

Policeman kidnapped
F.P. Report

BANNU: Unidentified armed men kidnapped a policeman while returning to his home in Bannu, KP. According to police, the Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Sakhi Zaman, deputed at Baka Khel police station, was kidnapped by the armed men from Circular Road. The police said, cop was kidnapped en route to his home after ending the duty. The hunt to recover the policeman has begun.

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Four terrorists killed
F.P. Report

GHALANAI: Security forces in Mohmand district successfully foiled a terrorist attack, killing four terrorists. According to sources, the terrorists attempted to infiltrate the Civil Administration Colony. Security forces engaged the terrorists, resulting in their elimination. Sources further indicate that a clearance operation is currently underway in the area.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minster Shehbaz Sharif offering condolences to Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan on the demise of his sister.

Political differences should not be turned into hatred: COAS

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Asim Munir stressed the need for not turning the political differences into hatred for the sake of national unity.

Addressing a special ceremony in connection with Defence and Martyrs Day at GHQ where Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was chief guest, the army chief said the nefarious designs to weaken national unity will not succeed.

"I want to make foreign powers involved in fanning terrorism that the Pakistani people and military know how to defend their integrity. Wherever we find terrorists, we will eliminate them," he resolved. He said the "Azm-e-Istehkam" was a key part of the National Action Plan and it is not any new operation. No one will be displaced while implementing the Azm-e-Istehkam, he highlighted.

COAS Munir said the sacrifices will continue until the eradication of terrorists in the country. He said the sacrifices rendered in fight against terrorism will be written in golden letters in history. He vowed to tighten the noose around the terrorists. He

also said that the bond between the Pakistan Armed Forces and the people is a heart-to-heart connection and it guarantees the defeat of the enemies.

Gen Asim Munir said Allah Almighty has blessed Pakistan with immense resources, adding: "Our true asset is the people, especially the younger generation". Global changes have a profound impact on a country like Pakistan, and political differences should not be turned into hatred for the sake of national unity, he said.

COAS Munir said India's illegal occupation of Kashmir is a global issue. The establishment of sustainable peace in South Asia is conditional on resolving the Kashmir issue. "We will continue to support the just struggle of the Kashmiris until they achieve their right to self-determination," he said. The army chief paid tribute to all the martyrs and veterans of Pakistan who have ensured the protection of the country. "I pray for the elevation of the ranks of all the martyrs."

General Munir also addressed the ongoing Kashmir conflict, calling for the peaceful resolution of the issue in accordance with United Nations reso-

lutions and the aspirations of the Kashmiri people. He praised the resilience of the Kashmiri people in the face of Indian aggression, stating that their "determination and courage" continue to inspire Pakistan's commitment to their cause.

In addition to highlighting the Kashmir issue, General Munir reaffirmed Pakistan's continued support for the Palestinian people. He condemned Israeli aggression in Gaza, describing it as a "black mark on the global conscience," and vowed that Pakistan will continue raising its voice on international platforms in favor of the Palestinians.

In closing, the COAS urged the nation to renew its commitment to unity and solidarity, emphasizing that Pakistan's strength lies in its national cohesion. "While remaining committed to the security, development and prosperity of our beloved country, we must renew the promise that we will remain united," he asserted. "Let us forget our differences and show exemplary unity and harmony." General Asim Munir maintained, "As long as we remain united, no power in the world can harm Pakistan."

LHC orders removal of Nadra chief

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday ordered the removal of NADRA Chairman Lt Gen Muhammad Munir Afsar from his post.

Justice Asim Hafeez pronounced the verdict on the petition of a citizen, Ashba Kamran, against the appointment of the chairman. The petitioner contended that the caretaker government approved the appointment of a serving army officer by amending the NADRA Act. The petitioner argued that the caretaker government cannot interfere in permanent policy matters.

She requested the court to quash the NADRA Amendment Rules and annul the appointment of a serving army officer as chairman. In October 2023, the caretaker government appointed Lt Gen Munir Afsar, currently posted at the General Headquarters (GHQ), as the chairman of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA).

Nation celebrates Defence Day

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Defence and Martyrs Day was observed on Friday to pay tribute to martyrs and Ghazis and reaffirm commitment to defend the motherland against all threats. It was on this day in 1965 that the Indian forces crossed international border in the darkness of night to attack Pakistan but the nation foiled nefarious designs of the enemy. The day dawned with 31 gun salute at the federal capital and 21 gun salute at provincial capitals.

Special prayers were offered in the mosques for the progress and prosperity of the country, and independence of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir from the cruel clutches of India. Fateha and Quran Khawani als held for the martyrs.

Judge delays Trump sentencing

NEW YORK (AFP): The New York judge who presided over Donald Trump's hush money trial on Friday delayed sentencing until after November's US presidential election. The Republican White House candidate had been scheduled to be sentenced on September 18 for falsifying business records during a scheme to silence a porn star.

Instead, Judge Juan Merchan postponed it to November 26 — well past the November 5 election in which Trump faces Vice President Kamala Harris. Trump's lawyers had sought the delay. Trump was convicted in May of 34 counts of doctoring business records to cover up hush money payments to porn star Stormy Daniels to stop her from publishing her account of an alleged sexual encounter on the eve of the 2016 election.

He was originally scheduled to be sentenced on July 11 but that was delayed after the Supreme Court ruled that a former US president has broad immunity from criminal prosecution. Trump's lawyers had asked that his New York conviction be dismissed following the Supreme Court immunity ruling. Merchan said he would rule on the dismissal motion on November 12 and delayed sentencing until after the election.

"This is not a decision this Court makes lightly but it is the decision which in this Court's view, best advances the interests of justice," he said. Trump in theory faces up to four years in prison on each count. However, he is considered more likely to receive probation.

Enemy designs to be thwarted

PM resolves to continue operation against Fitna-al-Khawarij till complete eradication

Saqib Mushtaq

RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Friday reaffirmed his government's unwavering commitment to combating terrorism, pledging to continue the ongoing operation against Fitna-al-Khawarij until their complete eradication.

"All our armed forces and law enforcing agencies will continue their operation for which there is a national consensus," he said while addressing a ceremony held here at General Headquarters (GHQ) in connection with Defence Day. Paying rich tributes to the valiant sons of soil and brave heroes of Armed Forces who fearlessly fought, and defeated the enemy that attacked our motherland across the international border on 6 September 1965.

Despite their numerical advantage, the prime minister said the enemy designs were thwarted by the valiant Armed Forces and were handed an unforgettable defeat, on all fronts. He saluted the families of Shuhada, whose immense resilience and strength continued to inspire the nation.

The prime minister emphasized that divisions within the nation posed threat to the country's integrity and any movement in the country aimed at weakening the state will not be tolerated at any cost. "Abuse or bullets are not solution to the issues," he said stressing the need of unity among the nation.

The prime minister said all Pakistanis were responsible to ensure development, peace and stability in the country. "We might be in different fields but our goal is only one that is development, integrity and security of Pakistan." He said Pakistan was a peace loving country. "We have proved that Pakistan does not have aggressive designs against its neighbors."

He said Pakistan was playing positive role of promoting regional and global peace. "The prosperity always comes with peace, we desire respectful and peaceful relations with regional countries, but we will never compromise on our national interests, respect and independence," the prime minister added. He said recalled "we have defeated our enemy's evil designs for multiple times but their evil intentions were still a big threat to Pakistan's security."

As regards the issue Kashmir, the prime

minister said non-resolution of the Jammu & Kashmir dispute was hampering the pace of positive development in the region. "Kashmir is the unfinished agenda of partition that needs immediate settlement as per the aspirations of the people of Kashmir and according to the relevant UN Security Council resolutions through an impartial plebiscite. At the same time, roots of terrorism stemming from our neighbors need to be curbed in our common interest," he added.

Shehbaz for drawing inspiration from martyrs, Ghaziz: As the nation observed Defence and Martyrs Day, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif urged the countrymen to draw inspiration from the martyrs and Ghazis to defend and rebuild Pakistan with the same spirit of September 6, 1965.

On his X timeline, the prime minister paid tribute to the sacrifices of soldiers and martyrs as well as all those who had fought valiantly for Pakistan's defence. "Let us draw inspiration from our Shuhada and Ghazis to defend and rebuild Pakistan with the same spirit of September, and in line with the vision of our Quaid, Muhammad Ali Jinnah by embracing the values of hard work, integrity, and compassion to chart a course towards a brighter future for our beloved Pakistan," he remarked.

Premier visits IGP Islamabad: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif visited the residence of Inspector General of Islamabad Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi to condole the death of his mother.

The prime minister prayed for peace for the departed soul and strength for bereaved family to bear the loss, according to a PM Office press release. "The grief of the passing of a great blessing like mother, stays with the bereaved person forever," the prime minister remarked. Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar also accompanied the prime minister.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif visited the residence of former federal minister Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan to condole the death of his sister. Expressing his deep grief, the prime minister prayed for peace for the departed soul and strength for the bereaved family to bear the loss, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar also accompanied the prime minister.

NA okays bill to regulate public gatherings in Capital

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Following in the footsteps of the Senate, the National Assembly on Friday approved a bill regulating public meetings in Islamabad, turning it into a law. The bill, is called the 'Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Act, 2024'.

The law, which is awaiting the assent of the president, will hand down a three-year jail term to people taking part in an unauthorised public meeting, while those committing an offence during such gatherings will be sentenced to 10 years in jail. The government will designate Sangjani, a suburb of Islamabad, or any other venue for the meetings, after which a gazette notification will be issued, the bill said.

According to the bill, the deputy commissioner will give permission, and if permission is not granted, then an appeal can be made to the chief commissioner. A review application can be submitted to the home secretary against the decision of the chief commissioner. Even after permission has been granted, the police can disperse the gathering at any time, the bill added.

For any meeting in Islamabad, an application must be made to the deputy commissioner at least seven days in advance, the bill stated, adding that the application should be made by the coordinator of the meeting. The meeting's location, time, objective, and number of participants must be stated in the application, it added.

The district magistrate will have the authority to ban the meeting. The reasons for banning the assembly shall be given in writing while the aggrieved person may appeal within fifteen days. "Provided that if the application is not filed earlier than seven days of the intended date of the assembly, the district magistrate may decline the permission if the event coordinator fails to provide justifiable and reasonable grounds for late filing of the application," the bill said.

Before granting permission, the district magistrate will assess the law and order situation and obtain security clearance from law enforcement agencies before allowing the meeting to take place. The district magistrate will also not permit any meeting outside the designated area. They can also modify the permit issued based on national security risk, fear of violence, and fear of deterioration of the law and order situation.

According to the bill, the government can declare a specific area of ??Islamabad as a red zone or high-security zone. The district magistrate can direct the officer-in-charge of the police station to disperse the assembly. If the meeting disrupts law and order, and does not disperse, the police have authority to disperse it by force, the bill stated.

The Senate passed a bill proposing up to three years imprisonment for participants of an unauthorised assembly in the federal capital. Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar told the house that the permission granted to the PTI to hold a rally in Islamabad was intact "as of now". The rules were suspended for the immediate consideration of the 'Peaceful Assembly and Public Order Bill 2024' bill seeking to empower the district magistrate to regulate and ban public gatherings in Islamabad.

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SC restores changes to NAB laws

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Supreme Court on Friday restored changes to the country's anti-graft laws, accepting the federal government's appeal against the court's Sept 15 verdict which struck down those amendments.

Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Qazi Faez Isa pronounced the verdict reserved by a five-member bench on June 6 after hearing intra-court appeals (ICAs) filed by the federal government and other parties. Judges of the bench — headed by CJP Isa and also including Justices Aminuddin Khan, Jamal Khan Mandokhail, Athar Minallah, and Hasan Azhar Rizvi — reached the courtroom where the chief justice announced the verdict.

In a 16-page verdict issued today, the five judges said they allowed the appeals "by setting aside" the Sept 15 judgment and dismissed the petition filed by Imran. "However, there is no order as to costs," the order added. "The chief justice and the judges of the Supreme Court are not the gatekeepers of parliament," the verdict observed. It further noted that whenever possible, the SC "must try to uphold legislation rather than rush to strike it down". "And if there be two or more interpretations of any legislation, to adopt the interpretation which upholds it," the verdict added.

The court also noted that Imran's petition and the Sept 2023 ruling "failed to establish that the amendments were unconstitutional". The Sept 15 ruling had restored corruption cases against public representatives, with prominent politicians who allegedly benefited from the amendments being likely to face cases again.

However, a month later, the apex

court had been seized with a number of ICAs — moved by the federal government as well as by private citizens Zuhair Ahmed Siddiqui, who was an accused in a corruption case but not a party to the challenges to the NAB amendments case, and Zahid Imran. Hearings on the matter in May had seen the judges debate whether to live-stream the case (as done on May 14) or not, before finally deciding against live broadcast due to concerns about the facility being politically misused.

Written order observed that the amendments to the NAB laws "did not decriminalise any offence" but "only changed what may be investigated by NAB itself and the forum of the criminal trial". Citing Justice Shah's dissent from the previous ruling, the order noted that the Sept 15 judgment "rewrites the Constitution, and also a number of statutes, by creating an artificial distinction between civil servants and public servants and elected holders of public office and persons in the service of Pakistan, which the minority opinion had also noted".

The court stressed that "every care should be taken to ensure" that neither the legislature nor the judiciary encroach onto the domain of the other. It highlighted that while the previous ruling had accepted the limit of Rs100 million under NAB standard operating procedures for cases that NAB "can investigate and send for trial but struck down legislation which had increased the limit to Rs500m".

The verdict noted that Imran did not approach the SC "in a bona fide manner" and that he "also did not have the requisite locus standi since the amendments neither adversely nor personally affected him (Imran)". "It does not suffice that the original jurisdiction of the

Supreme Court under Article 184(3) of the Constitution is exercised by simply mentioning that one or more fundamental rights are contravened," the order observed.

It added that the Sept 15 ruling "did not demonstrate how the amendments violated or infringed any of the fundamental rights which were cursorily mentioned therein". The verdict recalled that NAB Additional Prosecutor General Chaudhry Mumtaz Yousaf stated that the bureau supports the ICAs. Detailing on the origins of the National Accountability Ordinance 1999, the court said it was enacted 34 days after former military dictator Pervez Musharraf "forcibly assumed power after he was sacked".

It acknowledged that the manner in which NAO provisions were "applied, or were disregarded, led to the "widely-held perception that the ordinance primarily was an instrument of political victimisation and political engineering". Meanwhile, in his additional note, Justice Minallah "concerned that the impugned majority judgment is liable to be set aside".

However, he dismissed the federal government's appeal as in his opinion, it was "not competent under section 5 of the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act, 2023". At the same time, Justice Minallah held the appeals filed by the private citizens as maintainable and accepted them, consequently setting aside the Sept 15 ruling. Referring to Justice Shah's dissenting note from last year, Justice Minallah "affirmed to the effect that members of the armed forces and judges of the constitutional courts are not immune from accountability" under the NAO. "The detailed reasons shall be recorded later," the note said.

indebted to the martyrs who sacrificed their today for the tomorrow of the nation. The minister saluted the parents of Shaheed Ahmed Badr for the courage shown by them after the martyrdom of their son. Colonel (ret'd) Badruddin said he was proud of the sacrifice of his son in the line of duty. "The courage with which my son embraced martyrdom made me proud," he said. He said before the martyrdom, his son was told by his colleague that the enemy was right in front and there was a chance to escape from behind but he refused to retreat. He said his son embraced martyrdom with dignity and he found solace in knowing that his son fulfilled his duty till his last breath.

He said he was deeply grateful to the entire country for the sentiments expressed by the entire nation on the martyrdom of his son. It is worth a mention that Captain Ahmed Badr was martyred during an encounter with terrorists in Mir Ali area of North Waziristan in March this year.

father of the martyred army officer Colonel (ret'd) Badruddin had demonstrated remarkable composure and courage after the martyrdom of his son, who fought bravely against terrorists.

"The whole nation is proud of the unwavering spirit demonstrated by the martyr's father on the martyrdom of his son", the minister remarked. "Today we are safe in our homes because of the sacrifices of martyrs like Ahmed Badr" he said. He said that the government and the Pakistan Armed Forces were determined to uproot Fitnatul Khawarij from the country. He maintained that Pakistan came into being on the 27th of Ramazan which was proof that this country which was achieved after great sacrifices will exist till eternity. He said that in human history, two migrations took place in the name of Islam, one migration from Makkah to Medina and one migration to Pakistan in 1947.

Tarar said that the nation was

‘Nation will never forget sacrifices’

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Friday that the Pakistani nation was proud of martyrs like Captain Ahmed Badr who selflessly sacrificed their lives in line of duty.

The minister said this during his visit to the residence of Captain Ahmed Badr Shaheed, where he met with his father Colonel (ret'd) Badruddin and other relatives. He expressed heartfelt condolences to the family of martyred Captain Ahmed Badr and offered Fateha for his soul.

Terming Captain Ahmed Badr Shaheed as the pride of Pakistan, the information minister Attaullah Tarar said that the nation will never forget the sacrifice of Captain Ahmed Badr Shaheed. Tarar said that sacrifices of martyrs never go in vain and Fitnatul Khawarij will be rooted out from the soil of the motherland. He said that

Day of Defense & Martyrs Special ceremony held at Balahisar Fort



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A solemn ceremony was held at Balahisar Fort, Peshawar, in commemoration of the Day of Defense and Martyrs. Inspector General Frontier Corps (North),

Major General Anjum Riaz, led the event by laying flowers at the martyrs' memorial and offered Fatiha. The ceremony was attended by the families of the martyrs, who were honored for the ultimate sacri-

fices made by their loved ones in the defense of the nation. Major General Anjum Riaz personally met with the families, acknowledging their bravery and paying tribute to their fallen heroes.

Sept 6 is a day to foil nefarious designs of enemy: Saif

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Adviser to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Information and Public Relations, Barrister Dr. Saif, stated that September 6 is a day to foil the nefarious designs of the enemy. While paying tribute to the martyrs and veterans of September 6, Barrister Dr. Saif emphasized that the nation must unite to protect Pakistan from external enemies and internal corrupt mafias. On this day, we must also pledge to rid the country of the corrupt mafia associated with Form 47, alongside our external enemies. In his statement, Barrister Dr. Saif further said that the country is currently at greater risk from the fake government of Form 47 than from external enemies. The corrupt elite are devouring the nation like

termites, and the root cause of economic and social ills is the corrupt political aristocracy that has been imposed on the country for decades. As a result, the nation is now facing challenges such as inflation and unemployment. Until the elite, who are illegally clinging to power through Form 47, are removed, the situation will not improve. He stressed the need to rid the country of this corrupt mafia under the leadership of the founder of PTI (Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf). He further emphasized renewing the commitment to achieving true freedom under the leadership of PTI's founder and, by fulfilling this pledge, rescuing the nation from its current crises. Meanwhile, Barrister Dr. Saif hosted a dinner in honor of senior journalists from Peshawar, which was attended by bureau chiefs,

chief editors, and senior journalists, along with former provincial ministers and advisors on information, Shaukat Yousafzai and Kamran Bangash. During the meeting, there was a detailed discussion on the political situation and provincial matters. Barrister Dr. Saif said that journalism is an important pillar of the state, and therefore, the government will work with journalists for the development and prosperity of the province. He reiterated that the current government believes in freedom of the press and that constructive criticism will lead the province towards progress. He praised the journalists of Peshawar for always standing by the truth and expressed hope that the journalist community will continue to fully support the government in the province's development.



PESHAWAR: A man writing on a banner to pay tribute to Pakistani forces on the occasion of Defense and Martyrs Day outside Peshawar Press Club.

PHC handovers 18 vehicles to Senior Civil Judges F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court has handed over new vehicles to 18 senior civil judges of the subordinate courts. A simple ceremony was held at the Peshawar High Court in this regard, which was attended by Chief Justice Peshawar High Court Justice Ihtesham Ibrahim, Senior Judge Justice Ejaz Anwar, Registrar Ikhtar Khan, Additional Registrars Memrez Khan Khilji, Hidayatullah, and other principal staff and officers.

On this occasion, in the presence of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court Justice Ihtesham Ibrahim, 18 senior civil judges of the family courts were handed over new vehicles. The Chief Justice said that these new vehicles will enable the judges of the subordinate courts to perform their duties more efficiently.

Moreover, practical steps will be taken to resolve the issues faced by judicial officers so that they can discharge their responsibilities without any hindrance. These new vehicles are also the beginning of solving the problems of judicial officers.

Pesco notifies shutdown schedule

PESHAWAR (APP): Pesco has notified power shutdown in various areas of Peshawar, Mardan, Haripur and Bannu due to maintenance work.

According to Pesco, power supply will remain suspended from Regi Model Town grid station on 9th September from 9AM to 1PM, resultantly consumers RMT 1,2,3, Media Dorani, Sheikh Yasin, Professor, Regi and Safdar Abad feeders will face inconvenience.

Power supply will remain suspended from Mardan grid station on 9th and 11th September from 8AM to 2PM, resultantly consumers Bank Road, Muslim Abad, Nisata Road, Ahmad Abad, Misri Khan, Rural 1, PRC, New Taru, Eid Gah, New Sheikh Maltoon, Shah dandh, Zando, Col Sher Khan Shaheed, Tawas Babini feeders will face inconvenience.

Power supply will remain suspended from Pabbi grid station on 10th September from 9AM to 12PM, resultantly consumers Nowshera, Abakhel, New Bara Banda, Behran Kale, Khashgi Tube Well, Khashgi Express feeders will face inconvenience.

Similarly, power supply will remain suspended from Nowshera City grid station on 9th and 10th September from 9AM to 12PM, resultantly consumers Nowshera, Abakhel, New Bara Banda, Behran Kale, Khashgi Tube Well, Khashgi Express feeders will face inconvenience.

Thai delegation discusses Buddhist, Gandahara civilization with Governor

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Faisal Karim Kundi, on Friday emphasized ongoing efforts to promote religious tourism related to various civilizations in the province and noted the vast opportunities available in religious tourism.

The Governor said this in a meeting with an 8-member delegation from Thailand here at the Governor's House.

The delegation, led by Chaipayon Suk-learn Director General of the Ministry of Culture, included Anil Sakya among other members.

During the meeting, discussions focused on matters related to the Gandhara Buddhist exhibition in Bangkok and potential areas for bilateral cooperation.

The delegation and the Governor reviewed various aspects of including Gandhara civilization artifacts from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the Bangkok exhibition.

The conversation also discussed on joint cultural

and art projects. Governor Kundi welcomed the Thai delegation to the Governor House and presented them with souvenirs.

Governor Kundi highlighted that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is home to over 2,000 sites of Gandhara civilization.

He also mentioned plans to invite various ambassadors and religious figures to the Governor House soon to seek suggestions on promoting religious tourism.

Additionally, he announced that the Gandhara Buddhist exhibition and symposium will be held in Peshawar and Swat.

Governor Kundi advocated for art and culture exchanges between Thailand and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, particularly focusing on Buddhist civilization.

The Thai delegation shared gifts and assured fully support for cultural exchange. They said that Pakistan is rich of Buddhism civilization.

They said that there is good diplomatic relations between the two countries

and we want to develop it more.

Meanwhile, Governor Faisal Karim Kundi emphasized the need to modernize the province's agriculture sector to achieve economic prosperity.

He stressed the importance of developing a comprehensive strategy with the support of international organizations.

