

Attack on check post repulsed
F.P. Report

BANNU: Police in Bannu have repulsed a late-night miscreants' attack on a check post making them run for their lives in Fatahkhel area, police informed on Friday. As per detailed, during late night hours, miscreants attacked Lora Pul, Fatahkhel police check post with heavy arms and rockets, however the police, already on high alert, effectively retaliated the attack.



@thefrontierpost

First national English daily published from Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Karachi and Washington D.C

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIXI

No. 265

Regd. No. 241

RABI-US-SANNI 15 1446 -- SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19 2024

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing a meeting regarding relief efforts in Palestine by Government of Pakistan.

Committee approves amendment draft

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The special parliamentary committee established for constitutional amendments has approved the draft, which will be presented at the cabinet meeting today (Saturday).

ANP boycotted the meeting, while PTI and JUI-F opposed the draft. The special committee's meeting took place at the Parliament House on Friday. The meeting was attended by Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, PTI's Amir Dogar, JUI-F's Shahida Akhtar Ali, PML-N's Irfan Siddiqui, MQM's Aminul Haque, PPP's Raja Pervez Ashraf, Sherry Rehman, Rana Tanveer, Senator Anusha Rehman, Chaudhry Salik Hussain, Ijazul Haq, Khalid Hussain Magsi, and others. During the meeting, PTI member Amir Dogar stated that constitutional amendments are the government's job.

"We are taking risks; some of our members are seeking refuge. Personal privacy is being violated, and forced legislation is being carried out. Maulana Fazlur Rehman supports our stance," he added. The ANP's amendment was dropped from the proposed constitutional draft. ANP boycotted the meeting because the clause to change the province's name was not included, and Aimal Wali Khan did not attend the meeting. ANP had proposed removing "Khyber" from the province's name and suggesting "Pakhtunkhwa."

Later, the committee formed a joint draft and approved it, but the suggestions from allied parties were not included. The committee decided that the draft would be presented for approval at the cabinet meeting tomorrow. After cabinet approval, it will be presented to the National Assembly and Senate.

Bilawal announces consensus on amends

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chairman of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, announced on Friday evening during a joint parliamentary party meeting that a consensus had been reached in the special parliamentary committee regarding Constitutional Amendments. He highlighted that the attendance of PPP members in Parliament was better than that of any other party.

Bilawal expressed his gratitude to the members for being present in Islamabad for this crucial session, noting their hard work in achieving agreement on the Constitutional Amendments. He emphasised the party's commitment to getting these amendments passed in Parliament, adding that one of the unfinished items from the Charter of Democracy would also be completed. He mentioned that the PPP, Pakistan Muslim League (N), and

Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) had already reached a consensus on the draft of these amendments.

Bilawal also addressed complaints raised by some parliamentarians, calling them unfortunate and strongly condemning them. He noted that Syed Khursheed Ahmed Shah had taken notice of the complaints and had brought them to the attention of the Speaker of the National Assembly. He further remarked on the historical collaboration between the PPP and JUI since 1973 for the development of the Constitution.

The alliance between the Pakistan Peoples Party and Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians has contested elections under the symbol of the arrow. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari clarified that all necessary paperwork had been completed to avoid confusion and instructed party members to vote in alignment with his position, stressing the importance of following

the party line.

Meanwhile, as efforts to build consensus among all political parties ahead of the highly anticipated tweaks to the Constitution continue, the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) has nominated its chairman, Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, as the party's parliamentary leader. The development comes at a time when members of the treasury benches are scrambling to win over the opposition to vote for the 26th constitutional amendment, which mainly focuses on judicial reforms.

Meanwhile, PPP leader Naveed Qamar has submitted the documents pertaining to the election of the party chairman as the parliamentary leader at the National Assembly Office. Under the constitution, the parliamentary leader has the authority to direct members to vote on constitutional amendments, finance bills and the election of the prime minister or speaker as per the party policy.

received two bodies and injured persons. Police added that local armed area people chased the assailants and shot both of them dead.

Terming it an act of terrorism, Deputy Commissioner Javedullah Mahsud said that they were investigating the incident, saying that certain elements were involved in violence. It may be noted that unknown gunmen had killed two persons in the same area in the same fashion a week ago. Police further said that intense firing still continued in the area while firing on passenger vehicles in Kanj Alizai area near Pak-Afghan border further aggravated the situ-

ation.

Meanwhile, the elders have said that continuous closure of main and link roads would lead to massive humanitarian crises due to acute shortage of edibles, medicines, petrol and diesel reserves in District Kurram. Tribal elders from the Turi and Bangash tribes have expressed concern that the continuous closure of roads has caused shortage of food and fuel supplies, raising the fear of a major humanitarian crisis. They said that suspension of 3G and 4G services had also caused distress for students and citizens, affecting studies and businesses alike in the area.

JUI-F denies claims of forward bloc in party

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) has firmly denied reports suggesting the formation of a forward bloc within the party in the backdrop of the proposed 26th Constitutional Amendment, reiterating that all their lawmakers will follow the party's direction on the matter.

The denial comes in response to reports suggesting that a faction within the JUI-F had emerged, consisting of four to five parliamentarians, with regards to the proposed the 26th Constitutional Amendment. These members are reportedly in favour of supporting judicial reforms as part of the proposed amendment. Speaking to media, JUI-F spokesperson and senior leader Aslam Ghauri dismissed the speculation, saying: "There is no truth to the claims. We are in regular contact with all our members."

However, he noted that out of the party's eight MNAs and five senators, only Senator Maulana Abdul Ghafoor Haideri has not been reachable currently, "but we are making efforts to get in touch with him". Ghauri categorically denied division within the party. He clarified that JUI-F Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman had given clear instructions to all members through notices to vote according to the party's official policy under Article 63(A) of the Constitution. Following a meeting with the PTI leadership late Thursday, the JUI-F chief reiterated that the government's initial draft of the 26th amendment was rejected by his party and it still remains unacceptable to him.

"We continue to reject the initial draft even today," he said, but also noted that "some issues are still open for discussion". Fazl also expressed his concerns about the alleged harassment of opposition members, saying, "On one hand, negotiations are taking place, and on the other, members are being abducted and offered large incentives."

Consensus reached with JUI-F, says Gohar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Barrister Gohar Ali Khan claimed on Friday that a unanimous decision has almost been reached with JUI-F chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on the issue of constitutional amendment.

Talking to media after a detailed meeting with JUI-F's bigwigs, he said decision was also reached yesterday. We will reach a decision shortly as the talks are still going on," he said. Gohar said the Maulana and the PTI have discussed in great detail some debatable clauses included in the constitutional package.

Responding to a question, he said the PTI would take direction from its founder and a meeting would be held with him soon to seek his opinion over the matter.

The Frontier Post

Shehbaz writes letter to Biden
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has written a letter requesting the US president to pardon and release Dr Aafia Siddiqui, says in media reports. In the letter, wrote to US President Joe Biden for release of Dr Aafia Siddiqui, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said "I met you in America and in my hometown Lahore. I have always found you a friend of Pakistan and its people."

Shehbaz reaffirms support to Palestine, Lebanon people — calls for donations to relief fund

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday, reaffirming Pakistan's support to the suffering people of Palestine, Gaza and Lebanon, urged the countrymen to donate generously to the relief fund, established by the government.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to review the relief efforts for dispatching the relief assistance for Palestine, Gaza and Lebanon, appealed the people to supplement the government's efforts and particularly the affluent people to donate wholeheartedly for the fund. He said the locals as well as overseas Pakistanis should send their donations to IBAN:PK11SBPD000000111111429 2 or Raast ID: 01111114292 to assist the suffering people of Palestine and Lebanon.

He told the meeting that Pakistan would soon dispatch another 3,000 tents and 12,000 blankets besides eatables and medicines for the people of Palestine and Lebanon. He sought a report from the Pakistan's ambassadors in the neighboring countries of Palestine and Lebanon - Egypt, Oman and Syria - on the required quantity of tents and blankets, also directing them to play their role to accelerate the supply of relief goods.

The prime minister condemned the impediments being created by Israel in the relief efforts and lauded the NGOs supplementing the Government of Pakistan's relief efforts. He said the government

would make no compromise on the quality of the relief items and asked the authorities concerned to dispatch the fireproof tents.

Expressing his concerns over the growing Israeli barbarism, he called for the international community's role to end the genocide of Palestinian people. He said the major reason behind the world war in the 20th century was the indifference of the world powers to the conflicts.

In the briefing, it was told that since October 8, 2023, 12 cargos had been dispatched to Palestine through six chartered, three PAF special flights and another three through the sea route. The consignments consisted of 3145 tents, 12625 blankets, eatables, milk powder and medicines. Besides, another 3,000 tents and 12,000 blankets were being sent through three flights soon.

The prime minister was informed that two batches of Palestinian medical students had reached in Lahore and Islamabad. Prime Minister Shehbaz asked the relevant authorities to make arrangements for Palestinian students to study in other disciplines as well, other than the medicine. Deputy Prime Minister Ishaq Dar, federal ministers Ahsan Iqbal, Ahad Khan Cheema and Attaullah Tarar, Advisor to PM Rana Sanaullah, SAPM Tariq Fatemi, chairmen of Higher Education Commission, and National Disaster Management Authority and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister

Shehbaz Sharif lauded the Pakistan Navy for successfully carrying out an operation in the North Arabian Sea in which 1.3 tons of narcotics were seized.

The prime minister, in a statement, said that the vibrant leadership of the Pakistan Navy led to the seizure of huge quantity of narcotics in the operation. He said that foiling the attempt to smuggle a huge quantity of narcotics was laudable. "The whole nation feels proud of the officials of the Pakistan Navy. The elimination of narcotics was essential for the welfare of humanity," he remarked. Prime Minister Shehbaz reiterated that the government was determined to extend all possible facilities to the Pakistan Navy in its mission to purge country of narcotics.

Moreover, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif lauded the Pakistan cricket team for winning the first home Test match against England after a long haul. Pakistan defeated England at the Multan Cricket Stadium and leveled the three-match series 1-1. The Green Shirts beat England by 152 runs in the second Test.

"Well done, Team Pakistan for winning the first home Test after a long haul with a historic win against England," the prime minister wrote on his X timeline. He also appreciated the "spectacular" performances by Sajid Khan and Noman Ali for claiming nine and eleven wickets respectively. "Remarkable team effort at display," Prime Minister Shehbaz remarked.

Election Act amendments can't void reserved seats ruling: SC

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The majority of the Supreme Court judges on Friday clarified the reserved seats ruling once again. The eight judges of the Supreme Court clarified this upon the request of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

According to the majority judges, the amendments to the Election Act cannot invalidate the decision of July 12 in which the apex court granted the reserved seats to PTI. The decision cannot be rendered ineffective based on the retroactive application of the amendments to the Election Act. Therefore, after the short order, the amendments made to the Election Act will have no effect, it added.

The majority judges stated that the short order granted relief to enforce the right of electors through political parties. "Since both the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and the PTI have sought a second clarification, we only wish to clarify and reiterate the well-established interpretation of the law," said the clarification.

According to the majority judges, the amendments made to the Election Act do not allow the retroactive

application of our decision. In its previous clarification on September 14, the top court had come down hard on the ECP for its "attempts to create confusion" on its July 12 reserved seats verdict, saying that the clarification sought by the commission was nothing but an attempt to "obstruct implementation" of the judgment declaring PTI eligible for reserved seats in parliament.

"Putting together the record placed before us [top court], and considering the same in light of the short order, leaves in little doubt that the clarification sought by the commission is nothing more than a contrived device and adoption of dilatory tactics," the eight judges had stated in the clarification. In its four-page clarification, the SC said having itself issued notices to the PTI through Barrister Gohar Ali Khan as its Chairman, the Commission "gave recognition to both the party and the office holder".

On September 23, hours after the SC issued a detailed verdict of the reserved seats case wherein the PTI was declared eligible for seats in assemblies, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar reiterated that decision of joining any political party by inde-

pendents is "irreversible", saying that the Imran Khan-founded party was not even a petitioner in the case. "Legal question still remains in place [...]" the detailed judgment didn't interpret how the reserved seats will be allocated to the party as per the current regulations," the minister had said.

The law minister had said Articles 51 and 106 of the Constitution warrant that independents will have to join a political party within three days of the publication in the official Gazette of the names of the returned candidates. Tarar had said parliament has amended the Sections 66 and 104 (a) of the Election Act, which is now the existing law in the country.

Referring to the PTI-backed returned candidates, the minister had said the independents, who have already joined the Sunni Ittehad Council, cannot join any other party, adding that parliament is fully empowered to make or amend laws. In its 70-page judgment issued today, the apex court had termed the PTI "a political party" and eligible for the seats' quota. It stressed that the lack of an electoral symbol does not affect its constitutional right to take part in elections.

Centre in contact with provinces to deal major security issues: Tarar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, National Heritage Attaullah Tarar on Friday informed the Senate that although after the 18th Constitutional Amendment, the maintenance of law and order situation was the responsibility of respective provincial governments but the Centre was also in contact with the provinces in major security issues especially at border areas to control drugs smuggling, and terrorism.

Responding to a point of order, the minister said the National Action Plan (NAP) was devised after Army Public School (APS) incident in Peshawar. Innocent children were martyred in APS attack which resulted forging unity among the entire nation to purge the terrorism from the country's soil, he added.

The federation at that time said that it would play the role of the elder brother, said the information minister. He said NAP was launched to deal with border smuggling, terrorism and gangs etc. He said that despite of the 18th Amendment, there was a meeting to discuss the national policy on the grave issues of law and order.

In the National Action Plan meetings, the Prime Minister himself went to Karachi several times, he said and added, in 2013, there were terrorist attacks every second day. "National Action Plan brought Ulema and media together and banned hate

speeches. The Muslim League played its role in this regard. The Ulama had assured full cooperation to bring peace in the country. The National Action Plan had been successfully implemented and terrorism was eradicated" he mentioned.

The federal minister said that some people started the debate of good Taliban and bad Taliban and they were brought back and settled unfortunately, today we are picking up dead bodies. In order to maintain law and order, Pakistan Army is sacrificing each day, he added. The then prime minister brought back the terrorists and settled them. He did not see that there is a National Action Plan and under the NAP, the Federation and the provinces had made sacrifices and eradicated terrorism, said the Information Minister. "Today these terrorists attack in Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa".

Ali Amin Gandapur spends 16 hours out of 24 hours on political activities, he said and informed who should establish CTD in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Why Safe City project was successful in Lahore and Islamabad, CTD and Forensic Lab were working successfully here, why no one paid attention to CTD and Safe City in Quetta and Peshawar, said the information minister.

"Our senior officer Captain Mubeen was martyred in Lahore. He did a lot of service in Quetta, because

of the Safe City cameras we tracked down the Afghans who planned to kill him and punished them", the minister lamented. Zainab's case is in Kasur, the accused involved in Zainab's case was hanged, he said. "While talking about the Donki incident, the minister said it is very sad that innocent workers were martyred in the incident. Sarfraz Bugti is a capable Chief Minister. I have full confidence in him, and together with the security agencies, they are making great efforts to solve problems like terrorism".

We had brought peace before, we will do it again, he ensured. He hailed that the credit of NFC award goes to President Asif Ali Zardari. Resources are provided to provinces under the NFC Award. It should be noted that no meeting was held on the National Action Plan from 2018 to 2022, he lamented. "We were taught that a political opponent is not a political enemy. We were taught that when an opponent falls from a crane, he goes to the hospital and gets treated," the information minister said.

In 2013, Nawaz Sharif himself went to the hospital and took care of PTI's founding chairman after he fell from a crane. After the 2013 election, he went to Bani Gala himself and talked about working together, said the information minister. This is the flow of time, yesterday you were sitting here, today we are sitting, tomorrow someone else will be sitting, he added.

INF(P) 2724/24

Governor remembers Oct 18 Karsaz tragedy; pays tribute to martyrs

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Faisal Karim Kundi on Friday remembered the tragic Karsaz incident and paid tribute to the martyrs.

In a condolence message, the Governor termed the incident as one of the most tragic events in Pakistan's history that claimed the lives of at least 180 deaths and 500 injuries.

He paid tribute to the martyrs and emphasized that October 18, 2007, serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by brave individuals in the struggle for democracy.

Governor Kundi highlighted that this event symbolizes the sacrifices made for democracy and reminds us of the necessity for national unity in combating terrorism and extremism.

He recalled how, on that day, people from all walks of life, women, children, and the elderly gathered at Karachi Airport to welcome their leader, a moment that was met with hostility from enemies of democracy, turning joy into mourning for the nation.

Reaffirming his commitment to the promotion of democratic values, justice, and peace, Kundi expressed condolences to the families of the martyrs, assuring them that the nation would never forget their sacrifices.

He urged collective efforts to fulfill their mission and uphold the principles they fought for.

It's worth mentioning here that the Karsaz bombing attack occurred on October 18, 2007 in Karachi.

It was an attack on a motorcade carrying former Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. The bombing occurred two months before she was assassinated.

Most of the dead were members of the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP).



PESHAWAR: Winner of 6 international level titles Squash player Ahsan Ayaz meeting with Advisor to KP CM Syed Fakar Jehan.

PTI's leader Umar Ayub calls for dialogue

PESHAWAR (INP): In a recent statement, Umar Ayub, the Leader of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and Leader of the Opposition in the National Assembly, urged the government to engage in dialogue rather than resorting to intimidation and manipulation regarding proposed constitutional amendments.

Speaking after his appearance in the Peshawar High Court concerning a bail case, Ayub criticized Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif and caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, challenging them to clarify allegations of oppression within the political landscape.

Ayub highlighted the arrest of many PTI members and alleged that offers ranging from one billion to three billion rupees have been made to assembly members to sway their allegiance.

He emphasized that any amendments to the constitution should involve discussions with opposition parties, including representatives from Bar Councils, rather than proceeding through coercive measures.

"The government does not have enough numbers for the constitutional amendment," Ayub asserted, noting that it is the government's responsibility to secure the required support in the House. He expressed his intent to attend upcoming National Assembly sessions, despite facing multiple legal challenges and a fear of arrest following protests at D Chowk.

The Peshawar High Court granted bail to Ayub and fellow PTI leaders Barrister Saif, Mashal Yousafzai, and Wazirzada for three weeks, with Chief Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim presiding over the case. During the proceedings, Ayub's concerns about political persecution were evident, as he stated, "I have been nominated in 22 cases... I want to go to the assembly session but there is a fear of arrest."

The court also approved Ayub's transit bail until November, allowing him some respite as political tensions continue to mount in the country.

Sughra Amir defends M.Phil thesis



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A Master of Philosophy (M.Phil) scholar Sughra Amir defended her thesis in Social Work from University of Peshawar, on Friday.

The M.Phil thesis titled with "Causes of Acid Attacks and Its Impacts on the Life of Survivors in Peshawar, Pakistan". The thesis was supervised by Assistant Professor Dr. Muhammad Ibrar Department of Criminology while External Examiner was Chairperson, Department of Rural Sociology, Agriculture University Peshawar Dr. Bushra Hassan Jan.

Humayun drives initiatives to empower inmates in province

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting was held with key industry leaders under the chairmanship of Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Prisons, Humayun Khan for enhancing the welfare prospects of inmates in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's prisons.

According to information, the meeting was attended by Hassan Nisar, CEO of Metrix Pakistan, and Huzaifa Bahram, CEO of Lets Grow, along with their teams, the Superintendent of Central Jail Peshawar was also present at the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the measures aimed at improving the welfare prospects of prisoners, particularly by facilitating access to both national and international markets for products developed within the prison system. The participants acknowledged the potential of these products to generate income for inmates while fostering community engagement and social entrepreneurship.

Additionally, the meeting highlighted the importance of offering Information Technology (IT) courses to educated youth in prisons, which would provide them with critical skills for better employment prospects after release and encourage continuous learning within correctional facilities.

The conversation also involved establishing start-up opportunities for educated prisoners with IT skills, aimed at supporting them in launching small businesses while incarcerated, thus promoting entrepreneurship and self-sufficiency.

Humayun Khan expressed his commitment to rehabilitation and reintegration, stating, "By empowering inmates with skills and opportunities, we can significantly impact their futures and contribute to a more productive society."

The meeting concluded with an agreement to develop a comprehensive working plan, which will be presented at the next session. This plan will outline the steps for implementation, including the signing of a MoU to formalize the collaboration.

Constitutional amendment aimed at pushing PTI against wall

PESHAWAR (INP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Advisor Barrister Saif said on Friday that proposed constitutional amendment was aimed at further sidelining the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

In a statement, Saif said that people were taking to the streets against the 'fascist' government on a daily basis, adding that the PTI would continue its protest till PTI Founder Imran Khan and other political prisoners' release from the prison.

He criticised the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) for working in cahoots with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) against the ideology of former party's founder Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

"An independent judiciary can stand in the way of any infringement on people's rights carried out by use of force and oppression. The fake rulers are pressurising people to vote in favour of the constitutional amendment. I urge legal community to defend the freedom of judiciary," he added.

Women's Center of Excellence established

PESHAWAR (APP): The Higher Education Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has announced the establishment of a Women's Center of Excellence in collaboration with the British Council with an aim towards empowering women.

This initiative aims to equip women with essential digital skills needed to thrive in today's competitive job market.

Following a selection process involving seven public universities, IM Sciences Peshawar has been selected as the host institution for this center.

The initiative will focus on training over 2,000 women in more than 50 modern digital skills, including data science, artificial intelligence, mobile application development, and web designing.

This program will not only enhance the skill set of women but also empower them to compete on a global scale and provide opportunities to work from home.

The establishment of the Women's Center of Excellence will encourage more women to pursue careers in technology and other digital fields.



PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar Division Riaz Khan Mehsood presiding over a meeting.

KPCPWC, PPA ink agreement for protection of children

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission (KPCPWC) and Pakistan Pediatric Association (PPA) on Friday signed a landmark cooperation agreement for the protection of children from violence and abuse in the province.

This partnership aims to enhance the welfare and protection of children across the province through improved collaboration, capacity building, and research initiatives jointly with the pediatricians in the province and health care facilities.

The agreement, supported by UNICEF, marks a critical milestone in building integrated referral pathways for effective case management of child protection cases, including child abuse and abandoned children identified through pediatricians and health care facilities.

Under this collaboration, both parties will establish Hospital Child Protection Committees (HCPCs) in select hospitals, ensuring these cases are efficiently managed by linking hospital structures with Child Protection Units (CPUs) across the province.

Other key features of the agreement are the emphasis on media engagement, responsible reporting, and raising public awareness on child protection issues.

Additionally, capacity-building workshops for healthcare professionals, child protection staff, and journalists will be jointly organized.

This initiative will also foster joint research efforts to inform evidence-based policies advocacy aimed at safeguarding vulnerable children.

Dr Tufail Muhammad, Chairman of PPA, and Ijaz Muhammad Khan, Chief Protection Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, signed the agreement in the presence of Sohail Ahmad, Child Protection Specialist UNICEF Peshawar Office.

UNICEF will play a pivotal role in supporting the technical oversight of this collaboration, ensuring the alignment of the partnership with broader child protection frameworks and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This partnership demonstrates KPCPWC and PPA's commitment to creating safer environment for children and enhancing the provincial child protection system through integration with the health professional and services, community outreach, media engagement, and strategic collaborations.



