the site of an ongoing humanitarian catastrophe, was being examined.

It is not hyperbole to suggest that the horrors of Gaza could be repeated in Lebanon if all sides do not take an immediate step back. Speaking to The National last week before the annual gathering of world leaders at the UN, the organisation's Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, made it clear that he felt such a scenario could happen, warning that “we are seeing the risks of this conflict spreading to Lebanon, to other parts of the Middle East”.

Sadly, all sides in this conflict seem unwilling to recognise the scale of the disaster that is approaching. Hezbollah's fiery rhetoric of revenge and defiance may resonate with those who are fearful, angry and frustrated at Israel's attacks but it offers little to the very people the militants claim to champion – Lebanon's civilians. The reality is that the country is singularly ill-prepared for a major Israeli offensive. As The National reported from Beirut on Sunday, those Lebanese who can afford to are trying to rent apartments in the mountains, away from the likely targets of Israeli warplanes. Andira El Zouhairi, president of the Lebanese Association of Properties, revealed that only 10 per cent of buildings have a shelter for civilians to hide in.

Although it would be naïve to suggest that Hezbollah – a paramilitary movement – could sit back and absorb Israeli blows, the organisation can only act offensively; it lacks the ability to intercept Israel's attacks, and its rockets and missiles have not proven to be a deterrent to an emboldened Israeli military. On the contrary, increased attacks on Israel may remove the last vestiges of restraint from one of the region's most well-equipped militaries. Given the already asymmetrical and lop-sided nature of this conflict, the brunt of any escalation would be borne primarily by Lebanon's population.

Israel's role in this volatile situation is also significant. Its military claims to carry out targeted, surgical strikes but the facts paint a different picture. In the past week alone, more than 170 people in Lebanon have been killed by Israeli actions, and thousands more injured. After the detonation of booby-trapped pagers and walkie-talkies belonging to Hezbollah members – apparently without concern for their proximity to civilians.

Rocket attacks, air strikes on urban areas and the displacement of civilians in Lebanon, Gaza and Israel run the risk of creating an unstoppable momentum to a conflict that no one will win. In an interview with The National published on Saturday, US Department of Defence press secretary Maj Gen Pat Ryder said Washington had been “very clear to Israel and others from the very beginning that we don't want to see a wider regional conflict; no one benefits from that. Everyone loses”.

There are also fears that the US may be dragged into a war; in an interview with Sky News Arabia broadcast on Friday, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov suggested some attacks had the “goal of making the United States' interference in the war inevitable”.

But on the issue of a war in the Levant, Maj Gen Ryder is right – there is nothing to be gained from further escalation. In fact, there is everything to lose.

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PukhTosh@gmail.com

Netanyahu gets his war but any victory will be pyrrhic

Osama Al-Sharif

ALMOST a year after the calamitous events of Oct. 7, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu is finally getting what he always wanted: an all-out regional war. Make no mistake, the dangerous escalation on Israel's northern front can only be described as a full-fledged war, with all cards laid on the table. Forget about the tactical euphemisms, it is everything short of an open war. The reality is that Israel is hitting Hezbollah all over Lebanon, from the south to the Bekaa and from the Lebanese coast to Beirut's southern suburbs.

In return, a badly injured and humiliated Hezbollah is trying to salvage its reputation and ability to respond. It is now firing missiles deep into northern Israel, as well as the suburbs of Tel Aviv. No one knows how far the two parties will go in this latest exchange of blows.

There are multiple factors in play as this bloody round unfolds. Israel has hit southern Lebanon hard right after carrying out a series of “below the belt” blows to the pro-Iran militia. As far as one can tell, Hezbollah has suffered critical losses to its top military leadership, has lost confidence in the integrity of its command and control communication system and has suffered severe blows to its underground missile bases in southern Lebanon.

The Israeli reaction has been astounding. It has proved to be precise, superior in terms of military intelligence and capable of neutralizing most of Hezbollah's primary and most-feared first-salvo response.

The foremost goal of Israel's military operation against Hezbollah is to force the Shiite group's hand into

accepting the delinking of its support of the Gaza resistance. In his most recent TV speech, Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah vowed to maintain that link at any price. The Israeli operation ostensibly seeks to convince him to drop that demand, accept a truce and allow thousands of Israelis to return to their homes in northern Israel.

While a shaken Nasrallah ponders this offer, Israel is bent on creating a buffer zone in southern Lebanon that extends way north of the Litani River. It is using a Gaza-like carpet bombing of south Lebanon, causing tens of thousands of Lebanese to flee. A week or more of the Israeli bombing of south Lebanon will render this area a parched and empty space. There is no way that Hezbollah can reclaim this territory.

Netanyahu has managed to turn the Oct. 7 Hamas attacks into an existential war for Israel's survival. He has managed to use the multiple war fronts against Israel in a battle for its survival. However, there is another goal that Netanyahu and his far-right coalition partners want to achieve: proving that resistance is futile. Israel's enemies will be crushed.

More than 11 months of war on Gaza has decimated the Palestinian enclave. More than 70 percent of the civilian infrastructure has been destroyed. More than 41,000 Palestinians, mostly women and children, have been killed. More than 1.9 million Palestinians in Gaza are cramped into a 40 sq. mile area. It is no longer about Hamas, but about the fate of almost all Gaza residents. Netanyahu was never interested in the fate of the Israeli captives. He wanted to destroy Hamas, which he

almost did while pushing for a master plan: Occupy most of Gaza and force the Palestinians to Egypt's borders, while allowing his extremist partners to terrorize Palestinians in the West Bank.

Aside from his legal ordeals, Netanyahu has always believed that he has a mission to debunk any attempt to create a Palestinian state. In later years, he thought that he could carry out such a scheme with the help of extremist coalition partners.

The reality today underlines Israel's far-right plan to annex most of the West Bank, leaving the Palestinians in ghettos with limited self-administration.

Netanyahu's war on Gaza and now Lebanon aims to show that Israel today is the most formidable regional power. All others must take note.

Hezbollah has been weakened, but it remains a force to be reckoned with. But Hezbollah cannot survive without Iran. And it seems that Iran will not come to Hezbollah's rescue now. Instead, it is using its proxies in Iraq and Yemen to divert and engage Israel. An intensive Israeli attack on the Lebanese militia may subjugate it into accepting a truce.

And then we have Iran: an elusive and mercurial ally ready to pursue a political deal even if that means dispensing with its allies. Iran has regional priorities, which may mean leaving its allies to fend for themselves.

As for the US, the Biden White House appears to be satisfied looking on. It says it wants to contain the conflict but has decided to sit it out. Israel is in no immediate danger, while Biden would love to see Netanyahu calling for help.

Aside from saving his

skin, Netanyahu hopes to neutralize any form of resistance for decades. Hamas is terminally injured in Gaza and Hezbollah soon will be as well. The rest, including the Houthis and the Iraqi militias, can be handled. That is the message Netanyahu wants to send and apply.

But then what? Israel faces two paths: one of unending wars and one of a lasting peace. Netanyahu and his partners want to emasculate their opponents. That will never happen. There will always be those who want to fight. Once this war ends, what awaits the region?

Even those who made peace with Israel now call for a just closure to the Palestinian saga. Israel will never have peace if the Palestinians are denied their liberation.

Israel may push Hezbollah to accept its terms – for now. But that will never end Israel's fear that another round, a more brutal one, lurks around the corner.

Once this war ends, Israel will still face hard questions. What to do with more than 7 million Palestinians between the river and the sea? No Israeli pundit has come up with an answer. Neither Jordan nor Egypt will accept absorbing millions of Palestinian refugees. For them, this would be tantamount to a declaration of war.

This latest cycle of violence may well end in a partial Israeli victory. But it will prove to be a pyrrhic victory for Netanyahu. Hezbollah, like Hamas, will survive in one way or another. The threat to Israel will never disappear. The only way for Israel to survive is to make peace with the Palestinians. So far, Netanyahu has not seen this. If he overcomes the polls, he will face this solid reality.

Silencing us at the DNC will only make us stronger

Nadia Ahmad, Liano Sharon and Esam Boraey

AS delegates at the 2024 Democratic National Convention that took place in August in Chicago, we stood up for what we believe is a fundamental issue of justice and human rights. We came to the convention in solidarity with millions of people around the world protesting and demonstrating against the genocide in Gaza.

The banner we displayed at the DNC calling to “Stop Arming Israel” was not just an expression of personal beliefs; it was a demand for the Democratic Party to live up to its proclaimed values.

The response to our protest was as symbolic as it was violent. Nadia, a hijab-wearing Muslim woman from Florida, was repeatedly struck with “We Love Joe” signs by union members.

Liano, representing Michigan, was escorted out by security. Esam, a delegate from Connecticut, faced police intimidation.

What happened to us is part of a broader pattern of marginalising progressive voices within the party. But the Democratic establishment's choice to silence us has only strengthened our resolve.

We represent a significant and growing portion of the Democratic base – one that is increasingly disillusioned with a party leadership that refuses to listen to voices demanding justice. The establishment may see us as troublemakers, but we see ourselves as the conscience of the party, pushing it to live up to its stated ideals.

We are not fringe radicals. We are the voices of a new generation of Democrats who are tired of seeing our values compromised. Our demands are simple: we want a Democratic Party that prioritises human rights, stands up for the oppressed, and does not shy away from challenging unjust power structures, whether foreign or domestic.

The party's current stance on the genocide in Gaza is a major point of contention within the Democratic electorate. While the party leadership continues to support unconditional military aid to Israel, a growing number of Democrats, especially younger voters and people of colour, are calling for a more balanced approach.

Our actions at the convention were part of a larger movement that has been gaining momentum across the country. From college campuses to community organisations, more and more Americans are speaking out against the unconditional support for Israel's policies.

This groundswell of activism is challenging long-held assumptions and demanding a foreign policy that aligns with our values of human rights and international law.

The Democratic Party's response to our

protest – silencing and removal – is emblematic of a larger problem. It reflects a reluctance to engage with difficult questions and a tendency to prioritise political expediency over moral clarity. But this approach is shortsighted. By refusing to address these concerns, the party risks alienating a significant portion of its base and losing its moral authority on issues of social justice.

Silencing us at the DNC will not make us go away. It, in fact, has only emboldened us. We are more determined than ever to continue our fight, not just within the Democratic Party, but across the broader political landscape.

The more the establishment tries to suppress our voices, the louder we will become.

Our protests at the DNC were just the beginning. We will continue to organise, speak out, and demand that the Democratic Party takes a stand for what is right. The future of the party, and indeed the future of American democracy, depends on whether it can embrace the full spectrum of voices within its ranks.

As we move forward, we call on all those who believe in justice and human rights to join us in this fight.

Together, we can create a Democratic Party that truly represents the progressive values it claims to champion – a party that stands firmly against oppression and injustice, both at home and abroad. Democratic lawmakers from both chambers of Congress were split in their attendance with roughly half boycotting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's speech to Congress earlier this year.

The time for change is now, and we are ready to lead it.

We call on the Democratic leadership to push for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza in a way that it actually happens; condition military aid to Israel on compliance with international law and human rights standards; support diplomatic efforts to achieve a just and lasting peace in the region; recognise and address the humanitarian crisis in Palestinian territories; embrace open dialogue on these issues within the party, rather than suppress dissenting voices.

The Democratic Party can choose to evolve and embrace the change among its voters by heeding our call, or it can continue to resist and risk losing its moral standing and the support of a generation of activists and voters.

While it grapples with this choice, we stand united in our commitment to creating a more just and equitable world, and we will not rest until our voices are heard and our demands addressed. Gaza will stand between Vice President Kamala Harris and the White House in November.

— Aljazeera

Amid an escalation of Israeli attacks, where is Hezbollah headed?

Eyad Abu Shakra

Assume that the nature of Israel's role, especially under its current leadership, in its ongoing crime committed in Gaza is above dispute. It is now expanding its war and exacerbating the destruction in Lebanon.

There is no question or doubt about it, especially since the Palestinians and Lebanese have been promised that the worst is yet to come.

On the other hand, we must recognize the divisiveness in Palestine fostered by Iran, as well as Tehran's relentless efforts to separate a key Lebanese community from the others, alienate it from the state and use it to undermine Lebanon's sovereignty.

When a renewal of former Lebanese President Emile Lahoud's term was imposed in 2004, the forces exercising de facto control defended the decision by claiming that he was the person “best equipped to stand up to the conspiracy threatening Lebanon.” At that time, the Lebanese called these forces the “Syrian-Lebanese security regime,” lacking the curiosity needed to delve deeper into the identity of

that regime, which was only Syrian-Lebanese in name and in its tools. That is because this regime, as the events that would later unfold demonstrated, was part of an Iranian project to establish regional hegemony and sow division.

But this strategic project could not be marketed with an Iranian label or its dreams of “divisive hegemony” – especially with Israel. Thus, a national, bright and attractive slogan that deserves sacrifice was adopted: resistance. The slogan had some justification, as parts of southern Lebanon were occupied territory at that time and Israeli warplanes had free rein over its skies. The Lebanese had many wounds, pains and memories of this ... and they sympathized with their brothers in Palestine and the Golan Heights who suffered, and still suffer, the injustices of Israeli occupation.

Thus, just as the Lebanese rose to embrace the Palestinian resistance in 1968, they sympathized with Hezbollah when it was performing actual “resistance” duties ... before Israel withdrew from southern Lebanon in 2000. However, opinions shifted after 2000 and the

contours of the hegemony and division project began to become clear. Albeit timidly, its proponents justified the project by framing it as support for the resistance and confrontation of the so-called conspiracy against it.

The previously mentioned imposition of another Lahoud term in September 2004 (against the backdrop of UN Security Council Resolution 1559 calling for an end to foreign interference in Lebanon) was the first station. The following month, there was an assassination attempt made against government minister Marwan Hamadeh, an ally of both Rafik Hariri and Walid Jumblatt. It was an early message to those involved.

