

Tablighi Ijtema on 31st
F.P. Report

LAHORE: The first phase of the annual Raiwind Tablighi Ijtema is set to commence on October 31 attracting a large number of pilgrims from across the country and beyond. The first phase will conclude on November 3 with a final prayer session. Following a brief interval, the second phase will start on November 7 and will similarly conclude with a final prayer on November 10.



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PTI calls off protest
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The PTI has deferred its D-Chowk protest scheduled for October 15 in view of the two-day SCO summit scheduled to begin from today (Tuesday), sources told media on Monday. The decision was taken by the PTI's political committee in a meeting in which majority of participants urged to withdraw the protest call for Tuesday (today) in view of the SCO Council of CHG meeting.

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ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Chinese Premier, Li Qiang during MoU exchange ceremony.

Pak-China agree to enhance cooperation

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan and China on Monday agreed to further enhance bilateral cooperation in multiple sectors including security, education, agriculture, human resources development and science and technology.

In this regard, two sides exchanged documents of 13 accords at a ceremony held at PM House also witnessed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese Premier Li Qiang. The documents were exchanged after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese Premier Li Qiang held the delegation-level talks wherein they discussed all aspects of Pakistan-China relations including economic and trade ties and cooperation under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

Earlier, as Premier Li arrived at PM House, Prime Minister Shehbaz warmly received him at the formal welcome ceremony where he was given a guard of honor before proceedings for the meeting and delegation-level talks. The two prime ministers, accompanied by their respective delegations witnessed the ceremony. Pakistan and China exchanged the documents of a Handling over certificate of Smart Classrooms Project inked by Economic Affairs Minister Ahad Khan Cheema, and Chinese Commerce Minister Wang Wentao. Pakistan and China exchanged the minutes of 13th meeting of the CPEC Joint Coordination Committee and 7th Joint Working Group on Gwadar under CPEC.

Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal and Lou Zhaohui, Chairman of China International Development Cooperation Agency exchanged a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on Promoting Cooperation on Livelihood Working Group of CPEC. Both sides reached an understanding to strengthen cooperation in the fields of "Information and Communication", "Water Conservancy Facilities, Flood Control and Calamity Reduction", and "Security." The MoUs in this regard were exchanged by Economic Affairs Minister Ahad Khan Cheema and Luo Zhaohui, Chairman of China International Development

Prime Minister terms Gwadar Int'l airport a gift from China

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the completion of Gwadar International Airport showed Chinese leadership's commitment and dedication to support Pakistan's economic agenda and develop its backward areas.

Addressing a ceremony of virtual inauguration of the newly completed Gwadar International Airport here, the prime minister said that the landmark achievement was all about time-tested friendship between the two countries.

He expressed the hope that the completion of this international airport would transform Gwadar's economy in particular and the economy of Pakistan in general. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang were at hands to unveil the plaque of Gwadar International Airport. The ceremony was attended by members of the both delegations, ministers, military leadership and senior officials.

The prime minister said that today, both sides had witnessed the signing and exchange of MoUs between the two countries in various fields of industry, commerce and agriculture. "No doubt these MoUs will shape into agreements very soon through joint efforts of both countries. Once again, I thank you for your visit to Pakistan out of your busy schedule which is a reflection of your commitment to promoting friendship between the two countries," PM Shehbaz told the Chinese premier.

He further said that earlier today, the two sides held comprehensive discussions. The prime minister also thanked President Xi, the Chinese premier and the people of China for their generous gift in shape of Gwadar International Airport. He said "This gift is another feather in CPEC's cap" and assured his Chinese counterpart to work closely with him to complete the second phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and the peace and security of the people of Pakistan and China.

Prime Minister Sharif further said that the completion of project reflected the untiring efforts of the Chinese and Pakistani engineers and workers who made it possible as world class airport. "It will be remembered as another gift by China," he added. Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang, in his remarks, congratulated the Pakistani nation and the government on behalf of the Chinese government and his people on the completion of Gwadar airport which was a manifestation of the commitment of the Chinese and Pakistani engineers and workers and also thanked the Pakistani society for their support.

Cooperation Agency.

Ahad Cheema and Luo Zhaohui also exchanged documents of Letters of Exchange on "Human Resource Development under the GDI" and "Assistance Program of Fire Fighting Vehicles to Islamabad." Two countries exchanged an MoU on Jointly Supporting the Joint Laboratories inked by Secretary Ministry of Science and Technology Sajid Baloch and Ambassador of China to Pakistan, Jiang Zaidong.

Pakistan and China also agreed on the "Co-production of TV Programs" and the document was signed by Secretary Ministry of Information and Broadcasting Ambreen Jan and Chinese Ambassador Zaidong. Minister for National Food Security and Research Rana Tanvir Hussain and Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, exchanged the documents of protocol on Quarantine Requirements of export of donkey meat to China.

SCO CHG summit kicks off today

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The twenty-third meeting of the Council of the Heads of Government (CHG) of the member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) is set to begin on Tuesday, bringing together regional leaders to discuss enhancing collaboration with a focus on trade, economy, and cultural linkages.

The delegates from the countries participating in the annual gathering of SCO leaders have already started landing in the federal capital which has got a facelift with colorful lights, floral decorations, SCO countries' flags and banners to welcome the dignitaries. The LED display screens have been installed on the main intersections - also beautifully painted with lights and murals. The landmarks across the city have been adorned with colorful lights and Pakistani flags, also creating a rare photo-op for the citizens and fodder for social media timelines.

Premier of the State Council of China Li Qiang, along with a high-level del-

egation, has already landed in the federal capital to attend the moot and hold meetings with Pakistan's civil and military leadership. The two-day meeting of SCO CHG, the second highest forum within the SCO, will be chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif as the current chair of the Council.

Pakistan has assumed the rotating chair of the SCO CHG for 2023-24 at the previous meeting held in Bishkek on October 26, 2023 where the country was represented by that time Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani. The leaders from the SCO member states attending the summit include China's Premier of the State Council Li Qiang, Prime Minister of Belarus Roman Golovchenko, Prime Minister of Kazakhstan Olzhas Bektenov, Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin, Tajik Prime Minister Kohir Rasulzoda, Uzbek Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov, Kyrgyzstan's Chairman of Ministers' Cabinet Zhaparov Akyzbek, Iran's First Vice President Mohammad Reza Aref, and

Indian External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar.

Besides, Mongolia is participating in the summit as an Observer State being represented by Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai and Turkmenistan as Special Guest represented by Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers Rashid Meredov. Among other dignitaries attending the moot include SCO Secretary-General Zhang Ming, Director of Executive Committee SCO Regional Anti-Terrorist Structure (RATS) Ruslan Mirzayev, Chairman of the Board of SCO Business Council Atif Ikram Shaikh and Chairman of the Council of SCO Interbank Union Marat Yelibaev.

The CHG meeting will discuss ongoing cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, environment, socio-cultural linkages and review the performance of the Organization. The leaders will adopt important organizational decisions to further enhance cooperation among SCO member States and approve the budget of the Organization.

China praises counter-terror efforts of Pak Army

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chinese Premier Li Qiang, who is in Pakistan to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit, held a significant meeting with Pakistani military officials.

Premier Li Qiang met with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and the service chiefs. During the meeting, the discussions reaffirmed the commitment to further strengthen and expand the long-standing relations between Pakistan and China.

Key topics included defense cooperation and issues related to terrorism between the two countries. The Chinese premier praised the role of Pakistan's armed forces in the fight against terrorism, and assured full support and assistance from China in this ongoing fight.

Fazl rejects constitutional amend draft

F.P. Report

TANDO ALLAHYAR: The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that they rejected the government's draft of the constitutional amendment, which could potentially infringe on individual freedoms.

Talking to the media, he mentioned that there is a possibility of disagreement when the amendment is presented. He emphasised that everything must be done in the country's best interest. Priority should be given to the nation's needs, not to empower any specific institution, but rather to create a balance among all institutions.

Regarding the amendment process, Maulana Fazlur Rehman highlighted that it has been a long and arduous effort. "After significant hard work, we succeeded in reaching a consensus," he added. He further stated that they were not in favor of passing laws that go against the interests of the people. "The matters we rejected have resurfaced," he asserted. Sarcasically, he noted that while it took nine months to pass the 18th amendment, they should at least be given nine days to pass the 26th amendment.

Additionally, he affirmed their belief that extremism should not exist anywhere. He pointed out that the Prophet (PBUH) is respected within the constitution and the law.

Pakistan emerges as important player in region

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar said on Monday that Pakistan which faced isolation on foreign policy affairs in the past, had now emerged as a key player in the region.

Talking to the media after the inauguration of the Media Facilitation Center at Pak-China Friendship Center, he said the present government had succeeded to end diplomatic isolation of the country and now high level delegations from many countries have been visiting Pakistan in the recent past. "We are a very active player in the region, and we have to play an active role in the region", he remarked.

He said recently Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim concluded a highly successful visit to Pakistan and both countries signed arrangements to enhance bilateral cooperation in various sectors. Tarar said after his visit a high-level Saudi delegation led by a Minister arrived and inked many MoUs for Saudi investment worth 2.2 billion dollars in Pakistan. He said that all economic indicators of Pakistan were positive with inflation decreasing to record 6.9 as compared to 32 per cent last year. He said that foreign exchange reserves

and IT exports had witnessed a surge and remittances during the first quarter of the current fiscal year had touched \$ 8.8 billion mark.

International financial institutions like International Monetary Fund and World Bank praised Pakistan's economy and renowned financial journals like Bloomberg had termed Pakistan stock exchange as the most emerging market in the region, he remarked. He said that the Chinese Prime Minister had come to Pakistan after 11 years which was an honour. The minister said China had always extended the hand of friendship to Pakistan, and after the recent visit of the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to China, the second phase of China Pakistan Economic Corridor was launched.

During this phase, he said business to business cooperation will be increased. Tarar said that during the tenure of Nawaz Sharif as Prime Minister, China-Pakistan Economic Corridor Phase-I was started under which a network of motorways was built, Gwadar Port made functional, many industrial and special economic zones were established and the energy sector was restructured to overcome load shedding.

He urged the Chinese investors to set up industrial units in Pakistan as cost of production was low here. He



assured that Pakistan will provide all possible facilities to Chinese investors. The minister said that the SCO Summit being hosted by Pakistan was the first big event being held after 27 years. Terming it a big honour for Pakistan to hold the SCO meeting, he said Islamabad was beautifully decorated on the occasion of the summit. He said that people of Pakistan were very hospitable and resilient people who will give a warm welcome to all guests.

Attaullah Tarar appreciated the entire team of the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting led by Secretary Information Ambreen Jan for providing state of the art facilities at the Media Facilitation Center. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting was the eyes and ears of the government, which had the responsibility to defend the ideological frontiers of the country, he maintained.

Key Daesh terrorist arrested

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a joint operation, police and Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on Monday arrested a key terrorist of banned Daesh organization tasked with attacks on public and political gatherings.

Police said, the terrorist along with his family was residing in a rented house and was arrested during an hour-long operation.

Police have also arrested the owner of the house and a property dealer who facilitated the terrorist in hiring the house for Rs 3000 commission. The property dealer and owner of the house were arrested under Tenant Act for not verifying the identity of the terrorist, police said.

On identification of the terrorist, police have also arrested two of his facilitators. Explosive materials, maps of would-be targeted places in Charsadda, Nowshera, Khyber and Mohmand were also recovered from the terrorist.

Police were expecting further revelations during the interrogation of the terrorist. Police said the arrested terrorist was the mastermind of attacks on police and security forces.

28 injured as students stage protest against rape of girl

F.P. Report

LAHORE: At least 28 people suffered injuries after clashes erupted between the students and police during a protest held against the alleged rape of a college girl in Lahore.

According to Rescue 1122 officials, 28 people — 24 students and 4 police officers — were given first aid after the clash. The incident took place outside a private college in Lahore's Gulberg area. A security guard of the college was arrested recently after reports related to the alleged rape of the student went viral on social media platforms.

Addressing a press conference today, Lahore Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Operations Faisal Kamran said that they were investigating the incident of alleged rape of a student. The police officer said he visited the private college's Gulberg campus and questioned everybody about the incident. He said that none of them had the correct information.

"Nobody reported the incident so far." He further said that they could not rely

on social media reports as they did not have correct information about the incident. Meanwhile, a spokesperson of the DIG confirmed that the security guard was in police custody and an investigation was underway in this regard. "The victim girl and her family did not come forward," the spokesperson said, adding that the concerned police station or the college administration was also not informed by anyone about the incident.

The Punjab education minister Rana Sikandar Hayat arrived at Punjab College and assured the protesting students of justice. "Action will be taken against the principal and the college administration if allegations related to the deletion of pictures and video evidence are proved," he said. "And if it comes to sealing the college and cancelling its registration, we will not hesitate," he added.

Hayat instructed the police not to use baton charges against the protestors after the students complained of police violence. The education minister showed support for the students and said that they would not be

removed from the college even if the administration had threatened them.

Meanwhile, the Punjab government suspended the registration for the college in a notification dated Oct 14. The Directorate of Public Instruction (Colleges), Punjab, issued the suspension of registration certification for Punjab College for Women "till further orders". On the other hand, a statement issued by the Punjab Group of Colleges stated that no rape incident was reported citing a "thorough and impartial" investigation by law enforcement.

The statement addressed the "false claims circulating on social media" and said that the college remained "committed to transparency despite the lack of credible evidence supporting the allegations." "We have implemented strict security protocols [...] to ensure a safe and secure environment," it added. In another statement, the principal of Punjab College, Campus 10, said that legal action would be taken against the "unsubstantiated negative propaganda" on social media.

Bilawal launches Benazir Hari Card for poor farmers in Sindh

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has fulfilled another revolutionary promise from his election manifesto, the People's Economic Agreement, by launching the Benazir Hari Card in Sindh. Under this program, poor farmers and small-scale growers across Sindh will receive targeted subsidies, access to easy loans, assistance in acquiring modern agricultural technology, crop insurance, and immediate government aid in case of natural disasters.

According to a press release issued by the Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP, while addressing the inauguration ceremony of the Benazir Hari Card at the Chief Minister's House, said that his party has always worked to secure the rights of the poor, farmers, and women. He mentioned that the Benazir Income



Support Program (BISP), introduced by the previous PPP government, has become a global example of financial assistance for women.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari further stated that the Sindh People's Government is now introducing the Benazir Hari Card, and recalled that Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, as Prime Minister, envisioned the economy in a way that benefited farmers. He mentioned that even

decades back, the IMF was present, and Pakistan was said to be at a critical juncture. But Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto had spoken up for the rights of poor farmers and addressed the experts in international and federal capitals, confidently asserting, "I know better than you!"

Chairman PPP added that before President Asif Ali Zardari's first tenure, the economic conditions of farmers were critical, but thanks to his decisions, an agricultural revolution took place within year. The farmers prospered, and the entire economy stood on its own feet. He pointed out that today, when we review the Pakistani economy, every segment of society seems distressed and facing hardships, adding that as an elected representatives, it is our responsibility to solve your problems, and that is why the people have chosen us.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari condemned the conspiracy being hatched to

deregulate the agricultural sector by mafias, large business groups, industrialists, and international forces. He noted that in a time when climate change poses a question of life and death, suggesting deregulation of the agricultural sector is foolish idea and plan. He described investment in agriculture as the only path to national development and demanded an immediate end to subsidies for fertilizer factories, advocating instead that billions in subsidies be given directly to farmers to combat the conspiracy against agriculture.

He also highlighted that in 2007, when Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto returned to Pakistan, she was committed to implementing the Charter of Democracy, a mission for which she sacrificed her life. Bilawal asked whether some unfinished tasks in the Charter of Democracy should be forgotten just because someone sits in jail. He made it clear that the PPP is

not willing to compromise on this.

Bilawal questioned the current state of the justice system, asking the people of Sindh if they are satisfied with it. He stated that if the justice system seems fair, it should continue, but if it is broken and unjust, the Charter of Democracy has provided solutions for its flaws. He emphasized that ensuring the provision of justice requires guaranteeing equal representation across the country.

The PPP Chairman suggested that establishing a constitutional court alongside regular courts could help resolve constitutional issues and protect fundamental rights. He added that if there is a dispute between the federation and a province, there should be a platform to resolve such issues. He reaffirmed the party's two demands: the establishment of a constitutional court and the reform of the judicial appointment process, both of which are laid out in the Charter of

Democracy.

Bilawal rejected calls for him to back down. He questioned the logic of delaying constitutional amendments, insisting that if not now, then when? He reminded everyone that Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was executed, and amendments to the Constitution were made during General Zia-ul-Haq's rule without concern. He asserted that no other politician understands the judicial system better than he does or the PPP in Pakistan.

He criticized a judiciary that permits military dictators to draft constitutions and pointed out that former Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry introduced a system that failed to deliver justice to the people but benefited the judiciary itself. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari stated that the constitutional amendment proposals by the PPP are based on Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's promises, enshrined in the Charter of Democracy.



KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah speaks at the Benazir Hari Card launching ceremony at CM House.

Sherry hails SCO summit as "Significant Honor" for Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): A prominent leader of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Sherry Rehman Monday expressed her enthusiasm about the SCO summit, considering it a significant honor for Pakistan and believed that this pivotal event would not only bolster regional ties but also stabilize the country's foreign policy as international trust in Pakistan grows.

In an exclusive talk with a private news channel, she emphasized the significance of the SCO Summit in restoring confidence and strengthening diplomatic ties for Pakistan, which were damaged in the previous regime.

"The SCO Summit presents a crucial opportunity for Pakistan to deepen its economic ties with member states, particularly China and Russia and position itself as a hub

for trade and transit, facilitating greater economic integration within the region," she added. "By actively participating in the SCO, Pakistan can enhance its geopolitical and economic standing, strengthen security cooperation and promote regional connectivity," she mentioned.

"The SCO framework provides a platform for Pakistan to engage in diplomatic dialogues, address bilateral and multilateral issues and amplify its voice in international forums," she said. "India's participation in the SCO Summit alongside Pakistan is a significant development where India can get opportunity to discuss issues on table talks," she added. Responding a query, Sherry Rehman expressed optimism about the upcoming SCO summit.

"India's participation alongside Pakistan presents an opportunity for meaningful dialogue and cooperation," she highlighted. She noted that during the previous conference, India missed the chance to engage constructively with Pakistan.

However, Rehman hoped that this time around, India would demonstrate maturity and engage in mutually beneficial discussions.

Sherry also emphasized that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) party should demonstrate maturity and understand the significance of the SCO summit. "The SCO summit, founded by China and Russia in 2001, focuses on key areas such as political, economic, international security, and defense matters," she added.

Director KMC Fire Brigade passes away

KARACHI (APP): Director of Contract Management and Fire Brigade at Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, Tariq Siddiqui, passed away on Monday due to cardiac arrest.

His funeral prayer was held after Maghrib prayers at Saima Pride Mosque, Rashid Minhas Road, Gulshan-e-Iqbal. The burial took place at Azimpura Graveyard, Shah Faisal Colony. Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab, Municipal Commissioner S.M. Afzal Zaidi, Financial Advisor Nayab Saeed, Senior Director of Human Resources Management Saif Abbas, Legal Advisor Azra Muqem, Director of Land Sabah-ul-Islam, Senior Director of Media Management Ali Hassan Sajid, Senior Director of Culture & Sports Raza Abbas Rizvi, Director of Charged Parking Nabeel Baloch, Director Recreation Iqbal Nawaz, Director Protocol Abdul Rahim Qadwai, and other kmc officers expressed deep sorrow over the sudden demise of Tariq Siddiqui and prayed for the departed soul's forgiveness, as well as for patience for the bereaved family.

A large number of departmental heads, officers, employees of KMC, and relatives of the deceased attended the funeral and offered condolences to Tariq Siddiqui's son, Usama, over his sudden death.

CM greets Chinese Prime Minister

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif warmly welcomed the arrival of Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang to Pakistan.

In her statement, the CM said, "We heartily welcome Chinese Prime Minister Li Qiang from the core of heart on behalf of the Punjab government and its people. The visit of the Chinese Prime Minister to Pakistan is deemed as the beginning of a new chapter of mutual friendship."

The CM said the relations between China and Pakistan are the guarantors of world peace, prosperity and development of the region. The credit for the

warmth and cordial relations between Pakistan and China goes to the PML-N Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif is playing a vigorous role in strengthening and stabilizing Pakistan-China relations, she mentioned.

The launching of CPEC during the regime of PML-N gives an undeniable proof of Pakistan-China friendship, she noted.

The chief minister added with the arrival of the Chinese Prime Minister, the CPEC projects will accelerate and thousands of employment opportunities will be generated.

The mutual friendship between Pakistan and China is built on a solid foundation of trust and respect. Pakistan and China's mutual cooperation in every hour of distress and difficulty has become a part of history.

Pakistan and China are moving together towards a prosperous and peaceful future. Pakistan-China friendship is getting further stronger with each passing day.

The Belt and Road Initiative profoundly expresses China's commitment to global prosperity. People across the globe are benefiting from the fruits of China's economic development, she added.

Police intensifies crackdown on electricity theft

LAHORE (APP): Under the directive of Chief Minister Punjab Maryam Nawaz Sharif, the Punjab Police has intensified its crackdown against electricity thieves across the province, including Lahore.

Police teams are prioritizing actions against those involved in electricity theft, says a spokesman for the Punjab Police on Monday.

He further said that 53,323 individuals have been arrested for electricity theft this year, with 91,264 cases registered and 58,067 case challans

submitted.

The spokesman also mentioned that over 7,000 electricity thieves have been convicted. Regarding operations in the provincial capital, Lahore, the spokesman stated that 28,400 electricity thieves have been arrested, 28,618 cases have been registered, and 7,872 case challans have been submitted.

IG Punjab, Dr. Usman Anwar, has directed that ongoing actions against electricity theft cases be pursued without discrimination, emphasizing zero tolerance for those causing

losses to the national exchequer.

He stated that proclaimed offenders in electricity theft cases should be arrested immediately, recovery rates should be improved, and cases should be registered promptly in coordination with relevant electricity companies, following a strict course of action.

Dr. Usman Anwar reiterated that police teams will continue to provide full support to electricity companies in the crackdown against electricity theft.