The Governor made these remarks during a meeting with Farrukh Toirov, Deputy Representative of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in Pakistan, who visited the Governor House in Peshawar.

Provincial Assembly member Arbab Zarak Khalil and prominent social figure Arbab Madad Khan were also present. The discussion focused on promoting agriculture in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, providing training and facilities to farmers, and exploring various suggestions.

Governor Kundi highlighted the province's unique position in fruit and vegetable production, noting the presence of research

centers like Tarnab and Ratta Kulachi, as well as the Rud-Kohi irrigation system and the Chashma Right Bank Canal.

He also mentioned the upcoming Chashma Lift Canal project and the significant presence of sugar mills in the province, with five out of eight located in Dera Ismail Khan.

The Governor pointed out that the livestock and fisheries sectors also require attention, as individuals in these fields are awaiting economic benefits.

He stressed the need for increased cooperation with Central Asia to promote agriculture and called on international organizations, especially the FAO, to focus on these areas.

He assured that the Governor House would provide full support to enhance production, improve quality, and ensure packaging meets global standards.

The meeting concluded with an agreement to work on developmental and welfare projects based on various future proposals.

SSG officer Capt Muhammad Iqbal Shaheed (HJ)

A role model for young army officers remembered

PESHAWAR (APP): Rich tributes were paid to Captain Muhammad Iqbal Khan Shaheed (Hilal-e-Jurat) on 59th defense day of Pakistan for his indomitable courage and heroic battlefield performance at Siachin glaciers where he embraced martyrdom on September 25, 1987.

"Majority of people die on the bed, others in road accidents but few lay their lives for the noble cause of defending their motherland and become immortal. Captain Muhammad Iqbal Khan Shaheed (Hilal-e-Juraat) Shaheed was one of the brave officer of Pakistan Army, who on the world highest battle zone Siachin embraced martyrdom on September 25, 1987 defending his country against the enemy and immortalized himself forever," said Brigadier Retd Mahmood Khan, former Secretary Law and Order Fata while talking to APP.

"Death is inexorable. One can die in a road accident or suffer the last rigorous interminably on a Charpoy (bed) but I want to face death and look it in the eye like a true warrior," the 27-year old young army officer, who died as bachelor, told his friends and relatives just two months before leaving the mortal world.

Born in Pashtoon Garhi in district Nowshera on November 15, 1960 at Haji Mir Ahmad Khan's residence, he got Commission in the Pakistan Army's ASC in 1982. He faced enemy at an altitude of above 21,000 feet at Siachen glaciers and fought like a lion. "He faced two enemies-the indian

Army and the harsh weather-with steadfastness, bravery and strong determination," said Brigadier Mahmood Shah.

Shams Khan, brother of Capt Iqbal Shaheed said that he was pious and a man of good moral character and whenever came home, he would hug Shabbir, our servant irrespective of his clothes' conditions and little keeping in mind that he (Iqbal) is an officer.

Shams said just two months before his martyrdom, Capt Iqbal wrote his last famous will and handed it over to his childhood friend Ghayasuddin and told him not to disclose it before his death.

The will of Capt Iqbal says: "I owe 16 days of fasting and took a bank loan of Rs. 900 from a fund reserved for science student. The administration block of the Peshawar University would have the necessary particulars. I owe this amount and it must be paid to the Bank."

The will further said, "My grave should be left unpalstered and let it be only as high as the Shariah allows. No flowers, no sehra, no dupatta for my grave. All these are rituals and quite outside of Islamic teachings. Prayer is the real thing. There should be nothing like a chehlum or anniversary for me. Don't cook rice and call people and give alms on these occasions. Nothing of the sort is permitted by Islamic injunctions. Charity can be given at any time and not necessary at these occasions. Instead of cooking rice and calling people, let the

amount be spent on paving a street or constructing a drain or give it to a mosque. This way it will be a continuing charity. There is no need for exhibition and ostentation, which will not be a blessing but a curse. If the amount received from the government after my death is of the order of Rs.50000 or more, fully Rs.40,000 be distributed amongst the poor and the deprived as an atonement for the prayers I did not offer and the fast I did not keep. Stop my relatives from doing anything un-Islamic after my death. If they want to cook a deg (rice) on a Friday or do something similar, don't let them. Let the amount be given in alms on another occasion. Anyone wanting to do me good after my death should recite Darood Sharif on the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) as often as possible and offer its blessings for my soul."

He also wrote the following last testament: "Let the green pack and the high-neck jersey go back to company stores and the bills for "langar" (mess), washerman and cobbler be paid."

Shams said that later on August 23, 1987, Capt Iqbal wrote his last letter to Ghayasuddin asking him to pray to Allah Almighty for his good health, grant him the courage to follow the right path and serve Islam and bestow him the life of a victorious Ghazi or the death of a Shaheed.

Brigadier (Retd) Rasheed Malik (Sitara-e-Juraat), the then captain and was accompanying Capt Iqbal in the "Qiadat" operation said "We

received orders to take back the control of the highest posts of Rana and Akbar in Siachin. Enemy was monitoring our activities from these posts and created problems as these posts were of prime strategic importance," he recalled.

"We took control of Rana post but majority members of our party either embraced martyrdom or received injuries including Capt Saalik Cheema (Sitara-e-Juraat) shaheed during this operation. We asked for help and Capt Iqbal was directed to reach for our assistance. He reached swiftly and led his platoon from the front side to take control of Rana post" the eye witnessed Brigadier recalled.

Brigadier Rasheed said that he (Rasheed) and Capt Imran were seriously wounded while leading their platoons from right and left sides respectively while taking control of Rana post. He said the valiant Captain Iqbal was almost alone now in the battlefield and fought like a chivalrous warrior and took control of Rana post despite receiving serious injuries.

Brig Malik said that Captain Iqbal was further directed to proceed towards Akbar post to disconnect the communication and transportation line of the enemy between the two posts and if possible take control of Akbar post, as without it victory would be meaningless.

During the operation, he said the Captain Iqbal received bullet injuries on his legs but did not lose courage, determination and proceeded forward.

Defense and Martyrs Day observed in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Defense and Martyrs Day was observed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including erstwhile Fata on Friday where glowing tributes were paid to all the martyrs and ghazis, who sacrificed for protection of the motherland.

6th September is a historic day in the history of Pakistan as 59 years ago on this day, our brave soldiers despite limited resources and weapons defeated a three times bigger enemy and destroyed the nefarious designs of the aggressor with support of the nation.

The people from all walks of life including senior citizens, academics, farmers, civil society, human rights activists, military personnel, farmers, laborers and media men presented glowing tributes to all martyrs and ghazis of Pakistan, who rendered matchless sacrifices while fighting against the enemy forces during 1948, 1965 and 1971 wars, 1999 Kargil conflict, war against terrorism.

The entire nation paid homage to all martyrs of armed forces of Pakistan

including recipients of prestigious Nishan-e-Haider (NH), Captain Raja Muhammad Sarwar Shaheed, Major Muhammad Tufail Shaheed, Major Aziz Bhutti Shaheed, Major Muhammad Akram Shaheed, Major Hussain Shaheed, Major Shabbir Sharif Shaheed, Lance Naik Muhammad Mehruz Shaheed, Pilot Officer Rashid Minhas Shaheed, Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed, Havaladar Lalak Jan Shaheed and Naik Saif Ali Janjua Shaheed decorated with Hilal-e-Kashmir (Equivalent to Nishan-e-Haider) on Defense and Martyrs Day.

Great tributes were paid to the 65 War hero, Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed (Nishan-i-Haider) who successfully defended the strategic BRB canal near Lahore for five days where embracing shahadat after being hit by an enemy tank shell on September 10, 1965.

Squadron Leader Muhammad Mahmood Alam popularly known as M.M. Alam shot down two

enemy hunter aircrafts and damaged three others on 6th September 1965 besides destroyed five more enemy hunter aircrafts in less than a minute on September 7th, which was unprecedented in the history of Pakistan Air Force.

Flight Lieutenant Imtiaz Ahmad Bhatti and Squadron Leader Sarfaraz Ahmad Rafiqi thwarted the nefarious designs of the enemy on Halwara and destroyed several enemy's aircrafts. Squadron Leader Sarfaraz Rafiqi fought bravely in the 65 War and embraced martyrdom. Similarly, Squadron Leader Sajjad Haider exhibited exceptional leadership, indomitable courage and flying skills in operations during the said war.

The legacy of unmatched gallantry and sacrifices of our Army Officers and Jawans started with the martyrdom of Capt Raja Muhammad Sarwar Shaheed (NH) in 1948 Kashmir War, was carried forward by Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed (NH) in 1965 war, Shabbir Sharif Shaheed in 1971 War and Capt Karnal Sher Khan

(NH) and Havaladar Lalak Jan Shaheed during the Kargil war in 1999.

Captain Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed (Nishan-e-Haider) was one of those celebrated officers of Pakistan Army whose indomitable courage, unmatched valour, devotion to duty, leadership qualities and heroic battlefield performance during Kargil war was highly praised by the Indian Army.

"Death was meaningless for the 29-year old celebrated young officer of the 12th Northern Light Infantry (NLI) Regiment, Capt. Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed who fought like a lion against both the enemy and harsh weather on an altitude of 17,000 feet on Line of Control (LoC) at Gultary mountainous region at Tiger Hills near Kargil and inflicted heavy human and material losses to the enemy," said Brigadier retd Mahmood Shah, former Secretary Law and Order erstwhile Fata while talking to APP.

True to his name, Capt. Sher Khan conducted many successful raids in the

enemy's area and during one such raid, he went inside the enemy camp where he inflicted heavy losses to them. During the fierce battle, he received a burst of machine gun fire in the chest and embraced Shahadat on July 5, 1999. His epic action in the battlefield true to his name had earned him the title of "Loin of Kargil".

The courageous feat of Capt Sher Khan by accomplishing the assigned mission of forcing the enemy to withdraw left the Indian commander Brig M.P.S Bajwa outrightly impressed by his splendid battlefield performance as well as indomitable courage and wrote a citation letter, requesting Pakistan that Capt Sher Khan Shaheed has fought bravely and deserved recognition.

Later, Capt Karnal Sher Khan Shaheed (1970-1999) and Havaladar Lalak Jan Shaheed (1967-1999) of the 12th NLI Regiment were decorated with the prestigious Nishan-e-Haider, the highest military gallantry award of Pakistan posthumously.

Captain Sher embraced

Shahadat in the Gultary region near Tiger Hills Kargil on July 5, 1999 and became immortalized. He was the first army officer from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, who was awarded Nishan-e-Haider.

Brigadier (Retd) Mahmood Shah said that Capt Sher Khan Shaheed had followed the footsteps of his predecessors including Major Aziz Bhatti Shaheed and other martyrs of 65 War and added a new chapter of gallantry in the history of Pakistan Army.

"September 6, 1965 was a day when India attacked Pakistan in darkness without a warning or a declaration of war by violating all international laws, conventions and agreements. The whole Pakistani nation along with their valiant military forces stood up against the coward enemy and showed unmatched valour in 1965 War by defeating Indian forces," he said.

Brig Mahmood Shah said Pakistan Air Force and Pakistan Artillery had broken the back of the enemy in 65 War. "During the 65 war, Pakistan had occupied about 1,617 square miles of

Indian territory and we were in a strong position to occupy Delhi if war continued for a few more days as the morale of enemy troops was completely shattered," Brig Mehmood Shah who participated in 65 War, recalled. "Most of the enemy officers of 1965 war had served with Pakistani commanders during the second World (War II) and the latter knew about their so called fighting abilities and war skills that helped our forces to foil their evil designs," he added.

He said shooting down of two Indian warplanes inside LOC one fell in Azad Kashmir and other in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir besides capturing of an Indian Pilot on February 27, 2019 had proved the highest professionalism, indomitable courage and outstanding fighting skills of the PAF.

The unity exhibited by the nation after the Indian air strike on Balakot on February 27, 2019 was the same as that of the 65 War, he said.

Brig Mehmood said that the February 27 successful action of PAF has clearly

testified that our armed forces were fully capable of giving a befitting response to the enemy in case of any misadventure by it.

Ambassador Retd Manzoorul Haq said that India had attacked Pakistan on September 6, 1965 in darkness which was without warning or declaration of war by violating all agreements and international laws, adding the whole Pakistani nation stood up with their valiant forces against the coward enemy and defeated Indian forces despite limited resources.

He said national songs of Melody Queen, Noor Jehan had infused new spirit of patriotism in the nation during the said war.

Brig Mehmood Shah said a handful elements were making negative propaganda to create hatred against national institutions, adding a powerful Pakistan Army was guarantee to peace and stability of the country.

He said that Pakistan has all the resources and abilities to achieve heights of economic glory if we all worked with dedication in our respective fields.



In brief

Murder of teacher flayed F.P. Report

BUNER: Director RDO Nor Bastia has strongly condemned killing of primary school teacher at Jangdara area of Khudokhail tehsil, in front of her father, by refusing forced marriage. According to details, Director demanded arrested of murderers involved in the crime. She argued for stern actions across the board to avoid such mishaps in the future. Director RDO Buner Noor Bastia, has expressed deep concern over the incident adding that this incident has caused concern among women workers. She said it has spread deep concern in women workers and they are suffering from insecurity. Madam Noor Bastia has called for concrete steps to be taken to remedy forced marriage and abduction, threats and harassment against women especially working women.

Seminar on Mpox arranged F.P. Report

NOWSHERA: Medical Teaching Institute (MTI) Qazi Hussain Ahmad Complex Nowshera arranged a seminar to orient doctors and medical students about Mpox. During Seminar, medical professionals were informed about signs and symptoms of disease and precautions needed to contain spread of virus. Doctors were also informed about protocol and treatment of patients suffering from Mpox. Dean, Nowshera Medical College who was the Chief Guest appreciated the efforts of organizers to hold a seminar on Mpox. Later, a walk was carried out the aware people about the Mpox virus and precautionary measures.

Three sons kill father

FAISALABAD (INP): In an unfortunate incident, three sons in Faisalabad gunned down their father over a property dispute. According to the heirs, the deceased sold the land and distributed Rs500 rupees among his sons. As per the Police, the father started to feel burdened, so they got rid of them, after quarreling soon after the distribution of wealth among his sons. Police said that the father was shot dead by three sons in Medina Town. Faisalabad Police said all three after the shooting incident shot and escaped. The deceased had sold the land and distributed Rs500 million among the sons, the heirs. There was a dispute between the sons over keeping the father and after a bitter argument, they killed their father. "One accused has been arrested and a search has been going on," Police said.

Minister's uncle passed away F.P. Report

BANNU: Minister for Public Health Engineering Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Malik Pakhtun Khan's uncle, former SP Nasrullah Jan died after a long illness. His funeral prayer, offered in Mirakhel. Provincial ministers, members of the National and Provincial Assembly, district administration, police officers and provincial ministers attended the funeral prayer. Housing minister Dr. Amjad Ali Khan, ANP Central Vice President Senator Baz Muhammad Khan, Leader of Aqame Banu Malik Nimat Ali Khan Advocate, Former IG Ghaniur Rehman, F-rmer Provincial Assembly Candidate Muhammad Ullah Dawar, Human Rights Leader Malik Niaz Ali Khan, Leaders and workers of political parties participated in large numbers.

Defense Day marks in Bara

F.P. Report

BARA: The Defense Day was observed on Friday in tehsil Bara to pay homage to the soldier who embraced Shahadat for the sake of the country.

Pakistan marks Sept.6 every year to remember the sacrifices of armed forces for the defense of the country during the 1956 war with India. The day was dawned with special prayers for the solidarity of the country and prayers offered for the martyrs who sacrificed their lives in defense of the country.

In this connection a colorful program under the auspice of Bara Rifles was organized in Fort Slop tehsil Bara that was attended Commandant Bara Rifle Muhammad Ali Adil, Deputy Commissioner, Khyber, Capt (Retd) Sanaullah Khan District Police Officer (DPO), Khyber Mazar Iqbal,



Assistant Commissioner, Bara Sahabuddin besides large number tribal elders' students and residents of the area.

Addressing on the occasion, speakers paid rich tribute to the martyrs of 1965 war and said the forces displayed extraordinary courage and spirit and thwarted the evil design of the enemy. The unmatched sacrifices of the troops ensured security of the country, they remarked.

They vowed that the entire nation stands firm with their forces to repulse any offense from the enemy. Earlier, a floral wreath was laid at the

memorial of the martyrs besides a smart contingent of the forces presented salute and the national anthem was sung.

Students presented national songs; speeches and players exhibited their talents in the sport competitions of Gymnastic, Tug of War, Shot put etc. and culture music that was applauded by the audience. A rally while holding the 18 hundreds meter national flag was also conducted at Fort Slop that was attended by a large number of people from different walks of life.

DPO announces action against drug dealers

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The district police officer said that there is no room for drug sellers in the district and police have been strictly directed to crackdown them in every nook and corner of the district.

Briefing local journalists at his office, the DPO said that a total of 32 drug sellers and users had been arrested during the last 15 days. He said that police had also recovered 48 kilograms of hashish, 530-gram heroin and 3000 liters of poisonous liquor so far. He said that 9 of the drug addicts had been admitted to various hospitals for recovery and rehabilitation.

DPO claimed that 9 of the drug sellers had been convicted in courts. He said that drugs were a menace that destroyed youths especially students. He said the police officials supporting and assisting the drug sellers and users would be dealt with iron hand.

Admn agrees with local

elder on load shedding:

Area elders and the district administration agreed that power outages on the Balambat feeder would be decreased to 6 hours instead of 12 hours a day. A delegation of elders led by MPA Azam Khan in this regard met the Lower Dir deputy commissioner Muhammad Arif Khan and Pesco executive engineer Muhammad Zeb Khan at Timergara and informed them about the public sentiment.

The JI former district nazim Muhammad Rasool Khan, Malik Arsalan, PML-N district president Malik Farooq Iqbal, PPP activist Malik Javed Iqbal, ANP leader Malik Sajjad Yousafzai, Malik Aslam Pervaz, PTI activist Malik Rahatullah, Malik Ali Bakht and Sawal Muhammad were part of the delegation.

The DC and XEN Pesco were informed that people of the area had fed up with over 12 hours of power outage. The parties agreed to

decrease the duration of power outage to 6 hours instead of 12 hours a day. The DC asked the elders to inform the power consumers to pay their bills regularly and avoid power theft on the feeder. The XEN announced that there would be no outage from 10 PM to 10 AM.

AIOU deny rumors about fee hike: The Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) Islamabad regional director Maaz Ahmad has said the university has not increased its examination fees but degree fee has been included in it.

Talking to local journalists at his office, he said the students would now get their detailed marks certificate and degrees at home after completion of courses. He said that baseless news was being spread about the increase in the varsity's fees on social media. He asked the students to complete their admission process on time and not heed to the false news.

Journalist briefed on anti-polio drops drive

F.P. Report

KARAK: Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) along with District Health Officer, Staff Officer, Polio Coordinator briefed media personnel regarding polio vaccination.

According to details, journalists of the district including the press club president and the cabinet participated in the briefing. In the briefing, the Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) gave a detailed briefing on all the issues related to the treatment of polio in Karak district, especially on the positive polio germs in the drain water and said that after the reports, it was found that this germ was

from Jacobabad germs. There were similarities after which investigation was started and as a result now this family has also been traced. The family came from Jacobabad which has also moved back to Jacobabad.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) further said that the next three campaigns are very important in which all children below the age of five years will be given polio eradication drops because polio disease not only cripples children for life but also it becomes a lifelong disease for parents. The Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) requested the cooperation of the media in this regard and all the journalists of the

district assured all possible cooperation.

Meeting on water supply scheme held: In the meeting regarding Sunda Manzai Water Supply Scheme was attended by MPA Khurshed Khattak, Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance Karak, representatives of Mall Pakistan and officials of public health department and local residents participated.

DO Public Health gave a detailed briefing to the forum about the scheme and informed about the problems faced, DC Karak assured to take concrete steps with the support of community members to solve the problems and also speed up the work on the scheme. Orders were issued to start at the earliest.

Hafizabad secure six positions in BISE exams

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: The students of the district secured 6 positions in the annual intermediate examinations 2024 administered by the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education Gujranwala. The students of the district achieved great success in the Gujranwala Board Intermediate Examinations by proving their ability and hard work and bagged 6 prominent positions in various categories.

According to the details, Umayim Tariq of Punjab College Hafizabad secured second position in the board in pre-medical female category with 1155 marks. Muhammad Attique of KIPS College Hafizabad secured third position in the board in pre-medical male category with 1139 marks. Muhammad Abdul Rafay of Punjab College Hafizabad bagged 1117 marks and bagged second position in pre-engineering male category. Fakhira of Superior College for Girls, Pindi

Bhattian bagged 1114 marks and bagged the first position in the arts female category. Shahid Ali of Government Degree College Pindi Bhattian got first position in arts male category by getting 1074 marks and Awaiz Sarfraz of KIPS College Hafizabad got second position in arts male category by getting 1070 marks.

Academic and literary organisations of all the district have congratulated the students who got positions in Gujranwala Board, their teachers, heads of their educational institutions and their parents for achieving great and record-breaking success.

Laborer killed in road mishap: A speedy dumper hit a motorcycle near Channi Kareem Dad, resulting the death of a 15-year-old poor laborer while the driver of the dumper escaped.

According to the details, Shoaib, the fifteen-year-old son of Muhammad Arshad, a resident of Mohallah Bahawalpura, was riding a motorcycle for labor when he was hit by a speedy dumper

near Channi Kareem Dad, as a result of which he died on the spot while the driver of the dumper escaped. The dead body shifted to the city morgue for further investigation.

Admn holds event regarding Defense Day: A programme was organized by the district administration to celebrate the 6th September Defense Day with national enthusiasm.

The main flag hoisting ceremony will be held at the district complex where the Deputy Commissioner and DPO will lead the flag hoisting and rally. On the occasion of Defense Day, programs will be organized by the Education Department, Sports Department, Health Department and all other departments. Speech contests, national songs and other programmes will be organized in educational institutions to pay tribute to the martyrs of the Pakistan Army and Punjab Police for their eternal sacrifices, while rallies will also be taken out by all the departments.



QUETTA: Students holding a protest in favour of their demands.

Students hold protest against school admn F.P. Report

LARKANA: The student of Government Pilot Higher Secondary School Larkana city protested in front of press club against the alleged illegality by the management of the school.

I am studying in the 8th class in Government Pilot Higher Secondary School, he accused and said that today without any reason, the teacher Farhan Qureshi, who teaches math subject, kicked me out of the class without any reason. has been expelled from the school, he requested the Chief Minister of Sindh and Provincial Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah on the media.

He said that legal action should be taken against the teacher of the said school, Farhan Qariq, and the principal of the school, and my admission to the school should be restored otherwise. I will be forced to take extreme measures which will be the responsibility of the school management.

Murderer imprisoned for lifetime: The model court of Larkana has sentenced the accused to life imprisonment and a fine of Rs 10 lakh after being found guilty of the murder case. The case of the laborer Elaha Bakhsh, son of Karim Dayo Bharru, who was killed in the border, was heard, where after the crime was proven, the court sentenced the accused Muhammad Peril Abaro to life imprisonment and a fine of 10 lakh rupees.