The second station was the assassination of Hariri himself in February 2005, which triggered seismic repercussions, including a wave of horrific assassinations, and ultimately led to the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Lebanon.

Following this withdrawal, the third station had been reached. Hezbollah began openly taking actual power. It did not take long before we

got to the fourth station. The 2006 war ended any illusions that Hezbollah was a Lebanese organization in its principles, loyalties and command and one that sought only resistance. This painful fact was affirmed when, in 2008, Hezbollah pointed its weapons (which had been directed southward until 2006) toward the interior ... invading Beirut and attempting to invade southern Mount Lebanon, antagonizing Lebanese sectarian and religious communities that it could have avoided antagonizing. Then came the fifth station. The dimensions of the Iranian project and the party's role in this project became clear: the “resistance” arsenal became a tool for killing, abusing and displacing Syrians, with Hezbollah fighters accused of committing numerous massacres and displacing people from entire regions of the country.

Now, we are at what can be considered the sixth station, following the Al-Aqsa Flood Operation and the catastrophic repercussions it has had for the Palestinians and Lebanese, exposing many

assumptions and intentions. The planners, executors and supporters of the operation either overlooked fundamental facts or deliberately ignored them to serve their operators. Chief among them are two facts. First, this Israeli government is the most extreme in the country's history. It is led by the most belligerent and spiteful leaders Israel has ever had; no government has been less keen on a peaceful settlement and it includes two ministers whose declared aim is a population transfer. Second, they undertook an operation against Israeli civilians only a year before a US presidential election, meaning it is futile to seek American help to deter Israel against displacement aggression. Even if those who planned and executed the attack imagined that the regional climate could undermine Israel's retaliation, here is what happened.

After nearly a year of limited to ineffective support from groups affiliated with Iran, the latter's leadership is making contradictory, evasive and even weakening statements. In the Palestinian territories, the people of the Gaza Strip have been dis-

placed following its destruction and the elimination of some of the prominent leaders of Hamas, including Ismail Haniyeh, Mohammed Deif and Saleh Al-Aroui.

In Lebanon, Hezbollah's communications infrastructure has been hit and much of its top brass has been eliminated, with thousands of citizens displaced from the south. In contrast, the supreme leader in Tehran said he supported a “tactical retreat” and Iranian President Masoud Pezeshkian, before his visit to the US, assured us that the “Iranians and Americans are brothers” and that “there is no enmity between them.”

Thus, the Iranian project has reached an advanced stage. Tehran has exploited its tools, which have long deceived their popular base, to further its project of hegemony and sit at the negotiating table with Israel and the US, with which it seeks to share regional influence at the expense of Arab blood, Arab humanity and the Arabs' future. However, I believe that it is not too late for Hamas to go back to supporting the cause of its people, or for Hezbollah to embrace its state.

Trump plays the fear card on the economy – and it seems to be working

DONALD Trump had an apocalyptic warning for a group of farmers in swing state Pennsylvania: If he loses the election, “You won’t have a farm very long.”

Trump spoke Monday at an event highlighting his vow to protect rural Americans from the perceived predatory power of China, at which he also showed that when he tries to focus, he can assemble effective, populist economic arguments that help explain his dominance in polls on the most important issue in the election.

But Trump’s prediction about mass bankruptcies in the agricultural sector also echoed a familiar refrain — one that is the foundation of his pessimistic political creed. The ex-president adapts this construct to almost any audience as he evokes a vision of a nation wracked by crime, economic blight and an immigrant invasion.

Most politicians court voters by offering them an optimistic vision, peddling hope and promises of change. Democratic nominee Kamala Harris is seeking to sweep away Trump’s somber picture of America in crisis by invoking joy and a new kind of “opportunity economy.” Trump, however, mostly dishes out fear and threats.

He, for instance, warned Americans at his debate with Harris that “you’re going to end up in World War III.” In a Fox News Town Hall earlier this month, he warned that “this country will end up in a depression if she becomes president. Like 1929.” He brands Harris a “communist” and “Comrade” as he implicitly argues that if he loses, America won’t have an economy anymore.

In another twist of his extreme rhetoric, Trump also seems to be seeking scapegoats should he lose the election in just over 40 days.

Last week, at an event on antisemitism, the former president warned that “the Jewish people” would be partly to blame if he loses in November. He seemed to be suggesting, as he as in the past, that Jews shouldn’t vote for Democrats because without his fervent support for far-right Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, there might not be an Israel anymore. The comments were just the latest occasion when he’s invoked an antisemitic trope that suggests American Jews have dual loyalties. The Biden administration, while calling on Netanyahu to do more to spare Palestinian civilians, has sent vast resources to the Middle East to protect Israel, notably when it led an international effort to

repel a massive Iranian missile attack in April.

Taking aim at another faith group, the former president wrote on social media Monday that Catholic voters “should have their head examined” if they back Harris, implying that worshippers wouldn’t have Catholicism any more with a baseless claim that “Catholics are literally being persecuted by this administration.”

Over the weekend, the ex-president tapped out a bizarre, patriarchal, all caps message on Truth Social that came across more like a dictate from an authoritarian state than a promise as he vowed “WOMEN WILL BE HAPPY, HEALTHY, CONFIDENT AND FREE” if he is elected

Stephen Collinson

rampant, he warned that if he was not reelected, there would be “no kids in school, no graduations, no weddings, no Thanksgiving, no Christmas and no Fourth of July together.” While such rituals were severely disrupted when he was in office in 2020, the country gradually got back on its feet under Biden, who used his first Independence Day celebrations in office to declare independence from the virus, even if it ultimately took longer for normal life to resume.

Some of this rhetoric is classic overkill from a lifelong salesman — or what Trump once called “truthful hyperbole” in his treatise “The Art of the Deal.”

Against this backdrop, Trump’s ominous warning to farmers sounded rather familiar. He claimed that energy prices would skyrocket in a Harris administration and bankrupt agricultural businesses in rural areas that mostly support him. “If they get in, your energy costs are going to through the roof — they are going through the roof, OK? You won’t have a farm very long, I will tell you that,” Trump said. The conjured threat that farms — the fabric of rural life — could be wiped out in a Harris administration plays into the ex-president’s core theme at the debate, namely that “our country is being lost. We’re a failing nation.”

president again.

At a rally in Pennsylvania on Monday night, Trump — who was found liable by a federal jury in a civil case for sexual abuse and is trailing Harris among female voters — told America’s women: “I am your protector. I want to be your protector. As president, I have to be your protector.”

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The conjured threat that farms — the fabric of rural life — could be wiped out in a Harris administration plays into the ex-president’s core theme at the debate, namely that “our country is being lost. We’re a failing nation.”

His comments also echoed one of his most notorious and chilling remarks as president, when he told a crowd on January 6, 2021, to march to the US Capitol and “fight like hell” otherwise they were “not going to have a country anymore.”

The Republican nominee’s warnings of disaster are not a new wrinkle. In 2020, with Covid-19

Monday will lay off about 600 employees across three US factories as the Illinois-based company shifts production to a planned facility in Ramos, Mexico. The fights that Trump picks in the past haven’t always helped US workers. Investments and jobs that the ex-president promised he’d save often didn’t materialize. And President Joe Biden has frequently highlighted his own investments in manufacturing and infrastructure that the ex-president failed to deliver.

But Trump’s enduring — and critics say fictionalized — image as a shrewd businessman and his knack for populist photo-ops help explain new polls by The New York Times and Siena College on Monday that showed that 55% of respondents in Arizona, North Carolina and Georgia said Trump would do a better job managing the economy compared to 42% who picked Harris.

The vice president has sought to narrow the advantage by adopting her own populist streak — taking aim at what she says is price gouging by supermarket chains and accusing Trump of planning massive new tax cuts for the richest Americans that would mirror those during his first term. Like Trump, Harris argues that US Steel should remain American owned in opposing a sale to Nippon Steel — Japan’s biggest steelmaker.

Harris plans to give another speech on the economy later this week in which she will flesh out details of a plan designed to spread the robust economic recovery more equally and to help working Americans get on the housing ladder.

But Harris has rarely conducted the kind of roundtable event that Trump attended on Monday with farmers. Even if the group appeared to be made up of strong Trump supporters, the optics of the meeting sent a message as the former president, for once, spent more time listening than speaking.

Later, the former president pulled off another photo-op that demonstrated the advantage he holds over Harris, who must run for president as an incumbent member of an administration given poor marks by voters over high prices. Fresh from his warnings of a looming wipe-out of American farms, Trump stopped at a grocery store in Kittanning, Pennsylvania, and handed a woman cash to help her pay for her groceries. “Here, it just went down a hundred bucks,” Trump said. “We’ll do that for you from the White House.”

On Monday, the former president warned that if Congress tried to block him from imposing new tariffs on China, he’d just ignore lawmakers. “I don’t need them. I don’t need Congress, but they’ll approve it. I have the right to impose them myself if they don’t,” the former president said.

And Trump also said he’d impose a 200% tariff on tractor maker John Deere if it moved production to factories in Mexico. “I’m just notifying John Deere right now: If you do that, we’re putting a 200% tariff on everything that you want to sell into the United States,” Trump said. “It’s hurting our farmers. It’s hurting our manufacturing.” John Deere announced in July that it

One reason why Trump’s rhetoric has been effective — at least in cementing the loyal base of the Republican Party — is that it channels the feelings of many voters and legitimizes them.

This is where Trump’s authoritarian instincts and economic impulses come together.

The former president

played into anger over the way globalization and industrialization has cut a swathe through small farms in recent decades. And he lashed out at China, both over its efforts to buy US farmland and over what he said was its failure to buy \$50 billion in US agricultural produce under a trade deal that he worked out with President Xi Jinping before the pandemic. Many experts raised doubts that China would live up to the terms when Trump made it — although the then-president hailed the agreement as one of the greatest deals in history.

Trump blamed Biden for failing to hold Beijing’s feet to the fire. And he promised that one

Israeli army’s recruitment of African refugees

MAHAL is one of several recruitment agencies that aim to entice mercenaries from all around the world to fight in Israel’s dirty wars in Gaza and on other fronts. When one visits its website, a pop-up reminder, reading “Apply online,” keeps appearing. It is as if the repeated beep is a reminder of the state of emergency, if not outright panic, in the Israeli military.

As soon as the Israeli war on Gaza was launched last October, rumors began circulating of a low turnout among Israeli reservists. This was coupled with an unprecedented political crisis in Israel, with the military’s insistence that ultra-Orthodox Jews should serve. This topic was, until recently, largely taboo among Israeli politicians.

Even when the draft orders went out for 1,000 Haredim in July, only a small fraction of the summoned men answered the call, according to Israeli media.

The crisis is yet to be resolved and most likely will not be, even as the Israeli government of Benjamin Netanyahu continues to expand the war fronts. To understand the degree of Israel’s military crisis, compare the statements of Israeli officials at the start of the war, when they promised total victory, to the latest statements.

In July, for example, Defense Minister Yoav Gallant said “the army needs 10,000 more soldiers immediately.” This number is particularly interesting when we consider the Israeli army’s revelation in August that at least 10,000 of its soldiers had been killed or injured since the start of the war.

The actual number of injured is likely to be much higher, based on media leaks and information provided by Israeli hospitals. Additionally, thousands of Israeli soldiers have been declared “disabled” due to psychological trauma suffered during the war, according to Israel’s Defense Ministry.

Thus the state of urgency in an army that, according to Brig. Gen. Yitzhak Brik, has become “small and weak, with no surplus of forces.”

So, where does Israel go from here? Instead of ending its war-turned-genocide in Gaza, Israel has decided to turn to the people who have been told they are the most unwanted element of Israeli society: African asylum seekers.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported last week that Israeli recruiters have been quietly working to enlist as many African refugees as possible. To entice them, recruiters are promising them permanent residency. However, according to Haaretz, not a single African soldier has yet

received the coveted documents.

“Defense officials ... say the project is conducted in an organized manner, with the guidance of defense establishment legal advisers,” the report said. It also confirmed that “the ethical considerations of recruiting asylum seekers have not been addressed.”

By “ethical considerations,” both Haaretz and the cited defense officials are not referring to the killing of unarmed Palestinian civilians in Gaza by poor, desperate refugees from Africa, but to the rights of the asylum seekers themselves.

Israel is known to mistreat not only African asylum seekers, but also its own Black population.

This racism has manifested itself in the clearest ways against African asylum seekers, who number about 30,000.

Thousands of Africans have already been deport-

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ed from the country, not to be repatriated to their original homes but to other African countries, where human rights violations are widespread.

In 2018, Amnesty International reported that the Israeli government was forcefully returning the refugees “to persecution or indefinite detention.” The group chastised Israel’s “ill-thought-out policies” and “reckless abandonment of responsibility.”

Expectedly, Israel’s mistreatment of its asylum seekers and refugees has received a muted response from Western governments and rights groups that often react strongly to reports of mass abuse or unlawful deportations of refugees anywhere else in the

world. And, as is often the case, the failure to hold Israel accountable to international laws emboldens it to continue with its “ill-thought-out policies.”

Imagine the cruelty of using desperate refugees, who have no political or historical affiliations with the war in Palestine, to kill other refugees in displacement camps across Gaza.

In doing so, Israel has crossed every moral, ethical and legal boundary that governs state and army behavior during times of war. This, however, cannot mean that the international community is incapable of deterring these Israeli practices through concrete actions and direct sanctions.

Many countries throughout Africa have already raised their voices in solidarity with Gaza and the Palestinian people. The bond between Africa and Palestine should now be strengthened by Israel’s utter dis-

..... regard not only for the lives of the Palestinians, but for those of Africans as well. The African Union should take the lead on this issue by dissuading Africans from joining the Israeli military under any circumstances and pursuing the matter of Israel’s recruitment of African asylum seekers at the world’s highest legal institutions. While the moral stance taken by many African countries regarding the Israeli genocide in Gaza deserves the utmost respect, it is also incumbent on African governments to take an equally strong stance so that Israel ceases its practice of using Africans to kill and be killed in Gaza. — Arab News

Is the West Bank the next target?

