

Kundi meets Maryam
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: KP Governor, Faisal Karim Kundi on Tuesday met with Punjab CM Maryam Nawaz and Governor Sardar Saleem Haider at the Aiwan-e-Sadar. They discussed the current political landscape, provincial issues, and interprovincial cooperation. The leaders exchanged views on developmental projects and initiatives aimed at public welfare.



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PM emphasizes enhanced trade with Kazakhstan

Saqib Mushtaq

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday while noting the warm and excellent bilateral relations between Pakistan and Kazakhstan emphasized the need to enhance trade and investment, while also focusing on regional connectivity and security.

To achieve this shared objective, the prime minister emphasized the need to maintain regular and high-level contacts, including through institutional mechanisms of bilateral engagement. The prime minister had a bilateral meeting with Prime Minister of Republic of Kazakhstan Olzhas Bektenov on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting earlier, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. Welcoming Kazakhstan's participation at the SCO CHG Meeting, the prime minister reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to work with all SCO countries in advancing SCO's principles and purposes. In this regard, the prime minister recalled his visit to Astana in July earlier this year for the SCO Council of Heads of State meeting and appreciated Kazakhstan's contributions to strengthening cooperation among SCO countries.

The prime minister stressed to convene the meetings of Joint Working Groups on trade and agriculture at the earliest. The Prime Minister of Kazakhstan congratulated the prime minister on the successful organization of the SCO Summit in Pakistan and lauded Pakistan's positive role as the SCO Chair. He reiterated Kazakhstan's firm resolve to work closely with Pakistan, both as part of SCO and bilaterally, to enhance regional connectivity, trade and development. He further said that Kazakhstan saw Pakistan as a leading trade partner is South Asia.

Both sides agreed to jointly work to realize the true trade potential between the two countries. "Had a delightful exchange of views with my brother H.E. Mr. Olzhas Bektenov, PM of Kazakhstan on the sidelines of 23rd SCO CHG. We discussed the need to enhance cooperation in trade, investment, transport, connectivity, agriculture, defence, education and energy sectors and agreed to accelerate official exchanges to take Pakistan - Kazakhstan relations to new heights. I also extended a cordial invitation to President Kassym Jonart Tokayev to visit Pakistan at his earliest convenience. Pakistan-Kazakhstan ties are poised for a bright future," separately, the prime minister posted on X handle.

India to buy 31 drones from US

NEW DELHI (Reuters): India signed a deal with the US State Department on Tuesday to buy 31 armed MQ-9B SkyGuardian and SeaGuardian High Altitude Long Endurance (HALE) drones, the South Asian nation's defence ministry said.

The deal follows talks that began in 2018. It is expected to significantly increase India's surveillance and intelligence capabilities and is in line with US efforts to coax India away from buying Russian military equipment and counter China's growing dominance. India's apex defence body approved the procurement last year just before Prime Minister Narendra Modi's state visit to Washington, while the Pentagon approved it in February.



KARACHI: Chief of JUI-F, Maulana Fazlur Rehman shaking hands with PPP Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari prior to a meeting.

Premier meets Tajik counterpart; calls for cementing bilateral cooperation

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday held a bilateral meeting with his Tajik counterpart Qohir Rasulzoda wherein he emphasized close bilateral collaboration to further cement mutually advantageous cooperation across all spheres of shared interest. In the meeting, held on the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting here, the prime minister called for promotion of bilateral ties in the areas of trade, investment, energy and regional connectivity. While deeply appreciating Tajikistan's active and constructive participation in the SCO CHG meeting, Prime Minister Shehbaz stressed that as brotherly countries and regional partners, Tajikistan and Pakistan shared enduring bonds of friendship and cooperation. He fondly recalled his productive visit to Dushanbe in July, earlier this year, and expressed satisfaction over the positive trajectory of the bilateral relationship. Prime Minister Rasulzoda conveyed warm felicitations on organizing the SCO CHG meeting by Pakistan, in its capacity as the SCO chair. He thanked Pakistan for the warm welcome and hospitality extended to him and the SCO delegates.

PM underlines need to increase Pak-Turkmen high-level exchanges

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday emphasized upon the need to increase high-level exchanges between Pakistan and Turkmenistan. He stressed the importance of both sides continuing to work closely to realize the full potential of bilateral cooperation, particularly in the domains of trade, energy and connectivity. On the sidelines of the SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting, being held from 15-16 October in Islamabad, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Rashid Meredov called on the prime minister, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. Welcoming Turkmenistan's participation in the SCO CHG Meeting as a 'Special Guest', the prime minister reaffirmed the significance of Pakistan's longstanding, historic and brotherly ties with Turkmenistan. He also conveyed his best wishes and warm regards to the Turkmen leadership. Meredov congratulated Pakistan for successful organization of the SCO CHG Meeting and conveyed best wishes of the Turkmen leadership to the prime minister.

Shehbaz discuss ties with Roman, Akylbek

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday called for sustained exchanges between Pakistan and Belarus to realise the potential of bilateral cooperation, particularly in the areas of trade, investment, agricultural machinery and joint production of tractors and connectivity. The prime minister, who held a bilateral meeting with Belarusian Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko, on the sidelines of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting here, recalled his "warm and productive" meeting with President Aleksandr Lukashenko in Astana in July earlier this year and stressed sustaining regular high-level exchanges considering their positive momentum on bilateral ties, according to a PM Office press release.

Meanwhile, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif while reiterating Pakistan's strong desire to further strengthen cooperation with Kyrgyz Republic, stressed the need to enhance new avenues of collaboration in the areas of trade, investment, people-to-people contacts and regional connectivity. The prime minister held a bilateral meeting with Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Kyrgyz Republic Akylbek Japarov on the sidelines of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) Meeting, being held in Islamabad.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meeting with Kazakhstan's counterpart, Olzhas Betenov on the sidelines of Shanghai Cooperation Organization Head of Government meeting.

Belarusian PM, Army Chief discuss cooperation

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus, Roman Golovchenko on Tuesday met with Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir here.

During the meeting, discussions were held on regional dynamics and enhancement of bilateral security and defence cooperation between the two nations, an Inter Services Public Relations news release said. The COAS reaffirmed Pakistan's appreciation for Belarus's contributions to global and regional affairs and expressed the desire to further strengthen the military partnership between both countries. Prime Minister Golovchenko commended the Pakistan Armed Forces for their pivotal role in promoting regional peace and stability, and acknowledged their professionalism and sacrifices in the fight against terrorism.

Indian External Affairs Minister arrives

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Indian External Affairs Minister, Subrahmanyam Jaishankar arrived here on Tuesday to attend the twenty-third meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).

Director General for South Asia at Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ilyas Mehmood Nizami, warmly received the distinguished guest at Nur Khan Airbase Islamabad. Children dressed in traditional attire presented bouquets of flowers to the foreign dignitaries. A red carpet was rolled out to welcome the guests, underscoring the importance of the event and the cordial relations between the two nations.

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 had assumed the rotating chair of the SCO CHG for 2023-24 at the previous meeting held in Bishkek.

Constitutional amendment draft

PPP, JUI-F achieve consensus

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Jamiat-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F) have reached a consensus on draft of 26th constitutional amendment, announced the religious-political party chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Tuesday night.

The 'contentious' constitutional package, among other things, aims to set up a federal constitutional court and fix the tenure of the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) for three years.

"After much deliberation, I can say this much that our two parties have agreed on a draft [of the constitutional package]," Fazl said while addressing a press conference in Karachi after meeting with the PPP Chairman. He said they would meet Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) President Nawaz Sharif tomorrow and try to achieve his agreement, adding that he also had to meet the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leadership. "We will make an effort to create such a consensus on this draft that it is unan-

imously considered a constitutional amendment," he said. The JUI-F chief noted that "serious" talks were held with the PPP as he praised Bilawal Bhutto — who spearheaded the government efforts for the contentious package — for playing a "big role" in achieving the consensus.

Earlier, the PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has said opposition to the judicial reforms including establishing federal constitutional courts is based on personal likes and dislikes.

The remarks come after the government failed to secure the magic number to sail through the bill to amend the Constitution last month, as its allies as well as members from the opposition benches vehemently opposed the proposal, forcing the administration to begin a consultation process.

In a message on X, the PPP chairman said many of those opposing the reforms now because of party position, had supported it in the past. "While many of today's opponents have supported this reform in the past.

Their opposition today is based on personal likes and dislikes or partisan positions on the politics of the moment," he wrote in a tweet.

On the other hand, Bilawal said that the establishment of a federal constitutional court had been a part of his party's manifesto since the 2007 elections after the Charter of Democracy in 2006. He also attached the relevant portions of the Charter of Democracy and the party's manifestos of 2013 and 2024 with his message.

"The PPP has fought every election since 2007 with the manifesto pledge of implementing judicial reforms including but not limited to establishing federal constitutional courts," he said, adding the PPP's permanent party position for almost two decades had remained consistent. "Our representatives elected in every election under my Chairmanship of this party have been given the mandate by the people of Pakistan to establish a Federal Constitutional Court with equal representation for all."

President calls for trade with Kyrgyzstan

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday stressed the need for expanding the bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and Kyrgyzstan by focusing on trade in value added products across various sectors to strengthen economic ties and boost mutual prosperity.

Talking to Akybek Zhaparov Usenbekovich Chairman of the Cabinet of the Kyrgyz Republic who called on him along with delegation on the sidelines of SCO Council of Heads of Government (CHG) meeting here, the president said Kyrgyzstan could also benefit from the Karachi and Gwadar ports.

The president also expressed the government's

desire to expand cooperation with Kyrgyzstan in all sectors of mutual interests. He extended gratitude to Kyrgyzstan for supporting Pakistan's successful election to the non-permanent seat of the UN Security Council. Expressing his views during the meeting, Akybek Zhaparov Usenbekovich said Kyrgyzstan always prioritized promotion of trade with the friendly countries.

Kyrgyzstan wants to enhance bilateral cooperation with Pakistan in various sectors of business, economy and technology, he said adding that due to Kyrgyzstan's economic development, there were significant opportunities for the workforce in the construction and textile sectors in the country. The

Kyrgyz leader also extended gratitude to the Pakistan government for making the process of issuing Pakistani visas easier for Kyrgyz citizens.

Meanwhile, President Asif Ali Zardari hosted State Luncheon in the honour of Chinese Premier Li Qiang at Aiwan e Sadr.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Senate Chairman Syed Yousuf Raza Gilani attended the luncheon, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release. Governors and Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz were also present. Federal ministers, service chiefs, members of the parliament, diplomats, journalists and senior officials attended the luncheon.

US warns Israel to improve humanitarian situation in Gaza

WASHINGTON (Reuters): The United States has warned Israel that it must take steps in the next month to improve the humanitarian situation in Gaza or face potential restrictions on US military aid, US officials said, in the strongest such warning since Israeli operations to root out Hamas militants began a year ago.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin wrote to Israeli officials on Sunday expressing concern over the deteriorating situation in the Palestinian enclave, US officials said on Tuesday. "We are writing now to underscore the US government's deep concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Gaza, and seek urgent and sustained actions by your government this month to reverse this trajectory," they wrote in a letter to their Israeli counterparts, posted by an Axios reporter on X.

Failure to do so could impact US

policy, said the letter, which was first reported by Israeli News 12. Officials confirmed the letter's veracity to Reuters and said it had been sent to Israeli Defense Minister Yoav Gallant and Strategic Affairs Minister Ron Dermer.

The State Department and Pentagon did not immediately respond to requests for comment on the letter. The White House did not immediately respond on whether President Joe Biden signed off on the letter. The Israeli embassy in Washington declined to comment.

The letter is the clearest ultimatum yet to Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's government since the Gaza conflict began, raising the prospect of a shift in Washington's support for Israel. Washington has frequently pressed Israel to improve humanitarian conditions in Gaza since the war with Hamas began with the Palestinian militant group's attacks on

southern Israel just over a year ago. The Biden administration has mostly declined to impose restrictions on the billions of dollars of military aid the United States sends to Israel, even after previous warnings over its conduct in the war were not heeded.

The administration, which has consistently said it supports Israel's right to defend itself, appeared to balance its criticism of Israel's actions in Gaza with a strong show of military support by announcing on Sunday - the same day as the letter - that it would send US troops and the advanced THAAD anti-missile batteries to Israel. The reports come as Israeli forces expand operations into northern Gaza amid ongoing concerns about access to humanitarian aid throughout the enclave and civilians' access to food, water and medicine.

Reuters reported earlier this month that food supplies have fallen sharply since Israeli authorities introduced a

new customs rule on some humanitarian aid and are separately scaling down deliveries organized by businesses. The United States told the UN Security Council last week that Israel needs to address urgently "catastrophic conditions" among Palestinian civilians in the besieged Gaza Strip and stop "intensifying suffering" by limiting aid deliveries.

The letter outlined specific steps Israel must take within 30 days, including enabling a minimum of 350 trucks to enter Gaza per day, instituting pauses in fighting to allow aid delivery and rescinding evacuation orders to Palestinian civilians when there is no operational need. "Failure to demonstrate a sustained commitment to implementing and maintaining these measures may have implications for US policy ... and relevant US law," the letter said.

It cited Section 620i of the Foreign Assistance Act, which prohibits mili-

tary aid to countries that impede delivery of US humanitarian assistance. It also cited a National Security Memorandum US President Joe Biden issued in February that requires the State Department to report to Congress on whether it finds credible Israel's assurances that its use of US weapons does not violate US or international law. Blinken earlier this year concluded that Israel may have violated international humanitarian law using US-supplied weapons and "did not fully cooperate" with efforts to get humanitarian aid into Gaza, but said this did not amount to a breach of U.S. law.

Bureaus within the State Department had earlier reported to Blinken instances of Israeli military actions that "arbitrarily restrict humanitarian aid," including rejecting entire trucks of aid due to a single "dual-use" item and repeated attacks on humanitarian sites, according to an internal

State Department memo reviewed by Reuters. Seth Binder, director of advocacy at the Middle East Democracy Center, said the letter showed senior US officials know that Israel is restricting aid but have been "bending over backwards to avoid enforcing US law at the expense of Palestinian civilians."

Washington's provision of military assistance to Israel has prompted protests across the United States and made some groups leery of voting for Vice President Kamala Harris in the Nov. 5 presidential election. Dozens of Biden's fellow Democrats have also called for restrictions to be imposed on the aid, although broad support for Israel remains in Congress. The House of Representatives Foreign Affairs Committee has asked for a briefing from the administration on the secretaries' letter, a spokesperson for the committee's Republican majority said.



KARACHI: Chairperson BISP Rubina Khalid and Chairman PAC Sindh Assembly Nisar Ahmed Khuhro jointly chairing a meeting of elected representatives at Sindh Assembly building.

BISP to equip youth with vocational training

KARACHI (APP): The Chairperson, Benazir Income Support Program, Senator Rubina Khalid underscoring the need of promoting skill development for poverty alleviation, Tuesday, said that BISP is determined to equip the youth with vocational training for ensuring employment opportunities to them.

While chairing a meeting during visit of Hunar Foundation in Korangi area of Karachi, she said that our focus is on provision of the vocational training to young members of families registered with BISP in accordance with international standards and global market demand so that they could be able to earn decent livelihood for their families and contribute in economic stability of the country.

Senator Rubina Khalid highlighting the BISP's key role in social protection and providing financial assistance to the deserving families across the country said that BISP was trying to meet the gap in expenditure and income of the deserving households through financial assistance. Currently around 9.3 million registered families were getting financial assistance through quarterly stipends and the number was expected to enhance more than 10 million after completion of dynamic registration process, she informed.

Youth comprise a large portion of national population and we have to engage the young people and utilize their energies for development and economic stability of the country, she said and vowed that BISP was gearing up for providing technical and skill training to enable individuals to secure employment both locally and internationally, thereby improving their economic conditions. She added that skill development will help bringing people out of poverty and achievement of poverty graduation targets will create space for registration of new families in the BISP.

We had positive talks with members of Sindh cabinet about coordinated efforts for skill development in the province while BISP was also engaged with NAVTEC, STEVTA and other vocational training bodies, she said and also emphasized the importance of cooperation between BISP and vocational training institutions.

Senator Rubina Khalid further stressed the importance of securing internationally recognized certifications for skilled workers and said, "If we ensure authentic global certifications across various sectors, our skilled labor will be in demand worldwide." She also highlighted the need to include basic work ethics and health and hygiene practices as part of the training curriculum.

CEO Hunar Foundation Tahir Javed, CEO Operations Ghuffran Ahmed and others briefed the BISP Chairperson about endeavour, efforts and future strategy of the

foundation.

Earlier, BISP chairperson visited different training and skill development facilities being provided at the Hunar Foundation institutions.

CM orders restoration of approved parking areas in Karachi

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah presiding over a high-level meeting expressed concern over the deteriorating state of Karachi's infrastructure, identifying ongoing development projects, damaged roads, drainage issues, illegal parking and rampant encroachments as major contributors to the city's severe traffic congestion.

The CM, in a decisive move, set a deadline for clearing encroachments from 10 to 15 key roads in the city for which he constituted a task force under Minister Local Government Saeed Ghani and ordered immediate efforts to uplift the affected areas. Mr Shah pointed out the role of drug addicts in damaging public infrastructure, pointing out that they steal steel rods, streetlight pipes, and other materials, causing further degradation of public spaces.

"I want the administration to relocate all drug users currently living under bridges and in slum areas. Their theft of steel rods from bridges and streetlights not only defaces the

city but also undermines our development efforts," Shah stressed, directing civic agencies to strengthen vigilance to prevent such thefts.

SBCA: The Director General of the Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA), Rasheed Solangi, informed the Chief Minister (CM) that they have begun issuing QR codes for all approvals, as per the CM's instructions. The CM was informed that out of 425 buildings currently under construction, 201 have been issued permits with QR codes, which will enable better regulation and monitoring.

Scanning the QR code will reveal the date of approval, NOC for advertisement, date of starting and completion, number of floors, name of the builder, architect, and contractor, and cost of a flat/shop based on its location/floor.

To another question, the Chief Minister was informed that the Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA) in District South had identified 25 commercial buildings with

approved reserved car parking spaces, but the owners had illegally converted these areas into godowns. With the support of the Commissioner and the Additional Inspector General of Police, Karachi, six of the parking areas have been restored, three buildings have been sealed, and notices have been issued to the rest.

The SBCA chief also told the CM that they have conducted 1210 raids against illegal construction and sealed several buildings, including 16 in Lyari. At this, the CM directed the SBCA to ensure no building was allowed to be erected illegally, and every approval should have solid reasons to issue.

Mr Shah issued clear instructions to SBCA and administration not to allow dumping of construction material and debris on the service roads and to seal the buildings in case of violation of his orders.

Red Line: It was pointed out that the ongoing development work on the Red Line BRT was one of the traffic jam reasons in the area of Gulshan-e-Iqbal.

SNGPL disconnects 121 connections

LAHORE (APP): In a significant enforcement operation, Sui Norther Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) has disconnected another 121 illegal gas connections across Punjab, KP, and Islamabad, imposing fines totaling over 3.5 million PKR. According to a spokesman for the department, in Multan and Sahiwal, 26 connections were severed for illegal gas usage, while Lahore and Faisalabad saw 19 more connections cut, resulting in fines exceeding 600,000 PKR. Additionally, in Sheikhupura, Gujranwala, and Sardodha, eight illegal connections were removed, incurring fines of 1.1 million PKR. Bahawalpur and Gujrat faced the disconnection of 13 connections, with penalties amounting to 20,000 PKR.

The operation also targeted areas in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where 52 illegal connections were disconnected in Karak, Peshawar, and Mardan, with fines totaling 1.85 million PKR and 40 FIRs registered against offenders. Authorities in Rawalpindi and Islamabad disconnected three more illegal connections as part of the ongoing crackdown, aiming to ensure compliance with gas regulations and curb illegal usage.

Karachi hosts world culture festival

Kinza Sualiha

KARACHI: Karachi is hosting a remarkable celebration of global art and culture through the World Culture Festival, an event that has drawn attention from all worldwide. Running from September 26 to October 30 at the Arts Council of Pakistan, the festival is one of the largest cultural gatherings ever held in the country. With over 250 artists from more than 35 countries, it brings together talent from across all continents, showcasing a breathtaking array of music, theatre, dance, and fine arts.

This festival represents a significant step in cultural diplomacy, with a theme of "world without borders," highlighting how art can unite people despite geographic, cultural, and linguistic differences. It has transformed Karachi into a vibrant global cultural hub, attracting art lovers, performers, and tourists eager to experience the creativity of artists from diverse backgrounds.

From the moment visitors enter the festival grounds, they are greeted with a sensory explosion of colors, sounds, and performances. The Arts Council has been meticulously designed to accommodate a range of performances and exhibitions, each offering a unique cultural experience. The festival

lineup includes a variety of events such as theatre performances, live concerts, and Qawwali nights, each of which has left audiences spellbound. The performances have proven to be a rich blend of local traditions and global narratives, with artists presenting their cultures through captivating storytelling, music, and dance.

The theatre performances, in particular, have been one of the major highlights of the festival. With internationally acclaimed actors and directors taking the stage, the plays presented have ranged from emotional and thought-provoking narratives to those that entertain with wit and humor. Audiences have praised these performances for their depth and the poignant messages they convey. Each play not only reflects the cultures of the countries represented but also touches upon universal themes such as identity, love, struggle, and hope, resonating with the diverse crowd that attends the festival.

The concerts have been equally mesmerizing. Musicians from various parts of the world have come together to create a fusion of sounds that has been nothing short of magical. From classical music performances that evoke nostalgia to modern fusion that represents the blending of traditions, the



diversity of music on display has left attendees in awe. The concerts have drawn large crowds, with music lovers from Karachi and beyond eager to witness some of the finest performances ever seen in the city. The Qawwali nights have been particularly popular, as the soulful renditions of Sufi poetry have captivated audiences and stirred deep emotions. The spiritual nature of these performances has made them a truly memorable part of the festival, with attendees feeling connected to both the music and its profound message.

In addition to the performing arts, the visual arts exhibitions have offered festival-goers a chance to engage with another side of the artistic spectrum. Featuring the works of both international and local artists, the exhibitions include paintings, sculptures, photography, and installa-

tions. The fine arts section of the festival is a feast for the eyes, with each artwork telling its own story and offering a glimpse into the world of the artist. The diversity of styles, themes, and mediums used by the artists showcases the boundless creativity of the human spirit. Visitors have been particularly drawn to the interactive installations, where they can engage directly with the art, making the experience even more personal.

The World Culture Festival is more than just a celebration of art; it is a celebration of unity and diversity. Through the universal language of art, the festival brings together people from different backgrounds, allowing them to share their experiences, learn from each other, and appreciate the beauty of diverse cultures. For many, the festival has become a platform to engage in meaningful cultural exchange, breaking

down barriers and building bridges between nations. The festival is a testament to the power of art to unite, inspire, and promote understanding in a world often divided by differences.

For the Arts Council of Pakistan, the festival is a milestone achievement in its mission to promote cultural diplomacy. By inviting artists from around the world to perform and exhibit in Karachi, the council is fostering dialogue and creating opportunities for cultural exchange. This festival has not only strengthened Pakistan's cultural ties with other nations but has also showcased the richness of Pakistani culture to the world. The inclusion of local talent alongside international artists has further elevated the festival, providing emerging Pakistani artists with a platform to share their work on a global stage.