It should be noted that on December 28, 2019 the accused shot and killed the son of Alaha Bakhsh, son of Karim Dayo Bharru, in the limits of Hasan Wahan police station. Such a case was registered against the accused Muhammad Peril Abaro on the complaint of Qalandar Bakhsh Bharru, the brother of the deceased, on which the court acquitted him on the basis of evidence. Punished him.

Crackdown against narcotics F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: The newly posted Station House Officer (SHO) police station, Landi Kotal said that an operation will be conducted to curtain narcotic smuggling in the area. Speaking to the local journalist in Landi Kotal press club, district Khyber the newly appointed SHO said that although unfavorable conditions prevailed but the police force was competent enough to tackle any anti-social element.

He maintained that being a bordering locality, tehsil Landi Kotal was a paradise for narcotics peddlers but he was determined to curtail all kinds of narcotics businesses and make Landi Kotal free of the curse. Appreciating the role of the media, he added that the journalists' were the eyes and ears of the society therefore they should utilize their energies for highlighting problems of laymen.

On a query, the police officer maintained that transfer and posting was the routine business of the district police department, however under his supervision no injustice would be done to an innocent one.

Defense Day celebrated in Mardan

F.P. Report

MARDAN: In other parts of the country, Pakistan Defense Day was also celebrated with full enthusiasm and national spirit in Mardan. In this regard, a rally was held under the leadership of Deputy Commissioner Mardan Mian Behzad Adil, In addition to the students of various government schools, administration and officers of government departments, government officials and a large number of civil society participated in the rally.

The participants carried banners. On this occasion, loud slogans of Pakistan Zindabad and Pakistan Army were raised and great tributes were paid to the martyrs of Pakistan Army. On this occasion, Deputy Commissioner Mian Behzad Adil, DHO Dr. Javed Iqbal, DEO Male Zahid Muhammad, DEO Female Samina Ghani, ADC Usman Ali and Press Club President Bashir Adil said that the nation should remember its martyrs. We are proud of the sacrifices and the Pakistani nation will protect the country's security with its armed forces and will not hesitate to make any sacrifice in this regard.

Meanwhile, member Provincial Assembly Abdul Salam Afridi stated that resolving the issues of citizens at their doorstep is our top priority. Since the inception of Water and Sanitation Services Company Mardan (WSSCM) the cleanliness of Mardan city has been significantly improved. Pakistan Tehreek Insaf Provincial government is striving to address the challenges faced by the companies. He expressed these views during his visit to WSSCM.

On the occasion, Chairman Board of Directors Engineer Adil Nawaz, Directors BoD Haroon Rashid and Javed Hussain gave a detailed briefing to the Member Provincial Assembly on the company's operations, performance, and challenges.

The briefing revealed that six hundred and seventy nine (679) sanitation and water supply staff were transferred from TMA Mardan to the company under SAMA agreement in 2016, out of which one hundred and ninety six (196) staff have been retired. Under the SAMA agreement, TMA is supposed to provide funds for the salaries of sanitation staff and electricity bills but so far no

compliance been made from TMA Mardan. If TMA provides funds timely, the financial challenges faced by the company shall be minimized. WSSCM is collecting garbage from eighty percent household on daily basis and four hundred and thirty five kilometers drains is cleaning periodically.

Water Quality tests are conducted bi-annually through PCRWR to ensure the provision of clean and safe drinking water to the citizens. MPA Abdul Salam Afridi expressed satisfaction upon the briefing and stated that meeting will be arranged to discuss and sort out the issues highlighted by the company officials, with the provincial minister of local government.

He mentioned that the provincial government of Pakistan Tehreek Insaf has established sanitation companies in the seven divisional headquarters to ensure safe drinking water and improved sanitation services. Chairman Board of Directors WSSCM Engineer Adil Nawaz thanked MPA Abdul Salam Afridi and stated that despite of limited resources, the company is providing improved sanitation services to the citizens of Mardan.

‘A call to action for PML-N leadership’

Saif-ur-Rehman

A recent social media post has gone viral, highlighting the Pakistan Muslim League (N) party's long-standing issue of neglecting loyal workers and activists in times of ease. The post emphasizes the need for party leadership to recognize and appreciate their dedicated workers, who stand by them through thick and thin.

The article argues that

this behavior is a major weakness of the party and suggests that they should learn from their mistakes. It highlights the importance of valuing loyalty and dedication, citing examples of party leaders who have neglected their workers in the past.

The workers called on party leaders, including President Shehbaz Sharif, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, and other ministers, to take actions and change their behavior. They sug-

gest that leaders should follow the example of Deputy Chairman Senate Syed Al Khan and Federal Minister Engineer Amir Muqam, who are known for their accessibility and dedication to party workers.

By valuing loyalty and dedication, the Pakistan Muslim League (N) party can strengthen its foundation and build a more loyal and dedicated workforce. Will the party leadership take heed of this call to action? Only time will tell.

LG key for delivery of services at gross root level

F.P. Report

MARDAN: City Mayor Mardan, Himayat Ullah Mayar, emphasized the critical role of local governments in addressing public issues effectively due to their direct proximity to the community.

Speaking at a dialogue session organized by the German Development Agency GIZ, FOFOF, and U Logo at TMA Hall Mardan, City Mayor Mardan highlighted that local governments are better positioned than provincial and central governments to tackle issues related to education, health, water, and sanitation.

He praised the participatory decision-making aspect of local governance, which allows citizens to be involved in decisions that affect their lives. This participatory approach not only makes the decision-making process more transparent but also holds it accountable to the people. Additionally, local governments play a vital role in raising political awareness and training citizens in democratic processes.

The session also featured remarks from Nusrat Ara, a member of the District Reconciliation Committee Mardan, Haris Karim, Shabnam, and others, with

the TMO Mardan in attendance. The dialogue included participation from male and female councilors, minority communities, and civil society members.

Mayor pointed out that while local governments face challenges such as financial resource constraints, administrative inefficiencies, and provincial government interference, they still offer significant opportunities to strengthen democracy and improve public service delivery. He noted that local governments are crucial for developing and implementing projects at the community level, addressing local issues, and contributing to regional development.

The event underscored the importance of a robust and effective local government system, which forms an essential part of any country's administrative structure. Unlike members of the national assembly, whose responsibilities include legislation and policy-making at the provincial and national levels, local government officials focus on community-specific projects and issues.

Organizers Shahabuddin and Abroo Haider stressed that the local government system provides a direct platform for citizens to partici-

pate in addressing and improving local issues. They highlighted the crucial role of municipal institutions in delivering effective services and managing local affairs.

DDAC meeting held: District Emergency Officer Syed Shoaib Mansoor attended the introductory meeting of District Development Advisory Committee Mardan. An introductory meeting was held under the chairmanship of DEDIC Chairman Zarshad Anjum Members of Mardan Provincial Assembly Iftikhar Ali Mashwani, Tufail Anjum, Abdul Salam Afridi, and representatives of all institutions were invited. Strategies for sustainable development and emergency preparedness in the district were discussed.

District Emergency Officer Syed Shoaib Mansoor while briefing the committee about the emergency services of Rescue 1122, ongoing activities and capabilities across the district highlighted the importance of the institution, Rescue 1122 is ready to deal with the natural and sudden situation in the district. Rescue 1122 is equipped with modern equipment and trained personnel are guarding people's life and property day and night.



WELLINGTON: Maori Queen Nga Wai hono i te po Paki accompanies the king's coffin in a flotilla of canoes towards Mount Taupiri.

Rift between Parkland massacre survivor, families of dead erupts

FORT LAUDERDALE, Fla. (AP): A nasty rift between the most seriously wounded survivor of the 2018 Parkland school massacre and some families of the 17 murdered erupted in court in a fight over dueling lawsuit settlements each side recently reached with the shooter as opposing attorneys accused each other of lying.

The immediate fight is over a June agreement survivor Anthony Borges and his parents reached with Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School shooter Nikolas Cruz that would give Borges rights to Cruz's name and image, approval over any interviews he might do and a \$400,000 annuity left Cruz by his deceased mother. Attorneys for the families of slain students Meadow Pollack, Luke Hoyer and Alaina Petty, and survivor Maddy Wilford, quickly countered with their own \$190 million settlement with Cruz.

But as Circuit Judge Carol-Lisa Phillips learned, the mutual animosity started during negotiations over a \$25 million settlement reached in 2021 with Broward County schools when the families of those killed insisted Borges receive \$1 less than they would as an acknowledgement that they suffered the greater loss. Borges' attorney, Alex Arreaza, believed his client deserved \$5 million from that pot as Borges will have a lifetime of medical expenses. That resulted in his client being kicked out of the group when he wouldn't budge. The fight continued during negotiations over a \$127 million settlement the families and surviving victims reached with the FBI. The Borgeses eventually reached their own settlements.

Borges, 21, was shot five times in the torso and legs. The once-promising soccer star nearly bled to death. "The Borgeses are tired of being treated like second-class citizens," Arreaza said after the hearing. "We never wanted to air that out before, but the reality is that they threw us out of the group because they wanted to dictate what we are supposed to get, and the Borgeses have every right to ask for what they asked for."

But David Brill, the lead attorney for the Pollack, Hoyer and Petty families and Wilford, said Arreaza has insulted the families by telling them he was tired of hearing about their dead loved ones and that he exaggerated how much Borges' future medical costs will be. "This bad blood, on our side we have repeatedly done what is right for the Borgeses, notwithstanding that history, at every turn, even on this one. And this is the thanks we get," Brill said after the hearing.

Phillips had to step in numerous times during 90-minute session as the sides yelled over each other and accused each other of dishonesty. In exacerbation, the judge at one point made a semi-joke that the animosity level was so high she felt like she was presiding over a contested divorce - and that she was granting it.

The immediate fight over the dueling settlements comes in two parts. First, Brill argued state law precludes Borges from acquiring rights to Cruz's name and likeness and any money he might earn from his story as Cruz was stripped of those when he was convicted.

In any case, Brill said, one person should not have the right to decide

whether Cruz should be allowed to give interviews. That should belong to all the families and survivors, he argued, which would ensure Cruz would never be heard from again. Cruz, 25, is serving a life sentence at an undisclosed prison. Second, he said, Arreaza violated a verbal contract to work together in their lawsuits against Cruz, split the annuity money and donate it to charity, if it ever materializes. Instead, Brill said, Arreaza surreptitiously got the killer to settle without telling anyone until it was done. Arreaza insists that Brill is lying about a verbal contract and that Borges needs the possible annuity money to help with his future medical care. He insists that state law does not bar Cruz from signing over his name and any future earnings, but also said Borges would never agree to let Cruz give an interview, so the other families shouldn't worry about that.

Phillips said she would rule later on whether Borges, the families or anyone owns Cruz's publicity rights, but urged the sides to negotiate a settlement over the annuity. Otherwise, she will schedule a hearing that she said will be painful for both the families and Borges and again give Cruz the attention he craves. She said she was particularly saddened hearing came a day after four people were killed in a Georgia school shooting and that she thinks the sides are letting their animosity toward each other push aside the immense tragedy they all experienced. "Everybody should look deep into their thoughts," she told the lawyers. "Is this what everyone wants to focus on?"

Blinken announces aid, US support for peacekeeping force on Haiti visit

PORT-AU-PRINCE: Secretary of State Antony Blinken has travelled to Haiti to show the United States' support for a multinational effort to combat gang violence in the Caribbean nation. Blinken arrived in Port-au-Prince, where he met with interim Prime Minister Garry Conille and announced a new surge of humanitarian aid.

"At this critical moment, we do need more funding, we do need more personnel to sustain and carry out the objectives of this mission," Blinken told reporters. Vast stretches of Haiti have fallen under gang control since the assassination of President Jovenel Moise in July 2021. That includes an estimated 80 percent of the capital Port-au-Prince.

The Haitian government has struggled to regain control and maintain peace, amid its own crisis of legitimacy. Just one day before Blinken's visit, Haiti's interim government expanded an existing state of emergency to include the entire country, as the violence spills into its 10 departments.

Previously, the state of emergency had only applied to the Ouest department, a

populous area where Port-au-Prince is located. But a spokesperson for Prime Minister Conille said the expanded emergency declaration reflects gang battles unfolding in departments like Artibonite, a large rice-growing region. The violence has forced a record 578,074 people from their homes in 2024, marking the largest internal, crime-driven displacement crisis in the world, according to the United Nations.

In the first quarter of 2024 alone, an estimated 2,500 were killed or wounded in the continuing violence. But in June, the government of Kenya sent a first batch of 200 police officers to Haiti, in an effort to prop up the country's law enforcement. A second group of 200 Kenyan officers arrived the next month, out of an expected total of 1,000. Still, Blinken warned during his visit that the Kenyan forces alone may not be able to turn the tide against the gang violence.

He and other US officials have openly speculated whether a UN peacekeeping force is needed. But that is a controversial proposition in Haiti, where UN peacekeepers were responsible

for a deadly cholera outbreak during their last deployment to the country. Nearly 10,000 people died as a result of the disease from 2010 to 2019.

The country has also grappled with a long history of foreign intervention, which has left many wary of international forces. The first step, Blinken said during his visit, was to ensure the international community was prepared to continue supporting the Kenyan forces, who arrived as part of a programme called the Multinational Security Support Mission. That mission was approved last October for a one-year span. Blinken said it was time for the UN to reconvene and approve an extension.

"The mission itself needs to be renewed," he said. "That's what we're working on right now. But we also want something that's reliable, that's sustainable, and we'll look at every option to do that. A UN peacekeeping mission is one option." The US has been the mission's largest financial supporter, with the administration of President Joe Biden pledging \$360m. An additional \$45m in humanitarian aid to Haiti was announced.

Blinken also underscored the need for a stable, democratically elected government during his visit. He called on Haitian officials to put in place plans for new general elections next year. "That is the critical next step," he said. "We want to make sure Haiti is back on a clear democratic track." Haiti has not held federal elections since before President Moise's assassination. In January 2023, its latest democratically elected officials reached their term limit, with no one to replace them.

The government was run at that point by former Prime Minister Ariel Henry, whom the late Moise appointed shortly before his death. But Henry - an unelected official - was widely unpopular, and local gangs used the distrust in the government to expand their reach and assert their own power. Henry ultimately stepped down in April, allowing for the establishment of a transitional council tasked with reestablishing democratic norms. "Much remains to be done, and we're determined to continue," Blinken said. "It's starting to move." — Aljazeera

UK prosecutors drop charges against Harvey Weinstein

LONDON: Disgraced Hollywood producer Harvey Weinstein will not face charges of indecent assault in Britain, prosecutors say. In June 2022, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) said it had authorised London's Metropolitan Police Service to file two charges of indecent assault against Weinstein in relation to an alleged incident that occurred in London in 1996. The accuser was in her 50s at the time of the

announcement. The CPS said it decided to discontinue proceedings because there was "no longer a realistic prospect of conviction". "Following a review of the evidence in this case, the CPS has decided to discontinue criminal proceedings against Harvey Weinstein," said Frank Ferguson, head of the CPS special crime and counterterrorism division. "The CPS has a duty to

keep all cases under continuous review, and we have decided that there is no longer a realistic prospect of conviction," he added. After the revelations against him in the United Kingdom emerged, British police said they were investigating multiple allegations of sexual assault that reportedly took place from the 1980s to 2015. Unlike many other countries, Britain does not have a statute of limitations for

rape or sexual assault. Weinstein, 72, was found guilty of rape allegations and jailed for 23 years in the United States in 2020 in a milestone for the #MeToo movement, in which women accused hundreds of men in entertainment, media, politics and other fields of sexual misconduct. But in April, New York's highest court overturned Weinstein's conviction on sex crime charges in a shock reversal. — Aljazeera

Greta detained by Danish police

COPENHAGEN (Reuters): Danish police detained activist Greta Thunberg at a Copenhagen protest against the war in Gaza and Israel's occupation of the West Bank, a spokesperson for the organisers of the demonstration said.

Thunberg was later released from detention, according to Danish media reports, and the daily Ekstra Bladet showed video footage of her walking out of a police station. Six people had been detained at the Copenhagen University after about 20 people blocked the entrance to a building and three entered, a police spokesperson said without commenting on individual detainees.

Widely known for her campaign to end man-made climate change, Swedish-born Thunberg has increasingly taken up the Palestinian cause and said in May such protests "should be everywhere". Video posted by Students Against the Occupation, a pro-Palestinian student group, showed uniformed police officers leading Thunberg and other detainees into a police van while handcuffed or with their hands tied behind their backs. Thunberg wore a scarf around her shoulders imprinted with the traditional Palestinian keffiyeh pattern, a common symbol among pro-Palestinian demonstrators. The Copenhagen University may take disciplinary action against enrolled students who took part in the protest, Kristian Cedervall Laut, prorector of education at the university said in an email. Thunberg is not a student at the university.

Physician sentenced to 9 months

WASHINGTON (AP): A Massachusetts medical doctor who punched a police officer during a mob's attack on the US Capitol was sentenced to nine months of imprisonment followed by nine months of home confinement.

Jacquelyn Starer was in a crowd of rioters inside the Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021, when she struck the officer with a closed fist and shouted a profane insult. Starer told US District Judge Timothy Kelly that she isn't proud of her actions that day, including her "regrettable encounter" with the officer.

"I accept full responsibility for my actions that day, and I truly wish reason had prevailed over my emotions," she said. Starer also turned to apologize to the officer whom she assaulted. The officer, identified only by her initials in court filings, told the judge she feared for her life as she and other officers fought for hours to defend the Capitol from the mob of Donald Trump supporters. "Do you really take responsibility for your actions or are you just going to say: 'It wasn't my fault. Fight or flight?'" the officer asked Starer before she addressed the court.

Starer, 70, of Ashland, Massachusetts, pleaded guilty in April to eight counts, including a felony assault charge, without reaching a plea agreement with prosecutors. Prosecutors recommended a prison sentence of two years and three months for Starer, a physician who primarily practiced addiction medicine before her arrest. Starer's attorneys asked the judge to sentence her to home confinement instead of incarceration. Online licensing records indicate that Starer agreed in January 2023 not to practice medicine in Massachusetts. The state issued her a medical license in 1983. Starer attended then-President Trump's "Stop the Steal" rally near the White House on Jan. 6 before joining the mob outside the Capitol. She entered the building through the Rotunda doors roughly 15 minutes after they were breached.

In the Rotunda, Starer joined other rioters in trying to push past police officers guarding a passageway to then-House Speaker Nancy Pelosi's office. Starer pushed through other rioters to reach the front of the police line, where she yelled at officers.

NZ's Maori anoint new queen, bury late king

WELLINGTON (AFP): New Zealand's Maori chiefs anointed a 27-year-old queen as their new monarch, a surprise choice hailed as a symbol of change for the country's Indigenous community. Nga Wai hono i te po Paki was cheered by thousands as she ascended a high-backed wooden throne during an elaborate ceremony on the country's North Island.

She is the youngest daughter of King Tuheitia Pootatau Te Wherowhero VII, who died on Friday after heart surgery. After being elected by a council of chiefs, Nga Wai was ushered to the throne by a phalanx of bare-chested and tattooed men bearing ceremonial weapons -- who chanted, screamed and shouted in acclamation. The queen, wearing a wreath of leaves, a cloak and a whalebone necklace, sat beside her father's coffin as emotive rites, prayers and chants were performed.

After six days laid in state, the late king was carried down the Waikato River as part of a flotilla of four war canoes, each powered by more than a dozen rowers. His funerary procession passed throngs of onlookers camped on the riverbanks, before stopping at the foot of sacred Mount Taupiri. From there, three rugby teams acted as pallbearers, shepherding his coffin up steep slopes to the summit and the final resting place of Maori royals. The Maori monarch is a mostly ceremonial role with no legal status. But it has enormous cultural, and sometimes political, significance as a potent symbol of identity and kinship. As the king's only daughter and his youngest child, Queen Nga Wai was considered an

outside choice to become his successor. One of her two elder brothers had taken on many ceremonial duties during their father's periods of ill health and had been widely tipped to take over.

"It is certainly a break from traditional Maori leadership appointments which tend to succeed to the eldest child, usually a male," Maori cultural advisor Karaitiana Tairuru told AFP. Tairuru said it was a "privilege" to witness a young Maori woman become queen, particularly given the ageing leadership and mounting challenges faced by the community. "The Maori world has been yearning for younger leadership to guide us in the new world of AI, genetic modification, global warming and in a time of many other social changes that question and threaten us and Indigenous Peoples of New Zealand," he said. "These challenges require a new and younger generation to lead us."

New Zealand's Maori make up roughly 17 percent of the population, or about 900,000 people. Maori citizens are much more likely than other New Zealanders to be unemployed, live in poverty or suffer cancer, cardiovascular disease and diabetes and have higher suicide rates. Maori life expectancy is seven years less than other New Zealanders.

The Kiingitanga, or Maori King movement, was founded in 1858 to unite New Zealand's tribes and provide a single counterpart to the colonial ruler, Britain's Queen Victoria. "People think Maori people are one nation -- we're not. We're many tribes, many iwi. We have different ways of speaking out," said

Joanne Teina, who had travelled from Auckland for the ceremony. "The Kiingitanga was created to create unity -- among people who were fighting each other for thousands of years, before Pakeha (Europeans) came along." Queen Nga Wai is the eighth Maori monarch and the second queen.

Her grandmother, Queen Te Arikiniui Dame Te Atairangikaahu, held the position for four decades until 2006. The new queen studied the Maori language and customary law at New Zealand's Waikato University. She also taught "kapa haka" performing arts to children. To mark the anniversary of the king's coronation in 2016, she received a traditional Maori ("moko") tattoo on her chin. King Tuheitia, a 69-year-old truck-driver-turned-royal, died on Friday, just days after heart surgery and celebrations marking the 18th anniversary of his coronation.

Tens of thousands of Indigenous citizens and "Pakeha" -- those of European ancestry -- visited to pay respects, mourn and celebrate New Zealand's rich Maori heritage. Among them was Auckland-based Darrio Penitito-Hemara, who told AFP the king had united "many people across Aotearoa (New Zealand) who don't often see eye-to-eye". The king leaves a legacy forged "through respect, through aroha (love)", Penitito-Hemara said. New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon welcomed Queen Nga Wai in a statement, saying she "carries forward the mantle of leadership left by her father". "The path ahead is illuminated by the great legacy of Kiingi Tuheitia," he said.

Russia says it will take action against US media

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russia said it would take retaliatory measures against US media in response to US charges against Russian media executives and state broadcaster RT, which Washington has accused of trying to influence the 2024 presidential election.

The United States filed money-laundering charges against two employees of RT for what officials said was a scheme to hire an American company to produce online content to influence the 2024 election. The US Treasury and State departments also announced actions targeting RT, including the network's top editor, Margarita Simonyan. US officials said Russia's goal was to exacerbate US political divisions and weaken public support for American aid to Ukraine in its war with Russia.

Russia's foreign ministry said the US moves were part of a plan to purge any dissenting voices from the global media landscape and to stoke fears among US voters about Russia as a mythical external enemy. "When the authorities resort to such primitive ways of influencing their voters, this is the decline of 'liberal democracies'," Maria Zakharova, foreign ministry spokeswoman, said in a statement on the US action.

"There will be a response," Zakharova said. "We warn that attempts to expel Russian journalists from the territory of the United States, create unacceptable conditions for their work or any other forms of obstruction of their activities, including with the use of visa tools, will become the basis for taking symmetrical and/or asymmetric retaliatory measures against the American media." The France-based Reporters Without Borders ranks Russia at 162 out of 180 countries in monitors on press freedom and ranks the United States at 55. Norway was top and Eritrea was bottom.