Yossi Mekeberg

INEVITABLY, much international attention regarding the multifront war that Israel is currently embroiled in has been directed toward the Gaza Strip and, increasingly, to the country’s intensifying war with Hezbollah in Lebanon. Much less attention has been paid to the West Bank, despite only a year ago there being fears that it would become the major theater of conflict between the Israelis and Palestinians, rather than Gaza.

These fears were a crucial component in Israel’s disastrous decision to divert substantial military resources from the border with Gaza to the West Bank, only to be completely caught by surprise on Oct. 7. However, it is still the case that the danger of a full-scale intifada in the West Bank is real and quickly escalating.

Over the last two decades, despite some common characteristics, fundamental differences have emerged in the nature of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in Gaza and the West Bank, which in both cases have led to bloodshed. Gaza was left, after

Israel’s unilateral disengagement of 2005, with no Jewish settlers and hence no friction between Arab and Jewish civilians. However, it was under an intense and almost complete blockade that greatly limited the movement of goods and people, including for the most basic human needs, and left its people poor and despairing.

In the West Bank, neither the economic situation nor restrictions on movement have been as dire as in Gaza, but still Palestinian people live there under a harsh, oppressive Israeli occupation. And, unlike Gaza, they are also experiencing the constant expansion of settlements, increasing confiscation of their land and the growing phenomenon of settler terrorism, perpetrated with impunity and, on more than one occasion, with the Israeli army’s active or tacit support.

Despair among the population is widespread due to the lack of any political horizon for peace, the absence of security and growing economic hardship. To this can be added the dysfunctionality of the

Palestinian Authority, which at this point is perceived to be serving Israel’s security interests and as an instrument of prolonging the occupation, rather than being capable of facilitating the welfare of its own people or realizing Palestinians’ aspirations to self-determination. That is in addition to the dwindling legitimacy of its executive and legislature, which last faced the public at the ballot box in 2006.

Consequently, conflict and friction between Israelis and Palestinians have recently been fast brewing in the West Bank, mainly manifesting in the emergence of new militant groups that Israel’s security forces are attempting to eliminate, while making the life of the population much harder. Civilians are being caught in the cross-fire, both literally and figuratively.

According to figures released last week by the PA’s Ministry of Health, since Oct. 7, at least 716 Palestinians, including 160 children, have been killed by the Israeli army or attacks by settlers, with 5,750 wounded. Equally staggering is the arrest and detention of nearly 10,000

Palestinians, with or without subsequent trials. In many cases, defendants are not presented with the allegations against them or allowed access to legal aid. Instead, they are detained using what Israel terms

jointed and scattered, (and) they lack a clear political agenda,” which from an Israeli perspective makes them more dangerous, as they are more unpredictable. These groups have

Despair among the population is widespread due to the lack of any political horizon for peace, the absence of security and growing economic hardship. To this can be added the dysfunctionality of the Palestinian Authority, which at this point is perceived to be serving Israel’s security interests and as an instrument of prolonging the occupation, rather than being capable of facilitating the welfare of its own people or realizing Palestinians’ aspirations to self-determination. That is in addition to the dwindling legitimacy of its executive and legislature, which last faced the public at the ballot box in 2006.

“administrative arrest,” which meets no international legal standards.

Despair and frustration in the West Bank has been brewing mainly in the north of the territory. Over the last couple of years, this has led to the formation of militant groups with no clear affiliation to the more traditional factions of Fatah and Hamas and who mainly consist of young people. They have been described as “small, dis-

killed scores of Israelis and provoked a very strong military reaction, as was the case in a recent Israeli army operation in places such as Tulkarm and Jenin. No one questions the duty of Israel’s security forces to protect its citizens; nevertheless, the excessive force that is being used, which leads to many civilian deaths and destroys infrastructure, cannot and should not be excused. As the occupying force, it has

militarily and expanding the settlement project, in the hope of breaking the spirit of the Palestinian people and their resistance to the occupation. There is also a general perception that, the longer the war in Gaza continues, the more the loss of discipline among soldiers will become apparent, as brutality toward Palestinians becomes legitimized.

Last week, horrific footage emerged that

showed Israeli soldiers throwing the bodies of three Palestinians from a rooftop during a raid in the northern town of Qabatiya, near Jenin. The video then appeared to show a military bulldozer picking up and removing the bodies. The Israeli army condemned its soldiers’ actions and announced an investigation, but it is extremely worrying to see Israel’s military losing not only its discipline, but also its humanity and empathy for its fellow human beings.

A further development that should deeply concern the international community is that Israeli security forces are ignoring the Oslo Accords by operating freely in Area A, which was assigned to the complete control of the PA. This is happening despite Israel’s international obligations and the fact that the Palestinian security forces are cooperating in averting militancy against Israelis, in spite of huge pressure from their own people to end such cooperation.

Belligerent statements by Israeli officials are also making things worse. In an outrageous and reckless comment during last month’s operations in Jenin

and Tulkarm, Foreign Minister Israel Katz tweeted that this was a “war in every sense,” to be handled “exactly as we deal with the terror infrastructure in Gaza, including the temporary evacuation of Palestinian civilians.”

Katz reacted angrily when the EU’s foreign policy chief Josep Borrell accused him of seeking to “displace people from the West Bank.” Moreover, if Katz’s model is Gaza, where people have already been displaced several times over the last year, the fear of a similar fate should terrify the Palestinians of the West Bank. In their case, they may even find settlers trying to steal their land and property while they are temporarily displaced.

Considering that there are elements in Israel’s ruling coalition who hold sway over the prime minister and that this is precisely their intention, no one should take lightly a comment such as that of Katz, which only inflames an already explosive situation and makes one wonder whether this is exactly what Benjamin Netanyahu’s government intends to do.



PSX continues with bearish trend, loses 366 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bearish trend on Tuesday, losing 366.86 more points, a negative change of 0.45 percent, closing at 81,483.64 points against 81,850.50 points on the last working day.

A total of 369,620,812 shares were traded during the day as compared to 400,309,071 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 17.062 billion against Rs.18.690 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 427 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 127 of them recorded gains and

246 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 54 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 39,357,051 shares at Rs1.25 per share, Pace (Pak) Limited with 22,589,739 shares at Rs 5.23 per share and Hub Power Company XD with 21,241,308 shares at Rs 129.09 per share.

Ismail Industries Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 146.54 per share price, closing at Rs 1,896.67, whereas the runner-up was Rafhan Maize Products Company Limited with Rs 57.50 rise in its per share price to Rs

7,300.00.

Nestle Pakistan Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 52.05 per share closing at Rs 6,906.02 followed by Services Industries Limited with Rs 36.23 decline to close at Rs 1,112.80.

Rupee gains 06 paise against dollar: Pakistani rupee on Tuesday appreciated by 06 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs 277.80 against the previous day's closing of Rs 277.86.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 279 and Rs 280.7

respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 91 paise to close at Rs 309.31 against the last day's closing of Rs 308.40, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen came down by 01 paise and closed at Rs1.92, whereas an increase of Rs 2.49 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 371.01 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs 368.52.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham decreased by 02 paise and closed at Rs 75.63 and the Saudi Riyal remained stagnant at Rs 74.04.



LAHORE: Vendors displaying and selling flower bouquet and flowers garlands to attract customers outside his shop in flower market.

WEF urges Pakistan to seek help from world bodies

FAISALABAD (APP): Pakistan should seek financial and technical assistance from world organizations including the UN, IMF and WEF to switch over from fossil fuel to clean renewable energy in order to contribute its productive role in minimizing ill impacts of Green House Gaseous (GHG) emission, said Hassan Abulenein, Associate Director World Economic Forum (WEF).

Addressing an online meeting with the R & D department of the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI), he said that WEF has already chalked out a comprehensive strategy to phase out hazardous fuel which has posed serious threat to the earth and environment.

He mentioned climate change and increase in global warming which have become a key threat to life and may cause the extinction of a large number of endangered species of animals and plants.

He appreciated the research work conducted by the R & D department of the Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) on environment preservation and said that we could collaborate to carve out a workable strategy to promote renewable energy in Pakistan.

Engineer Ahmad Hassan Convener FCCI Standing Committee on R&D and former Vice President FCCI said that WEF, UN, IMF and other global organizations have already given a plan to cut use of fossil fuel by 50% by the year 2030.

He said that Pakistan is trapped by the IPPs which are producing costly electricity by using fossil fuel. "We should exploit the global agreements including UN sustainable development goals and Paris agreement to get rid of the harsh conditionalities of the IPPs which have become an unbearable burden on the national kitty", he said and added that Pakistan has potential to produce 2.9 million MW electricity through solar but we are dwindling at only 1000MW.

He mentioned a white paper published by the R&D department of the FCCI which has given a comprehensive solution to get rid of fossil fuel by promoting clean and renewable energy resources in the country.

He said that during the last one century global warming has recorded an alarming increase of 1.2 centigrade which is perpetrating unpredictable rains, floods, storms and earthquakes badly affecting the cropping patron in addition to inflicting colossal loss to the infrastructure.

He urged upon the WEF and other global organizations to divert maximum funding towards the production of clean energy so that the carbon emission could be reduced to the minimum level.

He said that Pakistan was bearing a huge loss of \$3.8bn while the floods of 2022 also caused staggering losses to the tune of \$15bn.

He said that the business community must pressurize the government to renegotiate with the IPPs so that the UN objective of reducing fossil fuel to 50% by 2030 could be achieved without any hassle.

BF gains support for SCCI's elections

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Medical Equipment Association and Hajj Organisation Association of Pakistan Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Zone announced complete support for Businessman Forum - Ilyas Ahmad Bilour led group and vowed to make successful candidates of the BF with majority on 25 Sept through vote.

According to details, a delegation of Medical Equipment Association led by vice chairman and Chairman of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Standing Committee on Medical Equipment

Naemur Rehman held an important meeting with SCCI president Fuad Ishaq, senior vice president Sanaullah Khan, and vice president Ejaz Khan Afridi at the chamber house.

The SCCI election for 2024-26 will be conducted today (Wednesday) in the premises of the chamber house. A total of 46 candidates were vying for 10 each corporate and associate seats. 500 corporate and 3,000 associates will elect 23 executive members for the next two years.

Meeting was attended by Businessman Forum Corporate and Associate Candidates. The Association

members expressed full confidence over leadership of former senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour and reaffirmed commitment to support and vote in the upcoming SCCI election 2024-26.

In a separate meeting, office bearers of Hajj Organisation of Pakistan KP Zone said they would always remain part of the Businessman Forum and will continue to support former senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour led BF group in the election.

The Hajj Association also vowed to make successful candidates of the BF with heavy mandate on 25 Sept through vote.

Sarhad CCI goes to elect EC members for 2024-25

PESHAWAR (APP): Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industries (SCCI), Peshawar is going to elect Executive Committee members for the year 2024-25 today (Wednesday) September 25, 2024.

Polling will be held for 20 seats of the executive committee with 10 seats each for the Corporate and Associate Groups. A total of 46 candidates with 26 in run for the Corporate Group and 20 are contest-

ing for Associate Group seats of the executive committee respectively.

The nominee of the BF for the seat reserved for Town Associations has returned opposed while the fate of the two seats for women (one each for Corporate Group and Associate Group) will go to the group which wins majority of executive committees of both categories.

Sarhad Chamber has 8000 registered voters out

of which 5000 are Corporate Group members and 3000 are Associate Group members.

Three major groups of the business community including Businessman Forum (BF) of the former Senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour, Sarhad Business Alliance of the former Governor KP Haji Ghulam Ali and the Pakistan Business Community of Sharafat Ali Mubarak have fielded their candidates.

Peshawar set to become a hub of industry and trade: Ghulam Ali

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The business community in Peshawar is eager for positive change, development, and merit in the Sarhad Chamber, as these are the core values promised by the Sarhad Business Alliance (SBA). The successful outreach campaign and large-scale gatherings indicate that today's election is poised to be a historic victory for the

SBA.

In a statement expressing his gratitude to the business community, former Governor and Patron-in-Chief of the SBA, Haji Ghulam Ali, confidently stated that just as the Peshawar Small Chamber witnessed a clean sweep by SBA candidates, the Sarhad Chamber election will also yield a similar outcome in favor of the SBA. He remarked that if this comes

to pass, Peshawar will be ready to establish itself as a major center for industry and trade. He further emphasized that the SBA is dedicated to solving the longstanding issues faced by traders, industrialists, and businesspeople, with a commitment to elevate the chamber to a leading institution.

The former governor highlighted that their competition is not merely against other groups, but against a mindset and behaviors that have led Peshawar's business community into a quagmire of difficulties. Despite substantial contributions to taxes, various sectors remain entangled in problems due to the inactivity of the chamber, distancing themselves from government institutions and solutions.

The resounding support for the SBA, according to Haji Ghulam Ali, demonstrates the community's desire for meaningful

change and progress. He confidently quoted, "I began the journey alone, but people kept joining, and the caravan continued to grow," reflecting the growing momentum behind the SBA.

Haji Ghulam Ali reaffirmed the SBA's pledge to uphold merit and quality, ensuring that the candidates represent the best possible leadership for the chamber, free from any controversy or allegations. He called on the business community to vote wholeheartedly, noting that their effort today will secure a prosperous future for themselves and the region.

In conclusion, the former governor thanked the SBA team and the entire business community for their overwhelming support and successful campaign. He also conducted a campaign visit at the Hidayat Market on Charsadda Road, where the members assured their complete backing.

Standard Chartered launches Goal Accelerator Programme

— to enhance women's economic inclusion, employability

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Standard Chartered Bank launched the Goal Accelerator Programme in collaboration with Right To Play International Pakistan at the SC Pakistan Head Office.