As the World Culture Festival continues until October 30, there is much more to look forward to in the coming weeks. Additional performances, exhibitions, and workshops are set to take place, offering more opportunities for audiences to experience the best in global art and culture. The festival has already made a significant impact on Karachi's cultural landscape, drawing crowds from across

the city and beyond. For many, the festival has been a source of pride, as it positions Karachi as a key player on the global cultural map. The excitement and energy surrounding the festival are palpable, as attendees immerse themselves in the diversity of performances and exhibitions on display.

The legacy of the World Culture Festival will undoubtedly extend beyond the month of October. It has set a precedent for future cultural events in Karachi and has highlighted the city's potential as a hub for global artistic gatherings. The festival is a reminder that art has the power to transcend borders and bring people together in ways that few other things can. As Karachi continues to host the festival, the city's reputation as a center for creativity and cultural exchange will only grow, leaving a lasting impression on all those who have had the opportunity to be part of this incredible journey. For now, the World Culture Festival continues to enchant, inspire, and bring joy to the thousands of people who visit it every day. With its rich blend of performances and exhibitions, it offers something for everyone—a world without borders, brought to life through the transformative power of art.

Sindh Food Authority commemorates World Food Day 2024

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Sindh Food Authority celebrated World Food Day 2024 in collaboration with university students, representatives from the food business, NGOs, government institutions, and the farming community.

The theme for this year's celebration was "Right to Food for a Better Life and a Better Future," emphasizing the importance of ensuring access to adequate, nutritious, and safe food for all.

Speaking on the occasion, Director General Sindh Food Authority, Muzamil Hussain Halepoto, said that ensuring food security and combating hunger is essential for improving the quality of life and fostering sustainable development. He further emphasized that the Sindh Food Authority is actively working across all districts of the province to ensure food safety while raising public awareness about healthy eating habits and the importance of food

hygiene through awareness campaigns.

The Director General reiterated that under the Sindh Food Authority Act, no food business can operate without a license from the authority. "We have activated the food authority by focusing first on human resources and have increased the number of inspections to ensure hygiene standards are met. Non-compliance results in heavy fines."

He added, "A crackdown against chemically adulterated milk is underway across Sindh, and we have inspected more than 9,000 shops in the past month." All food business operators were urged to obtain licenses from the Sindh Food Authority, which has issued over 5,000 licenses this month alone.

The Director General also noted that "there is zero tolerance for adulteration, and the sale of expired or substandard food products will not be tolerated. Heavy fines are being imposed for such violations."

TENDER NOTICE-AUCTION

All interested parties are hereby informed that auction of Repairable and Unserviceable Ration Packing Material (Bags Jute Flour/ Dhall, Polypropylene packs Sugar/ Dhall, Plastic cans, Ghee Tins 16 Kg, etc) will be held at Station Supply Depot ASC Peshawar on 14 November 2024 at 1000 hours. In case of any unforeseen situation, auction will be held on alternate day i.e, 15 November 2024. All policies will be adopted according to the law.

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ISLAMABAD - 2024

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استقام

Saif praises decisive leadership of Gandapur

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Kyber Pakhtunkhwa for Information and Public Relations Barrister Dr. Saif praised the decisive leadership of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Sardar Ali Amin Gandapur, whose guidance facilitated the successful convening of the Jamrud Jirga. Dr. Saif emphasized that the Chief Minister played a pivotal role in fostering political consensus, navigating both the province and the nation through significant challenges.

"This is a quality that only a genuine public rep-

resentative possesses, and Ali Amin Gandapur has proven this convincingly," he said.

Dr. Saif criticized the federal government, accusing it of a lack of political wisdom in its handling of the Jirga issue, which he claimed only served to complicate matters. "The federal government's imprudent behavior led to unnecessary confusion," he said, further noting that the governance at Federal level and in Punjab under the current administration has been marred by confrontational politics rather than focusing on addressing core issues.

He also pointed out that

the Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi, who previously conducted raids to arrest Ali Amin Gandapur, should now learn from him about how genuine leadership resolves public issues.

Criticizing the Sharif family's government, Dr. Saif referred to the Model Town incident, where even pregnant women were targeted. "Today, under Shehbaz Sharif and Maryam Nawaz's governance, peaceful protests are routinely met with batons and bullets. These fake rulers are complicating public issues further through violence," he stated.

Dr. Saif further condemned the federal government for imprisoning "true leadership" on what he called fabricated charges, pointing to the restrictions placed on former Prime Minister Imran Khan. "It is deeply concerning that the government has barred any meetings with Imran Khan, whether from his lawyers, medical staff, or family members," he said, describing the situation as a gross violation of human rights.

In his closing remarks, Dr. Saif asserted that the people of Pakistan will no longer tolerate the fake rulers and will hold them accountable for stealing the public mandate.



PESHAWAR: In a shocking move director Admin Peshawar University closes two main roads leading to his house in campus with sharp barricades causing inconvenience for families, children & female students.

Govt taking steps to stop wastage of water, says Barkwal

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Agriculture Major Retired Sajjad Barkwal has said that Provincial government is taking a lot of steps to prevent wastage of water and better use of underground water and bring it to use for agriculture. As per vision of PTI founder Imran Khan, small dams have been constructed in the province. He said that at the moment, the farmers of the province are facing shortage of agricultural land and resources, including erosion of existing agricultural land, expansion of cities. There are many problems like depletion of water reservoirs. Reducing these problems can significantly increase agricultural production.

He expressed these views while addressing the "Workshop on Groundwater Capacity and Recharge Estimates in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" held in Peshawar.

In the workshop Consul General American

Consulate General Peshawar Shanti moree, Secretary Agriculture Attaur Rahman, Director General Soil Conservation Yasin Wazir, Director General on Farm Water Management Hayat Khan, Director General Agriculture Engineering Naseem Javed, Dr. Azeem Ali Shah Chief of Party WMFEP including officers from Agriculture department, Irrigation department, private and partner institutions, representatives of academia and other relevant authorities participated.

In the opening session of the workshop, GIS Lab Soil and Water Conservation show map of water reservoirs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was presented with the aim of potential management of water bodies.

In the workshop, there was a detailed discussion on the possible zonings and recharge estimates of ground water, the perspective of water users in different areas, activities done with the financial support

of USAID and other issues. Thanking the participants for their arrival, he said that we have to move towards food self-sufficiency. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has been badly affected by terrorism.

Because of this we are facing a lot of problems. We are peaceful people. Women in the Agriculture department are responsible for providing public services and we have to move forward with the world. Provincial minister Sajjad Brakwal discussed in details the agricultural background in the province, measures taken for the farmers and the problems faced by the farmers.

On this occasion, Consul General American Consulate General Peshawar Shanti more thanked the participants for their attendance and suggestions in the workshop and said that we should jointly try to provide abundant water supply to all. Command area development and restoration of flood-affected properties

will bring better results in agricultural development.

USAID's WMFEP programme were mentioned that the program is structured in four components which are development of command area of Gomal Zam Dam, improved capacity of relevant agencies/staff of the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, agricultural water management in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and This includes strengthening governance and increasing cooperation between Afghanistan and Pakistan on water policy, practices and water sector challenges. The main focus of the program is to assist the government in improving performance in the Gomal Zam Command Area Development.

In the workshop, Provincial Agriculture Minister Major Retired Sajjad Barkwal presented the shield to Consul General US Consulate Peshawar Shanti Moree and certificates of appreciation were distributed among the participants.

Health adviser visits UNICEF Office Peshawar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Health Ihtisham Ali, accompanied by Health Secretary Adeel Shah, visited the UNICEF Peshawar office, where they were warmly welcomed by UNICEF's Health Team Lead Dr. Inamullah and Program Manager Wisam Hazem and Nutrition Specialist Ayeen Afridi . During the visit, UNICEF provided a comprehensive briefing on the support being provided to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Department.

In his address, Health Adviser Ihtisham Ali expressed his gratitude to UNICEF for its invaluable support, particularly in ensuring the provision of healthcare services in remote areas and enhancing immunization efforts. He highlighted that the Health Department will collaborate closely with UNICEF in its future planning, ensuring that the department's needs are reflected in UNICEF's strategies. He also urged UNICEF to continue supporting the revitalization of primary healthcare.

UNICEF representatives briefed the Adviser on their five-year program (2023-2027), which includes assistance in various health sectors such as polio eradication, maternal and child health, nutrition, and more. UNICEF is also supporting the digitization efforts of the health department, particularly in implementing the DHIS-2 system. Moreover, they are providing assistance in the Newborn Strategy, expanding the capacity of oxygen plants, and driving social behavior change initiatives. UNICEF remains a vital partner in providing emergency assistance to the health department.

During a briefing at the UNICEF Peshawar office, Health Adviser Ihtisham Ali was informed about the alarming malnutrition situation among children in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. While support programs are in place, it was emphasized that more robust and serious actions are required from the Health Department to tackle this issue effectively.

UNICEF is actively working with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Health Department, Khyber Medical University, and the Planning and Development Department to address the malnutrition crisis. The Health Adviser was informed that in addition to ongoing initiatives, it is crucial to include essential medicines in the MCC procurement list that can help combat malnutrition, particularly in remote areas.

These medicines are expected to play a significant role in addressing nutritional deficiencies and improving child health outcomes across the province. The briefing further highlighted a concerning issue: the province's high neonatal mortality rate, which remains above the target set by the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). According to a survey conducted in 2020, 158,947 children under the age of one died in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa between 2018 and 2020. Alarming, 86% of these deaths, amounting to 135,499 children, occurred in rural areas, with 118,142 of them being less than one month old.

KPBC boycotts court proceedings

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council (KPBC) observed strike from court's proceedings against worsening law and order situation in District Kurram and southern districts while famed the government is ineligible to ensure public safety, on Tuesday.

KPBC claimed that 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.

KPPC blamed the provincial government of being preoccupied with protests and political maneuvering, which has directly affected the province. The government has more focus on political point-scoring than addressing the pressing.

SACM Nek meets DG PDMA

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Relief, Nek Muhammad Khan, on Tuesday paid a visit to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

During the visit, Nek Muhammad Khan met with the Director General of PDMA, Muhammad Qaisar Khan, and other senior officials of the Authority.

The Director General provided a comprehensive briefing to the Special Assistant, detailing the PDMA's efforts, initiatives, and prepared-

ness for managing natural disasters across the province.

The Director General also highlighted the authority's ongoing relief activities, especially the swift response mechanism activated during emergencies such as floods, earthquakes, and other natural calamities.

The briefing included an overview of the PDMA's collaborations with various government agencies and non-governmental organizations to ensure efficient relief efforts during disasters.

Nek Muhammad Khan expressed his appreciation for PDMA's proac-

tive approach and significant contribution to safeguarding the lives and properties of the citizens of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He assured that the provincial government stands ready to extend any further assistance required by the authority to enhance its disaster management capacity.

In recognition of the mutual commitment to disaster management and relief efforts, shields were exchanged between Mr. Nek Muhammad Khan and the Director General of PDMA, Muhammad Qaisar Khan, as a gesture of goodwill and continued collaboration.

SCO summit: Time to take advantage

PESHAWAR (APP): The ongoing two-day Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit in Islamabad has provided a unique opportunity to its members states to take advantage of Pakistan's vital link in Eurasian connectivity for bolstering trade and economy for mutual benefits.

The experts emphasized that the gathering of top leadership of SCO members states at Islamabad has not only allowed Pakistan to strengthen its bilateral and economic ties with the regional powers but also positions the country as an essential player in the broader Eurasian connectivity initiative.

As the two-day summit unfolds at Islamabad, the focus is on fostering regional peace, security, and prosperity through enhanced diplomatic and economic collaboration. The summit provides a pivotal moment for Pakistan to elevate its economic and geopolitical aspirations on an international stage besides highlighting its principled stand on regional issues.

Established in 2001, the SCO now comprises nine member states, including founding members like China and Russia, alongside newer members such as Pakistan, India, and Iran, which joined in 2017.

Professor Dr. Adnan Sarwar Khan, former chairman of the International Relations Department at the University of Peshawar, highlighted the summit's potential to economic prosperity and attract foreign investment besides diplomatic say.

He said Pakistan carried a unique strategic geographical location in South Asia vital for trade, business and investment point of view,

adding this summit provides an unparalleled opportunity for the nation to position itself at the heart of regional connectivity.

Terming CPEC as game changer project for Pakistan, he said that entire country especially Gilgit Baltistan, Baluchistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would be largely benefited.

The first phase of the Rashakai Special Economic Zone (RSEZ) has been completed under CPEC before six months of the scheduled time aimed at promoting business and employment besides turning KP into a hub of trade and investment.

He said Phase I of RSEZ encompassed about 247 acres of modern facilities designed to attract domestic and foreign investors besides spurring economic growth and job creation for a skilled workforce.

He said Phase I housed about 18 zone enterprises with seven being under construction mobilising an estimated investment of about Rs85 billion.

Different projects were launched in the second phase of RSEZ that would generate approximately 250,000 jobs for the youth of KP.

Professor Dr. A.H. Hilali, former chairman of the Political Science Department at the University of Peshawar, underscored the SCO's role as a significant diplomatic platform that could reshape not just regional dynamics but economic cooperation by supporting developing countries and global relations as well.

Pakistan's status as the fifth most populous country, coupled with its critical role in international trade, enhances its importance in this context.

"Discussions on trade,

regional connectivity, environmental concerns, and security challenges at SCO are vital for the stability of the region," he remarked.

Dr. Naermur Khattak, former chairman of the Economics Department at the University of Peshawar, highlighted the economic ramifications of hosting the SCO summit.

"This event apparently marks a significant shift in Pakistan's approach from a geo-strategic focus to a geo-economic one," he explained, emphasizing the importance of enhancing connectivity with Central Asia, especially in light of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

With bilateral trade between Pakistan and China nearing \$20 billion, the integration of Central Asian resources through enhanced connectivity could yield substantial benefits for all parties involved.

He said the summit is expected to culminate with key declaration that will fortify economic partnerships among member states.

The summit also served as a platform for the SCO's top leadership to engage in constructive dialogues addressing pressing regional issues.

The experts predicted that the recent inauguration of the Gwadar airport by Pakistani and Chinese Prime Ministers heralds a new era of prosperity for Balochistan, further solidifying Pakistan's role as a pivotal player in the region.

As discussions progress, the eyes of the world remain on Islamabad, where Pakistan is poised to make significant strides in asserting its influence and fostering collaborative efforts within the SCO framework.

KMU hosts speech competition to mark Global Handwashing Day

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Watson Cell Local Council Board of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in collaboration with Khyber Medical University (KMU), Peshawar in celebration of Global Handwashing Day organized second inter-university speech competition centered around the theme of "Hygiene and Climate Change."

Students from 16 universities across the province participated, with 31 contestants competing in both English and Urdu categories. The purpose of Global Handwashing Day, observed annually on October 15, is to raise awareness about the importance of hand hygiene as a cornerstone of public health.

In the English category, Laiba Yousaf of City University secured first place, followed by Nawal Sohail from Iqra National University in second place, and Abdul Basit from Sarhad University in third. In the Urdu category, Ayesha from City University claimed the top spot, while Samaya Zahoor Khan from Bacha Khan



University, Charsadda, took second, and Muhammad Wasif Bilal from Khushal Khan University, Karak, and Maqbool Ahmed from Sarhad University tied for third place.

The competition topics highlighted the significance of handwashing, the effects of climate change, global warming, and the role of public engagement in addressing these global challenges. The event's Chief Guest, KMU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Ziaul Haq, delivered a keynote address, emphasizing

ing the critical role of cleanliness and hygiene in the prevention of communicable and non-communicable diseases.

He also underscored the importance of youth involvement in public health initiatives to foster a culture of hygiene and disease prevention.

Muhammad Samiullah, Coordinator of the Watson Cell, Local Government KP, was another prominent speaker. He elaborated on the crucial role of hygiene in building a healthy society and called for ongoing

efforts to raise public awareness about cleanliness.

The competition concluded with a lively awards ceremony, where shields and certificates were presented to the winners in recognition of their outstanding performances.

The event attracted significant participation from administrative officers, faculty members, and students from across the province, reflecting the collective commitment of educational institutions to promoting vital public health issues.

Remembering Muhammad Khurshid A Beacon of Journalism

BY SK UTMANI

The journalist community, especially in Bajaur and Peshawar, is in mourning following the sudden demise of Muhammad Khurshid, a senior journalist and active member of Peshawar Press Club, on the night of October 10, 2024, due to cardiac arrest.

Born in Khyber Tribal district, M. Khurshid adopted journalism as a profession and made Peshawar his second home. He quickly established himself as a prominent voice in regional journalism. During his journalistic career spanning over many decades, he worked for several esteemed newspapers of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province and became known for his insightful reporting and compelling storytelling.

His write ups often highlighted the challenges faced by the region while advocating for peace and prosperity. With each story, he aimed to foster dialogue and promote tranquility, embodying the principles he held dear.



Beyond his professional accolades, Khurshid was a simple and deeply pious individual. His faith guided him in his mission to uplift society through the power of the pen.

He believed that journalism could serve as a driving force for good, helping to bridge divides and inspire hope in troubled times. His untimely departure has left a significant void in the hearts of his colleagues and the broader journalistic community.

Muhammad Khurshid was not just a talented writer; he was also a mentor, a friend, and a beacon of compassion. As we remember him, we celebrate a life dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge, truth, and peace. May Allah SWT shower His blessings upon Muhammad Khurshid and grant him a high place in Jannah.

His legacy will continue to inspire future generations of journalists who strive to highlight social ills and promote peace through their writings.

219501 houses inspected

PESHAWAR (APP): Director Vector Borne Diseases, Dr. Fazal Rehman has said that Provincial Health Department has inspected 219501 households in various areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under Dengue Surveillance during last week. The health teams have found dengue larvae in 379 households during inspection. Meanwhile, Lady Health Workers and Community Health Workers also conducted operations in these houses to eliminate larvae. He said that besides residential areas, health teams have inspected 39253 spots to identify breeding places of dengue larvae among which 1 413 places were found contaminated.



In brief

Miners in Duki hold protest

QUETTA (INP): In the wake of a tragic incident that claimed the lives of 21 miners, workers at coal mines in Duki have staged protests, halting operations in a show of solidarity and demand for safety. The protests erupted after a shooting incident at the mines, leading to calls for the immediate arrest of the assailants. The miners have voiced their concerns regarding inadequate security measures, insisting that they will continue their demonstrations until their safety is guaranteed. "We will not resume work until our protection is ensured," stated a representative of the protesting miners, highlighting the severe risks they face in the current environment. In response to the incident, the Balochistan government has initiated a search operation aimed at swiftly apprehending those responsible for the attack. A devastating attack on coal mines in the Duki district of Balochistan left at least 21 miners dead and several injured. The attackers reportedly used rocket launchers and hand grenades in the assault, setting fire to machinery within the mines on October 11. According to police, the attackers gathered the miners into groups before opening fire. SHO Humayun Khan stated that all of the deceased and injured were Pashtun.

Bomb thrown at Khuhro's house

LARKANA (INP): A hand grenade attack targeted the home of Nisar Khuhro, the Chairman of the Sindh Public Accounts Committee and President of the Sindh chapter of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), in Larkana. It reported in media that the incident caused no casualties or property damage. Two individuals on a motorcycle allegedly attempted to throw a hand grenade into Khuhro's residence. However, the device, described as a "cracker" by police, failed to enter the house due to the high walls. At the time of the attack, Mr. Khuhro was not present at his home. Police have launched an investigation into the incident.

Foolproof security to be ensured

QUETTA (INP): Superintendent Police City Muhammad Sharif emphasized his commitment to maintaining law and order by tightening the grip on criminal elements and drug dealers. Talking to media, he said police checkpoints across the City Police jurisdiction have been reinforced for more effective security checks. SP Sharif assured that every complaint received at the City Police Station and other precincts within the circle will be addressed promptly, ensuring justice for all citizens. "It is the core responsibility of the police to ensure that no one is subjected to injustice," he added. "Any disturbance to peace or criminal activity will be dealt with firmly." He also highlighted the role of the business community and residents in maintaining peace. He urged them to remain vigilant against criminal activities and continue their cooperation with the police. He appealed to the public to support law enforcement efforts, stressing that his doors remain open 24/7 to address the concerns of citizens.

PO held

QUETTA (PPI): Sadr Police claimed to have arrested a proclaimed offender in an operation conducted in the precincts of Police Station Sadr Quetta on Tuesday.

Construction work on hospital to restart soon

Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam Afridi advocate said that work on the under-construction building of Liaquat Memorial Women and Children Hospital Kohat will be resumed soon for which the PDWP has already approved revised estimate of more than Rs.2.44 Billion.

This he said while talking to the local people on the occasion of his visit to the Union Council Ziarat Sheikh Allah Dad the other day. He on this occasion also condoled the sad demise of the members of Tableeghi Jamaat who were died in a road accident recently and prayed for the eternal peace of the deceased.

The minister said that a Tender of Rs.1 Billion has already been done for the said hospital in April this year, out of which Rs.20 Million have been released. He added that Liaquat Memorial Hospital will be equipped with modern medical equipment and facilities. He vowed that best medical treatment facilities to women and

children of Kohat will be available at local level soon.

Aftab Alam specially thanked the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Gandapur for generously provided the required funds for the building of the Liaquat Memorial Hospital, which has been pending for last many years.

People of Kohat while welcoming the approval of required funds for Liaquat Memorial Hospital, appreciated the joint efforts of Sherryar Afridi MNA, Law Minister Aftab Alam Advocate, Chairman DDAC Shafi Jan MPA and Daud Shah Afridi MPA for the said hospital. They hoped that they will bring more mega projects for Kohat in future.

Commissioner visited public dispensaries: Commissioner Kohat Division Syed Motasim Billah Shah has under the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Program "Awami Agenda" visited Civil Dispensaries, Animal Husbandry, Basic Health Units and Schools in different areas of Kohat District along with the authorities concerned of the respective Departments.

He on this occasion reviewed various activities under the "Awami Agenda" and besides inspecting and checking the attendance of the concerned staff also reviewed the cleanliness conditions and the services being provided to the general public and issued necessary instructions in this regard. Commissioner Kohat praised the concerned officers/officials for their excellent performance while reprimanded some for poor performance. He also ordered action against 8 officials for absence and lethargy.

Commissioner said that the performance of government departments and institutions has been improved manifold with the Program "Awami Agenda" launched by the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and there will be further improvements with the passage of time. Commissioner Kohat's actions under the "Awami Agenda" are widely welcomed and appreciated as due to his frequent visits, if actions have been taken on the one hand for poor performance, on the other hand, good performance has also been encouraged and awarded.

KKKUK, Al-Frutiyaat launch training program

F.P. Report

KARAK: Khushal Khan Khattak University Karak's (KKKUK) Department of Botany has partnered with Al-Frutiyaat to offer a comprehensive training program on commercial mushroom farming.

The training aims to equip participants with the knowledge and skills necessary for commercial

mushroom production, enhancing entrepreneurship and employment opportunities in the region.

"KKKUK is committed to promote entrepreneurship and skill development. This collaboration with Al-Frutiyaat will foster innovation in mushroom farming." - Dr. Noor Ul Haq HoD Botany Added In his address Founder of Al-Frutiyaat Muhammad

Zeesan highlighted the importance of Mushroom farming.

"We are excited to partner with KKKUK, sharing our expertise in commercial mushroom production to benefit the local community." Khushal Khan Khattak University Karak is a premier institution dedicated to education, research, and community services.

Hamza Foundation holds blood donation camp

F.P. Report

MINGORA: Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassaemia Center and Blood Transfusion Services with collaboration and support of the Government Degree College, Thana Swat, successfully organized one day blood donation camp, to combat the shortage of blood for thalassemia patients and those in need, on Tuesday.