PESHAWAR: Chief Child Protection Ijaz Muhammad Khan and Chairman PPA Dr. Tufail Muhammad signing letter for welfare and protection of children.

Primary School Teachers announced sit-in on 5th November

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The former provincial cabinet approved up-gradation for all cadre teachers including primary teachers. According to the law and according to the cabinet decision, it was to be implemented from July 1, 2023.

But despite the passage of a year and a half, the provincial government has not taken any practical action. While in this one and a half year we have held jirgas on the heads of all political parties and held meetings with all the ministers and MNEs MPs of the present government.

And appealed to them to issue notification for upgradation of primary teachers by following the rule of law themselves. The provincial government is running the roll-off movement but they are trampling the roll-off law in their province. In October 2022, primary teachers staged a continuous sit-in for 5 days in which thousands of primary teachers participated As a result of which the Tehreek-e-Insaf government of that time accepted the gradation and then it was passed by the cabinet but it has not been implemented yet.

Therefore, All Primary Teachers Association Pakhtunkhwa has once again decided to protest for the implementation and notification of primary teacher upgradation.

And on October 7, 2024, thousands of primary teachers in every district in the province recorded protests And Azizullah Khan, provincial president of APTA in Peshawar, has announced a big protest sit-in in Peshawar on November 5, 2024.

One lakh male and female primary teachers will participate in this sit-in and from November 5, around 26,000 primary schools across the province will go on complete lockdown and strike. They will camp in Peshawar's Jinnah Park and the Peshawar Provincial Assembly will be surrounded and Peshawar Provincial Assembly will be encircled.

Therefore, the Provincial Government, Chief Minister, Finance Department, Finance Minister, remove the hurdles in your gradation notification of primary teachers. The finance department has submitted wrong figures to the government.

We have always promoted the table talk, we do not want the peaceful educational environment in Pakhtunkhwa to be disturbed. We do not want to close the institutions, but the provincial government and the finance minister are forcing us Azizullah Khan said that I should make it clear that a large number of female teachers from across the province will also participate in the November 5 protest sit-in.

City school students excel in Cambridge exams

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Like students from other provinces, students from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are also aspiring to make the country proud in fields such as robotics, nuclear science, and space technology. City School Peshawar students excelled in this year's Cambridge exams.

Award-winning students expressed that, beyond medical and engineering fields, Pakistan needs experts in modern sciences. The future will be defined by space technology and nuclear advancements, which are key to progress. They emphasized that the country is going through a critical time, and the youth need to step forward to guide the nation.

Students shared their desire to pursue higher education and make their country proud, while noting that government support could empower the youth to change the country's fate.

During the annual awards ceremony, education experts emphasized the need for acquiring modern knowledge, stressing that keeping up with contemporary demands is crucial for the nation's future.

Sabahat Tafari, Regional Director of City Schools, highlighted that the City School system has been serving the nation in education and research for the past five decades. She acknowledged the efforts made by the school administration in promoting education, as reflected by the students' success in both the Cambridge and local education systems.

City School Cluster Head Mahwish Shaukat mentioned that the efforts and dedication of the Peshawar campus teachers have been instrumental in fulfilling the dream of higher education in the province. Despite challenging circumstances, City School continues to play a vital role in advancing education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Romana Afzal, Principal of City School Peshawar Campus, addressed the audience, explaining how the school system is enhancing educational facilities, with new blocks under rapid construction at the main campus. She added that City School alumni are not only serving the country in key sectors but also making a name internationally.

The awards ceremony for the Cambridge exam high achievers of 2024-2025 took place at Shiraz Hall, organized by the City School Peshawar Campus. The event's chief guest was Ms. Sabahat Khan Tafari, Regional Director North Region, with Khyber Cluster's Network Partner, Ms. Mahwish Shaukat, as a special guest. Other prominent attendees included MNA Sher Ali Arbab, senior advocate Abdul Rauf Rohela, and Town Campus Headmistress Ms. Nusrat Khattak.

Four former students of City School Peshawar, including Dr. Khushal Khan, Mr. Sohaib Ahmed, Mr. Syed Muhammad Muneem, and Ms. Lillian Shehzadi Khan, shared insights from their respective fields and appreciated City School's contributions to educational growth.

Awards were presented to high achievers from Grade 10, Grade 11, and A-Level students of the Peshawar Campus, as well as Grade 10 and 11 students from the Town Campus. Teachers were also honored with Awards of Excellence and certificates based on their outstanding performance and meeting specific standards.

The event aimed to celebrate student success, passion, and continuous efforts while fostering true satisfaction in education.



In brief

Death of girl condoled F.P. Report

WANA: Commander Colonel Muhammad Tahir extended his condolences to the family of a young girl, Fatima, who tragically passed away in a private dental clinic. The incident has left the local community in grief, on Friday. Colonel Tahir visited the bereaved family at their home to offer his personal sympathies and prayed for the forgiveness of the deceased. His visit, alongside the support of FC South, is being hailed as a positive step toward strengthening public relations and building trust within the region. Residents of Lower Waziristan expressed their gratitude for the commander's empathetic outreach, calling for more such initiatives to foster a sense of brotherhood and mutual respect between the public and the security forces. This visit is seen as a significant milestone in reinforcing the bond between the community and the forces, offering hope for continued cooperation and understanding. Meanwhile, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) (PTI) staged a protest against the arrest of Prime Minister Imran Khan. The protesters declared Imran Khan's arrest as arbitrary, on Friday. The speakers harshly criticized the current government, which they accused of coming to power based on Form 47. The participants vowed that PTI workers would continue their protests and not rest until Imran Khan is released. During the demonstration, the crowd chanted slogans against the "mandate-theft government." The protest has drawn significant interest from other public circles in South Waziristan, with the political atmosphere indicating the likelihood of further protest movements in the coming days. A heartfelt thanks was extended to all PTI workers.

Police arrest six outlaws F.P. Report

D I KHAN: Dera police during the operation arrested six outlaws including proclaimed offenders and recovered weapons from their possession in the limits of City and Cantt police stations on Friday. According to the police spokesman, on the direction of the District Police Officer Dera Nasir Mehmood, City police station led by SDPO Muhammad Adnan along with SHO Sibtain Khan with police team conducted a search and strike operation in different localities. During the raid the police arrested the accused Dilawar Khan son of Muhammad Rafiq, Shahzad son of Bazak Khan, resident of Zafarabad Colony and Arfi Khan son of Abdullah resident of Qayyum Nagar and recovered one Kalashnikov with 87 cartridges, one rifle 222 bore with 24 cartridges and two 9mm pistols with 29 cartridges from their possession. Similarly, in the second operation, the police team arrested the accused, Farooq, Ismail, and Laikdad. The accused wanted to police in different cases. Meanwhile, the team of Cantt police station arrested the criminal wanted to local police in six different cases.

Seven held

SARGODHA (INP): Irrigation Task Force caught farmers red handed while stealing water from government canals, here on Friday. Irrigation authorities said that during a crackdown, team of Irrigation department under the supervision of SDO concern conducted raids at Midh Ranjha, Ghulam Pur, Naseer Pur Kalan and caught seven farmers red handed while stealing water from canals.

KKKUK, Stanley Pharmaceutical sign MoU



F.P. Report

KARAK: Khushal Khan Khattak University Karak (KKKUK) and Stanley Pharmaceutical Pvt. Ltd. Peshawar have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) that aims to strengthen academic-industry collaboration and foster innovation in the pharmaceutical sector.

The MoU was signed by Prof Dr Naseer Ud Din, Vice Chancellor KKKUK,

and Zia Muhammad managing director Stanley Pharmaceutical Pvt. Ltd. Peshawar, in the presence of Registrar Dr Ghani Ur Rehman, Dr Nazeer Ur Rehman and Dr Zubair Khattak.

In a statement, Vice Chancellor highlighted the significance of the MoU and its benefits for students. This partnership will provide students and faculty with opportunities for joint research projects, intern-

ships, and industry-based learning experiences. By bridging the gap between academia and industry, the MoU seeks to equip students with the practical skills and knowledge needed to excel in the pharmaceutical field. Managing Director Stanley Pharmaceutical added. The MoU is expected to contribute to the development of a skilled workforce in the pharmaceutical sector and promote innovation and research in the field.

Public Prosecutor holds Kuli Kacheri for awareness

F.P. Report

MARDAN: A 'Kuli Kacheri' (open court) held here in the premises of office of District Public Prosecutor Mardan with the purpose to highlight important and key issues related to criminal cases and then to find out its possible solution.

As per vision of the Additional Chief Secretary Home Department and Director General Prosecution Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Robin Haider Bukhari, the kuli Kacheri was organized with the collaboration of Peace and Justice Network Pakistan.

Aims and objectives of this Kuli Kacheri is to aware citizen and general public regarding the importance of prosecution's role in the criminal justice system. Besides, to listen the grievances and complaints of general public regarding criminal cases, if any.

A large gathering of citizens, advocates, representatives of NGOs, civil societies attended the occasion. President of District Bar Association Mardan Mr. Noor Badsha, District Coordinator Peace and Justice Network Ms. Nighat Seema also attended this occasion and presented their valuable views and comments regarding the importance of Kuli Kacheries for redressal of

the general public.

On the occasion Mr. Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Regional Director Prosecution Mardan and Mr. Bakht Baidar Khan District Public Prosecutor Mardan replied the queries and issues of citizens in honourable way and assured the forum that all their grievances and problems would be resolved as per law.

Male and female citizens presented their views, comments, complaints, suggestions in connection of their criminal cases' problems. Some complaints were resolved on the spot while rest shall be given priority to be resolved after proper legal procedure.

Most of the participants are of the views that these like kuli Kacheries for redressal of general public's problems should be repeated every month so that their problems can be resolved in true sense. No doubt these like Kuli Kacheries will reduce the problems of general public regarding disposal of their criminal cases.

WSSCM launches recovery operations: Water and Sanitation Services Company Mardan (WSSCM) launched a recovery operation against the defaulters of utility bills. A huge amount about of Rs.13.7 million is outstanding against the con-

sumers of the company. Chief Executive Officer WSSCM, Shahid Khan said that all resources have been utilized to provide clean and safe drinking water and sanitation services to the citizens of Mardan. Legal action will be taken against the defaulters of WSSCM's services bill.

He was briefed that the company has more than 4908 registered consumers out of which 1374 are defaulters and having an outstanding amount of Rs 13.72million. The defaulters in hoti are 548 and amount is 5.76 million, bicketgunj 201 and amount is 1.81 million, in baricham 128 and 1.296 million, in Dagai 127 and 1.24 million, in muslimabad 113 are defaulters and amount 1.08million are due.

Water Quality Tests have been started while citizen liaison cell and revenue teams started awareness campaign for paying bills. While chairing the meeting regarding increase in revenue and improvement in service delivery Shahid Khan stated that if the citizens cooperate the company by paying their bills in time then the level of service delivery will be improved. He issued the directions to stop the illegal utilization of water and stated that legal action will be taken against the violators.

Youth Summit at University of Malakand concluded

F.P. Report

CHAKDARA: The 5th edition of The Metrix Pakistan Youth Summit, which is the largest Youth Summit in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, concluded at University Malakand. The 3 days summit was carried out in collaboration with Metrix Pakistan, Directorate of Youth Affairs, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology Board and Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to motivate the youth and encourage innovativeness within the different sectors.

The summit featured keynote addresses, panel discussions, and workshops focused on cutting-edge areas such as cyber security, artificial intelligence (AI), and digital marketing. Experts from across Pakistan shared insights on protecting digital information & and moderation of data, combating cyber threats, and leveraging AI to transform industries. Professionals also shared strategies for effective online marketing and brand building.

More than 10,000 students from all over Pakistan attended the summit, thereby emerging as the most populous congregation of the young brains within the country. More than 50 renowned experts such as speakers from various industries, academicians, and businessmen attended the

event, and over 20 companies exhibited their products, services, and innovations through their exhibitions. The companies included RankingGrow, TechBrixia, Lets Grow by Huzaifa Behram, CodeCrush Tech, Prisons Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Information Technology board, Tanawal Welfare Organization and others.

Special Assistant to the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Prisons Humayun Khan attended the ceremony and officially inaugurated. In his address, he highlighted how the government has prioritized the issues of the youth and the promotion of entrepreneurship, declaring that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Government will be providing loans without any interest to the youth with business plans through the Directorate of Youth Affairs. He went on to say that every subdivision of Lower Dir will also be organized such summits to reach out more of the youth and aid their ambitions. High aspirations were also nurtured by Humayun Khan as he described the possibilities of the region, transforming itself into a technology centre, projecting plans on the digitization of the Prisons Department via e-governance projects. He also thanked Vice Chancellor of

the university of Malakand and Metrix Pakistan CEO Hassan Nisar for quite a number of reasons in relation to the success of the summit.

The Metrix Pakistan Youth Summit has provided an important focus for the youth of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The fifth edition preserved its tradition of providing those various seminars, roundtable discussions, and proper communication needed to prepare the younger generation for employment in the current labor market. An exhibit on technology, education, and business development was also organized as a part of the event, allowing students to meet with specialists and learn about the latest trends in the area.

The University of Malakand's Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Rashid Ahmed, addressed the attendees and expressed satisfaction with the improving status of the university. He indicated that the University of Malakand has been declared the best university in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by Times Higher Education Rankings thanks to the commitment of its workforce. He appreciated the Directorate of Youth Affairs and Metrics Pakistan for their assistance with the activities and reiterated the university's belief in the need for youth development activities.

DEO Female supervises sports festival Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: Under the supervision of District Education Officer (DEO) female Nowshera Annual Sports Festival continues across the three zones among government schools, on Friday.

Earlier, a sports committee was constituted under chairperson DEO Nowshera Safia Amin while Naila Noreen as vice chairperson, general secretary Shujaat Begum, finance secretary Saeeda Bano, purchase secretary Wasf Nigar and press secretary Imtiaz Perveen was appointed respectively.

The district has been distributed among three zones including Nowshera, Pabbi and Jahangira under the supervision of different teachers to ensure annual sports competition among schools.

Drinking water issue solved F.P. Report

KOHAT: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister on Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam Afridi Advocate has said that the journey of promises to fulfillment is successfully in progress, hoping that every promise made to the people will be honored in letter and spirit.

Minister Law in his statement here on Friday, said that during his visit to Union Council Khushal Garh along with the Tehsil Nazim Gumbat Sajid Iqbal last month, he promised the revival and solarization of the Khushal Garh Dhok Jaat water supply scheme which remained closed for a long time. The promise, he said, has been fulfilled today.

The said water supply scheme has been solarized and the main line has been spread while work on distribution will start in the next phase, he maintained. Chairman Union Council Khushal Garh Sabir Aziz Awan, other members of UC, and the people of Khushal Garh Dhok Jaat have thanked the Provincial Law Minister Aftab Alam Advocate, Shahrayar Afridi MNA and Tehsil Nazim Gumbat Sajid Iqbal who as per their commitment permanently resolved the long-standing drinking water problem of the area.

Malaysian team visits Takhtbhai F.P. Report

TAKHTBHAI: A member Malaysian delegation visited ancient ruins at Takhtbhai archaeological site while police has ensured foolproof security.

District Police Officer Mardan ordered to ensure security of foreign delegation visiting UNESCO World Heritage Site, which attracts numerous domestic and international tourists due to its historical and cultural significance. Considering its importance, DSP Takhtbhai over-saw security, deploying heavy police contingents on entry and exit routes and conducting thorough checks.

The Malaysian delegation commended facilitation while expressing feelings of complete safety and a pleasant environment throughout their visit. They acknowledged Takhtbhai's historical significance, terming their trip memorable. Mardan Police spokesperson stated that the department will prioritize security for foreign tourists and local visitors to promote tourism at historical sites.

Highway blocked F.P. Report

QILLA ABDULLAH: Tribesmen of Ghaibezai Achakzai tribe on Friday blocked Quetta-Chaman highway near Jungle Piralizai area against the alleged kidnapping of Senator Abdul Shakoor Khan Achakzai, central leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl.

Quetta-Chaman highway was blocked by the tribesmen of Ghaibezai Achakzai tribe near Jungle Piralizai area of district Qilla Abdullah against the enforced disappearance of Senator Abdul Shakoor Khan Achakzai, central leader of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl.

Transporters demand repair work on NHA road

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Lower Dir transporters demanded the government and authorities of the National Highways Authority (NHA) to take notice of the dilapidated condition of the 40-kilometer Chakdara Timergara road. Talking to local journalists the president of All Transporters' Association Lower Dir Haji Essa Khan, transporter Malik Muhammad Zeb and others complained the 40-km Chakdara Timergara portion of the NHA road presented an ugly look as it had developed large potholes after recent monsoon rainfall disrupting traffic.

They said that it was the busiest road as vehicles bound for Upper Dir, Chitral, Bajaur and Lower Dir had to pass on it. The transporters said that ditches more than a foot had appeared on the road at many places from Chakdara to Timergara and the drivers attempted to navigate those ditches. The transporters said the ditches increased the risk of accidents particularly when rainwater stood on the road.

They said that heavy loaded trucks with marbles' rocks plying on the road also increased risk of road accidents. The transporters' leaders also complained that the traffic police imposed heavy fines even on the tourists visiting the area. They demanded the NHA and the concerned ministry to take notice of the situation and start repair work on the Chakdara Timergara road.

Meanwhile the Anjuman Tajiran Timergara president Haji Anwarud Din told local journalists that the government had released Rs 60 million out of Rs 270 million for reconstruction of the Jail to Mian Banda Road causing delay in its completion.

He said the concerned contractor had stopped work on the project due to unavailability of funds. The traders' leader said that local residents, pedestrians and passengers suffered from chest and throat infection due to rising dust from the road. He threatened to bring people onto the road if work on the project was not started within a week.

LG by-polls: The district administration finalized its arrangements for holding by-elections on 12 vacant village council seats in Paito Dara (Balambat), Hajiabad (Balambat), Sadbar Kaly (Samarbagh) and Rahimabad (Munda tehsil) on Oct. 20. A meeting in this regard was

chaired by deputy commissioner Muhammad Arif Khan. The district election commissioner and returning officer Jamshid Khan, additional assistant commissioner Timergara Tariq Khan and other stakeholders attended the meeting.

The meeting was informed that all arrangements had been finalized for by-elections on a total of 12 village councilors' seats including 6 for women and 6 generals. No woman has submitted nomination papers for women councilor seats. The meeting was told that results would be announced on Oct. 23. The meeting expressed satisfaction on the arrangements.

Passports issue: The residents of different areas of Lower Dir demanded the government and the interior ministry to take notice of the unnecessary delay in issuance of passports. Talking to local journalists they said that passport seekers had deposited Rs 12000 to Rs 18000 for getting their passports urgently under fast-track system but to no avail. They said that visas of several aspirants had expired due to delay in passport issuance. They said the government should take practical measures to ensure timely issuance of their passports.

Constitution supremacy to bring prosperity: GLF

F.P. Report

MINGORA: Gujjar Lawyer Forum (GLF) committed for supremacy of the Constitution and rule of law which is only solution for redressal of national issues, on Wednesday.

GLF shows their commitment during its introductory meeting held at Mingora. The meeting started with the recitation of Quran Sharif by Sardar Abdul Aziz advocate. Muammar Khan Advocate congratulated the forum for organizing the meeting.

The gathering concluded with prayers for senior advocates late Mr. Hazrat Hussain, late Mr. Mohammad Arif, and late Sher Mohammad Khan.

The meeting was attended by Sardar Waqar Shahzad, Sardar Abdul Aziz, Abdul Qadir, Said Mohammad, Asad Madani, Sardar Imran, Siad Muhammad Bacha, Zahid Hussain, Fazal Karim and Malik Mohammad Riaz advocates.

Sardar Waqar Shahzad Advocate addressed the attendees, emphasizing the importance of unity and

collaboration in shaping the future of the legal community. He highlighted the shared heritage and commitment to justice that bind the Gujjar lawyers together, expressing optimism for a brighter tomorrow.

The meeting saw a strong sense of camaraderie and a collective vision for the future. Plans were announced for a divisional meeting of lawyers in the near future, underscoring the commitment to continued collaboration and progress within the legal community.

Health sector-related issues to be resolved

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: Member Provincial Assembly (MPA) from Upper South Waziristan Asif Mehsud called on the Advisor to the Chief Minister on Health Ehtisham Ali and discussed various issues pertaining to the health sector in the area.

The meeting was also attended by Health Secretary Adeel Shah, Director General Health Dr. Muhammad Saleem, and District Health Officer (DHO) Dr. Tufail from Upper South Waziristan. MPA Asif Mehsud highlighted the major issues of the area, stating that since the district's formation, there had been a lack of adequate medical staff and an absence of an established health administrative structure at the district level.

Additionally, restoring and reactivating the destroyed and non-functional health centers was also a major challenge, he

added. Health Advisor Ehtisham Ali assured the MPA that immediate action would be taken to address the health concerns in Upper South Waziristan. He stressed that resolving health issues in remote areas was key to the overall development of the health department.

He further said that it was among his top priorities to strengthen and activate the administrative framework for health services in Upper South Waziristan. MPA Asif Mehsud pointed out that despite the district status, there was no District Hospital (DHQ) in the area. The provincial advisor promised to upgrade the existing health center to a Category A hospital.

Moreover, they also discussed the dismissal of absent medical staff, deployment of surveillance teams for disease control, expansion of the Sehat Card program, establish-

ment of TB and Hepatitis control centers, and the operation of Primary Care Management Committees in the district. He added these committees would help address the hospitals' needs more effectively.

MPA Asif Mehsud also raised the urgent need for funds for medicine procurement, restoration and activation of destroyed health centers, recruitment of medical staff, and provision of clean drinking water in hospitals. The discussion also covered budget allocation and release for under-construction hospitals, with 70 percent of construction already completed.

They agreed that absent medical staff should be dismissed promptly, and immediate recruitment was needed to ensure the functionality of health centers. Health Advisor assured MPA Asif Mehsud that all necessary measures would be taken to resolve these issues swiftly and effectively.

Construction on three new roads to kicks of soon

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Deputy Commissioner Abdul Razzaq has said that construction work on three new road sector development schemes with the cost of Rs. 1924 million for providing better communication facilities to people will be started soon.

While addressing a meeting held to review on pace of ongoing development schemes, DC said that Hafizabad-Khanqah Road would be executed at a cost of Rs. 920 million, Hafizabad-Ali Pur Road with the cost of Rs. 550 million and Hafizabad-Ramke Chatha Road with the cost of Rs. 454 million and tenders process was finalised for launching con-

struction work. With the completion of these schemes, travelling problems of people will be resolved and business activities will also be enhanced in the district Hafizabad, he added.

Meanwhile, district administration has expedited action to contain spread of smog and officers imposed Rs. 50 lakh fine to farmers to burn residue of crops, owners of bricks kilns, factories and transport in the district.