The Goal Accelerator Programme is an evolution of the deeply impactful Goal Programme that was first launched in Karachi in 2016. It is a sport-powered, gender-responsive economic resilience initiative with the aim to create concrete pathways and steps for disadvantaged girls and young women to obtain decent employment, earn an income and become economically resilient.

In Pakistan, Goal Accelerator will support 450 young women between the ages of 17-35 years old who will be recruited from urban slums in Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad. For entrepreneurship participants, the minimum level of education required is 8th Grade. For employability participants, the education threshold will be higher, at 12th Grade.

Mr. Rehan Shaikh, Chief Executive Officer, Standard Chartered Pakistan commented, "Today marks



a significant milestone, not just for the Bank, but for the countless women who will benefit from the Goal Accelerator Programme. Since 2016, we have partnered with 140 schools across Pakistan, equipping young girls and women with the skills needed to become economically independent. Currently, there are over 90,000 Goal beneficiaries who have benefited from this programme and can now work towards shaping their own futures. We know that investing in girls' futures

and closing the gender inequality gap will increase women's labour force participation rates, which is a matter of critical importance for Pakistan's economic growth. At 24.5%, Pakistan's workforce participation rate for women is one of the lowest both in South Asia and globally. Programmes such as Goal Accelerator will aid in bridging this gap, impacting not just the intended beneficiary but entire communities."

Ali Khayam, Country Director Right To Play Pak-

istan addressed the audience, stating, "This partnership between Right To Play and Standard Chartered has benefited thousands of young girls over the last 08 years. Goal program has empowered these girls teaching them core life skills and financial literacy, giving them agency over their life decisions."

The event concluded with a call to action, reiterating the commitment to champion the rights of youth particularly young women and girls so they can reach their full potential.

Pakistani documentary 'Songs of the Sufi' wins best documentary award

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistani music documentary film "Songs of the Sufi" has won the Best Documentary - Audience Choice Award at the 15th Chicago South Asian Film Festival held in Chicago from Sept 19-22, 2024. The feature film produced by Kamran Anwar and directed by Shahrukh Waheed tells the story of classical qawwali through Qawwals of the Qawwal Bachay Gharana, aficionados, devotees, and music scholars. The film uses Sufi-inspired art by leading Pakistani artists and Mughal miniature paintings, qawwalis, interviews, and verité-style storytelling to create a cinematic musi-

cal visual experience.

"Songs of the Sufi is a wonderful craft that explores the history, culture, and universal message of Love. I'm very thrilled that the film won at our festival and stood out for masterful direction, and the emotional depth. Sharukh Waheed and Kamran Anwar have brought this masterpiece in a very tasteful and divine way to the big screen!" said Jigar Shah, Festival Director Chicago South Asian Film Festival.

The film had its Pakistani premiere at the Gandhara Independent Film Festival hosted by the National Academy of Performing Arts in Karachi, back in October 2023. The film was screened to a full

house and received a Special Jury Award at the festival. The film went on to play at the DCSAFF in Washington DC, where it won best music documentary and received acclaim from critics and audiences alike. It was then screened at JIFF, Jaipur winning the Yellow Rose Award, and was runner-up for best documentary at the South Asian Film Festival of Montreal. It has been officially selected at 16 festivals, literary conferences, and academic institutions worldwide including Red Sea Film Festival Doc Days in Jeddah, NIFF Kathmandu, UPENN, USA, Max Planck Institute, Berlin, Kings College, London, and literary festivals in Sri Lanka,

Lahore and Karachi.

The director of the film Shahrukh Waheed said, "It feels great that our film is getting appreciated by audiences at home and abroad. This is our ode to the art of Qawwali and the Qawwal families keeping this sacred art form alive and we want to share it with the world." The film's producer Kamran Anwar added "we are heartened at the responses and pleased that the film is resonating with juries and audiences far and wide. We thank the judges and the audiences who have recognized this film and hope that the core message of unity, tolerance, and inclusion that is embodied in the message of the great Sufis will continue to light the way".

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COURT

NOTICES

BUNER

In the Court of district Judge /Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar. Suit No. 6/CR. Institution 13/1/2024. Date of hearing, 14/10/2024. Khaista Rehman VS Ghani Rehman etc. Notice to No.2.Salih Mohamad s/o Abdul Jabbar resident of Peeraibai at present abroad. 5.Mian Said Shah Jihan s/o Said Qamash resident of Rega at present abroad. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.00 am dated 16/10/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

In the Court of Additional district Judge I /Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar. Appeal No. 128/13 Institution 8/11/2023. Date of hearing, 14/10/2024. Abu Ali Shah VS Rehmat Zada. Notice to 1.Rekhmat Zada s/o Dilbar resident of Nawagai thehsel Mandran district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.00 am dated 14/10/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

In the Court of Additional district Judge I /Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar. Appeal No. 61/13 Institution 28/5/2022. Date of hearing, 16/10/2024. Ajmal Khan etc VS Dilam Khan etc. Notice to No.5/1.Akhtar Zada.5/2.Umerzada.5/3.Mst

Rahat ds/o Sherzada (late) resident of Elai, 12/1. Mst Hameda widow, 12/2.Tariq s/o Jamshed Khan resident of Torwarsak.25/1. Afsar Jihan s/o Dost Mohamad Khan.24.Mst Zenat d/o Saeedur Rehman. 28.Shad Mohamad Khan s/o Taj Mohamad Khan. 29/1.Ghulam Rashed s/o Mst Faroshi, 31/1.Qaym Jihan, 31/2. Naem. 31/3. Saleem. 31/4.Iftikhar sons, 31/5.Mst Nuzhat d/o of Masher.32 Gul Bashir s/o Munawar.33.Meraji Khan s/o Ajab Khan.34.Sher Bahadur Khan a/o Habib Khan. 35.Abdul Jalil s/o Abdul Malik. 36.Raza Khan s/o Yusuf Khan resident of Torwarsak thehsel Daggar district Buner.Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.00 am dated 16/10/2024 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

In the Court of Irum Bashir, Civil Judge -V, Swabi Khalil-ur-Rehman VS Sher Rehman Suit Number: 143/1Institution Date: 12-10-2023Hearing Date: 28-10-2024Subject: Proclamation Notice to: (2) Sartaj Bahadur son Sardar Bahadur, (3) Taj Nabi Khan son Sher Baz (4) Noor Rehman (5) Hakeem-ur-Rehman Sons Saif ur Rehman (6) Mst. Ulfat daughter Saif ur Rehman (7) Noor Rehman (8) Ali Rehman sons Saif ur Rehman (9) Mst. Irshad Begum (11) Riaz Begum daughter Amresha, R/o Tandkoi, Teh, & Distt, SwabiThe service through ordinary means is difficult, so you are informed to attend the Court on 28-10-2024 personally, through counsel or attorney to avoid ex-parte proceeding.

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difficult, so you are informed to attend the Court on 05-10-2024 personally, through counsel or attorney to avoid ex-parte proceeding.

In the Court of Qurat-ul-Ain Rashid, Senior Civil Judge/ Judge Family Court Swabi Nazima VS Said Nabi Khan Suit Number :389/FC Institution Date :04-12-2023Hearing Date : 25-10-2024Subject: Dissolution of Marriage Notice to : Said Nabi Khan son Wazir Rehman R/o Punjman, Teh, & Distt, Swabi, presently Fajerah, Dubai, Gee Co Mechanical Company The service through ordinary means is difficult, so you are informed to attend the Court on 25-10-2024 personally, through counsel or attorney to avoid ex-parte proceeding.

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In brief

Female panel to officiate Women's T20 WC

DUBAI (Agencies): The highly anticipated ICC Women's T20 World Cup 2024 is all set to begin from October 3 in the United Arab Emirates hosted by Bangladesh. The International Cricket Council has released the list of ten umpires and three match referees, who will be officiating the ninth edition of the coveted tournament. The experienced panel for the ICC Women's T20 World Cup boasts a wealth of unique experiences. Claire Polosak, a veteran of the panel, will be making her fifth appearance. Kim Cotton and Jacqueline Williams, both with three tournaments under their belts, notably officiated the final between South Africa and champions Australia at Cape Town last February. TV umpire Sue Redfern, who umpired the match's final, is also back for her fourth tournament. The Zimbabwean debutant Sarah Dambanevana will complete the panel. The match referee is GS Lakshmi, who officiated her first T20I in 2012 and, along with Shandre Fritz and Michell Pereira, will also be a part of the panel. In an official statement, ICC's senior manager Sean Easey expressed the great delight he feels to contribute towards the advancement of women in the sport of cricket. He also instilled support and faith in the all-female line-up for the Women's T20 World Cup. The Emirates ICC Elite Panel of Umpires: Lauren Agenbag, Kim Cotton, Sarah Dambanevana, Anna Harris, Nimali Perera, Claire Polosak, Vrinda Rath, Sue Redfern, Eloise Sheridan, Jacqueline Williams.

Sabalenka chases year-end no 1 ranking

BEIJING (Agencies): Aryna Sabalenka said Tuesday that she wants to cap off a stellar year by returning to the top of the world rankings. The world number two is the top seed at the China Open this week following the withdrawal of top-ranked Iga Swiatek, the defending champion, because of undisclosed "personal matters". Fresh from winning the US Open, Sabalenka can take a large step towards overhauling the Pole at the top of the rankings with victory in Beijing. "Of course that's one of my goals, to finish the season at world number one," the Belarusian, who won the Australian Open at the start of the year for a second time, said. But the 26-year-old added: "I'm not trying to focus on that, I'm trying to focus on my game. There is only three tournaments left. I'm just trying to bring my best tennis on court. After the season, I'll see if it was enough to finish the year at number one or have to improve something else to get to number one." The three-time major champion first became world number one a year ago, before being usurped by Swiatek. "To be called the best player in the world, that means everything. It's good to know that you've been doing the right thing, all of that hours of training, wasn't a waste of time," she said. Sabalenka will be playing for the first time since beating Jessica Pegula in the final in New York earlier this month. She has a bye in the first round. Pegula also features at the prestigious 1000 WTA hardcourt event in the Chinese capital, along with fellow American Coco Gauff, four-time major champion Naomi Osaka and China's Olympic champion Zheng Qinwen.

Saim and Hasnain script Panthers' successful run-chase in Qualifier

FAISALABAD (Monitoring Desk): Saim Ayub and Mohammad Hasnain shared eight wickets among them while Usman Khan struck an unbeaten 26-ball 54 as the Lake City Panthers cruised to a seven-wicket triumph in the Qualifier of the Bahria Town Champions One-Day Cup here at the Iqbal Stadium, Faisalabad on Tuesday.

Panthers qualified for the final of the tournament as they chased the meagre 138-run target in 23.4 overs. The Markhors will now take on the winner of the first Eliminator on 27 September in their second bid to make a place in a final.

Earlier, Saim Ayub ran through the Markhors bat-

ting lineup with figures of 5-24, his maiden five-wicket haul across formats in competitive career, in just six overs. Mohammad Hasnain returned figures of 3-25 in his nine overs as his tally of wickets increased to 14 in the tournament.

After Markhors won the toss and opted to bat first, Ali Raza struck to remove Haseebullah, who made his maiden appearance in the tournament, in just the second over of the innings.

Hasnain broke the back of the Markhors batting lineup in the next over as he struck on back to back balls pinning Kamran Ghulam leg-before while Mohammad Rizwan was caught behind. He dis-

missed Fakhar Zaman in the seventh over reducing the Markhors to 25-4.

A 77-run partnership between Salman Ali Agha and Iftikhar Ahmed brought some semblance of stability back to the Markhors innings before Iftikhar was run out for 39 in 61 balls with the help of three four and one six. Salman hit four fours and a solitary six in his 52 off 81 balls. Markhors lost their last five wickets for 27 runs managing 137 all out in 36 overs.

In turn, Saim (33, 36b, 6x4s) gave his team a solid start as he put on a 50-run second-wicket partnership with Umar Siddiq (35, 52b, 5x4s, 1x6) after Azan Awaish returned for 13.



Usman, batting at No. 4, came out all guns blazing as he hit five fours and four massive sixes to help his team chase the total in 23.4 overs. He also became the leading run-scorer of the tournament with 259 runs to his name.

Akif Javed, Salman Ali Agha and Zahid Mehmood picked up one wicket each. Scores in brief

Qualifier – Lake City Panthers beat UMT Markhors by seven wickets UMT Markhors 137 all out, 36 overs (Salman Ali

Agha 52, Iftikhar Ahmed 39; Saim Ayub 5-24, Mohammad Hasnain 3-25, Ali Raza 1-29)

Lake City Panthers 143-3, 23.4 overs (Usman Khan 54 not out, Umar Siddiq 35, Saim Ayub 33; Akif Javed 1-20, Salman Ali Agha 1-24)

Player of the match: Saim Ayub (Lake City Panthers)

Next fixture (Eliminator 1 - 25 September): Allied Bank Stallions vs Nurpur Lions, Iqbal Stadium, Faisalabad at 3pm (local time).

Haris beats Blackwell in second round of British Open

CHELTENHAM (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan snooker player Haris Tahir continued to prove his mettle as he outclassed England's Simon Blackwell in the second round of the British Open 2024 here on Tuesday.

Tahir, who has been in brilliant form, started the second-round fixture on a high by winning the opening frames with scores of 71-32 and 63-16. Blackwell pulled one back by winning the third frame, which saw him scoring a 56-point break, and reduced Tahir's lead to 2-1.

But, Haris Tahir, fuelled with momentum, denied Simon Blackwell any chance of a comeback and won the next two frames comprehensively to secure a statement victory and advance into the Last 32 of the British Open 2024.

Tahir qualified for the final stages of the tournament by edging past



Scotland's Dean Young in the qualifying round last month.

In a thrilling snooker match, Tahir and Young battled it out in a series of closely contested frames. Tahir took the lead by winning the first frame with a score of 58-43, setting the stage for an intense showdown.