Resource Mobilization officers Attiq ur Rehman and Ibrar Ullah Jan delivered motivational speeches to the students. This initiative reflects the unwavering commitment of Hamza Foundation to saving lives and ensuring a



steady supply of blood for those who rely on it.

As many as 85 healthy volunteer students blood donors after medical check-

up, donated their blood for saving precious lives of 1504 registered poor and underprivileged Thalassemia, Hemophilia and other patients admitted in different Government and Private Hospitals of KP, with the help and support of Principal Prof. Sardar Hussain, Dr. Nawab Ali, Zoology Department and Prof. Muhammad Javed.

Founder Chairman Hamza Foundation Ijaz Ali Khan extended their heartfelt gratitude to all the donors, management and participants who joined hands to make this event a successful. And their generosity and support can truly be the difference between life and death.

Court constitutes JIT to probe three killing

F.P. Report

LARKANA: In the case of the murder of 3 family members in Hyder Brohi village of Baqrani taluka near Larkana, a Joint Investigation Team (JIT) has been formed on the order of the court.

According to details, twenty-three (23) days ago, three family members, Qaim Khatoon Brohi her son Nadeem Brohi and her daughter Fazila Brohi, were killed by armed gunmen in Haidar Brohi village of Taluka Baqrani.

On the orders of DIG Larkana Nasir Aftab Pathan, a 4-members JIT has been established in which DSP Ratodero Zahoar Ahmad Soomro was appointed as the chairman, SHO Baqrani sub Inspector Muhammad Alam Jamarani and IT in-charge Larkana were appointed as members.

Meanwhile, the District Bar Association in Larkana staged a protest rally from the Bar's room to the session court premises to boycott the police lathi charge and arrests of the leaders and activists of the Karachi Press Club and the police baton charge and arrests by the

District Bar Association in Larkana. During the demonstration, slogans were raised against the police. Addressing the demonstration, the Joint Secretary of Session Court Bar Association Nader Bhutto and other lawyers, Abdul Sattar Hulio, Aqeel Ahmed Bhutto, Rauf Korai and others said that the purpose of the "Tolerance March" in Karachi.

As rally, to send a message to the whole world that our land is a land of peace, tolerance, brotherhood and lovers of the country, but unfortunately the police charged many leaders and workers including journalists with batons and tortured women leaders and arrested them. What was done is a violation of international human rights, they demanded the Chief Justice of Sindh High Court to conduct a judicial investigation of the incident and take legal action against the involved police personnel so that justice is fulfilled.

Accused arrested, stolen bikes recovered: Larkana police conducted raids in different areas of the city and arrested 10 accused involved in crimi-

nals activities, and recovered weapons, drugs, two motorcycles and two buffalo.

According to details, Ali Goharabad police arrested drug dealer Mujtaba Jatoti, Abu Harir alias Haru Jatoti and recovered 1.5 KG of hashish from their possessions. Similarly, Dari police arrested accused Bilawal with 30 bore pistols and bullets, drug dealer Allam Sarwar Sheikh with 3kg and 100 grams of hashish. In another action, Police recovered 2 kg and 150 grams of hashish from accused Shiraz Ansari, while Taluka police recovered 20 bore guns and cartridges from the possession of accused Shoaib Sehar wanted in the murder case.

Similarly two accused Ghulam Nabi Brohi and Habibullah Brohi arrested by Waleed Police from New Bus Terminal along with 5 bags of Gutka and carry van. Ratodero and Dokri police have arrested Imdad Laghari with weapon and recovered two stolen motorcycles. Police registered separate cases against all arrested accused and started further investigation.

WSSCM launches grievance redress mechanism

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Water and Sanitation Services Company Mardan (WSSCM) Shahid Khan paid a surprise visit to canal road and observe the ongoing construction of sewerage network under Khyber Pakhtunkhwa cities improvement project. He directed the project team and relevant authorities to cater the public and citizens grievances and take immediate corrective actions during the construction to mitigate the issues related to the project.

He shows his concerns on the construction material including sand and gravel laying along the roadsides of canal and ordered to lift it within 24 hours. Moreover he stressed to carry out road washing and sprinkling of roads two times a day during the construction phase of the project.

CEO stated Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) has been set up for citizens' complaints, ensuring that complaints are resolved immediately. He further stated that the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is trying to solve the citizen's problems on priority basis.

TEVTA employees announced protest: All TEVTA Employees Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa informs all officials of KP-TEVTA that if by 18th October 2024 long standing issues of KP TEVTA (Public Servants) including service structure, seniority lists, timely payment of CP fund, M. Phil, Phd Allowance and Hard Area Allowance etc. are not resolved, there will be a massive protest across the province.

All TEVTA Employees Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has repeatedly highlighted these issues in every forum but till now no positive progress has been made by the concerned officials to resolve these issues which are very sad and cruel behavior.

Dengue spreading in Takhtbhai

F.P. Report

TAKHTBHAI: The rapid spread of dengue fever in Takhtbhai has become a cause for concern. The number of patients admitted to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital and Type D Hospital in Lund Khwar has increased significantly.

According to Dr. Bilal Islam, Focal Person for Dengue Control at Tehsil Headquarters Hospital, health department working on emergency basis to eradicate the disease. Awareness teams have been active since day one, and mosquito nets have been distributed in large numbers, exceeding last year's figures.

Moreover, the health department and TMA have conducted insecticide spraying in numerous homes. However, the public's failure to take precautions, such as covering water containers and tanks, has contributed to the spread. So far, 14 positive cases have been reported from the tehsil, with 20 dengue patients visiting the OPD daily, experiencing high fever and body aches.

The situation has taken an epidemic form, with multiple patients reported in every household. Critics argue that the provincial government has neglected public health concerns, and citizens' health is being compromised. To control the spread and protect citizens, the district administration, health department, and PHA must adopt a joint mechanism.

Machinery set ablaze

KALAT (INP): Unidentified armed assailants carried out two attacks on camps of crash plants working on the National Highway in Kalat and Mangochar late at night on Tuesday.

According to media reports, during the attack, several pieces of heavy machinery were set on fire, causing significant damage.

Homoeopathic doctors in Swat vow to challenge Amend in Drug Act



Shafi ullah

MINGORA: Homoeopathic doctors in Swat have announced plans to approach the Supreme Court in opposition to the government's proposed amendments to the 1965 Drug Act. This decision was made public during a crowded press conference at the Swat Press Club, where representatives Dr. Muhammad Alam, Dr. Arshad Hussain, Dr. Shah Ziaur Rehman, Dr. Muhammad Shabbir, Dr. Haider Ali, and Dr. Zahid Ali emphasized the global

benefits of homeopathic treatment.

The doctors highlighted that billions worldwide benefit from homeopathy, yet pharmaceutical mafia conspiracies in Pakistan hinder their work. They demanded government action against those involved in the amendment process.

The doctors urged Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif and President Asif Ali Zardari to Provide quality education in homeopathy and establish medical wards in government hospitals form teaching cadres in teaching colleges. They

also demanded to establish separate homeopathy teaching hospitals and universities in every province.

They said If their demands are ignored and the amendments are made, the doctors vowed to take their case to any forum necessary, making any sacrifices required. The press conference culminated in a protest, with homeopathic doctors marching and raising slogans in support of their demands. This move underscores the determination of homeopathic practitioners to protect their field and patients.

WSSCK organises event on Handwashing Day



F.P. Report

KOHAT: Water and Sanitation Services Company Kohat (WSSCK) celebrated World Handwashing Day on Tuesday. Every year, on October 15, the World Handwashing Day is celebrated all over the world, which aims to highlight the importance of World Handwashing Day.

In this connection, the WSSCK Kohat organized an event at Government Girls Primary School Jangal Khel, The City

School, Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan School System and various activities in DA of Government Girls Primary School.

During the activities, schoolchildren were taught the correct way to wash their hands and told them how important it is to wash their hands with soap at different times of the day to stay healthy. Schoolchildren also presented speeches on the occasion of World Handwashing Day.

Manager Media and Communication Asma Ali

told the children during the activity that by washing their hands with soap at different times during the day, they can protect themselves from diarrhea, fever and stomach diseases. She explained to the children to adopt the habit of washing their hands after using the washroom and before eating. The official added that awareness about health is the need of the hour, and the use of soap to wash hands to prevent germs. There is a safe way, she added.

1122 rescues goat from 65 feet deep well

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Rescue 1122 Dir Lower on Tuesday rescued a goat that had fallen into a deep well in Manyal area of Maidan tehsil here. According to Rescue 1122, information was received about a goat, fallen into a 65 feet deep well. A rescue team was dispatched to the site to rescue the goat that was still alive.

The rescue team, while applying its professional techniques and gadgets, safely retrieved the goat from the deep well and handed it over to the owner. The area people thanked the rescue team for their intine action and professional capabilities.

District admn commits for public facilitation: In order to solve the public problems under the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa public agenda, District administration organized 'kuli Katcheri' in Lower Dir area Rabat in

which Deputy Commissioner Lower Dir, DPO and the officers of all the departments participated, on Tuesday.

The people openly explained their problems and piled up the problems. While answering the questions of the people, the officers of the relevant departments cried about the lack of funds. Former Jamiat-e-Islami provincial assembly contestant Shad Nawaz Khan, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Tehsil General Secretary Rehmanullah, PSF Hasanzeb Roghani, Maulana Ghani-ur-Rehman, PPP's Tariq Syed, Dr. Hamadzada, Kamil Khan, Maulana Rahatullah, Saifullah Khan, Maulana Rahatullah, and others spoke.

Shad Nawaz Khan expressed his opinion and said that the post of female DEO of the Education Department Lower Dir has been vacant for the last two years in the Government Higher Secondary School.

By demolishing government higher secondary school Rabat, students have been forced to study under the open sky for three years and the students' time is being wasted. There is no waiting room for Rabat's 50,000 population.

Therefore, it should be made functional by appointing a principal in Timergara Medical College as soon as possible. The roads of Rabat Dara have turned into ruins, so it should be constructed soon. While Urgent Passport is not being received even in a month despite submitting the fee for Urgent Passport, due to which people's visas expire. Laram top a beautiful place where the forest department planted trees without taking them into confidence, which created tension between the local people and the district administration and sent the local people to jail, so the government took the plantation owners into confidence.

Shutter down strike announced in Tank

F.P. Report

TANK: Political and civil organizations have announced a shutter down strike in Tank city on October 23 to record a protest against the shifting of district courts of district Tank and newly merged tribal districts of South Waziristan to Dera Ismail Khan (DIK).

A public meeting was held at District Bar Tank Monday and attended by the representatives of different political parties and civil organizations, journalists, local notables and lawyers. The participants strongly condemned the decision of Peshawar High Court to shift the district courts of Tank to district Dera Ismail Khan.

The meeting was addressed by the senior lawyer of the district Bar Muhammad Zahid Advocate, President Tank Action Committee Shams Mehsud, Chairman Saraiki Tehreek Mauz Arain, former member provincial assembly Ghulam Qadir Bitani, President Pakistan People's Party Tank

chapter Sardar Hidayat Ullah Gandapur, Haji Muhammad Zaman Bitani and others. The speakers said that shifting the district court to another district would add to the worries of people of the least developed district and demanded the Peshawar High Court to immediately withdraw its decision. A unanimous committee of 30 members was also formed during the meeting that would see the Chief minister and the governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the resolution of the issue.

It is worth mentioning here that the district courts have been shifted to the Dera Ismail Khan after a couple of attacks on the judges of the district courts at Tank-DIK avenue that followed a reported verdict of the Peshawar High Court to shift the district courts of Tank to Dera Ismail Khan for safety and security of the judges, however, as no written verdict could be publicly announced. The increasing incidents of kidnapping, and firing at Tank-DIK road have added to the miseries of the

commuters. Meanwhile, a staff transportation bus of Gomal University DIK, taking on board the academic staff of the university from DIK to Tank, was fired on near Hathala area on main Tank-DIK avenue on Monday, local social media reported. No loss of life was reported and the bus returned to DIK after being fired on, the reports said.

Pilferers booked

SARGODHA (INP): The Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) task force team caught six power pilferers, during an ongoing crackdown, here on Tuesday.

Task force teams raided at various areas of the district and caught six accused involved in electricity theft from main lines and meter tampering. The task force teams also imposed a fine of Rs 250,342 on pilferers.



China deploys 125 warplanes in military drill

TAIPEI (AP): China employed a record 125 aircraft, as well as its Liaoning aircraft carrier and ships, in large-scale military exercises surrounding Taiwan and its outlying islands, simulating the sealing off of key ports in a move that underscores the tense situation in the Taiwan Strait, officials said.

China made clear it was to punish Taiwan's president for rejecting Beijing's claim of sovereignty over the self-governed island. The drills came four days after Taiwan celebrated the founding of its government on its National Day, when Taiwanese President Lai Ching-te said in a speech that China has no right to represent Taiwan and declared his commitment to "resist annexation or encroachment."

"This is a resolute punishment for Lai Ching-te's continuous fabrication of 'Taiwan independence' nonsense," China's Taiwan Affairs Office said in a statement. Taiwan's Ministry of National Defense said 90 of the aircraft, including warplanes, helicopters and drones, were spotted within Taiwan's air defense identification zone. The single-day record counted aircraft from 5:02 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Shipping traffic was operating as normal, the ministry said.

Taiwan remained defiant. "Our military will definitely deal with the threat from China appropriately," Joseph Wu, secretary-general of Taiwan's security council, said at a forum in Taipei, Taiwan's capital. "Threatening other countries with force violates the basic spirit of the United Nations Charter to resolve disputes through peaceful means."

Presidential Office also called on China to "cease military provocations that undermine regional peace and stability and stop threatening Taiwan's democracy and freedom." A map aired on CCTV showed six large blocks encircling Taiwan indicating where the military drills were being held, along with circles drawn around Taiwan's outlying islands. Taiwan's defense ministry said the six areas focused on key strategic locations around and on the island. China deployed its Liaoning aircraft carrier for the drills, and CCTV showed a J-15 fighter jet taking off from the deck of the carrier. China's People's Liberation Army's Eastern Theater Command spokesperson Senior Captain Li Xi said that the drill was successfully completed. Li said the navy, army air force and missile corps were all mobilized for the drills, which were an integrated operation. "This is a major warning to those who back Taiwan independence and a signifier of our determination to safeguard our national sovereignty," Li said in a statement on the service's public media channel.

Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said at a daily briefing that China did not consider relations with Taiwan a diplomatic issue, in keeping with its refusal to recognize Taiwan as a sovereign state. "I can tell you that Taiwan independence is as incompatible with peace in the Taiwan Strait as fire with water. Provocation by the Taiwan independence forces will surely be met with counter-measures," Mao said. Taiwan's Defense Ministry said it deployed warships to

designated spots in the ocean to carry out surveillance and stand at ready. It also deployed mobile missile and radar groups on land to track the vessels at sea. It said, they had tracked 25 Chinese warplanes and seven warships and four Chinese government ships, though it did not specify what types of ships they were.

On the streets of Taipei, residents were undeterred. "I don't worry, I don't panic either, it doesn't have any impact to me," Chang Chia-rui said. Another Taipei resident, Jeff Huang, said: "Taiwan is very stable now, and I am used to China's military exercises. I have been threatened by this kind of threats since I was a child, and I am used to it." The US, Taiwan's biggest unofficial ally, called China's response to Lai's speech unwarranted. "This military pressure operation is irresponsible, disproportionate, and destabilizing," Pentagon spokesman Maj. Gen. Pat Ryder said in a statement. "The entire world has a stake in peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait, and we continue to see a growing community of countries committed to peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait." "We call on (Beijing's government) to act with restraint and to avoid any further actions that may undermine peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and in the broader region," State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said in a statement.

China held similar large-scale exercises after Lai was inaugurated in May. Lai continues the eight-year rule of the Democratic Progressive Party that rejects China's demand that it recognize Taiwan is a part of China.

5 beheaded bodies found next to road in Mexico

MEXICO CITY (BBC): The decapitated bodies of five men have been found on a road in central Mexico, in an area controlled by the powerful Jalisco New Generation Cartel. Police were called to a road near the town of Ojuelos, in Jalisco state, after plastic bags containing the remains were spotted by drivers.

Forensic experts have been trying to identify the victims, officials said. The brutality of the murders and the disposal of the bodies in a public place are clear indications of drug cartel involvement. National guard troops also attended the scene and found the remains wrapped in black plastic bags, the Jalisco state prosecutor's office said in a statement. None of the victims' ages could be determined yet and an investigation has been launched, it added. In Jalisco this year, official figures show that 1,415 people were murdered between January and September. More than 30,000 people are killed every year in Mexico, which has one of the world's highest murder rates. Last week, the mayor of a Mexican city plagued by drug violence was murdered less than a week after taking office. Alejandro Arcos was killed in Chilpancingo, a city of around 280,000 people in the southwestern state of Guerrero.

President Claudia Sheinbaum, who was sworn in last week, has ruled out a return to the war on drugs of previous administrations. She said her security plan would focus on gathering intelligence on cartels and addressing the social causes of violence - a strategy referred to as "hugs not bullets" by her predecessor in office, Andrés Manuel López Obrador. But the opposition is calling for tougher action against the gangs. Since the government first began to use the Mexican military against the cartels in 2006, hundreds of thousands of people have been killed and tens of thousands more gone missing.

Le Pen outlines her defence

PARIS (Reuters): French far right leader Marine Le Pen told a Paris court that she saw no real difference between domestic and EU political work, defending herself and her National Rally (RN) party against charges of embezzling EU funds.

Le Pen took the stand, in her first of three expected days of testimony. The widely awaited trial, which comes almost a decade after initial investigations started, threatens to undermine her party's efforts to polish its image ahead of a 2027 presidential vote many believe she can win. Le Pen, the RN itself, and 24 others - party officials, employees, former lawmakers and parliamentary assistants - are all accused of using European Parliament money to pay staff in France who were working for their party, which at the time was called the National Front.

Le Pen and her co-defendants deny the charges, saying the money was used legitimately, and arguing the allegations show too narrow a definition of what a parliamentary assistant does. Le Pen outlined the basis of her defence, telling the court that she believed a Member of the European Parliament's role was as much to push their party's agenda in France as it was to work on legislation in Brussels.

"I don't see the difference between a national MP's task and a European MP's task, except the scale," Le Pen said. "We're doing politics!" If found guilty, defendants could face a potential jail sentence of up to 10 years and a one million euro (\$1.1 million) fine. Those like Le Pen who were elected officials at the time risk being barred from public office for up to 10 years, while the unelected could face a five-year ban. If Le Pen was cleared, it would add credibility to her and political party, as they seek to leave behind a reputation for racism and anti-Semitism when her father, Jean-Marie Le Pen, 96, ran the National Front.



NAIROBI: Kenya Wildlife Service rangers and a capture team load an elephant into a truck at Mwea National Reserve.

Russia says it captured a Ukraine village in a push

KYIV (AP): Russia said it captured the village of Levadne in southern Ukraine as it probes for weaknesses along the war's roughly 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line, including in eastern areas that are the main focus of Moscow's military effort before winter arrives.

Ukrainian authorities, meanwhile, reported no nighttime Shahed drone attacks on the country for the first time in about six weeks, after saying five days ago they struck a Shahed storage facility in Russia's Krasnodar region where around 400 drones reportedly were being kept.

Levadne, in the Zaporizhzhia region, was seized by the Russians early on during the full-scale invasion, which began on Feb. 24, 2022, but was recaptured by Ukrainian forces during a counteroffensive in the summer of 2023. Ukrainian officials made no comment about Levadne's reported capture, though they had previously noted that the Russian army was assembling troops there and was conducting local assaults at the end of last week.

Ukraine's troops are straining to hold back Russia's military might, especially in the eastern Donetsk region, and don't have the manpower or weaponry to launch their own offensive. Though Russia's gains have been incremental, its steady forward movement is slowly adding up as the Ukrainians are pushed backward. In his nightly address,

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he was briefed on Russia's autumn and winter plans for attacking Ukraine and said North Korea was supporting Moscow. Ukraine says it needs more Western help to have a chance of holding back Russia's invasion.

Zelenskyy said that Ukraine's victory plan will be publicly presented to Kyiv's European partners and he dubbed it a strategy to compel Russia to come to a "just end to this war." Details of the plan have not been disclosed, but Zelenskyy has said the plan is about strengthening Ukraine "both geopolitically and on the battlefield" before any kind of dialogue with Russia. Russia illegally annexed four regions of Ukraine, including Zaporizhzhia, in September 2022. Russian President Vladimir Putin has demanded the withdrawal of Ukrainian forces from all four regions as the main condition for a prospective peace deal - a demand Ukraine and the West have rejected. Last week, the Ukrainian General Staff reported a direct hit on the Shahed drone warehouse inside Russia.

"The destruction of the Shahed drone storage base will significantly reduce the ability of Russian occupiers to terrorize peaceful residents of Ukrainian cities and villages," it said at the time. Ukrainian officials are keen to show the West that they aren't giving up the fight against their

much bigger neighbor. An incursion into Russia's Kursk border region has put Ukrainian troops on Russian soil for more than two months. The Russians are managing to retake some territory in Kursk but the Ukrainians are capturing even more, according to Oleksandr Kovalenko, a military analyst from Information Resistance, a Kyiv-based think tank. He told The Associated Press that the onset of winter fog and rain will affect the use of drones - an important element in Ukraine's military strategy. Ukraine has deployed sophisticated long-range drones to strike targets inside Russia, including airfields, oil refineries and ammunition depots. The Ukrainian Main Directorate of Intelligence said that it destroyed a Russian military transport aircraft, a Tu-134, at a military airfield in Russia's Orenburg region. Russia, meanwhile, struck port infrastructure in the southern Ukrainian city of Odesa with a ballistic missile, killing one person and wounding eight others, as well as damaging two merchant ships, officials said. The attack damaged grain storage facilities, cargo cranes, administrative buildings, port equipment and vehicles, Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister for Restoration Oleksii Kuleba said on his Telegram channel. Recent attacks on Odesa port facilities appear intended to disrupt the country's exports of grains and other food staples.

North Korea blows up parts of inter-Korean roads

SEOUL (AP): North Korea blew up the northern parts of inter-Korean roads no longer in use on Tuesday, South Korea said, after the rivals exchanged threats of destruction amid rising animosities over North Korea's claim that South Korea flew drones over its capital.

The roads' demolition is a display of North Korea's growing loathing of South Korea's conservative government, as its leader Kim Jong Un has vowed to sever relations with South Korea and abandon the goal of achieving peaceful Korean unification. Observers say it's still unlikely for Kim to launch preemptive, large-scale attacks on South Korea, because that would certainly invite massive retaliation by the more superior South Korea-US force that will pose a threat to his survival.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff also said South Korea's military fired within southern sections of the border in response to the explosions. Its statement did not give details on the firing. It could have been an attempt to avert cross-border fire by North Korea. It wasn't immediately known whether North Korea has made any response. South Korea's military said it is bolstering its readiness and surveillance posture in coordination with the United States.

Video provided by South Korea's military showed a cloud of white and gray smoke emerging from the explosion at a road near the border town of Kaesong and North Korea sending trucks and excavators to clear out the debris. Another video showed smoke emerging from a coastal road near the Korea's eastern border. North Korea has a history of staging choreographed events to destroy facilities on its soil as a political message.