JI strongly rejects Govt's proposed constitutional amendment

KARACHI (INP): Hafiz Naeemur Rehman, the Amir of Jamaat-e-Islami Pakistan, has voiced strong opposition to the government's intention to amend the constitution to appoint a Chief Justice of its choosing. He made it clear that JI strongly rejected the Government proposed constitutional amendments.

He described this move as unacceptable and a direct affront to the integrity of the judicial system.

During a press conference, Rehman highlighted the deteriorating infrastructure in Karachi, particularly criticizing the city's broken roads and failing sewage system.

He noted that recent rains exacerbated these issues, underscoring the rampant corruption within Sindh's administration.

"Corruption is embedded from the top down in this system," he stated, lamenting the lack of accountability for those responsible.

Rehman emphasized that resources should be allocated fairly, stating that the wealth of Karachi should benefit Sindh first. "Problems arise when rights are denied," he said, insisting that only a fair justice system can address these grievances.

He also pointed out the prevalence of white-collar crime, criticizing the "electric mafia" for evading justice with legal loopholes. "These criminals are protected, and even after their misdeeds, they manipulate the legal system to their advantage," he lamented.

Rehman further commented on the recent local elections, alleging that MQM Pakistan was awarded

17 seats despite not winning any polling stations, which he claimed was indicative of electoral manipulation. He denounced the ruling party for allegedly tampering with ballot boxes during the ongoing recounting of bye-elections.

In response to ongoing protests by Tehreek-e-Insaf, Rehman urged the party to postpone their demonstrations, suggesting a meeting with former Prime Minister Imran Khan to discuss the situation.

He also mentioned that the government has terminated contracts with five Independent Power Producers (IPPs), hinting at further controversies within the administration. Jamaat-e-Islami remains steadfast in its commitment to opposing any unconstitutional measures and advocating for the rights of the citizens of Sindh.

No girl reported private college incident: Azma

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Information Minister Azma Bokhari has said that no girl has reported to the Punjab police so far about a private college incident.

In a statement, she said, "Today, a name was highlighted and inquiries were made at the homes of all girls of that name, but no affected girl was found; all denied it. Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif is receiving updates on the matter continuously.

Instead of politicizing the plight of innocent girls, if anyone has verified information or knows about the victim, then share it with the Punjab government. The guard, accused of the private college incident, has been in police custody since yesterday."

Azma Bokhari expressed profound sorrow over a tragic incident in the Punjab University. The information minister emphasized, "We should care for the old father and no one should be allowed to politicize the sorrowful incident." She urged people to consider others' daughters as their own and refrain from displaying posters about their families.

Home Department issues transfer orders

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Home Department has announced significant appointments and transfers within the Punjab Prisons Department to enhance operational efficiency.

According to department's spokesman, key changes include Babar Ali, who has been appointed as the Superintendent of Central Jail Dera Ghazi Khan, and Muhammad Zubair Cheema, now the Superintendent of Juvenile Jail Bahawalpur.

The spokesman added that several Deputy Superintendents have also been assigned new roles, including Ghulam Mustafa at District Jail Faisalabad, who will oversee daily operations, and Muhammad Irfan at Central Jail Gujranwala, where he will manage inmate programs. Other notable appointments include Amir Abbas at District Jail Gujrat, Zahid Saeed at the Family Room of Central Jail Lahore, and Shaukat Ali at District Jail Rahim Yar Khan, among others across various jails in the province.

In addition to these administrative roles, the department has also strengthened its psychological support services. Wajiha Komal has been appointed as a psychologist at the Inspectorate of Prisons in Lahore, while Samrooz Zaheer will serve at District Jail Sialkot, Fatima Siddique at District Jail Sheikhupura, and Wajiha Arif Khan at District Jail Hafizabad.

These strategic appointments aim to enhance the management, rehabilitation programs, and overall operational effectiveness of the prison system across Punjab.

MoU inked to safeguard child rights

LAHORE (APP): Child Protection and Welfare Bureau (CPWB) Chairperson Sarah Ahmed and Punjab Prosecutor General Syed Farhad Ali Shah have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) aimed at enhancing the protection of children's rights.

The MoU establishes a framework for collaboration, allowing prosecutors across Punjab to support the prosecution of cases involving children.

Additionally, both departments will engage in capacity-building initiatives focused on child welfare. The agreement also facilitates the exchange of information and legal assistance to improve children's welfare. The legal teams from both organizations will represent cases related to child abuse and violence in court and ensure that victims receive appropriate legal support. This MoU marks a crucial development in the ongoing efforts to create a safer environment for children across Punjab.

Sharjeel urges swift completion of Red Line BRT

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon has once again directed that the Red Line BRT project be completed ahead of schedule.

He stated that the project is a game changer for Karachi, and its timely completion must be ensured under all circumstances.

The Red Line BRT is a top priority for the Sindh Government, with work continuing around the clock. The minister emphasized that efforts should be accelerated to finish the public project before the deadline.

The Red Line BRT is aimed at reducing traffic

congestion and providing a sustainable, reliable transport solution for millions of Karachiites.

A high-level meeting of the Transport Department and relevant stakeholders on the Red Line BRT project was held in Karachi, chaired by Sindh Senior Minister and Provincial Minister for Information, Transport, Excise, Taxation, and Narcotics Control, Sharjeel Inam Memon.

The meeting was attended by Secretary Transport Asad Zamin, CEO of TransKarachi Shumaila Mohsin, international consultants, contractors, and other officials. During the meeting, representatives from TransKarachi, along

with contractors and consultants, provided a briefing on the ongoing work. The progress of the development work on Lot 1 and Lot 2 of the Red Line BRT project was also reviewed.

Speaking at the meeting, Sindh Senior Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon emphasized that all stakeholders must make concerted efforts to accelerate the construction work and fully utilize all available resources.

He stated that to expedite the completion of ongoing development work in the airport area, discussions with airport authorities should be accelerated. All issues must be resolved within one week to prevent further delays.



BISP and Sindh education join forces for skill development

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Senator Rubina Khalid, held an important meeting today with the Sindh Education and Literacy Minister, Syed Sardar Ali Shah, at his office.

The discussion focused on the skill development of BISP beneficiaries, the allocation of campsites in schools during BISP's quarterly payment disbursements, and the promotion of technical and vocational education in the province.

Also present were the Secretary of School Education, Zahid Ali Abbasi, BISP Sindh Director General Zulfiqar Ali Shaikh, and other senior officials. During the meeting, Chairperson BISP emphasized that the program is working on various initiatives related to skill development and technical

education to enable beneficiary families to become self-sufficient through technical training. She added that BISP and the Government of Sindh can collaborate on providing technical training under this flagship initiative.

Chairperson Rubina Khalid highlighted that beyond financial assistance, BISP is making significant efforts to help families achieve self-reliance. "We aim to focus more on the technical education of children from BISP-registered families," she said.

Provincial Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah praised BISP's efforts and commended the Chairperson for her dedication. He remarked that Shaheed Benazir Bhutto's vision of economic stability and self-sufficiency for Pakistani women remains clear. He stressed the importance of helping children who cannot complete their education due to

family obligations. "By imparting both education and technical skills, we can empower our youth to achieve economic stability," the minister added.

Both parties agreed to develop an action plan for enhancing technical education and prepare a working paper outlining final recommendations. Minister Shah also briefed Chairperson Rubina Khalid on the recent reforms in the Sindh Education Department.

Concluding the meeting, both Chairperson BISP Rubina Khalid and Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah pledged their full support for the promotion of technical education and skills development.

Later, Chairperson Rubina Khalid visited the Government Higher Secondary School in Shireen Jinnah Colony, where she encouraged the students to pursue diverse fields and contribute to the nation's progress.



KARACHI: Ms. Rubina Khalid, Chairperson BISP meeting with Syed Sardar Ali Shah, Minister Education & Literacy Government of Sindh.

PDP chief calls for accelerating work on Karachi Safe City project

KARACHI (PPI): Expressing concern over organized terrorist activities in Karachi, particularly the recent car bomb attack near the airport, Pasban Democratic Party (PDP) Chairman Altaf Shakoor here Monday demanded of the government to accelerate the pace of work on much delayed Karachi Safe City project.

He said this crucial project after the delay of eight long years was started previous month with the government making payment of more than Rs3 billion to the National Radio & Telecommunication Corporation (NRTC) for its execution, with installation of 1,044 new surveillance cameras and upgrade of 256 old ones.

It is said that in the first phase, the Red Zone and airport corridor would be covered. Total 1,300 cameras would be installed in the first phase. Among these 1,300, 1,044 would

be new and the rest 256 are the old ones which would be upgraded. These 1,300 cameras would be installed at 300 sites in districts South, East, Malir and Korangi. Shakoor said that it needs that this project needs to be completed as soon as possible to make the megacity safer and more secure. He said the recent terrorist act near the Karachi airport has increased the urgency to complete this project as soon as possible.

He said as per the original plan with 12 megapixel cameras in place, the safe city system would help carry out digital forensic and image enhancement of the acquired data, facial recognition, automatic number plate recognition which is called ANPR, which will be integrated with national and criminal databases.

The 1,300 cameras would be supported by "response force" on the

ground moving on 23 vehicles across the designated areas. Shakoor said that the surveillance cameras are important because they safeguard assets, deter crime, and supply actionable evidence when illegal events occur. In fact, the presence of security cameras makes potential perpetrators think twice and consider other targets.

He said that studies show that visible surveillance systems can reduce the likelihood of criminal activities by as much as two-thirds. People behave differently when they believe they're being watched. Security cameras thereby create a psychological barrier that can turn an attractive target into a security stronghold.

He demanded from the government and the concerned project executing agency to increase speed of this crucial city security project and ensure its early completion.

Comparison of health services in Sindh and KP

Shahid Afridi:
PESHAWAR: A Delegation of Journalists' Reports Despite claims of revolutionary changes in healthcare by the government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, recent visits by a delegation of journalists from the province indicate notable improvements in hospitals in Sindh. The delegation, led by Vice President of the Peshawar Press Club Tayab Usman, and Irfan Musazai, Secretary General Irfan Musazai, explored various hospitals in Sindh, where they observed the provision of modern machinery, cashless counters, and free services from outpatient departments (OPD) to surgeries for patients. The delegation conducted detailed visits to the Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre, Gambat Institute of Medical Sciences, National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease (NICVD)Mithi, Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation (SIUT) Sukkur and Child Health

care Institute Sukkur. They were briefed about the provincial government's initiatives in the health sector and the facilities available to the public. The delegation praised the health initiatives taken by the Pakistan People Party describing them as satisfactory. During their visits the journalists interacted with patients from Afghanistan and other regions receiving treatment who reported their experiences positively. At these major health centers free medications and services are provided from OPD to surgeries. On the first day the delegation visited the Cyber Knife unit at Jinnah Postgraduate Medical Centre in Karachi where Professor Dr Tariq Mahmood provided a detailed briefing. He noted that the hospital offers modern treatment technologies, treating patients without discrimination. He mentioned that patients from 15 countries and 167 cities have received free treatment at this facility.



The advanced machinery provided by the provincial government allows for rapid cancer treatment contrasting sharply with the average cost of around 30 million PKR in other countries. The 2200-bed hospital accommodates approximately 12,000 patients daily including over 2,000 in emergencies. The facility performs around 350 CT scans and 200 radiation therapies each day. In response to a question the professor explained that while chemotherapy is common for cancer treatment radiation therapy is modern and easier despite fears stemming from older units in various cities that pose a risk of collective damage. The delegation also visited Gambat Institute of

Medical Sciences where patients come from across the country for liver and kidney transplants all provided free of charge. The hospital's spokesperson mentioned that lungs transplantation would begin in October after a team of doctors received training in China. More than thousand liver transplants have already been conducted. Additionally, the delegation toured the Sindh Institute of Urology and Transplantation Sukkur where it was revealed that thousands of OPDs and 400 dialysis treatments are conducted daily all free of charge. At the National Institute of Cardiovascular Disease (NICVD)Mithi and Child Health care Institute Sukkur they received detailed briefings on modern technology used for treating cardiac and pediatric conditions with all services offered completely free due to substantial annual budgets allocated by the Sindh government. The Peshawar Press Club delegation commended the Sindh government's health initiatives highlighting the cashless counters and the provision of free services from OPD to surgeries as revolutionary measures in the health sector. They asserted that the modern machinery and international standard hospitals in Sindh represent a commitment by the provincial government to the welfare of the people particularly the residents of Sindh. In this era of inflation having access to free treatment including medicine is commendable. The delegation urged the provincial government to expand these facilities to reduce congestion in hospitals and ensure timely healthcare for patients. They emphasized that health is a fundamental issue calling for similar initiatives in other provinces to provide basic healthcare needs ensuring the availability of modern technology for free treatment and fostering collaboration among provinces focused on public welfare rather than politics.



PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar, Riaz Khan Mehsud in a group photo along with other officials during the launching ceremony of DOSTI Peshawar Women Literature Festival 2nd Edition at Nishat Hall.

Second edition of DOSTI Peshawar Women Literature Festival launched

PESHAWAR (APP): The DOSTI Peshawar Women Literature Festival's second edition was launched here on Monday. The launching was jointly organized by DOSTI Welfare Organization and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University, Peshawar. Commissioner Peshawar Riaz Khan Mehsud was the chief guest of the inaugural session attended by literary enthusiasts, scholars, and dignitaries from various sectors. Representative of Dosti foundation Syed hanif Rasool, Tayyaba Aziz and DG culture and Tourism Mr Tashfeen Haider were among guest of honours. Prof Dr Safia Ahmed (T.I.), Vice Chancellor of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar, delivered the welcome address. A key highlight of the event was the keynote speech titled "A Tribute to Empowered Women" by renowned literary figure Ms. Bushra Farrukh. The session emphasized the significance of women's contributions to literature and their role in societal development. A panel talk "Adab aur Agahi" moderated by Dr Antal Zia followed the keynote speech of penalists Naz Parveen, Shaheen Umar and Dr Humaira featuring discussions on the intersection of literary expression and gender. The author talk was moderated by Dr Sumaira Gul, with contributions from acclaimed author Madam Sameena Qadir. Female poetess Dr Shahida Sardar, Shaheen Ameen and Rani Bano presented their poems on different societal aspects and entertained the audiences. Dr Zarmina Baloch and Sania siraj presented a session under the title "Connecting Regions: A Visual Journey Through Discourse" highlighting the role of visuals in shaping collective experiences and understanding in our region regional diversity. The chief guest Riaz Mahsud appreciated the efforts put forward by vice chancellor Dr Safia Ahmad and chief organizers Dr Hamida and Tashfeen zia along with organisers Dr Sumaira, Dr Zarmina and Sania Siraj for organising the event. Later, Dr. Hamdia Bibi, the chief organizer of the event, delivered the vote of thanks, expressing gratitude to all the participants.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi, Speaker KP Assembly Babar Saleem, Swati and Opposition Leader inaugurating the Nadra Passport Office in KP Assembly Secretariat.

Governor Kundi stresses enhancing Red Crescent's role for public benefit

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday emphasized the importance of enhancing the Red Crescent's role for the benefit of the public and urged members to work diligently to secure funding from the international community. He said this in a meeting of the Pakistan Red Crescent Society's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chapter management committee was held under the chairmanship of Governor Faisal Karim Kundi. The meeting was attended by Chairman Malik Azmat Orakzai, Member of Provincial Assembly Ahmad Karim Kundi, Principal Secretary to the Governor Zubair Khattak, and other members. During the meeting, Farzand Wazir was elected as Vice Chairman of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chapter, while Azra Jamshed was reappointed as Honorary Treasurer. He said the Red Crescent's well-established reputation for providing timely assistance during natural disasters and emergencies, highlighting its critical role in societal development. "The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Red Crescent is not only delivering exceptional services during natural calamities but also in various health sectors," he said. The Governor assured his support for the Red Crescent's projects and stressed the need for increased resources and measures to improve humanitarian efforts. He pledged to act as an advocate for securing federal funds, instructing all participants to expedite and enhance public welfare projects to ensure basic facilities are available in underdeveloped areas of the province. The meeting approved a seven-member Executive Committee for the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Red Crescent, along with various sub-committees including Finance, Human Resources, Legal Property Rent, Health, Reverse Mobilization and Fundraising, and IT and Media. Proposals for establishing Emergency Response Centers in Dera Ismail Khan, Abbottabad, Mansehra, and Swat were also deemed essential.

Postings, transfers in health dept now my responsibility: Minister

F.P. Report
PESHAWAR: An introductory meeting was held between the Adviser to Chief minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Health Ihtisham Ali and health beat reporters from print, electronic, and digital media. The meeting was also attended by Additional Secretary Health Fayaz Sherpao, Director General Health Services Dr. Muhammad Saleem, and Additional Director General Dr. Siraj. The Adviser to CM Ihtisham Ali warmly welcomed the media representatives and expressed his gratitude for their presence. He acknowledged the senior health reporters, emphasizing that their guidance would help steer the health department in the right direction, stating, "The media serves as our eyes and ears." During the discussion, Ihtisham Ali highlighted his focus on revitalizing and operationalizing the primary healthcare system. He noted that a significant portion of the health budget is spent on tertiary care due to the inefficiencies of the primary healthcare system, which serves 80-90% of the population. He further mentioned his commitment to fully digitizing the administrative and operational structure of the health department, an initiative already underway. As of today, posting and transfers will be processed online, with candidates able to apply through an online portal. The Adviser announced the formation of a placement committee, which will meet twice a month to make decisions based on merit and departmental needs. He clarified, "Posting and transfers are not my responsibility. My role is to drive reforms, improve policy-making, and enhance governance within the health department." Addressing past issues, Ihtisham Ali referred to a major scandal involving medical procurement during the caretaker government. To prevent such incidents, he explained that the medicine procurement process has been completely digitized, with the Chief Minister set to inaugurate the new system soon. Through the new portal, Medical Superintendents (MS) and District Health Officers (DHO) will input their budget and supply needs, and the system will generate orders in accordance with the Medicine Coordination Committee (MCC) list. He also emphasized the importance of reactivating Primary Management Committees and Hospital Management Committees, similar to the Parents Teachers Committees model, to promptly address hospital needs and expenses. The Adviser pointed out that the Directorate General has been facing challenges in service delivery due to excessive workload. To address this, the four regional Additional Directorates General have been activated. The management of staff in grade 16 and below will now be handled by the respective regional directorates, and human resource data, along with posting and transfer processes, will be digitized at the Directorate General within a month. High-Level Meeting of Health Department Held Under the Chairmanship of Health Adviser Ihtisham Ali. Meanwhile, a high-level meeting of the Health Department, chaired by Adviser to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Health Ihtisham Ali, was convened to review and discuss key administrative and digitalization initiatives. The meeting was attended by Secretary Health Adeel Shah, Additional Secretary Fayaz Sherpao, Special Secretary Health Ghafoor Shah, Director General Health Services Dr. Muhammad Saleem, Director General Provincial Health Services Academy Dr. Abdul Waheed, Deputy Director IT Zakirullah, CEO Sehat Card Dr. Riaz Tanoli, Deputy Chief HSRU Dr. Majid, and other relevant officials. During the meeting, Health Adviser Ihtisham Ali directed the officials to immediately operationalize the Regional Directorate Generals and ensure that they take full responsibility for the administrative affairs of their respective regions. He issued strict instructions regarding the return of official vehicles by retired or transferred officials, stating that FIRs will be registered against those who do not comply within three days, and their details will be made public via social media. The Adviser further emphasized the digitization of all administrative matters, including posting and transfers, leave management, and seniority. He also called for the complete abolition of detailment and additional charge assignments. Officials currently working on attachment or deputation in the Secretariat or Directorate were instructed to return to their original postings by the end of this week. The meeting included a detailed briefing on the digitization agenda, with a focus on the newly launched online portal for posting and transfers. The IT Cell in charge informed the Adviser that the portal is now fully functional, and all departmental notifications are being digitized with archiving and verification features. The system for leave management and charge assumption is also fully online. He added that a donor coordination mechanism has been developed, providing all donors with login access to the portal, where they are required to upload their activities and data. This ensures transparency and allows the department to monitor donor activities effectively. The IT Cell also recommended integrating the Planning Cell with the current system to streamline hospital upgrades and project funding allocations. Additionally, it was suggested that the HRMIS system be enhanced by uploading doctors' seniority lists online to eliminate any ambiguities in future postings.

KPBC to observe strike against law and order

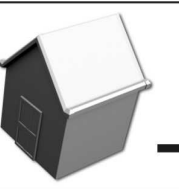
F.P. Report
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council has strongly condemned the worsening law and order situation in District Kurram and southern districts while observing strike from court proceedings against government's inability to ensure public safety. KPBC denounced the recent terrorist attacks in Kurram district, which targeted innocent civilians, as cowardly acts. The attacks resulted in the loss of lives, including family members of Noor Wali former Joint Secretary Peshawar High Court Bar Association. The council attributed the deteriorating law and order situation to the failure of law enforcement agencies. Vice Chairman Sadiq Ali Momand and Executive Committee Chairman Timur Ali Shah criticized the provincial government and security agencies for their inability to prevent terrorist attacks. KPBC accused provincial government of being preoccupied with protests and political maneuvering, which has directly affected the province. The government are more focused on political point-scoring than addressing the pressing.

Govt seeks suggestions for improvement in master Plan

PESHAWAR (APP): The Planning and Development department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has invited suggestions and objections from all the stakeholders to improve the master plan for Peshawar city 2024-44. The Urban Planning Unit of the department in collaboration with the district administration would hold a seminar on October 17 at PUTA hall, University of Peshawar to seek suggestions and objections from engineers, architects, builders, developers, legal experts, industrialists, businessmen and other relevant persons. The department said that the participants could also submit their suggestions on email@gmail.com or on whatsapp number 0334-9157932.