This was stated by the Assistant Director Environmental Protection Hafizabad Abdul Rauf in the meeting of District Anti-Smog Committee held under Chairmanship of DC Abdul Razzaq. The meeting was informed that

10 bricks kilns were sealed while a brick kiln was demolished and Rs. 21 lakh fine was received from owners of bricks kiln to run bricks kilns without zigzag technology, on burning residue of crops Rs. 90 thousand fine was imposed to farmers. Rs. 21 lakh fine was collected from smoke emitting factories and Rs. 12 lakh fine was received from owners of smoke emitting vehicles during crackdown launched to stop spread of smog in the district. Addressing the meeting, DC said that environmental protection department and agriculture department were formed quick response teams for taking actions against violation of anti-smog SOPs.



CAIRO: Pharaonic statues displayed at the new halls of Grand Staircase of the Grand Egyptian Museum in Giza.

2 German pilots killed when WWII-era airplane crashes

HELSINKI (AP): Two German men died when their World War II-era airplane crashed and caught fire in southern Finland minutes after takeoff, police said.

The single-engine, two-seater T-6 Texan plane -- a popular American military trainer aircraft introduced in the 1930s and now used mainly in air shows -- crashed into a forest near the Rayskala aviation airfield, killing the "two experienced pilots," police said. "The small plane fell to the ground shortly after takeoff and caught fire," police said in a statement. Finnish accident investigators said it was likely that the engine had failed.

Authorities said the German-owned aircraft was recently sold and was on a test flight before being transferred to Germany. According to Finnish news agency STT, the plane was manufactured in 1942 and was the only one of its kind in Finland. The aircraft, a navy version of the T-6, had been brought to Finland in 2020 and was last inspected earlier this month, according to Finnish media. Rayskala, around 100 kilometers (60 miles) from Helsinki, is the largest sports aviation center in the Nordic region, according to its website.

Egypt's Sisi meets with Iran's FM

CAIRO/DUBAI (Reuters): Iranian Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi met with Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, Egypt's presidency said in a statement. The meeting focused on regional developments, with al-Sisi reiterating Egypt's call to avoid the expansion of conflict and the need to halt escalation to prevent a full-scale regional war.

Araqchi emphasized the importance of continuing efforts to explore prospects for mutual development of relations between the two countries, the statement added. Araqchi landed in Cairo for talks with Egyptian officials, the first such visit in years as part of a Middle Eastern tour amid concerns of a wider confrontation in the region with Israel. Tensions are high in anticipation of an Israeli attack on Iran in retaliation for Iran's missile attack on Oct. 1. That followed a rapidly spiralling conflict between Israel and Iranian-backed Hezbollah in Lebanon. Araqchi arrived for "important talks with Egypt's high ranking officials," Iran's foreign ministry spokesperson Esmail Baghaei said in a post on X, after stops in countries including Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Iraq and Lebanon.

Relations between Egypt and Iran have generally been fraught in recent decades but the two countries have stepped up high-level diplomatic contacts since the eruption of the Gaza crisis last year as Egypt tried to play a mediating role. Egyptian Foreign Minister Badr Abdelatty traveled to Tehran in July to attend the country's presidential inauguration.

China building capacity to rapidly strike Taiwan

TAIPEI (Reuters): China is building its capacity to rapidly turn military drills into a full-out attack, a senior Taiwan security official said, providing the Taipei government's assessment of the strategic intent behind Beijing's war games around the island this week. China, which views democratically governed Taiwan as its own territory, staged large-scale drills that it said were a warning to "separatist acts" following last week's national day speech by Taiwan President Lai Ching-te.

Taiwan has for the past five years complained of almost daily Chinese military activities around the island, including at least four rounds of major war games and regular "joint combat readiness patrols". "They are increasing the building up of their capacity to turn military exercises into a conflict," the official said at a briefing in Taipei, requesting anonymity to be able to speak more frankly. Taiwan reported a record 153 Chinese aircraft took part in the drills, and the official added an unprecedented 25 Chinese navy and coast guard boats also approached close to Taiwan's 24-mile (39-km) contiguous zone. "They approached very close to Taiwan. They increased their pressure on Taiwan and squeezed Taiwan's response time," the official said. "This drill presented more of a threat than ever before to Taiwan."

The official said during the drill, China launched two missiles towards an unspecified inland area, without providing further details. "Although they did not fire missiles towards Taiwan this time, they did practice missile launches," the official said. China's defence ministry did not immediately respond to a request for comment. It vowed to take further action as needed against Taiwan, while China's Taiwan Affairs Office said Beijing will never commit to renouncing the use of force over Taiwan. The Taiwan official said their own intelligence had detected signs of China's drills ahead of time and deployed assets including mobile missile launchers to strategic spots before Beijing announced the war games around dawn. Lai and his government reject Beijing's sovereignty claims saying only Taiwan's people can decide their future. Lai has repeatedly offered talks, but he has been rebuffed by China. In a report to parliament, Taiwan's defence ministry said China currently holds three to four "joint combat readiness patrols" per month around Taiwan, in a move the ministry described as "provocation and increasing the threat to our military". Taiwan Defence Minister Wellington Koo, asked when China could hold its next war games, told reporters it could be at any

time and under any pretext. "This shows their hegemonic nature, which we can all see very clearly," Koo said. The military has already included a plan, in its annual Han Kuang war games, on ways to counter a compressed response time in case China suddenly turns its drills into a real attack, he added.

A Taipei-based diplomat familiar with security issues in the region said Beijing's war games presented a "big threat" because through the drills, China's military was quickly building up its mobilisation and combat capabilities. "The permanent state of readiness is getting higher and higher - they can switch from nothing to drills to war in no time," said the diplomat, who requested anonymity due to the sensitivity of the matter. Taiwan has lived with the threat of invasion by China's People's Liberation Army since the defeated Republic of China government fled to the island in 1949 after losing a civil war to Mao Zedong's communists. China's recent war games have not caused undue alarm for most Taiwanese, nor did they impact financial markets on the island. Asked by a lawmaker at a separate parliamentary session about the possibility of war with China, Taiwan central bank governor Yang Chin-long said they have "appropriate preparations", without elaborating.

Efforts to combat deforestation hindered

BOGOTA (AP): Armed groups operating in Colombia's Amazon are tightening their grip on the region and that's stalling government efforts to tackle deforestation, according to a think tank report. The Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) dissidents, known as EMC, have the ability to slow or accelerate deforestation at will, said the report by The International Crisis Group.

Some of the former FARC members never signed and disagree with the 2016 FARC-Colombia peace deal. Others signed it but took up arms again, while others are new to the dissident ranks either as volunteers or forced fighters, said Rodrigo Botero, director of The Foundation for Conservation and Sustainable Development (FCDS). EMC is currently Colombia's third largest armed group, with around 3,500 members. "This group

is the most directly responsible for deforestation in the last five years," Botero said. "More than half a million hectares have been lost in their control zones."

"Over the last year," he said, "the EMC has given orders to the population to suspend deforestation, but this year they have increased it again." More than 40% of Colombia is in the Amazon - an area roughly the size of Spain. The country has the world's largest bird biodiversity. Fifteen percent of the Colombian Amazon has already been deforested, according to FCDS. Colombia's first leftist administration under Gustavo Petro stakes much of its legitimacy on its environmental and peace agenda, Crisis Group researcher and report coauthor Bram Ebus told The Associated Press. "However, as Colombia's natural environment continues to suffer from the severe impacts of

conflict dynamics and economic activities that fuel violence, his political legacy is at risk," Ebus said. Colombia's environment ministry said in a statement that saving the Amazon rainforest has been one of Petro's main priorities and it has achieved a historic reduction of deforestation by 61% in the last two years.

While acknowledging "the difficulties with the dynamics of peace in the territory and the armed actors," the ministry said it wants to build a forest development model that benefits Amazon communities, recovers the forest and stops illegal deforestation. Previous administrations opted for punitive measures against Amazon communities complicit in deforestation, while Petro offers incentives, proposing financial aid to support forest conservation and promote sustainable livelihoods, Ebus said.

A Palestinian student was asleep at hospital when an Israeli strike brought an inferno

DEIR AL-BALAH (AP): Shaban al-Dalu was sleeping in his tent in a central Gaza hospital's courtyard, still recuperating from wounds from an Israeli strike on a mosque a week earlier, when a new strike hit, setting off an inferno.

The 19-year-old university student and his 38-year-old mother, Alaa al-Dalu, were among five people killed as the blaze ripped through a tent camp sheltering hundreds of Palestinian families in the courtyard of the Al-Aqsa Martyrs Hospital in the central city of Deir al-Balah. Dozens of others, including children, were severely burned.

Al-Dalu and his mother were sleeping in the tent along with his father and three siblings when the strike hit at around 1:30 a.m.

Mohammed al-Dalu, his fifth sibling, was sleeping nearby at his vendor's table when the explosion jolted him awake. He found his father and uncle, who lived in a neighboring tent, struggling to pull their families out of the fire. The father, Ahmed al-Dalu, said he managed to rescue two of his sons and his daughter, but not his wife or eldest child, Shaban. "My son was being burned in front of me," he said, speaking at the hospital with burns on his face. "I accepted the will of God in every sense of the word."

The Israeli military said it targeted militants hiding out among the displaced, without providing evidence to support its claim. It was the seventh Israeli attack on this hospital compound since March; three of them occurred in

September, according to Doctors without Borders, which supports the hospital. The war began when Hamas attacked southern Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing some 1,200 people, mostly civilians, and abducting around 250 hostages. Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed over 42,000 Palestinians, according to Gaza's Health Ministry, which says women and children make up more than half the fatalities. It has displaced more than 1.9 million of Gaza's 2.3 million people, often multiple times. Over the course of the war, the military has repeatedly raided hospitals and struck crowded shelters and tent camps, alleging that Hamas fighters were using them as staging grounds for attacks, without showing evidence.

UNRWA 'very near' possible breaking point in Gaza operation

BERLIN (Reuters): The UN Palestinian refugee agency is close to a possible breaking point for its operations in the Gaza Strip due to increasingly complicated conditions, its head said. "I will not hide the fact that we might reach a point that we won't be able anymore to operate," UNRWA chief Philippe Lazzarini told journalists at a news conference in Berlin.

"We are very near to a possible breaking point. When will it be? I don't know. But we are very near of that," he said. He said the agency was facing a combination of a financial and political threats to its existence, in addition to difficulties in day-to-day operations, as aid is even more desperately needed against the threat of disease and famine. He said there was a real risk, heading into winter, with people's immune systems weakened, that famine or acute malnutrition could become a likelihood. UNRWA provides education, health and aid to millions of Palestinians in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Lebanon and Syria. It has long had tense relations with Israel but ties have deteriorated sharply since the start of the war in Gaza. Israel launched the offensive against Hamas after the Palestinian militant group led attacks on Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, in which 1,200 people were killed and around 250 taken hostage to Gaza, by Israeli tallies. More than 42,000 Palestinians have been killed in the offensive, according to Gaza's health authorities. Israeli leaders in January accused UNRWA staff of collaborating with Hamas militants in Gaza, leading some donors to suspend funding, although many of those decisions have since been reversed. The UN launched an investigation into Israel's accusations and dismissed nine staff.

Kenya's Dy president sacked

NAIROBI (BBC): Kenyan senators have voted to remove Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua from office despite his failure to testify at his impeachment trial after his lawyer said he had been taken to hospital. In one of the most dramatic days in Kenya's recent political history, Gachagua had been due to appear in the Senate after lunch to defend himself, a day after he had pleaded not guilty to 11 charges.

However, Gachagua, popularly known as Riggy G, did not show up and his lawyer requested a postponement saying his client was suffering from chest pains and was being treated by doctors at The Karen Hospital. Senators chose to continue the trial without him, prompting the defence team to leave the chamber. The senators' refusal to delay proceedings - as long as would have been legally allowed - shows how determined they were to get rid of Gachagua, several months after he fell out with President William Ruto. Last week, an overwhelming majority of MPs in the National Assembly - the lower house of parliament - voted to impeach him, setting the stage for his two-day trial in the Senate. Gachagua, a wealthy businessman from the vote-rich central Mount Kenya region who was present in the house in the morning, has described the impeachment as a "political lynching".

US citizen's torture in Russia retold by Ukrainian cellmate

MOSCOW (AFP): When Ukrainian serviceman Igor Shyshko summarised his two years of detention in Russia alongside 72-year-old US citizen Stephen Hubbard, three words came to mind: torture, humiliation, hunger.

After being held incommunicado for two and a half years, Hubbard suddenly appeared in a Moscow court last month where he was sentenced after a closed trial to nearly seven years behind bars for allegedly taking up arms and fighting for Ukraine. He was captured in April 2022, just weeks after Russia invaded Ukraine and Washington says it has had only "limited" information on this case because Moscow has refused to share any details.

On September 27 -- just 10 days before the verdict was handed down -- Russia announced for the first time that it had been holding Hubbard, who appeared pale and frail in the Moscow court. Shyshko was taken prisoner in May 2022 and released in an exchange in May 2024. AFP first met him while he was undergoing psychological treatment in Ukraine in August of this year -- before Moscow had announced that Hubbard was in their custody.

In separate interviews with AFP in September and October, he recounted having been detained with Hubbard in two Russian prisons. The men were held in Novozybkov in the Bryansk region in western Russia from September 2022 to May 2023, sometimes in neighbouring cells. Then, until spring 2024, they were held in the Pakino penal colony no. 7 in the Vladimir region, some 270 kilometres (168 miles) east of Moscow,

where they were cellmates for a time. The presence of a foreigner among Ukrainian prisoners of war was unusual, he told AFP.

"It wasn't very clear why he was there," said Shyshko, a 41-year-old with dark circles under his eyes and sunken cheeks who says he spent 801 days in total in captivity. Shyshko said Hubbard was subjected to the same treatment as the Ukrainians: beaten, humiliated and starved by their guards, adding that he personally witnessed abuses inflicted on Stephen Hubbard and endured the same himself. - Beaten and forced to crawl - "They beat him all the time, like the rest of us," Shyshko said of the prison guards' treatment of Hubbard during an interview with AFP in the eastern Ukrainian city of Kharkiv.

"They hit him with sticks and truncheons and kicked him. They attacked him with dogs," he told AFP. "They made him run, they didn't feed him, they made him crawl through the corridors," Shyshko added. The guards at Novozybkov "deliberately hit inmates' genitals," Shyshko said, and forced inmates, including Hubbard, to simulate sexual acts with other inmates to humiliate them. Shyshko recounts Hubbard, with whom he had some difficulty communicating in English, had confided to him that he had been tortured in Pakino by his Russian captors with electric shocks. The released Ukrainian serviceman said torture in Russian detention was routine, showing scars on his hands and his hearing aid needed in the wake of beatings that damaged his ears.

In an October 2024

report, the United Nations accused Russia of perpetrating "widespread and systematic" torture and mistreatment of Ukrainian prisoners of war. The Russian foreign ministry did not respond requests for comment from AFP about Hubbard's detention and therefore did not confirm that he was held together with Shyshko. His account of the treatment he and other inmates suffered in detention, however, is similar to the stories told by other former prisoners. Russian state media reported that Hubbard was taken prisoner on April 2, 2022 during the Russian occupation of Izium, a town in the northeast of Ukraine that was liberated months later.

Kremlin-funded news outlets, citing testimony from the court, said Hubbard had moved to Izium in 2014 to live with his Ukrainian partner, a journey that the American recounted to his Ukrainian fellow prisoner. Moscow had accused Hubbard of joining a Ukrainian territorial defence battalion at the start of the Kremlin's invasion and that he was paid at least \$1,000 a month to fight. Authorities in Kyiv told AFP they had found no record of Hubbard having been among Ukrainian military units.

"We haven't found him on our lists," said Oleksiy Dmytrashivsky, head of the communications department of the Ukrainian Territorial Defence Forces' command and spokesman for the Ukrainian command in occupied parts of Russia's Kursk region. Shyshko said that Hubbard was likely mistreated by Russian guards despite his age partly because of his citizenship. "Understand, for our guards, America is the embodiment of evil."

Russia flaunts its many doomsday weapons

MOSCOW (AP): This year has seen President Vladimir Putin repeatedly brandish the nuclear sword, reminding everyone that Russia has the world's largest atomic arsenal to try to deter the West from ramping up support for Ukraine. He ordered his military to hold drills involving battling field nuclear weapons with ally Belarus.

He announced Russia will start producing ground-based intermediate range missiles that were outlawed by a now-defunct US-Soviet treaty in 1987. And last month, he lowered the threshold for unleashing his arsenal by revising the country's nuclear doctrine. Putin is relying on those thousands of warheads and hundreds of missiles as an enormous doomsday machine to offset NATO's massive edge in conventional weapons to discourage what he sees as threats to Russia's sovereignty and territorial integrity. A look at Russia's atomic arsenal and the issues surrounding it: The Federation of American Scientists estimated this year that Russia has an inventory totaling 5,580 deployed and non-deployed nuclear warheads, while the US has 5,044. Together, that's about 88% of the world's nuclear weapons. Most of these are strategic, or intercontinental-range weapons. Like the US, Russia has a nuclear triad of ground-based intercontinental ballistic mis-

siles, long-range bombers and ICBM-armed submarines. Since Putin came to power in 2000, the Kremlin has worked to upgrade the Soviet-built components of the triad, deploying hundreds of new land-based missiles, commissioning new nuclear submarines and modernizing nuclear-capable bombers. Russia's effort to revamp its nuclear forces has helped prompt the US to launch a costly modernization of its arsenal. Russia has reequipped its land-based strategic missile forces with mobile Yars ICBMs and recently began deploying the heavy, silo-based Sarmat ICBMs - designated "Satan II" missiles in the West - to gradually replace about 40 Soviet-built R-36M missiles. Sarmat has had only one known successful test, and reportedly suffered a massive explosion during an abortive test last month. The navy commissioned seven new Borei-class atomic-powered submarines, each with 16 Bulava nuclear-tipped missiles, and plans to build five more. They are intended to form the core of the triad's naval component alongside a few Soviet-era nuclear subs still operating.

Russia still relies on Soviet-built Tu-95 and Tu-160 strategic bombers carrying nuclear-tipped cruise missiles. Moscow has restarted production of the supersonic Tu-160 that was

halted after the 1991 Soviet collapse, aiming to build several dozen modernized aircraft with new engines and avionics. The US estimates that Russia has between 1,000 and 2,000 non-strategic, or tactical, nuclear weapons intended for use on the battlefield that typically are far less powerful than the strategic warheads capable of destroying entire cities. Russia has high-precision ground-launched Iskander missiles with a range of up to 500 kilometers (310 miles), which can be fitted with either a conventional or a nuclear warhead. The air force has a fleet of MiG-31 fighter jets that carry a hypersonic Kinzhal missile, which can be equipped with a nuclear or conventional warhead. Russia has widely used conventional versions of both Iskander and Kinzhal against Ukraine.

As part of the Kremlin's nuclear messaging, Russia and ally Belarus held drills to train their troops with the battlefield nuclear weapons in May, shortly after Putin began his fifth term. MAD and Russia's nuclear doctrine Moscow and Washington have relied for decades on nuclear deterrence under the concept of mutually assured destruction - MAD for short - based on the assumption that an overwhelming retaliation would discourage either side from launching an attack.

"We live in a very hard circumstance," he said in the video. He launched an online fundraiser hoping to make enough money to get his family to Egypt. It had raised more than \$24,200 - though no one has been able to leave Gaza since Israeli troops seized the crossing with Egypt in May. "I used to have big dreams, but the war has ruined them," he wrote on his GoFundMe page. "Time feels like it's stopped in Gaza, and we're stuck in a never-ending nightmare."

On Oct. 6, he was reciting the Quran in a mosque near the hospital when an Israeli airstrike hit the place of worship, his brother Mohammed said. Shaban suffered a head wound that required 11 stitches and was still recuperating in the tent when strike hit.

The Frontier Post

Rehmat Shah Afridi (Late)

Founder

Bilal Shah Afridi

Chief Executive

Jalil Afridi

Managing Editor

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

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

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

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

*USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

Could Putin's 'new elite' of soldier-politicians backfire?

LAST week's appointment of Artyom Zhoga, a former entrepreneur and fighter for the self-styled Donetsk People's Republic as presidential plenipotentiary in the Urals Federal District is the clearest signal yet towards incumbent elites that President Vladimir Putin was serious when he said in February that soldiers and veterans are the country's "new elite." The Kremlin has so far successfully defined what is acceptable and expected behavior in Russia. To the wider population, Moscow has signaled that veterans and other participants in the war need to be regarded as people worthy of elevated status and various benefits, from free airline tickets and public transportation, in some regions free land, soon likely debt relief, and the right to talk to children about patri-

otism. But these are mostly symbolic measures. At the same time, efforts to promote war participants as elected officials have mostly failed. In the 2024 regional and municipal elections, only 329 war participants received mandates (while tens of thousands were available), mostly in municipal assemblies without significant influence and little control over finances. This is in spite of the governing United Russia party giving war participants a 25% bonus in its "primaries." This was likely largely due to the resistance of incumbent elites who use positions in regional assemblies to defend their own interests. There were reports from several regions of active sabotage. This year, however, more than a dozen former war participants have been appointed to administrative positions. The Kremlin proudly announced in October that 10 of these are alumni of Time of Heroes, a training program created to incorporate veterans into the administrative elite. But once again, most appointees are in municipal positions, having no real power and serving under established elites. This is likely to remain so for those of them without prior experience in public administration. They include city council speakers in Nizhny Novgorod and Krashnovishsk in the Perm region, a deputy speaker in Blagoveshchensk, deputy mayors in Stavropol and Tomanovo in the Belgorod region and a district head in the Khanty-Mansi autonomous district.

There have been fewer appointments to regional governments: a head of an assembly committee in the republic of Altai, a deputy governor in the Khabarovsk region, a regional minister in the republic of Sakha and an aide to the governor of the Kemerovo region. Apart from these, both Russian Railways and the pro-Putin youth organization Movement of the First took their picks from the carefully selected alumni. More notably, three regions have also appointed war participants to the Federation Council. However, due to the specifics of these regions, it is too early to say whether this is the beginning of a trend or a one-off. It is no surprise that both the occupied Crimea and the war-torn Kursk region would take such symbolic steps. Meanwhile, the republic of Altai is currently led by former United Russia supreme Andrei Turchak who is likely very keen to end his internal "exile" as the region's governor, by eagerly humming along to the tune from the Kremlin. Furthermore, he appears to want to set boundaries with local elites.

This is what makes Zhoga's appointment, on the surface, notable. The Kremlin was keen to nip suggestions that the real reason for this was a nascent conflict between him and the head of the occupation administration in the Donetsk Region, Denis Pushilin, this itself would not warrant an elevation in the ranks. The Urals Federal District contains Russia's most important oil- and gas-producing regions as well as several regions with key defense industry plants. Even if the role of presidential plenipotentiaries has historically been vague and malleable depending on the goals and the political weight of the people in these positions, the fact that the Kremlin saw this appointment through in spite of apparently noticeable elite discontent, says something about Moscow's intentions. Officially, as presidential plenipotentiary, Zhoga's two main roles will be representing the Kremlin in the regions and coordinating the work of governors. Some more influential plenipotentiaries (such as Yury Trutnev in the Far East) have used their positions to influence the personnel policy of the regions in their districts.