In 2020, North Korea blew up an empty, South Korean-built liaison office building just north of the border in retaliation for South Korean civilian leafleting campaigns. In 2018, North Korea demolished tunnels at its nuclear testing site at the start of nuclear diplomacy with the US. In 2008, North Korea blew up a cooling tower at its main nuclear complex when earlier disarmament-for-aid negotiations with the US and others were alive. Destroying the roads would be in line with leader Kim Jong Un's order in January to eliminate the goal of a peaceful Korean unification, formally designate South Korea as the country's "invariable principal enemy" and define the North's sovereign, territorial sphere. Kim's order stunned many outside North

Korea watchers because it seemed to break from his predecessors' long-cherished dreams of unifying the Korean Peninsula on the North's terms. Experts say Kim likely aims to diminish South Korea's voice in the regional nuclear standoff and seek direct dealings with the US. They say Kim also likely hopes to diminish South Korean cultural influence and bolster his rule at home.

North Korea has accused South Korea of infiltrating 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 North Korea would face the end of its regime if the safety of South Korean citizens is threatened. North Korea put frontline artillery and other army units on standby to launch strikes on South Korea, if drones from South Korea are found over North Korea again. The North Korean Defense Ministry said that the entire South Korean territory "might turn into piles of ashes" following the North's powerful attack. North Korea's state media reported earlier Tuesday that Kim Jong Un called a meeting with his top military and security officials the previous day.

Ukraine urges Brazil to arrest Putin if he attends G20 summit

THE HAGUE (Reuters): Ukraine's top prosecutor said he had received intelligence indicating that Russian President Vladimir Putin may attend the G20 summit in Brazil next month, and called on authorities there to carry out a warrant for his arrest if he showed up. The International Criminal Court (ICC) in The Hague issued a warrant for Putin in March 2023, roughly a year after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, accusing him of the war crime of deporting children.

Russia denies allegations of war crimes and the Kremlin has dismissed the ICC warrant as "null and

void". When asked if a decision had been made on whether Putin would attend the meeting of the world's 20 leading economies, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters: "No. When a decision is made, we will let you know." Ukrainian Prosecutor General Andriy Kostin told Reuters in an interview that "it's important for the international community to stand united and hold Putin accountable." Due to "information that Putin may attend the G20 summit in Brazil I would like to reiterate that it's an obligation for the Brazilian authorities as a state party of the Rome

Statute to arrest him if he dares to visit," Kostin said, referring to the treaty that established the ICC.

"I truly hope that Brazil will arrest him, reaffirming its status as a democracy and a state governed by the rule of law," he said. A failure to do so risks setting a precedent under which leaders accused of crimes can travel with impunity, he said. Brazil sent Putin a standard invitation for the Nov. 18-19 meetings in Rio de Janeiro of the G20 group but has received no indication he planned to attend, according to two Brazilian government officials. The ICC's office of the prosecutor declined to comment.

Poland's leader defends his decision to suspend the right to asylum

WARSAW (AP): Poland's Prime Minister Donald Tusk defended a plan to suspend the right to asylum as human rights and civil society organizations argued that fundamental rights must be respected. Poland has struggled since 2021 with migration pressures on its border with Belarus, which is also part of the European Union's external border.

"It is our right and our duty to protect the Polish and European border," Tusk said on X. "Its security will not be negotiated." Successive Polish governments have accused Belarus and Russia of organizing the mass transfer of migrants from the Middle East and Africa to the EU's eastern borders to destabilize the West. They view it as part of a hybrid war that they accuse Moscow of waging against the West as it continues its nearly three-year full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Some migrants have applied for asylum in Poland, but before the requests are processed, many travel across the EU's

border-free travel zone to reach Germany or other countries in Western Europe. Germany, where security fears are rising after a spate of extremist attacks, recently responded by expanding border controls at all of its borders to fight irregular migration. Tusk called Germany's move "unacceptable." Tusk announced his plan to suspend the right for migrants to seek asylum at a convention of his Civic Coalition. It's part of a strategy that will be presented to a Cabinet meeting on Tuesday. The decision does not affect Ukrainians, who have been given international protection in Poland. The United Nations estimates that about 1 million people from neighboring Ukraine have taken refuge from the war in Poland. Dozens of nongovernmental organizations urged Tusk in an open letter to respect the right to asylum guaranteed by international conventions that Poland signed, including the Geneva Convention on the Status of Refugees and the Charter of

Fundamental Rights of the European Union, and Poland's own constitution. "It is thanks to them that thousands of Polish women and men found shelter abroad in the difficult times of communist totalitarianism, and we have become one of the greatest beneficiaries of these rights," the letter said. It was signed by Amnesty International and 45 other organizations that represent a range of humanitarian, legal and civic causes. Those who support Tusk's decision argue that the international conventions date to an earlier time before state actors engineered migration crises to harm other states. "The Geneva Convention is from 1951 and really no one fully predicted that we would have a situation like on the Polish-Belarusian border," Maciej Duszczczyk, a migration expert who serves as deputy interior minister, said in an interview on private radio RMF FM. Tusk has argued that Finland also suspended accepting asylum applications after facing migration pressure on

its border with Russia. "The right to asylum is used instrumentally in this war and has nothing to do with human rights," Tusk said on X. A spokesperson for the European Commission, the EU's executive branch, acknowledged the challenge posed by Belarus and Russia, and didn't explicitly criticize Tusk's approach. "It is important and imperative that the union is protecting the external borders, and in particular from Russia and Belarus, both countries that have put in the past three years a lot of pressure, on the external borders," Anitta Hipper said during a briefing. "This is something that is undermining the security of the EU member states and of the union as a whole." But she also underlined that EU member countries are legally obliged to allow people to apply for international protection. Hipper noted that the commission intends to "work on ensuring that the member states have the necessary tools to respond to these types of hybrid attacks."

Female unit gunning down Russian drones

KYIV (BBC): It's when dark falls over Bucha that the witches come out, because that's when the Russian attack drones start swarming. The Witches of Bucha, as they call themselves, are a volunteer air defence unit made up almost entirely of women, now helping to protect Ukraine's skies as more and more men are sent to the frontlines.

There are more drones to shoot down, too, often launched from Russia in waves to overwhelm the main defences ahead of a missile strike. The night-time shifts allow the women to combine their work defending their country with day jobs as teachers, doctors - there's even a manicurist.

Many say it's a way of overcoming the powerless-

ness they felt when Russian forces occupied Bucha region at the start of the full-scale invasion.

The horror stories of those weeks - including of killing, torture and abduction - only began to emerge after Ukrainian forces freed the area at the end of March 2022. "I'm 51, I weigh 100kg, I can't run. I thought they'd send me packing, but they took me on!" Valentyna recalls, a veterinarian who signed up with the drone-busters this summer and now goes by the callsign Valkyrie.

She talks about friends deployed to the front, and others who've died in the fighting, as part of what brought her to this role. "I can do this work. The kit's heavy, but we women can do it." Valentyna gets to

demonstrate that a few hours later as an air alert is activated across the region. Her unit scramble from their base in the woods, and we follow their pick-up truck through the darkness as it bumps towards the middle of a field. The team of four jump out to begin mounting their weapons. The machine-guns are from another era: two Maxims made in 1939, ammunition boxes stamped with red stars from Soviet days. Serhiy, the only man on the team, has to pour in bottled water by hand as a coolant.

This is all that's available: Ukraine's best kit is at the frontline, and it is constantly asking its allies for more. But the ancient weapons are impeccably maintained and the Witches say they've downed three drones since

the summer. "My role is to listen for them," Valentyna explains. "It's nervous work. But we have to stay focussed, to [listen out] for the slightest sound." Her friend Inna is also in her early 50s and out on one of her first deployments. "It's scary, yes. But so's giving birth, and I still did that three times," she laughs, telling me her own callsign is Cherry: "Because of my car, not the tomatoes." A maths teacher, she occasionally has to rush back from the woods to take a class. "I keep my clothes in the car. My heels. I put on some lipstick, teach the lesson. Then it's back in the car, quick change round the corner and I'm off." "The guys have gone, but we're here. What can't Ukrainian women do? We can do everything."

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Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

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Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

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

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

Genuine effort to bring peace to Gaza

IN a demonstration of true statesmanship and genuine effort to help end the Gaza crisis, Foreign Minister Wang Yi called both the Israeli and Iranian foreign ministers over the phone on Monday, asking the two sides to exercise caution and avoid further escalating the conflict.

In the latest move to mediate peace between the conflicting parties in the Middle East, Wang urged all sides to prevent the already grave situation from spiraling into a vicious circle where violence begets more violence.

More than a year since the Hamas attacks, Israel, as it proudly claims, is fighting seven enemies, all of which it portrays as "evil", on different fronts. The negative impacts of the Gaza crisis are clearly spilling over, leaving no party unscathed. The question is: For how long will the international community, the United States in particular, allow the rampage in Gaza to continue and let the region turn into a permanent war zone? Aren't the deaths of more than 42,000 Palestinians and the near total destruction of Gaza enough for the US and its Western allies to act?

Teheran and its regional proxies have denied having any intention to declare an open war against Israel, leaving Tel Aviv, and its sole unconditional supporter, Washington, to answer those questions. Israel's attacks on the bases of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon over the past few days show that the Benjamin Netanyahu government has no regard for international law and no interest in declaring a cease-fire. Nor is he interested in bringing home the hostages held by Hamas.

China is not a party to the conflict, and it has always wanted it to be settled through peaceful negotiations. And yet Israeli Foreign Minister Israel Katz urged China to adopt "a balanced and fair position in relation to the war", in his talks with Wang. The fact that China has all along been doing exactly that shows Tel Aviv needs to give some serious thought to the crux of the Middle East crisis: Allowing the Palestinian people to run their own country.

There are signs suggesting Israel is being guided by a desperate warmonger's calculation that as long as he can get US material and military assistance, Israel can make its control over Gaza a foregone conclusion, and set up a buffer zone on its north border with Lebanon.

Even if he succeeds in accomplishing that goal, the feud between Israel and its neighbors will not end. He cannot safeguard the security of the future generations of Israelis. Instead, he will make them intergenerational enemies.

The Palestinian question is at the core of the Middle East crisis. The first step toward ending the crisis, as China proposed, should be to call a comprehensive cease-fire in Gaza and ensure humanitarian assistance and relief materials reach the Palestinian enclave.

The second step should be to work out a mechanism which would allow the Palestinian people to govern Palestine. To that end, Beijing has tried its best to help end the factional feuds among the Palestinian people by persuading 14 Palestinian factions, including Fatah and Hamas, to jointly pledge to end their divisions and strengthen Palestinian unity by signing the Beijing Declaration in April.

The third step is to promote Palestine to become a full member of the United Nations and implement the "two-state solution".

China has close and stable trade and economic relations with both Israel and Iran. The three-step solution China has put forward shows it holds a neutral position on the Middle East conflict and at the same time it wants the conflict to be put to an end.

China has been reiterating that the path to lasting peace in the Middle East passes through the "two-state solution" for Palestine. Only the implementation of the "two-state solution" will help restore stability and peace in the region.

What China seeks to help achieve in the Middle East is by no means a makeshift plan to address some crying needs but a balanced, permanent and sustainable resolution to the crisis.

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.



Indus Water Treaty: New hot spot?

Air Commodore (Retd) Khalid Iqbal

DESPITE the periods of stress, the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) is well known as one of the most successful transboundary water-sharing mechanisms in the World. Recently it has entered another phase of 'difference of opinion' between the two parties to the treaty, India and Pakistan. The matter relates to individual preferences concerning dispute resolution channels.

The IWT has an inbuilt mechanism for dispute settlement that operates at three levels: meetings of Indus Commissioners (appointed by India and Pakistan), deliberation by a Neutral Expert (NE) on technical aspects only, and unlimited jurisdiction of the Permanent Court of Arbitration (PCA).

The NE is a one-person tribunal, hence easy to influence. The defending side can continue building the disputed structure while the NE takes up the complaint. By the time NE announces its verdict, the dam is, generally, near completion. India salvaged its Bhagliar dam by influencing the NE to 'let it stay for the sake of good governance' as 'it was almost complete'. The NE has circuitous procedures, spanning far beyond the usual completion time of typical dams that India plans to build.

The PCA is a three-person court, hence difficult to influence. Once a complaint is lodged, right on the first hearing further construction on the challenged facility is stopped

by the PCA, which is the right way. India wants to avoid adjudication by the PCA to avoid the stoppage of construction on challenged dams.

Pakistan is situated as a natural lower riparian in the Indus Water System. As a consequence, Pakistan is more likely to be a complainant in the cases related to upstream Indian structures which may either cause a significant change in the downstream water flow patterns or incorporate a significant water storage facility to gain control over the downstream release of water in terms of quantity and flow. Keeping these factors in mind, Pakistan has a natural preference for dispute settlement through Permanent Indus Commissioners and then the PCA. Since 2016, India has already stopped the meetings of Indus Commissioners. Now it wishes to bypass the PCA, and it is not without a sinister purpose. This is a part of Indian design to exert multi-sectoral squeeze to achieve strategic ascendancy over Pakistan.

In 2016, Pakistan asked the World Bank (which facilitated the IWT related negotiations) to facilitate an ad-hoc Court of Arbitration to investigate its concerns about the designs of the two dams, the Kishenganga and Ratle Hydroelectric Projects. Pakistan argued that these projects were not in consonance with the provisions of the IWT. Six weeks later, India asked for the appointment of a

Neutral Expert for the same purpose. The World Bank also appointed a Neutral Expert as well. India objected to the jurisdiction of the PCA, while at the same time appointed its arbitrators.

In response to India's objection, Pakistan took up the case for adjudication of PCA's jurisdiction, and India boycotted the proceedings. The petition was won by Pakistan. The PCA also ruled that India's non-appearance in the proceedings will not bar competence to continue the proceedings, issue orders, or render binding decisions. Even Before the Kishenganga dispute, PCA tribunals and the ICJ have ruled in various verdicts that the non-appearance of a Party in the proceedings would not affect the validity of its judgment, and the absent party remains bound by the eventual judgment.

The PCA emphasised the need for hydro-diplomacy in resolving such conflicts while encouraging treaty adherence. Soon after this verdict, India responded by indefinitely suspending the regular biannual meetings of the Indus Water Commissioners.

Now India finds itself in jeopardy, the binding verdict of the PCA will start coming in due course, hence India is struggling to riggle out of the implications of such decisions by the PCA. To accomplish this, India has written four formal letters to Pakistan, in quick succession, to initiate Indus Water Treaty

(IWT) discussions.

India's stated motivations for revisiting IWT are "fundamental and unforeseen changes in circumstances including change in demographics; environmental issues warranting to accelerate the development of clean energy, etc." However, the prominent Indian newspaper 'The Hindu' has recently reported that India's "prime" focus is on reviewing the treaty's dispute settlement system'.

Pakistan must exercise caution while entering into parleys with India on the IWT issues. The proverbial camel may simply be posing to put its head in the tent. Any engagement with India on the IWT matters, beyond the Indus Commissioners' purview should be under the auspices of the World Bank. The IWT adequately safeguards Pakistan's water rights. Any tampering with it would mean reverting to a pre-1960 conflictual situation. If so, the IWT may become another hotspot between India and Pakistan. The spokesperson for Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has aptly responded to India's fourth letter on 19 September: "The two countries have a process of Indus Commissioners, and we feel that all matters concerning this treaty can be discussed in this mechanism".

Writer is Director at the Centre for Aerospace and Security Studies (CASS), Lahore Pakistan. He may be reached at info@casslhr.com

Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said: A Distinguished personality

Dr. M. Yakub Mughul

SHAHEED Hakim Mohammed Said, former Governor of Sindh, a renowned Hakim (physician) of international repute, Chancellor of Hamdard University, President Hamdard Foundation Pakistan and Chairman Hamdard Laboratories (Waqf) Pakistan was a distinguished scholar and humanist. He was strictly a man of principles with extraordinary sense of time management.

He was a multifaceted personality.

Hakim Said was born on 9th January 1920 in Delhi in pre-partition days during the British rule in the Sub-Continent.

His father was associated with herbal medicine business and had established Hamdard Dawakhana in 1906 in Delhi, India.

Hakim Said got his early education in Delhi where he learnt Arabic, Persian, Urdu, and English and studies Holy Quran. At the age of 20, in 1940, he obtained the degree in Unani Medicine from Ayurvedic, and Unani Tibia College, Delhi.

After completing his education, he joined Hamdard and looked after the affairs of Hamdard herbal medicines business with his elder brother Hakim Abdul Hameed.

As a result of partition, he migrated from India to Pakistan in January 1948 along with his wife and daughter.

Before migrating to Pakistan his teacher Maulana Kazi Sajjad

Hussain told his brother Hakeem Abdul Hameed that let Hakim Said migrate of Pakistan, he will come back after facing difficulties. But Hakim Said did not go back, faced all the problems and achieved most of his goals, he set after his migration. Hakim Said rented a room for Rs. 12 a month where he started the practice of Tibb.

After practicing Tibb for a few years, Hakim Said established Hamdard Dawakhana and started manufacturing herbal medicines. Hakim Mohammed Said's hope for a bright future was the young generation of Pakistan. His mission was to provide them proper education so that they should be a true embodiment of the dreams and vision of Quaid-e-Azam, the Founder of Pakistan.

Hakim Mohammed Said was one of the greatest travellers of the world and travelled millions of miles throughout the world. Most of the journeys were in connection with Tibb and the healing process. He also wrote the account of his journeys and his travelogues were published. He had a number of friends in foreign countries particularly in Turkey, Germany, Kuwait, Iran and Lebanon.

His frequent visits to the United States of America also enabled him to develop friendly relations with a number of scholars there.

He was a social reformer and committed to

the cause of Pakistan and the young generation.

Hakim Said's life mission was to work. Once he had said that he had no work except to work.

Actually there is a saying of the Holy Prophet (P.B.U.H) that "Al-KasibHabibullah"-"The worker is a friend of Allah". No doubt Hakim Said spent his entire life for betterment of humanity. By doing this he had certainly become "Habibullah"---"Friend of Almighty Allah".

Hakim Said lived a very simple life. His ambition of life was to serve the people. Therefore, he devoted his whole life for this noble cause.

Hakim Said was a prolific writer, and wrote, edited and compiled over 200 books, journals in Urdu and English on Tibb, Medicine, Education, Islam and Pakistan.

Besides travelogues of the countries he visited, he also edited Journals such as "Hamdard Islamicus "Hamdard Medicus" and Journal of the Pakistan Historical Society. "Historicus", "Hamdard Sehat" and "Hamdard Naunehal". Hakim Said was also the Editor of "Payami" Urdu edition of Unesco's Journal "Courier".

Hakim Said participated in more than 100 International Conferences as a delegate from Pakistan. He was also associated with more than 30 Associations and Learned bodies.

On June 17, 1985 Hakim Said laid the foundation stone of Hamdard University where he performed the duties as its first founding Chancellor till his death.

Actually establishment of "Madinat al-Hikmah", "City of education, Science and Culture" in the outskirts of Karachi which today houses different institutions of higher education including Hamdard University was a great achievement of Hakim Said and he will be remembered for this great achievement for centuries.

One of his other great achievements was having Eastern medicine recognized at the WHO as Alternative Medicine.

Hakim Said was a great philanthropist and always helped needy people and supported worthy causes.

The tragic death of Hakim Mohammed Said, a social reformer and a great humanist is not only a loss to the people of Pakistan but also it was a shock for his friends and admirers through out the world. Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said will always be remembered for his meritorious services for humanity.

After his death the Government of Pakistan recognizing his meritorious services for 50 years in the field of Education, Tibb and Social Welfare awarded Shaheed Hakim Mohammed Said with Nishan-e-Imtiaz in 2000.

(The writer is HEC Eminent Scholar and former Director Quaid-e-Azam Academy Karachi.

Turning the right to foods for a better life into reality

Qu Dongyu

THIS year, the theme for World Food Day, which is marked on Wednesday, is "Right to Foods for a Better Life and a Better Future." It is a timely reminder that all people have the right to adequate foods.

But how do we get from a right to a reality? And why is it so important to think about not just having sufficient food, but also the diversity of diets? That is why I speak of "foods" in the plural, emphasizing this diversity, as well as food availability, food accessibility and food affordability for all.

Right now, the world's farmers produce more than enough food to feed the global population in terms of calories. Yet, about 730 million people are facing hunger due to human-made and natural disasters, including conflict, recurrent weather shocks, inequalities and economic downturns.

Another harsh reality is that more than 2.8 billion people in the world are unable to afford a healthy diet, which is a leading cause of all forms of malnutrition.

Simply put, almost one-third of the global population today is not getting the nutrients and micronutrients they need to thrive and, in some cases, survive. This means that the quality of life for roughly half the world is urgently in need of improvement.

We need a greater diversity of nutritious and affordable foods to be available in our fields, fishing nets, markets and on our tables, for the benefit of all. This is not just about populations' nutritional requirements, but also about ensuring that our agrifood systems are efficient, inclusive, resilient and sustainable, so that they can be respectful of traditional food cultures and healthy diets based on science and in line with personal preferences.

Another crucial consideration is the long-term health and sustainability of the environment on which we rely to produce these foods and which needs biodiversity to thrive.

And especially the youth — because a food-secure future is their right. They design and decide the future. All calls from the UN Summit of the Future are determined by their actions. Farmers can make a difference by practicing sustainable agriculture that enhances biodiversity and manages natural resources responsibly. Businesses can make nutritious and diverse foods available more affordably. Academia and civil society can hold governments accountable by collecting data, identifying areas for improvement, implementing science-technology solutions and measuring progress toward targets.

The "right to foods" will not in itself fill stomachs or put more diverse diets on plates. But it does help frame our collective aspirations for the kind of just and equitable world in which we want to live. It creates concrete obligations for governments and key partners to fulfill, and it should encourage all of us to do our part to ensure it is realized. This is the reason for action. Now.

At the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN, we are working hard to turn this right into a reality, even in the face of a range of challenges. In conflict zones, access to foods is being disrupted, leading to malnutrition and hunger. In these and other hunger hotspots, the FAO's efforts are focused on rebuilding agricultural infrastructure to ensure food availability and accessibility for long-term food security, with all tools and channels.

Aside from such emergency interventions, key FAO programs such as the "Hand in Hand" initiative, "One Country One Priority Product," "Blue Economy" and technical cooperation programs also target medium to long-term food security and nutrition across a wide range of countries.

In many places, dietary changes and market concentration driven by globalization have led to increased health issues, including obesity and diabetes. School feeding

programs supported by FAO play an important role in helping address these challenges, as they source food from local farmers and ensure children receive nutritious meals.

In many countries, across all regions, the FAO is working with fishing communities and local governments to expand social protection and economic inclusion of the most vulnerable by helping them diversify their production, build alternative income sources and connect to new markets.

Inflation, particularly during periods of economic instability, can make food unaffordable. In some African countries, for example, the FAO's initiatives include cash transfers to the poorest households, helping them afford food during times of hyperinflation.

The climate crisis poses a significant threat to global food security. Erratic weather patterns and natural disasters can devastate crops and livestock. For example, in some countries in Asia, the FAO has introduced climate-smart agriculture techniques to help farmers adapt to changing climatic conditions, ensuring consistent food production.

Furthermore, by working closely with governments, the FAO helps develop legal frameworks and has assisted in drafting national policies toward ensuring food security and nutrition for all.

But it is not just governments we call on to engage in this battle. Collective action can drive substantial change, with global collaboration from all sectors and all partners — governments, the private sector, academia, civil society and individuals.