Power suspension on Peshawar feeders notified

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO) on Monday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from Hayatabad grid station on 16th and 20th October from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. resultantly, consumers of Khyber 1, 2, Hayatabad 9, 10, 13, 14 and IMS feeders will face inconvenience. It said that power supply will also remain suspended from Peshawar University grid station on 16th and 17th October from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. resultantly, consumers of Malakandher, Engineering, Agriculture, Taj Abad, Taj Abad 2, Danish Abad, Gharib Abad, Rahat Abad 1, CMB, Old Bara Road, JAF, Academy Town, Circular Road, Askari 6, Regi, University Town, NCR, Airport Road, PAF Base, Saddar Road, Mall Road feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from Peshawar Cantt grid station on 16th and 20th October from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. resultantly, consumers of MES 2, Old MES, CAA, Palosi 1, Behari Colony, Tehkal Payan, Bank of Khyber feeders will face inconvenience. Likewise, the power supply will remain suspended from Pesco Colony Grid Station on 16th and 20th October from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. resultantly, consumers of jail feeder will face inconvenience.



In brief

Woman killed for honor F.P. Report

MINGORA: In Manglawar area of Swat district, a woman was found dead with her throat slit, police informed on Sunday. Police said the incident which took place in the Banjot area of Manglawar, was likely to be a case of honor killing. Two brothers of the murdered woman, her husband and brother-in-law have been arrested for their alleged involvement in this gruesome murder, police said. The body of the lady was shifted to hospital for medico legal procedure, while police have started further investigation into the case.

Cool weather expected F.P. Report

QUETTA: Meteorological Department Quetta Regional Center forecast on Monday that cool and dry weather is expected in northern part of the province whereas dry weather is expected in Sibbi and Naseerabad Division. Partly cloudy to cloudy weather with chances of rain/thunderstorm is expected in Jiwani, Gwadar, Pasni, Ormara, Lasbella, Hub and southern Awaran. However dry weather condition would prevail in rest of the province during the next 24 hours. Weather forecast for next 48 hours: Cool and dry weather is expected in northern part of the province whereas dry weather is expected in Sibbi and Naseerabad Division. Partly cloudy to cloudy weather with chances of rain/thunderstorm is expected in Jiwani, Gwadar, Pasni, Ormara, Lasbella, Hub and southern Awaran. However dry weather condition would prevail in rest of the province during the next 48 hours.

Tribesmen stage protest F.P. Report

QUETTA: Khilji tribesmen on Monday staged a protest demonstration outside Quetta Press Club against Chasma Achozai incident. Addressing the protest demonstration, speakers said that it was condemnable to demolish the homes of people in Chasma Achozai area of Quetta and open fire at residents. They said that land dispute in Chasma Achozai was subjudice before the court of law, but authorities started demolishing the homes besides opening fire at the residents. They called on authorities to compensate the family members of victims and injured of the incident. Protest demonstration was addressed by noted social activist Zareena Khilji, tribal elder Wazeer Khilji and others.

Gunmen target PTI leader

ARIFWALA (INP): A shooting incident occurred at the residence of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) South Africa leader, Mian Ilyas Wattoo, in Iqbal Nagar, Arifwala. According to the channel report, unknown assailants on a motorcycle opened fire at the overseas Pakistani's house, prompting local authorities to take swift action. Arifwala city police confirmed that a case has been registered against two unidentified individuals following a complaint lodged by Mian Ilyas Wattoo's brother, Muhammad Abbas. The police have initiated an investigation into the incident and started raids to capture the accused persons. The PTI leadership has strongly condemned the shooting and demanded a thorough investigation to ensure the culprits face justice.



SHANGLA: Residents holding a protest for acceptance of their demands. - F.P. photo

Govt to be dealt terrorists with iron hands

F.P. Report

HUB: Senior leader of Pakistan Peoples Party, Spokesperson of President Asif Ali Zardari and Provincial Advisor for Industry and Crafts Mir Ali Hassan Zehri have expressed their deep anger and grief over the brutal killing of innocent miners in Dukki. Condemning the incident in his condemnation statement, he said that the elements that terrorize unskilled laborers do not deserve any concession.

He said that the terrorists have once again proved their cowardice by targeting poor and unskilled laborers. Terrorist elements are targeting innocent citizens for the pleasure of their masters, who are being dealt with by the government with iron hands. Mir Ali Hasan Zehri said that the terrorists had the patronage of India in the said cowardly attack. Describing the Dukki tragedy as an Indian conspiracy, he said that the financial support and facilitation of the terrorists in the

incidents of terrorism was provided by Pakistan's eternal enemy, India, of which there are irrefutable evidences.

Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that the increasing incidents of terrorism in Balochistan is the agenda of the enemies, which is to stop the development of Pakistan by increasing differences, chaos and hatred on the basis of language and ethnicity in the province. The nefarious intentions of the enemies will never be allowed to succeed. Mir Ali Hassan Zehri said that the terrorists in Dukki area killed the innocent miners working in the coal mines by shooting at their foreign masters and achieve nefarious purposes.

PPP leader said that elements who target innocent citizens with terrorism do not deserve to be called human beings and our Baloch, Pashtun traditions and Islam also do not allow taking the lives of innocent people. He said that martyring innocent miners is not bravery but a cowardly

act. Cowardly terrorists do not have enough strength to face the security forces, so they target innocent citizens for their terrorism. He said that the enemy is engaged in conspiracies to make the people fight among themselves and destabilize the country by doing such actions, but the people of Pakistan and the security forces will together destroy their nefarious intentions.

He said that the Pakistan Army and other security agencies are fighting against the terrorists without caring about their lives to eradicate terrorism from the country, and God willing, the time is not far when the terrorists will be eradicated from Pakistan and the earth will be cleansed of their existence. In this war of terrorism, the enemies will be defeated, while the victory will finally be for the right. Mir Ali Hassan Zehri expressed his condolences and sympathy to the families of the miners who were martyred by the firing of terrorists and wished the injured a speedy recovery.

Entrepreneurship to bring prosperity: Zahir Shah

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Provincial General Secretary Central Organization of Traders and former President of Mardan Chamber Zahir Shah, who is on a business visit to England, participated in the Business and Youth Seminar organized by the Overseas Business Forum in Birmingham with the main objective of encouraging the new generation towards entrepreneurship attracting and getting rid of social problems that today include ice and other addictive substances.

The participants of the seminar shed light on addiction and the social evils that spread in the society in detail and said that the only and easy way to rid the new generation of this scourge is to adapt the new generation to business and modern technology, which not only it will be possible to get rid of the social scourge, but the new generation will develop the spirit to promote business.

From the seminar, Zahir Shah said that ice and drug dealers are enemies of the entire society and not of any individual or family who deals in drugs. He said that to get rid of this scourge we have to take joint steps then our new generation will be able to avoid destruction. He further said that in order to raise awareness among the youth against ice and addiction, the public and the youth are being informed about the dangers of ice in seminars on different platforms.

Zahir Shah said that a campaign against this scourge will be launched from the platform of Mardan Chamber very soon. Chairman of Overseas Business Forum Mohammad Farooq Khan, well-known TV artist Kashif Mehmood, executive member of Mardan Chamber Imtiaz and others participated on this occasion.

Passengers involved in beggary arrested

MULTAN (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) during the operation nabbed five passengers, including three women, for attempting to travel abroad with fake documents, involved in begging here at Multan airport on Monday.

According to an FIA spokesperson, the suspects - Shahid Abbas, Adnan Haider, Samira Bibi, Shahnaz Mai, and Amna Mai, residents of various districts including Multan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Bahawalpur, and Jhang were attempting to travel to Saudi Arabia under the guise of performing Umrah.

PPP is being reorganized in KP

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Pakistan Peoples Party Khyber Pakhtunkhwa president Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha has said that party workers will be given a call to protest against the provincial government for gaining rights of Pukhtun. He was addressing a meeting of party district presidents of Malakand division at Chakdara here the other day.

The PPP former provincial presidents engineer Humayun Khan, Najmud Din Khan, former MPAs Sahibzada Sanauallah, Muhammad Zamin advocate, Dr Haidar, Afsarul Mulk, divisional president and former MNA Malik Azmat Khan and district president Nawabzada Ahmad Zeb also spoke on the occasion. The speakers criticized the Pakistan Tahreek Insaf led government for doing nothing for development and welfare of people in the province.

Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha alleged the PTI spent government resources on agitations against the federal government. He said the PTI had failed to deliver according to the wishes of local masses.

The PPP provincial chief said the party was being reorganized in the province and it would become the most popular party soon. Lauding the struggle of party workers, he said that they were the real asset of the party. He asked youth

and party district office bearers to come forward and play their active role in the PPP reorganization on each level.

Scholar defence: Mr Muhammad Usman, a PhD scholar from the Department of Mathematics, University of Malakand (UoM), successfully defended his dissertation on 'Analysis of some classes of Fuzzy differential equations via integral transforms and additive operator splitting method' here on Saturday. The public defense was evaluated by a panel of subject experts.

The internal examiner and supervisor was Dr Hidayat Ullah Khan, Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics, UoM. While his external examiners were Professor Dr Maraj Bibi, Associate Professor, COM-SATS University Islamabad and Professor Dr Faiz Muhammad, Chairman, Department of Mathematics, University of Swat.

According to a press release, Dr. Muhammad Usman's research contributes significantly to the field of mathematics, specifically in the analysis of fuzzy differential equations. His work demonstrates the application of integral transforms and additive operator splitting methods. The Scholar thanked all his teachers, relatives and friends for achieving his goals.

Another scholar Subhan Ullah, also successfully

defended his PhD thesis in Mathematics under the supervision of Dr Amir Ali, Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics, University of Malakand. The external examiners were Professor Dr Hamid Khan, Islamia College University Peshawar and Professor Dr Ghulam Mustafa, Dean of Sciences, Islamia University Bahawalpur. The Chairman Dr Imtiaz Ahmad appreciated the hard work of the scholar and encouraged him to continue exploring the same area of research.

Zakat chairman: The newly appointed provincial chairman of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ushr and Zakat council Imtiaz Khan advocate was warmly welcomed by the PTI workers on his arrival at Chakdara here on Sunday. The PTI workers received him at the Chakdara interchange on Swat motorway and brought him to his native town Chakdara in a vehicular procession.

Addressing the party workers at his hujra, Mr Imtiaz pledged that he would abide by his party founder Imran Khan. He thanked the KP chief minister Ali Amin Gandhapur and his cabinet for appointing him as provincial chairman of Zakat council. He said the party leadership had given respect to all workers of Adenzai and he would not disappoint them. He said that he would always take party workers into confidence before making important decisions.

Redressal of toll tax assured on priority basis

Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: The representative delegation of Kohat District on Monday held a special meeting with the Chairman DDAC Kohat Shafi Jan, Daud Shah Afridi MPA and Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Motasim Billah Shah in the Commissioner House Kohat on the issues of Kohat in general while Kohat Tunnel Toll Tax and NHA related issues in particular.

The meeting beside the Deputy Commissioner Kohat Abdul Akram, Head

of delegation Obaidullah Haidari and President of Kohat Bar Association Amir Ajam Advocate, was also attended by all the political, social and religious leaders of Kohat. Members of the delegation informed the elected representatives and Commissioner Kohat Division about the concerns and reservations being found at the public level regarding the Kohat Tunnel Toll Tax and other issues related to NHA in detail and stressed its early solution.

Members of the Provincial Assembly Shafi

Jan and Daud Afridi and Commissioner Kohat Division assured the political and social leaders that issues related to Tunnel Toll Tax and others will be discussed at the highest level keeping in view the interest of Kohat district and its people. They assured that all the issues will be resolved on priority basis.

Members of the delegation expressed the hope that the public representatives and the divisional and district administrations Kohat will solve the problems of public interest on priority basis.

Blood donation camp for thalassemia patients held

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Serving the ailing humanity is great worship and blood donations are lifeline for thalassemic children. This was stated by the Patron-in-Chief Sundas Foundation Hafizabad Col.(R) Ali Ahmad Awan while talking to administration and students of KIPS College on the eve of blood donation camp arranged at the college.

The students of the college donated 76 bags of bloods for thalassemic juveniles. Col.(R) Ali Ahmad Awan appreciated the passion of students for donating blood to save the lives of thalassemic children as well as Principal Kashif Jalal and Zaeher Bhone for arranging emergency blood donation camp.

Meanwhile, Deputy Commissioner Abdul Razzaq said that officers of district administration and other concerned departments are started anti-smog steps and strict action will be taken against smoke emitting factories, brick kilns, vehicles and burning of remaining crops indiscriminately.

He stated this while presiding over a meeting held to review anti-smog measures. ADCG Hamadullah, AC Hafizabad Sohail Riaz, AC Pindi Bhattian Ishfaq, Deputy Director Agriculture Muhammad Yousaf, Assistant Director Environment Protection Naveed Ahmad, Secretary RTA Aqsa Riaz and other officers attended the meeting.

DC said that special quick response teams consisting of offices and official were constituted for taking effective action against burning residues of crops in the district. He directed the

officers of Environment Protection, Secretary RTA and traffic police to check smoke factories, bricks kilns and vehicles whereas special campaign also be launched to create awareness among farmers, transporters, factory and bricks kilns owners about hazard of smoke and smog.

Civil defence crackdown against illegal oil agencies: District Civil Defence Office Hafizabad Shahid Pervaiz has launched special crack down on illegal oil agencies and decanting of LPG on the directions of the Punjab government in the district. He sealed five illegal oil agencies operating in congested areas of the city Hafizabad and taken machines into his custody. Shahid Parvaiz said that all illegal oil agencies and decanting of LPG would be sealed and no one would be allowed to run this dangerous practice in the district.

Moreover, President Awami Mahaz Rana Khalid Mehmood has said that with the hectic efforts of police led by District Police Officer Hafizabad Faisal Gulzar, drug trafficking has declined significantly.

While addressing the meeting of Awami Mahaz Hafizabad Rana Khalid Mehmood and other speakers said that due to strict action of police, criminals are compelled to leave the district and sense of security prevailed among people of the district. They said that open courts of police officers were also providing relief to people and common people were approaching the DPO and other officers without any hurdle to submit their applications for getting relief.

Three injured in encounter including constable: A police constable

and two dacoits critically injured in police encounter allegedly and police have shifted injured to hospital. According to details, Vaneki police received a phone call through helpline 15 that four unknown dacoits are engaged in dacoity near Hakeem Pura drain. After receiving the call, Vaneki Tarar police rushed to the scene. Seeing the police, accused tried to sped away but police chased the accused. When, police party reached near the accused, the dacoits opened fire indiscriminately.

As a result of which, a police constable Akif Gujjar injured critically. Police retaliated and arrested two injured accused. Police shifted injured accused and police constable to hospital. While two accused sped away. According to police spokesman, arrested accused were wanted by district police Gujrat and district police Chiniot in different crimes. He applauded courage and bravery of police party. He asked about health of injured constable and announced to give cash reward to him.

DC pays surprise visit: Deputy Commissioner Abdul Razzaq has paid Surprise visit to Government Boys Primary School No.6 Hafizabad, Family Park, Children Park and DHQ Hospital Hafizabad. He reviewed academic activities in the school, availability of recreational facilities in the parks and provision of treatment facilities being provided to patients in the DHQ Hospital. During the visit of school, DC checked attendance of staff, cleanliness and directed the headmaster and other teachers to improve cleanliness of washrooms and other parts of the school.

Fictionalization of slaughter houses directed

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Commissioner Mardan Division, Javed Marwat has directed the authorities to functionalize the slaughter houses established in Mardan and Takhtbai and immediate ban on slaughtering of cattle on streets and bazaars to ensure the provision of clean and healthy meat to the people.

He issued these directives while addressing the monthly performance review meeting in the conference room of the Commissioner's Office on Monday. Besides, Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mardan Mian Behzad Adil, DC Swabi Nasrullah, Secretary to Commissioner Sara Tawab, administrative officers, TMOs, Revenue and

Superintendent Engineer (SE) Peshawar Electricity Supply Company (PESCO), other relevant officials also attended the meeting.

The Commissioner also directed TMAs to take effective action against illegal housing societies and submit a report in this regard. The meeting also reviewed the measures taken for the implementation of the public agenda of the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, apart from the implementation of the government revenue collection, encroachments, on ban polythene bags and progress on ongoing development schemes.

The Commissioner while taking notice of illegal encroachments on various government-owned assets, directed the Deputy

Commissioners to convene a meeting of the officers and formulate a strategy in this regard. The Commissioner Mardan praised the performance of the assistant commissioners of Takhtbai, Katling and Garhi Kapura for conducting an effective campaign against illegal encroachments.

He said that due to illegal encroachments the smooth flow of traffic was affected and there was difficulty in the movement of the people in the markets. He directed to intensify the campaign against illegal encroachments in Mardan and Swabi. Commissioner Mardan directed to set up the desks of commercial banks in all service delivery centres to provide all facilities to the people under one roof.

Blood donation camp held at Muslim College

F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassemia Center and Blood Transfusion Services Peshawar has arranged one day Blood Donation camp at New Muslim College, Charsadda with the help and support of Principal, on Monday.

According to details, NMC principal Mehmood Khan, Resource Mobilization officers of Hamza Foundation Ateeq ur Rehman and Ibrarullah Jan delivered lectures to the Students and worthy teach-

ing staff about different welfare activities of the organization, especially free of cost treatment providing to Thalassemia, Hemophilia patients and they also delivered motivational speech about the importance of Blood donation.

Indeed, it was very successful blood donation camp at NMC Charsadda. 60 healthy volunteer students donated their blood for saving precious lives of 1504 registered poor and underprivileged Thalassemia and Hemophilia kids of Hamza Foundation.

Founder Chairman of Hamza Foundation Ijaz Ali Khan, highly appreciated the cooperation and support of the Principal, teaching staff and also the dedication and spirit of the Students blood Donors. On this special occasion, RMOs of Hamza Foundation presented shield to Principal Mehmood Khan. Founder Chairman Hamza Foundation Ijaz Ali Khan also thanked the management of the college for the arrangements of such a Successful blood donation camp for the ailing humanity.

Tribesmen demand reopening of Angoor Adda crossing

F.P. Report

WANA: The tribesmen including Chief of Ahmadzai Tariq Khan, Malik Baz Gul, Malik Saifullah Khan and President of Chamber of Commerce and Industry Saifur Rahman, along with other business representatives, held an urgent press conference in Wana Bazaar on Monday.

During the briefing, the elders expressed their concerns over the prolonged closure of the Angoor Adda Gate, a key commercial crossing point, and announced that a large Jirga will be held tomorrow in Raghzai Bazaar. Thousands of tribal members are expected to attend the gathering to demand the reopening of the gate, which has been shut for over a year, halting local trade and causing

widespread economic distress.

The elders also revealed the formation of committees comprising local political leaders, union representatives, shopkeepers, and owners of showrooms and petroleum pumps. These committees will meet with various stakeholders to develop a strategy to press for the gate's reopening and the resumption of commercial activities in the region.



Tuesday, October 15, 2024



BEIRUT: Rescue workers standing on the rubble of destroyed buildings in southern Lebanese city of Nabatieh.

Kyiv denounces Moscow's reported execution of captured troops

KYIV (BBC): Ukraine's human rights ombudsman has denounced the alleged execution of nine Ukrainian troops by Russian forces in the Kursk border region.

Dmytro Lubinets said he had written to the United Nations and the Red Cross about the allegations, accusing Moscow of breaching "all the rules and customs of war". The intervention follows reporting by Ukrainian human rights organisation DeepState, which published drone footage purporting to show the dead troops who it said were drone operators. Officials in Russia have yet to comment on the allegations.

Kyiv is believed to have deployed thousands of troops into the Ukrainian border region since it launched its shock incursion earlier this summer. The images published by DeepState showed the dead Ukrainian troops stripped to their underwear and lying face

down in what appeared to be farmland in Kursk. The BBC cannot independently verify the images. The outlet said the drone operators had been overrun by a rapid Russian advance. "These actions must not go unpunished, and the enemy must bear full responsibility," Mr Lubinets wrote in a message to Telegram. "The international community should not turn a blind eye to such crimes!"

Kyiv has frequently accused Russian of executing captured Ukrainian troops - a war crime under the Geneva Convention. Earlier this month the prosecutor general's office alleged that Russian forces had executed 93 Ukrainian soldiers since the beginning of the conflict. It added that an official investigation had been opened into reports that 16 Ukrainian soldiers were executed in the eastern Donetsk region near the city of Pokrovsk - where fighting has raged for

months. Officials said the reports would mark the "largest mass execution" of Ukrainian prisoners of war by Russian troops since Moscow launched its invasion in February 2022. The Kremlin denies that its soldiers have been committing war crimes in Ukraine. The reports come as Russian forces continue to attack Ukrainian positions in Kursk. President Volodymyr Zelensky said in his nightly address from Kyiv that Ukrainian troops had fought off a renewed Russian advance in the region. Analysts say that Kyiv launched the offensive to try and force Russia to redirect some of its troops from its offensive in eastern Ukraine. The Institute for the Study of War (ISW) has estimated that around 40,000 Russian forces are now active in Kursk - up from 11,000 when Ukrainian troops first crossed the border.

But the offensive has

failed to slow Russian momentum in the eastern Donbas region, where relentless attacks has slowly pushed Ukrainian forces backwards. The Ukrainian leader acknowledged that "there are very difficult conditions, with harsh enemy actions" in both Donetsk and Zaporizhzhia in his address. The Russian defence ministry said its forces had seized the village of Mykhailivka, which sits along a highway near the key city of Pokrovsk.

Russian forces have been advancing towards Pokrovsk - which is a key logistics hub - for months. Experts say if Russia can seize the city Ukraine's ability to resupply units in other crucial towns would become far more difficult. Meanwhile, Russian aerial attacks on Ukraine continued overnight. Air force officials in Kyiv said Moscow launched 68 drones and four missiles towards Ukrainian territory.

US official accuses Russia and China of blocking Asia leaders' statement

WASHINGTON (Reuters): Russia and China blocked a proposed consensus statement for the East Asia Summit drafted by Southeast Asian countries, mainly over objections to language on the contested South China Sea, a US official told Reuters.

A draft statement arrived at by consensus by the 10-nation Association of Southeast Asian Nations was put to the 18-nation East Asia Summit meeting in Laos, the official said. "ASEAN presented this final draft and said that, essentially, this was a take-it-or-leave-it draft," the official said on condition of anonymity.

