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Five killed in landslide

SKARDU (INP): As many as five people were killed as a landslide hit their car in Skardu. The tragic incident took place on Jagot-Skardu road. The police said that all the five passengers lost their lives in result of landslide. The car disappeared after the landslide, said the police. The searching team found the car from a deep ditch under the debris. The rescue officials also reached the spot to shift the bodies to nearby hospital.

PIA to resume flights

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) is set to resume direct flights to Paris in January 2025, marking a significant step towards enhancing business, tourism, and people-to-people contacts. Ambassador of Pakistan to France, Asim Iftikhar Ahmad, recently met with PIA's marketing representatives to discuss preparations for the launch of the direct flights to Paris.

PM commits to eradicate virus forever

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Sunday launched the anti-polio drive by administering polio drops to children under five years of age, emphasizing the government's commitment to completely eradicate polio virus from Pakistan.

During the inauguration, the prime minister highlighted the growing concern of rising polio cases, with around 60 new reported cases, but assured that with the combined efforts of the federal and provincial governments, the country would overcome this challenge.

Speaking on the occasion, Prime Minister Shehbaz expressed his gratitude to the international partners who had supported Pakistan in the fight against polio, including the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the World Health Organization (WHO), and the government of Saudi Arabia.

He specifically thanked Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman for his contributions to the anti-polio campaign in both Pakistan and Afghanistan.

"I especially thank the government of Saudi Arabia and Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman, for his very valuable contribution towards eradicating polio not only in Pakistan but also Afghanistan, and of course, I deeply appreciate the efforts of Bill Gates Foundation, WHO and I want to assure you that together we will march forward and will not rest until polio is thrown out for all times to come," he added.

Under the leadership of Dr. Ayesha Raza Farooq and Dr. Bharat, he said the campaign aims to ensure that no child is left unvaccinated, with over 400,000 polio workers deployed across 143 districts in the country.

The prime minister urged parents to actively participate in the campaign and ensure the safety of their children from polio, a disease that remains a significant threat in the region.

He also acknowledged the dedication of the polio workers, recognizing their bravery and hard work in difficult circumstances. He extended his appreciation to the security forces and law enforcement agencies for providing essential protection to the polio teams, ensuring their safety as they carry out their vital mission.

Earlier, Prime Minister's focal person for the anti-polio drive Dr. Ayesha Raza Farooq, thanked the Prime Minister for his steadfast support and participation.

She noted that the Prime Minister's continuous involvement in the anti-polio efforts served as a testament to his commitment to safeguarding the health of Pakistan's children.

She assured that the campaign would leave no stone unturned in its efforts to ensure that every child is vaccinated against the disease.

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif launching the last anti-Polio Campaign of 2024 by administering polio drops to children.

PTI lacks positive, constructive agenda: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting, National Heritage and Culture Attaullah Tarar on Sunday said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf always indulged in protests and sit-ins as the party did not have any positive or constructive agenda.

Talking to the media on Sunday, the minister said that the series of incitement, threats and accusations was the style of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership.

He reminded that in 2014, they attacked the Pakistan Television Corporation building and targeted law enforcement personnel. The PTI leaders incite people to violence and then run away, he maintained.

The minister said it was important to inform the nation about the facts regarding the baseless allegations of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Gandapur.

Gandapur's allegations were based on lies and concoction, he said adding now foreign media was invited to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to give them misleading briefings.

The facts should be known to the public and mischief and anti-nationalism should be exposed, he remarked.

He said Gandapur had claimed the next call will not be peaceful but the question arises which of their past calls were peaceful. He said on November 26, they invaded the capital with AK 47 rifles, teargas shells, grenades and slingshots.

The PTI first faked 1200 dead bodies and spread AI generated fake pictures on social media. "If they were speaking the truth, their leadership would not have been given figures from 12 to 1200 deaths", he added.

The minister said that the spouse of PTI founder Bushra Bibi was misleading and inciting the workers through her address.

He posed a question as to why Ali Amin and Bushra Bibi ran away leaving their workers alone at D Chowk.

About Gandapur, Tarar said he was a political and administrative failure who had failed to manage the affairs of the province as chief minister. The minister said the nation will never forget what the PTI workers did on May 9 and all involved in arson and violence must face the law.

He said that the PTI was spreading propaganda against institutions on social media through its supporters abroad. He said that the PTI social media activists had links with anti-Pakistan people including Indians.