This is far from a given. Though, since a 2021 reform the Kremlin - which Zhoga will represent - has had significantly more say in the appointment of regional governments than before. The key industrial regions of the Urals, however, likely have their own channels to the Kremlin, not least through Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin, whose ally, Vladimir Yakushev, has been plenipotentiary so far. Zhoga's position thus may or may not come with actual influence and powers to turn into political capital. His activities might be limited to keeping in touch with former war participants and reminding administrative elites and residents of the importance of the war in Ukraine. It is notable that his appointment comes shortly after the drafting of Russia's new federal budget, which not only significantly increases war-related expenditures but also proposes to reduce them significantly more slowly over the following years than last year's projections; doubling down on the Kremlin's narrative that Russia is ready and willing to fight a long war. Indeed, one of Zhoga's first acts as plenipotentiary was visiting wounded soldiers in a Yekaterinburg hospital.

Prior to his appointment, some local officials suggested that Zhoga might be brought in to break the "liberal elite" of Yekaterinburg, a city known for its relatively pluralistic politics. One could indeed argue that if the Kremlin were to elevate a tame, domesticated turbo-patriotic icon to fill the gap of Yevgeny Prigozhin in the public conscience, Zhoga is a fairly good candidate, not unlike the former prosecutor Dmitry Medveshin who was suggested to be a Kremlin-friendly stand in for the jailed Sergei Furgal in the Khabarovsk region. It is too early to tell whether Zhoga will be content with his role as an avatar. Perhaps he - and his backers - will try to throw their weight around in the Ural regions, perhaps in an attempt to create a counterbalance to Sobyanin's network. The risk for the Kremlin is that sooner or later war participants looking at the occasional high appointment, or the people seeing their potential, may decide that Putin's mantra that veterans and soldiers are a "new elite" gave them license to challenge the positions of incumbents at the local and regional levels. Conflicts like these can then prompt questions about why war participants should be regarded as elites in the first place.

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 teshil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



Middle East needs peace, not conflicts

Ma Xiaolin

ISRAEL'S Security Cabinet reached a consensus on Oct 15 on how to thwart Iran's Oct 1-style missile attacks. After reportedly holding talks with the US' Joe Biden administration, Israel has largely ruled out attacking Iran's nuclear and oil facilities, choosing instead to focus solely on military targets. The decision is intended to prevent the further destabilization of the Middle East, avoid jeopardizing the US presidential election on Nov 5 or the ongoing presidential campaign, or ruining the chances of Israel normalizing relations with the Gulf Arab states.

The Washington Post, citing US officials, reported on Oct 14 that Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has given formal assurances to Washington that it may launch a "limited" retaliatory attack on Iran. But the report also said that the "sword of Damocles" (of Israel's retaliation) could fall before the US election, meaning the outcome is likely to be known in the next couple of weeks.

In response, the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries issued a monthly report on Monday, lowering its global oil demand expectations for the fourth quarter of the year and for 2025. This suggests a panic-driven surge in oil prices, fueled by the fear of a major potential conflict between Israel and Iran, may subside.

Given Israel's strategic practices and the Middle East's geopolitical landscape, Israel would have launched a massive attack on Iran, but the fact that it has not yet prepared militarily and diplomatically, especially due to the constraints imposed on it by the US and Gulf Arab states, has prompted Tel Aviv to shelve its retaliation plan - perhaps for now. Iran fired about 200 missiles at Israel in response to Israel's bombing of Hezbollah's headquarters in Lebanon, which killed the outfit's leader Hassan Nasrallah, senior Iranian Revolutionary Guard commander Abbas Nilforoushan and other Hezbollah activists.

Despite the Iranian attacks being condemned by the West, the US in par-

ticular, and Israel claiming to have intercepted all the Iranian missiles, some of them hit Israeli military and intelligence facilities, demonstrating Iran's long-range strike capability and exposing the loopholes in Israel's air defense system.

Netanyahu has said that Iran will be made to pay for the attacks. Since its founding, Israel has had a deterrence-centered defense strategy, characterized by overpowering military capability, violation of international law, and disproportionate punishment for any armed challenge. Yet Israel has not retaliated against Iran even more than two weeks after the attacks, because of several reasons.

The trend of elite talents leaving the country has intensified, with an increasing number of Israeli citizens considering migrating to other countries. Fourth, the US-Israel relationship is a key factor behind Israel not retaliating against Iran. Although it considers Israel's security its top priority in the Middle East, Washington has shifted its strategic focus away from the region to Europe and the "Indo-Pacific" region to the extent of taking measures to prevent the conflict from spreading to the Persian Gulf which would drag the US into direct confrontation with Iran.

First, since Israel, as it proudly claims, is fighting on "seven fronts", it has to consider the consequences of escalating the conflict with Iran. For more than one year, Israel has been battering the Gaza Strip and making incursions into the West Bank, tackling Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthis rebels in Yemen and Shia militias in Iraq and continuing its airstrikes on Syria, all the while continuing its confrontation with Iran.

Second, Israel's military focus has shifted from operations in Gaza in the south to Lebanon in the north, leaving it incapable of launching a cross-border strike eastward against a more formidable and resilient Iran because, despite all the hype, Israel is a small country with limited strategic maneuvering space, and lack of conventional military power.

Based on its knowledge of wars in the Middle East, Israel has worked out a strategy of tackling threats one at a time while striving

to attain air superiority, and using its forces to neutralize the most immediate dangers. However, Israel cannot replicate its past military successes against neighboring countries such as Egypt, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan when facing a much larger and stronger Iran. If a counterstrike proves ineffective or provokes a fresh round of Iranian missile attacks, the loopholes in Israel's decades-long strategic deterrence mechanism will be fully exposed, shattering its reputation of being "invincible".

Third, internal divisions in Israel are growing, leading to political failures despite some military victo-

ries. Israel's Security Cabinet remains divided on whether to expand the conflict, with increasing focus on the differences between Prime Minister Netanyahu and Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, which have turned into a competition for controlling the Likud Party in the future. Israel's focus on boosting its development has shifted to managing conflicts, which have deteriorated the investment and living environment, with large-scale withdrawal of foreign capital, companies and expatriates from the country. The trend of elite talents leaving the country has intensified, with an increasing number of Israeli citizens considering migrating to other countries.

Fourth, the US-Israel relationship is a key factor behind Israel not retaliating against Iran. Although it considers Israel's security its top priority in the Middle East, Washington has shifted its strategic focus away from the region

to Europe and the "Indo-Pacific" region to the extent of taking measures to prevent the conflict from spreading to the Persian Gulf which would drag the US into direct confrontation with Iran.

As the US presidential election approaches, the Biden administration, concerned about the impact of the conflict on the Democratic Party's votes, appears unhappy with the aggressive Israeli government, with complaints against Netanyahu becoming almost public. Washington strongly opposes Israeli strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities, fearing it could result in a nuclear leak or cause Tehran to withdraw from the nuclear non-proliferation regime. It also advises Israel to avoid targeting Iran's oil facilities to prevent triggering a new global energy crisis.

And fifth, Gulf Arab states' opposition to Israel escalating the conflict has forced Israel to shelve its plans to launch a major attack on Iran. The Israel-Palestine conflict has changed the geopolitical landscape in the Middle East, with traditional Arab-led opposition to Israel giving way to a confrontation between Israel and the Iran-led "Axis of Resistance".

The six Arab countries that have normalized relations with Israel now want to continue dialogue and reconciliation with Iran, while focusing on their own development and praying for peace in the Middle East. These countries recently said they will not open their airspace to Israel nor will they allow US military bases on their soil to help Israel launch air strikes on Iran.

If Israel proceeds to launch a retaliatory attack on Iran, the trilateral security framework among the US, Israel and the Arab states, often described as the "Middle East minilateral" or "Middle East NATO", could collapse, undoing years of diplomatic hard work. In fact, Iran has conveyed through Saudi Arabia that it will not retaliate further if Israel's response is not treacherous.

These developments have helped ease Israel's anxiety, which means that despite the stick of Israel's retaliatory attack raised high, it may only fall symbolically.

Trump promises mayhem

Jackie Calmes

BACK at the dawn of the Trump age, weeks before the 2016 election, a conservative writer chided the media as it struggled with how to cover the outrageous Republican nominee. Salena Zito wrote in the Atlantic - as the title of her buzzy piece had it - that reporters should start "Taking Trump Seriously, Not Literally."

That's what Donald Trump's supporters were doing, she said: Unlike journalists, his voters believed he was a serious candidate who'd be elected, and they didn't believe he'd do the out-there things he talked about, the stuff that so riled the pundits who took him literally. Her observation seemed prescient, suggesting why Trump fans didn't mind when, as president, he failed to build a 2,000-mile border wall, get Mexico to pay for it or lock up Hillary Clinton.

Now we know that both Zito and the media got it wrong: Trump should be taken seriously and literally. Trump is outdoing himself during the 2024 campaign's final weeks, belching threats and spreading conspiracies. He demonstrated as president what he's capable of, not least in separating migrant families and inciting an insurrection. Dozens of former advisors have told us that he'd have committed other dangerous, even illegal acts - including ordering troops into the streets, authorized to shoot protesters in the legs - but for the aides' resistance.

Such resistance likely will not come from sycophants a reelected Trump would appoint. He tells us so. At the Detroit Economic Club last week, Trump acknowledged that as a political novice in the White House, he relied on staffers who often wouldn't fulfill his wishes. "I now know the game a little better," he warned.

Which makes his comments on Sunday on Fox News about militarily countering "the enemy from within" - that is, Democrats - all the more chilling. Trump told interviewer Maria Bartiromo that he isn't worried about election day chaos from his supporters or foreigners but from "radical left lunatics." Never fear, he said: "I think it should be very easily handled by, if necessary, by National Guard or, if really necessary, by the military."

Fortunately Trump won't be president on election day. Still, as former Defense Secretary Mark Esper said on CNN, "I think we should take those words seriously." It was Esper who had to deal with Trump's desire to fire into crowds at racial justice protests in 2020. "I lived through that," Esper said. Trump's "inclination is to use the military in these situations."

On Fox, Trump similarly responded when Bartiromo leadingly asked how he'd deal with "the bureaucrats undermining you" in a second term. His answer: "We have the outside enemy and then we have the enemy from within. And the enemy from within is, in my opinion, more dangerous than China, Russia and all these countries."

He cited one example: the man he childishly calls Adam "Shifty" Schiff, the Burbank congressman who was a leader in the House

impeachments of Trump and its Jan. 6 committee and is a sure bet to be elected California's next senator, as Trump himself said. "A total sleazebag," Trump lied.

Certainly Trump's most zealous and unstable loyalists take him both seriously and literally. More than 200 Jan. 6 defendants testified that they were heeding Trump's orders when they came to Washington and attacked the Capitol. Such misplaced fealty is what stokes fears of trouble next month should Trump lose the election, or even if he simply grouses about how it was run.

It wouldn't be surprising if Trump's nasty name-check revived death threats against Schiff, yet another reason to take the man seriously and literally. The long list of his "enemies" who have had to get security includes VIPs such as former Republican Rep. Liz Cheney, Utah Sen. Mitt Romney and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Mark Milley (Trump once said the retired general should be executed for treason), and average Americans such as 2020 election workers Ruby Freeman and Shaye Moss in Georgia. "How evil," Freeman tearfully said in federal court about Trump's slanders.

After Trump lied that FEMA ignored states slammed by Hurricanes Helene and Milton and squandered money on migrants, an armed North Carolina man was arrested Saturday for allegedly threatening government disaster workers. First responders were ordered out of one county amid unconfirmed reports of "truckloads of armed militia." And Trump's dark, dystopian lies about immigrants ruining Springfield, Ohio; Charleroi, Pa.; and Aurora, Colo., have drawn attention to each from neo-Nazis and white supremacists.

He keeps up the incitement. In Aurora on Friday, Trump lied that Vice President Kamala Harris, "has imported an army of illegal alien gang members and migrant criminals from the dungeons of the Third World" and "has had them resettled beautifully into your community to prey upon innocent American citizens." He's vowed to use wartime powers to deport millions. "Getting them out will be a bloody story," Trump said last month in Mosinee, Wis. Believe him.

Yet Trump's normie supporters do not. As a New York Times story about Trump's Detroit Economic Club appearance began: "A lot of people are happy to vote for him because they simply do not believe he will do many of the things he says he will." One businessman explained away Trump's recent call for "one really violent day" in which police would crack down on property crimes as "just a sound bite." That's what Republicans have said since Jan. 6 about Trump's election fraud falsehoods (despite their initial condemnations) and his summons to the Capitol ("Be there, will be wild!") and so much more. Willful delusion about what Trump has done and what he could do if reelected - as he keeps promising, loud and proud - is idiocy in 2024.

Seriously and literally, *The Los Angeles Times*

Like in magic, Moscow is playing a game of distraction

Slavoj Zizek

Sometimes listen to podcasts about the secrets behind the best-known magic tricks (the three-shell game, mentalism, levitation), and after reading recent news from Russia, I saw an analogy to how Russian propaganda has achieved the seemingly impossible. Defying common sense, the Kremlin continues to proclaim with a straight face that its attack on Ukraine was an act of self-defense.

Most magic tricks combine two strategies, one to produce the desired effect and another to distract the audience from what is really going on. Russia is doing the same with recent statements that are clearly designed to raise regional tensions around Ukraine. First, the Russian government approved a list of 47 foreign states and territories whose neoliberal attitudes supposedly threaten people with "traditional Russian spiritual and moral values." Those on

the list are now officially designated as "enemy states." Gone is any pretense of supporting a "multipolar" world. If you do not share Russia's values, you are an enemy.

Among those who apparently share Russia's values are North Korea, Afghanistan and Iran. The common element across these regimes is that they regard the European Enlightenment as the ultimate evil. The conflict is thus elevated to a metaphysical-religious level, and whenever religion enters directly into politics, the threat of deadly violence is never far behind. Beneath all the talk of a new multipolar world is an eschatological vision of a total war to extinction between two opposites.

Hence, soon after releasing his "enemies list," Putin declared a new nuclear doctrine that expands "the category of states and military alliances in relation to which

nuclear deterrence is carried out." In a pointed warning to the West, he announced that any attack on Russia by a nonnuclear state that is backed by a nuclear-armed one would be considered a "joint attack." Moreover, the Kremlin reserves the right to use nuclear weapons in response to an attack on Belarus, which forms part of its "Union State." In other words, any case where an enemy "creates critical danger to our sovereignty" is a potential case belli for a nuclear conflict.

Such statements cannot but make us nostalgic for the good old days of the Cold War, when both sides wisely avoided direct nuclear threats and announced that they would use nuclear arms only in response to a nuclear strike by the other side. Under the conditions of "mutual assured destruction," nobody dared to raise the possibility of a nuclear

first strike. But now, Russia is not only asserting its right to a first strike; it is even expanding the conditions for justifying it.

Of course, an actual Russian first strike remains unlikely. But in military matters, words are never just words. It is all too easy for one side to become trapped by its own rhetoric. After thousands of paggers exploded in Lebanon, Iran's delegate to the United Nations said that Israel had again "crossed a red line." But at a time when "red lines" are being crossed regularly, such statements can only make the situation more dangerous. After all, there must be real red lines somewhere, but they may not be well understood, implying that we will not know where they lie until they have been crossed.

The obvious response to Putin is that he is the one who crossed the red line by

issuing nuclear threats. Like those commentators who see the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war as a proxy war between Russia and NATO, he would have us believe that Russia was attacked first. Can this be true? Israel would say that it is just acting in self-defense in Gaza, the West Bank, in Lebanon, but much is riding on how one defines "self" here. If I occupy territory that is not mine and then proclaim it mine (like the West Bank or parts of Ukraine) and if the people who live there resist me, am I acting in self-defense when I crush them?

This brings us back to the magician's strategies of Russian state propaganda. By accusing his opponents of what he is already doing, Putin wants to divert attention from the fact that he has stolen land and declared it his own. If you accept that Crimea, Donbas and any other area with "traditional

Russian" values (perhaps the Baltic countries or Moldova?) is being threatened or that the Ukrainian nation is some fanciful modern construct, you have fallen for Putin's trick.

Understanding Putin's sleight of hand matters for the near term, because his combination of propaganda strategies has rendered rational peace negotiations practically impossible. When the terms of negotiation have been falsified from the outset, what progress can be made? Reflecting on the perpetual calls for peace in Ukraine, Luka Lisjak Gabrijelcic of Central European University is right to caution that, "Peace is all too precious to be left to peaceniks." Add Putin's third strategy of deception - presenting a brutal war of conquest as a defense of spiritual values - and his ledger-main looks almost insuperable. All our hope now resides in that "almost."

The Japan Times

An exodus of millionaires is already underway. Britain will be poorer for it

MY proposal for tax reform is a new, empty box at the end of the self-assessment form. "Some believe the rate of tax is too low," it would say. "If you would like to pay more, state the amount here." This would serve to gauge just how much demand there really is for higher tax. But most of all it would allow people, like those involved in Patriotic Millionaires UK, to pay what they feel is right without deepening the inequality of which they complain.

The movement was set up in America by Erica Payne, a Democratic campaigner then arguing against George W Bush's tax cuts. She found rich Americans to say that their (then) effective tax rate - 24 per cent - was too small. In Britain, the top rate is 47 per cent. But we now have an offshoot group, 'Patriotic Millionaires UK', popping up to suggest we need more capital gains tax, wealth tax and more. They have even released what purports to be a poll of millionaires crying out to be hit hard-er.

This matters because it's unclear how many around Rachel Reeves will be able to see through this seductive logic. She certainly needs money. Millionaires have it - so what's the problem if they want to give more to her? The Institute for Public Policy Research, an influential think-tank in Labour circles, has issued a report quoting some of the 'Patriotic Millionaires' to say that higher tax would not stop them investing or force them to leave the country. So, surely: case closed?

Hitting the richest would certainly be popular. Since the dawn of opinion polling, people have always backed higher taxes for those richer than themselves. When Idi Amin turned on Asian businessmen and women (like Priti Patel's parents) it was wildly popular. The problem was that the Asians accounted for 90 per cent of Uganda's tax revenue and, after he threw them out, the economy collapsed. It was the most spectacular example of an old problem: the rich may be annoying, but you need them. So what to do?

The UK tax system has become unusually reliant on a small number of super-taxpayers with the best-paid 1 per cent stumping up 28 per cent of all UK income tax collected. These figures should warm the heart of the most ardent class warrior. Deeper data isn't published but you can (and I did) submit a Freedom of Information request. The top 0.01 per cent - that's the top 3,740 taxpayers - are expected to pay over 5 per cent of all income tax this year, an average of £4.5 million each - and that's just income tax. On to that we can add their investments, charitable donations, spending and more.

So how mobile are golden geese? How likely to fly off to other countries? We can answer that by asking how many have done so already. The first Sunday Times Rich List, published in 1989, contained hardly any immigrants. Now, it reads like a Who's Who of the global business elite: Gopi Hinduja, Idan Ofer, Len Blavatnik. Then come the families like the Rausing and Mittals.

Fraser Nelson

Britain has become home to more millionaires than any country in the world after the US and China - and we've been banking the dividend. Britain's top 100 earners now pay more in tax than North Sea oil has generated for most of the last ten years. While we're unlikely to strike oil again, it is quite possible to find another 100 millionaires - or, at least, keep the ones we've got. So what they think matters, but they tend to stay away from the public debate. The UK's biggest taxpayer, for example, is Alex Gerko, a reclusive financial trader from Moscow whose latest tax bill came to an estimated £665 million. He tends to give about £20 million a year to charity.

Very few millionaires announce that they're emigrating because tax is too high, but decades of study from several countries shows that this is precisely what happens. It is, as always, a combination: quality of life, of schools, ease of business. But no serious economist disputes that tax is a major factor in that balance and that, after a certain point, tax rises are self-defeating and bring in less money. The only debate is where that point lies. It looks increasingly likely that Britain passed that point some time ago. A survey by Henley & Partners found that Britain's millionaire population probably started to decline in 2017, with 9,500 on track to leave this year - double the 4,200 who left last year. The trickle may soon become a flood. The UBS Global Wealth Report recently estimated that Britain will lose 500,000 dollar-millionaires over the next five years, far more

than any other country in the world. Spain and Italy are out to catch those fleeing Britain, with some success so far.

The uber-rich, it seems, don't stop to give quotes to think-tanks on their way to the airport. They just leave. A millionaire exodus would certainly make Britain a more equal country (just as Uganda was after the Asians left) but also a poorer country. This will increase the tax burden on people who are not millionaires and deprive the economy of its biggest spenders and investors. This, surely, should be the sole priority of a progressive government: to reduce the burden on the poorest. If that means wooing the rich, so be it.

This is the logic that led Peter Mandelson to declare that Labour was "intensely relaxed about people getting filthy rich" as long as they pay their taxes. That's why Gordon Brown ensured the top rate of tax was no higher than 40 per cent for all but the last few weeks of Labour's time in office. His new 50p tax richest was not intended as a revenue raiser but a trap designed to electrocute any Tory who tried to touch it. George Osborne dared only reduce this to 45p. Liz Truss put any Tory off trying again. It would be a shame if Brown's trap ends up ensnaring Rachel Reeves. High taxes make everyone poorer: even New Labour understood that. If the Chancellor wants more investment, she should cut tax on investing - and investors. But if she comes after them in her Budget, she should not be surprised if they decide not to stay around to see her drama to its conclusion.

The Telegraph

Foreign Secretary David Lammy's visit to China on Friday and Saturday will mark a significant opportunity for a new beginning in Sino-British relations. The relationship between the United Kingdom and China is not only of importance for the people of both nations but also for the wider global community.

As two permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and two of the world's nuclear powers, their cooperation - or lack of it - has far-reaching implications for international peace, development, climate change mitigation, and the reform of the global governance system. It is crucial that Lammy's visit leads to concrete steps toward re-establishing a productive partnership between the two sides, one that can help shape the future of the world.

China and the UK have shared periods of both strong collaboration and discord. The "Golden Era" of Sino-British relations demonstrated the potential of a positive, mutually beneficial partnership. During this period, which started two years after the 2008 global financial crisis, trade between the two sides surged significantly, and diplomatic ties strengthened. In 2015, The Plough, a pub in Cadsden, Buckinghamshire, hosted then UK prime minister David Cameron and Chinese President Xi Jinping for pints and fish and chips.

However, this period of goodwill was later marred by growing tensions, most notably over the situation in the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region. The political disagreements between the two countries on a range of issues caused a deterioration in Sino-British relations, straining both diplomatic and economic ties.

Now, as the world faces unprecedented challenges, whether in terms of geopo-

John Quelch & David Gosset

litical instability, climate change, or the need for a more inclusive global economic system, there is a pressing need for the UK and China to find common ground. It should be the foremost objective of diplomats to seek and establish common ground in pursuit of the common good.

That's why Lammy's visit could be a step toward healing old wounds and forging a renewed path of cooperation. The stakes are high: as significant powers, both economies are key players in the ongoing reform of international institutions such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, and global climate agreements. Their ability to collaborate could set the tone for how effectively these global bodies can address pressing issues such as poverty reduction, environmental protection and peacekeeping. The UK's diverse population, which includes significant communities with roots in the Global South, makes the UK a unique bridge between China and developing nations. This offers the UK the chance to engage in dialogue between China and other parts of the world, particularly Africa and South Asia. As China advances its Belt and Road Initiative, which has connected many developing nations to Chinese investment and infrastructure projects, the UK's position in Europe as a hub for these conversations can be pivotal.