The United States, Japan, Australia, South Korea and India all said they could support it, the official said, adding: "The Russians and the Chinese said that they could not and

would not proceed with a statement." Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov told a news conference in Vientiane the final declaration had not been adopted because of "persistent attempts by the United States, Japan, South Korea, Australia and New Zealand to turn it into a purely political statement." China's Washington embassy did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The US official said there were a couple of issues of contention, but the key one was how it referred to the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), going further than in the previous 2023 EAS statement. However, the official said, "there was certainly no language that was getting into the nitty gritty of any particular standoff, no language that

was favoring any claimant over any other." China claims nearly all of the South China Sea and has stepped up pressure on rival claimants, including several ASEAN countries, notably the Philippines. ASEAN has spent years negotiating a Code of Conduct with Beijing for the strategic waterway, with some ASEAN states insisting it be based on UNCLOS. China says it backs a code, but does not recognize a 2016 arbitral ruling that said its claim to most of the South China Sea had no basis under UNCLOS, to which Beijing is a signatory.

According to a draft seen by Reuters, the proposed EAS statement contained an extra sub-clause over the 2023 approved statement, and this was not agreed to. It noted a 2023 UN resolution saying that UNCLOS

"sets out the legal framework within which all activities in the oceans and seas must be carried out." Another sub-clause not agreed said the international environment, including "in the South China Sea, the Korean Peninsula, Myanmar, Ukraine and the Middle East ... present challenges for the region." Chinese Premier Li Qiang told the summit Beijing was committed to UNCLOS and striving for an early conclusion of a Code of Conduct, while stressing its claims have solid historical and legal grounds. "Relevant countries outside the region should respect and support the joint efforts of China and regional countries to maintain peace and stability in the South China Sea, and truly play a constructive role for peace and stability in the region," he said.

North Korea is preparing to destroy northern parts of inter-Korean roads

SEOUL (AP): South Korea said Monday it has detected signs that North Korea is preparing to destroy the northern parts of inter-Korean roads no longer in use, as the rivals are embroiled in soaring tensions over North Korea's claim that South Korea flew drones over its territory.

Destroying the roads would be in line with leader Kim Jong Un's push to cut off ties with South Korea, formally cement it as his country's principal enemy and abandon the North's decades-long objective to seek a peaceful Korean unification. South Korea's military said Monday that it was observing various activities in North Korea that appeared to be preparations for demolishing the roads, such as installing screens.

"They have installed screens on the road and are working behind those screens, preparing to blow up the roads," Lee Sung Joon, spokesperson of South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff, told a briefing. He said the demolitions could be carried out as early as Monday. Lee said that the

South Korean military believes that the North could also attempt to launch a space rocket, which is viewed by the UN as a banned test of long-range missile technology. Lee said North Korea may conduct unspecified "small provocations" to ramp up pressure on Seoul. It's not clear how much parts of the roads North Korea would destroy.

The development comes as North Korea has recently accused South Korea of launching drones to drop propaganda leaflets over Pyongyang three times this month and threatened to respond with force if it happened again. South Korea has refused to confirm whether it sent drones but warned it would sternly punish North Korea if the safety of its citizens is threatened. In a statement, the North's Defense Ministry said that the military had ordered artillery and other army units near the border with South Korea to "get fully ready to open fire." The spokesperson said that the entire South Korean territory "might turn into piles of ashes" following the

North's powerful attack. North Korea often releases warlike rhetoric when animosities with its rivals increase. Experts say it's highly unlikely for North Korea to launch full-scale, preemptive attacks as its military is outmatched by the combined US and South Korean forces. Koo Byoungsam, a spokesperson of South Korea's Unification Ministry, said Monday that North Korea's accusation on South Korean drone flights was likely aimed at creating tensions to reinforce its internal unity while stoking instability in South Korea. Koo said North Korea cannot win what it wants from South Korea with threats and provocations.

Some observers say anti-Pyongyang activists might have sent drones this month, but North Korea argues the South Korean government cannot still escape responsibility because it must have been aware of such moves. In 2022, South Korea sent surveillance drones across the border into North Korea after it accused North Korea of flying drones into South Korea for the first

time in five years. Last week, North Korea said it will permanently block its border with South Korea and build front-line defense structures to cope with "confrontational hysteria" by South Korean and US forces. It cited various military exercises in South Korea and the temporary deployments of powerful US military assets in South Korea. South Korean officials said North Korea had already been adding anti-tank barriers, planting mines and reinforcing roads on its side of the border since earlier this year in a likely attempt to boost its front-line security posture and prevent its soldiers and citizens from defecting to South Korea.

Tensions on the Korean Peninsula are at their highest point in years, with North Korea continuing a run of provocative missile tests and South Korea and the US expanding their military drills. Observers say North Korea could perform major weapons tests ahead of next month's US presidential election to increase its leverage in future diplomacy with the Americans.

Lukashenko says Russian nuclear shift was overdue

MOSCOW (Reuters): Changes announced by Russia to its nuclear weapons policy were long overdue and will probably "cool the ardour" of its Western enemies, Belarusian leader Alexander Lukashenko said in an interview released.

Lukashenko, a close ally of President Vladimir Putin, said "hootheads" in the West had already heard the nuclear signals being sent by Moscow even before the Kremlin leader announced the changes last month. Putin said on Sept. 25 that Russia was extending the list of scenarios that could prompt it to consider launching a nuclear weapon, including if it had reliable information about a massive cross-border attack against it involving aircraft, missiles or drones. He said Moscow would consider any assault on it supported by a nuclear power to be a joint attack.

The announcement was the Kremlin's answer to deliberations in the United States and Britain about whether or not to give Ukraine permission to fire Western-supplied long-range conventional missiles to hit targets deep inside Russia. "This doctrine should have been renewed long ago," said Lukashenko, who last year agreed with Putin on the stationing of Russian tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus.

He told a Russian TV reporter that Western missiles would "already be bombing us, especially Russia" if the West had not paid attention to Putin's earlier nuclear signals. But the change to the nuclear doctrine "probably cools their ardour", he added. Ukraine has accused Russia of nuclear blackmail and its president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has urged the West to ignore Putin's "red lines". Moscow says its warnings are for real, and Putin has said the US and its allies will be fighting Russia directly if they give the green light for Kyiv to fire US ATACMS and British Storm Shadow missiles deep into Russia.

Ukrainian journalist dies in prison

KYIV (BBC): Viktoriia Roschychyna disappeared in August 2023 in a part of Ukraine now occupied by Russian forces. It took nine months for Russian authorities to confirmed the journalist had been detained. They gave no reason. This week, her father got a terse letter from the defence ministry in Moscow informing him that Victoria was dead, aged 27.

The document said the journalist's body would be returned in one of the swaps organised by Russia and Ukraine for soldiers killed on the battlefield. The death date was given as 19 September. Again, there was no explanation. This weekend, friends gathered to remember Viktoriia on the Maidan in central Kyiv. They shuffled into position on the steps holding her photograph, young face smiling out at the small crowd. "She had huge courage," one woman began the tributes. "We will miss her enormously," said another, turning away as her eyes filled with tears. Viktoriia's stories were snapshots of life that Ukrainians were not getting from anywhere else. Reporting from occupied areas of Ukraine was extremely dangerous, but her colleagues remember how she was desperate to go there, even after she was detained and held in custody the first time, for ten days.

"Her parents used to call and tell us to stop deploying her, but we never did deploy her!" one of her former bosses recalled. "All her editors tried to stop her. But it was impossible." The young reporter eventually went freelance in order to deploy herself and when she got back newspapers would buy her reports. Most strikingly, she never used a pseudonym even though she wrote openly of "occupied" territory and referred to those who collaborated with the Russians as "traitors". "She wanted to provide information about how those cities live under siege by the Russian army," Sevgil Musaieva, editor-in-chief at Ukrayinska Pravda, told the BBC. "She was absolutely amazing."

Kim's sister threatens S Korea over drone flights

SEOUL (AP): The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un accused South Korea of deliberately avoiding responsibility for the alleged flights of South Korean drones over the North's capital, and warned of a "terrible calamity" if they continue.

The statement by Kim Yo Jong came a day after North Korea's Foreign Ministry claimed that South Korean drones carrying anti-North Korean propaganda leaflets were detected in the night skies over Pyongyang this week. The ministry said North Korean forces will prepare "all means of attack" capable of destroying the southern side of the border and the South Korean military, and respond without warning if South Korean drones are detected in its territory again.

South Korea's defense minister initially denied the accusation, but the South's military later adjusted its response, saying it couldn't confirm whether or not the North's claims were true. In comments published through state media, Kim, one of her brother's top foreign policy officials, said that the South Korean military's vague statements should be taken as proof that it was "either the main culprit or accomplice in this incident."

"If the military stood by while its own citizens employed drones, a widely recognized multi-purpose military tool, to violate another country's sovereignty, thereby increasing the risk of armed conflict with a potential adversary, this would amount to intentional acquiescence and collusion," she said. "The moment a South Korean drone is discovered once again in skies above our capital, a terrible calamity will surely occur. I personally hope that does not happen." South Korea's military and government didn't immediately respond to Kim's comments. Tensions between the Koreas are now at their worst in years as the pace of both North Korea's missile tests and the South's combined military training with the United States have intensified in tit-for-tat. The animosity has been exacerbated by Cold War-style psychological warfare campaigns between the Koreas in recent months.

Since May, North Korea has sent thousands of balloons carrying paper waste,



plastic and other trash to drop on the South, in what it described as retaliation against South Korean civilian activists who flew balloons with anti-North Korean propaganda leaflets across the border. South Korea's military responded to the North's balloon campaign by using border loudspeakers to broadcast propaganda and K-pop to North Korea. North Korea is extremely sensitive to any outside criticism of the authoritarian government of leader Kim Jong Un and his family's dynastic rule.

South Korea officials have been raising concern that North Korea may seek to dial up pressure on Seoul and Washington ahead of the US presidential election in November. Experts say Kim's long-term goal is to eventually force Washington to accept North Korea as a nuclear power and to negotiate security and economic concessions from a position of strength. In written answers to questions by The Associated Press this month, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said North Korea is likely preparing major provocations around the US election, possibly including a test detonation of a nuclear device or flight-test of an intercontinental ballistic missile test, as it tries to grab Washington's attention.

Israel reinforces ban on UN chief entering country

TEL AVIV (Reuters): Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz reinforced his decision to declare UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres persona non grata over what he described as a failure to condemn Iran's missile attack and anti-semitic and anti-Israel conduct.

On Oct. 2, Katz said that he was barring Guterres from entering Israel. He posted on X that "Guterres can continue seeking support from UN member states, but the decision will not change." UN spokesperson Stephane Dujarric described the initial announcement on Oct. 2 as political and "just one more attack, so to speak, on UN staff that we've seen from the government of Israel." He said the UN traditionally does not recognize the concept of persona

non grata as applying to UN staff.

When asked to respond to Katz's remarks, a UN spokesperson referred to Dujarric's earlier comments. Dujarric also said last week that the UN had not received any formal communication from Israel on the matter. On Oct. 3, the UN Security Council expressed its full support for Guterres, saying in a statement that "any decision not to engage with the UN Secretary-General or the United Nations is counterproductive, especially in the context of escalating tensions in the Middle East." When asked last week if Guterres had been made persona non grata by Israel, Israel's UN Ambassador Danny Danon told reporters: "There was a statement made ... we will evaluate the relationship.

We are here at the UN, we work with the UN agencies, but we were disappointed."

Iran fired more than 180 ballistic missiles at Israel on Oct. 1 amid an escalation in fighting between Israel and its proxy in Lebanon, Hezbollah. Many were intercepted in flight but some penetrated missile defenses. Guterres condemned the missile attack and "the broadening of the Middle East conflict, with escalation after escalation." Earlier the same day, Israel had sent troops into southern Lebanon. During a Security Council meeting a day later, Guterres said: "As I did in relation to the Iranian attack in April - and as should have been obvious yesterday in the context of the condemnation I expressed - I again strongly condemn yesterday's massive missile attack by Iran on Israel."

Belarus activist symbolizes nation's repression

TALLINN (AP): The last time any of Maria Kolesnikova's family had contact with the imprisoned Belarusian opposition activist was more than 18 months ago. Fellow inmates at the penal colony reported hearing her plead for medical help from inside her tiny and smelly cell.

Her father, Alexander Kolesnikov, told The Associated Press by phone from Minsk that he knows she's seriously ill and tried to visit her several months ago at the facility near Gomel, where she is serving an 11-year sentence, but has failed whenever he goes there. On his last attempt, he said the warden told him, "If she doesn't call or doesn't write, that means she doesn't want to."

The 42-year-old musician-turned-activist is known to have been hospitalized in Gomel in May or June, but the outcome was unclear, said a former prisoner who identified herself only as Natalya because she feared retaliation from authorities. "I can only pray to God that she is still alive," Kolesnikov said in an interview. "The authorities are ignoring my requests for a meeting and for letters - it is a terrible feeling of impotence for a father." Kolesnikova gained prominence when mass protests erupted in Belarus after the widely

disputed August 2020 election gave authoritarian President Alexander Lukashenko a sixth term in office. With her close-cropped hair, broad smile and a gesture of forming her outstretched hands into the shape of a heart, she often was seen at the front of the demonstrations.

She became an even greater symbol of defiance in September of that year when Belarusian authorities tried to deport her. Driven to the Ukrainian border, she briefly broke away from security forces in the neutral zone at the frontier and tore up her passport, then walked back into Belarus. She was convicted a year later of charges including conspiracy to seize power. Natalya, whose cell was next to Kolesnikova's before being released in August, said she had not heard her talking to guards for six months. Other inmates heard Kolesnikova's pleas for medical assistance, she said, but reported that doctors did not come for "a very long time." In November 2022, Kolesnikova was moved to an intensive care ward to undergo surgery for a perforated ulcer. Other prisoners become aware of her movements because "it feels like martial law has been declared" in the cell block, Natalya said. "Other prisoners are strictly for-

bidden not only to talk, but even to exchange glances with Maria."

Her sister, Tatiana Khomich, said she was told by former inmates that the 5-foot-9-inch Kolesnikova weighed only about 45 kilograms (100 pounds). "They are slowly killing Maria, and I consider that this is a critical period because no one can survive in such conditions," said Khomich, who lives outside Belarus. The last time Kolesnikova wrote from prison was in February 2023. Letters to her "are ripped up before her eyes by prison personnel," her sister said, relaying accounts from other former inmates.

Kolesnikova, who before the 2020 protests was a classical flautist who was especially knowledgeable about baroque music, is one of several major Lukashenko opponents to disappear behind bars. The prisons department of the Belarusian Interior Ministry refused to comment on Kolesnikova's case. The UN Human Rights Committee has repeatedly demanded Belarusian authorities take "urgent protective measures" in relation to Kolesnikova and other political prisoners held incommunicado. In September, the European Parliament demanded that Belarus release all political prisoners.

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Obama touches raw nerve of Black voters

FORMER US President Barack Obama, and the first Black to have held the highest executive post, expressed frankly his apprehension that Black men are not fully supportive of Democrat candidate Kamala Harris. He shared with campaign volunteers his sense that Black men have second thoughts on a woman president.

The general assumption is that Harris enjoys the support of Blacks, Latinos, Asian communities and middle class white Americans, the traditional Democrat voter base. Though Harris is leading Trump by three percentage points in many of the surveys, many political observers feel that it is a close race, and everything depends on swing states like Pennsylvania. It is then to the field workers of the Harris campaign in Pittsburgh that Obama said, "Part of it makes me think that, well, you just aren't feeling the idea of having a woman as a president, and you're coming up with other alternatives and other reasons for that."

Obama said that there is not the energy in the Harris campaign he saw in that of his own in 2008. Surprisingly, co-founder and executive director of Win With Black Men, Khalil Thompson, said he agreed with Obama. He said, "I believe President Obama is speaking to a tangible, visceral understanding of what it means for all men to relate to women in America. Calling out misogyny is not wrong."

This reveals an interesting social and psychological issue. The first is whether Americans in general are willing to accept a woman as the president of the country. America might be the most advanced democracy in the world in many respects but when it comes to the issue of gender, the sensitivity of the American male is quite far behind that of many other countries, especially Asian.

There is a tacit, white male assumption that a woman at the head of the table is a still a hard fact to accept. Of course, there are conscious attempts made by the American corporations to have more women in the boardroom and also as the CEOs. But it has not yet become the norm.

Kamala Harris is the first woman Vice President in America. And it will be quite a leap of imagination on the part of the American people for her to become the president of the country. What might catapult her to the top post is the fact that Republican candidate Donald Trump is quite brazen about his authoritarian style of functioning. He makes no attempt to hide it or even rationalise it. And many Americans do feel that in the Trump way lies anarchy.

There is also the social psychological fact that the American Black male ego is much more fragile and brittle because of the racial discrimination he experiences at every turn, especially when the American Black male happens to come from the lower income bracket, and he is an unjustified suspect in the eyes of the police in every American city.

And this becomes a hurdle for the American Black male to accept woman as a leader. Obama seems to have sensed it and he spoke out against it. It might seem odd indeed to distinguish between male and female among the Blacks, but as Khalil Thompson has pointed out it is "tangible, visceral".

The question arises as to whether speaking out about the underlying fault-line of the Black mind, Obama has harmed or helped the Harris campaign. But Obama knows that his candour is one of his charming aspects of personality, and he hopes that he will persuade the fence-sitters among the Black men to go out and vote for Harris, and also gather more support for Harris among Black men.

Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or tehsil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



Unifil can't keep the peace in Lebanon, but it should stay there anyway

Mukesh Kapila

THE UN is renowned for clunky acronyms but one is especially apt: Unifil. This is the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, which provides the vanishingly thin sandwich of a buffer between Lebanon and Israel. It is newsworthy because it is now in the way of Israel's cross-border operations into southern Lebanon and Hezbollah's shelling of Israel.

Both protagonists have long found Unifil's presence awkward because they do not want it to discover what they do along the 120-mile-long Blue Line separating them. Yet, that is Unifil's job – observing and informing on each side – to avoid lethal misunderstandings or resolve them through negotiation.

That is useful in peaceful times but inconvenient during war. So, it is not surprising that the Israeli military have over the past week been shooting

at Unifil observation towers, cameras and communications. They don't want their movements monitored, which Unifil is obliged to do under its rules of transparent engagement. Hezbollah also does not want information on operations from its bases and tunnels in southern Lebanon to be leaked. Strictly speaking, Unifil liaises not with Hezbollah but with the Lebanese Armed Forces. But the two communicate. Israel's distrust of Unifil is compounded by the nationalities of its 1,100 personnel. The largest contributors are Indonesia, Italy, India, Nepal, Malaysia, Spain and China, and the rest span another 43 countries. The great majority of contributing nations are critical of Israel.

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ians were slaughtered.

And it is contentious because the UN can do little but bluster in the face of Israel's pugnacious attitude towards numerous rebukes in the General Assembly, Security Council, Human Rights Council and International Court of Justice. There is no love either for UN aid agencies as Israel obstructs their work and appears determined to dismantle the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA). Even the UN Secretary General, Antonio Guterres, was insulted by Israel declaring him persona non grata.

A further twist comes from the Irish, whose peacekeepers have tragically suffered the most casualties over past years. They are strident because their contingent at Unifil was warned specifically by the Israeli military. But Ireland also leads a European movement to recognise Palestinian statehood, having joined the South African genocide case against Israel, too.

There is also a French angle. Lebanon was administered by France until 1944 and is now the "penholder" for Lebanese issues at the Security Council. French troops used to be a significant part of Unifil and were criticised in ways that echo more recent criticisms of "meddling" in Mali, Burkina Faso and Niger, all of which have expelled UN peacekeep-

ing missions.

With diverse interests at play, keeping the tattered UN flag flying on the bunkers sheltering Unifil soldiers while Hezbollah and Israel exchange fire overhead is political gesturing rather than substantive. And it is a dangerous gesture, as 326 peacekeepers have been killed over the years. Neither adversary is deterred by Unifil, which has suffered further casualties in recent days.

The UN will have decided to take a stand only after consulting troop contributors, who tend to be risk averse as soldiers returning in body bags makes for bad domestic optics.

But that is trumped by international optics, especially for Israel's detractors, whose political spin is that Israel is widening the conflict by attacking the UN, having already engaged aggressively on

whether it wins local hearts and minds is disputed, as the mission cannot provide the stability and security that people crave. In any case, these are insufficient outcomes from \$500 million annually that sustains Unifil.

Where do we go from here? UN peacekeeping aims to create space for peace making. The cardinal requirement for that is consent of the conflicting parties who must genuinely seek peace. Those conditions do not currently prevail across the Israel-Lebanon border because of the mutually exclusionary aims of Hezbollah and Israel to destroy each other.

But all is not hopeless. Intense pressure on Hezbollah from Israeli military ferocity, Iranian reluctance to get sucked in further and perhaps rising unpopularity within Lebanon could persuade the group to accept Resolution 1701 and exit the border zone below the Litani River.

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multiple fronts.

The courage of peacekeepers is not disputed. But in the heat of the moment, a cooler appreciation of Unifil's 46 years is warranted.

Unifil's mandate comes from Security Council resolutions in 1978, expanded by Resolution 1701 in 2006 and renewed annually, most recently in August. Its authority comes from Chapter 7 of the UN Charter, which does not allow Unifil to use force except in self-defence. That is sensible, as it is outgunned by Hezbollah and Israel. But it means that Unifil cannot enforce its mandate.

So, it is unsurprising that Unifil is always disregarded or disparaged by the warring sides, depending on the prevalent cycle of tranquillity or trouble in its operating zone between the Litani River and the Blue Line.

Unifil is criticised for passively reporting frequent violations of Resolution 1701 by both sides but not doing more to help the official Lebanese army secure the border areas while helplessly watching Hezbollah entrench itself there.

Instead, Unifil keeps busy with non-controversial works such as clearing landmines, running clinics, conducting education and cultural activities, and installing water supplies and solar panels. This is worthwhile, but

There is indication that Hezbollah may accept that once it realises that linking its strategy to Gaza hinders the cause of an independent Palestine which already enjoys considerable global support. Israel must then respond wisely to that opportunity to pacify its northern border, allow its displaced citizens to go home and find the emotional bandwidth to consider the wider Palestine question including the day-after challenge of Gaza.

However, we have been there before in earlier cycles of violence. To be different this time requires trust. This is where Unifil comes in – not the current mission but a stronger one with a more robust enforcement posture under Chapter 7 of the UN Charter and in which both Israel and Lebanon have confidence.