Young retaliated in the second

frame, narrowly defeating Tahir with a score of 68-65. Undeterred, Tahir staged a comeback in the third frame, securing a convincing 78-31 win before continuing his impressive form to clinch the fourth frame with a score of 74-13.

However, the momentum shifted as the Scottish cueist fought back vigorously, displaying dominance in the fifth frame with a score of 73-48. He followed this up with a nail-biting victory in the sixth frame, edging out Tahir 69-62 in a closely fought contest.

In the final and decisive seventh frame, Haris Tahir secured his triumph with a score of 63-36. His overall performance throughout the match was commendable, and this last frame solidified his well-deserved victory in the qualifying round of the British Open.

Ben Stokes open to England white-ball return

LONDON (AFP): Test captain Ben Stokes indicated Tuesday he would be ready to make an England limited-overs comeback.

Stokes ended his one-day international retirement to play in England's woeful defence of their 50-over World Cup title in India last year. But following knee surgery, he opted out of England's lacklustre bid to retain the T20 World Cup in the Caribbean and the United States earlier this year.

Despite further injury trouble this season, Stokes said he was open to resuming a limited-overs career that has seen him play match-winning innings in the finals of the 2019 50-over and 2022 T20 World Cups.

"This white-ball team has gone in a new direc-

tion," Stokes told Sky Sports in an interview during the third one-day international between England and Australia at his Durham home ground on Tuesday.

"We've seen some unbelievable talent come through, just to point out one: Jacob Bethell, who I think is going to be a superstar. I've played a lot of white-ball cricket for England, I'm very happy and content with what I've achieved in that form of the game."

Stokes, who has played in 114 ODIs and 43 T20s, has worked well alongside Test coach Brendon McCullum, with the former New Zealand captain set to take charge of England's limited-overs teams in the new year.

"If I am part of the white-ball teams' plans

going forward in any way, shape or form then great," said Stokes. "If I get the call, saying 'do you want to come and play?' It's definitely going to be a 'yes.'"

Nevertheless, the 33-year-old added: "But I'm not going to be too disappointed if I don't because it means someone's come in and doing really well. I can just sit back and watch everyone else go out and smack it."

Stokes missed England's recent 2-1 Test series win over Sri Lanka, with Ollie Pope deputising as captain, after suffering a hamstring tear when playing for Northern Superchargers on August 11.

Stokes is due to undergo a scan on Wednesday to assess his recovery ahead of England travelling to Pakistan next week

for a three-match Test tour that starts in Multan on October 7.

While saying he feels "really, really good", Stokes was more guarded when asked whether he would be able to bowl and be a fully-fledged all-rounder for the first Test.

"I think that's you getting ahead of yourself," he replied.

"Obviously I've been six-and-a-half weeks now of just walking and doing stuff in the gym. But rehab has gone really well."

"There's a lot more than just my hamstring that I need to get back firing and working up again in terms of bowling, because you use everything. I need to get that all right to make sure that I don't do any damage to other parts of my body."

FAISALABAD (Monitoring Desk): The Pakistan cricket selectors announced a 15-player squad on Tuesday for the first Test against England, set to take place in Multan from 7-11 October.

Following the squad announcement and based on the recommendation of head coach Jason Gillespie, the selected players have been withdrawn from the Champions One-Day Cup playoffs to allow them some rest ahead of the series. The squad will assemble in Multan on Monday, 30 September, with the training camp commencing on 1 October.

Squad (for 1st Test):

Shan Masood (captain), Saud Shakeel (vice-captain), Aamir Jamal,

Abdullah Shafique, Abrar Ahmed, Babar Azam, Mir Hamza, Mohammad Huraiza, Mohammad Rizwan (wicket-keeper), Naseem Shah, Noman Ali, Saim Ayub, Salman Ali Agha, Sarfaraz Ahmed (wicket-keeper), and Shaheen Shah Afridi.

Left-arm spinner Noman Ali, who has taken 47 wickets in 15 Tests, has replaced fast bowler Khuram Shahzad, who is injured.

Kamran Ghulam and Mohammad Ali, who were part of the squad for the Bangladesh Tests, remain firmly in the selectors' plans. However, due to the selection policy's emphasis on consistency and continuity, and the belief that 15 players are sufficient for a Test, they have been

advised and encouraged to continue representing their teams in the Champions One-Day Cup and the President's Cup, starting on 3 October, to ensure they stay match-ready through competitive cricket.

Pakistan men's red-ball head coach, Jason Gillespie:

"With a busy domestic and international cricket schedule, it makes sense to give our players some much-needed rest ahead of the Test series against England."

"We are very much looking forward to the series against England here in Pakistan and cannot wait for it to begin. We are excited about playing in front of our wonderful supporters."

China's Zheng embraces big home expectations

BEIJING (AFP): Paris Olympics champion Zheng Qinwen said Tuesday she hopes to use the fervent support of the home crowd to propel her to a first China Open title.

The world number seven is back in Beijing fresh from making history as the first Chinese player to win an Olympic singles tennis gold.

The China Open, which begins on Wednesday, is a WTA 1000 event and among the most prestigious in the women's tennis calendar.

"People start to get tired at the end of the season. For me it's different," said the 21-year-old Zheng, finalist at the Australian Open.

"I'm really motivated to come and play in China, in front of my people. I know

they're going to support me."

With that comes pressure, but Zheng says she is physically fresh, has prepared well and has "big expectations" of herself.

After Beijing, the player dubbed "Queen Wen" will play the Wuhan Open. "I think I don't consider that like big pressure," she said of the support she will receive in the coming weeks.

"I will consider it like big support. Especially when I'm feeling down, I see all the people support me."

She added: "It is quite different to play in China compared to rest of the world. I know basically all of them, going to be 95 percent of the crowd, they are going to support me. It is a big confidence."

Is also a big energy there when I'm playing on court."

Zheng sees a difference now compared to before she was the Olympic champion.

"When I was at the airport, people wouldn't recognise me if they're not interested in tennis. My fame was only within the tennis circle," she told a packed press conference in the Chinese capital.

"But now when I go to a restaurant, people ask me for autographs."

"I feel the impact. I feel a sense of responsibility now here in China."

Chief among Zheng's title rivals at the China Open will be the top seed Aryna Sabalenka, who comfortably beat her in the Australian Open final at the start of the year.

Russia could be reinstated if Rusia follows rules: Samaranch

BUDAPEST (Agencies): The International Olympic Committee should start work on ending Russia's suspension from the organisation "the minute" Moscow obeys the rules again, IOC vice-president Juan Antonio Samaranch Junior said on Tuesday.

The 64-year-old Spaniard, whose father of the same name was IOC president from 1980-2001 and transformed it into a commercial powerhouse, is one of the seven candidates vying to succeed current IOC leader Thomas Bach.

The Russian Olympic Committee (NOC) is "today still in clear and flagrant breach of the Olympic Charter by taking over responsibilities of a fellow national Olympic committee in certain territories," Samaranch told AFP in Budapest on the sidelines of a conference.

The IOC had excluded the NOC after it had placed several sports organisations from occupied Ukrainian regions under its authority.

"The minute the reasons for suspension and non-recognition disappear, we have the obligation to start working very hard to bring them back," said



Samaranch. He stressed that Russia had not been suspended for invading Ukraine, but "because it had not respected the Olympic truce" by starting the war in 2022, just as the Beijing Olympics ended and before the Paralympic Games.

"We didn't take sides... The minute we take sides, you are excluding the other side, a part of the world," Samaranch said.

He promised to fight for the Olympic movement's "independence and universality" without which the IOC "would not serve" its purpose to "unite despite differences, despite controversies, despite fights,

despite war". Russia was banned from world sport following the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. A tiny squad of 15 neutral athletes represented Russia for the Paris Olympics this summer.

Commenting on the fast-paced AI development, Samaranch expressed the hope that it can help "reduce the gap" between rich and poorer countries and that IOC must "make the most of technological evolution". On the "complex" question on the participation of transgender athletes, he pleaded for a "level playing field".

"We can't afford to dis-

courage girls, future women champions," he said, noting a "conflict between two basic human rights" and that transgender athletes "deserve" to be recognised.

Bach, who has held the post since 2013, announced his intention to step down after the Paris Olympics.

The candidates vying to succeed Bach will present their programme next January to the IOC members in a meeting at Lausanne. The election to become the most powerful figure in sports governance will take place in March with the winner scheduled to take office in June.

Arteta stands by defensive tactics in fiery Man City clash

LONDON (AFP): Mikel Arteta stood by Arsenal's defensive tactics in their explosive Premier League clash with Manchester City, saying he would have been "thick" not to learn from previous clashes.

Leandro Trossard was shown a second yellow card for kicking the ball away when Arsenal were 2-1 up at the end of the first half at the Etihad on Sunday. After the break the Gunners sat back and soaked up pressure, ceding almost all the possession to the Premier League champions until John Stones netted a stoppage-time equaliser.

Arsenal, who had led for most of the contest after goals from Riccardo Calafiori and Gabriel Magalhães, were accused of employing the "dark arts" by City defenders Kyle Walker and Stones.

City forward Bernardo Silva accused them of "time-wasting".

But Arsenal boss Arteta stood by his team's approach on Tuesday, referencing their 5-0 defeat to Manchester City in



2021, when former captain Granit Xhaka was sent off.

Speaking ahead of Wednesday's third-round League Cup tie against third-tier Bolton, the Spaniard said his team "had to play the game that we had to play".

"Unfortunately we've been in the same situation," he said. "We were in that same situation with Granit and when we lost 5-0. So we'd better learn. If not I would be very thick."

Erling Haaland threw the ball at Arsenal defender Gabriel's head after City's equaliser as tempers frayed but Arteta played down the tensions.

"We have already moved on and we are now ready to battle again

tomorrow," he said.

He added: "The team, the desire that they have to compete in any context, to win, to adapt to different circumstances, different competitions, different ways of playing and handle that emotionally and physically, the way we've done it is superb."

Arteta joked that he would tell his players to leave the ball alone after Trossard's second yellow card. Declan Rice was also shown a second yellow for kicking the ball away in the draw against Brighton last month.

"Just leave the ball, don't touch the ball," he said. "We'll play without the ball." Arteta gave an update on injured captain Martin Odegaard, saying he would return from an ankle problem in "a matter of weeks".

The 25-year-old has missed the Gunners' past three games after sustaining the injury on international duty with Norway earlier this month. "I think it will be a matter of weeks, but how long exactly I cannot tell," he said.



In brief

RDA seals illegal buildings

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) in its operation against illegal buildings here on Tuesday conducted raids and sealed SLS School, two under construction residential buildings and three shops. According to a RDA spokesman, RDA Enforcement Squad on the directives of Director General (DG), RDA, Kinza Murtaza, conducted a targeted operation against illegal commercial buildings in Civil Lines Housing Scheme and on Dhamyal Kalyal Road, Rawalpindi. During the operation, the Squad sealed SLS School for illegal use of residential plot, two under construction residential buildings and three shops constructed illegally. The operation was carried out by the Enforcement Squad including the Building Inspectors and other officials concerned. The owners of the properties violated approved building plans and maps and despite prior notices issued by the RDA, they continued to flout regulations, breaching the Punjab Development of Cities Act 1976 and the RDA Building and Zoning Regulations 2021 by constructing illegal commercial buildings without obtaining the necessary approvals and No Objection Certificates. The DG had directed the Land Use & Building Control (LU&BC) Wing to take strict action against encroachments, unauthorized constructions, and illegal commercial activities in residential areas, he added.

PO arrested in murder case

RAWALPINDI (APP): In a significant breakthrough, Police have arrested Proclaimed offender (PO) involved in a double murder and attempted to murder case in the jurisdiction of Taxila Police Station. According to a police spokesman, the offender namely Qadir had killed Parvez and Zubair, along with his accomplices, over a domestic dispute while leaving Irshad, Riasat, Asif, Ali Shah and Zhaida injured. The incident occurred in May 2019, and since then, seven other suspects have already been apprehended. Following the murders, Qadir went into hiding but was tracked down through extensive efforts, including human intelligence. SP Pothohar Nasir Nawaz praised the Taxila police team for their successful operation, emphasizing that the police will continue their crackdown against proclaimed offenders and will be dealt according to law.

IRSA releases 205,400 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 205,400 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 143,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1535.99 feet and was 137.99 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 88,100 cusecs and 120,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1721.25 feet, which was 173.25 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded as 15,300 cusecs and 45,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 116,000, 113,600, 88,500 and 36,400 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 18,100 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 3,800 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.



ISLAMABAD: Labourers busy in road construction with the help of heavy machinery during development work near Faizabad. —APP Photo

Pakistan proactive player in global Climate Dialogue, Action: Romina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to the Prime Minister on Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Romina Khurshid Alam on Tuesday reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to implementing the National Climate Action Plan, aiming to mitigate climate disaster risks through collective efforts as a proactive player in the global climate dialogue and action.

She was addressing as chief guest at the Pre-COP 29 Stakeholders Conference on Climate Diplomacy and Cooperation to Enhance Ambition and Enable Action held here, a news release said.

She recognized the cru-

cial role of the media and civil society, particularly the Centre for Climate Diplomacy, in advocating for climate justice.

Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov talked about his country's preparation for successful and inclusive COP29. He emphasized about initiatives that have been launched by COP29 Presidency to focus global attention and accelerate climate action, including COP29 Truce Appeal.

Dr. Zafar Jaspal highlighted the significant threat climate change poses to human security and the critical role of science diplomacy. Senator Sitara Ayaz and Director General

of Environment, Farzana Altaf, identified challenges in policy implementation and offered guidelines for environmental protection.

Bilal Anwar, CEO of NDMRF, underscored the importance of advocating for climate justice and financing, while also highlighting the need for public-private partnerships to drive innovative climate adaptation solutions. Umair Mufakir NYCCC shared key elements of Pakistan's national climate action plan.

Amna Awan, President of the Centre for Climate Diplomacy, extended gratitude to the attendees for their valuable contributions.