Economically, the UK's service sector is one of the most sophisticated and competitive in the world. The sector includes finance, insurance, life sciences, pharmaceuticals, education and creative industries.

China's recent reaffirmation of its commitment to comprehensively advance reform and opening-up presents a significant opportunity for British exporters of goods and services. As China transi-

tions from an economy focused on quantity to one that emphasizes quality, British expertise could play a critical role in this shift.

The UK's world-class educational institutions, in particular, are well-placed to support China's aspirations to become a more innovation-driven economy. Additionally, the insurance and financial sectors stand to benefit from the growing affluence of the Chinese middle-income group and their increasing need for more sophisticated financial products and services.

In emerging fields such as green technologies and sustainable development, there is enormous potential for collaboration between the two nations. As the world increasingly prioritizes the transition to a low-carbon economy, the UK and China both have much to gain from pooling their expertise. The UK's leadership in climate finance and environmental innovation, combined with China's massive scale in green technology manufacturing, presents a promising avenue for future cooperation toward addressing climate change.

The UK's historical and cultural ties with the United States are strong, and maintaining the "special relationship" with the US has always been a priority for the UK's foreign policy. However, as global dynamics shift, particularly with the sustained rise of China as an economic and political global power, it would be a strategic mistake for the UK not to engage more deeply with China.

While the UK continues to value its relationship with the US, it must also recognize the opportunities that China's re-emergence presents. Failing to do so will not only limit Britain's potential influence in shaping the future global order but also weaken its economic prospects in an increasingly interconnected world.

The China Daily

Does Starmer believe in anything, people ask, and now we know

POLITICAL speeches seem to fall like autumn leaves at this time of year. Speeches at party conferences. Speeches at leadership hustings and to the UN general assembly. And the budget speech itself is still to come. Yet even the chancellor, Rachel Reeves, may struggle to say anything more illuminating than a speech this week by a far less high-profile government member than she.

In July, Richard Hermer KC was plucked from a successful bar career by his fellow barrister Keir Starmer, given a peerage and made attorney general. It was a hand-picked appointment by Starmer, who snubbed the shadow attorney general, Emily Thornberry, to make it. As Lord Hermer, the former head of Matrix Chambers is now the Starmer government's lawyer. He is also, we may reasonably assume, Starmer's eminent legal proxy in the attorney's role.

This week, Hermer gave the annual Bingham lecture at Gray's Inn. His subject, doubtless chosen in honour of the great judge whom the event commemorated, was the rule of law and the threat posed to it by populism. Hermer unquestionably wrote his own script on Monday. But it is surely not reckless to believe that he was also saying things with which Starmer would be fully in accord and to which he himself attaches special importance.

Hermer's lecture was an uncompromising reaffirmation of the centrality of law to government and politics, domestically and internationally. It condemned the previous government for knowingly breaching the law in some of its Brexit legislation, and for removing the role of the courts over Rwanda. By contrast, Hermer said that Labour would abide by and uphold the European convention on human

rights. He then went on to discuss subjects ranging from legislative statutory instruments to the UN.

His central message, though, was that this will be a government that practises what it preaches. It would uphold the rule of law "at every turn", said Hermer. Respect for law lay behind its immediate action in July to scrap the Rwanda deportation plan. It was again the basis of the more recent agreement reached with Mauritius over the Chagos Islands. The review of arms licensing to Israel, he added, came from the same approach. It was a decision based on "law, not politics". International law, Hermer said, was seamlessly part of the rule of law, too. It was "not simply some kind of optional add-on, with which states can pick or choose whether to comply".

There are three ways in which this lecture matters very much. The first is simply that Hermer is right. The rule of law applies to all of those who live in its jurisdiction. None of those who sometimes claim to be above the law - including the super-rich, the press and the military - are exempt. Nor are nation states. It is true that the rule of law is a phrase that has sometimes been misused, especially by politicians. But, as Hermer pointed out, it is emphatically not the same as rule by law, which says little more than laws must be obeyed, however they have been made.

The rule of law, though, is much more substantial and more subtle than this, but it is also more unifying and underpinning. Tom Bingham's definition, developed at length in his 2010 book The Rule of Law, is: "That all persons and authorities within the state, whether public or private, should be bound by and entitled

Martin Kettle

to the benefit of laws publicly made, taking effect (generally) in the future and publicly administered in the courts." No one gets an entirely free pass from the rule of law, especially not governments.

The second takeaway is that Hermer's lecture may mark a new chapter of British governmental deference to this interpretation. In effect, Britain has undergone a quiet constitutional revolution in the past quarter of a century. It has been marked by the passing of the Human Rights Act 1998, the separation of the judiciary from the legislature in 2005 and, not least, by Bingham's thinking and continuing influence. But it is not yet an entirely settled matter.

The quiet revolution made some significant arguments between the courts and the executive more likely. After 2010, under Conservative governments, things duly got rocky, especially on immigration. Brexit brought this to a head, culminating in the supreme court's prorogation ruling in 2019 and its Rwanda ruling in 2023. In sections of the Tory party and press, the legacy is populist opposition to the European convention, hostility to international law more generally and criticism of judges as part of a liberal elite. Starmer and Hermer mark at least a temporary end to all this. Whether that endures will depend on whether Labour and the judges can promote respect for the courts. But it will also depend on Conservative party politics. For now, though, the attorney's role will not be to fight the judges, as it was when Suella Braverman was the worst attorney general of modern times, but to support them.

The final conclusion is in some respects the most tantalising. But it is also the most important of

all. The lecture obviously says a lot about Hermer's approach to his job. But it also implies a great deal about Starmer's own approach to his own role. Critics sometimes question what Starmer actually believes in. Some claim that he believes in very little. Like it or not, though, this lecture suggests that is wrong.

Starmer believes in the rule of law. It is his red line. He absolutely does not wish to cross it if he can avoid doing so. Moreover, the evidence so far is that he will not. It is why, we can speculate, he chose Hermer to be his attorney general in the first place - because they would think alike. The instinct shows at every turn. Unlawfulness may be as close to a resignation issue for Starmer as there could ever be.

The instinct showed in the way he scrapped the Rwanda scheme, which the courts had ruled against and on which the Tories had offered a law-denying alternative. It showed in the Chagos deal, where the government had just lost in the courts before the transfer was agreed. And it showed in his biggest domestic crisis so far, when he pushed the police and the courts to use their full legal powers to end the far-right disorder this summer, rather than turning to crowd control or the military.

Law may be the threat to explain several of Starmer's Middle East decisions too, as well as some of his indecisions. If you seek an explanation of his stance on issues such as arms export licensing to Israel, the possible international criminal court arrest warrant for Benjamin Netanyahu, or, as yesterday, on international humanitarian obligations towards besieged Palestinians in Gaza, the clue may be there already, in that three-word phrase in Hermer's lecture this week. Words that may tell us an entire story. "Law, not politics."

Britain needs Commonwealth allies more than ever

THE start of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Samoa offers a golden opportunity for the UK Government to both present an ambitious agenda for the Association and a confident account of itself on the international stage.

A new report by Policy Exchange, "One Family: Harnessing the Strategic Potential of the Commonwealth", backed by former prime minister of Canada, the Rt Hon Stephen Harper PC, warns that the UK cannot afford to overlook the Commonwealth's economic and diplomatic value in an increasingly contested and volatile international system. In recent times, the Commonwealth has drifted to the margins of international relations - with some in the UK even dismissing it as "Empire 2.0".

The reality is that the Commonwealth is a voluntary international association which brings together a third of the world's population, incorporating some of its fastest-growing economies and dynamic cities on Earth. Members are free to leave at any point - but would lose out on the wealth of trade and investment opportunities in the process.

Known as the "Commonwealth Advantage", investment is 27 per cent higher between

Commonwealth countries bilateral trading costs are on average a fifth lower due to shared language, parity of legal systems, and compatible administrative regimes. Contrary to it being an outdated irrelevant relic of British imperialism, the Commonwealth now includes countries which have no colonial links to the UK - such as Rwanda, Mozambique, and Namibia. The fact that the two of the newest members of the Association are Togo and Gabon - two former French colonies - was a soft-power victory for modern Britain which went largely unrecognised here.

Indeed, there is a fundamental lack of national self-confidence and a paralysing culture of self-flagellation in the UK, which means much of the goodwill and affection which exists towards Britain within the Commonwealth goes underappreciated. Multi-country polling for the report finds that three in five members of the Indian public believe that the UK does more good than harm in the world, with the majority of Nigerian people also being of this view. The figure falls to under half - 47 per cent - among Britons themselves.

There is a certain appreciation of traditional British institutions

Rakib Ehsan

such as the royal family which exists in many of the Commonwealth's Asian and African members - independent, self-governing nation-states which appreciate the role that the late Queen Elizabeth II played in spearheading the transition from imperial control to voluntary association.

King Charles III, through the King's Trust Group he formed in 1976, works closely with local partners across the Commonwealth, supporting young people and communities to develop the skills and confidence to make progress and succeed in life. Prince William has supported environmental projects in Commonwealth countries such as India, Australia, Kenya, and the Bahamas, through the Earthshot Prize award he co-founded with Sir David Attenborough.

Modern Britain must not let down its Commonwealth partners by being insecure in its own history, heritage, and traditions. It should rise to the challenge of spearheading the revitalisation of the Commonwealth. The new Labour Government - especially its Guyanese-heritage foreign secretary David Lammy - should consider this objective to be a key pillar of an authentically internationalist and outward-looking British foreign policy.

There is a chance for it to demonstrate its "progressive internationalism" - one that does not ignore but looks beyond the European Union - by putting forward the case for the Commonwealth to be an effective and energetic organisation based on international peace and security, fair trade, socially responsible investment, environmental protection, and maximising the potential of young people.

But it also means embracing the hard truth that stability and security are the necessary foundations of sustainable economic prosperity. If the Commonwealth is to be a truly relevant and respected actor in international relations, it should create a new security and defence co-operation forum - one that encourages the holding of joint and collective military and naval exercises involving member countries which are facing threats to their territorial integrity. This includes Venezuela's depredations in Commonwealth member Guyana's oil-rich Essequibo region. If the current Labour Government is truly "mission-driven", it will make its mark by leading on a British foreign-policy realignment towards the Commonwealth, recognising the force for good this unique international association can be in areas ranging from trade to security.

Kadyrov's 'blood feud'

CHECHNYA is a republic where civil and religious laws mix with ancient customs. Despite Russian influence through governmental authority, people in Chechnya often continue to apply Adat (Chechen customary law) or Islamic Sharia law to resolve civil matters. These customs have burst back into the headlines after Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov declared a blood feud against three federal lawmakers from neighboring republics.

Blood feuds have been a fundamental part of Chechen society since ancient times, and persist thanks to a lack of trust in Russia's justice system and the strong role religion continues to play. Traditionally, these feuds involve only men of legal age, as women are neither the subjects nor the targets of this custom. Common reasons for initiating a blood feud are murder or rape.

The key distinction between blood feuds in Adat and Sharia is that under Adat, all male members of the offender's family can be considered targets whereas only the actual perpetrator of a murder can be killed under Sharia. The processes also differ: under Adat, the elders or head of the aggrieved family formally declare a blood feud to the elders of the murderer's family. Meanwhile, a full trial is conducted under Sharia and the death penalty is applied if the victim's family does not forgive the murderer. During the period of Soviet rule, the state-imposed death penalty for murder rendered the tradition of blood feuds largely obsolete. Instead, the tradition was often used as a means for reconciliation, with elders mediating and encouraging forgiveness between families.

However, the Chechen wars of the 1990s and 2000s had a significant impact on the region's traditions. Primarily, this was due to the impunity for war crimes Moscow granted to Russian soldiers despite the massacres committed across the republic which led some Chechens to seek vengeance for these crimes through "blood feuds," even if they did not follow the tradition by the letter.

One notable case is the 2011 assassination in Moscow of Yuri Budanov, a former Russian army

Abubakar Yanguibaev

colonel who had been convicted of the brutal 2000 murder of Elza Kungayeva, an 18-year-old Chechen woman.

Yusup Temerkhanov, a native Chechen, was later convicted of Budanov's killing. Temerkhanov's family claimed that his actions were motivated by the killing of his father by Russian soldiers during the Chechen Wars.

Temerkhanov was sentenced to 15 years in prison and was hailed as a martyr by many in the North Caucasus after he died under suspicious circumstances in 2018.

At the same time, the institution of blood feuds has increasingly become a personal tool for Chechen authorities. At the dawn of Ramzan Kadyrov's political career, he justified his fight against Chechen combatants by invoking the tradition. Kadyrov framed his battle against guerrilla fighters as a personal duty to avenge his father's death, portraying it not only as a political or military campaign but also as fulfilling an ancient Chechen custom.

This manipulation of tradition served to align his personal and clan interests with broader political goals. His fight against Chechen resistance was supported by the Russian government - although some suspect that the Kremlin may have had a hand in his father's assassination, as the case was never properly investigated, and the perpetrators were never found.

Following the mysterious and highly suspicious assassinations of the Yamadaev brothers - both influential pro-Kremlin Chechen commanders - in 2008 and 2009, Kadyrov and his family consolidated their power, becoming the sole rulers of Chechnya. While Ramzan Kadyrov has consistently denied any involvement, their feud was part of a larger struggle for control and influence in post-war Chechnya.

In 2010, Kadyrov established the Committee for the Struggle Against Blood Feuds, allegedly marking a change in his views on the tradition. However, if there was a change, it did not seem to affect his political behavior. Kadyrov and his subordinates intermittently issued threats against political critics, human rights activists and independent

journalists who were frequently attacked, tortured or even assassinated. These actions, aimed at those considered enemies of his regime, were regularly justified by the Kremlin as part of its broader counter-terrorism efforts.

What makes Kadyrov's most recent declaration of a blood feud especially surprising is that it was directed at federal deputies, including the famous Dagستاني billionaire Suleyman Kerimov. By invoking blood feud traditions in this power struggle over Russia's largest online retailer, Kadyrov is attempting to assert himself as a player at a new level in Putin's Russia, positioning himself not merely as an enforcer but as an influential member of the elite.

Ultimately, the tradition of blood feuds in Chechnya has been monopolized and manipulated by Kadyrov, becoming a prime part of his rule.

It is difficult to predict the future of the blood feud tradition in the region. Currently, the practice persists primarily in Chechnya, Ingushetia and Dagestan, rather than across the entire North Caucasus, largely as a result of the aftermath of the Chechen wars. The tradition is being maintained more by the actions of the local authorities than by the will of the general population.

The concept of blood feuds, rooted in the ancient principle of taking an eye for an eye has no place in a modern, civil and humane society. Thankfully the availability and accessibility of civil institutions of power and justice, combined with the influence of global culture and technological progress, are diminishing the reliance on traditional systems among Chechen youth thanks to the crucial role of education.

In conjunction with this, Chechens are striving to preserve the positive aspects of their traditions, using them to resolve local disputes and maintain a degree of independence from Russian governance. By relying on customary and religious systems like Adat and Sharia, they attempt to address issues within their communities, limiting reliance on state institutions, which are often seen as corrupt or distant.

The Moscow Times



SACM directs deptts to facilitate mine owners

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to KP Chief Minister on Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Abdul Karim Tordher has directed the concerned departments for provision of all possible facilities to mine owners and timely performing of their responsibilities in this regard.

He issued these directives while presiding over a high-level meeting here at the office of the KP Board of Investment and Trade (KP-BoIT) here on Friday. Besides, president Frontier Mine Owners Association, Sher Bandi Khan Marwat and other office bearers of the association, Director

Business Facilitation Centre KP-KPoIT, Iqbal Sarwar, Director Minerals Mohammad Aamir, the representatives of the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA), Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), Local Government, Environment and other departments attended the meeting at large.

The purpose of the meeting was the facilitation and creation of easing doing business for the mineral sector investors and businessmen at official level.

During the meeting, the mineral sector related businessmen and investors

highlighted the required facilities and hurdles at the hands of various public sector organizations and departments in various phases of their businesses and presented their proposals for provision of possible cooperation in connection with the Asan Karobar Policy of the government.

In response to the presentation of the Frontier Mine Owners Association, the Special Assistant to KP CM assured that serious in promotion of business and investment in the province. He said that they to uplift the provincial economically. Therefore, he said they have to collectively perform their responsibilities

in a better manner.

He said that there should be a timeline for the redressal of the concerns of lease holders and investors by the concerned departments to save them from unnecessary prolonging of the process and put the sector on the path of further progress.

The Special Assistant said that minerals are the flagship sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and has the potential of further progress. He said that all departments will provide all kinds of cooperation to the investors. So, they could carry their business in an easy and business-friendly environment.



PESHAWAR: Chief Manager, State Bank of Pakistan Peshawar Waqar Ali meeting with president Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Fazal Moqeem Khan.

Delivering Miracles: A safe delivery in SIEHS 1122's care

F.P. Report

KARACHI: In the early hours of October 13, 2024, an urgent call reached the SIEHS-1122 Command and Control center from a rural health facility in District Badin. A young pregnant woman, experiencing severe labor pains, required immediate medical transport. Responding swiftly, the nearby ambulance team was dispatched to assist.

As the labor progressed rapidly during the journey, the SIEHS 1122 frontliners, with quick thinking, expert care, and the consent of the attendant, prepared for an emergency delivery inside the moving ambulance. Shukur Alhamdulillah, a healthy baby boy was safely born in the Hope ambulance, filling the air with joy. At 4:15 AM, near the Khoski bypass, the delivery was successfully managed.

This is one of 233 babies delivered inside SIEHS ambulances since its inception on August 9, 2021, and among 66 deliveries facilitated in the past fiscal year alone. Both mother and baby were stabilized and safely transferred to RHC Nindo for further care. With an average dispatch time of just 148 seconds, SIEHS ensures timely responses when every second counts. The service handles over 20,000 calls daily, or 758 calls per hour, showcasing the unwavering dedication of the team.

This moment of life and hope underscores the tireless efforts of SIEHS, demonstrating the profound trust the public places in this vital service.

Standard Chartered sign MoU

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Standard Chartered Pakistan and Gatronova signed a Memorandum of Understanding at the Gatronova Head Office. Through this agreement, Standard Chartered was awarded Gatronova's cash management & supplier financing mandate.

This mandate enables the Bank to deliver channel agnostic solutions by providing Gatronova's distributors and customers the ability to transact digitally 24/7 with nearly 30 banks.

The agreement will enable Gatronova to improve their operational and cost efficiencies, unify its operating account, match receipts with invoices and reconcile collections across multiple several product lines with ease and control.

SCCI calls for provision soft loans for uplift SMEs

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry president Fazal Moqeem Khan urged the government and State Bank of Pakistan to ensure provision of soft loans for development of small-scale business and industry through commercial banks.

The SCCI chief said commercial banks had declared KP as 'red-zone', owing to which the business community is facing difficulties in the provision of loans.

On the other hand, he said the commercial banks at various forums were consistently making invitations to businessmen to avail loan facilities, but the business community approached concerned banks, and they were informed that KP had put them into 'red-zone'.

Therefore, he urged the central bank to issue instructions to commercial banks to remove KP from 'red-zone'.

He also stressed the need of improving the lending ratio of commercial banks against their rising deposits.

Fazal Moqeem was talking to Chief Manager, State Bank of Pakistan Peshawar Waqar Ali during a meeting, held here at the chamber house on Friday.

Meeting was attended by SCCI Senior vice president Abdul Jalil Jan, Deputy Chief Manager, SBP Muhammad Haroon, and Assistant Chief Manager Imran Khan and others.

The meeting was informed that SBP will hold an awareness session for the business community on November 19 in SBP building and on 27 November in the chamber house.

It was agreed to jointly take measures for provision of loans to traders on easy terms and promotion of SMEs under joint ventures and projects.

Chief Manager, SBP Waqar Ali along with other senior officials congratulated the newly elected cabinet of the SCCI.

Moqeem called for one window facilitation services to the business community to halt the 'flight of capital' and 'brain drains' from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He also asked the government and SBP to play a role in the economic development of K-P.

The SCCI chief, while emphasizing on uniform implementation of policies across the country, stated that traders, exporters and importers were faced with difficulties, which should be addressed on priority basis.

Fazal Moqeem stressed the need for efficient utilization of natural resources to change the destiny of the K-P and also halt the rapid flight of capital and brain drain from the province.

Earlier, the meeting decided to hold a joint meeting of SCCI, SBP and officials of relevant departments/authorities to sort out a viable solution to business community issues.

DG CAA leads Pak team at 59th DGCA Conference



F.P. Report

KARACHI: A three-member delegation from Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), led by DG CAA, Nadir Shafi Dar, attended the 59th DGCA Conference themed "Shaping the Future of Aviation: Sustainable, Resilient, and Inclusive".

The conference, hosted by the Philippines DGCA, took place in Cebu from 14-18 October 2024.

During the conference, the Pakistani delegation engaged in multiple side meetings aimed at enhancing cooperation with regulatory authorities across the Asia Pacific region. These discussions focused on opportunities for training

and capacity-building for CAA employees through partnerships with well-established states.

The delegation also presented three Discussion Papers on Aviation Safety and Air Navigation, which were well-received and gained strong support from member States.

In addition, the delegation held productive meetings with representatives from UK CAAI, DGCA Singapore, Transport Canada, UAE GCAA, DGCA France, IFALPA, the Flight Safety Foundation, and DGCA officials from Sri Lanka and Nepal.

DG Pakistan CAA, Nadir Shafi Dar, also had the honor of moderating key

agenda items, including:

1. Schedule of future DGCA conferences.
2. Enhancing communication and engagement in the ICAO State Letter Process.
3. Expansion of the ICAO Council.
4. Schedule of meetings/seminars/workshops for 2025.
5. Theme proposal for the 60th DGCA Conference.
6. Endorsement of action items from the current conference.

Pakistan's active participation in the 59th Asia and Pacific regions DGCA Conference reflects its growing role in the international civil aviation cooperation.

BankIslami redefines Pak's financial landscape with riba-free banking



F.P. Report

KARACHI: BankIslami, one of the leading Islamic financial institutions in Pakistan, has launched a pivotal initiative by promoting its riba-free banking services accessible for people of diverse background and faith. The move reflects BankIslami's mission to advance ethical and inclusive banking in Pakistan's financial landscape, which aligns with the principles of Shariah compliance while upholding social responsibility and transparency.

Riba (interest) is prohibited in almost all religions due to its unjust nature. This is why Islamic banking appeals to people of all faiths, promoting inclusivity by offering fair and transparent financial alternatives. Furthermore, the global Islamic finance industry, now valued at

over \$3 trillion, is growing rapidly, showing increasing demand for ethical and Shariah-compliant solutions.

The initiative comes amid growing interest in alternative banking models, and BankIslami is raising awareness about the benefits of riba-free and ethical banking to encourage wider participation in the country's financial system.

The launch event, held at Mohatta Palace, Karachi was attended by dignitaries including the Governor State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) Jameel Ahmad and Deputy Governor SBP Saleem Ullah, I.G. Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon, leaders from the banking industry leaders, public sector, and other industries, reflecting a broad endorsement of BankIslami's efforts towards financial inclusivity and ethical

banking.