Since the 2022 invasion of Ukraine, Russia has tightened control over information and the media, forcing the closure of the last significant independent news outlets and designating many journalists and activists as "foreign agents". Many Western news organisations have left Moscow and the arrest of Wall Street Journal correspondent Evan Gershkovich in 2023 prompted many more journalists to leave. There are now hardly any US reporters left in Russia. Russian officials say Western media groups give indulgent coverage of Ukraine, biased coverage of the war and excessively negative coverage of

Russia. Western media groups say they try to give balanced coverage.

RT responded with ridicule to the US charges. "Three things are certain in life: death, taxes and RT's interference in the US elections," the media outlet told Reuters. RT ceased operating in the United States after major television distributors dropped it following Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Simonyan said the charges were an attempt to drown RT as a competitor. The Kremlin in June dismissed as absurd US intelligence assertions that Russia was seeking to meddle in the presidential election and has said that US spies were intent on casting Russia as an enemy.

Previous US intelligence assessments have found that Moscow tried to meddle in the 2016 and 2020 elections. Russian officials have suggested that the United States has also meddled in its domestic affairs. Russian lawmaker Maria Butina, who spent 15 months in US prison for acting as an unregistered Russian agent and now represents the ruling United Russia party, said the US claims were nonsense. "Russia thinks it does not matter who wins the US elections - the only winner is the US private military-industrial complex. That is what matters - and nothing else," Butina told Reuters.

China not pushing Africa into debt trap, SA president says

BEIJING (Reuters): South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said that he did not believe Chinese investments in Africa were pushing the continent into a "debt trap" but were instead part of a mutually beneficial relationship.

Ramaphosa made the remarks on the sidelines of a China-Africa summit in Beijing, where delegates from more than 50 African nations gathered this week. "I don't necessarily buy the notion that when China (invests), it is with an intention of, in the end, ensuring that those countries end up in a debt trap or in a debt crisis," Ramaphosa said,

when asked by reporters about China's pledge at the summit of \$51 billion in new funding for Africa.

In addition to the financial support over three years, China promised to carry out three times as many infrastructure projects across resource-rich Africa, which in recent years has become the focus of intense geopolitical competition between global powers like China, Europe and the United States. Without providing details, Ramaphosa also said South Africa had reached agreement with China on aspects of its energy security. He said

South Africa could learn from China on reforming its energy sector.

"They already have done exactly what we are seeking to do. So there are lessons for us to learn from China and how to do it," he said. South Africa has been plagued for years by rolling power blackouts that have constrained economic growth. Ramaphosa also said South Africa would look to attract China's electric vehicle manufacturers including its largest, BYD. "We had good exchanges with BYD, which has shown a great interest to come and invest in South Africa," he said.

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The UAE visa amnesty is easing stress

THE first week of the UAE's eight-week visa amnesty programme – in which people who have overstayed in the country are given a chance to regularise their stay or leave without penalties – is drawing to a close. The amnesty applies to anyone in the country with a visa that expired before September 1, though it does not apply to those who entered the UAE illegally.

The last time the country held a visa amnesty programme in 2018, 105,000 people, a little over 1 per cent of the population, took advantage of the opportunity. The presence of so many overstayers was simultaneously a source of concern and a symptom of the country's dynamism. The UAE is a welcoming destination for those seeking opportunity, but its pro-migration policies make it tempting for many to circumvent the rules to extend their stay. In some cases, those policies are also exploited by unscrupulous agencies and even criminal networks. The result is can be a strain on elements of law enforcement, the labour market, and, not least, the lives of those who have overstayed. Anyone living in a country without legal documentation, like a valid visa or residency fall into the shadows, often lacking health insurance and vulnerable to exploitation. Most overstayers are jobseekers, but some are victims of fraud or, in extreme cases, human trafficking. Fearful of penalties if they approach authorities, some end up separated from their families back in their home countries for years. The National interviewed such people in the UAE in its reporting at the country's visa amnesty centres this week. The damage done to people's lives by prolonging such a situation makes visa amnesties an important part of the policy toolkit. They allow authorities to understand better who is in the country and why, and also help to bridge gaps in the labour market; this week, some amnesty centres have played host to job recruiters looking to hire from the pool of those wishing to remain in the Emirates.

For a country poised for continued population growth and an accompanying economic boom over the next decade, managing policies to keep the UAE an attractive destination for foreign workers is critical.

Visa amnesties are ultimately a stopgap, and UAE policymakers know this. In recent years, the country has rolled out a host of new legislation and regulations that make it easier for people's presence in the Emirates to remain above-board, and to prevent those whose stay would be unsustainable from entering. The introduction of jobseekers' visas is one such measure; as is the 10-year golden visa for those who merit more flexibility in the labour market. This year, authorities stopped those who arrived at UAE airports on visitor visas without a return ticket or sufficient funds. Migration is one of the most complex portfolios for any government. A host country's policies towards newcomers is a reflection of its own aspirations. It is a theme as old as the history of human migration itself: people move to new places in search of a second chance, and they tend to thrive when they are given one, as the UAE has made evident.

American politicians oppose Nippon-US Steel deal

JAPAN'S Nippon Steel is set to take over US Steel for \$14.9 billion. According to a special report put out by Western news agency Reuters, the Biden administration believes that the takeover by the Japanese company would pose a security threat to the United States, and that it would harm the American steel industry.

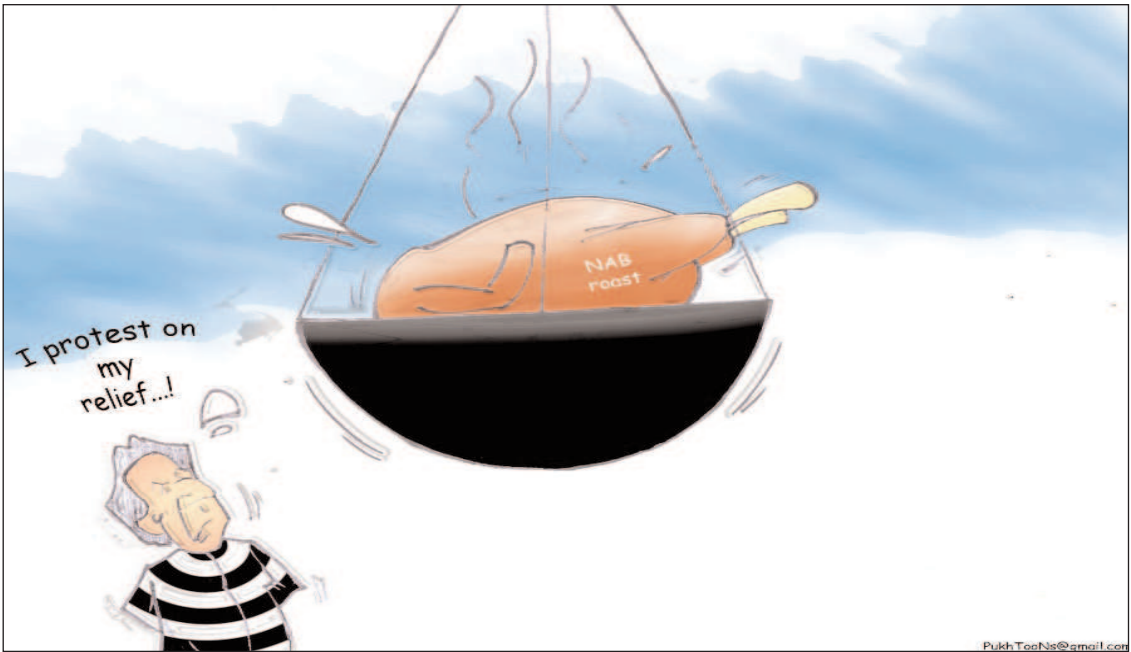
Democratic presidential nominee Kamala Harris said she wants US Steel to be "American owned and operated", and Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump said that he would block the deal if he is elected. It is a rare bipartisan consensus at a time when American politics is polarised on the most fundamental issues. The Committee on Foreign Investments in the United States (CFIUS) "has identified risks to the United States arising as a result of the transaction," according to a source cited by Reuters. On the other hand, American business circles believe that the deal is positive and that it is the only way to save US Steel. The two companies on their part had argued, "Rejection of this transaction will lead to the idling of US Steel's blast furnace facilities...likely cost thousands of jobs; and ultimately weaken the quality and resiliency of steel supply to US industries." The American steel major feels that a takeover by Japan's Nippon Steel is beneficial to it, to its workers and to American industry. This is a strange conflict of interest between American politicians and American business.

The politicians' viewpoint is understandable because whatever the degree of difference, leaders from all sides do cater to the sense of national pride, and they feel that they must stand up for anything and everything American. The evidence suggests otherwise. American markets are flooded with foreign-origin goods and manufactures. And the politicians cannot bring themselves to admit that a takeover by a Japanese company is necessary to save an American company. Perhaps a more enlightened leader would have argued that the foreign takeover will help America improve the quality and supply of its steel, and that it is part of enlightened self-interest to take help from outside the country to get over hurdles. The best argument for the Nippon Steel takeover of the US Steel is that it will save jobs, that is American jobs, and there cannot be a better argument for convincing the voters. It is most surprising that Americans should feel threatened by Japan, which is a close strategic ally. Of course, Americans always felt the sting of competition posed by the Japanese companies, but it never became an issue of American security.

The irony of the situation is that American politicians and policymakers have always preached to the developing countries the need to allow entry of foreign companies as part of economic reforms, and they have been critical of barriers. They dismissed notions of national pride and sentiment saying that the aim should be to improve the economic well-being of the people. But they are unable to accept the argument when it touches their own companies and their own economy. In some ways, the American economy is in need of infusion of foreign technology in some of the sectors though America maintains its technological leadership in space, in AI and in computer software. But American manufacturing is no more the world leader, and the state of American infrastructure leaves much to be desired. In many ways, the United States faces the same dilemmas like that of developing countries, and the political pressures too are the same. The hard rethink that is happening over the Nippon-US Steel deal will make American politicians more empathetic of the choices faced by the political leaders of developing countries.

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Netanyahu and the Israeli protesters are on the same genocidal page

Belén Fernández

IN July 2014, shortly after the kickoff of Israel's "Operation Protective Edge" in the Gaza Strip – a 51-day affair that ultimately killed 2,251 Palestinians, including 551 children – Danish journalist Nikolaj Krak penned a dispatch from Israel for the Copenhagen-based Kristeligt Dagblad newspaper.

Describing the scene on a hill on the outskirts of the Israeli city of Sderot near the Gaza border, Krak noted that the area had been "transformed into something that most closely resembles the front row of a reality war theatre". Israelis had "dragged camping chairs and sofas" to the hilltop, where some spectators sat "with crackling bags of popcorn", while others partook of hookahs and cheerful banter. Fiery, earth-shaking air strikes on Gaza across the way were met with cheers and "solid applause".

To be sure, Israelis have always enjoyed a good murderous spectacle – which is hardly surprising for a nation whose very existence is predicated on mass slaughter. But as it turns out, the applause is not quite so solid when Israeli lives are caught up in the explosive apocalyptic display.

For the past 11 months, Israel's "reality war theatre" has offered a view of all-out genocide in the Gaza Strip, where the official death toll has reached nearly 41,000. A July Lancet study found that the true number of deaths may well top 186,000 – and that is only if the killing ends soon.

Now, massive protests have broken out across Israel demanding that the government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu enact a ceasefire and hostage deal to free the remaining 100 or so Israeli captives held in Gaza. On Sunday, when the Israeli military recovered the bodies of six captives, CNN reported that

some 700,000 protesters had taken to the streets across the country. And on Monday, a general strike spearheaded by Israel's primary labour union succeeded in shutting much of the economy down for several hours.

Although certain wannabe peaceniks among the international commentariat have blindly attributed the protests to a desire to end the bloodshed, the fact of the matter is that Palestinian blood is not high on the list of concerns. Rather, the only lives that matter in the besieged, pulverised, and genocide-stricken Gaza Strip are the lives of the captives – whose captivity, it bears underscoring, is entirely a result of Israeli policy and Israel's unceasing sadistic treatment of Palestinians.

As Israeli analyst Nimrod Flaschenberg recently commented to Al Jazeera regarding the aims of the current protests, "the issue of

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returning the hostages is centre stage". Acknowledging that "an understanding that a deal would also mean an end to the conflict is there, but rarely stated", Flaschenberg emphasised that "as far as the protests' leadership goes, no, it's all about the hostages".

The captives, then,

have assumed centre stage in Israel's latest bout of blood-soaked war theatrics, while for some Israelis the present genocide is evidently not nearly genocidal enough. During a recent episode of the popular English-language Israeli podcast "Two Nice Jewish Boys", the podcasting duo in question suggested that it would be cool to just press a button and wipe out "every single living being in Gaza" as well as in the West Bank.

Time to break out the popcorn and hookahs.

At the end of the day, the disproportionate value assigned to the lives of the Israeli captives in Gaza vis-à-vis the lives of the Palestinians who are being annihilated is of a piece with Israel's trademark chauvinism. This outlook casts Israelis as the perennial victims of Palestinian "terrorism" even as Palestinians are consistently massacred at astronomically higher rates by the Israeli mili-

but reportedly killed 210 Palestinians in the process – no doubt par for the disproportionate course.

Meanwhile, following the recovery of the bodies of the six captives on Sunday, Netanyahu blamed Hamas for their demise, declaring: "Whoever murders hostages doesn't want a deal."

But what about "whoever" continues to preside over a genocide while assassinating the top ceasefire negotiator for Hamas and sabotaging prospects for a deal at every turn?

As the protests now demonstrate, many Israelis are on to Netanyahu. But the issue with the protests is that genocide is not the issue.

Even among Netanyahu's detractors, there persists a general consensus as to the unilateral sacrosanctity of Israeli life, which translates into the assumption of an inalienable right to slaughter Palestinians.

And as the latest

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During Operation Protective Edge in 2014, for example, no more than six Israeli civilians were killed. And yet Israel maintained its monopoly on victimisation.

In June of this year, the Israeli army undertook a rescue operation in Gaza that freed four captives

episode of Israel's "reality war theatre" drags on – with related Israeli killing sprees available for viewing in the West Bank and Lebanon, too – this show is really getting old. One would hope Israeli audiences will eventually tire of it all and walk out, but for the time being bloodbaths are a guaranteed blockbuster.

Scholasticide must not be normalised

ON August 10, the Israeli bombardment of al-Tabin School in Gaza City killed more than 100 people sheltering there, including many children. This was one of 17 deadly attacks on schools in the strip that took place last month, according to the United Nations. Spaces of learning – transformed into shelters for the displaced – have become repeated targets in this war, as the line between combatants and civilians has been blurred.

This week, tens of thousands of children should be celebrating the beginning of a new school year. Instead, they are living through the nightmare of scholasticide – a word invented specifically to describe the obliteration of education in Gaza. Dr Karma Nabulsi of Oxford University coined the term during the Israeli assault on Gaza in 2008-09, when schools, the Ministry of Education and other buildings related to learning were targeted. Today, the devastation wrought upon the education system in Gaza is unimaginable: Thousands

of students and hundreds of teachers have been killed and hundreds of schools damaged or destroyed over the past 11 months.

This deliberate destruction of Gaza's education system threatens not only the future of hundreds of thousands of Palestinian children, but also the international humanitarian regime and our collective moral compass. It appears that global society is slowly accepting the unacceptable. The normalisation of violence against schools is a stark indicator of a deeper crisis in our global values, where the protection of the innocent is no longer guaranteed, and the very fabric of our humanity is unravelling.

The Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols state explicitly that attacking schools is a violation – and yet they continue. According to data collected by UNICEF, as of July 6, 318 schools in the Gaza Strip were directly targeted. Dozens of attacks have happened since then.

The debates about whether the August 10 strike on al-Tabin School was legally justified or not

because a Hamas fighters may or may not have been operating there is a conversation that collectively misses the point. Schools are meant for learning. Such military actions are a direct assault on the fundamental rights of civilians, particularly children.

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Unfortunately, attacks on places of learning are not happening only in Gaza. According to UNICEF, since the escalation of the war in Ukraine in February 2022, more than 1,300 educational facilities have been damaged or destroyed.

According to the Global Coalition to

Protect Education from Attack (GCPEA), incidents targeting education and the military use of schools increased by nearly 20 percent in 2022 and 2023 compared with the previous two years.

The international community's ability to enforce

the protections enshrined in international humanitarian law, particularly the Geneva Conventions, is clearly diminishing. These laws, ratified by more than 190 countries, mandate the protection of civilians, including children, during armed conflict and call for the prosecution of violators.

While the Gaza war is an Israeli affair, any future war with Iran would involve both Israel and the West. Israel is

Why an Israel-Iran war is more likely than not

Abdulrahman Al-Rashed

THE Gaza war appears to be nearing its end with signs of agreements emerging, Hamas and Israel being closer in distance and Hezbollah's Hassan Nasrallah announcing that there will be no retaliatory conflict for the deaths of around 500 Hezbollah leaders. This is in addition to the remains of dead Israeli hostages now being handed over.

However, in my opinion, the upcoming agreement won't prevent future confrontations between Iran and Israel. This time, war was on the brink. Unless both nations work to avoid future conflicts, which would require significant compromises, Iran's strategy of encirclement will probably lead to a war between these two regional powers. For the past four decades, the proxy confrontations have continued, with intermittent long truces that caused limited damage.

How do we know that a war between Tehran and Tel Aviv is no longer as unlikely as we once thought?

The Hamas raid on October 7 was different – a qualitative shift in the conflict between these camps, awakening deep fears in Israel. Israel perceived it as an existential threat, and its retaliatory attack also took a different approach. Israel decided to dismantle the Hamas regime in Gaza. It wants to restore its deterrence policy, where any attack on Israel comes with a high price, and to reinforce its image as a regional superpower. During this war, Israel has shown that it is capable of waging long battles, 11 months so far, across multiple fronts: Gaza, the West Bank, Lebanon, Iran, and Yemen.

Israel has demonstrated terrifying intelligence and advanced military capabilities. Without entering even an inch of Lebanese territory, Israel managed to eliminate half of Hezbollah's leaders. It also targeted several Iranian Revolutionary Guard leaders and boldly assassinated a Hamas leader in Tehran itself.

Internally, a significant portion of Israelis, particularly the elite, may dislike Netanyahu and his religious allies, but they have still united behind him. Despite heavy casualties among Israeli forces, the billions of dollars bleeding from the Israeli economy, and his failure to eliminate Hamas' leadership, none of this has forced Netanyahu to stop the war.

While the Gaza war is an Israeli affair, any future war with Iran would involve both Israel and the West. Israel is

now more prepared than ever for a large-scale conflict, with naval fleets stationed and ready for a major war with Iran, marking one of the region's largest military buildups. This is a clear signal to Tehran that Iran and its regime will bear the cost. Despite Russia's statements, visits from Russian officials, and the rapid deployment of military aid to counter any airstrikes on Iran, this escalation is unlike any previous conflict in the region since the 1973 war. It may lead Iran to reconsider the futility of confronting Israel, or will it push it to build up greater capabilities?

The Cairo negotiations are on the verge of achieving an end to the fighting in Gaza, but it won't end the readiness for war with Iran and Hezbollah.

Since the beginning of the war last year, Israel has been preparing for a conflict beyond Gaza. It has deployed backup power generators across the country, filled water tanks, intensified cybersecurity measures, and stockpiled several months-worth of food supplies. Israel claims it can generate electricity from a diverse array of sources, on land, underground, and in the sea. If the electrical grid is destroyed, a backup system will restore power within seven minutes. Israel has also prepared bunkers for hundreds of thousands of people as a second line of defense, should the Iron Dome fail. The entrenchment mentality and preparing for war plays a crucial role in driving decisions toward conflict.

For decades, Israel's main strategy has been based on the likelihood of a regional war, once focused on Egypt, Jordan, and Syria. Today, this strategy is targeted against Iran, which it views as the primary existential threat, due to its pursuit of a nuclear military capability and missile development that could reach Israel's major cities. This makes Iran – not its proxies – the next target for Israel.

In this war, Iran was unable to save Hamas and chose to protect Hezbollah by keeping it out of the fight. The attempt to open a front in Jordan failed, and Syria refrained from allowing Iranian-backed armed groups to use its territory for military action. The Houthis in Yemen were the only ones involved but pulled back from targeting Israel after its vital facilities in the Hodeidah port were destroyed.

In my opinion, an Israeli-Iranian war is not unlikely, given the continued military buildup, Iranian expansion, and Israel's refusal to recognize a Palestinian state.

Yet, these commitments have failed to protect the children in Gaza and other conflict zones. While calls for immediate action, such as a ceasefire and humanitarian aid, are essential, they are not substitutes for decisive measures to enforce the provisions of international law.

When the international community tolerates violations of international law over months and years, it normalises its erosion.

This gradual acceptance weakens global norms, making once-unthinkable acts seem tolerable. When targeting schools becomes increasingly acceptable, a fundamental betrayal of the core principles of international legal regime and the protection of civilians has taken place.

The choice before us is stark: Either we act decisively to uphold the principles of humanitarian law and protect the innocent, or we allow the erosion of our shared values to continue unchecked. The world cannot afford to remain indifferent, for the cost of inaction is measured in the lives and futures of children.

America’s push for an Israel-Hamas deal is a failure on repeat

FOR months, the United States has chased a mirage — a deal to free hostages in Gaza, to end the agony of Palestinian civilians there and to pause the fighting between Israel and Hamas.

But its goal has never looked more remote, and the Biden administration has rarely been more estranged from Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu since the October 7 Hamas terror attacks and the start of the Israeli onslaught on Gaza.

When an administration repeatedly predicts a foreign policy goal is in sight but fails to deliver, as this one has, it risks shattering its credibility and looks like it's botched one of its top priorities. Politically damaging scrutiny is inevitable over why the Biden administration squandered capital on an apparently hopeless goal and how it misjudged the situation so badly.

President Joe Biden's team faces all these negative consequences and its exposure is especially acute because it now appears to be operating in a different reality from Netanyahu. Washington argues that a deal is nine-tenths of the way to completion after diplomacy involving the US and Qatar, while the Israeli leader denies it's anywhere near close.

Why the US can't walk away

The motivations that led the administration into this vicious circle of failure haven't changed. So Washington can't give up. Biden is under even greater pressure to secure the release of Americans believed to be held in Gaza following Hamas' murder of Hersch Goldberg-Polin, a US-Israeli citizen among six hostages whose bodies were found Sunday. For instance, even a tiny chance of a deal, which could spare other hostages, would have huge human consequences.

The administration's fervent desire to prevent a spillover regional conflict also means that ending the war remains imperative. The White House has political as well as humanitarian motives in ending the slaughter of Palestinian civilians. Anger over those casualties, especially among progressives and Arab American voters this fall, could threaten the election hopes of Vice President Kamala Harris in the key swing state of Michigan, for instance.

Biden's decision to end his reelection bid introduced a new and personal dimension of the Middle East crisis for the president. If no ceasefire takes hold in the next few months, he'd face the prospect of handing his successor a failure that would help shape his legacy.