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Summit of the Future are determined by their actions. Farmers can make a difference by practicing sustainable agriculture that enhances biodiversity and manages natural resources responsibly. Businesses can make nutritious and diverse foods available more affordably. Academia and civil society can hold governments accountable by collecting data, identifying areas for improvement, implementing science-technology solutions and measuring progress toward targets.

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Science and innovation, including IT, biotechnology, artificial intelligence and digital agriculture, will be a decisive force for the transformation of agrifood systems.

Finally, all of us as consumers can and should play our role in reducing our "foodprint," practicing healthy lifestyles, raising our voices to influence decision-making, reducing food waste and promoting food diversity.

This World Food Day, let us renew our commitment to build more efficient, more inclusive, more resilient and more sustainable agrifood systems that honor everyone's right to varied and nutritious foods.

Together, we can get back on track to achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development — our collective pledge to take action for people, planet and prosperity. We can accomplish this by transforming global agrifood systems to ensure the "Four Betters": better production, better nutrition, a better environment and a better life — leaving no one behind.

An Israeli attack on Iran’s nuclear facilities could backfire

SINCE Iran’s October 1 missile attack on Israel in response to the killing of Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah in Beirut and Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh in Tehran, there has been much speculation about how Tel Aviv will retaliate. Some observers have suggested that it could hit Iranian oil installations, and others, its nuclear facilities.

US President Joe Biden’s administration seems to oppose both options, but it has approved the deployment of a Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD) missile defence system and United States troops to Israel, possibly in anticipation of an Iranian response to an Israeli strike.

Meanwhile, Biden’s political adversary, Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump, has egged on Israel to “hit the nuclear first”. Trump’s son-in-law Jared Kushner has also suggested the same.

While Trump, Kushner and other staunch Israel supporters are happy to cheer on an Israeli strike on Iran’s nuclear facilities, they likely know very little about the consequences of another such Israeli attack that targeted an Iraqi nuclear site.

Israel’s destruction of Iraq’s French-built Osiraq nuclear reactor in 1981 actually pushed what was largely a peaceful nuclear programme underground and motivated Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein to invest in the pursuit of a nuclear weapon. An aggressive act against Iran’s nuclear programme will likely have a similar effect.

A ‘pre-emptive’ strike Iraq’s nuclear programme started in the 1960s with the USSR building a small nuclear research reactor and providing it with some know-how. In the 1970s, Iraq

purchased a bigger reactor from France – called Osiraq – and expanded its civilian nuclear programme with significant French and Italian assistance.

The French government had made sure that technical measures were in place to prevent any possible dual use of the reactor and it shared this information with the US, Israel’s closest ally. Iraq, which was a

Ibrahim Al-Marashi

ried out a strike on the Osiraq reactor, completely destroying it and killing three Iraqi civilians and one French engineer.

The attack provoked nationalist fervour among Israelis that helped Prime Minister Menachem Begin pinch a narrow victory in the elections three weeks later.

A trove of declassified

proved to be more valuable to Saddam than the hardware – the reactor – that he lost in the attack.

In the following years, Saddam’s regime made nuclear activities clandestine and started reaching out to nuclear powers like Pakistan to seek assistance in developing capabilities that could be used to produce a nuclear weapon. It also tried to rebuild the destroyed reactor.

carrying out this assassination and others in the past.

While these assassinations may have killed key cadres, they have inspired a new generation of Iranians to pursue nuclear science, part of an Iranian “nuclear nationalism” emerging as a result of the constant attacks on Iran’s nuclear programme.

The events since October 7, 2023 have further fuelled this sentiment. A poll conducted between February and May this year showed that not only has public support in Iran for a peaceful nuclear programme remained incredibly high, but that now there is a growing public consensus the country should acquire a nuclear weapon. Some 69 percent of the respondents in the survey said they would support it.

Clearly, Israel’s actions so far are only increasing Iranian determination to continue its nuclear programme. A strike on any of its nuclear facilities would make that determination even stronger. And if we are to go by the Iraqi example, it may drive the Iranian nuclear programme underground and accelerate it towards the development of a nuclear weapon.

Today, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu finds himself in his predecessor Begin’s shoes. He is also leading a government widely criticised for various failures, including the one on October 7, 2023. He is also desperate to show the Israeli public a “victory”.

But what Netanyahu is doing in Gaza and Lebanon now and will do in Iran will not bring victory to Israel. His strategy produces resentment in these countries and across the Middle East, which will help Iran and its allies rebuild swiftly whatever capabilities they lose to reckless Israeli strikes.

Zionist ‘safety patrols’ on campus have little concern for Jewish safety

Yoav Litvin

Palestine events in tactical gear. Both groups are expected to remain active on campus throughout the academic year.

Zionist activists with the Jewish Defense League (JDL), a Southern Poverty Law Center designated hate group whose stated goal is to “protect Jews from anti-Semitism by any means necessary”, have also been spotted at pro-Palestinian events at the university. The group, which was largely inactive prior to October 7, was deemed a “right-wing terrorist group” by the US Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) in 2001, Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported that several “counter-protesters” waved flags with the JDL or the Kahane Chai symbol on them at a small pro-Palestine march at the University of Toronto on September 6. Kahane Chai is a fascist Israeli group tied to JDL, which advocates for the forced expulsion of Arabs from Israel. Other participants in the Zionist action, the newspaper said, were seen wearing Kahane Chai caps and shouting chants calling for violence against Muslims and Palestinians, including “Let’s turn Gaza into a parking lot.”

The JDL has a long history of racist violence and terrorism. Its members bombed Arab and Soviet properties in the US and assassinated those it labelled “enemies of the Jewish people”, focusing on Arab American activists. They were linked to several 1985 bombings, one of which killed West Coast Regional Director of the American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee Alex Odeh; the 1994 Cave of the Patriarchs massacre when 29 worshippers were fatally shot in a Hebron mosque during Ramadan; and a 2001 plot targeting US Representative Darrell Issa in his San Clemente, California district office and the King Fahad Mosque in Culver City, California.

The presence of uniformed far-right Zionist “patrol teams” and JDL flags at the University of Toronto is alarming. It means that persecutory tactics long used by Zionists to curb anti-colonial resistance in Palestine and elsewhere are now being imported into North American university campuses, which in the past year became epicentres of anti-Zionist resistance and solidarity movements in the West.

The aim of these Zionist groups is twofold: fracture, weaken and defame intersectional resistance to white supremacy, which of course includes Zionism, and provide support for US-led Western imperial expansionism and genocide, spearheaded by Israel.

To divert attention away from their far-right ties, fascist roots and blatant aggression against anti-genocide student protesters, the Zionist vigilantes active at the University of Toronto duplicitously frame themselves as Jewish “self-defence” forces.

The concept of “self-

defence” has vastly different meanings for the colonised and the coloniser. For the colonised, “self” is tied to cultural identity, ancestral land and vital resources. Whereas for the coloniser, it is grounded in a constructed identity, land theft and the protection of stolen resources along with shifting blame for resistance to colonisation onto the colonised victims. Indeed, the leading Zionist militia from 1920 through the 1940s, the precursor of the “Israel Defence Force”, was named Haganah, meaning “defence” in Hebrew, and was a major force in appropriating Palestinian land and ridding it of its native population.

Zionist vigilante groups like the JDL employ the same “self-defence” rhetoric and methodologies used in Palestine since 1948 to justify offensive aggression and colonisation while appropriating Jewish victimhood and conflating it with Zionist criminality. They invoke fear in order to produce subservience and support for their eliminatory agenda. These groups rely on the concepts of deterrence and dehumanisation of Palestinians to justify extreme measures, framing their actions as defensive, thus obfuscating the potential illegality that comes with offensive aggression whilst responding to perceived threats with lethal force.

Zionist vigilante groups on Northern American university campuses target anti-genocide protesters under the guise of “Jewish defence” as a means of defending white supremacy in its Zionist and American forms and fracturing anti-colonial resistance led by Palestinian, Black, brown, Indigenous, immigrant and Jewish anti-Zionists.

In contrast, the anti-colonial alliance, both in North America and globally, is built on a shared understanding that white supremacist oppression is entrenched in systemic racism, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and imperialism. By presenting a united front against all forms of racism and capitalism, it challenges the colonial and neocolonial establishments. As part of this resistance, it rejects Zionism as a white supremacist, European-driven project, drawing parallels to other manifest destiny ideologies that have fuelled Western settler-colonial ventures, including in the US.

Regardless of the outcome of the upcoming US elections, white supremacy, Islamophobia and anti-Semitism continue to rise across North America. Additionally, the election discourse risks diverting attention from the threats posed by the increasing presence of Zionist groups with direct ties to far-right violence.

To challenge it, people, including Jews, must stand against all forms of ethnocentrism and exclusion. The Jewish community’s long history of trauma and persecution should inspire a unified pursuit of justice, freedom and equality for everyone, rejecting Zionist vigilante terrorism.

— Aljazeera

First EU-GCC summit is a historic moment

THE first ever summit between the EU and the Gulf Cooperation Council is around the corner. On Wednesday, the leaders of the two blocs will convene in Brussels at the level of heads of state and government to give new momentum to the relations between Europe and the Gulf. This summit will send a powerful message to our citizens and the world: we are committed to developing a strategic partnership for the 21st century.

This summit will build on our joint efforts to strengthen the already dynamic and long-standing EU-GCC relations. The EU-Gulf strategic partnership adopted in 2022 expressed unequivocally that this region is of strategic importance to the EU and provides concrete proposals and action plans to further accelerate our collaboration across a wide range of areas. These include energy, climate change, trade and economic diversification, regional stability and global security, humanitarian and development challenges, and closer people-to-people

contacts. To reflect this new level of partnership, in May 2023 the EU appointed its first special representative for the Gulf, Luigi Di Maio.

We are now ready to go further in facing together the current challenges in the global arena.

The summit comes amid heightened tensions in the region, from Palestine to Sudan and from Lebanon to the Red Sea. It is an opportunity to restate our mutual commitment to joint solutions to our shared challenges and to shape a better tomorrow for our citizens.

Our security is interconnected and interdependent. It is therefore of paramount importance to ensure strategic coordination between our regions. At the summit, we will explore enhancing cooperation on counterterrorism, maritime security, nonproliferation and cyber and hybrid threats, as well as responses to natural disasters.

This builds on long-standing security cooperation. A regional security dialogue was successfully launched in January in

Christophe Farnaud

Riyadh, followed in April by a joint high-level forum on regional security in Luxembourg, in the presence of EU and GCC foreign ministers. Second editions of these platforms are planned for 2025.

The EU and the GCC have shared security interests. We both want to join efforts to prevent further military escalation and push for political solutions through diplomacy and dialogue. The summit will confirm our determination to do more for peace and stability in the region. In particular, the recent launch, in New York, of a global alliance to advance the two-state solution, together with Saudi Arabia and other partners, emphasizes our joint commitment to supporting a lasting solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

We will also strive to coordinate better in the humanitarian field. The summit will be the occasion to develop our cooperation on disaster management and emergency response, in which both the EU and the GCC are major actors.

The summit will also seek to pave the way for a deeper cooperation in trade and investments. The EU is already a key economic partner of the Gulf, with a very robust bilateral trade in goods amounting to 170 billion (\$185 billion) in 2023. Additionally, the EU’s outward investments in the GCC, which reached 215 billion in 2022, make it one of the largest investors in the region.

The next EU-GCC business forum will be held in Doha next month. As a sign of support for the business communities in the Gulf, the first European Chamber of Commerce in the region was inaugurated in Riyadh in May.

There is vast potential for economic cooperation and the EU is ready to contribute to the goals of economic diversification and transformation envisioned by the Gulf countries.

The EU remains committed to discussions on a regional EU-GCC free trade agreement. It is, in parallel, exploring further options to enhance bilateral trade and investment between EU and GCC countries.

The green and digital

transition, sustainable energy, connectivity, education, research and innovation are also key areas for our future, to which the summit can give new impetus.

Importantly, people-to-people exchanges remain at the heart of our strategic partnership. To accelerate our exchanges, the EU adopted in April 2024 highly favorable visa rules for GCC nationals, who can now obtain five-year multiple-entry visas upon first application. The EU shares the interest of the Gulf countries to go further and we will continue to work toward visa-free arrangements between the Schengen area and all GCC member states.

Academic exchange programs, like Erasmus+, enable GCC students and researchers to study, work and live in Europe, bringing us closer together as people.

The EU-GCC summit will be a milestone in our relations. It is a great opportunity for both regions to come together, united by trust and shared interests, to shape a future that fosters peace, security and prosperity for us all.

Hype, hope, and hard truths of CPEC

Syed Kaleem Imam

AS the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) enters its second phase, it is time to take stock. After a decade of grand promises, billions of dollars in investments and countless ribbon-cutting ceremonies, the question remains: has the megaproject truly delivered, or are we merely giving it a new coat of paint?

CPEC was formally launched on July 5, 2013, during a visit by the Pakistani prime minister to China. The initial announcement laid the groundwork for a broader framework of economic cooperation between the two countries. Momentum picked up in April 2015, when Chinese President Xi Jinping visited Pakistan, marking the inauguration of the first set of CPEC projects with sig-

nificant agreements to enhance the initiative's scope and scale.

The vision was simple: a network of roads, railways, ports, and energy projects that would transform Pakistan into an economic powerhouse, all while giving China direct access to the Arabian Sea. On paper, it was a win-win for both nations. Fast forward to 2024, and the results are mixed.

Over the past decade, more than \$30 billion worth of infrastructure projects have been completed, including the Gwadar port, various power projects, and roads connecting Pakistan with Western China. Thirteen power projects have been completed, and a 4,000-megawatt electricity transmission line now supports roughly one-third of Pakistan’s power

grid. Transportation infrastructure, including key roads, ports, and even the Lahore Orange Line Metro Train, has seen significant improvements. China has poured over \$25 billion into direct investments, and if the official narrative is to be believed, CPEC has created more than 230,000 jobs.

Despite these successes, the road has been far from smooth. The development of nine planned Special Economic Zones, which were to be the centerpieces of Pakistan’s industrial revolution, has been hit by delays. Only four of these zones are currently under construction, and the expected industrial relocation from China to Pakistan has yet to materialize. Debt concerns have also cast a long shadow.

Security remains

another thorny issue, particularly in Balochistan, where key CPEC projects are based. Despite enhanced security measures, terrorist attacks on Chinese nationals and infrastructure projects have persisted, stalling progress and deterring potential investors. The recent attack on Chinese nationals in Karachi has once again posed challenges to Islamabad and put Pakistan’s security apparatus under severe scrutiny. With the Shanghai Cooperation Organization conference held on Tuesday and Wednesday, the timing couldn’t be worse. And security is not just a local issue. The West’s narrative around CPEC has been consistently negative. With the West overtly and covertly

pressuring Pakistan to back out of CPEC, the project has stopped being just an economic venture and turned into a battlefield of narratives and perceptions.

Enter CPEC 2.0, the next phase of this ambitious endeavor, promising a shift in focus from infrastructure to industrial cooperation, agriculture, socio-economic development, and information technology. It sounds promising — a sign that both Islamabad and Beijing are keen to address gaps and learn from past mistakes.

For CPEC 2.0 to succeed, both Pakistan and China need to make some tough decisions. First and foremost, political stability and good governance are essential. It is the responsibility of Pakistan’s civil government to take the lead on

this by ensuring that democratic institutions are strengthened and competent professionals are placed in key positions. CPEC cannot be treated as a political football, with each new government fiddling with its priorities and stalling progress. There needs to be cross-party consensus on the importance of this project to ensure it stays on track regardless of who is in power.

Secondly, it is time to prioritize. Instead of spreading resources thin across too many sectors, the focus should be on completing key projects that can deliver immediate benefits. Industrial cooperation and job creation are great goals, but they need to be backed by real, tangible investments and incentives.

Thirdly, local capacity-building is crucial. Pakistan’s industrial base

is weak, and its workforce is under-skilled. If CPEC is to deliver on its promises, there needs to be a concerted effort to invest in vocational training, technology transfer and capacity improvements. It is not enough to rely on Chinese expertise; Pakistan needs to develop its own. A country that cannot stand on its own feet is always going to lean on another.

Finally, security concerns need to be addressed head-on. The situation in Balochistan will not improve overnight; it needs a holistic approach that goes beyond simply deploying more troops. The rule of law and apolitical policing are the only answers. Engaging with local communities, addressing their grievances, and making them stakeholders in CPEC’s success is key to ensur-

ing the long-term viability of these projects. Simultaneously, countering hostile narratives and leveraging cultural connections will be essential in maintaining momentum and securing the trust of the local population. Law enforcement agencies should stop merely reacting to incidents and take security measures proactively. What’s needed is not just more officers on the ground, but a strategic overhaul of Pakistan’s approach to securing foreign nationals.

CPEC 2.0 is both a challenge and an opportunity. It is a chance for Pakistan to finally capitalize on its strategic location and build a more vigorous, diversified economy. But it’s also a reminder that the road to economic transformation is fraught with obstacles, many of them self-inflicted.



PESHAWAR: President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Fazal Moqem Khan presenting a shield to Ali Banafshekhah, Iranian Consul General in Peshawar.

SCCI for improving Pak-Iran trade

PESHAWAR (APP): President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Fazal Moqem Khan called for cementing bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Iran, said a release issued here Tuesday.

He was talking to Ali Banafshekhah, Iranian Consul General in Peshawar during a meeting held here at the Chamber House.

The meeting was attended by SCCI vice president Shehryar Khan, members of the executive committee Aftab Iqbal, Muhammad Ashfaq and Nadeem Rauf, Secretary General Muqtasid Ahsan, Secretary Sohail Anjum

and others.

Ali Banafshekhah who was accompanied by commercial attaché Hossein Mailki, said Iran wants to improve trade and economic relations with Pakistan and all brotherly and neighboring countries.

He said bilateral trade volume between Pakistan and Iran is very low, which needed to be improved by efficient exploitation of potentials of the both countries.

He said that Iran is ready to extend all kinds of cooperation to strengthen the mutual trade relations with Pakistan.

The meeting thoroughly deliberated upon prospects of enhancing mutual Pak-Iran trade, exchange of

business delegations, holding of joint trade exhibitions and hurdles in the trade.

SSCI President, Fazal Moqem assured full cooperation to strengthen the bilateral Pak-Iran trade. He emphasized that problems should be resolved by table talks to promote the business and trade between the two brotherly Islamic countries adding that SCCI would continue playing a role in promoting Pak-Iran relationship.

The meeting on the occasion agreed to continue joint working and holding meetings to improve the mutual trade between the two brotherly Islamic countries.

LCCI urges govt to notice FBR raids

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) Tuesday objected Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) raids on industrial units, which are disrupting the business environment.

"The LCCI has expressed concern over the raids under the pretext of combating sales tax evasion and urged the authorities concerned to take immediate action to stop these practices."

In this regard, LCCI President Mian Abuzar Shad held a meeting attended by a significant number of concerned taxpayers, who shared their experiences with FBR raids.

They explained that the lack of proper investigation and the abrupt registration of FIRs have left businesses in a state of fear and uncertainty.

Many businesses have been forced to divert their time, energy, and financial resources towards defending themselves in legal battles instead of focusing on growth and productivity.

The LCCI President alleged that FBR has been raiding industries without prior notice, and registering FIRs without issuing show-cause notices, investigation and demanding impractical affidavits from Chief Financial Officers (CFOs).

These affidavits require CFOs to guarantee that all of their buyers and suppliers, and even their extended networks, are complying with the law—a requirement that he described as both unjustified and impossible. He argued, how a CFO could be expected to take responsibility for the actions of entities not fall in their direct control.

Mian Abuzar Shad was of the view that these raids are stifling business operations at a time when Pakistan's economy is already under significant strain.

"The business community is a crucial driver of economic growth, and by creating an atmosphere of fear, the FBR is only impeding our progress towards economic recovery," he said.

SBP to Celebrate Women Entrepreneurship Day on November 19

E.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will celebrate Women Entrepreneurship Day (WED) on November 19, 2024. The event will be inaugurated by Governor SBP Mr. Jameel Ahmad at the SBP. The event is expected to bring together top officials from banks and non-bank institutions and working women associations to recognize the significant contributions of women entrepreneurs in the economy.

Besides other activities, the event will also include recognition awards

to high-performing banks that have consistently extended loans to female borrowers. Additionally, awards will be presented to women-led businesses across various categories, acknowledging their remarkable achievements in the entrepreneurial landscape.

The event will feature both on-ground and virtual activities throughout Pakistan, with commercial banks collaborating to create tailored products for women-led businesses. Initiatives will include workshops, awareness campaigns about SBP SME financing, and mentorship pro-

grams designed to empower potential businesswomen and enhance their loan eligibility.

WED is a global initiative aimed at acknowledging and supporting women who drive innovation, create jobs, and significantly contribute to economic growth. Despite their crucial role, a sizeable section of women faces impediments in accessing finance and business opportunities. Through this celebration, SBP and its partners seek to inspire more women to pursue entrepreneurship and succeed in today's competitive environment.

EFU Life Wins 'Brand Of The Year Award 2023-2024'



E.P. Report

LAHORE: EFU Life Assurance Ltd, a leading provider of Life, Takaful and Health insurance, has been conferred with 'Brand of the Year Award 2023-2024' for the Best Life Insurance Company by The

Brands Foundation. The Company has been awarded this title 12 times.

Mr. Mohammad Atif Khan, Regional Manager of EFU Life Assurance Ltd., received the award from the Governor of Punjab, Mr. Sardar Saleem Haider.

The 'Brand of the Year

Award' is a distinctive and premier recognition for the brand recognized as a champion in the industry on current market position and consumer preference.

It honors a single brand in each category every year which has excelled across all selection criteria. The

Company is committed to building the brand and is actively working towards increasing the insurance penetration in Pakistan, in line with its vision of 'no household should remain uninsured', by offering comprehensive and affordable financial planning solutions.

Technical Acceptance Ceremony for New Gwadar Int'l Airport held

E.P. Report

KARACHI: The technical acceptance ceremony was graced by Director General Pakistan Airports Authority (DG PAA) Air Vice Marshall (AVM) Taimur Iqbal and Deputy Director General Airports Dy DG Airports Engineer Sadiq Ur Rehman. The DG PAA AVM Taimur Iqbal presented appreciation shields

and certificates to key members of the Chinese Project Team. The event was also attended by Engr Faiz Ullah Khattak, Project Director of the New Gwadar International Airport, among others.

Mr. Ding Kaan, the Chinese Project Head, expressed his gratitude for the recognition and honor bestowed upon him and his team by the DG PAA. Additionally, the DG

PAA acknowledged the efforts of the PAA Project Team in successfully completing the New Gwadar International Airport Project.

Engr Faiz Ullah Khattak, Project Director of NGIAP, and Mr. Ding Kan, Project Director of China Airport Construction Group Co. Ltd, exchanged the signed minutes from the Technical Acceptance Meeting of the project.

PSX turns around to bullish trend, gains 578 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-Index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 578.96 points, a positive change of 0.68 percent, closing at 85,840.34 points against 85,261.39 points on the last trading day. A total of 422,107,359 shares were traded during the day as compared to 477,642,675 shares the previous trading day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 24.467 billion against Rs. 23.474 billion on the last trading day. As many as 443 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 202 of them recorded gains and 174 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 67 companies remained unchanged. The three top trading companies were PTCL with 37,868,367 shares at Rs 15.73 per share, Hub Power Company XD with 33,284,625 shares at Rs 98.83 per share and Kohinoor Spinning with 22,458,138 shares at Rs 7.59 per share. Unilever Pakistan Foods Limited witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 126.95 per share price, closing at Rs 17,477.45, whereas the runner-up was Reliance Pakistan Engineering Company Limited with Rs 75.64 rise in its per share price to Rs 876.30.