The Governor of the State Bank of Pakistan, Jameel Ahmad, remarked: "At the State Bank, we envision a Pakistan where Islamic finance drives growth and benefits everyone. We aim for a fair and modern financial system, accessible to all, regardless of background or financial status. BankIslami's vision of 'Saving humanity from Riba' highlights a commitment to making banking inclusive for all. The State Bank is proud to support the growth of Islamic banking in Pakistan."

Rizwan Ata, CEO of BankIslami, stated: "This initiative aligns with Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision of equality and fairness for everyone in all walks of life. By offering riba-free solutions, we aim to foster transparency and trust

across the banking sector. Our goal is to create a system where every citizen feels empowered to achieve financial stability."

Imran H. Shaikh, Deputy CEO, BankIslami, added: "Islamic banking isn't just for Muslims, it is for everyone who believes in fairness. At BankIslami, we're breaking down barriers and opening doors. We're not just about numbers; we're about people, community, and a banking experience that respects and includes everyone. Together, we can drive positive change and bring the benefits of riba-free banking to all."

BankIslami has engaged clerics from various religious backgrounds to foster understanding and trust in the benefits of joining the Islamic banking network. This collaboration creates a platform that highlights the ethical and inclusive nature of Islamic finance, with benefits to individuals and society as a whole.

BankIslami aims to improve access to Islamic banking for underserved communities and individuals previously excluded from the formal banking system. With shared risk, profit and partnership, asset-backed transactions, and an ethical approach to banking, BankIslami emphasizes inclusivity, fairness, and caution against practices that harm people.

Hameed Latif Hospital leads fight against breast cancer

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Hameed Latif Hospital recently hosted a successful Breast Cancer Awareness Walk and Health Seminar, drawing significant community participation.

The purpose of the event was to raise awareness about breast cancer, highlighting the importance of early detection and prevention. Attendees, including survivors, healthcare professionals, and the hospital's medical staff, participated in the awareness walk, followed by an informative seminar.

The seminar featured expert insights from leading medical professionals. Dr. Zeba Aziz, Consultant Oncologist, provided updates on advancements in breast cancer treatments and stressed the importance of regular screenings. Dr. Farrukh Zaman, Consultant Gynecologist, discussed the role of gynecological health in early cancer detection. Dr. Farooq Rana, General Surgeon, addressed surgical options for breast cancer patients, while many other well-known consultants like Dr. Tanvir-Ul-Salam, Dr. Ahsan Alam and Dr. Azhar Hussain participated

in the event.

The event was made possible under the leadership of Dr. Rashid Latif Khan, Chairperson of the RLK Group, and was supported by Dr. Yousaf Latif Khan Executive Director, Dr. Hassaan Khan Chief Operating Officer, Dr. Adnan Abdul Majid, Additional Medical Director and Mr. Muhammad Imran Marketing Manager. Their collective commitment to promoting health awareness and providing accessible healthcare services was a driving force behind the initiative.

In addition to raising

awareness, a free screening camp with discounts on mammograms & ultrasounds has been organized for the month of October as part of Hameed Latif Hospital's ongoing dedication to early detection and comprehensive care.

Hameed Latif Hospital is a premier healthcare provider in Pakistan, renowned for its patient-centered approach and commitment to excellence. Focused on delivering effective care, it has become the trusted choice for compassionate, high-quality healthcare in the community.

Publicis Media onboarded by Nestlé as Media Agency Partner



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Publicis Media has been selected by Nestlé Pakistan to oversee its media strategy in Pakistan, aiming to drive transformation in the realm of media and drive

effectiveness and efficiency of its spends across media touchpoints.

Jason Avanceña, CEO Nestlé Pakistan, emphasized the significance of media transformation in achieving long-term growth and industry leadership.

"Nestlé seeks to leverage data and technology to catalyze change and establish new benchmarks for marketing excellence in Pakistan," he said.

Benish Irshad, CEO Publicis Media Pakistan, commented, "We believe that this collaboration will be instrumental in accelerating Nestlé Pakistan's digital transformation journey and aligning with the company's goals of achieving marketing excellence within the FMCG sector in the country."

Fuad Ghazanfar, Head of Communications & Marketing Services at Nestlé Pakistan, stated, "This partnership aligns with our broader objective of enhancing audience engagement and maximizing the return on media investments."

The appointment of Publicis Media as Nestlé's consolidated media agency became effective on September 1, 2024.

As the media and digital landscape in Pakistan accelerates, Nestlé Pakistan is committed to driving transformation and setting new industry standards.

SPI inflation up by 0.28%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.28 percent for the combined consumption groups during the week ended on October 17, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reported on Friday.

According to the PBS data, the SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 319.79 points as compared to 318.91 points during the past week.

As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 15.02 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 covers 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups.

Likewise, SPI for the lowest consumption group of up to Rs 17,732 witnessed increase of 0.27 percent and went up to 313.74 points from last week's 312.91 points.

The SPI for consumption groups of Rs 17,732 to 22,888; Rs 22,889-29,517; Rs 29,518-44,175 and above Rs 44,175, decreased by 0.28 percent, 0.27 percent, 0.28 percent and 0.28 percent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 19 (37.25%) items increased, 09 (17.65%) items decreased and 23 (45.10%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded major decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week basis included onions (7.02%), bananas (2.83%), gur (1.82%), potatoes (1.15%),

pulse mash (0.72%), rice irrigated (0.40%), sugar (0.27%) and rice basmati broken (0.09%).

The commodities which recorded major increase in their average prices on week-on-week basis included tomatoes (26.24%), pulse moong (9.86%), pulse gram (3.15%), wheat flour (2.10%), diesel (2.01%), LPG (1.50%), garlic (1.31%), chicken (0.96%), eggs (0.68%), mustard oil (0.65%) and firewood (0.35%).

On-year basis, the commodities that witnessed a decrease included wheat flour (32.20%), electricity charges for q1 (20.32%), chilies powder (20.00%), diesel (17.05%), petrol (12.77%), cooking oil 5 liter (9.10%), rice basmati broken (8.18%), sugar (7.31%), eggs (6.24%), bread (5.03%),

vegetable ghee 2.5 kg (4.93%) and washing soap (1.61%).

Documents burnt in house fire

Our (Nahida Akhtar daughter of Ghulam Ali Shah) house was burnt down on 4th October 2024 due to unknown reason in which severe damages were happened including educational documents. The documents included Matic DMC & Certificate, F.Sc DMC & Degree, M.Sc DMC & Degree, B.Ed DMC, Domicile and DIT certificate were burnt to ashes. Nahida Akhtar daughter of Ghulam Ali Shah R/o Jehangir pura Qisa Khwani Peshawar



In brief

Team confident to win series: Sajid

MULTAN (APP): Pakistan's spinner Sajid Khan expressed team's joy in defeating England and said that the team was confident to win series. He was talking to the media after he was named player of the match. He shared his thoughts regarding match-winning performance. He said that, whenever he gets an opportunity, he tried to make the most of it. "Whether I get a chance or not it was the matter of luck, but I always stay focused on my performance," said Sajid. He expressed the team's joy in defeating England and promised to give their best effort in the upcoming matches. "The entire team was thrilled with this win over England and the team will do everything possible to win the series," he added. When asked about the Rawalpindi pitch, Sajid commented, "I am not sure if it will be a turning wicket or not that was up to the grounds-men." He also addressed questions about teammate Aamir Jamal's fitness, reassuring the media that Jamal was fit and that cramping can happen to anyone. On his unique wicket celebration style, Sajid explained, "My celebration was natural and I have had this style since my school and college days." With the series poised for an exciting finish, both teams were preparing for the Rawalpindi Test, where they hope to settle the contest on what could be a decisive pitch.

Shaheen faces India on Saturday

LAHORE (APP): Shaheens to commence their Emerging Teams T20 Asia Cup campaign against India on Saturday. The Pakistan Shaheens cricket team will begin its campaign in the eight-team ACC Men's Emerging Teams T20 Asia Cup 2024 against India 'A' at the Oman Cricket Academy ground in Muscat, Oman. The tournament is set to begin on Friday (today) with two Group A fixtures as Bangladesh 'A' take on Hong Kong and Afghanistan 'A' lock horns with Sri Lanka 'A'. Mohammad Haris-led 15-member Shaheens team, which is placed in the Group B, will take on the hosts Oman on 21 October followed by their third group match against the United Arab Emirates on 23 October. The top two teams in each group will qualify for the semi-finals to be played on 25 October followed by the final on 26 October. Pakistan Shaheens participated in a five-day training camp at the Hanif Mohammad National High-Performance Centre in Karachi before departing for Oman. This is the first edition of the ACC Emerging Teams tournament which is set to take place in the T20 format as the previous five editions in the 2013, 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2023 were played in the List-A format. Pakistan have won the tournament in 2019 under Saud Shakeel and in 2023 under Haris. Apart from skipper Haris, Arafat Minhas, Haider Ali, Rohail Nazir, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Omair Bin Yousuf, Qasim Akram, Shah Nawaz Dahani, Sufiyan Moqim are the capped player in the Shaheens squad. Abdul Samad, Ahmed Daniyal, Yasir Khan and Zaman will represent the Shaheens for first time. Mohammad Haris: "The Emerging Teams T20 Asia Cup is a great opportunity for all the players in the Shaheens squad to showcase their abilities and thrive under high pressure. "All of our three group fixtures will test out our potential because the teams we are facing are highly competitive and the format we are playing requires proactiveness during all phases of the game.



MULTAN: Pakistan's Noman Ali celebrate with teammates after taking wicket of England batsman Joe Root during day four of the Second Test Match between Pakistan and England at Multan Cricket Stadium.

NZ beat Windies to reach first World Cup final since 2010

SHARJAH (Agencies): The Women's T20 World Cup is guaranteed a first-time winner as New Zealand beat West Indies by eight runs to join South Africa in Sunday's final.

West Indies slipped to 63-5 in pursuit of 129 on Sharjah's slow pitch, before Deandra Dottin's dynamic 33 from 22 balls, with three sixes, rejuvenated the chase.

But Melie Kerr struck the crucial blow in the 17th over to have Dottin caught at short fine leg which all-but sealed the White Ferns' victory.

The experienced Suzie Bates was tasked with defending 14 off the final over, having not bowled all tournament, but held her nerve as West Indies finished on 120-8.

Kerr finished with 2-14 and Eden Carson 3-29 to prevent West Indies from reaching their second final, which will be contested at the more batter-friendly Dubai.

In contrast to their explosive innings against England on Tuesday, West Indies struggled for fluency with opener Qiana Joseph falling for 12, captain Hayley Matthews stuttering to 15 from 21 balls and veteran Stafanie Taylor only managing 13.

Dottin was dropped three times as she tried in vain to catch up with the run-rate with her usual aggression, but it proved beyond even her reach as West Indies paid the price for a pedestrian start which included a powerplay score of just 25-2.

The all-rounder, who reversed her

retirement to play in this tournament, earlier took 4-22 as New Zealand also could not score freely on the tricky surface. Therefore the toss proved pivotal as Sophie Devine opted to bat first, with Georgia Plimmer's 33 from 31 balls the top score while Brooke Halliday's nine-ball 18 provided some much-needed impetus after the cautious start to the innings.

Regular wickets had heaped the pressure on the middle order, with Melie Kerr, Maddy Green and Rosemary Mair departing for single-figure scores to Dottin but Izzy Gaze's 20 not out provided a late flurry for New Zealand to reach their eventual match-winning total. It is New Zealand's first World Cup final appearance since 2010, when they were beaten by Australia. South Africa were beaten finalists by Australia in last year's final in Cape Town.

New Zealand defy the odds

In a World Cup full of surprises, including neither England or India making it out of the group stage and Australia falling short in their semi-final, New Zealand's place in the final is arguably the biggest shock of all.

They were placed in what was considered the tougher group with India and Australia, and had lost their 10 previous T20s in the build-up to the tournament. But, eight of those coming against England and defending champions Australia seems to have worked in their favour because they had been put under plenty of pressure

and tested significantly. It means they can handle the crunch moments when they come.

The overall feeling was that 128-9 was below-par against West Indies, with their batters attempting to accelerate but both the pitch and the accurate bowling did not allow a free-flowing style of play.

With the benefit of knowing the surface's condition when it came to defence, their spinners twirled away relentlessly with Kerr continuing her impressive tournament, taking her tally to 12 and to the top of the wicket-taking charts so far.

Carson ensured their perfect start, bowling the one-dimensional Joseph, who swiped across the line, Shemaine Campbell then chipped to Bates at cover for three before Taylor, struggling with a sore knee, missed a sweep. When Matthews fell to Lea Tahuhu in the 11th over to leave West Indies 51-4, their hopes lay solely on Dottin's shoulders and she seemed fully prepared to accept the responsibility, clubbing 23 from Tahuhu in the 16th over.

But Kerr and Bates, who so often carry New Zealand alongside Devine, handled the pressure expertly to close out the victory despite the first ball of the final over being beautifully driven for four by Zaida James to send a few shockwaves through the White Ferns' camp. Many of the players could not hold in their tears of joy at the final ball, as they take one step closer to history against all odds.



SHARJAH: The New Zealand players celebrate their win.

More development needed to remain competitive in cricket: Shan Masood

MULTAN (APP): Pakistan Test Captain Shan Masood expressed satisfaction after his side's hard-earned victory in the second Test against England and emphasised the need for further development to remain competitive in international cricket.

Talking to the media after the match on Friday, the captain, while reflecting on the match, noted, "We managed to take 20 wickets in this match, which was key to our success. He said that although we have not played many Test matches in Multan, yet we adapted well. He recalled that Pakistan relied on seamers against Bangladesh, but for this Test, we changed our approach and opted for spinners.

He acknowledged that the victory came after a difficult period and was crucial for Pakistan cricket. "This win was long overdue and very important for our team. We need to be able to take 20 wickets in every match, no matter the conditions.

The lead we secured in this match was extremely helpful, but we cannot always rely on spinning tracks. We need to be able to adapt to different conditions," he added. Masood also shared his thoughts on the upcoming challenge in Rawalpindi, stating, "I have not seen the pitch in Rawalpindi yet, but personally, I would prefer a spinning track there as well. However, we will assess the conditions and try to field the best possible combination based on what we find."

The Pakistan captain credited spinners Noman Ali and Sajid Khan for their match-winning performances and gave insight into the team's selection strategy. "When the new selection committee came in, our primary focus was on how to take 20 wickets. Noman and Sajid deserve a lot of credit for their efforts. To win in Test cricket, we need to be willing to take risks."

Shan Masood's leadership and tactical awareness have brought Pakistan an important win, but the skipper remains focused on the challenges that lie ahead. As the team prepares for their next encounter, the emphasis will be on adaptability and continued progress in both bowling and batting departments.

Difficult batting conditions, missed opportunities cost a lot: Stokes

MULTAN (APP): England captain Ben Stokes acknowledged Pakistan's spinners for their impressive performance and said that difficult batting conditions and some missed opportunities cost his side the match. Talking to the media on Friday, he said Pakistan's spinners bowled really well in the second match. He said: "England also dropped some crucial catches, which did not help our cause." He said that the Multan wicket was not easy for batting, especially as the game progressed.

The match, which was played on a previously used pitch, saw significant turn from the second day onwards. Stokes admitted that batting on such a surface was challenging, saying, "It was an interesting Test match. The ball started to turn a lot on the second day but that was the game."

Stokes also remarked on the importance of the toss in the match, noting that Pakistan captain Shan Masood had the luck of winning the toss twice in a row. "The toss plays a key role sometimes and Shan has been fortunate to win it both times and added that credit to the Pakistan team as they played well." The England captain praised his own team's efforts, especially Ben Duckett, who excelled in the first innings, and bowlers Brydon Carse and Matthew Potts for their strong performances. "Ben Duckett was excellent in the first innings, and both Carse and Potts bowled really well," he maintained.

Noman Ali eight-for seals Pakistan's first home win since 2021

MULTAN (Monitoring Desk): It had been a long time coming for Pakistan, but the conclusion was swift. Noman Ali and Sajid Khan combined for the second time in the match to bowl out England and seal Pakistan's first win in a home Test since 2021. Eight wickets fell in less than two hours as England went down in a flurry of sweeps and reverse-sweeps.

Noman claimed seven of them himself to finish with 8 for 46 and 11 for 147 in the match, both career-bests. With Sajid, who took 7 for 111 in the first innings, picking up the other two, they became the first pair to take all 20 wickets in a Test since Dennis Lillee and Bob Massie in 1972.

A crushing result, achieved within three-and-a-bit days on a re-used surface that Pakistan had hoped would help their spinners, means the series is level at 1-1 ahead of the third Test in Rawalpindi. It also provided Shan Masood with his first victory since taking over as captain, after a horror run of six consecutive defeats.

Their success was all the more remarkable given the changes made in response to last week's crushing innings loss, with Babar Azam, Shaheen Afridi and Naseem Shah dropped and Pakistan selecting a three-man spin attack that had never played together before. In the end,

Zahid Mahmood was only required to bowl six overs as Sajid and Noman, playing his first Test since July 2023, dismantled England in tandem.

This was day four of the second Test, but the ninth day of action for the Multan pitch - with three days in between for a quick spritz up - and it was by now offering consistent turn. England's not-out batters, Ollie Pope and Joe Root, had been practising their sweeps before the start of play and it quickly became clear what the plan of attack was in their attempts to score a further 261 for victory. "Basically getting your broom out," as Ben Stokes put it afterwards.

Pope, however, didn't play a shot in anger before becoming the first wicket to fall, poking Sajid's second ball straight back into the bowler's hands. Harry Brook attempted to sweep his first ball, Root did likewise and the battle lines were drawn.

Not that such clarity of purpose did England much good. Root and Brook had amassed a record fourth-wicket stand of 454 in the first Test on this pitch but the turnaround in control and composure was stark. Root faced eight balls, attempting to sweep seven of them before being hit on the hip as he stretched out on off stump and played over the ball to be given lbw - a decision confirmed

as umpire's call on review.

Brook got one reverse away to the boundary but his frenetic approach was not built to last and he went back to his 21st delivery, the ball staying a touch low as Noman delivered from round the wicket, to be pinned in front of leg stump swinging across the line. England were 78 for 5, the top order back in the dressing room and the game as good as done.

It was soon 88 for 6, as Jamie Smith top-edged a slog sweep to mid-on three balls after dispatching Noman for four with the same shot. Stokes barely played a straight-bat shot and had the most success, reaching 37 at quicker than a run a ball before he was lured down the pitch by Noman. His swing across the line saw the bat end up somewhere near midwicket as Mohammad Rizwan completed the stumping - a fitting metaphor for England losing their grip.

That was pretty much that, beyond a brief sally from Brydon Carse, who survived being given out lbw to Sajid via the DRS, and subsequently smashed the offspinner for three towering sixes before the guile of Noman induced another swipe and a thin edge to slip. In his next over, Noman plucked out Jack Leach and Shoaib Bashir with consecutive deliveries and Pakistan's makeshift Multan master-plan had delivered.

Nadal 'emotionally ready' for Davis Cup farewell

PARIS (Agencies): Rafael Nadal says he feels emotionally prepared for ending his career at next month's Davis Cup Finals but the Spaniard will only contest the singles if he is "ready to win".

The 22-time Grand Slam champion announced last week that he will retire from tennis after representing Spain in Malaga, where the Davis Cup will be held from 19-24 November.

Nadal, 38, is currently competing at the Six Kings Slam exhibition event in Saudi Arabia and will face long-time rival Novak Djokovic for the final time on Saturday. "Emotionally, I'm sure I'll be ready. Physically and in terms of tennis level, there remains a month left to prepare," Nadal said after losing to Carlos Alcaraz on Thursday.

"I will try to be in good shape to help the team to win. If I don't feel ready for the singles, I'll be the first one to say. "Be 100% sure, I will not be on court if I don't feel ready to win my match." After losing his semi-final 6-3 6-3 to compatriot Alcaraz, whom he partnered in doubles at the



Olympics and could do so again at the Davis Cup, Nadal will meet Djokovic in the third-place match.

Serb Djokovic, the only man to have won more Slams than Nadal with 24, was beaten 6-2 6-7 (0-7) 6-4 by world number one Jannik Sinner, who will face Alcaraz for the \$6m (£4.5m) prize money. "To have Novak in front [of me], it's like a nostalgic thing," said Nadal, who has won 29 of his 60 meetings with Djokovic.

"We've played each other a lot, so it'll be fun to play each other again one more time in this match. Hopefully we can create a good show and good level of entertainment."

On Alcaraz, who at 21 has already won four

major and looks set to battle 23-year-old Sinner for years to come, Nadal said: "He's going to do very well with what he's got. He's learning all the time.

"We can see he's developing in every way. But of course I'll be ready whenever he wants to call me."

Saudi Arabia has invested heavily in sport since 2021, when the country's Crown Prince made it a key part of his strategy to diversify the economy.

However, the Gulf kingdom has been criticised for its human rights violations and accused of that investment and the hosting of high-profile events to improve its international reputation - a process known as 'sportswashing'.

Player welfare 'remains a priority' for Fifa: Infantino

LONDON (Agencies): Gianni Infantino says player welfare "remains a priority" for Fifa despite the top European leagues and players' union Fifpro filing a legal complaint to the European Commission.

World football's governing body has been accused of abusing a dominant position under EU competition law by failing to properly consult over the international fixture calendar, which included the introduction of a new 32-team Club World Cup next summer.

Unions and clubs said Fifa has harmed the economic interests of leagues and jeopardised player welfare through its "unilateral" approach.

Fifa chief Infantino posted a photo of himself on Instagram, external meeting David Aganzo, the president of the Spanish union AFE, in Miami.

Underneath it he wrote "Fifa continues to work with player bodies to ensure player welfare remains a priority. I look forward to continue working with David and everyone at AFE to achieve this goal".

World players' union Fifpro declined to com-



ment, but sources told the PA news agency that Aganzo's meeting with Infantino was a personal one.

In September, Manchester City and Spain midfielder Rodri joined a growing chorus of voices in the game who suggested players were "close" to going on strike if their concerns on the congested calendar were not heard.

Fifpro lodged the complaint to the European Commission on Monday alongside European Leagues, which represents 39 leagues - including the English Premier League - and 1,130 clubs across 33 countries.

A separate legal challenge has also been submitted the Belgian courts.

In that case, the unions want the European Court of Justice to rule whether Fifa's actions breach the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights.

The scheduling of the Club World Cup in the United States is regarded as the tipping point in sparking the call for action as it will not finish until 13 July, leaving little time for an off-season break before preparations for domestic campaigns begin.

Fifa insisted the calendar agreement was the result of extensive consultation, and has accused leagues of hypocrisy because many of them, including the Premier League, have scheduled pre-season events of their own.



In brief

Police bust dacoit gang

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have busted a dacoit and street criminal gang by arresting two active members of the gang and recovered cash Rs 82,500, a stolen motorcycle, a mobile phone, weapons, and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesman, R.A. Bazaar police held two dacoit and street criminals namely Ethesham and Bilal, and recovered Rs 82,500, a stolen motorcycle, mobile phone, weapons, and other items. A case has been registered against the accused while further investigation is under process. Superintendent of Police, Potohar said that police are making efforts to net other members of the gang.