One top Democrat close to the White House told CNN's MJ Lee that Biden had redoubled his focus on the Middle East since shelving his campaign and was "obsessed" with the issue. US officials are not yet at the point of acknowledging there may be no

deal before the president leaves office. But the top Democrat said: "We're stuck," adding that "both parties are very dug in."

Despite its frustration, the White House has not yet used all possible leverage on Netanyahu — and probably won't.

Biden is a deeply pro-Israel president and has so far been unwilling to bow to progressive demands to restrict US arms sales to Israel to force Netanyahu's hand. And the prospect of the US walking away from Israel and publicly blaming the impasse on an Israeli prime minister — in a way that would open it to accu-

Stephen Collinson

ing the war.

Bad feeling between Washington and the Israeli government spilled over when Biden on Monday said Netanyahu was not doing enough to secure the release of the hostages and after a senior administration official said later this week that 90% of an agreement had been completed. This was seen by the White House's Republican critics as an unacceptable attempt to build pressure on Israel.

Netanyahu's latest justification for not doing a deal center on his refusal to pull troops out of land in south-

is prolonging the war in the hope that Trump — who delivered almost everything he wanted in his first term — could soon be back in the Oval Office.

Disagreements rumbled on between the US and Israel Thursday. White House national security communications adviser John Kirby insisted it was sound to say 90% of a deal between Israel and Hamas, brokered by the US and Arab states, was done. "You call that optimistic, I call that accurate," he said.

The US and Netanyahu's positions are not necessarily contradictory. It's possible for most

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Netanyahu plays politics at home and in the US

The showdown between Israel and Hamas is so complex because of the historical, ideological and political factors swirling around the negotiations.

Both sides believe they are in an existential battle against the other. Each might believe they are winning and so they don't want to back down. Meanwhile, the outside political factors that could force their hands have not yet reached a critical point, and third powers have been unable to create that pressure. The incentives for Netanyahu and Hamas leader Yahya Sinwar, as horrific as those calculations may be, currently lean toward not end-

ern Gaza known as the Philadelphi Corridor, which he says is critical to Hamas' capacity to maintain its arms supplies.

But more broadly, he says that US perceptions that a deal is near are false. "It's exactly inaccurate. There's a story, a narrative out there, that there's a deal out there, that's just a false narrative," Netanyahu said on Fox News Thursday. He insisted that Israel had agreed to several proposed deals but that Hamas was the obstacle. "They don't agree to anything: Not to the Philadelphi Corridor, not to the keys of exchanging hostages for jailed terrorists, not to anything." (Reports this summer said Netanyahu also scuppered earlier deals).

His appearance on Fox demonstrated Netanyahu's long penchant for playing in US domestic politics to pressure the Biden administration at a time when Republican nominee Donald Trump is blaming Harris for the death of the hostages. There are suspicions among many Democrats that Netanyahu

of an agreement to be accepted and only 10% of sticking points to remain. There are familiar echoes here: The parameters of a US-Israeli final status deal on statehood have long been known — at least until recent bursts of settlement building in the West Bank — but there has never been the political will between credible leaders on both sides to make the extraordinarily hard political decisions to solve outstanding questions. And even if a deal is agreed in the Middle East, the implementation can be even more problematic than the negotiation.

Sinwar and Netanyahu have other motivations

But the prospects that this agreement could finally get over the line still seem grim.

Netanyahu has left no doubt that he sees the war against Hamas as part of a wider struggle against Iran and its proxies that is existential to the state of Israel and the Jewish people — a position that means he's considering far more than push for a deal with

Hamas.

While he has come under extreme political pressure from families of remaining Israeli hostages to do more to get them out — notably in the resumption of street protests in recent days — the opposition to his continued premiership has not reached a critical mass necessary to topple him.

Many analysts believe Netanyahu wants the war to continue to put off the inevitable inequities on how the worst terror attack in Israel's history took place on his watch. And Netanyahu would be more vulnerable to fraud and bribery charges and trials that he's facing if he's out of office. And his ruling coalition — the most right-wing in Israeli history — has held up, raising questions about whether the Biden administration properly assessed his prospects for survival and the possibilities of what is politically realistic.

Aaron David Miller, a former US Middle East peace negotiator, told Jim Sciutto on CNN Max on Wednesday that the key number in Netanyahu's mind was not the tens of thousands of Israelis protesting him on the streets — but 64. "That's the number of seats that his coalition controls and there is absolutely no indication on the part of any of the parties that they have any stake in fracturing that coalition," Miller said. "The reality is that there is no urgency on the part of Benjamin Netanyahu or Yahya Sinwar to either let those hostages go or to redeem them through a negotiation."

In an odd way, Netanyahu and Sinwar's situations are reinforcing the deadlock. The killing of the hostages bolsters Netanyahu's narrative that it's impossible to negotiate with Hamas. But the consequential public protests in Israel build the political pressure on Netanyahu that Sinwar wants to see.

And the Hamas leader has shown no sign that he's motivated by a desire to spare Palestinian civilians — his organization embedded its military infrastructure and tunnels in civilian areas of Gaza. And the more civilians who die, the greater international opposition crests against Israel, which is also in his interests. It's hardly surprising then that there is still not agreement.

The cycle of utter futility was inadvertently underscored by Harris in a CNN interview last week in which she refused to commit to an arms embargo against Israel. "We have got to get a deal done. ... We have to get a deal done. This war must end and we must get a deal that is about getting the hostages out. I've met with the families of the American hostages. Let's get the hostages out. Let's get the ceasefire done," Harris said. "We have to get a deal done. We have to get a deal done."

Her repeated insistence on the need for a deal mirrored months of administration statements. But that deal never gets done.

Trump's flip-flop on a woman's right to choose is an electoral liability

Hussein Ibish

his political persona. For instance, few voters are likely to learn or care that he now supports decriminalisation of marijuana in his home state of Florida, though he was a hardline anti-drug president.

Nonetheless, he's having extreme difficulty with the policy surely most associated with his presidency: prohibiting abortion.

Evangelical and other conservative Christians were initially sceptical, but in 2016 he persuaded them that he was serious about appointing Supreme Court justices who would prioritise ending almost 50 years of constitutionally protected access to early-term abortions. They eventually became the rock-solid cor-

cism, he "clarified" that he would vote no, falsely claiming that the referendum would allow abortions through the ninth month. Such hyperbole is nothing new, since he has been wrongly insisting for years that Democrats support and allow for "after-birth abortions", which is murder and unlawful everywhere.

Just as Mr Trump has failed to develop an effective counter to Ms Harris — his latest nickname for her, "Comrade Kamala", unsurprisingly isn't catching on — he hasn't found a stance that accommodates his existing and possibly epoch-shaping anti-abortion policies while attenuating the price at the ballot box.

His main strategy in recent weeks has been to advocate leaving the matter

Confronted with such so-called flip-flops in a recent interview, she acknowledged some of her views have changed, but insisted her values haven't. She suggested that she's learnt a great deal after almost four years in the White House, and developed a keener appreciation of the need to "build consensus", a clear nod to lessons from Mr Biden who has championed bipartisanship. Spending the past four years performing supporting Mr Biden's positions allows her to insist that his popular policies will continue but his unpopular ones won't. Mr Trump's relationship with political, or other, consistency is far more tenuous. Despite decades as a public gadfly in New York and almost 10 years in national politics, it's much easier to list the few issues on which he's held firm: opposition to immigration and free trade, plus a long track record of racist and misogynistic words and deeds.

nerstone of his adoring base.

Through good fortune and cynical Senate chicanery, he appointed three of the nine current justices, and in 2022 that court indeed overturned the constitutional right to choice for American women. Mr Trump then spent years boasting that he was personally, if not single-handedly, responsible.

But in 2024, that's all become a liability.

The court ruling, and widespread pushback against abortion access (and other vital women's healthcare provisions) in conservative states is so unpopular that, ever since, in every competitive election in which reproductive health care has been a major issue, liberals have won (even in hyper-conservative states such as Alabama).

Yet the new Republican party platform suggests that embryos do, or should, have unspecified constitutional rights, signalling a nationwide total abortion ban.

Mr Trump is clearly nervous, and with good reason.

Eyebrows were raised when he insisted that another Trump term would be "great for women and their reproductive rights". But his implication that he might vote for a referendum in Florida overturning the state's highly restrictive six-week limit (when women often have no idea that they've become pregnant) made many of his anti-abortion supporters livid.

Inundated with criti-

to each state. That hasn't appeased anyone, and it's annoyed many on his side.

He even recently suggested universal coverage for in vitro fertilisation, which is considered murderous by much of his base. But it's likely to prove one of his offhanded trial balloons, like his recent suggestion that graduating international students at US universities be given green cards, that end up on history's cutting room floor.

The Harris campaign is so invested in reproductive rights that it's highlighting them through a 50-stop national bus tour, beginning near Mr Trump's home in Florida.

The candidates are bound to vigorously confront each other at the upcoming debate. Mr Trump would be wise not to again accuse Ms Harris of flip-flopping on her mixed racial identity by suddenly "turning black". And she's best advised to foreground women's health care and force Mr Trump to either stand by or back-track further from his strong restrictionist track record.

His instincts for throwing red meat to his strongest supporters could help her task, although he's likely to stick to his "leave it to each state" formula.

Flip-flopping accusations are largely ineffective political clichés. But Mr Trump's close association with one of the most unpopular socio-political upheavals in recent history is almost certainly the biggest liability facing either candidate this year.

Do we have role models today like Mother Teresa and Muhammed Ali?

MUHAMMAD Ali once famously said: "Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on Earth." On September 5, 1960, the late boxer and activist won a gold medal at the Rome Olympics. The passing of this week's seemingly unremarkable date is in contrast to a remarkable man.

Ali's service in and outside the ring left a role model's legacy decades on from that pivotal moment. His boxing prowess was just one element of his status alongside his conscientious objection to the Vietnam War — for which he lost his world champion status — along with his lyricism and invention of today's "trash talk", and his ability to articulate right and wrong. It's little wonder that his funeral in 2016 was watched by a billion people, exceeded only by the services for Queen Elizabeth and

Princess Diana.

It feels like a double punch in the gut (pun intended) that his pivotal date coincides with the death anniversary of Mother Teresa, another global role model, revered for her service over decades to the poor of India.

This is because we are faced with the question, where are the role models that we need today? We live in a period of conflict, revolution and death on a scale our brains can't compute. Climate change poses a threat and many worry about a possible Third World War on the horizon. All these challenges are wrapped up in an era of misinformation, disinformation and the muddying of what once appeared to be a consensus on moral values.

It is reasonable to consider that this dearth of larger-than-life heroes is, in part, down to the fact that the moral clarity to even identify who such

people might be seems murkier than ever. After all, earlier this year, in response to an order from a judge to stop Donald Trump's verbal abuse during a court case, the

It is reasonable to consider that this dearth of larger-than-life heroes is, in part, down to the fact that the moral clarity to even identify who such people might be seems murkier than ever. After all, earlier this year, in response to an order from a judge to stop Donald Trump's verbal abuse during a court case, the now convicted former US president offered himself as a "modern-day Mandela" fighting for free speech. Andrew Tate, considered a role model for "alpha males", is seen as fighting back

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Shelina Janmohamed

against the weakening of men, yet he is also under arrest for rape and human trafficking.

Role models in this

sense seem not to need moral purpose, just large numbers of followers built on controversial viewpoints and exacerbated by algorithms. It is challenging to know if the world could

have another Nelson Mandela in the digital age. For every action or statement made by a public figure is subjected to

immediate and often relentless scrutiny. This isn't to say that role models from the earlier times did not polarise opinion. But social media platforms amplify both admiration and criticism of

today's leaders, making it difficult for them to maintain an unblemished public image.

But I'm not despondent. The process of blurring out role models who challenge authority is itself part of the role model's creation. We don't always recognise their heroic status at the time. They were controversial, anger was whipped up about them, they were insulted and persecuted, and considered fringe and disruptive in their times. Their myths are often post-hoc. And so it will be for the role models that are being nurtured in our midst now.

This century has also seen a shift from singular people as role models to collective movements and collective leadership. Campaigns such as MeToo and Black Lives Matter, as well as the protest camps on university campuses in the US and elsewhere about the war in Gaza, have been

collective rather than individualised. But clearly, within these collectives are visionary people.

It's not all about the online space; people are out in the real world, doing things. We just may not be attuned to it. Perhaps, they are not adequately covered in mainstream media, and probably edged out by the online algorithms.

Building role model status takes hard graft and long engagement — anathema to our digital age of short attention spans, fragmentation of public focus and the existence of echo chambers. Yet if we think of cultural figures such as Mahmoud Darwish, Umm Kulthum and Fairuz, we can be certain that they would have burst out of the corners of TikTok and Instagram. We know that today's equivalent of the real-world halls of Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr are still full of

people hungry for fighting for equality and overturn injustice.

The streets have been filled with millions of people fighting to save the planet, for racial equality and for peace and self-determination in Palestine, among other causes.

Not all role models need to be global figures. Community leaders, grassroots activists, and even parents can inspire and drive change within their own spheres. It is also common for people to say their role model is their mum or dad — it is something I've said myself. September 5 also marks Teacher's Day in many countries, a reflection on how educators change lives.

Of course, there is always the ultimate option when it comes to seeking leadership and role models. Which is to step up ourselves. To quote Ali: "We become heroes when we stand up for what we believe in."



Pakistan Stock Exchange stays bullish

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) gained 34.38 points on Friday, showing a slight positive change of 0.04 percent, closing at 78,897.73 points against 78,863.34 points on the last working day.

A total of 743,072,057 shares were traded during the day as compared to 770,518,958 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 12,900 billion against Rs 14,287 billion on the last trading day. As many as 444 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 185 of them recorded gains and 201 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 58 companies remained unchanged.

The three top trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 133,252,011 shares at Rs 1.42 per share,

Pace (Pak) Limited with 80,985,708 shares at Rs.6.14 per share and Kohinoor Spinning with 46,705,713 shares at Rs.9.52 per share.

Hallmark Company Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 98.21 per share price, closing at Rs 1,080.33, whereas the runner-up was Nestle Pakistan Limited with a Rs 82.50 rise in its per share price to Rs 6,997.50.

Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 200.00 per share closing at Rs 17,300.00 followed by First Imrooz Modaraba with Rs 17.22 decline to close at Rs 155.78.

Rupee gains 11 paise against dollar

Pakistani rupee on Friday appreciated by 11 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading and

closed at Rs 278.56 against the previous day's closing of Rs 278.67.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs 278.75 and Rs 280.25 respectively.

The price of Euro increased by 63 paise to close at Rs 309.58 against the last day's closing of Rs 308.95, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen remained unchanged and closed at Rs1.94, whereas an increase of 81 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs367.19 as compared to the last day's closing of Rs366.38.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 03 paise each to close at

Rs75.84 and Rs74.20 respectively.

Gold rates up by Rs1,400 to Rs263,500 per tola

The price of 24 karat per tola gold witnessed an increase of Rs.1,400 and was traded at Rs.263,500 on Friday against its sale at Rs.262,100 the previous day.

The price of 10 gram 24 karat gold also went up by Rs.1,200 and was sold at Rs.225,908 against Rs.224,708 whereas the prices of 10 gram 22 karat gold increased to Rs.207,083 from Rs.205,983, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs.2,900 and Rs.2,486, respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$15 to \$2,518 against \$2,503, the Association reported.



PESHAWAR: Delegation of traders led by Arbab Road Traders Association Peshawar Cantt vice president Sumeer Chaudhry meeting with SCCI president Fuad Ishaq at Chamber's House.

SBP injects Rs10,718.9b into market

KARACHI (APP): The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) injected Rs10,718.9 billion in the market on Friday through reverse repo purchase and Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operation (OMO).

According to OMO results issued here, the SBP conducted Open Market Operation, Reverse Repo Purchase (Injection) on September 6, 2024 for 7-day and 28-day tenors and accepted 34 bids cumulatively amounting to Rs10,613.9 billion.

The central bank received 34 bids for 7-day tenor cumulatively offering an amount of Rs10,613.9 billion at the rate of return ranging between 19.56 to 19.65 percent while no bid was received for the 28-day tenor.

The central bank accepted all the 34 quotes for the 7-day tenor amounting to Rs10,613.9 billion at 19.56 % rate of return.

Meanwhile, the central bank also conducted Shariah Compliant Mudarabah based Open Market Operation for 7-day and 28-day tenors and injected Rs105 billion in the market.

For the 7-day tenor, the SBP received one bid amounting to Rs105 billion at the 19.60% rate of return while no bid was received for 28-day tenor. The central bank accepted the only bid offered for 7-day tenor at 19.60% cut-off rate.

Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI (APP): Seven ships, Zhong Gu Bo Hai, Wan Hai-316, PH Minh Giang, Diamond Globe, Kaley, Petrel Bulker and Marangas Asclepius scheduled to load/offload Container, River Sand, Canola, Coal and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Grain Terminal, Bulk Terminal, Port Electric Terminal and Engro Elengy Terminal respectively on Thursday. Meanwhile, five more ships, DA Heng Shan, MSC Positano, Colombo Express, Amir Gas and Horizon-1 scheduled to load/offload Bitumen, Container and LPG are arrived at outer anchorage port during last 24 hours.

14 ships were engaged at PQA berths, out of them three ships, MSC Suape VII, Zhong Gu Bo Hai and Wan Hai-316 left the port today morning while four more ships, Colombo Express, YC Azalea, Clipper Kythira and Ullswater are expected to sail on Friday. Cargo volume of 214,158 tonnes, comprising 164,591 tonnes imports cargo and 49,567 tonnes export cargo carried in 2,901 Containers (2,010 TEUs Imports& 891 TEUs Export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours. Ten ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them four ships, Anassa, Horizon-1, MSC Positano and Colombo Express & two more ships, CMA CGM Nabucco and Chemroad Sakura carrying Coal, LNG Container and Palm oil are expected to take berths at PIBT, EVTL, QICT and LCT respectively on Friday. Meanwhile two more ships, MSC Capetown-III and Atlantic Ibis with Container are due to arrive at port on Sunday.

Resolving U-turn issue in Cantt:

Saddar's traders hail efforts of SCCI

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Traders from Arbab Road Peshawar Saddar praised the efforts and role of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry in opening a U-turn near Takhto Jamat Saddar Road Peshawar, which remained closed for the last 11 months.

According to detail, a delegation of traders led by Arbab Road Traders Association Peshawar Cantt vice president Sumeer Chaudhry held a meeting with SCCI president Fuad Ishaq in the chamber house, during which the delegation lauded his efforts in opening of U-turn to reconnect Arbab Road with main Saddar route.

Members of the delegation include general secre-

tary of the association Muhammad Aftab Ahmad Khan, Faisal Nouman, Naveed Abrar, Fazal Waheed, Khair Gul, Nouman Durrani, Saddam Hussain, Khushal Khan and others.

On the occasion the SCCI senior vice president Sanaullah Khan and executive member Monawar Khurshid also present.

Office bearers of the association highly eulogized the efforts of the president of the SCCI to open the U-turn near Takhtoo Jamaat Peshawar Saddar, which remained closed for the last 11 months.

The SCCI raised this issue effectively with relevant authorities and resolved promptly, the participants said.

The association repre-

ssed full confidence in the leadership of former senator Ilyas Ahmad Bilour, leader of the Businessmen's Forum and announced support for the BF in SCCI elections, which is scheduled on September 25.

Fuad Ishaq said that the incumbent provincial government had imposed 2 percent infrastructure development cess on export from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which is highly deplorable and unacceptable.

He said the move has badly affected the export process and demanded to immediately withdraw 2 percent cess on export.

The SCCI chief asked the government to facilitate the business community, trade and export, which is essential for provincial economic growth and progress.

Short-term inflation eases further by 0.15 per cent

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed further decrease of 0.15 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on September 05, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 319.24 points as compared to 319.73 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 14.07 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100

covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

Likewise, SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732 witnessed decrease of 0.14 per cent and went up to 310.35 points from last week's 310.80 points.

The SPI for consumption group of Rs 17,732 to 22,888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175 decreased by 0.17 percent, 0.15 percent, 0.16 percent and 15 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 19 (37.25%) items increased, 13 (25.50%) items decreased and 19 (37.25%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded major decrease in their average prices on a week-

on-week basis included tomatoes (14.54%), chicken (1.55%), wheat flour (1.31%), chilies powder (1.30%), diesel (1.23%), petrol (0.68%), pulse masoor (0.59%), sugar (0.54%), pulse mash (0.49%) and cooking oil 5 litre (0.41%).

The commodities which recorded major increase in their average prices on week-on-week basis included onions (3.83%), pulse gram (1.65%), garlic (1.38%), LPG (0.90%), cooked daal & cooked beef (0.70%) each, eggs (0.54%), potatoes (0.50%), rice basmati broken (0.34%) and georgette (0.14%).

On-year basis, the commodities that witnessed decrease included wheat flour (37.69%), sugar

(21.79%), chilies powder (20.00%), electricity charges for q1 (16.91%), diesel (15.64%), petrol (15.03%), cooking oil 5 litre (10.77%), rice basmati broken (9.52%), gur (7.92%), vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (6.80%), vegetable ghee 1 kg (6.00%) and washing soap (0.92%).

The commodities which recorded an increase in their average prices on year-on-year basis included gas charges for q1 (570.00%), onions (95.92%), pulse gram (51.20%), powered milk (26.15%), beef (23.88%), shirting (23.44%), garlic (21.81%), pulse moong (19.68%), salt powder (19.15%), cooked daal (15.21%), georgette (14.01%) and energy saver (12.87%).

CCP, PAS to enhance collaboration for competition law compliance



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Competition Commission of Pakistan (CCP) and the Pakistan Advertisers Society (PAS) expand their collaboration promoting self-regulation in order to deter deceptive marketing practices in Pakistan and ensure due compliance with the Competition Law.

During the recent visit of PAS's Executive Council to CCP, discussions were held for enhancing collaboration to promote self-regulation and ensure compliance with competition law, particularly in the area of deceptive marketing.

During the meeting, the PAS delegation provided an overview of the role it has

been playing in arbitration also among its member organizations which include various leading undertakings in the beverages, telecom, insurance, automobile, pharmaceutical sectors.

Commending PAS's efforts, Salman Amin, Member CCP, encouraged PAS to expand its membership to benefit all sectors of the economy, particularly through the self-regulatory Code that has been developed in compliance with the Competition Law.

He stated that the recent collaboration between the CCP and PAS has added value for the other undertakings also to become the member of the PAS. These recent collaboration

includes the trainings and joint advocacy sessions held for member organisations of PAS. It was also discussed that, if needed, sector-specific sessions will also be conducted by CCP, with sector specialists and resource persons provided by CCP as well as PAS.

Qamar Abbas, Executive Director of PAS, highlighted that the PAS's membership includes leading local and international brands from various sectors, collectively accounting for 85% of Pakistan's total advertising expenditure.

He also shared insights into the Code of Advertising Practice (COAP), which has been developed in line with the CCP's compliance frame-

work, highlighting the significant benefits it has brought to the sector. He also mentioned that as per the Code, arbitration among its members has, in turn, reduced the need for regulatory intervention by the CCP.

The CCP delegation was represented by the Member CCP along with Mr. Shahzad Hussain, Director General, and Maryam Zafar, Director. Whereas, PAS was represented by Vice Chair Ms. Asima Haq (Unilever), Mr. Qamar Abbas (PAS), Mr. Arif Aziz (Jazz), Mr. Shahzain Munir (English Biscuit Manufacturers), Syed Usman Qaiser (Jubilee Life Insurance), and Ms. Afsheen Rizavi (PAS).