Public Administration Pledge to Foster an Enabling Business Environment for Women Entrepreneurs under CM AWAMI Agenda

E.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WCCI) Charsadda, and Centre for Governance and Public Accountability (CGPA), jointly organized a Public-Private Dialogue (PPD). This event brought together key stakeholders to discuss the challenges and opportunities facing women entrepreneurs in the Charsadda district.

The dialogue was attended by the WCCI President and executive council members, representatives from the district administration, including the Additional Deputy Commissioner of Charsadda, TMOs (Tehsil Municipal Officers), the district social welfare officer, elected tehsil council members, and officials from SMEDA, NIC (National Incubation Center), the banking sector, civil society organizations (CSOs), media, and local women entrepreneurs.

The PPD aimed to create a collaborative platform to identify barriers that hinder women entrepreneurs in Charsadda and propose practical solutions, promoting inclusive economic

growth. The dialogue also provided an opportunity to foster networking between the public and private sectors and increase support for women-owned businesses at the local level.

Ms. Mahvish Ayub, Head of Strategy at the National Incubation Center (NIC), delivered a compelling presentation on how collaboration and networking can significantly empower women entrepreneurs. She highlighted the pivotal role that NIC can play in facilitating business growth by fostering linkages between Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and SMEDA, especially for securing business grants.

Ms. Ayub emphasized NIC's commitment to providing training on innovation and modern business practices, which are crucial for preparing women entrepreneurs to compete in today's dynamic market environment. She also shared details about the registration process and how women entrepreneurs (WEs) can access NIC's training programs, including online classes that cater to their needs. This flexible approach allows women business owners to upskill

and adapt to the latest business trends, enhancing their competitiveness.

Moreover, Ms. Ayub underscored the importance of forming strategic partnerships with NIC to drive business growth and create stronger opportunities for women entrepreneurs. She encouraged the participants to take full advantage of the resources and tools provided by NIC, which include mentoring, networking opportunities, and access to business development services. By leveraging these avenues, women entrepreneurs can strengthen their businesses and expand their professional networks, positioning themselves for sustained success.

Rashid Aman, the Provincial Chief of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), delivered a comprehensive analysis of the development needs for Start-Ups and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) in Charsadda. He explored the regulatory frameworks that impact SMEs and pointed out the policy gaps that currently hinder business growth, particularly for new and emerging enterprises.

Mr. Aman emphasized the urgent need for reforms in the corporate sector, highlighting the importance of providing policy support for SMEs, facilitating local trade, and enabling businesses to participate in export markets. He also stressed the significance of forging partnerships, both locally and internationally, to unlock new business opportunities and drive growth.

In his address, Mr. Aman proposed a collaborative approach between the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WCCI) and SMEDA to foster the growth of SMEs, with a special focus on empowering women-led ventures. He outlined various ongoing initiatives by SMEDA that aim to support local businesses, including training programs, access to finance, and resources for market linkages.

Mr. Aman encouraged greater participation from women entrepreneurs in these initiatives and reinforced SMEDA's commitment to working closely with the WCCI to ensure that women-owned businesses can thrive and contribute more effectively to the local economy. His recommendations underscored the importance of partnership, strategic planning, and policy advocacy in fostering a more inclusive and supportive business environment for women entrepreneurs in Charsadda.

Ms. Mossarat Qadeem, CEO of PAIMAN, and Ms. Tania Saleem, President of the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WCCI) Charsadda, recommended a full-day session focused on exploring opportunities and strategies for the growth of women entrepreneurs (WEs). During the dialogue, Ms. Saleem addressed a key issue within women chambers, noting that many women chamber members often rely on the support of male chambers for representation, which she described as a non-democratic approach. She stressed that women should be empowered to independently choose their representatives, enabling WCCI to grow autonomously and foster a more open environment for the expansion of women-led business ideas.

Ms Mossarat underscored the critical role that women entrepreneurs play in revenue generation and economic development, citing examples from countries like India and Bangladesh, where feasible business policies have significantly boosted women's participation in the economy. Ms. Qadeem and Ms. Saleem emphasized that similar supportive policies in Pakistan could enhance the contributions of women entrepreneurs to the local economy.

They also highlighted the persistent barriers faced by women-led businesses, particularly in terms of capacity building and access to financial loans and grants. In response, they called for targeted financial support and capacity development programs to equip women entrepreneurs with the necessary skills and resources. Additionally, they urged for the adoption of inclusive policies that prioritize women entrepreneurs, allowing them to flourish in an increasingly competitive market, and contribute more significantly to the region's economic development.

At the event, Additional Deputy Commissioner Mr. Shehbaz Khattak provided a detailed briefing on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Urban Policy 2030, empha-

sizing its relevance to women-led businesses. He highlighted key aspects of the policy aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs, focusing on improving access to markets, infrastructure, and essential services that facilitate business growth for women in Charsadda.

Mr. Khattak affirmed that the district administration, aligned with the Chief Minister's Awami agenda, is fully committed to promoting gender equality and supporting women entrepreneurs. He reiterated that empowering women at the district level is a top priority, and the administration is actively fostering collaboration between government bodies and women-led enterprises to create a more conducive business environment.

Among the initiatives discussed, Mr. Khattak announced that the district administration plans to offer office premises to the Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (WCCI) in government facilities, making it more convenient for women entrepreneurs to operate. He also shared plans for a women-led business expo in Charsadda, set to take

place in November 2024, which will provide a platform for women entrepreneurs to showcase their products and services.

Moreover, Mr. Khattak expressed his commitment to addressing the chamber's registration issues with the Federal Directorate General of Trade Organizations (DGTO), ensuring that the WCCI's administrative and legal hurdles are resolved. This reflects the administration's proactive approach to empowering women entrepreneurs and promoting an inclusive business ecosystem in the district.

The Public-Private Dialogue concluded with participants expressing appreciation for the productive discussions and the district administration's support for women entrepreneurs. The event reinforced the importance of collaboration between the public and private sectors in addressing the challenges faced by women-led businesses and identified key areas for future action. The dialogue was a significant step forward in promoting economic empowerment, gender equality, and sustainable growth for women entrepreneurs in Charsadda.



In brief

Iftikhar fined for code of conduct breach

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Water and Power Development Authority's (WAPDA) skipper Iftikhar Ahmed has been charged 50 per cent of his match fees for a level 1 breach of the PCB's code of conduct for Players and Player Support Personnel. The incident occurred during his team's first semi-final fixture against Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) on Sunday in the ongoing President's Cup One-Day 2024-25 at the Jinnah Stadium, Gujranwala. Iftikhar, who violated the Article 2.8 of the PCB code of conduct, showed dissent at Umpire's decision after a leg-before appeal was turned down, during his teams' bowling innings against SNGPL. The charges were levelled by on-field umpires Muhammad Asif and Zulfiqar Jan while match referee Iqbal Sheikh conducted the hearing in which Iftikhar accepted the charge and the fine imposed on him.

Bangladesh suspends coach Hathurusingha

DHAKA (AFP): The Bangladesh Cricket Board said Tuesday it had suspended head coach Chandika Hathurusingha for misconduct including an alleged assault of a player. Trinidadian former all-rounder Phil Simmons has been appointed stand-in coach and will take the team up until the ICC Champions Trophy, set for Pakistan in February 2025. "You can't assault a national player physically," BCB president Faruque Ahmed said in a n n o u n c i n g Hathurusingha's suspension, without giving details of the alleged incident. There was no immediate response from Hathurusingha. The 56-year-old former Sri Lanka batsman was hired in 2023 for a second time as head coach, after a largely successful tenure with the side between 2014 and 2017. The suspension follows Bangladesh's tour of India, where they lost both Tests and all three T20s. Bangladesh next play South Africa at home, with the first of two Tests starting on October 21. They travel to the United Arab Emirates for three ODIs against Afghanistan starting November 6.

Russian Olympic chief announces resignation

MOSCOW (AFP): The head of Russia's Olympic Committee announced his resignation on Tuesday, a surprise move that comes as Moscow faces isolation from international sport over its Ukraine offensive. Stanislav Pozdnyakov, a five-time Olympic medalist, said in his resignation letter there were "timely" reasons why Russian sport needed a new leader, without going into detail. "Geopolitical challenges faced by our country dictate the need to optimise and centralise the management of key spheres of activity, including top-level sports," he said. A professional fencer, Pozdnyakov was elected as the committee chief in 2018 as Russia faced a string of doping scandals that saw it barred the following year from a number of Olympic sports for four years. Pozdnyakov condemned the International Olympic Committee (IOC) ruling, following Moscow's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, that Russian athletes could only compete at the Paris Olympics as neutrals and urged Russian athletes not to take part.



MULTAN: Pakistan batter Kamran Ghulam celebrates his debut century (100 runs) during day one of the Second Test Match between Pakistan and England at Multan Cricket Stadium. —APP Photo

Plan of breaking partnership properly executed: Potts

MULTAN (APP): England's Fast Bowler Matthew Potts said that the plan was made to prevent and break partnership was properly executed. Talking to media persons on Tuesday, Potts acknowledged the difficulty his team faced in breaking key partnerships. "We gave it our all today as fast bowlers, but breaking those partnerships was really tough". He reflected on his past bowling experience in subcontinent conditions, saying, "I have had some good experiences bowling in India, but the heat in

Multan was quite intense." He also shared that he had detailed discussions with veteran pacer James Anderson regarding bowling strategies for the pitch. "I still believe there was plenty in the pitch for seamers. A long partnership can change the game, but overall, everything felt fine while bowling," he remarked. Potts emphasized the significance of breaking partnerships, which can shift the momentum of a match. "As a bowler, it was crucial to break a partnership, and we are glad we eventually man-

aged to do that. When you come in with a plan, it was important to execute it to the fullest," he added. He also commented on a key moment in the game when Mohammad Rizwan was caught, saying, "I felt the catch off Rizwan was pretty clear, though the keeper and slip players did not sense it immediately. But breaking that partnership was essential." Despite the tough conditions, Potts expressed his satisfaction with his bowling efforts and remains optimistic about England's position in the game.

Eidevall resigns as Arsenal head coach

LONDON (Agencies): Arsenal head coach Jonas Eidevall has resigned. The north London club sit sixth in the Women's Super League (WSL) after winning just one of their opening four games of the 2024-25 season. Assistant coach Renee Slegers will take charge on an interim basis. "We thank Jonas for his commitment to the club and achievements here since joining us in 2021," sporting director Edu said. "We have great respect for the dedication and commitment he showed to our women's first team and recognise the role he has played in the growth and development of Arsenal Women." Eidevall signed a new three-year contract with the club last October after consecutive top-three finishes in the WSL, while also winning the Women's League Cup in the past two seasons. Arsenal failed to win any of their last three games under the Swede, drawing one and losing two. They suffered a heavy 5-2 defeat at Bayern Munich in the Champions League on Wednesday, before slipping to a 2-1 loss at home to Chelsea three days later. "Our focus will now turn to the process of appointing a new head coach, and in the meantime, supporting Renee [Slegers], as she takes interim charge of the team starting with two important fixtures this week," Edu added. Slegers' first match comes on Wednesday when Norwegian club Valerenga visit in the Champions League. Arsenal then make the short trip to London rivals West Ham, who are 11th and yet to win in the WSL this season. Slegers joined Arsenal as assistant in September last year having worked with Eidevall previously in Sweden. The pair were at Rosengard before Slegers succeeded Eidevall at the club in June 2021, going on to lead them to back-to-back titles. "I was shocked by the news and was very sad," Slegers said.

Japan hold Australia, S. Korea and China win in World Cup qualifying

SAITAMA (AFP): Japan denied Australia a famous away victory after a 1-1 draw in Saitama in World Cup qualifying on Tuesday while South Korea and China both won. Australia had never beaten Japan on Japanese soil but a Shogo Taniguchi own goal just before the hour gave the visitors a shock lead in front of a crowd of 60,000. Cameron Burgess then scored an own goal with less than 15 minutes remaining to hand Japan an equaliser that keeps them on top of Group C on 10 points from four games. Australia are second on five points, having taken one win and one draw in two games since new coach Tony Popovic replaced Graham Arnold last month. Also in Group C, China beat Indonesia 2-1 at home to revive their qualification hopes. The top two from each of the three Asian qualifying groups automatically reach the World Cup in North America. South Korea are on course for 2026 and remain top of Group B after a 3-2 home win over Iraq, despite being without talisman Son Heung-min through injury. Popovic said he was happy with the point in

Japan after "a very resolute display defensively". "They have a first 11 that are all players that play in top leagues in Europe," Popovic said of the hosts, who came into the clash with a perfect three wins. "To keep them to the minimum -- they will always have their moments because they have the quality -- it was a very good display." Australia's preparations were hampered when they arrived at Saitama Stadium 45 minutes later than scheduled after their team bus got stuck in traffic. "Not ideal preparations but we didn't use that as an excuse -- the players and staff were fantastic," said Popovic, who handed a first cap to 34-year-old midfielder Luke Brattan. "The players had 10 minutes to get ready and we just dealt with the situation and they showed a fantastic performance today." Substitutes make impact Japan dominated possession but struggled to create clear-cut chances in the first half. Australia's opener came against the run of play in the 58th minute when defender Taniguchi turned Lewis Miller's cross into his own net.

It was the first goal that Japan had conceded in nine games over two rounds of qualifiers for the 2026 World Cup. "We hadn't conceded any goals before this game and then we went behind to an own goal," said Japan coach Hajime Moriyasu. "The players continued to keep doing the right things and they handled it in a calm way. "We didn't expect it to happen but they didn't let it get to them and they dealt with it." Moriyasu brought on substitute wingers Keito Nakamura and Junya Ito after Australia's goal. Nakamura forced the equaliser in the 76th minute when his cross was turned in by Burgess. Both Nakamura and Ito caused Australia problems in a frantic end to the match but Japan could not find a late winner. "The result maybe wasn't what we were looking for but to come back from conceding the first goal at home and then get the equaliser is a positive," said Japan captain Hidemasa Morita. Japan are away in their next two qualifying games, against Indonesia and China next month. Australia are at home to Saudi Arabia before travelling to face Bahrain, who beat them 1-0 in the opening game of the group.



Kamran Ghulam hits sparkling century on Test debut

MULTAN (Monitoring Desk): Kamran Ghulam, who earlier became the 257th player to don the Test cap for Pakistan, hit a brilliant century in his first outing in the Test career as Pakistan finished the first day of the second Test match with 259-5 in 90 overs at the Multan Cricket Stadium on Tuesday. Kamran was dismissed for a well-made 118 off 224 balls hitting 11 fours and one six, in the 85th over of the day after having walked into bat in the 10th over with 19-2 on the board. Along with Saim Ayub (77, 160b, 7x4s), Kamran shared a 149-run third-wicket partnership as the duo took Pakistan out of trouble before Saim departed in the 56th over with the scorecard reading 168-3. Earlier, after Pakistan opted to bat first, Jack Leach drew the first blood as he castled Abdullah Shafique for a 28-ball seven in the eighth over.

An over later, Leach got rid of Shan Masood for just three as Crawley pounced the ball at short midwicket. Pakistan amassed 79 runs for the loss of just two wickets on the stroke of lunch with Saim and Kamran having brought up their fifty-run stand off 85 balls. Saim reached his third Test half-century off 97 balls before succumbing to Matthew Potts just an over before Tea break, caught by Ben Stokes at short mid-off. After Pakistan scored 94 runs in the second session giving away only one wicket, England began the third session with the vital scalp of Saud Shakeel (4, 14b, 1x4) as he was caught behind off Brydon Carse in the 61st over. With the scorecard reading 178-4, Mohammad Rizwan (37 not out, 89b, 4x4s) joined forces with Kamran to stabilise Pakistan's

innings as the duo put on a dogged 65-run fifth-wicket partnership. In the meanwhile, Kamran became the 13th Pakistan player to score a century on Test debut and only the sixth batter to score a hundred on men's Test debut while batting at No.4, when he hit Joe Root to midwicket for a boundary in the 74th over. Shoaib Bashir brought an end to Kamran's 74.4-over stay on the crease when he got one to hit the stumps in the 85th over with Pakistan 243-5. Salman Ali Agha (5 not out, 19b) and Rizwan closed the day for Pakistan with 259-5 on the board. Scores in brief: Second Test – Day 1 of 5; Pakistan won the toss and elected to bat first at the Multan Cricket Stadium. Pakistan 259-5, 90 overs (Kamran Ghulam 118, Saim Ayub 77, Mohammad Rizwan 37 not out; Jack Leach 2-92).

Karachi Kings on hunt for second HBL PSL title

KARACHI (PPI): The HBL PSL ninth edition is around the corner with some of the leading stars of limited-overs cricket raring to light up cricket grounds in Pakistan. With a new coach and captain, Karachi Kings enter HBL PSL 9 with oodles of optimism and they'll show faith in their local talent as well as global star power to rebound. Karachi Kings will get their campaign underway on 18 February against Multan Sultans at the picturesque Multan Cricket Stadium. They've snapped up West Indies superstar Kieron Pollard in their squad who will try to swing their fortunes with his all-round capabilities. They have also secured the services of Australia all-rounder Daniel Sams as well as retained seasoned campaigner Shoaib Malik. Pace bowling is further stacked with Mir Hamza and Anwar Ali who will provide squad depth given their vast domestic experience and international exposure as well. Karachi Kings managed to bag only three wins in the 2023 season and despite having the firepower in their ranks to spring more surprises, they could not coalesce as a unit. The team's ethos includes resilience and a fighting spirit, and they'll be aiming to rejuvenate this season and give Karachi fans a lot to cheer about. The 2020 HBL PSL champions are determined to hit the ground running early on as the highly-experienced Shoaib Malik will be looking to shine at the twilight of his career. Phil Simmons comes with a wealth of coaching experience. He coached West Indies and is at present the head coach of Trinbago Knight Riders in the Caribbean Premier League (CPL) and LA

Knight Riders in Major League Cricket (MLC). "The decision to bring in Phil Simmons as head coach was influenced by his impressive credentials, including being a T20 World Cup-winning coach. His experience in guiding teams to success at the highest level adds a valuable dimension to our coaching setup, and we look forward to harnessing his expertise for a successful campaign in the upcoming HBL PSL edition and to build a team for the future", said Salman Iqbal, owner of Karachi Kings. Kings retained Shan Masood as their captain who currently leads the Pakistan Test team. Karachi Kings' director Haider Azhar shed light on the decision to appoint Shan as skipper of the side. He said: "Securing Shan Masood for Karachi Kings was nothing short of a coup for us. His leadership qualities and captaincy feats are well-documented and we are proud to have a local boy from Karachi lead the team. On a personal note, having worked closely with Shan in the past, I believe he is the ideal captain for our team that will be undergoing a transitional phase and we expect him to be central to our project." On the objectives set for this year's HBL PSL, Haider Azhar said, "Our first objective for this year has been to set up a platform and building blocks for the future, all the while assembling a squad that would be competitive in the upcoming edition of HBL PSL. We have a healthy mix of experience and youth in our squad with five players under the age of 24 years, supported by seasoned campaigners and proven performers." Salman Iqbal, highlighting the importance and progress of the HBL PSL, said: "The progress

of the HBL PSL over the years has been phenomenal, not only elevating the standard of T20 cricket but also playing a pivotal role in the development of Pakistani talent. The league has become a significant platform for showcasing local talent, providing them exposure and opportunities at the international level." Talking about Karachi's fortunes for the upcoming season, Salman said, "Karachi Kings fans can anticipate a major turnaround this year. With a strategic rebuild, a balanced squad, experienced leadership, and a focus on exciting yet measured cricket, we are optimistic about our prospects in the upcoming season. The team is geared up for a competitive campaign, aiming to deliver performances that will make our fans proud and contribute to a successful journey in the ninth edition of HBL PSL." Karachi Kings fixtures for HBL PSL 9: 18 February v Multan Sultans, Multan Cricket Stadium; 21 February v Peshawar Zalmi, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore; 24 February v Lahore Qalandars, Gaddafi Stadium, Lahore; 28 February v Islamabad United, National Bank Stadium, Karachi; 29 February v Quetta Gladiators, National Bank Stadium, Karachi; 3 March v Multan Sultans, National Bank Stadium, Karachi; 6 March v Quetta Gladiators, Pindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi; 7 March v Islamabad United, Pindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi; 9 March v Lahore Qalandars, National Bank Stadium, Karachi; 11 March v Peshawar Zalmi, National Bank Stadium, Karachi.

Key players discuss their standards in competitive arena of HBL PSL

LAHORE (PPI): Since its inception in 2016, HBL Pakistan Super League (PSL) has gained a reputation for its high bowling standards. Owing to the smart bowling on display, the games are highly competitive; pacers and spinners turning up the heat to match up to the innovation employed by powerhouse batters that partake in this league. According to a PCB report, with each passing year, HBL PSL raises the bar with astute bowling performances. Abrar Ahmed, Arshad Iqbal, Naseem Shah, Hasan Ali, and Usama Mir comment on delivering at high stakes by adapting according to the volatility of T20 cricket. Abrar Ahmed – Quetta Gladiators "If you compare league cricket across the world, HBL PSL probably has the best bowling on offer. Our emerging players bowl at 140 KPH or higher, so the standards are very high. "Sometimes I have to bowl the new ball in the power-play, which is difficult. Other times, I am told to bowl in the death overs. But you have to see what the requirement of the team is and deliver accordingly."

Arshad Iqbal – Peshawar Zalmi "HBL PSL is known for the impressive local fast bowling talent it showcases. It is a tough platform to bowl in, especially because T20 as a format is challenging. Whether you are bowling the new ball or bowling at the latter stage of the innings, you cannot take your role easy." Hasan Ali – Karachi Kings "All the teams have an impressive pace bowling arsenal which makes the league more competitive as none of the games are one-sided. Because of this, we have seen the level of competition grow with each season." Naseem Shah – Islamabad United "HBL PSL is a big stage and hosts top-class batters from the world so it is challenging, and even more so if you are coming back from an injury. You have to give your best, especially if you are leading [the bowling attack]. A lot depends on you then; if you give a good start, the rest of your unit follows. "I believe while wickets help build pressure on the opposition but controlling your economy is equally important in T20 cricket. In modern T20 cricket, where you see 200 runs

being scored, if you get a couple wickets and give under 30 runs, you have bowled a good spell." Usama Mir – Multan Sultans "The expectations are high when you assume any lead role because a lot is at stake. I have been Multan Sultans' main spinner since last year. I particularly enjoyed last Multan leg – even though the conditions were challenging, I did well there. "It is tough to adapt to the four venues – especially Rawalpindi – which is a grueling ground for spinners. You have to be smart about how and where to bowl. It is a hard task but you have to rise up to the challenge and make sure you employ the best tactics for your team." Zaman Khan – Lahore Qalandars "The HBL PSL has played a great role in my development as a player. I have faced many scenarios in the matches that have helped me strengthen my skills and enhanced my temperament. The dressing room environment and the intensity of the competition in the league are top-notch; any young player like me can become a star by proving his mettle."



In brief

PTI needs to stay safe from dollar mafia

ISLAMABAD (PPF): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former MNA Fawad Chaudhry has said that PTI needs to stay safe from the dollar mafia. In a statement, he said that he had consistently advised his PTI colleagues to be cautious of certain YouTubers who, on behalf of Pakistan's enemies, are running campaigns against the country and its military. According to Chaudhry, these elements aim to create a divide between the people and the armed forces. However, he believes this agenda cannot succeed as long as Imran Khan remains in the picture. He added that as long as there are restrictions on meeting Imran Khan, the party will remain in disarray, as there is no real leadership in PTI. He also remarked that some YouTubers had entered the PTI but they lacked true leadership qualities.