IRSA releases 99,800 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Friday released 99,800 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 69,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1535.68 feet and was 137.68 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 35,600 cusecs and 37,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1199.90 feet, which was 149.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,600 cusecs and 35,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 32,900, 51,900, 53,900 and 21,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 15,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 5,900 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

IESCO issues 2-day power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Friday issued 2-day power suspension programme for Saturday and Sunday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesperson, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period on Saturday from 08:00 am to 12:00 pm power Azhar Abad, Muhammadi Chowk, Khayaban-e-Sir Syed, PAF Feeders due to AMI meters installation. Due to Maintenance and Developments works from 08:00 AM to 01:00 PM Islamabad Circle, Ali pur Feeder, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Mehboob Shaheed, Park View, Pindi Board, Jail Park, Car Chowk, Fuji Foundation, Morgah, Humayun, New Kalyam, Old Kalyam, Jatha Hathial, Bisali, Industrial, Bhal, Ghometi, Jarrar Camp, Khasala, Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Kayani Road Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Chakral Circle, Feeders, GSO Circle, from 08:00 am to 01:00 pm, Parliament House, F-Plant, Freight House, Embassy, Park Secretariat 2, Parliament Lodges, Awan Sadar, PM House, Islamabad Club 2, Shakar Padian, PTV, Polyclinic G-6/3, State Bank, Islamabad Club One, Kohsar Market, NPCC, Melody, Sports Club, Convention Centre, CDA Pump Feeders, from 09:00 AM to 04:00 PM, 132KV Consumer Grid Station. On Sunday from 08:00 AM to 12:00 Noon Islamabad Circle, Ali Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Mehboob Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Ratta Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Chakral Feeders, GSO Circle, from 08:00 AM to 01:00 PM, Supreme Court, Civic Centre, Royal Enclave, Parliament Lodges, Convention Centre, HBL, MCB, China Embassy, Diplomat-2, 132KV Consumer Grid Station and surrounding areas.



ISLAMABAD: Coordinator to PM on Climate Change Romina Khurshid Alam presiding over a meeting of the Pakistan Climate Change Authority in the Committee Room of the M/o Climate Change & Environmental Coordination. —APP Photo

Dengue cases spike: Over 5000 cases report in twin cities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon on Friday chaired a review meeting to assess the current dengue situation in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. On the occasion, he called for stronger efforts to combat dengue as cases continue to rise in both the capital and its neighboring city, Rawalpindi.

All the assistant commissioners and health department representatives participated in the

meeting, focusing on the comparison of dengue cases in twin cities.

During the meeting, officials were briefed on the alarming rise in cases.

Rawalpindi has recorded a total of 3,220 dengue cases as of October 17, while Islamabad has reported 2,276 cases so far. In the past 24 hours alone, 55 new cases reported in Islamabad.

Health officials also highlighted the spread of dengue through mosquito breeding sites.

In the last week, 1,143 positive larvae samples were found in various locations across the city, indicating the need for increased measures to control the spread of the disease.

Following the briefing, the Deputy Commissioner directed all relevant authorities to step up anti-dengue operations. Meanwhile, he also emphasized the importance of swift and coordinated actions to prevent further escalation of the outbreak.

ANF recovers 13 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in its ongoing crack-down against drug dealers managed to recover 13 kg of drugs worth Rs 900,000 and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Friday.

He informed that in an operation, 950 grams hashish was recovered from a rickshaw intercepted near Iqbal Shaheed Toll Plaza, Attock, and an accused was arrested.

The accused confessed to selling drugs to the students of educational institutions. He said that the force is making efforts for drug-free educational institutions. In another operation, 12 kg hashish was recovered from a car near Motorway Toll Plaza Islamabad, and three suspects were arrested.

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

Rawalpindi Police holds flag march

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Rawalpindi Police on the instructions of City Police Officer Syed Khalid Hamdani carried out a flag march in different areas of the city on Friday to express its commitment for ensuring law and order.

The flag march, led by Senior Superintendent of Police - Operations Flight Lieutenant (retd) Hafiz Kamran Asghar, started from the Police Lines and after passing through Mall Road, Rawal Road and Murree Road, culminated at the starting point, a police spokesman said. Besides, senior high officers, including Superintendent of Police-Security, personnel of District Police, Elite Force and Dolphin Force participated in the march, he added. The spokesman said the police was fully committed to uphold the rule of law, and protect the lives and property of citizens.

He said no illegal activities would be allowed as Section 144 was in force in Rawalpindi. He warned of strict action in case of illegal assembly, rally or any violation of law. The disruptors of law and order would be dealt with iron hands, he added.

Gillani issues directives to brief Senate about prevailing law, order situation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yusuf Raza Gillani on Friday issued directives to the Interior Minister to come to the House and brief this august forum about prevailing law and order situation in Balochistan.

The Chairman issued the directives after lawmakers from Balochistan including Manzoor Ahamd Kakar and Umer Farooq who raised their voices about deteriorating law and order situation in the province.

Meanwhile, the Chair also referred the calling attention notice to the concern standing committee

for detail discussion. Earlier, raising the calling attention notice Senator Hidayatullah said that the teaching staff of Balochistan University was not getting their salaries.

They also staged hunger strike for payment of their salaries but in vain. He said that salaries to the teaching staff should be released immediately. He urged the chair to refer the matter to the committee for detail discussion.

Responding to the calling attention notice, Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar also endorsed view point of

Senator Hidayatullah and requested the Chair to refer it to the committee.

Earlier, Chairman, Standing Committee on Finance and Revenue Saleem Mandviwalla presented three reports of the committee including further to amend the Banking Companies Ordinance, 1962 [The Banking Companies (Amendment) Bill, 2024], to amend the State Bank of Pakistan Act, 1956 [The State Bank of Pakistan (Amendment) Bill, 2024] and on the Equal Scales of Salary and Allowances Bill, 2024 in the House.

Pakistan, France strengthen educational ties: A growing partnership

ISLAMABAD (APP): France Ambassador to Pakistan, Nicolas Galey on Friday said the partnership between Pakistan and France in higher education is gaining momentum, with increasing academic cooperation and student exchanges. This relationship, bolstered by the "Choose France" initiative, is paving the way for more collaboration between universities in both countries.

Mr. Rana Mashhood Ahmad Khan, Chairman of the Prime Minister's Youth Programme, esteemed members of the Choose France delegation, and representatives of the media, welcome to the French residence. This event marks the visit of a high-level academic delegation from France. We gather to highlight the achievements and ongoing efforts in educational cooperation between France and Pakistan. Strengthening ties in higher education remains a key objective in the bilateral roadmap of both nations.

The Ambassador said that the occasion was particularly timely, as we concluded the 3rd edition of the Choose France Education Tour in Pakistan, which

took place in Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad.

The Choose France initiative aims to achieve two main objectives: first, to engage students by providing direct interaction with leading French universities; and second, to foster collaboration between French and Pakistani universities through individualized visits, laying the groundwork for long-term partnerships, he said.

He said, in the past two years, eight agreements between universities from both countries have been signed, resulting in active academic and research cooperation. These agreements are just the beginning, as we seek to take the relationship further. One area of focus is establishing a double degree system between the two countries, which would enhance the quality of education and open up opportunities for joint participation in programs such as Erasmus Mundus.

Nicolas Galey said, this year's edition of the Choose France Education Tour attracted significant interest from both sides. A total of 2,200 Pakistani students attended educa-

tion fairs, while 22 bilateral visits between universities were organized. The response from France has also been encouraging, with 21 Pakistani representatives participating in this edition, compared to just five universities in the first edition two years ago. These interactions are essential in building mutual understanding and fostering friendship between our nations.

He also mentioned that France was seen to welcome talented Pakistani students with clear academic goals. The growing number of Pakistani students choosing France for their studies is a testament to the increasing awareness of the opportunities available. Over the past three academic years, the number of Pakistani students accepted into French institutions has increased sixfold, and many have received scholarships to support their studies. Most of these students pursue courses in English, he expressed.

The Ambassador said, it is crucial for Pakistani students to select institutions in France that offer state-recognized degrees.



ISLAMABAD: Students in action during the 3-day 'Girls Sports Carnival 2024,' organized by Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training.

Health Officials urge vaccination to stop diphtheria outbreak

ISLAMABAD (APP): Dr. Shobha Lakhsmi, a renowned specialist in infectious diseases, said on Friday that the diphtheria cases were spreading rapidly in Sindh.

Talking to a private news channel, she explained the seriousness of the disease by adding that diphtheria is a bacterial infection that affects the throat and airways.

It causes severe breathing difficulties, and if

untreated, it can lead to complications like heart problems or even death, especially in young children, she added.

She said that the diphtheria is highly contagious and spreads through coughing, sneezing, or even close contact with an infected person.

Dr. Shobha emphasized the importance of taking precautions, especially in areas where vaccination rates are low.

She urges parents by adding that the spread of the disease should be decreased by the vaccination.

"Make sure children wash their hands regularly, avoid contact with sick people, and always ensure they are up to date with their vaccines. According to the Health department statistics, around 170 children of Sindh were infected by the diphtheria in October, out of which 27 children died due to the disease.

Romina urges climate authority to coordinate with stakeholders for unified climate action

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister on Climate Change, Romina Khurshid Alam has urged the Pakistan Climate Change Authority (PCCA) to play its role to ratchet up collaboration and cooperation among various federal and provincial governmental organisations for achieving climate resilience, environmental sustainability and low-carbon development goals.

Presiding over the 2nd meeting of PCCA held here, the PM's climate aide said, "Driving the Pakistan's long-term sustainability and climate resilience actions is inevitable for ensuring that the country is better prepared to cope with the present and the future exacerbating impacts of climate change in various socio-economic sectors, particularly agriculture, water and energy."

Romina Khurshid Alam said further that the Authority, which has been established at the federal level, has been entrusted with an crucial responsibility of

achieving the climate resilience, environmental sustainability and low-carbon development goals by spearheading the country's response to the growing threats of climate change, coordinating efforts across sectors and implementing policies that promote climate resilience through various evidence-based policy measures.

She noted that lack of collaboration and cooperation among federal and provincial government organisations for implementing long-term and short-term national climate change policy measures for coping with the adverse fallouts of climate change has only increased the climate vulnerability of not only various socio-economic sectors but also infrastructure, lives and livelihoods of the people.

However, she called upon the PCCA to strengthen its role and pace up efforts to bring together all federal and provincial organisations and national and international non-governmental organisations together through

enhanced collaboration and cooperation for implementation of the national climate change policy for protecting the country and its people from aggravating climate risks, particularly floods, heatwaves, sea-level rise, shifting rainfall patterns and paced glacial melting.

The PM's climate aide also urged the authority to develop national programmes for climate adaptation for reducing the impacts of floods, droughts, and rising temperatures and mitigation programmes for cutting down greenhouse gas emissions through sustainable practices and renewable energy projects and actionable low-carbon development plans.

Romina Khurshid Alam also put emphasis on unprecedented significance of raising public awareness about the effects of climate change and engaging communities in climate action.

"Raising public awareness about impacts of the climate change and possible adaptation

and mitigation measures vital for equipping them with the skills and knowledge to combat climate challenges. And, role of media, educational institutions is key to enhanced the public awareness," Romina remarked.

During her welcome remarks, Aisha Humera Chaudhry, Secretary Ministry of Climate Change & Environmental Coordination, stressed upon need for the unified approach at the national level to tackle climate challenges. She said that recent devastating floods, heatwaves glacial melting due to rising temperatures in Pakistan's north indicate that the country is grappling with increasingly adverse socio-economic consequences of climate change, positioning it among the most vulnerable countries globally.

"With a rising frequency of extreme weather events, particularly devastating floods, extended droughts, paced glacial melt, and rising temperatures, Pakistan's socio-economic sta-

bility and environmental sustainability are under mounting threat," the climate change and environmental coordination ministry's secretary highlighted.

The Global Climate Risk Index consistently ranks Pakistan among the top ten most affected countries by climate-related disasters. This urgent situation requires a coordinated, robust response at both the national and international levels.

As an agrarian economy, the country's farming sector is highly sensitive to rapidly changing weather patterns. Unpredictable changes in rainfall patterns and the increasing intensity of droughts and floods are devouring crop yields, threatening the livelihoods of millions of farmers and exacerbating food insecurity and rural poverty in the country.

Earlier, the PCCA members engaged in stock-taking of the status of the implementation of the national climate change policy measures and reviewed the progress of the policy mitigation

and adaptation actions. They also deliberated upon possible measures to boost coordination and cooperation across various federal and provincial government organisations, institutions and sectors, ensuring a unified approach to tackling climate challenges being faced by the country.

The meeting participants also agreed upon the need to pace up coordination and cooperation for enhanced implementation of the national climate change policy and aligning other climate change adaptation and mitigation measures proposed in policies, plans, and strategies of other federal and provincial government organisations for unified coping response to growing climate change impacts.

Meanwhile, the PM's climate aide Romina Khurshid Alam assured her all-out support to PCCA for unified and effective coping response to climate risks, achieving climate resilience and environmental sustainability goals.

Armed attack leaves 5 dead

FARYAB (Amu TV): An armed attack in Afghanistan's northern Faryab Province left five people dead, including three civilians. Abdullah Moradi, a spokesperson for the Taliban police in Faryab, confirmed to Amu TV that the attack took place in Qaisar district, when a group of armed assailants targeted a vehicle carrying civilians in the Agh Kotul area. He said three civilians and two Taliban members were killed in the incident, while five other civilians were injured.

EU leaders agreed

KABUL (Khaama Press): European Union leaders agreed on Thursday to use all available tools, including development aid, trade, diplomatic efforts, and visa policies, to expedite the return of illegal migrants to their home countries. In the summit's final statement, EU leaders emphasized the need for decisive action at all levels to facilitate, increase, and accelerate returns from EU using all relevant policy tools, including diplomacy, development, trade, and visas.

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

US envoy calls for probe into Afghan migrant deaths

KABUL (Amu TV): Rina Amiri, the US special envoy for Afghan women, girls, and human rights, has called for a "thorough and transparent" investigation into the deaths of Afghan migrants at the Iran border.

Amiri stressed the need for accountability in the incident, in which Afghan migrants were reportedly shot while attempting to cross into Iran.

"I am deeply disturbed by reports of Afghans being injured and killed in the Saravan border area," Amiri said in a statement. "Those fleeing extreme repression should be treated with dignity and humanity, not further violence and abuse."

A survivor of the attack told Amu, an Afghan news outlet, that men and women came under gunfire after a group of migrants entered Iranian territory. Another witness, a woman from Herat, said that her father and brother were among those targeted and that there had been no word of their fate since the incident.

The Saravan-Kalgan border route, where the attack took place, is a well-known path used by human trafficking networks to smuggle undocumented Afghan migrants into Iran. Local sources report that smugglers had guided a group of nearly 450 Afghans on this perilous journey, which began about a week ago, as they sought to escape Taliban-controlled Afghanistan.

The journey starts in Zaranj, the capital of Nimroz Province, and continues through the Chahar Burjak District, crossing into the village of Dak on the other side of the Durand Line. The trip, which involves a mix of vehicular travel and trekking on foot, typically takes seven to eight hours.

‘Driving unregistered vehicles not permitted’



KABUL (Pajhwok): In compliance to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan decree and direction of the acting interior minister no one is allowed to drive undocumented vehicles in cities nationwide, the Ministry of Interior said.

Mol spokesman Mufti Abdul Mateen Qani wrote on his X handle, based on a decree of the supreme leader of the IEA and directives of the ministry, no one is allowed to drive undocumented vehicles.

Qani added, without a special permit from the ministry, no one can drive a vehicle with smoky glasses or use abnormal and special horns.

The traffic police officers control the movement of traffics on the roads across the country, no one can violate these orders.

All of the security police are tasked to control such violations and control the movement vehicles with smoky glasses and drag those violators who use special abnormal horns to the law.

According to the information of Qani, the policemen had cleaned smoky glasses of 3,500 vehicles during the past one year across the country.

South Korea reviews aid projects in Afghanistan



KABUL (Amu TV): South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs convened a meeting to assess the progress of its humanitarian assistance efforts in Afghanistan, which are being carried out in partnership with international organizations.

The session, chaired by Lee Kyung-chul, South Korea's Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, included both in-person and virtual participation. Representatives from major international organizations, including the World Food Programme (WFP), UNICEF, and the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), attended the meeting.

The South Korean government has provided \$74 million in humanitarian aid to Afghanistan between 2021 and 2023, focusing on alleviating food crises, aiding vulnerable groups such as women and children, and supporting refugees and internally displaced persons.

During the meeting, each organization outlined the current humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, expressing gratitude for South Korea's contributions. They emphasized the tangible impact of the projects funded by South Korea, which are helping to address critical challenges, including food insecurity and natural disasters.

South Korea reaffirmed its commitment to supporting international efforts to alleviate Afghanistan's humanitarian crisis and pledged to ensure that its contributions are used transparently and effectively.

Smartphone addiction widespread among Afghans

KABUL (Ariana News): The level of smartphone addiction is widespread among Afghans who exhibit symptoms of nomophobia, the fear and anxiety of being without a mobile phone, the UK-based University of Surrey said in a study report released.

The study, conducted by a team of international researchers, surveyed 754 undergraduate medical students, predominantly aged between 18 and 29 at the Kabul University of Medical Sciences.

The findings show that men experience moderate to severe nomophobia (93%) slightly more than women (88%), challenging previous studies that suggested differing vulnerabilities based on gender.

According to the report, 54% of the participants reported moderate nomophobia, while 35% exhibited severe symptoms.

"The overwhelming prevalence of nomophobia among Afghan students is not just a personal issue for the individuals; it is a reflection of the socio-political crisis in Afghanistan," said Suleman Lazarus, lead author of the study and cybercrime expert at the University of Surrey.

"In a nation where communication and connection are increasingly restricted, the smartphone becomes a lifeline, leading to heightened dependence and anxiety when separated from it."

The study also highlights the impact of marital status on nomophobia levels, with married individuals showing higher mean scores compared to their single counterparts. This unexpected finding suggests that the dynamics of personal relationships and societal expectations in Afghanistan play a significant role in shaping individuals' experiences of anxiety related to smartphone use, according to the report.

The research presents a unique lens through which to view the intersection of technology, mental health, and socio-political context in Afghanistan.

Kabir: IEA pursuing energy self-sufficiency

KABUL (TOLOnews): Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, the deputy prime minister for political affairs, said during the inauguration of a commercial market in Kabul on Thursday that the Islamic Emirate is working to make Afghanistan self-sufficient in energy production using domestic resources.

Referring to the launch of infrastructure projects in the country, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir called on citizens to cooperate with the Islamic Emirate to boost Afghanistan's economy.

The deputy prime minister emphasized that bribery and administrative corruption have been eliminated from government offices and that numerous facilities have been made available for investment in the country.

During the event, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir said: "We currently receive electricity from foreign countries, but within Afghanistan, through water, as well as the sun and coal, we have many resources that can enable us to turn Afghanistan into an electricity-exporting country, producing power not only for our own needs but also for other countries."

According to Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, the Islamic Emirate has launched various projects to develop the country's economy, particularly in water management, road construction, highways, and ring roads.

The deputy prime minister further said that the Islamic Emirate has come with the goal of advancing and serving the citizens.

Mawlawi Abdul Kabir added: "We did not come to oppress, force, or act violently towards the people, but rather we have brought an Islamic system, and the Islamic system should serve the state and work for the progress of the nation."

Mohammad Khalid Sajistani, the deputy of Urban Services of Kabul Municipality, also spoke at the event, saying: "Any facility within the framework of Sharia and the principles of Kabul Municipality that is required for investors, we are ready to provide day and night so they can invest in such markets and spend their capital in our beloved country of Afghanistan."

Officials of the newly opened commercial market stated that the cost of building the market was \$15 million, and it was completed within one year.

Mohammad Musa Isa Zai, the project manager for the market's construction, said: "It is worth noting that in this commercial market, shops, houses, offices, and other sections will be sold or rented at affordable prices with discounts to those investors who wish to make standard investments in the market."

This comes as officials of the Islamic Emirate have repeatedly urged domestic and foreign investors to invest in Afghanistan's infrastructure projects.

‘2 permanent members of Security Council cooperating with us’

KABUL (TOLOnews): Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, the deputy prime minister for political affairs, said in a program stated that in the past, resolutions were passed against the Islamic Emirate in the Security Council. However, now two permanent members of the Security Council are cooperating with the Islamic Emirate during its meetings.

The deputy prime minister for political affairs, during this program in Kabul, once again stressed engagement with world countries and added that there is no issue in the Islamic Emirate's interaction with the world.

Mawlawi Abdul Kabir said: "We have reached a level in the political sector where two permanent members of the Security Council cooperate with us most of the time. Even regarding the law of 'Amr bil Ma'ruf' (Promotion of Virtue), which caused a stir around the world, the United Nations and the Security Council were unable to issue a resolution against us."

Mawlawi Abdul Kabir once again pledged that Afghan soil would not be used against other countries. He said: "If the world is concerned that there are groups in Afghanistan that cause them problems; there were no problems for you before, and this claim was from your side. There is no such problem now either."

This high-ranking official of the Islamic Emirate clarified in the program that the Islamic Emirate has achieved significant progress in the political sector, and currently, 40 diplomatic missions of the Islamic Emirate are active in countries around the world.

Mawlawi Abdul Kabir also mentioned that during his trips to Iran and Qatar, he held talks with representatives from other countries, including France, Canada, Australia, South Korea, Italy, Germany, and the United States. They stated that apart from the issue of girls' education, they have no problem in interacting with the Islamic Emirate.

The deputy prime minister for political affairs further added: "I very boldly told them [representatives of the countries] that except for the issue of women's education, we are ready to engage with you on any other matter you have."

The deputy prime minister for political affairs also criticized the 20-year presence of the US in the country, stating that during the 20-year presence of foreign countries in Afghanistan, drug usage had reached its peak.

Women participants in exhibition in Kabul demand more support for their businesses

KABUL (Khaama Press): Several women participating in the 31st Agricultural and Livestock Products Exhibition in Kabul say that holding such exhibitions has provided them with market opportunities and that more attention should be given to this area.

The 31st exhibition of agricultural and livestock products was held on Wednesday, October 16, in Badam Bagh, Kabul.

One of the participants in the exhibition, Fatima Ebrahimi, stated that this is her first time showcasing her products and that she hopes to grow her business through this opportunity.

Having come from Lashkar Gah in Helmand Province, she emphasizes that she has created job opportunities for about 100 women and girls in carpet weaving and wool processing in her province.

According to Fatima, she was unable to complete her education due to the conditions women face in Lashkar Gah; however, she is pleased to have provided a source of income for women. Fatima, who displayed handmade carpets, highlighted that many women working with her were the breadwinners for their families.

The "Quality Production; Access to Global Markets" exhibition will continue until October 19.

Zahra, a 15-year-old girl from Bamyan Province participating in the exhibition, says that three years ago, after schools were suspended for girls, she established a sewing workshop with the support of her family for girls deprived of education.

Zahra adds that participating in these exhibitions creates market opportunities, but the presence of people here is limited.