PSL and partners collaborate to transform Royal Palm Golf & Country Club into Pakistan's premier leisure destination

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Services Limited (PSL) - Hashoo Group, in collaboration with Warm Waters Advisory Group, Platinum Construction Limited, and Golfscape LDA Portugal, is pleased to announce a 25-year strategic partnership to manage and transform the Royal Palm Golf & Country Club, Lahore, with a formal award of contract by the competent authorities awaited subsequently.

This collaboration marks a significant milestone in Warm Waters Advisory and Hashoo Group's commitment to enhancing leisure, hospitality, tourism, and sporting experiences, making Royal Palm one of the best family entertainment, leisure, and golf destinations in Pakistan.

Royal Palm Golf &

Country Club, one of Lahore's most iconic and historic clubs under the custodianship of Pakistan Railways, is renowned for its outstanding golf course, luxurious amenities, and distinguished membership, which includes top industry leaders, businessmen, and dignitaries from across the country. Under the stewardship of Hashoo Group and its partners, the club will undergo a comprehensive revitalization to enhance its position as a premier destination for family entertainment and sporting activities, further promoting tourism in the region.

The transformation will feature significant investments to upgrade the golf course, expand sports facilities, enrich dining options, and develop event spaces that cater to a diverse audience. A notable addition

will be a five-star guest accommodation facility featuring over 100 rooms with views directly overlooking the golf course. To foster a vibrant golfing community and attract tourists, the club will introduce high-profile golfing events, tournaments, and bespoke hospitality experiences tailored specifically for golf enthusiasts, further enhancing its appeal to both local and international players.

Bastien Blanc, CEO, Hospitality Division, Hashoo Group, stated, "We are excited to join forces with our esteemed partners to redefine the Royal Palm Golf & Country Club experience. This project marks the second golf-centered property to join the Signature Collection by Pearl-Continental, designed to offer unique and memo-

table experiences beyond the typical hospitality stay. Our vision is to establish Royal Palm as the premier choice for families, leisure seekers, and golf enthusiasts in the region."

Warm Waters Advisory Group, known for its strategic expertise in revitalizing state assets, is playing a key role in this collaboration. Adeel Malik, General Partner of Warm Waters Advisory Group, remarked, "Warm Waters Advisory has consistently led innovative collaborations in this market to maximize the potential of opportunities and assets. At Royal Palm Golf & Country Club, we have facilitated a strategic partnership between Hashoo Group, a leading hospitality player, and a top Portuguese Golf Company, bringing foreign direct investment (FDI) to

Pakistan. We aim to revitalize and enhance Royal Palm, making it a national asset again."

With its extensive experience in modern construction and infrastructure development, Platinum Construction Limited will ensure the transformation is executed seamlessly. Qadeer Ashfaq, CEO of Platinum Construction Limited, added, "We are thrilled to introduce a state-of-the-art five-star guest facility, new banquet spaces, and a complete renovation of this existing clubhouse. We prioritize delivering these upgrades swiftly, ensuring an enhanced experience for our members and their families."

Golfscape LDA Portugal, a global leader in golf course design and management, brings its expertise to elevate Royal

Palm Golf & Country Club to new heights. Gil Zdanowski, CEO Golfscape LDA Portugal and Asad Abbas, Partner Golfscape Pakistan, stated, "We see great potential in the Pakistan market and are committed to positioning Royal Palm as the premier golf course in the country. By introducing modern infrastructure, including advanced drainage, maintenance, and landscaping, we aim to deliver a golfing experience that meets world-class standards. Together with our partners, we will ensure Royal Palm becomes a local and internationally standout golfing destination."

This collaboration also aligns with Pakistan Railways' vision as the custodian of this historic club, which is to preserve its legacy while fostering

innovative improvements that will enhance its appeal to members and visitors. The new management will engage actively with club members and the local community through consultative sessions to ensure that the club retains its prestigious standing while evolving to meet modern needs and establish new leisure, hospitality, and tourism standards. This initiative will enhance the future of golf and hospitality in Pakistan, offering an unparalleled experience at Royal Palm Golf & Country Club for years to come.

PSL - Hashoo Group: A leading business conglomerate in Pakistan with diverse interests, including hospitality, education, technology, real estate, and more. The Group owns and operates Pearl-Continental Hotels & Resorts and is

committed to achieving excellence across all its ventures.

Warm Waters Advisory Group: A premier consulting firm with operations across Greater China, Pakistan, and Europe, specializing in the strategic revitalization of state assets through innovative business practices and restructuring.

Golfscape LDA Portugal: An internationally renowned company specializing in golf course construction, management, and maintenance, with experience managing projects for the International Olympics Committee and the PGA Tour.

Platinum Construction Limited: A modern construction enterprise with decades of experience in infrastructure development, housing, and construction projects across Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Tennis player Ushna Suhail in action in final of ladies singles during Khawar Hayat Memorial National Ranking Tennis Championship 2024 at PTF Tennis Complex.

Pak team to feature in ATF Team Competition

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan team has departed for Kazakhstan to participate in the ATF 12 & Under Team Competition final 2024, scheduled to take place in Shymkent from September 16 to 21.

The team will also attend a three-week training camp, one week before the event and two weeks after, as part of a historic collaboration between the Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF) and the Kazakhstan Tennis Federation (KTF), said a press release.

This is the second time Pakistan has reached the final stage of this prestigious event. In 2021, Pakistan triumphed over India to win the championship.

The players selected for

the 2024 event include Muhammad Shayan Afridi, Rashid Ali, and Muhammad Junaid while Muhammad Abid will be the Captain & Coach.

Participating nations in the competition are: West Asia: Syria, Saudi Arabia; Central Asia: Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan; South Asia: Pakistan, India; Southeast Asia: Indonesia, Thailand, Vietnam; East Asia: China, Chinese Taipei, and Korea.

As a result of a landmark Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the PTF and KTF, the Pakistani team will benefit from extensive training in Shymkent.

This is the first time Pakistani players will attend a training camp

abroad, which is expected to significantly enhance their skills.

Aisam-ul-Haq Qureshi, President of the PTF, extended his best wishes to the team, urging them to play with full force and bring home the title.

He emphasized the importance of the MOU, stating that such initiatives will give young players opportunities to showcase their talent and improve their skills. He also expressed gratitude to the KTF for hosting the Pakistani team.

Col. (R) Zia-ud-Din Tufail, Secretary General of the PTF, shared his optimism, encouraging the players to make the most of this golden opportunity and strive for victory.

Pegula sets up US Open final against Sabalenka

WASHINGTON (BBC): Home favourite Jessica Pegula staged a stunning comeback to set up an enticing US Open final against world number two Aryna Sabalenka.

American Pegula came back from a set, break and break point down to see off Karolina Muchova 1-6 6-4 6-2 and reach a first major singles final.

She will now face Sabalenka, who powered into the final for the second year in a row with a 6-3 7-6 (7-2) victory over American Emma Navarro 6-3 7-2.

The Belarusian is the first women's player since the great Serena Williams in 2019 to reach back-to-back singles finals at Flushing Meadows.

Sabalenka will be greeted by a wall of noisy support for New York-born Pegula on Saturday - but she already has experience in that area, having jokingly admonished the crowd for cheering for Navarro.

"Well now you're cheering for me, it's a bit too late," Sabalenka said as she began her post-match interview.

"It really means a lot and even though you guys were supporting her still I had

goosebumps for you cheering."

Having previously promised to buy the crowd drinks if they cheered for her, Sabalenka joked: "Margaritas for everyone!"

Pegula had previously lost her past six major quarter-finals before beating world number one Iga Swiatek on Thursday, and she followed that up with a battling victory over Muchova.

"I came out flat but she was playing unbelievable, she made me look like a beginner," Pegula said.

"I was about to burst into tears because it was embarrassing, she was destroying me."

"I don't know how I turned that around, honestly."

Poland's Swiatek is the player at the top of the world rankings, but arguably Sabalenka is the best hard-court player in the world.

Always a powerful player, Sabalenka struggled for years with her serve, ultimately deciding to work with a biomechanics expert to cut down the number of double faults.

That helped her win two Australian Open titles, but this year she has moved up

a gear mentally, being able to block out the crowd noise and shrug off errors and momentum swings better than usual.

Her easy power was on show against Navarro - she hit 34 winners to the American's 13 - but she also made the same amount of unforced errors.

The two traded early breaks before a pounding Sabalenka forehand gave her a 4-2 lead and, after seeing off a break back point, she served out the first set.

She was merciless on Navarro's second serve, again going an early break up, but as the finish line came into sight, Sabalenka's nerves showed and she was broken when serving for the match.

However, her quality showed in the tie-break, with the second seed reeling off seven points in a row to see off Navarro.

Afterwards, Sabalenka said she thought back to last year's final, where she was visibly distracted by the noisy support for Gauff.

"I had really tough lessons here in the past. I wasn't ready, then I got emotional, then I just couldn't handle the crowd," Sabalenka said.



Ronaldo reaches 900 career goals - the numbers behind the landmark

LONDON (BBC): Cristiano Ronaldo reached a significant milestone on Thursday by scoring the 900th goal of his illustrious career.

The 39-year-old struck for Portugal in their Nations League game against Croatia, putting them 2-0 up.

It prompted an emotional celebration by the forward, as he dropped to his knees by the corner flag in tears.

The goal was his 131st for his country, while he has also scored at club level for Sporting Lisbon, Manchester United, Real Madrid, Juventus and current club Al-Nassr.

"It was emotional because it's a milestone," Ronaldo said. "It seems like any other milestone but only I know, and the people around me, how hard it is to work every day, to be physically and psychologically fit, to score 900 goals."

"It's a unique milestone in my career."

Scoring for more than two decades - Ronaldo's goals

Such is Ronaldo's longevity that if someone was born when he scored the first competitive goal of his career they would now be 21.

He struck a double for Portugal's Sporting on 7 October 2002 at the age of 17 years, eight months and three days in a 3-0 win against Moreirense.

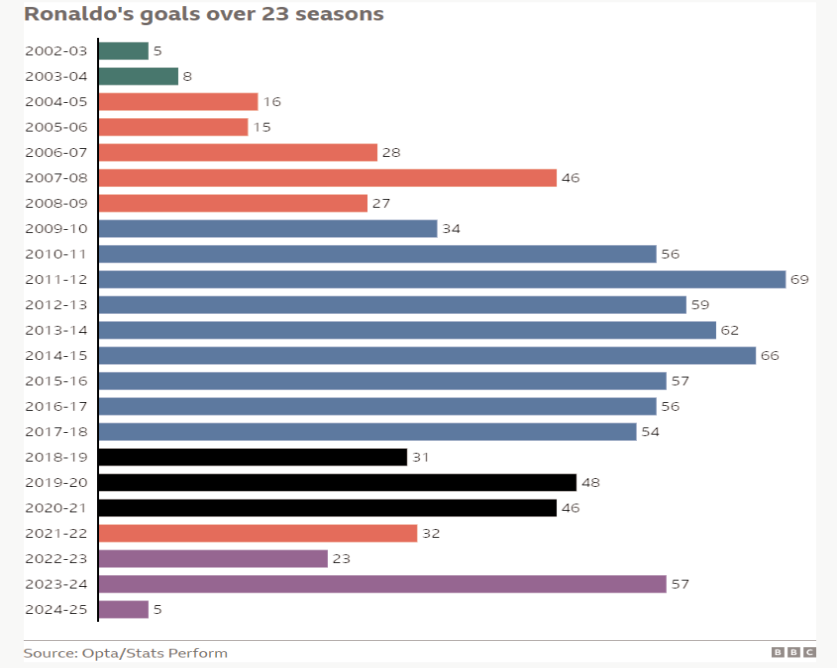
He then moved to Manchester United, scoring 118 goals in 293 games for the Red Devils before joining Real Madrid in 2009 for a then world record 94m euros (£80m).

In nine years at the

Ronaldo's career goals	
Cristiano Ronaldo - Senior Career	
	Goals
Al-Nassr	68
Juventus	101
Manchester United	145
Portugal	131
Real Madrid	450
Sporting CP	5
Total:	900
Source: Opta	

Spanish giants, he scored 450 goals in just 438 games before making the turn 30 in February 2015.

But a return to the Red Devils did not have a There is no central data-



move to Italy to join Juventus.

He added another 101 goals to his tally during his three years with the Italian club before returning to United, where he would score 27 goals in 54

fairytale ending - and in 2023 he made the move to Saudi Arabia with Al-Nassr, where he has got 68 goals and counting.

Incredibly, almost half of Ronaldo's goals (437) have been scored since he

United.

Brazil legends Pele and Romario separately claimed to have scored more than 1,000 goals each, but filter out friendlies and those numbers drop down into the 700s.

Unofficial statisticians RSSSF, external say Pele got 778 goals, while Romario scored 785.

Lionel Messi, Ronaldo's long-time rival, has scored 867 career goals to date.

"I want 1,000" - Ronaldo not done yet

Now 39, time is not on Ronaldo's side but the veteran is determined to keep playing until he has reached the figure of 1,000 career goals.

Speaking to his former Manchester United teammate Rio Ferdinand in an interview on his YouTube channel, external, Ronaldo said he was confident he could hit the milestone within the next couple of years.

"I want to reach 1,000 goals," he said.

"If I don't have any injuries, this for me is the most important [thing]. I want that."

"All the goals I have scored, they have video."

Ronaldo could play into his 40s and there has been plenty of speculation about whether he will be still be playing for Portugal at the 2026 World Cup.

But he said that was not a priority, adding: "Portugal winning the Euros is equivalent to winning a World Cup. I've already won two trophies for Portugal that I really wanted."

"I'm not motivated by that. I'm motivated by enjoying football and the records come naturally."

New era begins as Republic of Ireland host England

DUBLIN (BBC): The Republic of Ireland host England in Dublin for the first time in nine years with new faces at the helm and both nations looking for winning starts.

While Heimir Hallgrímsson takes charge of the hosts for the first time since his appointment in July, interim boss Lee Carsley wants a victory to strengthen his chances of landing the England job permanently.

The match in the Uefa Nations League is England's first without Gareth Southgate in charge since September 2016.

Southgate resigned after the 2-1 defeat to Spain in the Euro 2024 final in Berlin on 14 July.

Ironically, Birmingham-born Carsley played for the Republic of Ireland 40 times as a player after qualifying through his Irish grandmother.

England midfielder Declan Rice also played three senior games for Ireland - all friendlies - before switching allegiance in 2019, while Jack Grealish represented the Republic of Ireland at youth level.

"They chose who they wanted to represent," said Republic of Ireland captain Seamus Coleman, who is set to win his 73rd cap on Saturday.

"I can only speak of Declan. He's a good guy, top player. I just want the lads to represent Ireland and we have got that."

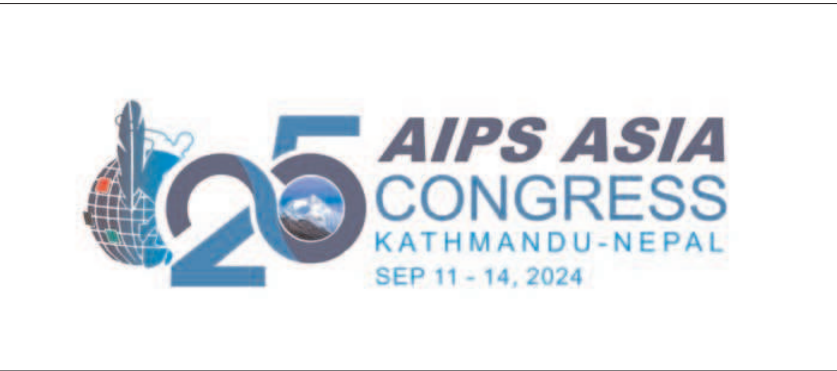
"It's been a few years [since they played for the Republic], it's not something that concerns me."

Hallgrímsson, who was joint head coach of his native Iceland when they stunned England at Euro 2016, reported no new injury worries for what is the Republic of Ireland's first game since 11 June.

"I have learned a lot this week," he said.

"We wish we would have had more time but we have to prioritise our time. I think after this camp I will have a lot more knowledge." Since Carsley - who was already without Jude Bellingham because of injury - named his 26-man squad for this game and next Tuesday's match against Finland at Wembley, three players have been forced to withdraw due to illness or injury.

Nepal to host historic AIPS Asia Congress



F.P. Report

KATHMANDU, NEPAL: The preparations for the 25th Annual Congress of the Asian Sports Journalists Federation (AIPS ASIA) have reached their final stages, with Nepal set to welcome international delegates from September 11 to 14.

According to Durga Nath Subedi, President of the Nepal Sports Journalists Forum, this will be the first

time in Nepal's history that representatives from both European and Asian continents will gather in the country for the prestigious event.

The Congress, to be held in the scenic capital city of Kathmandu, will serve as a platform to discuss the development and promotion of sports journalism in Asia. A key focus of the event will be a dedicated forum addressing the chal-

lenges and opportunities for women in sports journalism, including the issues they face in the industry.

In addition to these discussions, several Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) will be signed to foster collaborations in the field. The Congress will also provide insights into the activities of the Asian Electronic Sports Federation. Special mes-

sages from the Olympic Council of Asia and the Asian Football Confederation will be delivered to the delegates, emphasizing the significance of the event.

Durga Nath Subedi expressed pride in hosting such a grand event amidst the natural beauty of Nepal, known for its majestic mountains, including the iconic Mount Everest, and tranquil landscapes. He highlighted that the breathtaking scenery would provide a fitting backdrop to this historic gathering.

AIPS Asia Secretary General Amjad Aziz Malik will share further details about the Congress during a forthcoming press conference, with the Nepal Sports Journalists Forum ensuring all preparations are in place for what promises to be a memorable and impactful event.

Champions One-Day Cup Afridi, Rizwan, Shadab, Shakeel and Haris named captains

LAHORE (Cricinfo): Each of the five sides at the Champions One-Day Cup - Pakistan's newer, flashier version of the domestic 50-over competition - will be captained by Pakistan internationals. Shaheen Shah Afridi, Mohammad Rizwan, Shadab Khan, Saud Shakeel and Mohammad Haris have been announced as captains of the sides they represent, taking charge of the Lions, Wolves, Panthers, Dolphins and Stallions respectively.

Haris' captaincy of the Stallions - chosen by the team's mentor Shoaib Malik - appears to mark a remarkable, and sudden - return to favour with the PCB.

He last played ODI cricket a year ago, and was left out of Pakistan's World Cup squad. He also lost his place in the T20 side, the format most conducive to his skillset, during Wahab Riaz's stint as chief selector. Now, however, he captains a team that also includes Babar Azam, Pakistan's white-ball captain, as well as Haris' captain at Peshawar Zalmi, where the two play at the PSL.

Unlike previous iterations of the tournament, the PCB has pulled out all the

stops to ensure maximum participation of Pakistan's highest-profile players. There is no international cricket for Pakistan which coincides with the competition, with just about every fit centrally contracted player taking part.

During the mentors' unveiling press conferences, Misbah-ul-Haq, mentor of the Wolves, said any unfit players would be excluded from the competition. The PCB has provided a list of players who did not make the cut on that

account, including former Pakistan opener Sharjeel Khan.

All games will take place in Faisalabad, with the tournament running from September 12-29 with playoffs rather than semi-finals. The tournament concludes eight days before the start of the first Test between Pakistan and England.

Each side has announced extended squad lists, which are to be trimmed by September 10. The sides do not have affiliated city

names, though each name does have historical links to previous domestic cup sides: Lahore for Lions, Karachi for Dolphins, Peshawar for Panthers, Faisalabad for Wolves and, perhaps most famously, Sialkot for Stallions.

Sarfraz Ahmed is the only player-mentor, operating in that role with the Dolphins. Misbah (Wolves), Malik (Stallions), Saqlain Mushtaq (Panthers) and Waqar Younis (Lions) are the other mentors.

Guyana Amazon Warriors sign Moeen Ali as Saim Ayub's replacement

GUYANA (Cricinfo): England allrounder Moeen Ali is set for his maiden CPL stint after having been signed up by defending champions Guyana Amazon Warriors for the ongoing season. Moeen, 37, will slot in as a replacement for Pakistan opener Saim Ayub, who is unavailable for the entire season. Ayub's absence is a significant blow for Amazon Warriors, considering he was the breakout star in their run to their first title in 2023. Ayub was the second-highest run-getter last season, with 478 runs in 13 innings at an average of 43.45 and strike rate of 142.26. Nobody hit more sixes than Ayub's 28 in CPL 2023. This time, the CPL clashed with Pakistan's two-match Test series against Bangladesh at home, where Ayub opened the batting for his team, and will also overlap with the Champions One-Day Cup, a new version of Pakistan's domestic 50-over competition. Ayub is set to play for Panthers in that tournament. Moeen's availability for Amazon Warriors is subject to Birmingham Bears' progression in the T20 Blast in the UK, which is also clashing with the CPL. If Bears win the quarter-final against Gloucestershire on Friday, they will reach the Finals Day on September 14. Until Moeen arrives for the CPL, New Zealand's hard-hitting opener Tim Robinson will act as his temporary replacement. Robinson is a bit of a Finn Allen clone who "loves hitting sixes". In the 2023-24 Super Smash, he was the second-highest run-getter, with 298 runs in six innings at an average of 59.60 and strike rate of 187.42. The tally included 139 off 64 balls, with ten sixes, against Otago, the second-highest score in the history of the Super Smash.



In brief

Musadik visits Usman's home

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Petroleum, Dr. Musadik Malik, on Friday, visited the residence of Shaheed Major Usman Ullah to pay his respects and offer condolences to the family. Major Usman Ullah embraced martyrdom on August 6, 2015, during a rescue mission when his helicopter crashed in Mansehra. In recognition of his bravery and service to the nation, he was posthumously awarded the Tamgha-i-Basalat. While honoring Major Usman Ullah's sacrifice, he said, "The country thrives on the sacrifices of its martyrs." Speaking to the martyr's children, he said, "We are all proud of your father's great sacrifice." Dr. Musadik Malik said that the blood of martyrs is a debt upon the nation and offered prayers for the elevation of Major Usman Ullah's rank in the hereafter.

Defence Day marked

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Defence and Martyrs Day was celebrated in different schools in commemoration of the historic victory of Pakistan Armed Forces against enemy aggression during the 1965 September war. Different activities were organised in various schools and colleges of the city to pay tributes to the nation's martyrs who sacrificed their precious lives while defending the motherland. Special prayers were offered for the stability and peace of the country. Heads of institutions shed light on services of valour soldiers of the armed forces in defending the country. Students were cognised on the strategic and territorial challenges being by Pakistan. They were also informed about the responsibilities and duties of students in making Pakistan a secure and peaceful country. The students presented beautiful tableaux showing their affiliation with the armed forces. In morning assemblies, students also presented speeches and sang national songs. The students from the Cantt areas gathered outside their schools and organised a smart rally while raising slogans for Pakistan.