58 Dengue cases reported

RAWALPINDI (APP): Dengue patients recorded in the recent year till date reach to 777 after 58 new cases reported during last 24 hours in Rawalpindi.

The latest data released by the District Health Authority on Tuesday shows a total of 141 patients are under treatment in allied hospitals across the district with availability of 300 beds facility.

After officially declared 4 fatalities in the district, the health authority has also beefed up the surveillance and monitoring of the affected areas. The recent data reveals that out of 43 new cases, 33 patients were reported from Pothohar peri-urban areas during last 24 hours.

The health officials are focussing on Chak Jalal Din which remains among the most affected parts of the city. On the other side, Rawalpindi Cantonment Board and Municipal Corporation have started spraying and fogging in different areas. The health department is consistently appealing to the citizens to follow dengue SOPs.

During the last 24 hours, the health department has raided many commercial outlets and found SOPs violations. A number of shops were sealed and many others were imposed with financial penalties.

Woman dies in road mishap

RAWALPINDI (INP): A woman died in road accident at Chur Chowk Peshawar Road Rawalpindi. Heir held protest demonstration against the incident by blocking road. According to details, a woman was critically injured after hit by vehicle and shifted to hospital where she expired during treatment.

Heirs of the deceased blocked Chur Chowk and started protest. They stated the accused responsible for accident were captured and handed over to Westridge Police but it set them free.

Due to protest, long queues of vehicles were seen on both sides of the road and commuters had to face severe hardships due to blockage of road.

Later, DSP Cantt Mirza Javed held dialogues with protestors, announced to transfer SHO Westridge police station besides taking legal action against the responsible after which the protestors disperse and opened the road.

Governor KP calls on President Zardari

ISLAMABAD (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi called on President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari at the President House.

The discussion focused on various issues affecting the province, including security, economic stability and the welfare of its residents.

During the meeting, Governor Kundi briefed the President Zardari about the recent terrorist attack on a convoy of foreign diplomats in Swat, as well as the rising incidents of terrorism in the southern districts and merged tribal areas.

He highlighted the deteriorating law and order sit-

uation in the province.

President Zardari commended Governor Kundi for his efforts towards the overall improvement of the province.

He assured his full support for the development and prosperity of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including the merged districts.

Sub-Inspector held for alleged abduction of two children

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad police have arrested Sub-Inspector Suhaib Pasha following allegations of abducting and manhandling two children after conducting a high-level internal inquiry overseen by Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Syed Ali Raza.

The incident came to light after a complaint has gone viral on social media, prompting swift action from the authorities.

Inspector General (IG) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, took immediate notice of the incident, leading to an official inquiry overseen by Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Syed Ali Raza. Following the investigation, a formal case was registered against SI Suhaib Pasha at PS

Karachi Company Islamabad. According to police, the complaint was lodged on Tuesday against accused Suhaib Pasha of abducting two children and manhandling them under illegal custody.

The Islamabad police responded to the complaint in line with their ongoing accountability drive, ensuring that all officers are held responsible for their actions. The police department has reiterated its commitment to maintaining strict accountability within its ranks. The officials emphasized that no one, regardless of position or authority, is above the law. The Islamabad Police Department, under the leadership of IG Rizvi, has adopted zero tolerance policy toward any misuse of

power by its officers.

In a statement, the police department confirmed that strict legal action will be taken against any officer found violating their duties or abusing their authority. The department has assured that such incidents will be thoroughly investigated, and anyone found guilty will face the full force of the law.

This case has highlighted the department's efforts to ensure accountability and transparency in its operations. The Islamabad Police continue to work on enhancing internal checks to prevent such incidents in the future, stressing that all officers are bound to follow legal and ethical standards while serving the public.

The investigation into this case is underway.

Education wing holds road safety workshop

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Education Wing of Islamabad Traffic Police, under the special directives of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, organized a one-day road safety workshop for students and teachers of Islamabad Model College for Girls G-8/4.

According to a police spokesperson, more than 400 students and teachers participated in the workshop, which received an overwhelming response.

He said that during the workshop, students were edu-

cated on the dangers of risky driving, the rights of road users, the use of overhead bridges, zebra crossings, and other important traffic rules.

He said the ICT Police Education Wing delivered a lecture to participants on road safety and traffic rules. It was emphasized that children will take on significant responsibilities in the future, making it vital to educate them on road safety from a young age.

They further added that the ICT Police is fulfilling its duty diligently and has implemented special meas-

ures to raise awareness among students about road discipline.

On the occasion, school teachers and staff appreciated the awareness campaign conducted by Islamabad Police and praised the force as a well-organized and professional department that ensures road safety and security for the public.

Senior police officers said that such workshops will continue in the future as part of their ongoing commitment to road safety education.

Railways offer 50 percent concession for disable persons

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways is offering a 50 percent concession in rail fares to facilitate disabled persons traveling in all express and passenger trains, except the Green Line.

"The concession is granted upon the presentation of the Computerized National Identity Card (CNIC) bearing the disability logo," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

He said that a 50 percent discount is also offered to the attendant accompanying visually impaired persons. About the facilities at Railway Stations and Reservation Offices, he said that wheelchairs are available at all major stations to assist disabled passengers.

Additionally, the offi-

cial said that exclusive reservation and booking counters have been designated for disabled persons at reservation offices.

The free-of-cost access to executive washrooms and restrooms has been provided at a few major stations for special persons. The official said that the facility of executive washrooms at 12 major stations is also being developed and will have free access for disabled passengers.

To a question, the official said that Khushal Khan Khattak Express was discontinued in March 2020 owing to COVID-19, as train operation was suspended. He said that Pakistan Railways is operating 98 trains on a daily basis with 1,180 serviceable coaches. The department

owns 1,680 passenger coaches on books out of which 72 percent of coaches have surpassed their useful life.

The official said the overage coaches require extra resources, and maintenance costs to keep them fit for operation. At present, 2 Up and 2 Down trains are running between Peshawar and Karachi, he added.

He said that two passenger trains Bolan Mail and Monjodaro Express are operating on the Larkana section to cater to the transportation needs of the area while the restoration of Khushal Khan Khattak will be examined once the availability of coaches is improved along with consideration of the operating cost and commercial viability.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor waits for customers along roadside during hot day.

NA Panel directs to start work on ML-1 project at earliest

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Standing Committee on Railways Tuesday directed the authorities concerned to start the Mainline-1 (ML-1) project at the earliest after completing all the documents and necessary steps.

The committee that met here with Rai Hassan Nawaz Khan in the chair apprised that the phase-I would start in end of this year or in start of next year and would be completed within five years. Secretary, Ministry of Railways briefed the Committee about the project of Main Line (ML-1).

Divisional Superintendents, Pakistan Railways, Lahore, Mughalpur, Peshawar and Rawalpindi briefed the Committee about encroachments and lease of

Railways land. They talked about non-cooperation of concerned district administration during anti-encroachment operations.

The Committee recommended to approach the Provincial Governments for supporting during such operations. The Committee showed displeasure on presence of some officers on zoom and directed their presence in person in next meetings.

The Inspector General of Police, Pakistan Railways also briefed about issues of staff, equipment, salaries and packages of Railways Police. The Committee recommended to perform its role to resolve those issues.

The Secretary also talked about outstanding dues of Rs. 2155 million which had to be paid by sponsoring agencies of Railway level crossings.

The Committee recommended to approach the Provincial Governments to pay all the dues to Pakistan Railways. Lastly, the Committee extended the duration of Sub-Committee, which was constituted in previous meeting of the Standing Committee to look into the matters of encroachments/ lease of Railways land under the Convenership of Ramesh Lal, MNA, for thirty days.

The meeting was attended by Ramesh Lal, Waseem Qadir, Sadiq Ali Memon, Ibrar Ahmad, Zulfiqar Bachani, Syed Waseem Hussain, Ahmed Saleem Siddiqui, Syed Shah Ahad Ali Shah, Shafqat Abbas and Muhammad Jamal Ahsan Khan.

The senior officers from Ministry of Railways and Pakistan Railways were also present in the meeting.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Police apprehended 14 outlaws involved in different criminal activities, including snatching, drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons during last 24 hours from various localities in the federal capital.

Police teams during their various operations against anti social elements have recovered cash, valuables and weapons with ammunition from their possession.

According to details, Shehzad Town police team utilized technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending three members of an organized gang involved in numerous snatching activities. These accused had injured citizens by straight firing with arms during clash with police

parties. The accused were identified as Waheed Gul, Khan Wali, and Imad Farooq. The police team also recovered stolen cash, mobile phones, and weapons with ammunition used in the crimes from their possession.

During the preliminary investigations, the accused revealed their involvement in multiple snatching activities in areas such as Murree Road, Park Road, and Margalla Town, where they shot and injured citizens upon resistance. Further investigation is underway.

Islamabad police have carried out different, actions against accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons were also initiated, which resulted in the

apprehension of five drug dealers and seizing over 2 kilograms of heroin, more than 1 kilogram of hashish, and weapons with ammunition. Moreover, six absconders were also apprehended.

Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, said that the Islamabad Police are actively working to ensure the safety of citizens' lives and property in the federal capital, emphasizing that no elements will be allowed to disrupt citizens' peace.

The citizens are urged to report any suspicious activities to the relevant police station, emergency helpline "Pukar-15," or the "ICT 15" app to help make the city crime-free through cooperation between the police and the public.



#READNEWSPAPER

25 SEP. NATIONAL NEWSPAPER READERSHIP DAY



M E S S A G E S



Asif Ali Zardari
President
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

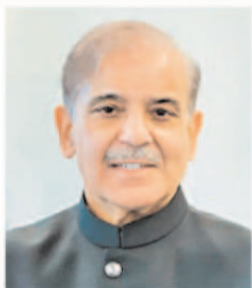
I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the All-Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) on National Newspaper Readership Day. Newspapers play a vital role in raising political awareness and informing citizens about their rights and responsibilities, besides providing news and helping citizens make informed decisions.

On this newspaper readership day, I would like to urge newspapers to play their role in promoting moral, ethical, and democratic values in our society. They should educate the people about socio-economic issues as well as to promote tolerance, inter-faith harmony, patriotism, civic responsibility, and respect for human rights.

In today's fast-paced digital age, where misinformation and fake news can go viral rapidly, the role of newspapers has become even more critical. Newspapers need to provide accurate and well-researched news to discourage fake news by using modern Information Technology. Their role in promoting facts over sensationalism is essential to counter the spread of false information.

A responsible press upholds the highest standards of accuracy, fairness and balance in reporting news. A responsible press not only provides a platform for marginalized voices to be heard but also generates healthy discussion among the stakeholders on important issues. It is, therefore, imperative that the Press must play a constructive role in guiding and educating the people on important issues.

On this day, let us reaffirm our support for a free and responsible press which is essential for the successful functioning of democracy as well as forming public opinion on issues of national and international significance.



Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif
Prime Minister
Islamic Republic of Pakistan

On this National Newspaper Day, we recognize and celebrate the indispensable contribution of newspapers as a cornerstone of our democracy. Throughout history, the narratives crafted by the press have played a transformative role in shaping public discourse. In times of intellectual and ideological awakening, newspapers have served as catalysts, igniting passion and awareness by providing reliable information to the masses.

Reflecting on our own journey, during the pivotal moments of Pakistan's independence movement, newspapers became the powerful voice of our nation's founders, uniting the Muslim community across South Asia. In the years that followed, these vital publications have continually demonstrated their commitment to fostering democracy, safeguarding our constitutional values, and supporting transparency.

In an age where disinformation is rampant, newspapers continue to offer well-researched and fact-based news, ensuring our access to authentic information. With the rise of social media and online platforms, the importance of print media has not diminished. In the contemporary world, the relevance of print media has become even more significant. While social media has revolutionized the way we access information, it has also raised challenges in the form of fake news, misinformation, and disinformation. Newspapers, with their established editorial standards and rigorous fact-checking process, continue to serve as a reliable source of information in a time of digital noise and confusion. They provide a level of accountability that is often missing in online spaces, ensuring that truth is not compromised.

The power of a well-informed society cannot be underestimated. It is through informed citizens that we can build a stronger, more resilient Pakistan. I encourage every individual to embrace the habit of newspaper reading, as it is a key to combating fake news and fostering a culture of responsible citizenship.

Let us work together to strengthen the role of newspapers in our daily life and support this invaluable institution so it can continue to serve our nation with integrity and dedication.

Pakistan Paindabad!



Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani
Chairman Senate

On the occasion of National Newspaper Readership Day, I am pleased to extend warm felicitations to the All Pakistan Newspapers Society, journalists, media professionals and newspaper readers across Pakistan.

Today we celebrate the importance and vital role of authentic news and information in shaping a healthy, informed and knowledgeable society. We also celebrate the significance of newspapers and print media as a citadel and trusted source of credible news.

I strongly believe that inculcating the ethos and habit of reading newspapers among citizens, especially youth, transcendently transforms nation's socio-cultural fabric into a rich intellectual tapestry vital for sound moral and ethical growth of the nation.

Newspapers are more than just a source of daily news; they are a repository of knowledge, a mirror reflecting the diverse voices of our society, and a guardian against misinformation.

Newspapers stand out as beacons of authenticity and reliability in an age where proliferation of information can sometimes blur the lines between fact and fiction, truth and falsehood. In order to engage more meaningfully in civic discourse, and to make informed decisions that affect our lives and our country, we must cultivate among ourselves the habit of reading newspapers.

Let us appreciate and acknowledge the APNS for their endeavors in promoting newspaper readership in our shared and mutually-beneficial national pursuit to build an informed and enlightened society. By encouraging our citizens to embrace reading habits, we foster a culture of critical thinking and intellectual curiosity, essential for the progress of any nation.

As we commemorate National Newspapers Readership Day, let us renew our commitment to supporting and valuing this essential medium of information. Let us also encourage those around us, especially the younger generation, to appreciate the invaluable role that newspapers play in shaping a well-informed and thoughtful society.