ASPs delegation visit to CPO

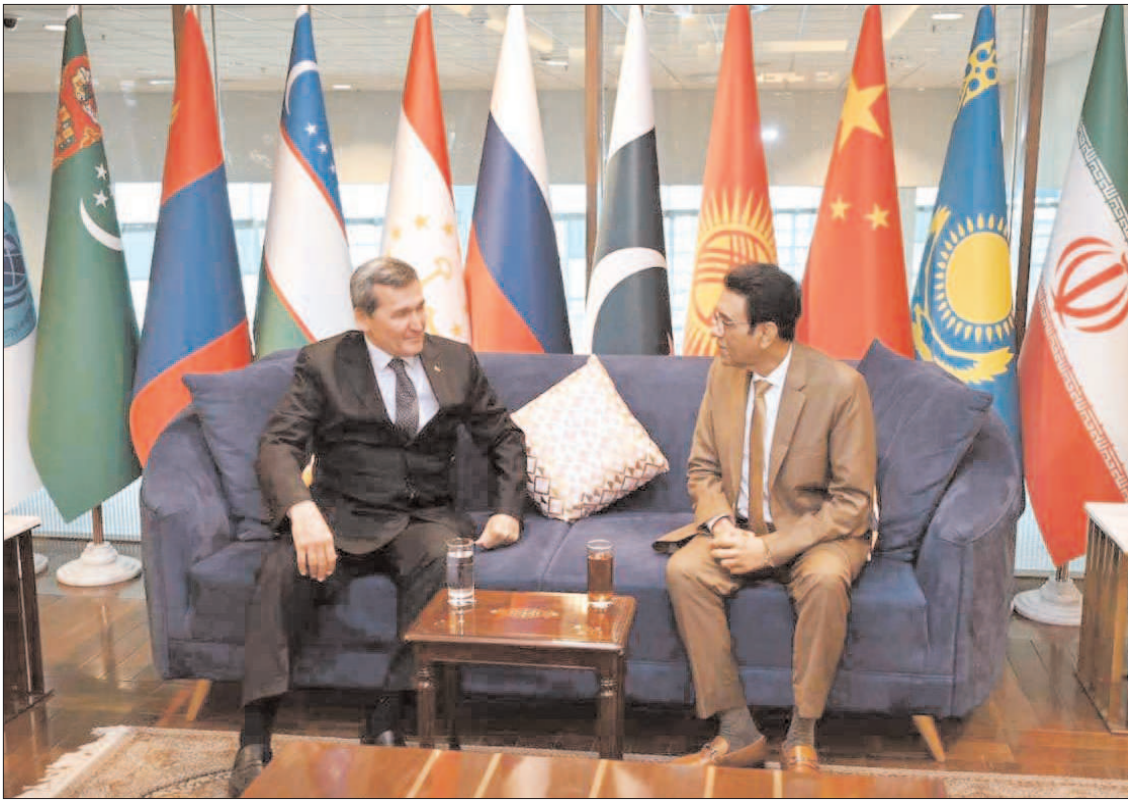
ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Police, on Tuesday, hosted a visit by the ASPs undergoing training at the National Police Academy to the Central Police Office (CPO), Islamabad. According to a police statement, Inspector General (IG) Police Islamabad, Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, delivered a special lecture to the trainee ASPs on building a positive society through community policing and maintaining law and order. He said during the visit, senior police officers briefed the delegation on the operations, security measures, and various functions of Islamabad Police. The delegation toured various units within the police lines, including offices, the quarter guard, roznancha, armory, various stores, uniform store, and a firing range, he added.

Police arrest three drug dealers

RAWALPINDI (INP): Police have arrested three drug dealers and recovered more than 3 kilogram drugs from their possession during crackdown here on Tuesday. According to police spokesman, Pirwadhai Police held two drug dealers namely Chanwaiz and Waleed Sajjad. During course of action, police seized 1.605 kg drugs from Chanwaiz while 1.250 kg drugs was recovered from Waleed Sajjad. Similarly, Wah Cantt Police apprehended Muhammad Kabir and confiscated 560 grams of Charas from his possession. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation has been started. SSP Operations, Flight Lieutenant (ret'd) Hafiz Kamran Asghar commended police teams for their swift action, stated that the accused will be presented in court with valid evidence, and they will face strict punishment. He made it clear that strict action will be continued against such anti-social elements.

IRSA releases 101,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 101,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 72,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1535.67 feet and was 137.67 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 38,300 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1202.55 feet, which was 152.55 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet.



ISLAMABAD: Turkmenistan, Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of Ministers, Rashid Meredov being received by Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training, Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui at Islamabad International Airport as he arrives in Pakistan to attend the SCO Summit. —APP Photo

Sherry urges Pakistan to harness momentum for regional connectivity

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior leader of the Pakistan People's Party & former Ambassador Senator Sherry Rehman Tuesday stressed that Pakistan has a historic opportunity to leverage momentum and achieve its connectivity goals, particularly with numerous dignitaries from various states participating.

In an exclusive interview, Senator Sherry Rehman highlights connectivity potential and said it is best time for Pakistan's Chance to Shine globally. Senator Sherry Rehman emphasized the importance of Pakistan leveraging its momentum to strengthen regional

connectivity, particularly through initiatives like the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and Gawadar.

Pakistanis are known for their genuine warmth and welcoming nature, which is deeply ingrained in the country's cultural fabric, she added.

This remarkable hospitality has the power to convey a strong message to the world, showcasing Pakistan's soft image and its people's kindness, she added. By leveraging its hospitality, Pakistan can improve its international image, promote intercultural harmony and create employment opportunities

for future, she mentioned.

She further said the immense potential for Pakistan to fortify its economic and bilateral relationships with fellow nations.

This presents a golden opportunity for Pakistan to strengthen ties with brotherly countries, fostering cooperation in areas such as trade, economy, defense, culture, education and people-to-people contacts, she added.

Sherry Rehman emphasized that Pakistan must play its important role effectively in regional connectivity, leveraging its strategic location and economic potential to foster cooperation and growth.

TikTok removes 78,827,465 videos for policy violations

ISLAMABAD (APP): In its ongoing efforts to foster a safe and positive user experience, TikTok has removed 78,827,465 videos for breaching its community guidelines.

Notably, 144,430,133 of these videos were removed through automated systems, highlighting the platform's innovative use of its detection technology to eliminate harmful content in real time.

According to TikTok Q2 2024 Community Guidelines Enforcement Report, over 30,709,744 videos were removed from TikTok in Pakistan, in the latest reporting period, as the platform continues to strengthen its content moderation systems to safeguard its diverse community.

Key findings show that 99.5% of these videos

were proactively removed before users reported them, with 97% taken down within 24 hours. These figures highlight TikTok's commitment to avoiding harmful content, ensuring a safer platform for Pakistani users, said a news release issued here on Tuesday.

The report sheds light on the platform's proactive approach to content moderation in Pakistan. This quarterly report provides transparency into the content and accounts removed during the reporting period for violating the platform's Community Guidelines.

With over a billion people and millions of pieces of content posted on TikTok every day, the platform continues to prioritise and enhance automated moderation technology.

This technological advancement enables TikTok to scale its moderation efforts and maintain a secure environment for its growing global community. With a proactive detection rate now at 98.2%, TikTok is more efficient than ever at addressing harmful content before users encounter it. The report also highlights a 50% reduction in the number of restored videos, reinforcing the accuracy and effectiveness of TikTok's content moderation systems.

As TikTok continues to invest in cutting-edge moderation technologies, its commitment to transparency and platform safety remains at the forefront, ensuring a secure environment for its diverse user base across Pakistan and globally.

ANF recovers 259 kg drugs in four operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting four operations across the country managed to recover over 259 kg drugs worth Rs 10 million and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Tuesday.

He informed that in an operation, 1.2 kg hashish and 165 grams ice were recovered from the possession of an accused rounded up from Super Highway Karachi. The arrested accused confessed to selling drugs to students of educational institutions.

In another operation, 252 kg hashish concealed for smuggling in Gwadar area was recovered.

502 grams heroin was

recovered from the possession of an accused netted in Korangi Karachi. 4 kg opium and 1.250 kg intoxicating tablets were recovered from Anarkali Bazar in Lahore and two accused were arrested during the operation. Cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against the arrested accused and further investigations are under process.

ANF intensifies crackdown on drug trafficking, smuggling with major arrests and seizures: Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) has ramped up its operations against drug trafficking and smuggling, making significant strides over the past 24 hours.

In a series of targeted

operations, the ANF arrested four suspects and seized a substantial 259.117 kilograms of drugs, with an estimated market value exceeding 10 million rupees.

A key focus of the ANF's latest operations has been combating drug distribution in educational institutions. In a raid on Karachi's Super Highway, authorities apprehended a suspect found with 1.2 kilograms of hashish and 165 grams of ice (methamphetamine). The individual reportedly confessed to selling drugs to students, raising concerns about the growing reach of narcotics into schools and colleges.

In other operations, the ANF intercepted 252 kilo-

IG Rizvi reviews foolproof security plans for SCO summit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Inspector General (IG) Police Syed Ali Nasir Rizvi, on Tuesday presided over a high-level meeting to discuss security arrangements for the "Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit" in Islamabad.

A public relations officer told APP that the meeting was attended by DIG Headquarters Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer and other senior police officials. During the meeting, IG Rizvi, reviewed the security arrangements and directed senior officers to implement more effective security measures.

The IG emphasized that security of the delegation must be strengthened, by effectively utilizing the modern systems of the Safe City Islamabad. He added well-prepared police teams will be deployed at all entry and exit points of the high-security zone.

He said during the delegation's movement, all major roads will be completely closed, and alternative routes will be provided at various intersections, keeping in mind the convenience of the public.

IG Rizvi further assured that the Islamabad Police will use all available resources to provide foolproof security to all delegations and will make every possible effort to uphold the dignity and honor of the country.

grams of hashish hidden for smuggling purposes in Gwadar. Additionally, a raid in Korangi, Karachi, led to the recovery of 502 grams of heroin. Meanwhile, in Lahore's bustling Anarkali Bazaar, authorities seized 4 kilograms of opium and 1.250 kilograms of narcotic pills, resulting in the arrest of two more suspects.

Pakistan considers China one of its closest friends: Gilani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani met with the Premier of the People's Republic of China, Mr. Li Qiang, on Tuesday and said that Pakistan considers China one of its closest friends, with both nations committed to mutual trust, respect, and goodwill.

The meeting, aimed at deepening the bond of friendship and enhancing bilateral cooperation, particularly in the fields of economics, trade, and investment said a news release issued by the Senate Secretariat.

He underscored the historic ties between Pakistan and China, tracing back over 2,000 years to the ancient Silk Road, which served as a bridge of friendship between the two ancient civilizations. He acknowledged the strong amity that has characterized Pakistan-China relations since the establishment of diplomatic ties in May 1951 and said that Pakistan was

one of the first countries to recognize the People's Republic of China.

Paying tribute to the visionaries who built this enduring relationship, including former Prime Ministers Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Benazir Bhutto, as well as Chinese leadership, he reflected on their contributions to solidifying ties between the two nations.

Recalling his tenure as Prime Minister, Gilani highlighted the importance of high-level interactions that have consistently strengthened bilateral relations. He also highlighted the crucial role of parliamentary cooperation, referencing recent visits by Pakistani delegations aimed at advancing this essential partnership.

Addressing the issue of security, he condemned terrorism in all its forms and reaffirmed Pakistan's commitment to ensuring the safety of Chinese nationals working on development

projects within the country.

He said that any attack on Chinese citizens would be considered an attack on Pakistan itself, underscoring the solidarity between the two nations in combating extremism and terrorism.

He also praised the robust defense cooperation between Pakistan and China, noting significant joint projects such as the production of the JF-17 Thunder fighter jet. He expressed gratitude for China's continued support in enhancing Pakistan's national defense capabilities.

On the economic front, the Chairman discussed the progress made under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which serves as a vital framework for strengthening trade relations. He noted the commendable growth in bilateral trade, with imports from China reaching \$13.50 billion and exports to China increasing to \$2.707 billion in FY24.

Over 200, 000 AMI meters installed in various areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has successfully installed over 200,000 state of the art Advanced Metering Infrastructure (AMI) meters so far in various parts of Rawalpindi City and Cantonment Circles.

Termining the AMI is a revolutionary initiative in power sector by the government, Project Director Moshin Raza Gillani said that this project is successfully continue in two operation circles of IESCO i.e. Rawalpindi city and Rawalpindi Cantt. As per latest report over 200,000 old meters have been replaced with AMI meters and expressed the hope that till January 2026 all old meters in Rawalpindi city Rawalpindi Cantt circles Taxila and surroundings would be replaced with AMI meter.

He said that AMI has been installed in areas of Chandni Chowk, Muslim Town, Ghangal, Dr Abdul Qadeer Road, Gulzar e

Quaid, PWD, Korang Town, Pakistan Town, Khana area, Sawan Garden, Media Town, CBR, Aghosh Town etc. Currently, AMI meters were being installed in Chaklala and Defence areas of Rawalpindi, he added. He said around 3000 meters were being replaced in daily basis.

Moreover, he said AMI meter were also being installed on industries and high losses feeders. This would anticipate towards uninterrupted power supply and reduction in line losses and power theft.

The Installation of AMI meter would also lead towards 100% accurate and timely meter reading, effective control on power theft, true estimation of power demand and supply, real time monitoring and control of electricity consumption, better recovery position, better and effective customer service, automated complaint registered of faulty meters to concerned field office, balanced distribution system and distribu-

tion transformers resultant in reduction of transformers and meters burnt complaints Moshin Raza Gillani said that this is a pilot project in Pakistan and IESCO has privileged to be a first power distribution company of Pakistan to implement this project.

He said that for awareness of the general public regarding the benefits of this technology AMI meters we have started awareness campaign at different forms and international experts are also the part of this technology. He said that being a pilot project our teams are facing some technical and operational issues and also receiving complaints from customers but our teams are handling all field issues and valuable customers complaints very professionally and swiftly.

He also requested the support of valuable customers which will surely lead towards timely completion of the project and its benefits will bring a positive change in the power sector.

Dengue tends to decline after continued spike

RAWALPINDI (APP): The long-spanned dengue rise has started declining as the rate of per-day positive cases is decreased in Rawalpindi district.

During the last three days, a total of 267 positive cases were recorded, which equates to an average of 89 patients per day.

According to the dengue statistical data shared by the District Health Authority, during the last three consecutive days, dengue-positive cases remained at 85, 87, and 95, which shows a marginal but continuous declining tendency in the dengue cases.

Beyond the last three days, the positivity rate was recorded as 110 patients per day during October 1-October 12, which put the district administration on high alert. An intensified and targeted anti-dengue campaign was organized after a 'Dengue Emergency' was declared in the district. The campaign is still underway, which has resulted in the declining trend in the dengue graph.

The dengue data regard-

ing punitive actions being taken against dengue SOP violators shows a zero tolerance policy was adopted by the authority in which approximately Rs. 20.0 million financial penalty was imposed, 1670 buildings were sealed, and 4328 FIRs were registered against those who irresponsibly committed violations.

Besides surveillance and detection in fields, the relevant authority also took actions against health officials showing negligence in performing their duties. Also, some government buildings were sealed, including IESCO, ET&NC, Railways, and Agriculture departments, for non-compliance with the prescribed SOPs. Leading the hectic indoor and outdoor anti-dengue activities, Dr. Asif Arbab Niazi, CEO of the District Health Authority, in a brief interaction with APP on Tuesday termed the decline in dengue cases as a result of collective efforts.

"We are rendering our best efforts in the fight against dengue endemic

through an inclusive, multi-pronged strategy.

"Particularly, following the directives of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, Health Ministers Khawaja Salman Rafique and Khawaja Imran, the focal person on dengue, and public representatives along with the district administration are playing their vibrant role," he said.

Dr. Asif also hailed the tireless efforts being made by the health officials. "The surveillance and monitoring teams are working very hard with the best of their abilities," he added.

He also highlighted the LHV's for their outstanding performance, especially those from Pothohar Town who regularly travel to other remote areas. To a question, Dr. Asif appreciated the response received from the citizens in cooperation with the health officials during the ongoing campaign. It is worth mentioning here that dengue has claimed six lives in the district, which the hospital resources claimed were late reported cases.

Tehreek-e-Jawanan Pakistan hails SCO Summit

ISLAMABAD (APP): Tehreek-e-Jawanan Pakistan (TJP) Chairman Abdullah Hamid Gul appreciated the 24th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) Summit held in Islamabad.

The fact that the best leaders from each member state are at this summit shows how important Pakistan is in building substantial economic and security partnerships in the area, the TJP Chairman said. Abdullah Hamid Gul, stated, "SCO is the most realistic place to talk about Eurasia's political-economic, climate, defense, and security situation. This year's event in Islamabad shows that Pakistan is a strong friend and essential partner in ensuring that member countries' economic growth is fair and can lead to long-term development," he said.

Chairman Gul also talked about how important it was for Pakistan to play an active part in achieving its goals within the SCO framework. This can be done by boosting economic integration, security

measures, and cultural exchange, which is essential for the region's social and economic growth. "Pakistan, as both the host and leader of the SCO, is responsible for starting activities that will be good for all member states, not just Pakistan," Gul said. Abdullah Gul remarked, "As we gather for the SCO Summit, I am profoundly inspired by the collective dedication and strategic insights shared by our distinguished leaders across the region. Each leader's contribution fortifies our shared objectives of fostering economic integration, enhancing security, and nurturing cultural ties."

Abdullah Gul stated that Chinese Premier Li Qiang's focus on critical infrastructural projects such as CPEC magnifies our endeavor to bolster regional connectivity, a vital route for our economic and geopolitical strengthening. Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin's commitment to regional security initiatives is pivotal as we collec-

tively seek robust mechanisms to safeguard our people and interests in a complex geopolitical landscape, he said. The participation of India's External Affairs Minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar highlights the significant role of diplomacy and work on climate change together, he added.

"Iran's First Vice-President Mohammad Reza Aref's emphasis on energy cooperation opens promising avenues for sustainable development, setting the stage for future energy security that benefits the entire region, Belarusian Prime Minister Roman Golovchenko's insight into expanding our technological and agricultural export capabilities presents new economic opportunities, enriching our regional trade landscape. Kazakhstan's Prime Minister Olzhas Bektenov has underscored the importance of strategic energy resource management, which is crucial for the stability and growth of our economies. Kyrgyzstan's Cabinet Chairman

Akylbek Zhaparov has brought to the forefront the critical issue of sustainable water resource management, essential for our environmental sustainability and agricultural productivity. Tajikistan's Prime Minister Kokhir Rasulzoda's focus on enhancing border security is commendable, as it addresses one of the fundamental needs for stability in our region. Uzbekistan's Prime Minister Abdulla Aripov's vision to expand the export of natural resources and agricultural products leverages our regional strengths and fosters economic diversity. Mongolia's Prime Minister Oyun-Erdene Luvsannamsrai's initiative to broaden market access for Mongolia's mineral resources will significantly aid in regional economic diversification.

Turkmenistan's Deputy Chairman Rashid Meredov has emphasized the creation of secure energy corridors, which are essential for ensuring energy flow across our nations," Gul said.

Three Afghan citizens killed in fire in Iran

TEHRAN (Khaama Press): Iranian media reported that three Afghan citizens lost their lives in a fire in Tehran, Iran. Iranian officials stated that the fire occurred on Monday, October 14, at the Shadabad iron market in Tehran. Authorities added that the identities of the victims have not yet been confirmed, but investigations into identifying the bodies are underway.

Over 55,000 Afghan Migrants return in recent month

HERAT(BNA): Over 55,000 Afghan migrants have returned to their homeland through the Islam Qala border in Herat in the past month, according to Mawlawi Hazrat Zaem Agha, the commissioner of the border crossing. Speaking to the Bakhtar News Agency, Agha reported that the deportation of Afghan migrants has markedly increased, with more than 2,000 individuals returning each day.

Taliban say they rejected demands contravening Islamic Sharia at Doha talks

KABUL (Amu TV): Taliban rejected demands they deemed in contravention of Islamic Sharia law during recent talks in Doha, according to Abdul Kabir, the Taliban's deputy chief minister for political affairs.

Kabir discussed the matter at a gathering in Kapisa Province, which was reported by Taliban-run national television. The report did not provide further details on his remarks.

The discussions in Doha, the most recent held in June, brought together representatives from various countries, though women's rights activists and civil society members were notably absent.

Key demands from participating nations included the reopening of girls' schools



and the removal of restrictions imposed on women's and girls' rights. Requests in Doha meetings, Kabir noted, were not accepted as they were viewed as inconsistent with the Taliban's interpretation of Sharia law.

Since their return to

power, Taliban have barred girls from attending school beyond sixth grade. At the conclusion of the latest Doha session, Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid reiterated that the matter of girls' education

remains an "internal issue" of Afghanistan and would be governed by the group's adherence to Islamic principles.

Global human rights organizations and the United Nations have repeatedly called on the Taliban to reverse these policies and reopen schools for girls. These groups continue to advocate for the lifting of restrictions on women's rights, which they argue are in violation of international human rights standards. The Taliban, however, have consistently maintained that their policies are aligned with Islamic teachings, resisting calls from the international community for broader freedoms for Afghan women and girls.

UNAMA Calls for int'l Support in Reducing Afghanistan's Disaster Risks

KABUL (TOLONews): The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), on the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, has called for greater international support for Afghanistan.

According to a statement by this organization, the people of Afghanistan are constantly facing threats from natural disasters and environmental and climate shocks, which claim lives every year.

In part of the UNAMA statement, it is said on the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, "we call for more international support for recovery and resilience."

Climate change-induced droughts, devastating floods, and earthquakes are among the most significant causes of natural disasters in Afghanistan.

Abdul Mohammad, a 72-year-old farmer from Uruzgan province, says that his agricultural lands were destroyed due to devastating floods, causing him heavy losses.

Abdul Mohammad told a TOLONews reporter: "I had four jeribs of land, and I planted crops, but I couldn't harvest them. The flood washed away the body of my land." Some of this year's flood victims also say that no organization has yet provided them with any assistance.

Rahmatullah, a farmer in Uruzgan, said: "This year, no organization helped us. Someone told me to plant wheat, but I said I won't because it won't yield anything." Hikmatullah, another farmer from Uruzgan, added: "We submitted our names to aid organizations several times, but so far, no organization has helped us, and we haven't received anything."

The Ministry of Economy of Afghanistan considers international assistance in the country's infrastructure as effective for reducing the risks of natural disasters. Abdul Rahman Habib, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Economy, said: "To prevent potential losses and deal with the consequences of climate change, diversifying livelihoods, increasing purchasing power through job creation, preventing environmental destruction, and managing surface waters through building check dams, water reservoirs, canals, and cold storage facilities are among our priorities."

October 13 is designated by the United Nations as the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction. In addition to challenges like poverty and unemployment, Afghanistan is also one of the most vulnerable countries to natural disasters such as floods and earthquakes.

Hanafi seeks global support to save Afghan youth from extremism



KABUL (Ariana News): Deputy Prime Minister for Administrative Affairs Abdul Salam Hanafi has requested the international community's cooperation with Afghanistan to prevent its young people from joining "sedition groups".

Speaking at an event on Tuesday in Kabul, Hanafi also said that if the international community coop-

erates with Afghanistan in the fight against drugs and the implementation of development projects, the neighboring countries and the world will be freed from drugs.