HEC conducts workshop

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has conducted a two-day workshop on "Marketing, Branding, and Outreach through Digital and Social Media Platforms" for universities and HEC media representatives at NUST, Islamabad. The workshop concluded successfully and was organised by the USAID-funded 'Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program'. At the closing session, Muhammad Raza Chohan, Advisor Scholarships, and Ms. Kate Maloney, Director of the Office of Education, USAID Pakistan, were in attendance. Speaking at the occasion, Chohan lauded the 20-year partnership between HEC and USAID. He emphasized the profound impact of modern social media in transforming higher education communication. He also highlighted the importance of developing a strategic brand identity to enhance university enrollment, foster external linkages, and attract greater investment. Ms. Kate Maloney, Director of Education, USAID Pakistan, distributed scholarship award certificates to the workshop participants. University focal persons expressed their appreciation for the efforts of HEC and USAID and called for future workshops to keep pace with the evolving digital media landscape.

Chinese team calls on Romina Khurshid, discusses green, efficient mobility solutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): A high-level Chinese delegation Friday called on Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam and discussed multiple aspects of their ambitious plan to help Pakistan revolutionise its mass transit system for providing world-class transportation facilities to public while achieving environmental sustainability and climate resilience goals.

The delegation, comprising senior-level officials of the Chongqing CRRC Hengton Vehicle Company and Chongqing Public Transport Group Company, PowerChina International and Daewoo Pakistan Express apprised the PM's climate aide of Pakistan Green Transport Project (PGTP), an ambitious initiative that aims at transforming the country's public transport system to

become more environmental-friendly and sustainable, a news release said.

"Basically set up under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) framework, PGTP is a consortium of Pakistani and Chinese transport companies, working to bring zero-emission, green transport in the country, which would benefit the common man in country, reduce petroleum import bill, ensure optimal utilization of the power generation capacity and above all improve the environmental conditions across the country," said Faisal Ahmed Siddiqui, CEO Daewoo Pakistan Express group, who led the delegation.

Sharing further details during the meeting, Siddiqui said that MoU has already been signed among the consortium members at Pakistan Business

Conference held in Schenzhen city of China in June 2024 in the presence of Federal Minister for Privatization and Board of Investment Abdul Aleem Khan; Minister for Industries and Production Rana Tanveer Hussain and Federal Commerce Minister Jam Kamal.

"Now, efforts are being expedited in support with the provincial governments to introduce electric buses, set up unified charging systems for the e-transport, and the bus stop mini shopping mall model initially in Islamabad, Lahore, Karachi," a senior official of a Chinese transport company Zhou Zheng informed Ms. Alam.

He also added that in the second phase, the same e-transport bus service and charging systems will be introduced in other cities of the country in the second

phase.

"Through the e-buses network in urban centers of Pakistan through the Pakistan Green Transport Project, we aim to provide technical assistance to reduce the growth of energy consumption & related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the transport sector in the country, while simultaneously improving urban environmental conditions and trade competitiveness," the senior Chinese transport company official Zhou Zheng highlighted.

He said further that project also focuses on reducing carbon emissions, enhancing fuel efficiency, promoting the use of electric vehicles (EVs), improving public transport and integrating clean energy solutions such as solar-powered vehicles.

The delegation members also said that the initiative

focusing on reducing air pollution levels in cities like Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad, which could be a step forward towards implementing carbon credit systems to further encourage green transport adoption in the country.

The Prime Minister's Coordinator Romina Khurshid thanked the delegation for their interest in revolutionising Pakistan's mass transit system by introducing a network of e-buses and charging facilities.

She assured them the climate change & environmental coordination ministry's all-out support for implementing the Pakistan Green Transport Project, saying: "The consortium of Chinese and Pakistani transport companies will be welcomed and be fully supported to implement the game-changer e-transport system in the Pakistani

cities."

"I hope the green transport project would revolutionise the country's transportation infrastructure by promoting environmentally sustainable and efficient mobility solutions across the nation. During the meeting Ms. Alam said the present government was committed to modernizing the country's public transport system, which will be decent, safe and environmentally-efficient.

To achieve the goal, the government is implementing the National Electric Vehicle Policy of 2019 to promote the adoption of electric vehicles in the country by providing incentives to the e-vehicle manufacturers in the country such as reduced duties and taxes for EVs, tax rebates for manufacturers, and support for building EV charging infrastructure, said

Romina Khurshid Alam.

She highlighted that cities like Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi have already introduced electric buses as part of their public transportation systems with aim to reduce air pollution and provide cleaner alternatives for environmental-friendly urban mobility facilities to the people.

Romina Khurshid Alam also highlighted Pakistan's broader efforts to tackle climate change and meet its commitment to the Paris Agreement by reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from various sectors, particularly transport.

"As one of the most populous countries in the world, Pakistan recognises the urgent need to adopt sustainable transport methods to alleviate pollution, improve air quality, and promote the well-being of its citizens," she said.

Aurangzeb meets family of Shaheed L/NK Waqar, pays tribute to martyrs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Aurangzeb on Friday visited the residence of Shaheed Lance Naik (L/NK) Waqar Hussain Shah, who laid down his life in the line of duty, defending the nation with unparalleled bravery and dedication.

During the visit, the minister met with the martyr's widow Sania Nazir and their children, extending his deepest condolences and expressing the nation's immense pride in the valor and sacrifice of Shaheed Waqar, a news release said.

He said the entire nation stood in gratitude and solidarity with the families of

those who have given their lives for Pakistan.

The minister remarked, "Our martyrs are the pride of the nation, and their sacrifices serve as a beacon of courage and patriotism for generations to come. The bravery of heroes like Shaheed Waqar Hussain Shah will forever be remembered, and the nation is indebted to their service."

Sania Nazir expressed her gratitude for the minister's visit, reiterating her commitment to raising their children in the spirit of patriotism and service to the country.

The children of Shaheed Waqar were assured of continued support and recogni-

tion by the government for their father's supreme sacrifice.

Muhammad Aurangzeb also commended the Pakistan Army and other security forces for their unwavering commitment to safeguarding the nation's sovereignty and ensuring peace within the region.

He emphasized that the sacrifices of martyrs were a reminder of the enduring strength and resilience of Pakistan's military and the spirit of its people.

He offered Fateha and prayed for Shaheed Waqar Hussain Shah and all martyrs of the Pakistan Armed Forces, whose legacy continued to inspire the nation.

Aleem Khan visits family of martyred Khurshid

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Privatization Abdul Aleem Khan, along with members of the National Assembly, on Friday visited the residence of martyred Subedar Major Muhammad Khurshid to pay tribute to the brave soldier who sacrificed his life for the country.

He met with the family members of the martyred soldier, including his children and expressed his condolences.

He praised the sacrifices of Subedar Major Muhammad Khurshid, saying that his martyrdom was a

great honor for the nation.

The minister said that the security forces were always ready to sacrifice their lives for the protection of the country, and the martyrdom of Subedar Major Muhammad Khurshid was a testament to their bravery.

Abdul Aleem Khan also met with the son of the martyred soldier Khurshid, and expressed his support for the family.

The widow and daughters of Shaheed Muhammad Khurshid thanked the minister for visiting them and said they felt courage with arrival of the

parliamentarians who acknowledged sacrifice of their family head. He said that the nation was proud of the sacrifices of Subedar Major Muhammad Khurshid and his family.

Subedar Major Muhammad Khurshid was martyred on December 20, 2022, during an operation against terrorists in Bannu. His sacrifice will always be remembered as a great honor for the nation.

Members of the National Assembly, including Aun Chaudhry and Gul Asghar, accompanied the Minister during his visit.

Rising water levels:

ICT admin to open Rawal Dam spillways

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration opened the spillways of Rawal Dam on Friday at 6 a.m. as a precautionary measure due to rising water levels.

The decision comes in response to the rising water levels in the dam, which reached 1,752 feet, prompting the authorities to take this step to prevent potential flooding, according to an ICT administration spokesperson.

He said residents living

near urban river channels have been advised to avoid these areas to ensure their safety.

Those residing in low-lying regions are urged to follow all safety protocols to protect themselves and their property, he said.

The public is encouraged to contact the district administration by dialling 16 in case of emergencies, he added.

Livestock owners are also advised to move their animals to higher ground

immediately, he said.

He said the district administration is closely monitoring river channels and bridges, with strict oversight in place to ensure public safety. All necessary preparations have been made to manage potential flooding, the administration confirmed.

The ICT administration remains vigilant and is taking all necessary steps to ensure the safety of residents as the weather conditions evolve, he added.

38th Khwarizmi Int'l Award announced

ISLAMABAD (APP): COMSTECH, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's (OIC) Ministerial Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation, has announced the 38th Khwarizmi International Award (KIA) for 2024 to recognize and celebrate outstanding scientific achievements by researchers, inventors, and innovators from across the globe.

According to an official of COMSTECH, the awards have been announced by the Ministry of Science, Research and Technology, Iranian Research Organ-

ization for Science and Technology in partnership with the OIC Standing Committee on Scientific and Technological Cooperation (COMSTECH).

The deadline for submission of entries is November 01, 2024, with the laureates being announced in January 2025.

This prestigious award offers global recognition for advancements in various fields, ranging from Aerospace and Agriculture to Nanotechnology, Information Technology, and Medical Sciences, the official informed.

The participants can submit their contributions in a broad range of scientific and technological disciplines, including Aerospace; Agriculture, Natural Resources, Animal Sciences, Veterinary Medicine; Basic Sciences, Biotechnology and Basic Medical Sciences; Civil Engineering; Electrical and Computer Engineering; Green Technology; Industrial and technology Management; Mechanical Engineering, Medical Sciences, and Nanotechnology; Digital Economy, among others.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam presiding a high-level meeting with a Chinese delegation.

TDC opens PsyCare Clinic

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Diabetes Centre (TDC) Islamabad, a not-for-profit organization and specialized diabetes, announced the opening of the Hope and Light, PsyCare Clinic with the collaboration of UAE-based organization Hope and Light.

This new facility, now open inside the main hospital, marks a significant advancement in comprehensive diabetes care by integrating essential mental health support, a news release on Friday said.

Dr. Asjad Hameed, Chairman of The Diabetes Centre, emphasized the vision behind the PsyCare Clinic, stating, "Our goal is to provide holistic care by combining physical and mental health support for diabetes patients."

Dr. Sajid Mahmood Ashraf, Chief Operating Officer of The Diabetes Centre, highlighted the initiative's impact, saying, "The PsyCare Clinic will offer invaluable support for the mental well-being and psychological health of diabetic patients visiting TDC, advancing our mission of creating a 'world without diabetes.'"

Dr. Asma Naheed, Chairperson & Founder of @Hope & Light, spoke on the importance of mental health, noting, "The clinic will help patients address the psychological challenges associated with diabetes, complementing their overall care."

Dr. Mohamad Shoaib Suddle, Chairman of the One-Man Commission for Minority Rights constituted by the Supreme Court of Pakistan, commended the efforts of both TDC and Hope and Light. He stated, "The excellent journey of TDC and Hope and Light demonstrates the power of collective effort. It is crucial for individuals to contribute towards guiding Pakistan in the right direction."

Touseef H. Farooqui former chairman NEPRA expressed his support, stating, "I am committed to supporting this important initiative, which addresses both physical and mental health needs of diabetes patients."

The PsyCare Clinic aims to provide specialized mental health services, including counseling and support groups, to enhance the overall well-being of diabetes patients.

12 new dengue patients identified in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (INP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad, Irfan Nawaz Memon on Friday chaired the weekly meeting to review the city's ongoing anti-dengue operations and the district administration's efforts for its control with rising cases in the city.

The spokesman of Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration said the meeting involved updates from all Assistant Commissioners about their progress in the campaign.

During the meeting, it was reported that 12 new dengue patients were identified in the last 24 hours. This brings the total num-

ber of cases in Islamabad to 85 from January 1 to September 5. A worrying statistic shared was the discovery of 419 dengue-positive larvae found across various locations within the last week.

Meanwhile, between August 29 and September 4, 129 potential dengue hotspots were identified in Islamabad. The meeting also included a comparative analysis of dengue cases with other cities in the country.

In response to the rising cases, the DC Islamabad stressed the importance of enforcing anti-dengue Standard Operating

Procedures (SOPs). Strict action was taken on several violations.

In an action, AC Pothohar sealed four junkyards and a factory where dengue larvae were found. Additionally, four people were arrested for breaking anti-dengue protocols.

Further action was also taken against the management of Jammu and Kashmir Society, where consistent breaches of dengue prevention measures were reported. The management committee had been warned previously, but violations continued, leading to the arrest of its staff.

Police busts dacoit gang, recover looted valuables

ISLAMABAD (APP): Capital Territory (ICT) Police Anti-Robbery and Dacoity Unit (ARDU) on Friday busted a dacoit gang involved in robberies, snatching, and street crimes.

The police recovered looted valuables, including mobile phones, motorbikes, and arms with ammunition from their possession, said Police Spokesperson.

He said on the special directives of ICT Police Inspector General (IG) Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, an operation was conducted against organized and dynamic gangs across the district to ensure the safety and security of citizens.

He said in line with these directives, the crack-

down targeted various areas in the city.

The ARDU police team arrested six wanted members of the notorious gang, including their gang leader, involved in numerous criminal activities, he said.

He said the accused were identified Inamullah, Ali Khan, Hammad Wali, Saleem Khan, Basit Ali and Atta Ur Rehman.

He said the team recovered motorbikes, mobile phones, and arms with ammunition from their possession.

Cases have been registered against the nabbed suspects, and further investigation was underway, he added.

DIG Dr. Syed Mustafa

Tanveer commended the police team for their successful operation. "Well done to the police team of DIG Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer," he said.

"Operations are being carried out against organized gangs," he added.

Senior police officers have directed officials to maintain an effective crackdown against those involved in criminal activities and to ensure the safety of lives and property as a top priority.

Citizens have been advised to cooperate with the police and report any suspicious individuals or activities through the emergency helpline "Pucar-15" or "ICT-15".

CTP deploy 216 traffic wardens

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Traffic Police Rawalpindi have deployed 216 traffic wardens to regulate traffic on city roads on Defence Day.

According to CTO Rawalpindi Benish Fatima, a total of 216 traffic wardens and officers including eight DSPs, 32 senior traffic wardens and traffic assistants were deployed here on Friday.

She informed that due to the Defence Day programme at the GHQ, traffic would be diverted from

Mall Road and several other chowks to alternate routes.

The traffic wardens were instructed to make all-out efforts to regulate traffic on the roads of Saddar particularly Mall road to ensure uninterrupted traffic flow.

The citizens were urged to report any suspicious activity immediately to district and military police.

The CTO warned that strict legal action would be taken against vehicles and motorcycles without num-

ber plates.

Ambulances, fire brigades, and other official vehicles would be thoroughly checked to avoid any untoward incident and prevent any misuse of such vehicles for terrorist activity.

Through the official social media pages of traffic police and radio station 88.6, the citizens were also being provided with moment-to-moment information about the diversion points and traffic situation, she added.

Zadran to miss NZ Test

KABUL (Ariana News): Afghanistan bowler Naveed Zadran will miss next week's test match against New Zealand with a side strain injury, the Afghan Cricket Board said on Friday in a statement. The 19-year-old, who has taken nine wickets in his two tests, has been told to rest for three to four weeks in the hope of recovering before this month's One-Day International series against South Africa, the board posted on X.

The Frontier Post

Rabi ul Awal 02 1446 — Saturday, September 07, 2024

Japarov met Noorullah

KABUL (Ariana News): The Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of Kyrgyzstan Akybek Japarov met with the Chargé d'Affaires of Afghanistan in Kyrgyzstan Noorullah Amin. The parties discussed and exchanged views on various areas of further bilateral cooperation between the Kyrgyz Republic and Afghanistan. Akybek Japarov said that Kyrgyzstan was interested in development of trade and economic relations with Afghanistan.

Chinese delegation to assist Afghan heritage

KABUL (TOLOnews): The chargé d'affaires of the Chinese Embassy in Afghanistan, during a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Culture and Arts of the Ministry of Information and Culture, announced that a professional delegation from the Chinese Archaeology Administration will visit Afghanistan next week.

The Chinese chargé d'affaires stated that the purpose of this delegation's visit is to collaborate with Afghan archaeologists in the preservation and consolidation of the Mes Aynak archaeological sites, the National Museum, historical monuments, and to expedite the Mes Aynak project.

Khabib Ghuffran, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Information and Culture, said about this

meeting: "They mentioned a technical delegation that will come to Afghanistan next week and will cooperate with the technical team of the Ministry of Information and Culture in the restoration, preservation, and reconstruction of historical sites."

At the same time, Atiqullah Azizi, the Deputy Minister of Culture and Arts of the Ministry of Information and Culture, called the visit of the professional archaeology delegation from China important and promised that the necessary facilities would be provided for this delegation.

Kitab Khan Faizi, head of the International Research Center for Kushan Studies at the Academy of Sciences, said: "In addition to scientific research, cooperation in the

restoration of historical relics is essential because some of the archaeological sites that have been destroyed are almost on the verge of destruction as they are not being preserved."

Mohammad Anwar Faiz, Deputy Senior Researcher at the International Research Center for Kushan Studies at the Academy of Sciences, said: "The research department of the Academy of Sciences and the archaeology department of the Ministry of Information and Culture, with their consultation, can make progress effectively."

In this meeting, the Deputy Minister of Culture and Arts of the Ministry of Information and Culture also added that Afghanistan is a country rich in antiquities and monuments, and China's cooperation in this regard is important.

17.25% increased in currency value

KABUL (Khaama Press): Officials from the Central Bank of Afghanistan have announced that over the past year, the currency's value has increased by 17.25% against the US dollar.

The Central Bank officials provided a report on the past year's achievements. They revealed that 149 licenses for currency exchange businesses and money service companies were issued, bringing the total number of permits issued to 1,780.

According to bank officials, over the past year, 7 billion, 186 million, and 544 thousand Afghanis in old banknotes were collected from central and provincial areas, incinerated, and replaced with new banknotes in the market.

The Central Bank noted that a new law for regulating currency exchange businesses and money service providers was introduced. This law aims to improve non-bank financial institutions' regulation, standardization, and mechanization.

However, the World Bank had previously warned that starting in 2024, the value of the Afghan currency is expected to decline against all major currencies.

The ongoing instability of Afghanistan's economy is a growing concern. While international support and aid organizations, including the UN, provide critical assistance, the economic foundation remains shaky and unsustainable. The dependency on external aid highlights the fragile nature of Afghanistan's economy, which is struggling with a severe humanitarian crisis and rising unemployment.

Efforts to stabilize the currency and regulate financial institutions are positive steps, but they may not be enough to address the deeper economic challenges. The lack of a solid and self-sustaining economic infrastructure coupled with the continued humanitarian needs underscores the need for more comprehensive and resilient economic solutions.

Japan pledges \$10m in aid to Afghanistan



KABUL (TOLOnews): The Deputy Prime Minister for Political Affairs, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, met with Japan's Ambassador to Afghanistan Takayoshi Kormaya, in Kabul to discuss Japan's assistance to Afghanistan.

According to a statement from the Arg, Takayoshi Kormaya said that Japan has announced a \$10 million aid package to Afghanistan for combating

drug trafficking and plans to build 165 primary schools in nine provinces of the country.

Additionally, the Japanese Ambassador mentioned that Japan intends to allocate \$300,000 to the National Museum in Kabul to help preserve Afghanistan's historical monuments and enhance the capacity of relevant institutions.

Takayoshi Kormaya further added that Tokyo is

working to establish relations between the Islamic Emirate and the G7 countries (the seven major economic powers).

During the meeting, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir emphasized the importance of Kabul-Tokyo relations for both countries and expressed hope that the commitments made at the third Doha meeting would be implemented promptly.

The Japanese Ambassador also expressed condolences over the recent explosion in the sixth security district of Kabul.

Previously, the former head of UNAMA and the head of Japan's Sasakawa Peace Foundation had asked the acting foreign minister to send a delegation to Japan to promote bilateral cooperation between Kabul and Tokyo.

Afghan Acting Minister calls for unity



KABUL (TOLOnews): Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani, the acting Minister of Interior, said at the inauguration ceremony of a mosque in the eleventh security district of Kabul city that no one will be allowed to damage the unity that has been established among the ethnic groups.

Emphasizing the prevention of any kind of conflict,

nicities and nationalities, and causes tension, is not a friend but an enemy."

Haqqani also urged security officials to adopt good behavior and engagement with the people.

He said: "Make every effort to interact well with the people, and in addition to engagement, conduct inspections within a framework; when inspecting, speak kindly to the people. Security is not achieved by disregarding the rules just because I am a Khalifa."

Earlier, during his visit to the provinces of Paktia and Paktika, the acting Minister of Interior had said that the general amnesty order in the country has not been violated and emphasized that many enmities among the ethnic groups have turned into friendships since the return of the Islamic Emirate.

Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani added that after years of war and challenges, the country is now unified, and security officials should also adopt good behavior and engagement with the people.

The acting Minister of Interior added: "Anyone who protests against the system and its officials, creates divisions among eth-

Firewood and coal prices jump in Kabul by 50 per cent

KABUL (Pajhwok): Some residents and shopkeepers in the capital Kabul of Afghanistan have said that on the eve of the fall season the prices of firewood and coal jumped by 50 per cent now compared to the same time last year.

Sayed Moqim, one of the firewood sellers in the Chaman-i-Babar area of Kabul's Taimani locality, said the price of 560 kilograms of Balut firewood accounted of 12,000 afis and the same quantity of Archa firewood 1,350 afis.

He said last year in the same time the price of 560 kilograms of Balut firewood was 8,000 afis and the same quantity of Arch firewood 8,000 afis.

He said the price of firewood had surged because of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) ban on deforestation.

Sayed Moqim said most of firewood arrived in the country from northern provinces and Nangarhar province.

He said: "We ask the IEA to allow the transfer of

already stored firewood in forests, it would help reduce firewood price in Kabul and people could not purchase firewood due to economic problems."

Farooq, one of the firewood sellers in the Char Rahi-i-Shaheed locality, said the price of Balut firewood jumped due to ban on its import.

He said today (Thursday), the price of 560 kilograms of Balut firewood is 11,500 afis and the price of a 560 kilograms of Archa firewood is 12,000 afis, while at the same time last year, the price of 560 kilograms of firewood tree was sold for 8,000 afis and the same quantity of firewood was sold for 7,500 afis.

He said that the price of firewood has increased due to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) ban deforestation.

Farooq said that most of the firewood came from Nangarhar and Khost provinces and added that due to the lack of Balut firewood in the market,

people had to cut down mulberry trees.

He asked the officials of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) to control the price of fuel and firewood.

Naseebullah, a resident of Chaharrahi Shahid in Kabul city, told Pajhwok that he had saved some money to buy fuel for winter, but he could not buy it due to the increase in the price of wood.

He asked the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) to control the price of wood so that poor people do not face problems in the winter season.

However, Amir Mohammad Kabuli, the general head of the Kabul Wood and Coal Sellers Union in the Afghanistan Chamber of Craftsmen and Shopkeepers, confirmed the increase in the price of wood in Kabul and said that about two years ago, deforestation in the southern provinces was prohibited by the relevant bodies of the caretaker government.

He said that following ban on cutting forests, the supply of firewood in the markets has decreased and its price increased.

He said, for this reason, this union has repeatedly requested to reconsider this matter and they continue their efforts to find a solution in this regard.

He said that currently, due to the ban on chopping Balut, most of the wood found in the markets is from fruit trees, especially mulberry trees, apricot trees, apples, etc., which are brought from the districts of Shekar Dara, Paghman and Chahar Asia. Because people cut down and sell their trees that have no fruit or are dry.