Congratulations once again to the APNS and to all those who champion the cause of reading and knowledge dissemination. Together, let us continue to uphold the values of truth, integrity, and intellectual advancement.

Happy National Newspaper Readership Day!



Attaullah Tarar
Federal Minister Information & Broadcasting

Newspapers help counter fake news by upholding values of truth, integrity

Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar has said that in the present era where misinformation and fake news threaten the very fabric of the society, newspapers continue to uphold the values of truth, integrity, and accountability.

In a message on national newspaper readership day, of Pakistan he congratulated the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) for observing National Newspaper Readership Day.

He said as the Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, he understood the importance of credible media in maintaining a healthy democracy. "Newspapers, with their rigorous editorial processes and commitment to accuracy, provide a level of reliability that is unmatched by other forms of media", he observed. The minister said that they serve as the backbone of responsible journalism and play a critical role in educating the public, promoting literacy, and fostering an informed citizenry. The depth of analysis, context, and balanced perspectives they offer make newspapers an invaluable resource in navigating today's complex information environment, Attaullah Tarar added.

In this era of digital media, he said that the newspaper remains an essential tool for countering fake news and ensuring that the public receives accurate, fact-based information.

"I encourage the people of Pakistan to make newspaper reading a regular habit, so that they can stay well-informed and contribute to the nation's progress." He urged all people to join hands in promoting the importance of newspaper readership and work towards creating a more enlightened, informed, and united Pakistan.

The minister said the present elected government was taking steps for the welfare of print media and it paid Rs 1.6 billion outstanding dues of news industry. "Ministry of Information and Broadcasting ensured payment of advertising dues of private media organizations, which facilitated the payment of salaries to journalists and media workers", he added.

In the budget, there was a proposal to impose a 10 percent tax on newspaper paper, which the Ministry of Information did not allow.

If tax was imposed on paper imported from abroad for newsprint, the newspaper industry could have faced more difficulties, he opened.

He assured that the government would provide more facilities to the newspaper industry.



Maryam Nawaz Sharif
Chief Minister Punjab

It is a pleasure to support the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) in celebrating National Newspaper Readership Day. Newspapers remain a trusted source of news, providing citizens with well-researched, fact-checked information that helps them make informed decisions.

The media landscape has changed dramatically in recent years, but newspapers have remained steadfast in their commitment to truth, integrity, and accuracy. In an era where rumors and fake news can easily go viral on social media, the role of newspapers has become even more crucial. They offer depth, context, and a comprehensive perspective on the stories they cover, which is essential for creating a well-rounded, informed public. In Punjab, we have seen firsthand how the dissemination of credible information can positively impact governance, shape public opinion, and foster social harmony.

In this age of rapidly evolving digital media, where fake news can spread unchecked, the importance of newspapers in providing clarity and truth is even greater. I urge the people of Punjab, and indeed all of Pakistan, to develop a regular habit of newspaper reading, so that we can build a society rooted in knowledge, truth, and understanding. Let us also encourage the younger generation to engage with this time-honored tradition, equipping them with the critical tools they need to distinguish between fact and fiction in an increasingly complex and information-saturated world.



Murad Ali Shah
Chief Minister Sindh

I take great pride in joining hands with the All Pakistan Newspapers Society (APNS) to celebrate National Newspaper Readership Day.

Newspapers have always been the cornerstone of information and education for our society, shaping public opinion with accurate, fact-checked news.

The importance of newspapers goes beyond their role as providers of news; they are instruments of education and cultural preservation. In Sindh, where we take great pride in our rich cultural heritage, newspapers have been instrumental in keeping the public informed about social, political, and economic developments. They provide a platform for diverse voices and offer a window into the global landscape while maintaining a focus on local issues that matter to our citizens.

The accountability that newspapers provide is essential for the proper functioning of our democracy and governance. It is in truest form a pillar of democracy.

In the age of digital misinformation, newspapers serve as an indispensable source of credible news. By promoting newspaper readership, we can combat the spread of fake news and nurture a more informed and tolerant society.

Let us all work together to revive the habit of reading newspapers and ensure that future generations grow up with a strong foundation of knowledge and responsibility.

I commend APNS for this initiative and look forward to continued efforts to promote literacy, education, and responsible journalism in our province.



Ali Amin Gandapur
Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

It is with great pleasure that I acknowledge the All Pakistan Newspapers Society's (APNS) declaration of September 25th as "National Newspaper Readership Day", an initiative being celebrated since 2019. This effort highlights the significance of newspaper readership and promotes reading habits in our country, which have unfortunately declined due to the proliferation of social and digital media.

The rise of social and digital media has transformed the way we communicate and access information, sometimes resulting in out-of-context messages, news, and information. This has led to the spread of fear, conflicts, and controversies. In this context, the importance of print media cannot be underestimated. While new media has brought about a revolution, print media remains a credible and authentic source of information when it comes to news and information dissemination.

Promoting reading habits among citizens is essential to combat the challenges posed by the unchecked spread of unconfirmed news. The Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa firmly believes in the fundamental and constitutional right of freedom of the press and considers an independent and free media as crucial for a developed and civilized society. We also recognize that without freedom of the press and ensuring people's right to know, our goal of a strong and democratic Pakistan cannot be achieved.

The provincial government highly values positive journalism and is taking all possible measures for the welfare of journalists. Guiding society in the right direction is a shared responsibility, and print media has a prominent role in this. I believe that in view of the current situation, print media must not only maintain its quality but also ensure more responsible journalism more than ever before.

I, once again commend the APNS for this initiative and an confident that celebrating this day will encourage more people to adopt reading habits and foster a shared understanding of national issues.



Sarfraz Bugti
Chief Minister Balochistan

On the eve of Pakistan's National Readership Day, I warmly extend my best wishes and greetings to the esteemed members of the All Pakistan Newspapers Society and the entire media community. The day declared by APNS as readership day indeed serves as a reminder of the importance of a well-informed society and the pivotal role that readership plays in shaping our national consciousness.

The Pakistan People's Party under the leadership of its chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has always been a strong proponent of the free flow of information and the cultivation of informed readership habits. We believe that a society armed with knowledge is a society empowered to make thoughtful, progressive decisions for the future.

To this end, we are committed to supporting policies that foster a culture of reading, both in print and digital formats, to ensure that every citizen has access to reliable and credible information.

In an era where misinformation and fake news threaten the integrity of our discourse, we must stand together to promote responsible journalism and a well-read populace.

The PPP, as big critic of unhealthy journalism, rejects the dissemination of fake news and is resolute in its belief that only through accurate, fact-based reporting can we truly strengthen the fabric of our democracy.

We hope that the efforts of APNS in upholding the principles of truthful and ethical journalism will bear fruit and we will be able to create an environment of ethical journalism.

Let us continue to work together in encouraging readership habits, combating misinformation, fake news upholding the true spirits of the journalism. Our joint efforts will help achieve very goals of thriving Pakistan.

Truth vs. Trend: Print Media's Role in the Age of Disinformation

"Fake news is cheap to produce, while genuine journalism is expensive."

— Thomas Hendrik Ives

In the age of social media, newspapers stand out as pillars of credibility and accuracy. Have you ever thought about where you get your daily updates on current affairs? How do you usually stay informed? Have you ever questioned whether the sources you rely on for information are truly reliable? In today's digital age, where news is consumed in overwhelming quantities, it is crucial to recognize that much of the news circulated via social media is often unreliable and fake.

With virtual media accessible to everyone with a single click, social media news stories have naturally stolen the spotlight. However, this rapid dissemination often comes at the cost of accuracy and credibility.

The issue of disinformation, or fake news, is not unique to Pakistan; many countries worldwide are grappling with this menace. In societies like Pakistan, the spread of disinformation is especially easy. Beyond Pakistan, we are all familiar with the phenomenon of celebrity death hoaxes. According to a 2015 report by the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism at the University of Oxford, the internet and television are the most common ways people access news, followed by social media.

Pakistan has experienced a significant surge in the spread of fake news, largely driven by the rapid consumption of information. There have been numerous instances where the swift and unauthenticated spread of news has fueled public discord and social conflict. Research has shown that the growing menace of disinformation in Pakistan has threatened public life, health, social harmony, and stability, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Fake news is not a new phenomenon; it has been around for ages. From ancient Rome to the present day, stories have been fabricated for profit. The dissemination of false information disguised as legitimate news has a long history, dating back centuries to when politi-

cian leaders in Rome spread misleading information to undermine their rivals.

However, it was never a menace. But today, with the explosion of social media, controlling this pressing problem seems like a "no-win" situation. The practice has become so pervasive over time that distinguishing between fake and authentic news has become increasingly challenging. Recently, Pakistan has seen a dramatic increase in fake news widely shared on social media without verification. Easy access to the internet across the country



has made it simple for anyone to make money through click-baiting—attention-grabbing fake headlines designed to maximize clicks. Click-baiting is not only a tool for earning money with misleading information but also for shaping public opinion. As click-baiting has surged in Pakistan, the spread of fake news has become more widespread, threatening the country's authentic media platforms.

Social media can easily be termed the primary player in the global spread of fake news, especially with platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter transforming how information is shared, leading to adverse consequences. These platforms have made it easier

than ever for users to share information without verification.

To address the rise in fake news, we must first understand what it truly means. Fake news refers to false or misleading information presented as legitimate news. It can appear in various forms, including fabricated stories, manipulated images, and misleading headlines. The motivations behind fake news are diverse, ranging from political agendas to financial gain through increased web traffic.

Researchers have highlighted several fac-

also blamed for the prevalence of fake news.

The issue of fake news in Pakistan is complex and multifaceted. Addressing it requires a concerted effort from various stakeholders, including the government, media organizations, educational institutions, and the public. Pakistan can only mitigate the impact of fake news by supporting the struggling print media industry, which has been fighting to survive in recent years, especially amid rapid digitalization and internet penetration.

For decades, mainstream media has served as a watchdog for information, but the advent of cyberspace has reshaped how news is produced, distributed, and consumed. Various studies show that print newspaper circulation has declined over the past decade, with many newspapers experiencing significant drops in readership. This decline is mainly due to easy access to mobile phones, laptops, and internet connectivity. Despite this, newspapers remain the most credible source of news. They are not merely fighting for survival but are battling for the preservation of truth.

With somewhat diminishing importance of newspapers in the country, it is vital to understand that newspaper readership remains a crucial pillar of informed citizenship, community engagement, and democratic values.

Newspapers offer unique benefits that continue to make them an essential medium for news consumption. For decades, newspapers have been a source of comprehensive and reliable news, providing in-depth reporting, analysis, and assured authenticity—factors often missing from social media-generated news, which contributes to the untrustworthy nature of the cyber world.

With their established editorial standards and journalistic integrity, newspapers play a vital role in producing authentic content. While digital media often focuses on short, catchy headlines and sometimes misleading stories, newspapers provide detailed news stories, which is crucial for informed public discourse and decision-making.

Newspapers also serve as historical records, documenting events, global happenings, and public interest trends. Unfortunately,

the new generation—the digital natives—shows little interest in reading newspapers, which is alarming. The younger minds must be exposed to credible and comprehensive information to foster critical thinking about global issues. This awareness is vital for understanding the interconnectedness of global events and their local impacts.

Daily newspaper reading also helps individuals, particularly students, build their vocabulary and exposes them to well-written articles, improving language skills, including comprehension and writing abilities. For students and young professionals, these skills are essential for academic and career success. Articles published in newspapers or magazines provide in-depth research on important topics.

For individuals who want to stay connected with local, national, and global events, newspaper readership is the best choice. Reading newspapers exposes readers to diverse viewpoints and perspectives. Mainstream media is also a tool for the entertainment and education of school-going children, offering separate editions that cater to young readers' viewpoints.

Print news caters to a diverse range of readers with a single edition, covering a broad array of topics. Unlike digital platforms that often trap readers with catchy headlines, newspapers provide varied information and topics, helping readers stay informed. Moreover, newspaper content is typically free of bias, presenting an accurate picture to the public and playing a crucial role in shaping public opinion. As American essayist, Arthur Miller aptly says, "A good newspaper is a nation talking to itself."

In today's world, where online platforms have enhanced accessibility and convenience, allowing global reach and personalized news feeds, they have also contributed to challenges like disinformation. While social media is cheaper and quicker, and newspapers are often large and not always free, print media surpasses social media in one critical area—credibility.

Today, therefore, encouraging newspaper reading is more urgent than ever!!

Vital to stay with reform agenda, says Aurangzeb

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Federal Minister for Finance Muhammad Aurangzeb on Tuesday said that for moving forward it was vital to stay with reform agenda whether it's from taxation side, energy side, state owned enterprises and privatisation side.

He said this while virtually addressing the High Level Private Sector Dialogue on "Leveraging Private Capital for CPEC II and the Region" at a local hotel. The dialogue was organized by the recently established Pakistan Regional Economic Forum (PREF) in partnership with Embassy of China.

He said, "In terms of macroeconomic situation where we ended the last fiscal year that trajectory continues into first quarter of this fiscal year." Foreign exchange reserves which were now more than two months import cover, inflation had come down, he maintained.

Muhammad Aurangzeb said, "More importantly policy rate is coming down. Few days back the government has rejected all bids aimed at conveying the message that with the grace of Allah Almighty, the government is under no desperation to borrow, and if it has to borrow, it will borrow at its own terms." Banking sector should start lending to the private sector, he added. He said that ultimately it was all about foreign direct investment which came into the country.

Regarding International Monetary Fund's board meeting, Muhammad Aurangzeb said, "We are hopeful that it will approve 37 months programme of dollar 7 billions." He said, "Under the programme we are committed to do structural reforms." He said that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had profusely thanked the government of China in terms of support on fund programme.