He also demanded the release of Afghanistan's foreign exchange reserves and stated that banking sanctions have caused traders to face challenges

importing medicines.

He stated that four decades of war, climate change, natural disasters and forced deportation of migrants have resulted in Afghanistan needing help from the international community.

He added that even in remote areas, mothers die during childbirth due to the lack of healthcare centers.

1.6 Million SIM cards registered in three months: Ministry

KABUL (TOLONews): Enayatullah Alokozay, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, said that the ministry has registered 1.6 million SIM cards across the country within three months.

According to Alokozay, they have increased the number of employees for SIM card registration to provide more convenience for the citizens of the country.

The spokesperson for the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology

said: "According to the information from the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, the Afghanistan Telecom Regulatory Authority (ATRA) Directorate has registered 1.6 million SIM cards in the past three months.

The ministry has managed this process well for the regulation of SIM card registration and the registration of telecommunications networks, which was one of the demands of the Afghan people. Additionally, due to the increase in employees in the SIM card registration

department, the process has sped up, allowing us to create ease for the people in the registration of SIM cards."

At the same time, some citizens consider the registration of SIM cards useful in reducing the level of criminal activities.

Hakimzada, a resident of Kabul, told TOLONews: "Registering SIM cards is beneficial both for security and for other reasons. The person responsible for the SIM cards must be accountable." Mohammad Ishaq, another resident of Kabul, said: "Our request from the

Ministry of Communications is that we have registered our SIM cards, but we still receive messages and when calls are made, the network says to register your SIM card. We want these messages to stop because they are somewhat annoying for us."

According to the spokesperson for the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology, there are a total of 25 million active SIM cards across the country, of which 13.9 million have been legally registered.

CSTO holds military drills in Tajikistan near Afghanistan border

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO) announced that it conducted military exercises at the Harb Maidon training center in Tajikistan, near the border of Afghanistan.

According to the CSTO, the drills, held from October 11 to 14, involved Russian, Kazakh, and Kyrgyz forces, with a focus on preparing them to combat illegal armed groups planning attacks in the region. A video released by the CSTO shows a convoy of tanks and various military vehicles deployed in Tajikistan as part of the exercise.

For the past three years,



regional organizations, including CSTO member states, have consistently expressed concerns about the threat of extremism spreading from Afghanistan into Central Asia.

This year, Kazakhstan holds the CSTO presiden-

cy and hosted another military exercise involving member states earlier this month. Additionally, representatives from more than 40 countries have recently raised alarms over the growing spread of extremism, radical reli-

gious ideologies, and racial discrimination during a meeting in Moscow, warning of potentially catastrophic consequences.

The increased focus on military preparedness by the CSTO highlights the escalating insecurity in the region, particularly with the persistent threat of extremist groups operating near Afghanistan's borders.

As concerns about regional stability grow, coordinated military and diplomatic efforts will be crucial in preventing the spread of extremism and ensuring security in Central Asia, especially in light of the deteriorating security situation in Afghanistan.

Cabinet takes action against low-quality fuel imports

KABUL (BNA): The cabinet meeting chaired by Prime Minister Mullah Mohammad Hassan Akhund convened on Monday, focusing on key issues affecting the nation, including the prevention of sub-quality fuel imports.

According to a statement from Arg, the meeting was the eighth of its kind since the establishment of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. During the session, several critical topics were discussed, leading to significant decisions aimed at enhancing the country's economic stability.

One of the primary outcomes was the formation of a committee, headed by Mawlawi Shamsuddin Shariati, the General Director of Monitoring Orders and Decrees. This committee has been assigned the task of conducting a thorough review of the Economic Committee's plan to curb the importation of sub-standard fuel.

They are expected to present a comprehensive report to the cabinet in the near future. In addition, the Ministry of Interior has been tasked with developing a plan concerning the importation and regulation of rickshaw vehicles within urban areas.

Environmental assessments begin for Mes Aynak Mine extraction

KABUL (TOLONews): The National Environmental Protection Agency (NEPA) said that assessments regarding the method of extracting the Mes Aynak Mine, in a way that does not harm the environment, have begun.

According to officials from the agency, the contracted company must begin the extraction operations for this project based on global standards.

Zainul Abideen Abid, Technical and Professional Deputy of NEPA, said: "The main goal of this project is the country's development, and environmental standards to prevent harm to people have been studied. After evaluating the pro-

posals, the necessary licenses will be issued."

At the same time, officials from the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum have pledged that the Mes Aynak Mine will be extracted according to standards, and following that, smelting and processing operations will also take place.

Hamidullah Habibi, head of the Mes Aynak project at the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, said: "Site preparation, the construction phase, excavation, processing, smelting, and site cleanup will each be carried out separately."

The technical deputy of the Chinese MCC company also said that the extraction of Logar's Mes Aynak Mine is one of

China's major projects in Central Asia.

Xiong, Technical and Engineering Deputy of the Chinese MCC company, which is the contracted company for the Mes Aynak project, said: "It is ensured that the Mes Aynak project will be beneficial for Afghanistan. Moreover, significant efforts will be made to promote economic development, increase the country's revenue, and create job opportunities for the Afghan people."

The contract for the Mes Aynak mine, signed with the Chinese MCC company for a period of 30 years, estimates that the copper reserves in this mine exceed 11 million tons.



Women-run online businesses increase in Herat

HERAT (TOLONews): The Herat Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industries said that online businesses run by women in the province have increased, with nearly 300 women and girls in Herat engaged in online trade.

According to the chamber, they have plans to introduce these women to online business opportunities through various programs.

Behnaz Saljoqi, head of the Herat Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industries, said: "The number of women involved in online business is increasing day by day. The number of online platforms these women use for trade has grown significantly. We have programs for these women to familiarize them more with e-commerce."

Some women entrepreneurs say that due to existing restrictions and challenges, online business suits them and has helped them grow their businesses in a short period of time.

Najiba Sadat, one such



entrepreneur, has been engaged in online business for almost a year. She takes online orders for food and delivers it to her customers. By setting up this small business, Najiba has been able to provide job opportunities for four women and two men.

Najiba Sadat told TOLONews: "Due to many restrictions on women, it wasn't possible to work in person. Working from home is safer, and I can manage both my household chores and my online activities."

I've had good results. My daughter has an online business, and seeing her success motivated me, as she has also been successful."

Khatira Jami, another entrepreneur, has been selling books online for several months. She takes orders from customers and imports the necessary books from Iran.

Khatira Jami, an online business entrepreneur, said: "I thought about what I could do under these circumstances to find a way

for myself. I'm happy that I turned to this profession. Since the day I started, girls have been accompanying me, and we are promoting a reading culture. I was motivated since I was in school, and now I am in a better situation."

Online businesses for women in Herat primarily operate through social media platforms. Many women and girls, after being deprived of education and work, have turned to this method of business.

Lahore students stage rally against alleged campus rape

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Progressive Students Collective (PSC) held an anti-harassment rally on Tuesday, a day after 28 students were injured in clashes with a college's security team and then with the police in Lahore during a protest against the alleged on-campus rape of a girl.

It, however, added that a first information report (FIR) of the incident had not been registered as the family members of the victim had not come forward to lodge it. The Punjab government also formed a "high-powered" committee to probe the incident. A notification issued by the CM Office said the chief secretary would head the committee, which also included the advocate general and secretaries of home, higher education, special education, and health-care departments.

Separately, Punjab police, in a post on X, said that if anyone had "any information regarding the alleged rape" in Lahore, they should "immediately inform the authorities via by either calling 15 or through the Women Safety App. "The name of the whistleblower will be kept confidential," the police said.

Enraged by the alleged incident, students mobilised on social media and staged protests outside different colleges in the city on Monday. During one of the protests, clashes broke out between the protesters and the security team of a college. Later on, the students also clashed with the police, with both clashes resulting in casualties. According to a statement issued by Rescue 1122, a clash broke out between security personnel and students at the Hafeez Centre Punjab College Campus.

On Tuesday, the PSC held a rally

from Government College University to Punjab Assembly. In a statement on X this morning, the group had called demonstrators to join the protest at 10:30am. The rally demanded a probe into yesterday's violence on students, the Punjab College rape case, and incidents of harassment at Lahore Women's College. They called for the formation of a committee comprising independent human rights organisations, student representatives, and judges.

They also demanded that an anti-harassment committee be formed on various campuses and representation of students, especially one female student, should be ensured. The rally's third demand was that an awareness campaign be started on laws and procedures related to harassment, with awareness guidelines included in the curriculum.

The director of the Punjab Group of Colleges, Agha Tahir Ijaz, addressed the alleged rape incident in a video statement on Tuesday. "We checked the CCTV records but did not find anything. We ourselves went to several police stations but no case was reported there," he said. "Police took with them all our CCTV records," he went on to say, adding that the college made phone calls to several students who were on leave, either for illness or for other purposes.

A hospital was named on social media, we checked several hospitals but could not find anything, the director said. Students asked for camera footage, all recordings are with the police, he added. "Students said the door to the basement was shut at the time of the alleged rape incident, but there are no doors at the basement of the Gulberg campus," the director said. "The basement has an open

entrance as vehicles are parked there."

He noted that the police had called in a security guard who was on leave and is still in custody. "The only purpose of arresting the guard was because of his mention on social media." We did not stop anyone from protesting, only the rioters, he said. "No girl or family has been identified on social media," the director said.

Meanwhile, a statement from a spokesperson for the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) said the watchdog's cybercrime wing for Lahore constituted a seven-member committee to probe what it said was the spread of "disinformation" related to the alleged incident. It said the branch had begun identifying those involved and was taking action against them.

A citizen of Lahore, Azam Butt, filed an application in the Lahore High Court against the alleged incidents of harassment across educational institutions. The alleged suicide of a girl at Punjab University was brought to light. The petition mentioned that female students had protested against harassment at a local government university, as well as protests against the alleged on-campus rape.

"Incidents of harassment of female students have been reported in various Punjab educational institutions. No action has been taken by the Punjab government over these incidents," the petition stated. "Protection of female students is the responsibility of the Punjab government," the petition said. It requested the court to order an investigation into the incidents of harassment. "The court should order the Punjab government to ensure the safety of female students."

Harris slams Trump as US election race heats up

WASHINGTON: US Democratic presidential candidate Kamala Harris has accused her Republican rival Donald Trump of being a threat to democracy, as the pair held duelling rallies in the critical battleground state of Pennsylvania.

Harris and Trump addressed their respective supporters, with Harris speaking in the city of Erie and Trump hosting a town hall in Oaks, a suburb northwest of Philadelphia. "A second Trump term would be a huge risk for America — and dangerous. Donald Trump is increasingly unstable and unheinged," Harris told the crowd, referencing recent comments in which Trump warned that the United States faced an "enemy from within".

Trump has leaned into increasingly incendiary rhetoric as the race for the White House heats up ahead of the November 5 vote. The former president has adopted dehumanising rhetoric about immigrants, and he also recently suggested the country faced internal enemies who could be addressed with military force.

"I think the bigger problem is the enemy from within," he told Fox News in an interview that aired at the weekend when asked about potential chaos on Election Day. "We have some very bad people. We have some sick people, radical left lunatics." He added: "It should be very easily handled by, if necessary, by [the] National Guard, or if really necessary, by the military."

Trump also has previously shared content on his social media platform suggesting that his political opponents were traitors who should face military tribunals. For years, Democrats have sought to portray Trump as a threat to US democracy, particularly after a mob of his supporters stormed the US Capitol on January 6, 2021, in an effort to prevent Congress from certifying the 2020 election results. President Joe Biden — who defeated Trump in that 2020 vote — said last year that the ex-president's Make America Great Again (MAGA) campaign was an "extremist movement that does not share the basic beliefs in our democracy".

But recent polls suggest Trump and Harris are locked in an extremely tight race for the White House, less than a month before the election. In recent weeks, Harris has been on a media blitz as her campaign pushes to appeal to key segments of the Democratic base, including Black men as well as Arab and Muslim Americans who have shown waning support for the candidate. At her rally on Monday, she showed clips of Trump's most recent comments as she warned against electing him to another term. — Ajazeera

KP CM for implementation of minimum monthly wages

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: KP Chief Minister Sardar Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has ruled out compromise on the rights of the labourers and directed the concerned authorities for the implementation of minimum monthly wages in any circumstances.

He issued these directives while presiding over a meeting of the Labour Department here on Wednesday. Besides, the Provincial Minister for Labour, Fazal Shakoor, the Secretary Labour and Advocate General and other concerned authorities also attended the meeting. The meeting took various steps and decisions for the welfare of labourers and workers of the industrial units and brick kilns.

The chief minister directed the authorities for

the opening of the bank accounts of labourers and workers of the industrial sector to transfer their salaries to them. The chief minister also directed the authorities to sit with the owners of industries and framed a comprehensive policy for the protection of the rights of labourers. He further directed for provision of protection to the employment of the workers of the industrial sector and a platform for the redressal of the complaints and prevention of injustice in this regard.

The chief minister further directed for fixation of a job quota for employment of the local labourers and its strict implementation. He on this occasion said that workers of brick kilns are met with cruelty and excesses and said that they will not allow the exploita-

tion of those workers in any circumstances and directed for special focus on the prevention of excesses with workers of brick kilns.

The chief minister said that the provision of justice and protection to the rights of such oppressed class of the society is the responsibility of the government and directed the concerned authorities to register brick kilns and compile data of labourers working in them. The chief minister also directed the authorities of the Labour Department to prepare a line of action to protect all rights of the brick kiln workers and ensure the provision of incentives announced by the government for them. He has also directed the speedy completion of the digitization process for better management of the Employees Social Security Institute (ESSI).



ISLAMABAD: Indian Minister of External Affairs, Subrahmanya Jaishankar being presented flower bouquet by children on his arrival at Nur Khan Airbase.

Salman expresses concern over govt amends plan

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Salman Akram Raja, the Secretary General of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), expressed serious concerns regarding the government's plans for mysterious constitutional amendments during an upcoming assembly session scheduled for October 18.

He asserted that the government lacks sufficient support to push through these changes, particularly highlighting the challenges surrounding the establishment of a constitutional court. Raja noted, "The biggest problem is creating a constitutional court," emphasizing that the amendments could potentially destabilize the political system.

He indicated that PTI's leadership is closely monitoring the situation and

preparing for a decisive response, stating, "We will not give any opportunity to the government." Touching on the topic of protests, Raja affirmed the right to peaceful demonstration, rejecting claims that a mob would disrupt the atmosphere. "If someone wants to protest, it is his constitutional democratic right," he asserted, condemning the government's heavy-handed approach to dissent, especially under the pretext of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) events.

He criticized the government's actions, which he described as coercive, and emphasized that the planned amendments could lead to a paralyzed governance structure. "The government has used the SCO for coercion," he stated, calling into question their legitimacy. Regarding PTI's internal dynamics, Raja confirmed

that the party remains resilient, with strong support from its members, including Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who has proposed forming a constitutional bench as an alternative to a full constitutional court. Raja also revealed that some PTI members are currently in hiding in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to fears of violence and abduction.

As the political climate intensifies, Raja reiterated the importance of strategic decision-making within the party, mentioning upcoming meetings of the political and core committees to discuss the next steps, including potential protests in Islamabad. "We will not be afraid of YouTube and social media; we will make decisions in the right direction," he concluded, signaling PTI's commitment to standing firm against the government's maneuvers.



ISLAMABAD: President Asif Ali Zardari welcoming the visiting Chinese Premier, Li Qiang, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Imran in good health: PTI chief

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: After a team of doctors from the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (Pims) visited Adiala Jail, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan on Tuesday shared an update on incarcerated party founder Imran Khan's health, saying: "Khan Saab is in good health and had exercised for an hour today."

Gohar's statement came after his party deferred its protest at Islamabad's D-Chowk on the SCO summit's inaugural day after Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi assured the party that a team of doctors would examine the PTI founder's health at the Rawalpindi central jail. The PTI chairman confirmed that two doctors — an ENT specialist and a medical specialist — visited Khan at Adiala Jail at 4pm today.

"We were informed a while ago that Alhamdullillah, Khan Saab is in good health and had exercised for an hour today," he said in a message on X, adding: "We shall get medical reports from them soon and I will share with you, InshaAllah." He also expressed gratitude to the PTI workers and supporters who were concerned about the party founder's health.

It was also learnt via sources that a team of Pims' doctors would visit Adiala Jail to examine the former prime minister. Additionally, Khan's private physician would also be permitted to meet him, the sources added. However, Khan's personal physician Dr Asim Yusuf was not allowed to meet him despite he waited outside the jail for more than an hour and also submitted his credentials to the security staff.

However, he returned from jail after not being permitted to meet the PTI founder. Dr Asim said that he was told that the authorities only allowed Pims' doctors to conduct the former prime minister's medical examination.

Pak-Russia commence joint drill

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan and Russia have commenced a joint military exercise codenamed Druzhba (Friend-ship) VII, marking the 7th bilateral joint counterterrorism exercise between the two militaries, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a statement on Tuesday.

According to the military's media wing, the drill is "aimed at refining professional skills through joint training, besides harnessing the historic military-to-military relations among friendly countries". "The two-week long exercise commenced on October 13 at National Counter-Terrorism Centre, Pabbi, with the participation of Light Commando Troops of Pakistan Army and Russian Military Contingent," the ISPR said.

According to the statement, the Commandant National Counter-Terrorism Centre graced the exercise's opening ceremony as a chief guest. The last military drill — Druzhba VI — was held at the Molkino Trg area of Krasnodar, Russia, in 2021.

Israeli forces ramp up Gaza assault as 55 killed

GAZA: Dozens of Palestinians have been killed in Israeli attacks across the Gaza Strip, including in Jabalia in the north where the Israeli military launched an offensive 11 days ago. At least 55 people were killed in the past 24 hours in the enclave, Gaza's Ministry of Health said on Tuesday, with at least 12 bodies recovered after an Israeli attack near al-Faluja in the besieged Jabalia refugee camp.

Mahmoud Basal, the spokesman for the Palestinian Civil Defence in Gaza, said seven of those killed belonged to the al-Sayed family. He said their bodies were buried in their family home. The other five bodies were recovered from the streets of the neighbourhood, said Basal.

In a separate incident, Israeli forces attacked the Birkat Abu Rashid area of the camp, killing at least three people and wounding several others, according to Al Jazeera's Anas al-Sharif, reporting from the scene. In the aftermath of the air attack, rescuers were seen frantically helping survivors exit from a heavily damaged building, with one man carrying an injured child.

Residents told Al Jazeera that troops are planting explosives-filled barrels into the ground in al-Faluja to destroy buildings and homes. Over the past year, Israeli troops have repeatedly returned to the Jabalia refugee camp, which dates back to the 1948 war surrounding Israel's creation. The attack on Jabalia follows Israeli orders to fully evacuate northern Gaza, including Gaza City. An estimated 400,000 Palestinians remain in the north, according to United Nations estimates.

The UN's human rights office said on Tuesday the Israeli military appeared to be "cutting off North Gaza completely from the rest of the Gaza Strip". The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) said, "Amid intense ongoing hostilities and evacuation orders in northern Gaza, families are facing unimaginable fear, loss of loved ones, confusion, and exhaustion. People must be able to flee safely, without facing further danger." An Israeli air attack destroyed several homes on al-Sinaa street in the west of Gaza City early on Tuesday, with two bodies recovered, according to the civil

defence. A search continues for 12 other people believed to have been in the houses at the time, it said.

Meanwhile, in central Gaza, four Palestinians were killed when a house was struck in the Nuseirat camp belonging to the al-Salhi family, the civil defence said. In southern Gaza, at least 10 people from a family were killed and many others wounded in Bani Suheila in eastern Khan Younis following an Israeli air raid on a house. "The killing machine hasn't stopped at all. All night long, heavy artillery and air strikes were carried out in the southern part of the Strip," said Al Jazeera's Hani Mahmoud, reporting from Deir el-Balah in central Gaza.

"They thought they were being protected and safe, but not any more. This has deepened the shattered sense of safety for everyone in eastern Khan Younis," Mahmoud said. In a separate attack, six people of a family were killed in Khan Younis's al-Fukhari district. The Health Ministry said on Tuesday that at least 42,289 people have been killed and 98,684 injured in Gaza in Israeli attacks since October 2023. — Aljazeera

Cadets of Pak Navy academy shine at Int'l Sailing Regatta

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Cadets of PNA Sailing team achieved a historic feat by securing Silver medal and overall second position in 79th International Naval Academy Sailing Competition held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. A total of nine teams competed from around the world in J24 Boat category.

The participating teams included Cadets from Naval Academies of Pakistan, Brazil, China, Italy, Portugal, Argentina, Colombia, Peru and India. Speaking on the occasion, the PNA team captain dedicated the victory to the quality training of Pakistan Naval Academy.

After securing first



position during International Sailing Championship in Sri Lanka earlier in August this year, this is consecutive second extraordinary performance at international level during last three months by

cadets of PNA. Chief of the Naval Staff congratulated the victorious team of PNA. He also lauded the efforts of PNA faculty and instructors for their back to back performances at international stage.

Israel strikes Lebanon

BEIRUT (AFP): Israel's military launched strikes Tuesday on eastern Lebanon, official Lebanese media reported, as Hezbollah fought Israeli soldiers after Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu vowed no mercy for the militant group.

The premier's pledge on Monday came a day after a drone attack by the Iran-backed Lebanese group on an Israeli base killed four soldiers, while volunteer rescuers said another 60 people were wounded. "We will continue to mercilessly strike Hezbollah in all parts of Lebanon — including Beirut," Netanyahu said on a visit to the base near Binyamina, south of Haifa.

Hezbollah said its "fighters clashed with" Israeli troops Tuesday who were trying to infiltrate on the outskirts of Rab Tlatin village. The group also said it launched missiles at soldiers and a barrage of rockets at northern Israel, while the military reported sirens blaring near the border. Israel's military, meanwhile, said its "troops eliminated dozens of terrorists in close-quarters combat"

and strikes over the past day.

Since Israel last month escalated its bombing in Lebanon before sending ground troops across the frontier, the war has killed at least 1,315 people, according to an AFP tally of Lebanese health ministry figures, though the real toll is likely higher. Israel launched multiple air strikes early Tuesday in the eastern Bekaa Valley, putting a hospital in Baalbek city out of service, Lebanon's official National News Agency (NNA) reported. The International Committee of the Red Cross's regional director, Nicolas Von Arx, appealed Monday for the protection of ambulances and other health facilities and personnel, calling attacks on them "deeply worrying."

Israeli strikes have targeted Hezbollah strongholds as well as other parts of Lebanon, including a northern Christian-majority village where at least 21 people were killed Monday, according to the health ministry. Anis Abla, civil defense chief in the southern border town of

Marjayoun, said rescuers were "exhausted."

"Our rescue missions are becoming more and more difficult, because the strikes are never-ending and target us," said Abla. The UN called Tuesday for a "prompt, independent and thorough investigation" into an Israeli strike in the northern Lebanese village of Aito which it said had killed 22 people. "What we're hearing is that among the 22 people who were who were killed were 12 women and two children," UN rights office spokesman Jeremy Laurence told reporters about Monday's strike, adding that this raises "real concerns with respect to ... the laws of war and principles of distinction, proportion and proportionality."

Israel says it wants to push back Hezbollah in order to secure its northern boundary and allow tens of thousands of people displaced by rocket fire since last year to return home safely. In Kfar Kara, a village in northern Israel, restaurant manager Yousef was shaken by the deadly Hezbollah strike on a nearby military base.