To allow for that possibility is the key reason for Unifil to remain while keeping safely bunkered, not as a symbolic instrument of defiance against uncaring protagonists but to provide the foundation for genuine peace enforcement when the current fighting is over.

That requires a new Security Council Resolution, as 1701 is insufficient. This is the polarised world's real test – much bigger than Unifil's current challenges.

— The National

Israel's options in Lebanon are limited — and fraught with risk

Nadim Shehadi

BENJAMIN Netanyahu's televised message to the Lebanese people last week sounded a bit "off," with Israel destroying the country. "This will hurt, but it is for your own good" was the implied meaning, and the tone attempted to be like that of a friend doing you a favor, but issuing a threat at the same time. The Israeli leader advised the Lebanese — I am translating here — to launch a civil war against Hezbollah in order to save themselves from destruction by Israel. If those were not his exact words, this is how we heard them in Beirut, the twisted product of a perverse logic.

The Netanyahu doctrine revealed in that speech is not complex — it is a binary view of the world, with Israel on one side fighting an enemy that it seeks to destroy physically. Success is measured by the number of people killed and buildings destroyed. He is crudely asking us to help. On this side of the border, the battle is far more sophisticated. By fighting Israel, Hezbollah justifies maintaining its arms, its status as a resistance force and its control over the country. It can lose militarily on the local front, but the so-called axis of resistance could also gain political power even from a military defeat. By calling on the Lebanese to join him, the Israeli leader is weakening them politically by turning them into collaborators in the destruction of their own country.

If there is a lesson that Israel can conclude from its previous wars, it is that victory on the battlefield has resulted in its enemies emerging stronger. It must be doing something wrong.

Israel's third Lebanon war has even less chance of success than the previous two. Success is not calculated by the number of deaths or the amount of destruction. A military victory can also translate into a political defeat, and history is full of heroes of glorious defeats on the battlefield. The saying in Arabic is that "the outcome at the threshing floor is not what was expected when planting the field." It is the exact opposite of the English saying that "you reap what you sow."

At the end of his last speech before he was killed, Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah set a trap when he practically invited Israel to invade southern Lebanon, saying that "we are ready." This allows Hezbollah to declare victory no matter what happens. What follows is a glimpse of how it can spin it.

If Israel does not invade, then Hezbollah will claim that it was deterred by the resistance and will declare victory. Even continuing bombardment without a land operation is counterproductive and will have the opposite effect of bringing the Lebanese closer together. It is absurd to think otherwise.

Here are the options:

If Israel falls into the trap and does invade, then Hezbollah will be given a lifeline legitimizing its role as a resistance force at a time it needs it most. It solves Hezbollah's crisis of legitimacy — for almost a quarter of a century, since Israel withdrew from south Lebanon in May 2000, it has faced a challenge in that it was resisting an occupation that hardly existed. Its interventions in Syria, Iraq and Yemen were also a bit of a stretch.

Israel will have two options after it invades, and I am not sure which is worse. If it remains as an occupation, then the chances of getting rid of Hezbollah's arms in Lebanon through a political process will be zero. Political debate in Lebanon will be back to square one, with few arguments for a now legitimate resistance to give up its arms. Hezbollah will also be the subject of a continuous supply of munitions, weapons and other resources from its allies, as it will be the front line in a global confrontation.

Worse still, if after a land operation Israel withdraws partially or com-

pletely, or if it carries out limited incursions, then Hezbollah would also declare victory, claiming that the enemy was repelled by the resistance, and the result would legitimize its arms even further.

But that is not the end of the story. Defeat on the battlefield can also give the party a boost politically, with influence that transcends the border area. Let me explain, or at least anticipate the narrative. Hezbollah is not just fighting a far superior enemy, it can also claim that it is fighting a global alliance that includes the US and NATO. This is the definition of a glorious defeat that would then attract support from all the anti-US forces in the world, including the students at Columbia and Berkeley universities.

Israel has far more serious problems than security — those of legitimacy, sustainability and viability. It cannot ensure its security by destroying the neighborhood. The Zionist dream is turning into a nightmare for both Israel and the region. It also threatens the broader region with radicals being given the upper hand over moderates. Calls for peace with Israel sound hollow while it is exhibiting so much brutality. The dehumanization of the Palestinians and Lebanese does not help it gain more friends in the Arab world and embarrasses those who already are.

There is a need for a deep and sober reevaluation of the Zionist project, since it is obvious that the current model has reached a stage of crisis. This process has already begun with the work of Israeli revisionists, or the "new historians," who are gaining influence. Authors such as Benny Morris, Avi Shlaim, Ilan Pappé, Tom Segev and Shlomo Sand are radically leading that thought process. Their work, however critical and sometimes extreme, is not necessarily a sign of weakness. The challenge that they pose is essential and they touch on fundamental issues. The same is happening among diaspora groups, especially young Jewish groups.

While this crude Netanyahu doctrine condemns the region to eternal instability without ensuring its security, it is also strengthening its enemies over those who now seem naive if they talk of peace. The optics should be clear. Israel should distance itself from such thinking, not only to save itself but also to save the world to which its present behavior also represents a danger.

The political impact of military defeat can also be unpredictable and far more dangerous. We have seen in Europe that the rise of fascism was fueled by despair and humiliation that made people yearn for a strong leader who would lift them up from the abyss. The culture of defeat in itself transforms societies in unpredictable ways.

At the same time, the larger picture is optimistic. The dark image is that, nearly two decades after the 2006 wars in Lebanon and Gaza, Israel's enemies look stronger. Iran and its proxies control the politics of Palestine, Lebanon, Syria, Iraq and Yemen, and the current war empowers them and puts them in a position to blackmail the rest of the region. But on the bright side, the prospects for peace look much brighter than they did in 2006, with the Arab Peace Initiative, the Abraham Accords and the recent declaration by Jordan's foreign minister on behalf of other Arab colleagues offering security guarantees in return for peace.

After a catastrophic war, there are lessons learned that can follow conflicting logical reasoning and lead to contradictory outcomes. The desirable conclusion is that one side will learn that war is tragic, destructive and should not be repeated, leading it to work toward peace. The conclusion to be avoided is that the other side learns that it is defeat that should not be repeated and so it starts preparing itself for the next, even more devastating, conflict.

The ICC’s credibility is hanging by a thread

UPON the entry into force of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court in 2002, a palpable hope arose that the era of impunity for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide was coming to a close.

Twenty-two years later, the international legitimacy of the court hangs in the balance as it ignores calls to move swiftly against those responsible for mass atrocities in Gaza. In May, ICC Prosecutor Karim Khan requested the court to issue warrants of arrest for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his Defence Minister Yoav Gallant, along with three Hamas leaders. The ICC is yet to make a decision despite the mounting death toll in and destruction of Gaza amid Israel’s continuing genocidal violence. The idea of a permanent international tribunal to prosecute war crimes first emerged in the wake of World War I in the legal circles of the victorious powers, but never materialised. After World War II, which killed an estimated 75-80 million people, several concepts of “justice” were floated.

At the 1943 Tehran Conference, during which the heads of state of the USSR, the United States and Great Britain met to discuss war strategy, Soviet Union leader Joseph Stalin suggested that at least 50,000 of the German commanding staff must be eliminated.

US President Franklin D Roosevelt replied, reportedly jokingly, that 49,000 should be executed. UK Prime Minister Winston Churchill argued for trying war criminals for their individual responsibilities.

Eventually, the allies established the Nuremberg and Tokyo military tribunals, which indicted 24 German and 28 Japanese

military and civilian leaders, respectively. But this was, in essence, victors’ justice as none of the Allied powers’ leaders or military commanders were prosecuted for their war crimes. In the end, these tribunals were, arguably, a symbolic attempt at trying those who waged wars of aggression and committed genocide.

During the following decades, no such international effort was made to bring war criminals to justice. Thus, for example, the mass murderers of peoples who rose against colonial and imperial powers never faced trial.

The notion of international justice was revived in the 1990s when the United Nations Security Council established two ad hoc tribunals to prosecute crimes committed during the 1991-1995 and 1998-1999 wars in the former Yugoslavia and the 1994 Rwanda genocide.

While these tribunals served their purposes, some questioned their efficacy, financial costs, and independence, given that they were set up by a Security Council dominated by Western powers.

Here again, the notion of victors’ justice hovered particularly over the Yugoslavia tribunal, as it didn’t investigate, let alone prosecute, NATO officials for the seemingly illegal 1999 bombing campaign against the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

With respect to the Rwanda tribunal, the latter didn’t investigate the possible complicity of Western powers in the genocide and/or their failure to prevent or stop it in accordance with the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide.

In this context, the signing of the Rome Statute in 1998, which entered into force in 2002, gave rise to hopes that those who com-

Moncef Khane

mit war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide will be prosecuted by the new court regardless of which side they were on in a conflict. In 2018, the crime of aggression – defined as the planning, preparation, initiation or execution of an act of aggression which, by its character, gravity and scale, constitutes a violation of the Charter of the United Nations – was added to the court’s jurisdiction.

But it didn’t take long for the high hopes for the ICC to be frustrated. A few signatories of the Rome Statute formally declared they no longer intended to become State Parties, thus nullifying their obligations. Among them were Israel, the United States and the Russian Federation. Other major powers, like China and India, did not even sign the statute.

It also did not help the ICC’s credibility that all 46 suspects it sought to prosecute in the first 20 years of its existence were Africans, including sitting heads of state. This pattern was broken for the first time in June 2022, when the court indicted three pro-Russian officials from the breakaway republic of South Ossetia who were accused of committing war crimes during the Russia-Georgia war of 2008.

A year later, in March 2023, the court made the sensational move to issue an arrest warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin, just 29 days after Chief Prosecutor Khan asked for it. The decision was, on merit, rather puzzling. Despite the lethality of the war raging in Ukraine since February 2022 and reported attacks on civilian targets, the warrant was issued for Putin’s alleged “individual criminal responsibility” for the “unlawful deportation of population (children) and

that of unlawful transfer of population (children) from occupied areas of Ukraine to the Russian Federation”.

In and of itself, the warrant against a sitting president of a permanent member of the UN Security Council could have signalled the independence of the ICC and its volition to go where the evidence would take it. But given the overt psychological war between the West and Russia, some saw the court’s decision as further evidence of the influence of its Western backers.

This perception could have been mitigated had the court demonstrated it was bona fide by following the overwhelming evidence of war crimes and crimes against humanity committed by Israel against the Palestinians.

In 2018, the State of Palestine submitted a referral to the ICC “to investigate, in accordance with the temporal jurisdiction of the court, past, ongoing and future crimes within the court’s jurisdiction, committed in all parts of the territory of the State of Palestine”. It took the court five years to determine in March 2023 that it could initiate an “investigation into the Situation in the State of Palestine”.

In November 2023, South Africa and five other signatories made another referral to the ICC, after which Chief Prosecutor Khan confirmed that the investigation launched in 2023 “remains ongoing and extends to the escalation of hostilities and violence since the attacks that took place on 7 October 2023”. It took Khan no less than seven months to recommend to the court’s pre-trial chamber the issuance of warrants of arrest for Netanyahu and Gallant, notwithstanding a rather formidable amount of evidence of their personal responsibility in the war crimes perpe-

trated in Gaza. He also made the same recommendation with respect to three Hamas leaders, two of whom were subsequently assassinated by Israel.

Arguably, it took time and courage to seek the arrest of Netanyahu, who has the support of the US and of Mossad, Israel’s infamous intelligence agency specialising in assassinations abroad. In May, the British newspaper The Guardian revealed that Khan’s predecessor, Fatou Bensouda, had been threatened “in a series of secret meetings” by Yossi Cohen, the then-head of Mossad and “Netanyahu’s closest allies at the time”.

Cohen tried to compel Bensouda “into abandoning a war crimes investigation” and “is alleged to have told her: ‘You should help us and let us take care of you. You don’t want to be getting into things that could compromise your security or that of your family.’”

If Bensouda was threatened and blackmailed for merely investigating allegations of war crimes perpetrated before the current genocidal war, one can only fathom the pressures and threats, real or assumed, that Khan faced or feared.

Now that he has done his duty, it is for the three sitting judges of the pre-trial chamber to decide whether to issue the warrants or not. Whether they face the same threats as Bensouda is unknown, but they must be acutely aware that the very credibility of the ICC also hangs in the balance if warrants of arrest for Netanyahu and Gallant are not issued without further delay.

The glaring and extraordinary amount of evidence of war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, and crime of aggression is such that were they to abscond from their responsibility, they would ring the death knell of the ICC.

Model for Africa

CHINA’S National Day is an exemplary example for nations of the Global South that are striving for economic transformation

China’s National Day, celebrated on Oct 1, commemorates the founding of the People’s Republic of China in 1949. The first celebration took place in Beijing’s Tian’anmen Square, where Chairman Mao Zedong proclaimed the founding of the PRC and raised the first national flag of New China.

Since then, National Day has become a major public holiday in China, being celebrated with grand parades, fireworks and various cultural and patriotic events. The holiday kicks off a week-long vacation known as “Golden Week” since 1999, during which many Chinese people travel domestically and internationally. Over the years, the National Day

Endalkachew Sime

areas, with more than 70 percent of the labor force engaged in agriculture. Additionally, 84 percent of the population lived below the international poverty line.

The economic reforms initiated in 1978 set China on a path of rapid growth and development. For decades after that, the average annual GDP growth rate was an impressive 9 percent, and the average annual foreign trade growth rate was 14 percent. As a result of these reforms, China achieved several significant milestones: by 2010, China had become the second-largest economy in the world and the largest exporter, with more than 95 percent of its exports being manufactured goods. By 2021, China’s per capita GDP had risen to \$12,551.

The recently concluded Third Plenary Session of

China’s journey from being one of the poorest countries in the world to a global economic powerhouse is a remarkable journey celebrated globally. This transformation, which began with the transition to a market economy in 1978, offers valuable lessons for South-South cooperation, specifically for African nations striving to maximize their economic transformation in their current post-colonial era. Before 1978, China faced severe economic challenges. At around \$156, China’s per capita GDP was less than one-third of the average for sub-Saharan African countries, which stood at approximately \$490 at that time. Exports accounted for only 4.1 percent of GDP, and imports 5.6 percent. A staggering 75 percent of exports were agricultural or processed agricultural products, showing the then dependence of the economy on agriculture. About 81 percent of the population lived in rural areas, with more than 70 percent of the labor force engaged in agriculture. Additionally, 84 percent of the population lived below the international poverty line. The economic reforms initiated in 1978 set China on a path of rapid growth and development. For decades after that, the average annual GDP growth rate was an impressive 9 percent, and the average annual foreign trade growth rate was 14 percent. As a result of these reforms, China achieved several significant milestones: by 2010, China had become the second-largest economy in the world and the largest exporter, with more than 95 percent of its exports being manufactured goods. By 2021, China’s per capita GDP had risen to \$12,551.

holiday has evolved to become not only a celebration of the founding of the PRC but also a reflection of China’s rapid development and achievements. It serves as a reminder of the country’s journey from a war-torn nation to a global economic powerhouse, fostering a sense of national pride and unity among the Chinese people, which is an exemplary model for nations of the Global South that are striving for economic transformation.

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the 20th Central Committee of the Communist Party of China emphasized deepening reforms to advance Chinese modernization, focusing on economic development, innovation, urban-rural integration, and improving people’s well-being. Key goals include establishing a high-standard socialist market economy by 2035 and building a great modern socialist country by 2049.

Looking forward, China aims to complete significant reform tasks by the 80th anniversary of the People’s Republic of China in 2029.

These past performances and future plans offer several key lessons for African countries. Embracing market-oriented reforms can drive significant economic growth.

Moving from an agriculture-based economy to one focused on manufacturing and services can enhance economic stability and growth.

Actively participating in global trade can boost economic performance. Improving access to education and healthcare is crucial for sustainable development.

Investing in infrastructure can facilitate economic activities and attract foreign investment.

The wave of independence that swept across Africa in the mid-20th century marked a significant turning point in the continent’s history. Between 1957 and 1962, numerous African nations gained

independence from their colonial rulers, starting with Ghana in 1957, which set a precedent for others to follow. This period, often referred to as the “Year of Africa” in 1960, saw 17 countries achieve sovereignty. The struggle for independence was characterized by a mix of peaceful negotiations and violent conflicts, reflecting the diverse experiences of African nations as they sought to reclaim their autonomy and identity. Among African nations, Ethiopia and Liberia stand out as unique cases. Ethiopia successfully resisted colonization by European powers, maintaining its sovereignty except for a brief occupation by Italy from 1936 to 1941. Liberia, founded by freed American slaves in the 19th century, also avoided colonization, establishing itself as a republic in 1847. These countries’ ability to remain

independent amid widespread colonization highlights their unique historical and geopolitical circumstances, which allowed them to navigate the pressures of imperialism differently from their neighbors. The post-independence era in Africa has been a period of significant transformation and challenges. Newly independent nations faced the daunting task of building stable governments, fostering economic development, and addressing social inequalities. Despite these challenges, many African countries have made remarkable progress, leveraging their independence to pursue development goals and strengthen their positions on the global stage. The experiences of Ethiopia and Liberia, alongside the broader decolonization movement, continue to inspire contemporary efforts toward self-determination and sustainable development across the continent. When African nations celebrate their national day, they can draw inspiration from China’s experience to chart their own paths toward economic prosperity and global integration. By learning from China’s successes and challenges, African countries can harness their independence to build robust, diversified and resilient economies that benefit all their citizens and beyond, making the aspirations of the South-South cooperation a reality.

— China Daily

Europe must be careful not to lose Gulf

ON Wednesday, the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council will hold their first ever summit meeting at the heads of state level in Brussels. It comes 36 years after the signing of the EU-GCC Cooperation Agreement and at a time when the security situation in the Middle East is as volatile and explosive as ever, threatening to engulf the entire region in further violence and destruction.

EU-GCC relations have witnessed significant progress at the institutional and higher political levels over the past two years. The EU’s strategic partnership with the Gulf region, the appointment of an EU special representative for the Gulf and the holding of the first structured security dialogue in January 2024 in Riyadh are all examples of the progress that has been made. In this context, the EU-GCC summit will be another important milestone.

At the same time, we need to ask ourselves whether the increased interaction and dialogue are actually producing the desired results of leading to shared analysis and understanding that impact developments on the ground. The evidence is scarce, to say the least, and whether or not the summit will produce anything different is highly questionable. However, tangible results are desperately needed and,

without them, the perception gap between the EU and the GCC is likely to widen.

It all starts with security. For the GCC states, there can be no sustainable path forward on wider regional economic development unless the perennial security issues that persist are effectively tackled. This includes, at this very moment, the ongoing crisis in Gaza, the threat of a regional war between Iran and Israel, maritime security, nuclear proliferation and the threat of extremism, coupled with the role of violent non-state actors.

For their part, the GCC states have spearheaded diplomatic initiatives, fostered economic partnerships and played a role in mediating conflicts, all while attempting to better leverage their influence on shaping the political and security dynamics of the broader Middle East. Examples include mending rifts within the GCC, dialing down the conflict in Yemen, opening channels of communication with Iran and facilitating prisoner exchanges between Russia and Ukraine. The overall relevance of the GCC agency in this regard is only beginning to be understood within European policy circles.

European responses to the crises mentioned above have, in the meantime, left the GCC states perplexed. The Oct. 7, 2023, Hamas attacks on Israel, followed by

Dr. Abdulaziz Sager

the carnage perpetrated on Palestinians by Israel ever since, have highlighted as clearly as ever that violence in the Middle East will not stop until a just solution to the Palestinian issue is found. However, on this key issue, the GCC states do not see Europe as acting coherently or willingly pursuing a resolution with an adequately robust foreign policy. Instead, when compared to the EU response to the Russian aggression on Ukraine, Europe is seen as acting on a double standard, carving out its own view of human rights, humanitarian law and justice. The result is severe damage to European credibility that stretches even to the younger population in the Gulf.

Unless Europe is ready to adopt a more balanced and substantive course of action when it comes to the Palestinian issue, the damage cannot be reversed. The recently announced joint effort between some European states and the Saud-led Middle East contact group for a political solution to the Palestinian issue is certainly a welcome step. But more concrete steps are needed, including

European-wide recognition of the state of Palestine and clear European support for efforts undertaken by the International Court of Justice and International Criminal

Court to set the legal precedents for the way forward. Overall, while the GCC states stand ready to use all the tools at their disposal to calm tension, including sending those messages to Iran, Europe needs to be seen as undertaking a similar effort when it comes to Iran.

Outside the crisis in Gaza, greater attention also needs to be given to the issue of maritime security in light of the threat that being posed to global commerce and freedom of navigation. While the European Aspidess naval mission in the Red Sea was welcomed in the Gulf, the mission itself is not seen as comprehensive enough to tackle the problem at hand.

Expansion of the mission, coordinated efforts at downgrading the capabilities of the Houthis, including the interdiction of weapons shipments, plus cooperation with GCC navies, should be taken into consideration. Maritime security is an area where the EU should be making a more direct security contribution given the impact it has on supply chains and the economic consequences for Europe proper.

Finally, it is high time that the wider instability in North Africa and the Levant be seen by the GCC states and the EU as a critical joint project for the near future, as continued state decay and widening economic and social cleavages there represent continued threats in the

Ghassan Charbel

firing more rockets and deepening its presence” in Palestine through the Islamic Jihad and Hamas.

Fouad Boutros, Lebanon’s former foreign minister, was another man whose views I enjoyed listening to, given his experience. He believed that the state is the best protector of the Lebanese people. Anyone banking on anything besides the state would be disappointed. The most dangerous thing that can happen in Lebanon is for a group or a sect to be lured into turning to foreign powers to consolidate their position in the country.

Lebanon has a fragile composition that does not tolerate violent coups. The alliance of a local group with an international or regional force is too much for Lebanon to tolerate. The weakest party often becomes a pawn in a project that is greater than it and in

which it has no say, Boutros noted.

Unfortunately, Lebanese groups have, at various instances, given in to this temptation. “The Sunnis and Maronites had both fallen for it. I sincerely hope that our Shiite brothers don’t become too embroiled in forcefully changing Lebanon’s role and features, and its internal and foreign relations. Such change could lead to Lebanon’s implosion and perhaps even nullify the reasons for its existence in its current form,” he remarked.