He further said that for smooth growth process, stable base was highly important and with the grace of Allah Almighty, Pakistan had reached to a point of good foundation from where it could build up. He said that China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) Phase I was all about infrastructure and CPEC Phase II was about monetization of that infrastructure.

He said that the incumbent government under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was focusing on taking CPEC forward. He said that bringing in other countries as a partner was also very important and added that the role of private sector could not be ignored at all. The Federal Minister said, "Government job is to provide policy framework and its conti-

nuity and private sector has to lead the country." He said that private sector leaders must be encouraged, adding that it was all about business to business approach as things move forward.

Development Finance Institutions like Saudi-Pak and Pak-China had fantastic opportunity to step up, he added. The Finance Minister supported the approach introduced by PREF to promote private sector led regional projects and transactions. He also extended his government's full commitment to facilitate the adequate private sector financing through multi-lateral and local resources.

The Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong emphasized the need to strengthen confidence in the development prospects of Pakistan. He said, "We need to strengthen confidence and work hard for development of the country." He said, "In order to strive for practical results, we must consolidate, deepen and expand China-Pakistan cooperation. Moreover, we need to take the agricultural advantages of neighboring provinces as an example to discuss the agricultural cooperation between China and Pakistan." He said that Pakistan should offer enhanced mutually beneficial preferential policies for Chinese and regional entrepreneurs.

The Chinese Ambassador said that Pakistan's energy sector was going through a systemic transition towards gaining more efficiency and price stability. Earlier, PREF Chairman Haroon Sharif former Chairman in his welcome remarks highlighted the rapid economic transformation of the region and the immense opportunities available in Pakistan for economic development.

With overall theme of making connectivity work for the people, he reiterated that Pakistan's needed a transition from a debt-to-investment economy, by leveraging infrastructure connectivity, he said and added that this would be done by seeking private sector capital investors from Central Asia, the Gulf and beyond to expedite implementation of CPEC Phase II. Khalid Mansoor, former SAPM on CPEC, presented potential projects in the key PREF identified sectors: climate smart agriculture, energy transition, value-added textile, emerging technologies, information technology and trade logistics. It is pertinent to mention here that the session is followed by an interactive and focused dialogue where all participants shared comments, suggestions and projects which could lead to joint ventures in the region by complimenting each other's comparative advantage.

President calls for enhancing scope of BISP

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Rubina Khalid called on President Asif Ali Zardari here in Islamabad on Tuesday.

During the meeting, the Chairperson gave a detailed briefing to the President about BISP. The President stressed on enhancing the scope of BISP and inclusion of more poor segments of society in the programme. He also appreciated the BISP's services for deserving people.

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi also called on President of Pakistan Asif Ali Zardari at the President House.

The discussion focused on various issues affecting the province, including security, economic stability, and the welfare of its residents. During the meeting, Governor Kundi briefed the President Zardari about the recent terrorist attack on a convoy of foreign diplomats in Swat, as well as the rising incidents of terrorism in the southern districts and merged tribal areas.

He highlighted the deteriorating law and order situation in the province. President Zardari commended Governor Kundi for his efforts towards the overall improvement of the province. He assured his full support for the development and prosperity of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including the merged districts.

Benefits of Pak-US trade highlighted

F.P. Report

LAHORE: In a meeting with the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Sialkot Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry, US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome emphasized the benefits of private sector-led, equitable, sustainable economic growth, and the potential for increasing two-way trade and investment between the United States and Pakistan. The Ambassador welcomed the opportunity to exchange views on Pakistan's investment and business climate and discuss prospects for economic reform.

"The United States is Pakistan's largest export market globally, and Pakistan's exports to the United States have more than doubled over the last decade - a testament to the robust economic relationship we share," Ambassador Blome said.

Underscoring the US commitment to promote entrepreneurship, Ambassador Blome and US Consul General Kristin Hawkins also visited GharPar in Lahore, a Pakistani women-led business that's redefining women's economic empowerment. The company participated in a US government funded entrepreneurship training program in 2016, and also participated in the US Department of Commerce's 2024 SelectUSA delegation from Pakistan. It plans to launch operations in the United States in the next year. "The United States firmly believes that expanding opportunities for women entrepreneurs leads to more stable societies.



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program, Senator Rubina Khalid, called on President Asif Ali Zardari, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Tourism sector to be developed in KP, merged districts: KP CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, has termed the promotion of tourism sector as one of the top priority areas of his government, stating that there are immense opportunities for the promotion of tourism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including the merged districts; and the current provincial government is taking steps under a comprehensive strategy to effectively utilize these opportunities with the aim to create employment opportunities for the local people as well as to enhance the province's revenue.

He further stated that the tourism sector can be developed on modern lines to make the province financially self-sufficient. He was speaking as the chief guest at the Tourism Excellence Award ceremony organized by Tourism Department at Nishtar Hall Peshawar the other day to mark World Tourism Day.

The Chief Minister said that the current provincial government, in line with Imran Khan's vision, is working to simultaneously promote all sectors of tourism and attract maximum tourists by providing them necessary facilities and developing new tourist destinations in the province adding that as a result of these efforts, over ten million domestic and foreign tourists have visited the province's tourist sites so far this year. Ali Amin Gandapur emphasized that law and order was essential for the promotion of tourism, and the provincial govern-

ment is taking serious steps to improve the current security situation in the province, especially in the merged districts.

While paying tribute to the role of the security forces and police in maintaining peace in the province, he paid tributes to the martyrs of the Pakistan Army and police who sacrificed their lives for peace in the country and the province. Ali Amin Gandapur said that the provincial government was working day and night to develop potential sectors to make the province financially independent, and tourism is one of those key sectors which the provincial government is focusing on adding that the provincial government is working on different initiatives including construction of access roads to tourist destinations, construction of rest areas, establishment of Integrated Tourism Zones, Tourism Police, Tourism Helpline etc, which are yielding significant results.

The Chief Minister said that it was the responsibility of the government to provide opportunities to the youth, and make them financially independent, and for this purpose, the current provincial government has launched various initiatives. On this occasion, the Chief Minister announced that 100% of the income from Nishtar Hall would be spent on the welfare of deserving artists.

He also distributed Excellence Awards to individuals with contributions for the promotion of tourism in the province. Speaking on this occasion, Advisor to Chief Minister on

Tourism, Zahid Chen Zeb, highlighted the provincial government's efforts to promote tourism and cultural activities. Earlier, the Chief Minister also inaugurated Culture Complex established in Nishtar Hall at a cost of 117 million rupees.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has directed the quarters concerned to digitize all the official business of food department including procurement of wheat its transportation and storage at provincial reserve centers.

He was chairing a meeting of Food Department here the other day, attended by the Provincial Minister for Food Zahir Shah Toru, Secretary Food Saqib Aslam Raza and other senior officials of food department.

The meeting deliberated upon various matters including provincial government's course of action in the context of federal government's decision to dissolve Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation (PASSCO) and it was decided to include a scheme in upcoming Annual Development Program (ADP) for enhancing the wheat storage capacity of the provincial government. In the meeting, it was also agreed that, in case of dissolution of PASSCO, a guarantee will be sought from Federal and Punjab Governments that no ban shall be imposed on inter-provincial transportation of wheat & wheat flour, adding that the matter would be taken up in Council of Common Interest (CCI).

Ex-KP CM challenged KP govt decision in PHC

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Former Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarian (PTIP) Chairman Mahmood Khan has challenged provincial government's decision to remove 26 development projects in Swat from the Annual Development Program (ADP) 2024/25 at Peshawar High Court.

The writ petition filed through Sultan Muhammad Khan advocate while Chief Minister KP, Chief Secretary Additional Chief Secretary P&D, Secretary Communication & Works, Secretary Finance and Secretary Local Government made as respondents.

The petition states that the petitioner served as former CM and provincial minister while approved 26 projects for Swat district. These projects were included in ADP 2021-22. The new provincial government, formed after the February 2024 elections, removed these projects from ADP 2024-25.

The reconstruction and rehabilitation of flood-affected roads and infrastructure, Establishment of an agricul-

tural complex, Construction and renovation of 100 mosques in Upper Swat, upgradation and construction of Civil Hospital Kalam and other medical centers, Establishment of Government College Management Sciences and Physiotherapy Center and Water supply and flood protection schemes were dropped from ADP 2024-25.

The writ challenged Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on the grounds that the petitioner being chairman of a major political party of the country having representation in the assembly and having remained an elected public representative has a genuine locus standi and cause of action to approach PHC to correct the illegalities and discrimination being committed by the respondents.

The "dropped" schemes having been approved by the cabinet and passed by majority in the provincial assembly and then public funds being already spent on them are part and parcel of the ADP and the budget and cannot be dropped by a single illegal order of the Respondent No. 2 Chief Minister and that too without assigning any cogent

or plausible reason.

The impugned actions and inactions of the respondents have the effect of committing discrimination and thus violating articles 2A, 4, 16, 17, 19, 25, 25A, 37 of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. The illegal action of the respondents of dropping the developmental schemes has the effect of adversely harming and stopping of the legal method of execution of developmental schemes, the petition stated.

Because the illegal action of the respondents is resulting in deprivation of people of the basic facilities necessary for human life including education, drinking water, sanitation and health. The illegal actions of the respondents is based on political considerations and pick and choose on the basis of personal likes and dislikes, the writ argued.

The inaction and illegal discrimination of the respondents will have the effect of giving the authority to approve, drop and execute developmental schemes to individual whims, thus making the same process illegal and blatant wastage of public funds.

Experts urge strategic investments in aerospace innovations

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Centre for Aerospace & Security Studies (CASS), Islamabad, successfully concluded a seminar on the 'Air and Space Technologies: Harnessing the Innovation Economy.' This event convened distinguished experts from the defence, technology, and academic sectors to discuss strategies for leveraging space and technological advancements to prosper in an innovation-driven economic landscape in Pakistan.

Air Vice Marshal Nasser Wyne (Retd), Director (Aerospace Warfare) at CASS, set the stage for the seminar sharing how the rise of air power in the Twentieth Century transitioned into aerospace power, incorporating space exploration, satellite technology, and autonomous systems. This shift, he stressed, presents strategic opportunities for nations to bypass traditional developmental barriers and capitalise on cutting-edge innovations for both defence and economic growth. AVM Wyne further asserted that the innovation economy, fueled by the commercialisation of new technologies, was playing a crucial role in this transformation.

In his Keynote Address on 'Future of Air and Space in National Defence

and the Global Innovation Economy', Air Marshal Zahid Mehmood (Retd), Former Vice Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force, highlighted the evolution of aerospace from a defence-centric industry to a key driver of economic growth and technological innovation.

He pointed out that while the sector originated in military needs, it has since expanded to foster commercial aviation, space exploration, and private sector involvement. He asserted that technological advancements in areas like satellite deployment, AI, and space exploration are creating new markets and opportunities globally. To capitalise on these, he emphasised the need for strategic investments and the development of skilled human capital, warning that countries that fail to adapt may fall behind. The Air Marshal also stressed the need for developing countries, like Pakistan, to harness aerospace innovations through strategic investments, technology transfer, and human capital development. He urged policymakers to foster public-private partnerships (PPPs) and invest in building capacity to secure their position in the rapidly evolving aerospace landscape.

In his presentation on 'Space and Technology Nexus: Boosting National Security & Economic

Prosperity,' Dr Najam Abbas Naqvi, Chairman National Centre for GIS and Space Applications, outlined how advancements in satellite technology, earth observation, and global navigation systems are providing innovative solutions for sectors like agriculture, urban planning, and disaster management.

Dr Naqvi acknowledged the importance of building a skilled workforce and fostering collaborative research between academia and industry to further leverage these technologies. He urged policymakers to incentivise private sector involvement through funding and tax benefits while advocating for the establishment of aerospace innovation clusters to drive research and commercialisation. Dr Naqvi stressed that leveraging PPPs would be essential in sharing risks and advancing large-scale space projects. He forecasted that with the right strategies in place, Pakistan could position itself to benefit from the growing global space economy, projected to be worth USD 1.8 trillion by 2035.

In his address on 'Aerospace Evolution in Pakistan: Initiatives and Impacts,' Air Vice Marshal Dr Liaquat Ullah Iqbal, Director General Public Relations & Publications at the National Aerospace Science and



Technology Park (NASTP), outlined the strategic vision behind PAF's flagship initiative. He articulated the critical role of NASTP as the driving force for the Triple Helix Model, highlighting the interconnectedness of the IT, computing, and aerospace industries.

Dr Iqbal provided an overview of the various initiatives undertaken under NASTP's infrastructure, which spans five cities, each focusing on distinct domains. He also briefly touched upon the business strategies and future prospects of innovative technologies and their incubation

within NASTP.

Commending the collaborative efforts of multiple ministries, he emphasised the critical role played by thorough documentation and approvals at various levels in securing the Special Economic Zone (SEZ) status for NASTP. He affirmed that youth development, private sector engagement, diaspora outreach, and international collaborations are essential pillars for NASTP's sustained growth, positioning it as a key player in advancing Pakistan's aerospace sector.

In his Concluding Remarks and

Vote of Thanks, Air Marshal Javaid Ahmed (Retd), President CASS Islamabad, articulated the need to evaluate both the positive and negative aspects of technology. He remarked that the Ukraine conflict highlighted how unmanned systems are reshaping modern warfare, while the recent events in Beirut underscored the growing risk of consumer technology weaponisation.

He stressed that technology was evolving rapidly; delivering solutions at an unprecedented pace but oversight and regulations remain far behind. President CASS also warned that if the global technological divide between East and West deepens, Pakistan might be forced to make a critical choice.

He acknowledged Pakistan's pockets of excellence in academia and among individuals, advocating for the continued harnessing of these capabilities. In the end, he reflected on the enduring spirit of indigenisation and innovation in the country, which, he asserted, remains key to future progress. The seminar was followed by active participation from a diverse audience, including retired military officers, scholars, journalists, and students, who engaged in an interactive question and answer session, enriching the discourse on this critical subject.