He asked the caretaker government to find an alternative to firewood or to allow the import of wood to flow..

Pajhwok Afghan News tried to get a response from one of the relevant departments of the caretaker government, but relevant official was not reached for comment

HRC representative says no complaints heard from prisoners

PANJSHIR (TOLOnews): Representatives of the Human Rights Council and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in a meeting with local officials in Panjshir said that their assessment shows the human rights situation and conditions of prisoners in Panjshir are better than before.

UNAMA has also said that a major meeting will soon be held in this province, involving all aid agencies, to attract humanitarian aid and implement development projects.

The Human Rights Council's official said: "We had a meeting with the

director of the prison, we are very happy to report to you Mawlawi Sahib that the provincial prison is functioning smoothly and we have not heard any complaints from the prisoners themselves."

The governor of Panjshir in this meeting said that the Islamic Emirate is committed to observing human rights within the framework of Islamic Sharia.

Mohammad Agha Hakim, one of the representatives of the Human Rights Council and UNAMA, has requested more attention be given to health, education, the economy, and infrastructure projects in this

province.

Mohammad Agha Hakim, the governor of Panjshir, said: "Every week a group of foreigners would come, implement their projects, and assist those in need. The people of Panjshir are deprived, like the people of Nuristan."

A number of political analysts have expressed their views on why institutions and organizations have more interest and frequent visits to Panjshir compared to other provinces.

"Under the current conditions where Afghanistan faces economic and political isolation and the world

is aware of it, these meetings can create unity, cohesion, and acceptance of each other. The institutions expressing concerns in this regard can witness the realities of Afghanistan up close," said Zalmay Afghanyar, a political analyst.

Representatives of the Human Rights Council and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), in a meeting with local officials of Panjshir province, stressed that the international community is seeking security, peace, prosperity, and well-being in Afghanistan.

Over 7b worth of worn-out banknotes destroyed last year

KABUL (TOLOnews): Officials of the Central Bank of Afghanistan, in their annual performance program, said that over the past year, they have collected and destroyed more than seven billion Afghanis worth of damaged banknotes.

They consider maintaining the value of the afghani against other currencies, preventing the smuggling of dollars, collecting worn-out banknotes, increasing the withdrawal limit from banks, reducing the inflation rate, implementing monetary policy, expanding Islamic banking, and developing financial services the most significant achievements of the Central Bank in the past year.

Sediqullah Khalid, the First Deputy of the Central Bank, said: "When the amount of damaged money



in the country's markets increases, last year the Central Bank managed to collect damaged banknotes

worth over seven billion afghanis, which includes various types, from both the center and provinces, and in accordance with a specific procedure, stops their collection and circulation."

According to the bank officials, the value of the Afghani increased by 17.25% in August of the current solar year compared to August of the previous year.

Ahmad Jawad Sadad, head of the Central Bank's Monetary Policy, said: "Based on the statistics provided by the National Statistics and Information Authority, in the month of Saratan of the current year, the inflation rate is -6.6%, while last year, the inflation rate was -9.1%."

The head of Non-Banking Financial Supervision added that they have issued a total of 1,780 licenses for money exchangers, and five electronic money institutions

have also received licenses to operate. The bank aims to transform transactions into electronic form in the coming years.

Ahmad Zahir Naserzai, head of non-banking financial institutions of the Central Bank, said: "More than 2,400 unlicensed money exchanges and financial services were identified, and necessary actions were taken in coordination with relevant agencies. Additionally, over the past year, 149 licenses were issued for money exchange companies and over 309 licenses for representatives."

The Central Bank of Afghanistan has also increased the cash withdrawal limit, and according to the bank's information, the weekly withdrawal limit has been raised to 150,000 Afghani and the monthly limit to 500,000 afghani.

Women among 300 doctors become specialists



KABUL (Pajhwok): Nearly 300 doctors, including 16 women, received certificates upon completing their specialization programs in Kabul. Addressing the graduation ceremony, Dr. Mohammad Haidar Umar from the Ministry of Public Health, emphasized the integrity of the process, stating that there should be no doubts or issues related to favoritism.

Acting Minister of Public Health Maulvi Noor Jalal Jalali noted that the graduation of these specialists marked a significant step toward alleviating the health challenges faced by Afghans.

Deputy Prime Minister Maulvi Abdul Kabir shed light on issues crippling the country's health system for four decades.

He criticized past efforts, pointing out that despite significant financial resources, fundamental improvements in Afghanistan's health system were lacking, leading to problems like poor-quality medicines and weakened government health centers due to corruption.

Maulvi Abdul Salam Hanafi, Deputy Minister for Administrative Affairs, called for enhanced quality health services, particularly in impoverished areas lacking

adequate health centers.

He urged doctors to fulfill their religious and professional responsibilities by ensuring that prescriptions and treatments genuinely benefit patients.

Speaking on the behalf of the graduating doctors, Dr. Mustafa Rahmani said they were committed to providing high-quality health services to reduce the need for Afghans to seek treatment abroad.

He also requested increased support for the medical sector, including more specialist doctors, better training, higher salaries, and improved medical equipment and supplies.



KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari addressing the induction ceremony of Pakistan Navy Ships Babur and Hunain, at Pakistan Navy Dockyard.

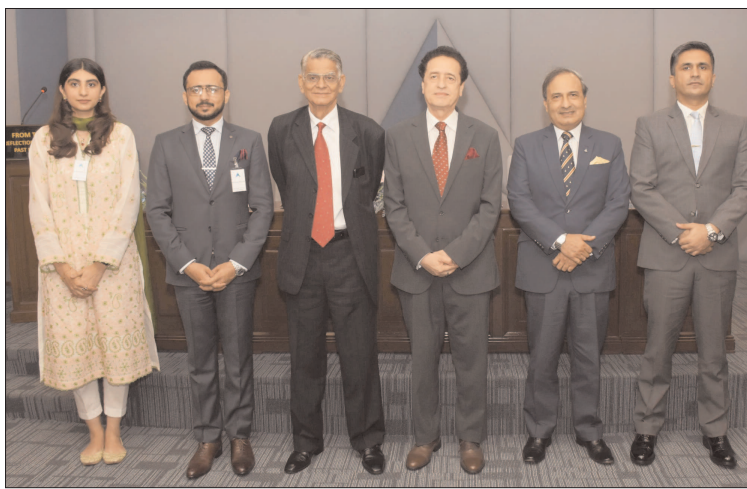
CASS honours legacy of PAF with reflections

F.P. Report

LAHORE: In celebration of the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) Day, the Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS), Lahore, hosted an engaging guest lecture titled "From the Cockpit: Reflections from the PAF's Past for the Future." The event, held on 5 September 2024, featured Wing Commander Salim Baig Mirza (Retd), a distinguished war veteran and revered fighter pilot, who shared insights into the PAF's illustrious history as a guide for the future.

The lecture began with a preamble by Air Commodore Khalid Chishti (Retd) on the 1965 and 1971 wars, which also included an introduction of the guest speaker. He praised the remarkable achievements of Wing Commander Salim (Retd) in aerial combat, which included two confirmed kills, highlighting PAF's motto, "Second to None".

Wing Commander Salim (Retd) shared his experiences of the 1965 and 1971 wars. While recounting his kills, he addressed the Indian propaganda that misrepresented the true nature of those events. He highlighted the PAF transformation over the decades under its visionary leadership, evolving into a modern and formidable force distinguished by exceptional courage, training, and professionalism. He also noted the PAF's technological and strategic



edge, which offsets India's numerical superiority. Following his address, an engaging interactive session ensued, where attendees explored the PAF's history and discussed the current and future challenges it faces.

The event concluded with closing remarks from Air Marshal Asim Suleiman (Retd), President CASS, Lahore, who emphasised the Air Force's crucial role and status as the leadership's preferred choice in contemporary warfare. He noted that all modern-day conflicts are employing the air medium for achieving military objectives. He also mentioned PAF's enduring legacy and steadfast dedication to national security. The

President further highlighted the ongoing strategic transformation of the PAF under the leadership of Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmad Babar Sidhu. He remarked that the PAF is now prioritising cutting-edge technologies and infrastructure to sustain its combat advantage, especially in light of increased defence spending by neighbouring countries like India.

The guest lecture was well-attended by both serving and retired PAF officers, as well as members of civil society and academia. The attendees appreciated the insights and the opportunity to celebrate the PAF's rich heritage.

PHC restrains appointment of CEO KPEZDMC

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court has restrained the appointment of a new CEO of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zone Development and Management Company (KPEZDMC) and sought a response from the provincial government within three days.

The petitioner's lawyer, Shamael Ahmed Butt Advocate, informed the court that his client, Javed Iqbal, was appointed as the CEO of KPEZDMC in 2020 by the then-government for a period of three years, which was later extended for another three years until 2026. However, he was removed from the post, which is illegal.

The lawyer argued that the cabinet does not have the authority to remove the CEO, and no consultation was made with the board before removing the CEO. Moreover, the CEO was removed without a show-cause notice.

The court, after hearing the arguments, restrained the appointment of the new CEO and sought a response from the provincial government within three days. The court adjourned the hearing till 12 September.

Residents approached PHC against crushing stones in Abbottabad: The residents of three villages in the Lora subdivision of Abbottabad district have filed a petition in the Peshawar High Court against the owners of stone crushing machines and the provincial government and local administration. The petitioners have requested an immediate ban on the operation of stone crushing machines, which are causing environmental damage and destroying mountains and forests, putting nearby communities at risk.

The petition filed by 19 affected individuals including Khadim Abbas, names 14 parties, including the provincial government, divisional and district administration, and the owners of the stone crushing machines.

Recently, landslides and stone quarrying for the crushing machines have increased the risk of landslides and forest destruction in the area.

Balakot Hydro Power Project vital: KP CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has termed the 300 MW Balakot Hydro Power Project (BHPP) as of vital importance to make the self-sufficient in electricity, and directed the quarters concerned to take immediate steps on urgent basis to remove impediments in its fast track execution, and said that the provincial government would extend all out support for the fast track completion of this mega project.

The Chief Minister while stressing the need of on ground progress on different activities of the project as per the stipulated timelines, has directed the Pakhtunkhwa Energy Development Organization

(PEDO) and concerned construction company to sit together and settle all issues once for all so that further progress could be made on the project without any delay.

He was chairing a meeting of Energy and Power department, held here on Friday at Chief Minister's Secretariat. Additional Chief Secretary Home and Principal Secretary to CM Muhammad Abid Majeed, High Ups of Energy and Power department, PEDO and representatives of an international firm working on BHPP attended the meeting.

While briefing the participants on 300 MW Balakot Hydro Power Project, it was told that the project would be completed in seven years at an estimated cost of Rs 95 billion adding a total of three each

100 MW power houses would produce electricity of 1143 GWH annually. Further told that per year Rs 15 billion revenue generation is expected from BHPP.

During the briefing, participants were apprised that construction of dams, power houses, tunnels, in take structures, residential colonies for staff and approach roads are the main components of the project. In addition to power generation BHPP would also create employment opportunities to overcome the pressing unemployment. Touching upon the progress on BHPP, participants were informed that 11.5 percent physical and 22 percent financial progress was made so far while land acquisition for project has been completed cent Percent.

US-Iraq deal would see troops withdrawal

BAGHDAD (Reuters): The United States and Iraq have reached an understanding on plans for the withdrawal of US-led coalition forces from Iraq, according to multiple sources familiar with the matter.

The plan, which has been broadly agreed but requires a final go-ahead from both capitals and an announcement date, would see hundreds of troops leave by September 2025, with the remainder departing by the end of 2026, the sources said. "We have an agreement, its now just a question of when to announce it," a senior US official said.

The US and Iraq are also seeking to establish a new advisory relationship that could see some US troops remain in Iraq after the drawdown. An official announcement was initially scheduled for weeks ago but was postponed due to regional escalation related to Israel's war in Gaza and to iron out some remaining details, the sources said.

The sources include five US officials, two officials from other coalition nations, and three Iraqi officials, all speaking on condition of anonymity as they were not authorized to discuss the

matter publicly. Several sources said the deal could be announced this month. Farhad Alaaldin, foreign affairs adviser to the Iraqi prime minister, said technical talks with Washington on the coalition drawdown had concluded.

"We are now on the brink of transitioning the relationship between Iraq and members of the international coalition to a new level, focusing on bilateral relations in military, security, economic, and cultural areas," he said. He did not comment on details of the plan and the US-led coalition did not respond to emailed questions.

The agreement follows more than six months of talks between Baghdad and Washington, initiated by Prime Minister Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani in January amid attacks by Iran-backed Iraqi armed groups on US forces stationed at Iraqi bases. The rocket and drone attacks have killed three American troops and wounded dozens more, resulting in several rounds of deadly US retaliation that threatened government efforts to stabilize Iraq after decades of conflict.

The US has approximate-

ly 2,500 troops in Iraq and 900 in neighboring Syria as part of the coalition formed in 2014 to combat Daesh as it rampaged through the two countries. The group once held roughly a third of Iraq and Syria but was territorially defeated in Iraq at the end of 2017 and in Syria in 2019. Iraq had demonstrated its ability to handle any remaining threat, Alaaldin said.

The US initially invaded Iraq in 2003, toppling dictator Saddam Hussein before withdrawing in 2011, but returned in 2014 at the head of the coalition to fight Daesh. Other nations, including Germany, France, Spain, and Italy, also contribute hundreds of troops to the coalition.

Under the plan, all coalition forces would leave the Ain Al-Asad air base in western Anbar province and significantly reduce their presence in Baghdad by September 2025. US and other coalition troops are expected to remain in Irbil, in the semi-autonomous northern Kurdistan region, for approximately one additional year, until around the end of 2026, to facilitate ongoing operations against Daesh in Syria.

Cooking oil, ghee prices go down in country

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Utility Stores Corporation has reduced prices of essential items, including cooking oil, ghee, and others, by up to 10% across Pakistan.

The decision comes after the country's inflation rate dropped to a single digit, with the core inflation measured by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) reaching a 34-month low of 9.6% in August 2024. The price reduction, effective immediately, affects over 800 items, with decreases ranging from Rs8 to Rs200. The new prices apply to various products, including tea, detergent, noodles, ketchup, tetra pack milk, powdered milk, spices, pickles, soap, and toothpaste.

The Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) subsidy at Utility Stores Corporation has been temporarily suspended, with authorities promising to reinstate it soon under a new procedure. Meanwhile, the management of Utility Stores Corporation has initiated a new strategy aimed at providing excellent services and ensuring the availability of high-quality and affordable goods. The recent drop in inflation is a positive sign for the country's economy, with the CPI inflation rate decreasing from 11.1% in July 2024 to 9.6% in August 2024. This represents a significant decline from the same month last year, when the inflation rate stood at 27.4%.

ECP rejects PTI pleas in intra-party election case

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Friday dismissed all four miscellaneous applications submitted by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in the intra-party election case.

A 10-page decision was issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan, authored by Sindh's member, Nisar Durrani. PTI's objection regarding the Election Commission of Pakistan's jurisdiction in the intra-party elections was overruled in the verdict. Additionally, PTI's request to delay the proceedings in the case was also struck down.

The plea to postpone action on intra-party elections until a decision on reserved seats was similarly turned down. The ECP in its verdict has advised PTI to approach the court for the return of documents taken from the party office. The decision emphasized that under Section 208 of the Election Act 2017, it is the Commission's responsibility to review legal requirements.

The Election Commission of Pakistan also highlighted its duty to examine the facts before issuing certificates under Section 209(3). On April 8, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) sought the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to issue the certificate of its intra-party election.

PTI leader Barrister Gohar Ali Khan said that they came to the ECP office to obtain the certificate for the internal election conducted last month. Expressing dismay over the delays in the issuance of the certificate, he said that parties who held elections after the PTI were issued certificates.

Heirs of Karsaz accident victims pardon suspect

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Heirs of the Karsaz road accident victims on Friday pardoned the suspect, saying they had no objection to granting him bail in the case as the mishap was not intentional.

"Matters have been settled between us and we have pardoned the suspect. We have forgiven for Allah's sake, who's the most kind and most merciful," read the affidavit submitted in the court during hearing of the suspect's plea seeking bail. The heirs said they had no objection to granting bail to the suspect as the accident that happened was not a deliberate murder attempt.

President welcomes induction of two new Naval ships

F.P. Report

KARACHI: President Asif Ali Zardari has called for making the Pakistan Navy further stronger to protect Pakistan's geo-economic interests as well as defend the maritime frontiers of the country. Welcoming the induction of MILGEM Class Corvette Pakistan Navy Ship (PNS) Babur and Offshore Patrol Vessel PNS Hunain into the Pakistan Navy (PN) fleet, he said that the ships would enable the Navy to meet its ever-growing operational responsibilities.

The President expressed these views while addressing the induction ceremony of PNS Babur and Hunain into the Pakistan Navy fleet, on Friday, at the PN Dockyard, Karachi. The ceremony was attended by Deputy Minister of National Defence Türkiye, Mr Bilal Burdali, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, senior representatives of construction yards, high-ranking officials of the Armed Forces and the political leadership.

PNS Babur is a multipurpose ship built and commissioned at Istanbul Naval Shipyard on 23 September 2023. PNS Hunain, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, was built and commissioned at DAMEN Shipyard, Romania on 25 July 2024.

Addressing the ceremony, the President highlighted that the induction of PNS Babur and Hunain into the fleet was a milestone achievement in fortifying Pakistan's maritime defence capabilities. He noted that these ships would enhance the operational readiness of the Navy to counter both conventional and asymmetric threats.

The President underscored the pivotal role played by the Pakistan Navy in ensuring maritime security, contributing to regional stability, and supporting the country's economic growth by safeguarding sea lanes of communication. He said that the Pakistan Navy was ensuring the continuous flow of maritime commerce and defending our maritime boundaries, in view of the great potential of the blue economy for the country's economic growth.

Pakistan Navy inducts two state of the art ships in fleet

F.P. Report

KARACHI: A graceful ceremony for induction of MILGEM Class Corvette PNS BABUR and Offshore Patrol Vessel PNS HUNAIN was held at PN Dockyard Karachi. President of Pakistan, Mr Asif Ali Zardari graced the occasion as Chief Guest. PNS BABUR is a multipurpose Ship built and commissioned at Istanbul Naval Shipyard on 23 Sep 23. PNS HUNAIN, an Offshore Patrol Vessel was built and commissioned at DAMEN Shipyard, Romania on 25 Jul 24.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Chief Guest dilated upon the precarious geo-strategic environment in the Indian Ocean and the need to have a potent Naval force to counter growing traditional and non-traditional challenges. He remarked that induction of state of the art ships on Defence Day of Pakistan is a milestone achievement. He reiterated that induction of these ships in PN Fleet will consolidate and enable the Fleet to meet its ever-growing operational responsibilities. The Chief Guest also mentioned that PN Ships BABUR and HUNAIN equipped with state of the art weapons, sensors and robust machinery, will In Sha Allah serve Pakistan Navy for years to come. Chief Guest formally handed over the ships' scrolls to the Commander Pakistan Fleet which marked the induction of PN Ships BABUR and HUNAIN in PN Fleet.

In his welcome address, the Chief of the Naval Staff termed the induction of these ships in PN Fleet as a major milestone in capacity building of PN Fleet. He acknowledged the government's full support for providing best possible resources for this purpose. He also acknowledged the professional competence of M/s ASFAT, Istanbul Shipyard, DAMEN Shipyard Galati Romania and the entire project team for delivering potent ships which showcased the deep rooted friendship and cooperation between friendly countries. The ceremony was also attended by HE Mr Bilal Burdali, Deputy Minister of National Defence Türkiye, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, Chief of the Naval Staff, senior reps of construction yards, political leadership and high ranking officials of the Armed Forces.

The President reiterated Pakistan's resolve to defend its sovereignty, uphold peace, prosperity, and stability, and defend the motherland at all costs. He stated that Defence and Martyrs' Day reminded us of the courage, unity, and determination of our Armed Forces and citizens who defended our nation against external aggression. He paid rich tribute to the martyrs who laid down their lives in defence of the motherland.

Acknowledging the collaborative efforts involved in the construction of the newly inducted ships, the President expressed his gratitude to the teams from Pakistan, Türkiye, and the Dutch DAMEN Shipyard for their dedication and hard work. "These ships symbolize our strong friendship with Türkiye and our trust in the Dutch DAMEN Shipyard in Romania," he remarked. He

added that the development would further boost the Navy's ability to defend the country's maritime boundaries.

The President also extended special congratulations to the Commanding Officers and crew of PNS Babur and PNS Hunain, wishing them success in their future endeavours.

In his welcome address, the Chief of the Naval Staff termed the induction of the two ships in the PN Fleet as a major milestone in the capacity building of the PN Fleet. He acknowledged the government's full support for providing best possible resources for this purpose. He also acknowledged the professional competence of M/s ASFAT, Istanbul Shipyard, DAMEN Shipyard Galati Romania, and the entire project team for delivering potent ships which showcased the deep-rooted friendship and cooperation between friendly countries.



PESHAWAR: KP Chief Minister, Ali Amin Gandapur offering fateha on the mazar of Captain Col Sher Khan Shaheed.

Life returns to raided West Bank city

JENIN (AFP): The Israeli army withdrew from the city of Jenin and its refugee camp on Friday after a 10-day operation that left 36 dead across the occupied West Bank, witnesses said.

After days of destructive incursions by soldiers backed by armored vehicles and bulldozers, residents who had fled began returning to their homes in the camp, a bastion of Palestinian armed groups fighting against Israel, AFP journalists said. On August 28, the army launched a military operation in several cities and towns of the northern West Bank including Jenin.

It said in a statement on Friday that Israeli forces "have been conducting counterterrorism activity in the area of Jenin," without confirming a withdrawal. "Israeli security forces are continuing to act in order to achieve the objectives of the counterterrorism operation," the statement said.

Over the course of the operation in Jenin, Israeli forces killed 14 militants, arrested 30 suspects, dismantled "approximately 30 explosives planted under roads" and conducted four aerial strikes, the statement said. One Israeli soldier was killed in Jenin, where most of the Palestinian fatalities have occurred.

Hamas, whose October 7 attack on southern Israel triggered the ongoing war in Gaza, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad have said at least 14 of the dead were militants. Aziz Taleb, a 48-year-old father of seven, returned to his family home of 20 years to find soldiers had raided it. "Thank God (the children) left the day before. They went to stay with our neighbors here," he said.

"If they had stayed, they would have been killed without warning or anything," he said as he surveyed the damage, glass crunching under his feet. Many homes in Jenin camp were damaged or

destroyed by army bulldozers and pavement was stripped from the roads. Residents used bulldozers of their own to begin clearing the rubble on Friday after Israeli armored vehicles left, AFP journalists reported.

The early trickle of returning residents turned into a flood, and soon children were playing in the streets. Israel has occupied the West Bank since 1967 and its forces regularly make incursions into Palestinian communities, but the latest raids as well as hawkish comments by Israeli officials signaled an escalation, residents said. Since the Gaza war began on October 7, Israeli troops or settlers have killed at least 661 Palestinians in the West Bank, according to the Palestinian health ministry. At least 23 Israelis, including security forces, have been killed in Palestinian attacks in the territory during the same period, according to Israeli officials.