I asked him what he was most worried about. He replied that it was the rabid policies that ignore the fragility of the Lebanese structure and how several politicians refuse to see the real balance of power in the region and the world. They believe that they can impose new realities

through force while ignoring the heavy prices that will be paid.

I recalled Mohsen and Boutros’ remarks as I watched the broad Israeli assault against Lebanon. The scenes from Lebanon are painful. The daily Israeli orders to some residents to evacuate their villages and homes are a stark reminder of the horrific scenes recurring in Gaza. The extent of the assassinations is unprecedented and so is the destruction. World powers are watching the massacre and making do with efforts to keep Beirut airport open in order to receive aid and visitors.

The most dangerous aspect of the current war is that it is greater than Lebanon, even if its playing field is terrifying. No serious efforts are being exerted to stop the war. It is as if the warring parties have chosen to forge ahead to the very end. This is extremely dangerous in a country where a

fifth of the population is displaced.

Added to the severity of the situation is the countdown to Israel’s expected retaliation against Iran. Lebanon cannot handle Israel dealing with it as the preferred choice for war against Iran when it opts against a direct confrontation with Tehran.

It is evident that the majority of the Lebanese people oppose a destructive war in support of Gaza. Several have said, openly and in private, that the war is beyond what Lebanon can handle. It is also evident that the Israeli destruction machine enjoys American support to deplete Hezbollah’s capabilities and take the southern front out of the military equation through the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1701.

This is the most dangerous period in Lebanon’s modern histo-

ry. Taking the south out of the equation will not be easy for Hezbollah, which had launched the “support front” with Gaza in the wake of Yahya Sinwar’s Al-Aqsa Flood Operation. It is not easy for Iran either. Now is not the time for accountability and the pinning of blame. It is time to save Lebanon before it is too late.

Can Lebanon come up with a formula that persuades the US and the West to seriously pursue a ceasefire? Can it come up with a formula that will pave the way for allowing the state to be the guarantor for ending the war and tending to the wounded Lebanese by embracing everyone without exception? There can be no other choice than rebuilding the state and its role. Turning to open war is rife with dangers and horrors. What use is it for the Lebanese to win medals but lose Lebanon?

Did we make Lebanon carry more than it can handle?

IN Tunis, Yasser Arafat used to gratefully look back on what he had presented to the Palestinian cause. Mohsen Ibrahim, the secretary-general of the Communist Action Organization in Lebanon, used to encourage him to reminisce about his time in Beirut.

One day, Arafat asked: “Did we make Lebanon carry more than it can handle?” Mohsen replied: “If only you had asked that question several years ago.” Several years later, Mohsen would ask the same question.

I knew Mohsen for more than three decades. One day, he told me: “Leave editorial work and its problems behind. I am a journalist too. I know what it’s like. Go, seek out what is more important. Form a small team to write the story of Beirut and its transformations. This is a city that changes rapidly accord-

ing to the balances of power, its location and features.”

“It seems destined to face an unknown fate,” he added, while refraining from saying anything more than that.

We talked for a long time. He said Beirut occasionally embraces major causes that a small country, with such a diverse and fragile composition and sensitive location, cannot embrace. The absence of a capable Lebanese state that can manage this embrace will lead the country to implode because of the major cause it has taken in or the cause itself will explode, taking the country along with it.

We used to rejoice at the Palestinian factions’ ability to worry Israel from the southern Lebanon front. The result was that Israel invaded the south. The justness of the Palestinian cause prevented us from sensing the danger of Beirut

becoming a capital of the cause in a country that borders Israel and within reach of its military machine, he added.

Beirut is in a very tough situation. The Lebanese capital is on the verge of becoming the capital of the Iranian project in the region. This is the greatest coup the region is witnessing. After intervening in the Syrian conflict, Hezbollah became a regional player, with roles in Iraq and Yemen. Add to that the major and fundamental changes that the party has introduced in its environment. The changes are so deep that they infringe on its understanding of its role and relationship to the Lebanese entity and its regional location, he continued.

Mohsen did not hide his fear that this “role would implode in Lebanon or explode if Iran were to escalate its position toward Israel by

Facilities that provide education and training for farmers, helping them to adopt best practices and new technologies to improve their operations. As technology continues to evolve, ongoing investments in infrastructure, education and innovation will be key to unlocking the full benefits of ICTs in agribusiness sector.



Nigeria to boycott Afcon 2025 qualifier

ABUJA (Agencies): Nigeria will boycott their 2025 Africa Cup of Nations qualifier in Libya on Tuesday after their players were left stranded at an airport overnight. The Super Eagles squad were due to land in Benghazi on Sunday but their plane was instead diverted to Al Abraq, which is about 230km (143 miles) away from their intended destination.

A Nigeria Football Federation (NFF) official told BBC Sport Africa the travelling contingent were "completely abandoned" and then locked inside the airport building after making arrangements to leave.

Captain William Troost-Ekong said the squad had decided not to play the game and called on his country's government "to intervene and rescue us".

Nigeria's minister of sports development senator John Owan Enoh said the main concern was the safe return of the team.



The Libyan Football Federation (LFF) said it was "deeply concerned" by reports about the situation experienced by the travelling side but denied suggestions of foul play.

"We have the utmost respect for our Nigerian counterparts and want to reassure them that the diversion of their flight was not intentional," it said.

The Confederation of African Football (Caf) has been in contact with representatives from Libya and Nigeria after the Super Eagles were "stranded in disturbing conditions".

A Caf statement added that the matter has been referred to its disciplinary board for investigation and action will be taken if its statutes and regulations have been violated.

Troost-Ekong posted an update on X at 12:00 GMT that the squad expected to depart Libya on Monday afternoon. "Apparently our plane is being fuelled as we speak and we should be leaving to Nigeria shortly," the centre-back said. Enoh said he had instructed the NFF to lodge a formal complaint with Caf about the squad's treatment in Libya.

Uncomfortable night in 'prison' at airport

NFF media manager Promise Efoghe said no reason was given for the decision to divert their plane to Al Abraq. "No Libyan Fa official has come to give reasons or provide any clarification," he said. "The Libyans made no effort to help. When the NFF tried to make alternative arrangement, we were locked inside the airport."

"It's like we are in a prison at the airport."

Nigeria striker Victor Boniface said on social media that the squad were left without food, wi-fi or anywhere to sleep, and the Super Eagles account on X posted pictures of players sprawled out on airport seating. Troost-Ekong announced the intention to boycott the match during a series of posts on Monday morning. "As the captain together with the team we have decided that we will not play this game," the centre-back said.

"I've experienced stuff before playing away in Africa but this is disgraceful behaviour." In response, the LFF said that disruptions can occur from routine air traffic protocols, security checks or other logistical challenges and said it hoped the misunderstanding "can be resolved with understanding and goodwill".

Senator Enoh said he had held talks with Caf president Patrice Motsepe and secretary general Veron Mosengo-Omba, and that African football's governing body wanted the match to go ahead as scheduled at 19:00 GMT on Tuesday.

"There must be a serious adverse consequence to the LFF for this unspeakable behaviour," Enoh said in a statement. "This cannot be through insisting that Nigeria still takes part in this match given the very obvious situation."



DUBAI: Eden Carson ensured Aliya Riaz's promotion didn't pay off for Pakistan.

Pakistan determined to win 2nd test against England: Mahmood

MULTAN (APP): Pakistan cricket team's Assistant Coach Azhar Mahmood expressed strong optimism ahead of the second Test against England, vowing to utilize the conditions in their favor and make every effort to secure a victory.

Talking to the media on Monday, Mahmood reflected on the first Test, admitting that the team had hoped for more spin but did not get the desired turn from the pitch. "We were expecting the ball to spin more, but it did not until the final day. This time, we are hopeful the ball will behave differently," he said.

Responding to the questions about the absence of star player Babar Azam for the upcoming match, Mahmood clarified that

Babar had not been dropped but was instead given rest. "Babar is our number one player. He has not been dropped, he was just resting. The selection committee made the decision to rest not only Babar but also Naseem Shah and Shaheen Afridi," Mahmood explained. He highlighted the mental toll on players in recent months, noting, "No matter how strong a player may seem, ongoing challenges can take a mental toll and that was important to give Babar and Shaheen a break."

The assistant coach also emphasized the importance of player fitness ahead of upcoming tours to Australia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe, adding

that there was a lot of cricket ahead. This was the best time to give our key players some rest. I am confident that Babar, Naseem, and Shaheen will return refreshed and ready for action, he maintained.

Mahmood praised England's fitness and resilience, acknowledging that when players were in top physical condition, weather and other external factors matter less. Nonetheless, Pakistan was confident in their preparations and eager to even the series.

The second Test promises to be a thrilling encounter, with Pakistan determined to bounce back from the challenges of the first match and put in a strong performance.

Cummins back, Marsh and Head out of Pakistan ODI series

SYDNEY (AFP) : Mitchell Marsh and Travis Head were Monday ruled out of Australia's home one-day series against Pakistan next month, but Pat Cummins returns as captain after missing their recent England tour.

Marsh and Head have both been granted paternity leave, opening the door for Jake Fraser-McGurk and Matt Short to open the batting together.

Cameron Green was also absent from the 14-man squad, with the all-rounder to undergo back surgery this week that will sideline him for six months.

Cummins missed the white-ball tour of England and Scotland to rest, but is back to captain the ODI team for the first time since winning the 2023 World Cup.

Marcus Stoinis returns after being overlooked for England, while rising stars Cooper Connolly and Aaron Hardie also make the grade.

"This is our last ODI series before the Champions Trophy (in Pakistan) and the balance of the squad was focused on that as well as continuing to focus on preparation for the upcoming Test summer," said chief selector George Bailey.

"The one-day side had a great result in the UK particularly given illness and injury challenges.

"We view this is an opportunity to expand on that achievement in preparation for next February in Pakistan."

Australia play three ODIs against Pakistan next month in Melbourne, Adelaide and Perth followed by three Twenty20s, with that squad to be announced at a later date.

Australia one-day squad: Pat Cummins (capt), Sean Abbott, Cooper Connolly, Jake Fraser-McGurk, Aaron Hardie, Josh Hazlewood, Josh Inglis, Marnus Labuschagne, Glenn Maxwell, Matthew Short, Steve Smith, Mitchell Starc, Marcus Stoinis, Adam Zampa.

New Zealand beat Pakistan to qualify for semi-final

Shahid Afridi

DUBAI: In the ICC Women's T20 World Cup Pakistan faced defeat against New Zealand, which resulted in both Pakistan and India being eliminated from the ICC Women's T20 World Cup.

In this crucial match, New Zealand secured a 54-run victory to qualify for the semifinals. The match played in Dubai saw New Zealand win the toss and opt to bat first posting a total of 110 runs for the loss of 6 wickets in their 20 overs.

In response Pakistan's team was bowled out for just 56 runs which is their lowest score in T20 internationals. Previously their lowest score was 60 runs made against England in Taunton in 2009.

New Zealand's openers Suzie Bates 28 and Georgia Plimmer 17 were dismissed by Nashra Sandhu, with the team's score at 50 in the ninth over. Only 8 more runs were added when Omaira Sohail claimed the wicket of Amelia Kerr 9. Brooke Halliday scored 22, and captain Sophie Devine contributed 19 before both were dismissed.

Pakistan's spinners bowled effectively to restrict New Zealand from posting a bigger total. Nashra Sandhu was the standout bowler with 3 wickets while captain Fatima Sana showcased her fielding skills by taking 4 catches.

This was the 13th instance in Women's T20 Internationals where a fielder has taken 4 catches in a match and Fatima

Sana became the first Pakistani cricketer to achieve this feat.

In reply Pakistan's innings began with Muneeba Ali and Aliya Riaz but Aliya was dismissed for a duck and Muneeba managed just 15 runs. Pakistan's struggles continued as Sadaf Shams 2 and Ayesha Javed 3 were both dismissed in the same over. When Sidra Ameen was out on the first ball she faced Pakistan's score stood at 28 for 5 in the sixth over.

This soon became 55 for 7 as Nida Dar 9 and Omaira Sohail 2 also fell cheaply. Captain Fatima Sana's resistance scoring 21 runs with two boundaries was not enough to save the game New Zealand secured a 54-run win to advance to the semifinal.

New Zealand 4-0 up in America's Cup but British show signs of life



BARCELONA (AFP): Holders Emirates Team New Zealand produced a faultless display to beat challengers Ineos Britannia in Monday's postponed fourth race to take a commanding 4-0 lead in the America's Cup.

In spite of another New Zealand win off the coast of Barcelona, which leaves them just three wins away from retaining the America's Cup, there was some cause for optimism for the challengers as the British boat skippered by Ben Ainslie made its best start of the series so far.

They were neck and neck at the end of the first leg but after some dramatic action on the second leg when the two boats were crossing tacks at high speed, the New Zealanders managed a small gain on leg three. From there, the Kiwis defended well and crossed the finish line just 23 seconds ahead of Ineos Britannia.

"We did a good job," said New Zealand co-skipper Peter Burling. "Every win on the board is a super nice one. It felt more like a boat race today than yesterday. It's nice to keep marching forward." Sunday's second race had been postponed because of a lack of wind but the first race was marked by a 75-metre penalty being handed to the British after Ainslie's boat attempted a risky pre-race manoeuvre that almost

resulted in a collision.

"It was a tight start," said New Zealand co-helm Nathan Outteridge on Sunday. "We had a bit of work to do to get off the boundary on the left side but when we had the opportunity to cross over to the right side we managed to get a little gain. "We've made a step forward again with the performance of the boat and getting it tacking nicely. Very happy with the result, plenty to come still."

No complacency

The New Zealanders are unlikely to be getting over-excited, however, about their 4-0 lead in the 13-race series. They will be more than aware that in 2013, they led 8-1 in a 17-race series before the Americans came back to life and won the next eight races to retain the 'Auld Mug' -- and the inspiration for Oracle Team USA was provided by none other than Ainslie.

"It was a good race," said Ainslie after Monday's tight defeat. "We had a good start but they're going well. We have to try and figure out how to improve the performance. "Clearly, they're going really well. I think we have our moments but there are moments when we are losing a click and that's really the difference."

Race five is slated for Wednesday which will give the teams a day off sailing on Tuesday to work on their strategy.

Australia look to flip the script and ruin Japan's WC party

TOKYO (Reuters): Defender Kye Rowles believes Australia will be energised by the hostile environment in Saitama as they look to halt Japan's juggernaut charge towards the 2026 World Cup in an Asian qualifier on Tuesday.

The Socceroos have built up a fierce rivalry with the Samurai Blue since switching to the Asian confederation in 2006, even if it has been somewhat one-sided in favour of the Japanese in recent years. On Tuesday, Rowles and his teammates will face a partisan crowd of around 60,000 at Saitama Stadium willing Japan on to a fourth straight win in Group C of the third round of Asian qualifying.

"We've played in some pretty hostile crowds together as a group," the centre-half told reporters from Japan. "I think hostile crowds really get you going in a different way than home crowds. Home crowds makes it all nice and pretty and you've got the support and it gives you that confidence."

"The hostile crowds really get your back up and you go, 'well now I'm not letting you have a party. I'm going to try and ruin it.' So look, our mentality is to go out there and try and ruin their party."

Japan have been in irrepressible form in the third round of qualifying as they target an eighth straight visit to the World Cup finals, thrashing China 7-0 and Bahrain 5-0 before beating Saudi Arabia 2-0 in Jeddah last Thursday.

Fans of the America's Cup final have long been able to see the races and the water. Australia, looking to lock up a berth at a sixth successive finals by finishing in the top two in Group C, have just a single win and a draw after being upset by Bahrain at home in their opener and held 0-0 by Indonesia in Jakarta.

Football leagues, unions file EU complaint against FIFA

BRUSSELS (AFP): Major bodies representing footballers and clubs in Europe on Monday filed a complaint to the European Commission accusing FIFA of abusing its position over changes to the international match calendar and tournament expansions.

Football's world governing body "holds conflicting roles as governing body and competition organiser, which give rise to a conflict of interest," FIFPro Europe, the European Leagues body and Spain's La Liga said in a statement.

The bodies presented their complaint at a press conference in Brussels, saying that FIFA's "imposition of decisions on the international calendar is an abuse of dominance and violates EU law". FIFPro is the global players' union while European Leagues brings together more than one thousand clubs from 33 countries around Europe.

Its member leagues include the English Premier League, as well as the leagues in Italy, Germany and France, but not La Liga, which joined the complaint separately. Citing recent European court rulings related to the breakaway Super League and the Lassana Diarra case, the bodies said FIFA's rules and conduct "harm the economic interests of national leagues, and the health and safety of players in European football".

"A legal challenge before the European Commission has become a necessary course of action to safeguard the European

football sector," they added.

FIFA has been accused of a failure to consult over recent changes to the calendar, such as the introduction of a 32-team Club World Cup. The first edition of the expanded Club World Cup will take place in the United States in June and July next year and 12 European clubs are due to feature.

Many of the continent's leading players will therefore be obliged to participate at a time when they would otherwise have been afforded a long close-season break, a year ahead of the expanded 48-team World Cup in North America.

A recent FIFPro report accused football's governing bodies of putting players' health at risk amid a constantly growing calendar, while some leading players have evoked the possibility of going on strike to protest against the increasing demands being made of them.

Representatives of domestic leagues, meanwhile, have voiced concerns that their competitions will suffer the most as top players will inevitably miss more domestic matches in order to rest, damaging their brands. FIFA has previously hit back at criticism and accused leagues of acting with "commercial self-interest (and) hypocrisy".

"Those leagues apparently prefer a calendar filled with friendlies and summer tours, often involving extensive global travel," the body said in July after it first emerged that legal action was planned.

England always plays for result: Ben Stokes

MULTAN (APP): England cricket team captain Ben Stokes has reiterated that the England team always plays for a result, emphasizing that this was the core of their approach to the game.

Speaking to the media at the Multan Cricket Stadium on Monday, Stokes highlighted England's intent to create winning opportunities, adding that the team was always looking to create chances to win and that was how England play.

The charismatic all-rounder, fresh after his return from injury, expressed his happiness at being back on the field. "I am feeling better than before. It is great to be back, and I am keeping myself positive. Returning to full fitness took time and a lot of hard work," he said.

Reflecting on England's first Test victory over Pakistan, Stokes praised his teammates for their stellar performance. He said that the first Test was

brilliant, and we are looking forward to the second. The guys delivered some great individual performances, and we are keen to carry that forward, he added.

Commenting on the bowling unit, Stokes singled out young fast bowler Matthew Potts, saying, "Potts was bowling really well. In these conditions, you have to manage the workload of the bowlers, and that was something we have been focusing on, he maintained.

When asked about the pitch for the second Test, Stokes remained unfazed. "Whatever the pitch, we have to play on it. We are preparing based on what we have seen, but we will really know after the first hour or so," he said, adding that the pitch's behavior will reveal itself early in the match.

Stokes concluded by acknowledging the challenge Pakistan presents. "Pakistan was never an easy opponent. We expect

good cricket, and hopefully, the fans will enjoy a thrilling contest."

The second Test promises to be an exciting battle as England continues their aggressive brand of cricket, aiming for another win against a strong Pakistan side.

Earlier, England and Pakistan have announced their playing XI for the second Test.

The England cricket team has revealed their playing XI for the second Test against Pakistan, set to begin on October 15 in Multan. All-rounder and captain Ben Stokes, along with fast bowler Matthew Potts, return to the side for the crucial match.

Stokes, who missed the last four Test matches due to injury, is back to lead the team. Matthew Potts also makes his return after the last feature in a Test match against Sri Lanka at Lord's in August. Both players' inclusion is seen as a significant boost for England as they look to

continue their winning momentum in the series.

The playing XI squad includes Ben Stokes (captain), Zak Crawley, Ben Duckett, Ollie Pope, Joe Root, Harry Brook, Jimmy Smith, Brydon Carse, Matthew Potts, Jack Leach and Shoaib Bashir.

Fast bowlers Gus Atkinson and Chris Woakes, who were part of the playing XI in the first Test, have been rested for the second match to manage their workload. With the return of key players, England will be eager to put up a strong performance and secure a series win against a competitive Pakistan side. The second Test promises to be another exciting contest between the two teams.

Meanwhile, Pakistan has also confirmed their playing XI for the second Test against England, set to be held in Multan. The team has opted for a balanced approach, fielding one fast bowler and three specialist spinners, aiming

to capitalize on the spin-friendly conditions.

The playing XI squad includes Shan Masood (captain), Saud Shakeel (Vice Captain), Saim Ayub, Abdullah Shafique, Kamran Ghulam, Muhammad Rizwan, Salman Ali Agha, Aamer Jamal, Nauman Ali, Sajid Khan and Zahid Mahmood.

This selection reflects Pakistan's focus on spin, with Nauman Ali, Sajid Khan and Zahid Mahmood forming a potent spin trio to challenge England's batsmen. Aamer Jamal will lead the pace attack, while Mohammad Rizwan continues as the wicket-keeper.

Pakistan will be aiming for a strong performance in this must-win match, after a competitive first Test, and the selection of three spinners indicates their strategy to exploit the conditions in Multan. The second Test promises to be an intriguing battle between the two sides.



England's Captain Ben Stokes addresses a press conference.



In brief

Death anniversary of 'Bil Batori,' observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 7th death anniversary of renowned stage star and TV artist Nusrat Ara, famously known as Bil Batori, was observed on Monday. According to a private news channel, she was born in Karachi back in 1964 and later moved to Lahore to pursue acting. The star rose to fame in the 90s with the hit TV drama Ainak Wala Jin, which saw her essay the ever-famous role of Bil Batori. Ara's career initiated in theater, as the performer moved from Karachi to Lahore to land an acting role in the PTV comedy.