According to Zahra, there needs to be more support for women's businesses and trade in Afghanistan.

The exhibition features agricultural and livestock products, processed goods, handicrafts, agricultural machinery, solar power generation devices, and other domestic products.

According to a statement from the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock, 263 booths are displayed at the exhibition, 56 of which are dedicated to women's handicrafts.

The Ministry's officials emphasized the country's importance of domestic products and urged domestic and foreign investors to invest in agriculture and utilize local production.

Meanwhile, the United Nations has consistently emphasized supporting women's businesses in Afghanistan.

Despite these efforts and the potential for growth within the agricultural sector, Afghanistan is currently facing a dire humanitarian crisis. Economic instability, food insecurity, and limited access to basic services continue to plague the population.



Kabulis want power outages reduced in winter

KABUL (Pajhwok): Some residents of Kabul say they were satisfied with electricity provision in summer, urging officials to ensure that prolonged power cuts do not occur in upcoming winter. Meanwhile, Da Afghanistan Breshna Shirkat assured that outages will be reduced.

Jumaddin Mushfiq, a resident of Taimani area of Kabul, told Pajhwok Afghan News, "Fortunately, compared to previous months, electricity outages and issues have improved to some extent, and we view this positively, hoping that this situation will get even better in the coming months."

He described electricity as an essential need for the city's residents and noted that excessive blackouts in any season cause significant problems for people.

He expressed hope that in the upcoming winter, prolonged outages will be prevented.

Saeeda Yousafzai, a resident of Baharistan in Kabul, also expressed her satisfaction with the reduction in power cuts over the past month, stating, "The problems with electricity have been addressed to some degree."

She urged officials to continue efforts to prevent power suspensions in the upcoming winter.

Saeeda regarded electricity as a necessity for the people, saying, "We face many difficulties; for instance, in hot summer, we cannot use fans in our classrooms... and during cold winter, when we need heaters, we unfortunately face problems in this regard as well."

Meanwhile, Hussain Ali, a resident of Qala-i-Fatehullah in Kabul, said, "Currently, the electricity is good; in the past, we only had electricity for four hours in 24 hours, but now, thankfully, we avail the facility for about twenty days, it has been quite stable."

He runs a store selling electrical appliances and noted that when there was no electricity, business was severely affected because customers needed to test the appliances.

Amrullah, another resident of Qala-i-Fatehullah, added, "Right now, the electricity is good; it is the government's kindness, our work is progressing, and outages have decreased, alleviating people's problems."

He referenced excessive outages last summer, adding, "Without electricity, life cannot go on; power outages are like a graveyard." He urged the Islamic Emirate to further reduce outages in the upcoming winter so that families, especially those with no means to heat their homes, can at least use electric heaters.

On the other hand, Abdul Jabbar Safi, head of the Afghanistan Industrialists' Union, pointed out that the industrial sector faced challenges due to a shortage of electricity, stating, "In the industrial parks, we have electricity from 4am in the morning until 3pm in the afternoon."

He called on the power utility to address this issue, noting that the imported electricity alone was insufficient.

He added: "The project with Afghan Invest to supply 500 kilowatts is crucial; we need to expedite this project to ensure that all additional electricity from Turkmenistan is transferred to Afghanistan."

Furthermore, all small and large projects that generate electricity from solar, water, and wind should be encouraged to invest in this sector for economic benefit."

It is noteworthy that officials from the Islamic Emirate signed an agreement last year to complete the 500-kilovolt power transmission line from Shiberghani to Dasht-i-Alwan with Afghan Invest, which is expected to facilitate the transfer of cheap, quality electricity from Turkmenistan to Afghanistan and significantly alleviate the electricity shortage in the country.

Meanwhile, Hikmatullah Maiwandi, spokesman for DABS, said the electricity situation had been changing recently, noting, "The weather has normalized, and maximum electricity consumption has decreased; therefore, the supply of electricity has increased from 55 to 75 percent compared to the summer season."

He emphasized, "When weather warms up, people use various electric devices to cool their homes and offices, which increases consumption. If one air conditioner is turned on in one house, ten other houses may lose power; conversely, if one air conditioner is turned off, ten homes can receive normal electricity."

When asked whether electricity availability would improve in the upcoming winter, he replied, "We are working on various strategies to manage electricity outages in the coming winter, including thermal power generation, for which we have procured fuel that will be activated in emergencies." Maiwandi assured that the power utility strives to increase electricity supply from domestic sources to avoid future electricity issues.

He explained the current electricity distribution schedule, stating, "At present, electricity distribution is categorized into three groups: first, government offices, ministries, embassies, hospitals, and educational centers receive electricity 24/7; second, factories and industrialists receive more than 18 hours; and third, residential areas receive less than 18 hours of electricity."



ISLAMABAD: Mongolia's Prime Minister, Luvsannamsrain Oyun-Erdene, captures memorable moments with Pakistani officials before departing for his homeland, wrapping up a successful visit to Pakistan.

No student has any evidence of alleged rape, lawyer tells LHC

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Punjab's state counsel told the Lahore High Court (LHC) on Friday that students alleging the rape of a college student in Lahore "had no evidence" to support the claim.

Last week, reports related to the alleged rape of a private college student went viral on social media, prompting the police to arrest a security guard at the college who was allegedly involved in the incident. Enraged by the alleged incident, students mobilised on social media and staged protests outside different colleges in Lahore over the past few days, resulting in at least 28 being injured on Monday. Demonstrations also spread to other parts of Punjab, as the police arrested more than 380 protesters against the alleged incident in Rawalpindi.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has declared that the alleged rape was "fabricated news", blaming the PTI for spreading the "fake reports" on social media. Punjab Group of Colleges (PGC) group Director Agha Tahir and other office-holders have also termed the incident "baseless".

Faced with the double challenge of a possible agitation by the PTI and students' protest today, the Punjab government has banned all public gatherings for two days as Section 144 has been imposed across the province. Section 144 of the Code of Criminal Procedure is a legal provision that empowers district administrations to prohibit an assembly of four or more people in an area for a limited period. It is usually imposed to prevent potential disturbances, maintain law and order, and curb any activities that might escalate into violence.

All public and private educational institutions across Punjab will also remain closed today. LHC Chief Justice Aalia Neelum resumed hearing a petition filed earlier this week

against the alleged harassment of female students in Punjab's educational institutions. Upon being summoned by the LHC, Punjab Inspector General of Police (IG) Dr Usman Anwar and Advocate General of Punjab Khalid Ishaq appeared before the court.

"Every student is saying that the assault took place but no one had any evidence," Ishaq told the court. During the hearing, Justice Neelum censured the Punjab IG for not being able to stop videos on different matters from spreading, saying that it was his "failure" that students had taken to the streets.

The LHC chief justice then decided that the matter of harassment of students and a separate ongoing case of Punjab Information Minister Azma Bokhari's fake videos be clubbed together and heard by a full bench on October 22. Separately, the Cyber Crime Wing of the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) carried out province-wide raids yesterday for the arrest of some senior journalists, lawyers, and TikTokers, arresting three of them for allegedly spreading false information on social media regarding the incident.

The case was registered in light of an inquiry conducted by the cyber crime wing of the FIA (Lahore) on the complaint of Punjab College for Women (Gulberg) Principal Sadia Yousef. At the outset of the hearing, Justice Neelum asked IG Anwar, "Why were the videos not prevented from spreading [on social media]? Did you approach any authority to stop the videos [from being spread]?"

The Punjab police chief replied he had approached the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA). The chief justice then noted that the videos went viral on October 13 and 14, remarking: "You wake up when the fire has been set alight when everything has been burned." "Did

you contact the relevant authorities very late?" she asked, to which the Punjab IG replied that more than 700 accounts were involved in sharing the videos. He stressed that the police "only have one agency to oversee cybercrime".

"IG sahib, this is your failure that you let the children take to the streets," Justice Neelum observed. She asked the Punjab police chief to give an account of what the police did on October 14 and 15, noting that some videos were still present on the platforms of X and TikTok. "The documents you have submitted [show] you did nothing for two days and started work on October 16," the chief justice observed. "If there's a will, all work gets done."

In his defence, the Punjab IG contended that it was "not easy to stop the data from being uploaded", highlighting that the police did not have the authority to do so. "If we stop it from one account, it is reposted from another," IG Anwar lamented. Here, the chief justice asked the Punjab advocate general: "If something [unfortunate] had happened to the girls who took to the streets, who would have been responsible?"

The advocate general informed the court: "An Instagram post on October 12 said that the rape of a girl had taken place in a private college. The SSP (senior superintendent of police) reached the campus concerned the same day and began investigating. "The first-year students have their own WhatsApp groups, which are not controlled by anyone. The Instagram post was shared in every group but no one knew what had happened," he added. At this point, the Punjab IG said that the police had identified more than 700 social media accounts. Upon his mentioning that even England "did not have the power to stop uploading" content, Justice Neelum told him to not state England as an example.

Hamas mourns Sinwar, vows no hostage release

JERUSALEM (AFP): Hamas vowed on Friday it would not release the hostages it seized during its October 7 attack on Israel until the Gaza war ends, as it mourned the death of its leader Yahya Sinwar. The killing of Sinwar, the mastermind of the deadliest attack in Israeli history, had raised hopes of a turning point in the war, including for families of the Israeli hostages and Gazans enduring a dire humanitarian crisis.

However, as Qatar-based Hamas official Khalil Al-Hayya mourned Sinwar in a video statement on Friday, he reiterated the group's position that no hostages would be released "unless the aggression against our people in Gaza stops." And Israeli forces pumelled Gaza with air strikes on Friday, with rescuers recovering the bodies of three Palestinian children from the rubble of their home in the north of the territory, according to Gaza's civil defense agency.

"We always thought that when this moment arrived the war would end and our lives would return to normal," Jemaa Abou Mendi, a 21-year-old Gaza resident, told AFP. "But unfortunately, the reality on the ground is quite the opposite. The war has not stopped, and the killings continue unabated."

Sinwar was Israel's most wanted man and his death — announced by the Israeli military on Thursday — deals a major blow to the already weakened group. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu called Sinwar's killing an "important landmark in the decline of the evil rule of Hamas." He added that while it did not spell the end of the war, it was "the beginning of the end." After Sinwar's killing was announced, some hailed the news as a sign of better things to come.

US President Joe Biden, whose government is Israel's top arms provider, said Sinwar's death was "an opportunity to seek a path to peace, a better future in

Gaza without Hamas." Israeli campaign group the Hostages and Missing Families Forum urged Israel's government and international mediators to leverage "this major achievement to secure hostages' return." "Now that Sinwar is not a formal obstacle in the way of the release of the hostages, it is unacceptable that they would stay in captivity even one more day," said Ayala Metzger, daughter-in-law of killed hostage Yoram Metzger.

But she added: "We (are) afraid that Netanyahu does not intend on stopping the war, nor does he intend to bring the hostages back." After Sinwar's death, Israeli military chief Herzi Halevi vowed to keep fighting "until we capture all the terrorists involved in the October 7 massacre and bring all the hostages home." Hamas's armed wing, the Ezzedine Al-Qassam Brigades, said that "our fight will not stop until Palestine is liberated."

Putin: S Arabia acceptable location for peace talks

MOSCOW: Saudi Arabia would be an acceptable location for Russian-Ukrainian peace talks, Russian President Vladimir Putin told Arab News on Friday, but any negotiations would be dependent on Ukraine lifting its ban on dealing with Russia.

Speaking at a pre-BRICS Summit press conference in Moscow Region, he said that Russia was ready for dialog with Kyiv but only on the basis of what had already been previously agreed in the 2022 Istanbul talks. Praising good relations with King Salman and "a strong per-

sonal relationship" with Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, he said that he believed the Kingdom's efforts toward mediation were sincere.

The 16th annual BRICS summit will take place in Kazan, Russia, next week between the namesake five countries — Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa — as well as the first meeting for new members Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran and the UAE. Putin told Arab News that the Israel-Palestine crisis would be on the agenda in discussions between the countries.

He reiterated the

Kremlin's support for the implementation of the two-state solution, adding that he was in contact with authorities in Israel and Palestine and had invited Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas to take part in next week's summit. During the briefing, Putin also said that 30 other countries had expressed interest in cooperation with BRICS nations, and said that its "doors are open, we are not barring anyone." He echoed India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi and said that BRICS was "not an anti-Western alliance, just a non-Western alliance." — Arab News

Russian troops fight desperate battles for Ukraine's east

KYIV: Ukrainian troops are locked in a bitter battle for the town of Toretsk in the eastern region of Donetsk, which Russian troops entered last Friday.

A spokesperson for Luhansk Technical University said Russian troops were demolishing the town as they advanced.

"They erase the city with artillery. We have already seen it in other towns of Donbas. And after that, they storm in small groups. They are trying to find weak points in our defence with such small strikes," Anastasia Bobovnikova said. Such Russian tactics have been reported elsewhere too.

Ivan Petrychak, spokesman for the Ukrainian 24th Mechanised Brigade, said Russian forces were conducting small-scale assaults in the Chasiv Yar area, 23km (14 miles) north of Toretsk, to infiltrate poorly guarded positions and use them to attack Ukrainian units from close quarters. Aerial images of Toretsk in Ukrainian media showed windowless apartment blocks blackened by fire and half-collapsed high-rise buildings.

Bobovnikova said Russian forces were prioritising the area, conducting 15 assaults on Saturday alone. She accused the Russian forces of breaking the rules of war. "I must note that the enemy uses insidious tactics. He disguises himself in civilian clothes. Therefore, our defenders need to think twice — is it an enemy before us or is it a peaceful resident?" "The enemy is constantly adding manpower to the forward positions," Bobovnikova said, estimating Russian casualties at 200 a day.

The US Department of Defense said a new intelligence assessment puts Russian casualties throughout the war at 600,000, quoting an unnamed defence official. The official said the past month has been the bloodiest of the war for the Russians. This could be because since the summer, Russia has resumed large, mechanised, platoon-sized attacks.

The head of Ukraine's National Guard, Ruslan Muzychuk, said Russia was rushing to seize land before rain muddies the terrain and makes it impossible for heavy armoured vehicles to operate. "Now the enemy is trying to use armoured vehicles more often. This is primarily due to weather conditions," Muzychuk said. The Institute for the Study of War, a Washington, DC-based think tank, said Russian forces have conducted at least four large mechanised assaults since July. — Aljazeera

Attacks on UN peacekeepers unacceptable, says Meloni

BEIRUT: Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni has called for the strengthening of the United Nations peacekeeping mission in Lebanon, known as UNIFIL, during a visit to Beirut. The premier decried attacks against UNIFIL, whose forces have been targeted by Israeli troops in recent weeks. "Only by strengthening UNIFIL while maintaining its impartiality will we be able to turn the page," Meloni said during a joint news conference with Lebanese Prime Minister Najib Mikati on Friday.

"I repeat that I consider targeting UNIFIL is unacceptable," she added in reference to Israeli attacks involving the mission's positions and troops. "I ask once again that all parties strive to ensure at all times that the safety of each of these soldiers is guaranteed."

Meloni, who is regarded as a strong ally of Israel, is the first head of state or government to visit Lebanon since an escalation between Israel and Hezbollah last month. She said that after her visit to Beirut, she would hold talks with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Italy has about 1,000 peacekeepers serving in the UN Interim Force in Lebanon, which has come under repeated fire by Israeli forces. Five peacekeepers were injured in a series of incidents last week. In the latest, the UN force accused Israeli troops of breaking through a gate and entering one of its positions. — Aljazeera

N Korea sending troop deployment to Russia: Seoul

PYONGYANG (AFP): North Korea has decided to send a "large-scale" troop deployment to support Moscow's war in Ukraine, with 1,500 special forces already in Russia's Far East and undergoing training, Seoul's spy agency said on Friday.

The National Intelligence Service (NIS) said North Korea had decided to send thousands of soldiers to help Russia, releasing detailed satellite images it said showed the first deployment. South Korea's President Yoon Suk Yeol convened an emergency security meeting Friday, with Seoul slamming Pyongyang's move as "a significant security threat not only to our country but also to the international community," the president's office said.

The NIS said it had "detected that from the 8th to the 13th (of October), North Korea transported its special forces to Russia via a Russian Navy transport ship, confirming the start of North Korea's military participation" in Russia's war in Ukraine. According to the NIS, multiple Russian landing ships and frigates have already completed transporting the first contingent of troops, who are currently stationed in military bases across Russia's Far East.

The special forces soldiers "are expected to be deployed to the front lines (of the Ukraine conflict) as soon as they complete acclimatisation training," it said. The soldiers have been issued Russian military uniforms and Russian-made weapons, the NIS said. "This seems to be an effort to disguise the fact that they are North Korean troops by making them appear as Russian soldiers," NIS added. More troops are likely to be sent soon, NIS said, adding that it estimated the North could send around 12,000 soldiers in total. "A second transport operation is expected to take place soon," it said.

Pyongyang and Moscow have been allies since North Korea's founding after World War II and have drawn even closer since Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine, with Seoul and Washington long claiming that Kim Jong Un has been sending weapons for use in Ukraine. Russian President Vladimir Putin made a rare visit to Pyongyang in June, with the two countries signing a mutual defence treaty, fuelling speculations of further arms transfers — which violate rafts of UN sanctions on both countries.

The NIS said Friday that the North had "provided Russia with more than 13,000 containers' worth of artillery shells, missiles, anti-tank rockets and other lethal weapons" since last August. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky on Thursday flagged intelligence reports saying North Korea was training 10,000 soldiers to support Russia in its fight against Kyiv. Zelensky suggested that Russia is relying on North Korean troops to compensate for its substantial losses, as many young Russians seek to avoid conscription.

Earlier this month, Ukrainian media reported that six North Korean military officers were killed in a Ukrainian missile attack on Russian-occupied territory near Donetsk on October 3. Seoul's defence minister, Kim Yong-hyun, told lawmakers at the time that it was "highly likely" that the report was true. Experts said that moving from supplying shells to soldiers to Russia was the logical next step.

"For North Korea, which has supplied Russia with many shells and missiles, it's crucial to learn how to handle different weapons and gain real-world combat experience," said Lim Eul-chul, a professor at Seoul's Institute for Far Eastern Studies. "This might even be a driving factor behind sending North Korean soldiers — to provide them with diverse experiences and wartime training," he told AFP.

Nato chief Mark Rutte said on Friday that the alliance could not yet confirm South Korean intelligence that North Korea was deploying troops to bolster Russian forces in Ukraine. "At this moment, our official position is that we cannot confirm reports that North Koreans are actively now as soldiers engaged in the war effort," Rutte told reporters following a meeting of Nato defence ministers in Brussels. "But this, of course, might change," he said.

Rutte said Nato was "in close contact" with its partners, particularly South Korea, which was taking part in this week's talks as part of the so-called Indo-Pacific four, along with Australia, Japan and New Zealand. "We will certainly have that conversation with them to get all the evidence on the table," said the Nato chief. "Even if North Korea is not physically there at the battlefield then still, they are helping to fuel Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine in every way they can," Rutte said.

Contempt of court plea filed against KP govt

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A contempt of court petition has been filed at Peshawar High Court (PHC) against Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for failing to appoint vice-chancellors in public sector universities while Chief Secretary, Secretary Higher Education and others were made as respondents.

The petition filed by Professors Aurangzeb and others through Aamir Javed advocate stating that despite court orders, vice-chancellors have not been appointed. The petition contends that PHC's detailed judgment on 22nd August directed the appointment of vice-chancellors.

The court declared the re-initiation of the vice-chancellors appointment process as unlawful. The court ordered the Search and Nomination Committee's recommendations to be presented to the Chief Minister, the contempt of court petition stated.

The Chief Minister was to approve the recommendations under Section 12 of

the Universities Act 2012. More than a month has passed, but the government has not implemented the court's decision. The respondents are committing contempt of court by ignoring the judgment, the petition argued.

The petition states that 25 universities in the province are operating without permanent vice-chancellors, leading to various problems. The petitioners request contempt of court proceedings against the respondents for failing to implement the court's decision.

Court orders submission of monthly progress report in Aqaf land case: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising Justice Shakeel Ahmad and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah granted a six-month extension to district administration to resolve the issue of Aqaf department's 36,000 kanal land in Kalushah area of Mardan while asked for submission of monthly progress report, on Friday.

PHC issued these orders during hearing of contempt of court petition filed by the

Auqaf department. The court ordered the Mardan commissioner, Javed Marwat, to personally oversee the matter and submit progress reports every month.

Commissioner Javed Marwat assured the court that negotiations with the occupants are underway and a mechanism has been devised to either regularize the lease agreement or vacate the land. He emphasized that all legal requirements will be fulfilled to implement the Supreme Court's decision.

Additional Advocate General Inam Yusufzai stated that the district administration and Auqaf department are on the same page, considering the large number of families residing in the area. He requested a six-month extension, which the court granted.

PHC directed the Mardan administration to submit progress reports every month and ordered the commissioner to ensure the implementation of the Supreme Court's decision while adjourned further hearing till 27th November.

SBP Governor's annual report released

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), in Governor's Annual Report (GAR) for fiscal year 2023-24 released here on Friday, highlighted improvements across key macroeconomic indicators during FY24 after two challenging years.

Fiscal consolidation, tight monetary policy, softer global commodity prices, and better agricultural production together with easing of external account pressure contributed in inflation deceleration, build-up of forex reserves and stability in the market, improvement in current account, moderate GDP growth and recovery of LSM production during the FY 24, the GAR stated. The GAR is published under the SBP Act that requires the Governor to submit annual report to the Parliament regarding the Bank's objectives, conduct of monetary policy, the state of the economy and the financial system, said a statement issued here.

The Report highlighted decrease in National CPI inflation in FY24, amid continued tight monetary policy

stance, fiscal consolidation, and softer global commodity prices and noted that these trends came alongside the easing of external account pressures, contributing to a build-up of foreign exchange reserves, which together with FX market reforms including in exchange companies instilled stability in the foreign exchange market.

The year also witnessed a moderate agriculture-led GDP growth that was supported by a small but gradual recovery in large scale manufacturing against a sharp contraction in FY23, it added. The Report also highlighted the cautious approach in monetary easing by the central bank that despite positive early signs kept the policy rate unchanged at 22% until nearly the end of FY24, to eliminate the risks of deep entrenchment of inflationary pressures. Later, owing to consistent decline in both headline and core inflation the monetary policy committee started gradual easing by reducing the policy rate to 20.5% in June 2024.

"This stance was supplemented by the alignment of fiscal policy with the tight

monetary policy stance, where the year saw the first primary surplus in 17 years that also contributed to a notable decline in public debt in terms of GDP," the Report noted. The GAR also mentioned the narrowing of current account deficit to a 13-year low and US\$ 3.0 billion Stand-By Agreement (SBA) with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and subsequent official inflows those contributed to improvements in overall macroeconomic environment since June 2023.

"The official inflows from multilateral and bilateral external creditors following the SBA, alongside the mobilization of deposits from friendly countries; and the government's decision to approach the IMF for an Extended Fund Facility program buoyed market sentiments and contributed to the stability in exchange rate," the Report said adding that the economy also benefitted from the positive spillovers of a favorable global economic environment, especially lower commodity prices and marginally higher global GDP growth.