IRSA releases 115,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 115,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 79,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1535.73 feet and was 137.73 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 41,100 cusecs and 50,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1203.50 feet, which was 153.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 8,600 cusecs and 35,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 50,800, 62,900, 54,900 and 15,800 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 18,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 3,500 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

4 members gang held

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested four members gang involved in street crimes and recovered stolen motorcycle, amounting Rs 78,000 from their possession during crackdown here on Monday. Police have also recovered weapon used in the crimes. According to police spokesman, Bani police held four members gang involved in street crimes who were identified as Muhammad Haq, Bashi Khan, Asad, and Sajjad. Muhammad Haq, one of the key suspects, has been sent for an identification parade, and it is to be believed that more revelations about other crimes could surface during the investigation. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress. SP Rawal Muhammad Haseeb Raja praised the efforts of the police team, stating that those who threaten the safety and property of citizens will not escape justice.

12 gamblers arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested twelve gamblers and recovered stake amount Rs 23,350, 12 mobile phones from their possession during crackdown on Monday. According to police spokesman, Waris Khan police conducted raid and arrested four gamblers who were identified as Sohail, Alamgir, Aslam, and Qasim. During operation, Police were found with Rs 22,500 in cash, four mobile phones from their custody. Similarly, New Town police apprehended eight more gamblers include Daulat Khan, Abdullah, Raheel, Ghulam Abbas, Riaz, Hanif, Shaukat, and Muhammad Arshad. The police seized Rs 850, eight mobile phones from them. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was underway.



ISLAMABAD: Security officials are on high alert as security beefed up in the Federal Capital for the 23rd Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit. —APP Photo

Protecting rights of visually impaired persons essential: Ayaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq Monday said that the white cane is a symbol of independence, confidence, and freedom for those with visual impairments.

While paying tribute to the courage and resilience of visually impaired persons on the occasion of White Cane Safety Day, he said that this day serves as an encouragement for all of us to support and empower visually impaired individuals and include them in the national mainstream.

The Speaker emphasized that visually impaired individuals are an important

part of our society, and ensuring their well-being and empowerment is our collective responsibility.

"By harnessing their potential, we can turn visually impaired persons into productive and active citizens," he added. Ayaz Sadiq stressed the need to take steps to utilize their abilities more effectively and enable them to play a vital role in social life, allowing them to live with dignity and contribute as valuable members of society.

He further added that if visually impaired persons are provided with equal opportunities in education, employ-

ment, and other sectors, they can significantly contribute to the development and progress of society.

The Speaker remarked that White Cane Safety Day is a moment to renew our commitment to safeguarding the rights of visually impaired persons and making every effort to improve their lives. He affirmed that Pakistan's Parliament is committed to ensuring the protection of special persons' rights and making their lives easier through effective legislation.

Additionally, the Speaker noted that the National Assembly has prepared the Constitution of

Pakistan in Braille and made its website accessible for visually impaired persons. He also highlighted that the National Assembly Secretariat building has been made accessible to persons with disabilities.

The Speaker reiterated that the National Assembly would continue to play an active role in the welfare and protection of the rights of visually impaired persons.

He underscored the need for providing visually impaired individuals with modern technologies, stating that such technologies can greatly improve their quality of life.

'Pakistan's ties with SCO countries to foster economic growth'

ISLAMABAD (APP): PML-N senator Tahira Aurangzeb Monday lauded the China-Pakistan friendship as a shining example of international cooperation and expressed heartfelt gratitude to SCO countries for placing their trust in Pakistan, which will significantly boost economic growth and regional stability.

In an interview with PTV news channel, she praise for the China-Pakistan friendship highlights the strong bonds between the two nations, fostered through years of cooperation and mutual understanding.

This exemplary relationship serves as a model for other coun-

tries, demonstrating the potential for peaceful coexistence and collaborative progress, she highlighted.

By strengthening ties with SCO member states, Pakistan will further solidify its position as a key player in regional affairs, she added.

Aurangzeb emphasized the significance of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) in strengthening Pakistan's regional integration and connectivity.

She noted that Pakistan's participation in SCO forums, such as the Council of Heads of State and the Council of Heads of Government, has enhanced its cooperation with member states

in areas like trade, investment, energy, and counter-terrorism.

Aurangzeb reaffirmed the PML-N's dedication to nurturing the China-Pakistan relationship, recognizing its transformative potential for Pakistan's economic development and regional influence.

Responding to a query, she urged PTI to recognize the significance of the SCO Summit in promoting Pakistan's positive global image.

She emphasized the need for unity, rather than protests that could undermine Pakistan's sovereignty and integrity, at a time when international cooperation is crucial.

ANF recovers over 341 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting nine operations across the country managed to recover over 341 kg drugs worth of Rs 50 million and arrested seven accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He informed that in two operations over 128 kg opium, 72 kg hashish and 1 kg ice were recovered on Ring Road Peshawar and an accused was arrested.

26,400 kg hashish and 7.2 kg opium were recovered from the possession of an accused arrested on Ahmad Ali Road in Lahore.

57.6 kg hashish was recovered from an accused netted on Jamali Bridge Service Road in Karachi.

In an operation, 10 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused rounded up near Iqbal Shaheed Toll Plaza, Attok.

8.4 kg hashish and 1.6 kg ice were recovered from two accused arrested in two operations in Toba Tek Singh.

Three kg hashish and 1 kg ice were recovered from an accused held near M-1 Toll Plaza Islamabad.

Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.

Senator Siddiqui criticizes PTI for undermining national dignity

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-N Senator Irfan Siddiqui Monday slammed PTI for consistently obstructing Pakistan's progress, urging them to prioritize national dignity and warned that choosing the SCO summit day for their actions would have severe repercussions.

In an exclusive interview with a private news channel, he said, "PTI is habitual for disruption of the country's advancement, emphasizing the need for patriotism over political point-scoring."

He further criticized that despite senior leaders from PML-N and PPP being jailed, the country's matters were not derailed by similar blackmailing tactics, adding, the current disruptions were being driven by political agendas rather than genuine concerns for the nation's well-being.

He said, "PTI has a history of causing trouble whenever important events are on the horizon, adding, in the past, they disrupted the Chinese president's visit to Pakistan and now they are poised to do it again."

"Their actions are reckless and selfish, prioritizing political gain over national dignity," he said, adding, "It is crucial to remember that Pakistan's reputation is at stake and such antics will only harm the country's interests."

Responding a query, he emphasized, "Even if a PTI leader is imprisoned, the party can still function effectively, just like PML-N and PPP did during similar circumstances."

"In fact, history shows that PML-N and PPP continued to operate smoothly despite having their senior leaders jailed," he mentioned.

For instance, during

Nawaz Sharif's imprisonment, PML-N remained a strong opposition force, and similarly, PPP continued its political activities when Asif Ali Zardari was jailed, he highlighted.

To another query, he replied that deadlock over the notification of the new Chief Justice that there was no any deadlock so far and collaboration and discussions were underway.

Replying a question, he added, "Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has been in communication with Bilawal Bhutto, leader of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), regarding a constitutional amendment."

"This amendment is a key part of Benazir Bhutto's unfulfilled agenda, and Nawaz Sharif has assured Bilawal that they will work together to implement it soon," he mentioned.

Grand search operation conducted in various City Zones

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT), under the supervision of zonal Superintendents of Police (SPs), conducted a grand search and combing operation late at night in various areas of city including Tarnol and Aabpara police limits.

According to public relations officer, under the special directions of Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, the ICT Police has intensified its crackdown on criminal elements to eliminate crime from the city, he told APP.

In this regard, a heavy contingent of police participated in the operation, which also included the lady police force.

Prior to the operation, zonal SPs briefed the personnel on the details of the mission, he added.

He said during the search, 150 suspicious individuals, as well as 189 households, shops, inns, hotels, and motels, were thoroughly checked.

Additionally, the operation involved inspecting 105 motorcycles and 26 vehicles, he said.

He added total of 42 suspicious individuals were taken to police stations, and 12 individuals faced preventive action.

He said during the

operation, one suspect was arrested, and illegal weapons along with ammunition were recovered from his possession.

He said the primary aim of the search operation is to curb crime in the area.

IG Islamabad has issued orders for grand search operations throughout the district to combat criminal activities, he added.

The public is urged to cooperate with the police during the checks and to report any suspicious activities.

"Ensuring the safety of the citizens is our top priority," he said.

RCB intensifies anti-dengue campaign to counter epidemic

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) has further intensified its anti-dengue campaign to counter the prevailing challenge of epidemic as the positive cases in the Cantt areas have increased.

The data which is being compiled and updated on daily basis by the District Health Authority has shown a considerable spike in dengue cases from Rawalpindi Cantt territories.

Additional CEO RCB, Haider Shuja has directed the dengue cell of the board to further enhance surveillance and monitoring of the dengue situation.

He remarked that the dengue issue demands collective efforts with collaboration between allied departments. He also urged the public reps from various cantonment UCE and Wards to visit their respective constituencies and monitor the situation regularly.

According to details, a meeting was held on Monday to review the

anti-dengue campaign, with Haider Shuja in the chair. It was attended by President RCB Malik Munir, in-charges of horticulture department, dengue cell, sanitation department, engineering branch and members from various wards.

The dengue cell of RCB gave a comprehensive briefing during the meeting and apprised of that more than 210 open vacant plots have been cleaned, fogging and spraying was being done on a daily basis in the most affected areas to prevent dengue. It was informed in the meeting that a separate dengue ward has also been established in the Cantt General Hospital.

Regarding the ongoing dengue awareness campaign, banners and posters have also been displayed in all wards. Surveillance of tire shops, factories, departmental stores, hotels, open plots, filtration plants and cemeteries was being completed.

It was briefed that during the Friday sermons, people have been asked not to allow water stagnation in and around their houses and to take special care of cleanliness to get rid of dengue larvae. Awareness campaign seminars on dengue prevention are also being organized in schools.

The Additional CEO on the occasion said that spraying should be continued in all the wards on an emergency basis. "The Cantonment Board will continue its efforts until the dengue mosquito is eradicated," he said.

He urged the citizens to extend their cooperation to the Cantonment staff in the fight against dengue. He directed the officials to fully cooperate with the health department and share the situation with each other.

All the members assured their all possible cooperation and expressed their resolve to ensure the successful rendering during the anti dengue campaign.

Routes established for SCO Summit under ITP's supervision

ISLAMABAD (APP): Under the supervision of Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Muhammad Sarfraz Virk, the Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) will lay the routes on Monday according to the traffic plan for the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) 2024 summit.

According to ITP statement, traffic on the Expressway will be halted from morning until noon. While Srinagar Highway will be halted from afternoon to late evening, he added.

He said Islamabad Traffic Police (ITP) have issued a comprehensive traffic plan aimed at ensuring smooth traffic flow during this important international event.

In this regard 1100 officers from the ITP have been deployed to ensure smooth traffic flow and guide citizens to alternative routes.

Citizens are advised to avoid unnecessary travel and are encouraged to use alternative routes to avoid inconvenience, CTO said.

For the latest updates on traffic conditions, the public is advised to tune in to Islamabad Police Radio FM 92.4 or contact 15, he said.

Chief Traffic Officer Muhammad Sarfraz Virk urged citizens to cooperate with the police to ensure the smooth conduct of the SCO Summit, he said.

SCO Summit: City streets shine with lights, decorations: The

Capital Territory (ICT) administration has finalized all administrative arrangements, with final touches in place, and the city is ready to welcome the delegates of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit.

Meanwhile, the streets, buildings, and public spaces have been carefully prepared for the international event.

According to the spokesman of ICT administration, in preparation for the SCO meeting, the city has been fully decorated. Before the guests arrive, streets have been adorned with lights and decorations, giving the city a fresh look. Major high-

ways now feature green spaces and crescents, adding a touch of nature to the urban landscape.

As part of a beautification drive, various statues have been installed at key intersections. Government offices, private business centers, and buildings have also been revamped, ready to greet the visiting dignitaries.

Private businesses, including plazas, petrol stations, and restaurants, are prepared to accommodate the needs of international guests during the summit. At night, the city offers an even more impressive view, with lights illuminating the skyline and key areas across the city.



ISLAMABAD: A customer selecting to purchasing cap from a roadside vendor. —APP Photo

\$12m deal inked in support of Kajaki dam

KABUL (Pajhwok): Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat (DABS), Afghan Mili Bank, and Kajaki Electricity Production Company have entered into a financial assistance agreement worth \$12 million. In a post on X, the power utility announced the agreement was signed by DABS CEO Dr Abdul Bari Omar, the Chairman of the Executive Committee of the Afghan Mili Bank, Dr Shakir Jalali.

Dozens of historical artifacts seized in Kandahar

KANDAHAR (BNA): Security officials at the Spin Boldak border have intercepted a significant attempt to smuggle historical artifacts. In a recent operation, authorities recovered 156 pen works and 13 metal works, all of which are believed to hold considerable cultural and historical value. The artifacts, which were in the process of being smuggled out of the region, will be handed over to the National Museum of Afghanistan for identification and restoration.

Muttaqi meets UN Special Representative for Afghanistan



KABUL(BNA): Roza Otunbayeva, the Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General, engaged with Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan. The discussions focused on critical aspects of the UN's ongoing activities in the country. During their conversation, Otunbayeva and Minister Muttaqi exchanged valuable insights regarding upcoming UN meetings related to Afghanistan. Both officials underscored the importance of collaborative efforts to address the pressing challenges faced by the nation.

Ministry seeks private investment for Panjshir water project

KABUL (TOLONews): The Ministry of Energy and Water says it is working to implement the project for Panjshir water transfer to Kabul through private investment. Matiullah Abid, the spokesperson for this ministry, told TOLONews that the project's proposal has been sent to the office of the Islamic Emirate's leader for approval. The spokesperson for the Ministry of Energy and Water said: "The project regarding how to transfer Panjshir's water has been completed by the Ministry of Energy and Water and is now sent for approval to the office of Amir al-Mu'minin. The Ministry is striving to secure the budget for this project through donors or private investment and to start the work." The Chamber of Commerce and Investment said that domestic investors are ready to invest in this significant project. Khan Jan Alokozay, a member of the executive committee of the Chamber of Commerce and Investment, said: "Domestic and foreign investors are interested in participating in this project because it is truly profitable." Some experts believe that transferring water from Panjshir requires substantial investment and more time. Therefore, initially, the construction of the Bagh Dara Dam and the canals of Shahwa-Aros dam should be prioritized. Amanullah Ghalib, former head of Breshna

WHO reports 11.7% decrease in Diarrhea

KABUL (TOLONews): The World Health Organization (WHO) has reported a decrease in the number of diarrhea cases in Afghanistan in its weekly report. According to this report, in the past week (from September 29 to October 5), 3,228 people in 179 districts of Afghanistan contracted diarrhea, showing an 11.7 percent decrease compared to previous weeks. The organization said that three children under the age of five, including two girls, have died as a result of this illness. According to the report, these deaths were recorded in Badakhshan and Paktika provinces. The report also indicated that the highest number of diarrhea cases were in the provinces of Paktia, Nimroz, Logar, and Kabul. Statistics show that for every 10,000 people, Paktia had 1,166 cases, Nimroz had 1,095, Logar had 918, and Kabul had 722 cases, making them the provinces with the highest number of infected individuals. In this report, the WHO added that since the beginning of 2024, 146,555 people in 346 districts of Afghanistan have contracted diarrhea, and 70 people have died. The report added that of these, 81,069 were children under the age of five, and 72,621 of the infected were women and girls.

Switzerland departs two Afghan migrants

KABUL (Khaama Press): Swiss media reported that Switzerland has deported two Afghan migrants labeled as "criminals." This is the first time since 2019 that the country has deported Afghan nationals. Swiss officials labeled these two individuals "serious criminals" and a "threat to national security." On Sunday, the Swiss news agency Keystone-SDA reported that the Swiss government provided each deportee with 500 Swiss francs (about \$583) to help them start a new life after their deportation. So far, Swiss media have not released any details about the identities of the two migrants. Vincenzo Mascioli, the deputy head of Switzerland's immigration office, told the media that the country plans to deport more "criminal" migrants soon. A Swiss German-language weekly, which previously reported on the deportations, noted that at least 13 other Afghan migrants, identified as "serious criminals," remain in Switzerland. Last month, Germany carried out a similar action, deporting 28 Afghan "criminals" to Kabul. These deportations highlight the growing trend in European countries to remove migrants who are considered a threat to public safety, especially amid concerns over rising crime. Despite the deportations, some humanitarian organizations have expressed concern over the safety of deportees, given the ongoing instability in Afghanistan. As Switzerland and other European nations continue to take a hardline approach towards criminal migrants.

Qatari, German officials discuss Afghanistan

KABUL (TOLONews): Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said that the country's special envoy for Afghanistan and the acting German ambassador in Doha discussed the latest developments in Afghanistan, including security, political, and humanitarian issues. In a statement, Qatar's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said: "During the meeting, they viewed the latest developments in Afghanistan with a particular focus on security, humanitarian, economic, and political issues." Qatar is one of the countries that has had good relations with Afghanistan in the past and present and has played an important role in key matters concerning Afghanistan. The ambassador of the Islamic Emirate has been accepted in Doha, and now Qatar's embassy is also open in Kabul. Meanwhile, some political analysts said that Qatar has had and continues to play



an effective role in addressing Afghanistan's challenges. "In the future, we also want Qatar to talk to the world about Afghanistan's challenges and strengthen the relations of the Islamic Emirate with the world's countries," said Hanif Khan Karrukhail, a political analyst. "Qatar can play a fundamental and key role in Afghanistan's economic and political matters, provided that the Islamic Emirate shows some level of flexibility," said Janat Faheem Chakari, another political analyst. This comes as yesterday Uzbekistan's special envoy for Afghanistan, along with a delegation from France's Ministry of Armed Forces, discussed coordinated efforts for border security, counter-terrorism, and other matters related to Afghanistan.

Iran plans to deport two million 'undocumented' Afghan migrants

KABUL (Khaama Press): Iran's chief of police, Ahmadrza Radan, announced that the country's police are determined to deport two million "illegal" Afghan migrants by the end of this year. Radan made the statement on Sunday, October 13, during a ceremony in Mashhad, stating that arrests of "illegal" Afghan migrants in Iran have increased. According to the Islamic Republic News Agency (IRNA), Radan added that since the announcement of the deportation plan, both the number of voluntary surrenders and the arrests of undocumented foreign nationals have risen. He had previously mentioned that the Islamic Republic aims to expel around two million "illegal foreign nationals" from Iran by the end of the current year. The Iranian government has intensified its pressure on Afghan migrants, imposing strict limitations on their work and activities in most major cities. Iran's interior minister, Eskandar Momeni, urged Afghan migrants living in Iran to "return to their country and work to rebuild it." However, due to the dire condi-

Hundreds of children without guardians get free education

L A S H K A R G A H (Pajhwok): A local businessman has set up a school in Lashkargah, the capital of southern Helmand province, to impart free education to hundreds of children without guardians. The school has a health clinic, dormitory and transportation facilities. The local businessman, Mohmamad Issa Omari, has set up the school in Ghazni Mohammad Ayoub Khan township where 750 students attend classes. Omari told Pajhwok Afghan News that he was striving to increase the number of students in this school to 1,000. He said: "All our students are orphans. 500 out of 750 are live in the provincial capital, they are brought by our transport in the morning and took them back to their homes in the afternoon and the remaining is staying in dormitory." He added that 150 orphaned girls were also studying in this school. Meanwhile, principal of the school Syed Mohammad Lal Hashmi said the school started functioning last year and was registered with the Ministry of Education (MoE). He said the curriculum of the ministry was being taught to students in this school. He said: "We have a total of 40 staff member, 16 of whom, including six women, are teachers, two are head teachers, one manager. We also have a



seminary for religious education, which has five teachers. He continued: "English and modern education is being taught to the students in the morning and they are also provided with free treatment during illness in a health centre in the school." All necessary accommodation facilities have been provided to students in the dormitory such as sleeping place, regular meals and different places for games, he explained. At the same time, students studying in this school were also happy. Sharifullah, 10, student of 5th grade and a resident of Merja district, said: "I don't have father, I have a song desire to study and my wish is fulfilled here." Mohammad Suliman, nine-year old child and a resident of Panjawi district of neighboring Kandahar province, said: "My father was martyred, now I am studying here, I am very happy and I live here at the dormitory." Meanwhile, Education Department officials also welcomed the establishment of this free school by the trader. Maulvi Mohammad Yawaz Ansari, director of the department, said: "We are grateful to him for providing free education for such a large number of orphans and hapless children." A group of youth in Greshk district of the same province has also started imparting free education to 300 children.

Afghan traders call on Pakistan to reduce tariffs on imported goods

KABUL (TOLONews): The Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce said that even the reduction of taxes imposed by Pakistan on Afghan exports to zero would not be helpful this late in the season. Naqibullah Safi, the executive director of the chamber, said that additional tariffs are still in place and that officials from both countries have not yet agreed on reducing them. The executive head of the Afghanistan-Pakistan Joint Chamber of Commerce said: "So far, the taxes remain in effect, and no actions have been taken to reduce or eliminate them. However, both sides have discussed lowering tariffs on some goods, especially fresh fruits and vegetables, but no agreement has been reached yet." Some fresh fruit



exporters are calling on the Islamic Emirate to seriously address the existing issues before the export season for Afghan products to Pakistan ends. Haji Mohammad Qasim, a businessman, said: "This should have been done during the apricot and grape seasons. Now, the grapes from the north are ruined, and what used to be worth one hundred Afghanis is now not even worth five Afghanis." Mohammad Nazir, another trader, said: "Nothing is being exported, and if it is, everything is stuck in cold storage. The route to Pakistan must be opened, and taxes reduced so that we can export to Pakistan and have some income left for ourselves." The Chamber of Agriculture and Livestock, criticizing the taxes imposed by Pakistan during the export season of Afghan goods, said that Afghan traders and farmers have always suffered because of this. Mirwais Haji Zada First Deputy of the Chamber of Agriculture and Livestock, said: "Today, reducing tariffs is of no use because our traders and farmers have suffered losses; compensation must be provided to them." Torkham, Spin Boldak, Ghulam Khan, Angoor Adda, and Dand-e-Patan are the official crossing points between Afghanistan and Pakistan, and most trade with South Asian countries is conducted through these crossings. However, the closure of these routes for exports and imports has significantly reduced trade between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Jalalabad dwellers want traffic lights activated

JALALABAD CITY (Pajhwok): Some drivers and residents of Jalalabad City, the capital of eastern Nangarhar province, have demanded the activation of traffic lights to reduce traffic congestion in the city. They said that during winter the number of people in Jalalabad City increased and in addition, the presence of Rickshaws also caused traffic congestion in the city. Jalalabad dwellers believed the only way to address the traffic congestion problem was the activation of traffic lights in the city. Traffic Department Officials said that traffic lights existed in different areas of Jalalabad City but due to some technical issues they could not be activated but efforts were underway to make them active shortly. Dawran Mangal, a resident of Jalalabad's 8th Police District, told Pajhwok Afghan News traffic congestion increases each day and there was a need for the activation of traffic lights. He said: "A large amount is spent on these traffic lights, efforts have been made but it remained deactivated for a long time, it is much needed not and should be activated." Another resident of Jalalabad City Khairullah requests that traffic signals should be activated in the city to reduce the crowd. Ezatullah, a taxi driver in Jalalabad City, traffic congestion in the city has increased, if there is more traffic lights in the city there would be decrease in traffic congestion. He said: "Traffic signals are inactive, many times collisions occur due to the non-existence of traffic signals, there is traffic congestion for hours and people stay away from work." Traffic Department official Attaullah Umar told Pajhwok Afghan News he discussed the issue of traffic lights with technical authorities and added that the traffic lights would be activated soon. He added: "We are in contact with the company and the department, the pylons are installed, we are short of few electricity meters and they are yet to be delivered to us, so they have promised to deliver them, so they will be ready for use shortly." He urged drivers that upon the activation of traffic lights, they should drive accordingly and avoid the violation of traffic lights. Traffic signals have been activated several times in Jalalabad city, but after a short period, they are no longer active, and the old signals are still inactive in many parts of the city.

Herat sesame yield reduces due to plant diseases: Farmers

HEAT CITY (Pajhwok): Some farmers in western Herat province expressed concerns about the significant decline in the sesame yield this year and termed plant diseases as the main reason behind this decline. Feroz Ahmad, a farmer of the Gozara district, while talking to Pajhwok Afghan News has confirmed a significant reduction in sesame-seed production in the province. He called on the government to help farmers fight natural pests and herbal diseases and make such facilities accessible for the farmers its time. Abdul Qayom, another farmer from Anjil district has also expressed his concern about the low production of sesame seeds and asked the government to train the farmers how to fight plants' diseases and provide them with all insecticides and other relevant equipment that are used in fighting the plant's diseases. If his sesame crops were not affected by plant disease he would have collected 200 kilograms of sesame seeds instead of the current 20 to 24 kilograms, he said. He confirmed that he sprayed pest killers on his sesame fields but said it was not effective enough and the diseases destroyed his sesame crops. Several agriculture specialists in Herat believed that the outbreak of a new type of plant disease has caused the reduction of sesame seed yields. A Naturopathic doctor Haji Ghulam Mahboob Ziarat Jaee hoped that the agriculture, livestock and irrigation department of Herat would take necessary measures to control such diseases in upcoming years. Local agriculture department officials have also confirmed a significant reduction in the production of

sesame seeds in Herat due to plant diseases. An official Maulvi Mohammad Naseem Sahar told Pajhwok that sesame was grown on 987 hectares of land this year but its seeds production was reduced due to reasons. He said the reasons for the reduced production of sesame seeds were climate change, diseases, and unexpected rainfall and they advised the farmers on how to deal with such issues. It is a priority for the officials of the agriculture department to help them and provide them necessary facilities on time how to cope with such factors. The sesame seeds is mostly used to produce cooking in Afghanistan and it is grown in many provinces. The doctors said that the use of sesame oil is effective for diabetes, thalassemia and joint pains.



LAHORE: Angry students burning various items during a protest against alleged rape of a female student by security guard.

Progress on implementation of KP cabinet decisions reviewed

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa cabinet has held a total of 15 meetings so far, in which 319 important decisions were made, out of total 242 decisions have been implemented completely, and whereas remaining 77 decisions are in the process of implementation.

The decisions made during cabinet meetings include 76 important decisions related to the Finance Department, 51 related to the Law Department, and 26 related to the Local Government Department, 19 decisions related to the Planning Department, 34 to the Home Department, 27 to the Education Department, and 28 to the Health Department.

Some of the key decisions of the provincial cabinet include; the approval of important legal drafts, funds for development projects, and other public welfare initiatives, in addition to approval of Memorandums of understanding, agreements and important policies of the government.

A review meeting held here on Monday with the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur in the chair, took stock of the progress made on the decisions of the cabinet meetings. The participants were informed that a total of 2564 new vacancies have been approved in the cabinet meetings. Moreover, Rs. 8.5 billion has been released for the deserving households under the Ramadan package. Additionally, 1356 new vacancies have been approved to strengthen police in the province, and Rs. 600 Million have been released for the purchase of

armored vehicles for the police.

It was also told that 698 new vacancies have been approved for Traffic Police. Some Rs. 20 million has been released under the Shuhada Package for the heirs of police martyrs whereas the quota for children of martyrs has been increased through amendments to the relevant act for ASI recruitment.

Similarly, Rs 1.10 billion has been released for the purchase of 327 kanals of land for the 88 MW Ghabral Kalam Hydro Power Project. The royalty share for oil and gas producing districts has been increased from 10% to 15%. 479 new posts have been created in the primary and secondary education sector.

In addition, grants-in-aid amounting to Rs. 470 million approximately have been provided for three cadet colleges in merged districts. Grants-in-aid of over Rs. 17.5 crore have also been provided for eight model schools in merged districts. Similarly Rs. 24 crore has been released for the "ILM TOLO DA PARA" program in merged districts, whereas Rs. 1.5 billion has been released as grant-in-aid for public sector universities.

It was further told that Rs. 5 billion was released in March for the Sehat Card program, followed by release of Rs. 3 billion on monthly basis. Rs. 27 crore has been released for international standard training of in-service nurses in collaboration with the University of Chester, UK and Rs. 50 crore has been approved for the existing endowment fund for promoting sports activities in the province. Apart from this, Rs. 1.15 billion has been released for timely repair of electricity transformers in all constituencies

of the province. As many as Rs. 45 crore has been released for ration support for temporary displaced persons (TDPs) in North Waziristan. Similarly, over Rs. 55 crore has been allocated for emergency tents and other essential items for the Kuki Khel tribe of Khyber District.

Similarly cabinet approval has accorded for establishing a Debt Management Fund to improve financial discipline in the province, and Regional Development Committees have been formed at the divisional level to ensure timely completion of development projects and quality of work. The royalty rates for minerals have been increased by amending the relevant act to enhance provincial revenue generation, whereas a Minerals Development and Management Company has been established for better utilization of natural resources.

It was told that Rs. 72 crore has been released for various TMAs in merged and settled districts. The authorities also informed that pragmatic steps have been taken to speed up work on important development projects, adding that the cost of the Shakai Dam in South Waziristan has been increased from Rs. 87 crore to Rs. 1.69 billion and Rs. 15.65 billion has been approved for the Pehur High-Level Canal project. An additional fund of Rs. 56 crore has been approved for the Kundal Dam in Swabi. Moreover, the monthly wage of laborers has been increased from Rs. 32,000 to Rs. 36,000, whereas approval has been granted for the establishment of a special fund to support deserving families in the province.

NASA launches space mission to Jupiter moon

NEW YORK (AP): The Europa Clipper spacecraft is on an almost six-year, 3 billion kilometres (1.8b miles) mission to learn whether conditions on Jupiter's moon could sustain life in what scientists believe could be a deep ocean hidden beneath its icy surface. The spacecraft launched Monday aboard SpaceX's Falcon Heavy rocket from a NASA facility on Florida's east coast.

The launch was delayed several days by the impacts of Hurricane Milton at its Florida launch site. The launch also came a day after SpaceX launched its fifth Starship test flight from Texas and returned the rocket's booster to land for the first time. Europa is one of Jupiter's 95 known moons, and scientists believe it could have an ocean that is up to 120 kilometres (80 miles) deep, hidden beneath a thick ice sheet covering its surface. In 2013, the Hubble Space Telescope spotted what appeared to be geysers erupting from the surface of Europa.

LONDON (AFP): Canada has formally expelled India's High Commissioner Sanjay Kumar Verma and five other diplomats, ahead of the Canadian national police force revealing new details about the Indian government's connection to "violent criminal activity" in Canada, mainly targeting pro-Khalistan separatists. Soon after Canadian officials notified India of the expulsion of the six diplomats, New Delhi recalled them, the Canadian sources said.

The sources also said that the Canadian police and intelligence have concrete evidence that the six Indian diplomats, including the high commissioner, were involved in the plot to murder Sikh leader Hardeep Singh Nijjar in June, 2023 — a close ally of Sikhs for Justice (SFJ) founder and General Counsel Gurpatwant Singh Pannun, who has survived several assassinations Indian plots. The Canadian government presented the evi-

dence to India last week and the government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi and told them that its top diplomats were involved in the assassination plots, the sources said. The senior Canadian government official said that Canada has evidence that India has been involved in other murders and violence in this country. Since the slaying of Nijjar, the source said a dozen people of Indian descent Sikhs — who support

Khalistan Referendum - have been warned there was credible evidence that they could be targets of Indian agents. RCMP Commissioner Mike Duheme is set to release the new information today at the Mounties' headquarters in Ottawa. Before the press conference, the Indian government said it pre-emptively withdrew its High Commissioner to Canada and other diplomats in response to a notice it received on Sunday that they are "persons of inter-

est" in an investigation. "The Government of India strongly rejects these preposterous imputations and ascribes them to the political agenda of the Trudeau Government that is cantered around vote bank politics," the statement from New Delhi said.

India said it is withdrawing its top envoy to Ottawa and other diplomats because the Canadian government is investigating them as "persons of interest" in an investigation, reigniting a diplomatic row over the killing of Nijjar. Soon after Canada expelled Indian diplomats, India announced it has decided to expel the following 6 Canadian Diplomats: Stewart Ross Wheeler, Acting High Commissioner; Patrick Hebert, Deputy High Commissioner; Marie Catherine Joly, First Secretary; Ian Ross David Trites, First Secretary; Adam James Chuipka, First Secretary; and Paula Orjuela, First Secretary.

Canada 'expels' Indian diplomats

PHC grants protective bail to four PTI MPs

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Fahim Wali has granted protective bail to four Pakistan Tehreek Insaf (PTI) lawmakers including Deputy Speaker Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Surya Bibi, Raja Basharat, Sanam Javed, and Alia Hamza, on Monday.

The counsel Alam Khan Adenzai informed the court that Alia Hamza faces a case in Mianwali's Musa Khel, Raja Basharat faces a case in Taxila, Rawalpindi, Deputy Speaker Surya Bibi and Sanam Javed face a case in Hassan Abdal Police Station. The lawyer argued that cases were filed against his clients on political grounds. He requested protective bail, citing fear of arrest. PHC granted protective bail to Surya Bibi, Raja Basharat, and Sanam Javed 3November and to Alia Hamza til 8 November.

Moreover, PHC ordered the petitioners must appear before the relevant courts on the specified dates. PT I Leaders' s Alia Hamza and Sanam Javed addressed the media. They claimed PTI leaders and workers face severe oppression. PTI demanded immediate meeting with PTI founding Chairman Imran Khan. End to police harassment and raids on PTI workers' homes. Withdrawal of the "anti-people" Punjab Police Ordinance.

ATC hand over former policeman to CTD on remand for inciting rebellion: The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) has handed over a former police personnel named Jamshed, to the Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) on a 15-day physical remand for investigation, on Monday.

CTD officials presented Jamshed before ATC Judge Muhammad Iqbal. The CTD investigation officer informed the court that Jamshed is a former policeman, allegedly incited rebellion among police personnel on social media. He was involved in negative activities against the state and its institutions.

According to prosecution, Jamshed belongs to Bannu but was arrested in Peshawar. The investigation officer requested the court to grant a physical remand for further investigation. ATC approved the request and handed Jamshed over to the CTD on a 15-day physical remand.

10 killed in Israeli strikes at Gaza

GAZA (Reuters): At least 10 people were killed and 40 injured in northern Gaza on Monday after Israeli tank shells hit people queuing for food, Palestinian medics said, as fears mounted in the enclave that Israel plans to displace all residents from the north.

Medics said an Israeli drone had also opened fire where dozens of residents had gathered to receive food in Jabalia, one of Gaza's eight historic refugee camps. Women and children were among the victims, they said. The Israeli military said it was looking into the incident. Jabalia has been the focus of an Israeli offensive for around 10 days and the military has now encircled the camp and sent tanks into nearby Beit Lahiya and Beit Hanoun towns, with the declared aim of stamping out Hamas fighters who are trying to regroup there.

KP PA body to analyze 22 points communique of Pashtoon Jirga: CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur here Monday said the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly's parliamentary committee will analyze the 22 points communique of Pashtoon Jirga and the committee recommendations would be tabled in the house through a resolution.

He said the workable points highlighted in the resolution related to the province would be implemented here while issues related to the federation would be forwarded to the federal government for consideration.

The Chief Minister was talking to media after meeting with the opposition

leadership. He said that peaceful protest was our democratic right. He demanded of allowing him to meet with PTI founder. Opposition leader Dr Ebad Khan said that the communique of the jirga was brought under discussion with the CM KP and these points would also be discussed in the Parliamentary Committee of the house.

Meanwhile, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister directed for setting up of a Parliamentary Committee on the difficult situation of Kurram tribal district.

Addressing the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, the Chief Minister said that the difficult situation in Kurram district was due



to land dispute between tribes rather than sectarian issue.

He said that all in Kurram wanted peace and solution of the dispute. The speaker hinted to setup the parliamentary committee comprising members of both the Government and Opposition parties.

4 cops martyred, five terrorists killed in attack

F.P. Report

BANNU, BUNER: At least four policemen were martyred and five terrorists killed when the latter attacked Bannu police lines here on Monday, police said.

Thd terrorists wearing *Burqa* (veil) stormed the police line and started indiscriminate firing on policemen deployed on its main gate. During exchange of firing, four police personnel embraced Shahadat and all five attackers were killed.

The firing continued for about one hour. The gunshots rocked the police station. The Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has sought report from police high ups of the the brutal incident. The Chief Minister directed the Chief Secretary and IGP KP to reach Bannu. The security forces cor-

doned of the police line and started search operation.

Meanwhile, DSP Muslim Shah of Ambela Buner who is on duty in Swat narrowly escaped unhurt in an improvised explosive device blast at his home in Ambela Buner at vee hours on Monday.

However,DSP Muslim Shah and his family escape unhurt in the blast while the house damaged partially. The IED was placed close to the wall out side the room of DSP Muslim Shah.DSP Muslim Shah was arrived at home on Sunday night pass.

Buner police reached the blast site late at night and secured the DSP's house and cordoned off the area and started searching for the accused. BDS squad has collected material from the blast site and sent it to the laboratory and started

the investigation. The CTD has registered an FIR of the blast against unknown accused.

According to the Police DSP Muslim Shah Khan, who miraculously survived the blast, has been on duty in several districts including Buner Waziristan Peshawar and is now on duty in Swat. The people of Buner district are worried about the second explosion in the district.

The Provincial Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports Syed Fakhr Jahan Bacha in media chatting has condemned the blast and issued instruction to DPO Buner and other security agencies to take further steps to maintain law and order in Buner. He has appealed to the public to remain calm and cooperate with the police to jointly fight for peace in Buner.

Italian Navy carrier strike group visits Karachi

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Italian Navy Carrier Strike Group comprising Aircraft Carrier ITS CAVOUR and Frigate ITS ALPINO, arrived in Karachi on a three-day visit followed by a bilateral exercise. Upon arrival in Karachi, the Italian Navy ships were warmly welcomed by senior officials of Pakistan Navy and the Ambassador of Italy.

Following the arrival, an Italian delegation led by the Ambassador of Italy, Marilina ARMELLIN, along with Rear Admiral Stefano BARBIERI, Capability Director of the Italian Defence General Staff, called on Commander Pakistan Fleet, Rear Admiral Abdul Munib. During the meeting, matters of mutual interest including

interoperability, avenues for future collaboration to enhance regional maritime security and defense cooperation were discussed.

Exhibition held onboard ITS ALPINO.

ITS CAVOUR also hosted a comprehensive brief for Pakistani media. During



Commander Karachi, Vice Admiral Muhammad Faisal Abbasi also visited ITS CAVOUR and was briefed about the Aircraft Carrier's capabilities by Commanding Officer Captain Francesco FAGNANI. The capabilities of Italian defence industries were also showcased in a Defence Industries

media brief, Ambassador of Italy, Capability Director of Italian Defence General Staff, and Commander of the Carrier Strike Group endorsed the role of Pakistan Navy in regional maritime security and highlighted the importance of interoperability between the two navies.

Israel kills 18 in Lebanon

BEIRUT (AFP): The Lebanese Red Cross said 18 people died in a strike on north Lebanon on Monday, with the health ministry and official media reporting an Israeli raid on the Christian-majority area far from Hezbollah strongholds. "Eighteen dead and four wounded in the strike on Aito," the Red Cross said, referring to a village in the Christian-majority Zgharta

district. The health ministry earlier said an Israeli strike there killed nine people, with the official National News Agency also saying Israel targeted a "residential apartment" in the village. So far, Israeli strikes have mainly been concentrated in predominantly Shia areas, where Hezbollah built its power base in a state wracked by sectarianism. An

AFP photographer at the site of the strike said it had levelled a residential building at the entrance to the village.

Body parts were scattered in the rubble, with Red Cross volunteers searching for survivors in the wreckage while ambulances evacuated wounded people. The Lebanese army imposed a security cordon in the area, where the strike had also sparked a fire, he said.

Murad announces interest-free agricultural loans for small growers

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that his government is working on a plan to offer agricultural loans to small growers and the provincial government will cover the interest on these loans, making it easier for small-scale farmers to access the financial support they need to enhance their agricultural activities.

"This initiative aims at supporting and empowering small farmers, ultimately contributing to the growth and development of the agricultural sector in Sindh," the CM said and added under this scheme, growers would only be responsible for repaying the principal amount. He said this while speaking during the launch ceremony of the Hari Card, presided over by Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, at the CM House on Monday.

We are actively working to provide loans through Sindh Bank to small growers, allowing them to grow crops without facing financial strain, the CM said and added that his govern-

ment would cover the interest on the loans, meaning farmers will only need to repay the capital amount. Mr Shah said that the new initiative, tied to the Hari Card, marks a significant step toward transforming the lives of small farmers and boosting the province's agricultural development. At the outset of his speech, the CM addressed the recent controversy surrounding police action against participants of the 'Sindh Rawadari March.'

Expressing regret over the incident, he said, "I was deeply hurt by the police action, and I apologise for it," he said and went on to say that he would ensure that such incidents are not repeated in the future." The chief minister explained that the police intervened due to increased security concerns in the city. He added that a terrorist incident had recently taken place near the airport, and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Summit was being held in Islamabad.

Given these events, the organizers of the Rawadari March were asked to postpone their protest because Section 144 had been imposed to prevent public gatherings.

Unfortunately, the government's request was not heeded. The Hari Card initiative, along with the loan facility, is expected to provide much-needed financial relief to small-scale farmers, fostering economic growth in the agricultural sector. Chief Minister said that the key features of the Benazir Hari Card, which seeks to provide targeted financial support to over one million small farmers. He added that his government was also working with an insurance company to ensure the crops so that growers could be saved from financial loss in case of any natural calamity like floods, heavy rains or fire.

"This crop insurance facility would also be tied with the Hari Card holders," he disclosed. He said that the agriculture department has registered 1.5 million Haris who were being issued cards today. Mr Shah said that the card is a continuation of the PPP and the Sindh government's longstanding efforts to support small and medium farmers, in line with the vision of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and the dream of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto.

"The Sindh government has introduced numerous initiatives to improve water management, enhance agricultural productivity, and mitigate the impacts of climate change on farming," he said and added that some of these initiatives include lining watercourses, constructing water storage tanks, and installing high-efficiency irrigation systems. The CM said that the government has also invested in modern agricultural machinery, climate-controlled food storage facilities, and advanced technology for sowing and harvesting crops.

The PPP-led Sindh government has taken swift action in response to the catastrophic 2022 floods that devastated 3.8 million hectares of farmland, causing agricultural losses worth Rs. 421 billion, Murad Shah recalled. He said that his government launched a Rs. 20 billion Flood Emergency Rehabilitation Programme, which provided financial aid to around 300,000 farmers, aiding their recovery. "As a result, Sindh recorded a remarkable recovery in its agriculture sector, with wheat produc-

tion exceeding 4 million metric tonnes in 2024," he said.

The chief minister reaffirmed the PPP's commitment to adopting climate-smart agricultural practices and technologies to boost crop yields, ensure food security, and promote economic prosperity for farmers and the nation. The Benazir Hari Card, he said, represents a significant step towards fulfilling these goals and providing much-needed support to Sindh's agricultural community."Our farmers are the backbone of our economy and crucial to ensuring food security," Mr Shah said, emphasising the importance of the agriculture sector in Sindh and across Pakistan.

He urged stakeholders to work together to build a resilient future where farmers thrive, and the nation's food supply remains secure.Minister Agriculture Mohammad Bux Khan Mahar and Secretary Agriculture Rafiq Buriro presented a detailed briefing to Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Benazir Hari Card: Key incentives offered under the Benazir Hari Card include:

Cash Support: Immediate financial

assistance for small growers to meet urgent needs.

Soft Agricultural Loans: Low-interest credit to help farmers access the capital required for farming activities. Quality Inputs: Priority access to high-quality seeds, fertilizers, and other essential crop inputs. Wheat Procurement: Preference for Benazir Hari Card holders in the government's wheat procurement process.

Farm Machinery and Implements: Financial aid for purchasing modern agricultural machinery and tools. Solar Tube Wells & Watercourse Lining: Support for installing solar-powered tube wells and lining watercourses, ensuring efficient water usage and boosting agricultural output. Kitchen Gardens: Assistance for developing kitchen gardens to promote sustainable and home-based farming. Support for Agri Enterprises: Aid for establishing micro, small, and medium-sized agricultural enterprises, fostering rural entrepreneurship. Crop Insurance: Coverage to protect farmers from the risks associated with crop failure due to natural disasters.