He said that a certain Indian army major and the PTI activists had the same agenda, both of them were against the Pakistan Armed Forces. He said that proofs of the guards Ali Amin Gandapur firing were now seen by the world.

The audio of PTI workers abusing Gandapur was also available, he said adding that they also pelted stones and plastic bottles on Gandapur as well and this showed what type of politics they were indulged in.

He said Ali Amin Gandapur was a political failure and his future protest call would prove a disaster. He said that the PTI wanted to drag the Armed Forces into politics as the army high ups refused to support it.

He said that now the Supreme Court had given a verdict that the military trial of those involved in the May 26 attacks would continue.

He said there was simple logic: if someone committed a crime in Pakistan Railway, the Railway Police would prosecute him, if someone committed a crime in the airport, the Airport Security Force would prosecute him. Similarly, if someone has attacked Pakistan Army installations, he will have to be prosecuted in Military Courts, the minister stated.

He said that on Saturday, a piece of fake news was published claiming that arrest warrants were issued for 150 journalists.

Tarar said that only three or four journalists were included in the list, the rest were PTI political activists who had incited the people to violence.

Strongly condemning the news, he urged the media to do responsible journalism.

Israeli troops kill 20 in Gaza Strip

CAIRO (Reuters): Israeli troops killed at least 20 Palestinians, most of them in the northern Gaza Strip, on Sunday airstrikes and other attacks on targets that included a school sheltering displaced Gazans, medics and residents said.

They said at least 11 of the dead were killed in three separate Israeli airstrikes on Gaza City houses. The others were killed in the towns of Beit Lahiya, Beit Hanoun and Jabalia camp.

Residents said clusters of houses were bombed and some set ablaze in the three towns. The Israeli army has been operating in the towns for over two months.

In Beit Hanoun, Israeli forces besieged families sheltering in Khalil Aweida school before storming it and ordering them to head towards Gaza City, the medics and residents said.

Medics said several people were killed and wounded during the raid on the school while the army detained many men. The number killed was not immediately clear.

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli army.

Palestinians accuse Israel of carrying out ethnic cleansing to depopulate the areas at the northern edge to create a buffer zone. Israel denies it and says the campaign targets Hamas militants and aims to prevent them from regrouping.

The war began when the Palestinian militant group Hamas stormed into Israel on Oct. 7, 2023, killing 1,200, mostly civilians, people and taking more than 250 hostages back to Gaza, according to Israeli authorities.

Israel then launched an air, sea and land offensive that has killed almost 45,000 people, mostly civilians, according to authorities in the Hamas-run Gaza Strip, displaced nearly the entire population and left much of the enclave in ruins.

A bid by Egypt, Qatar and the United States to reach a truce has gained momentum in recent weeks, yet there has been no news of a breakthrough.

One dead, 47 rescued as migrant boat sinks

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: One Pakistani was killed while 47 others were rescued after a migrant boat sank off Greece's coast this week, the foreign office confirmed on Sunday, saying it was unable to confirm the total number of persons who had died or were missing following the incident.

The tragedy took place on Friday when a migrant boat sank off the Greek island of Gavdos, south of Crete, according to Greece's coast guard.

Many Pakistanis undertake the dangerous and illegal voyage to Europe through the Mediterranean Sea in hopes of securing a brighter future for themselves and their families.

"According to initial reports, 47 Pakistanis are among those rescued following yesterday's incidents of capsized boats in the south of Crete Island of Greece," the foreign office said. "One Pakistani is confirmed to be among the dead."

The foreign office said it is unable to confirm the number of deceased or missing Pakistani nationals.

"The Embassy of Pakistan in Athens is in contact with the Hellenic Coast Guard and with the Coast Guard of Chania, which are directly dealing with the search and rescue operation," it said.

"The Embassy officials have reached the Crete to meet with the rescued Pakistanis and provide them with any assistance required."

The foreign ministry said it has activated its Crisis Management Unit to facilitate Pakistanis in Greece, encouraging them to contact the CMU for further details.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif expressed grief at the incident, vowing stern punishment for culprits involved in trafficking humans.

"Such persons [human traffickers] should be identified and they should be handed strict punishments so that they do not repeat such heinous crimes again," Sharif said in a statement shared by the Prime Minister's Office (PMO).

"Concrete steps should be taken to prevent such incidents from happening in future," he added.

Sharif instructed Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi to submit an inquiry report on the matter, describing human traffickers as a "cruel mafia" who extort money from the poor by selling them lofty dreams.

"Human trafficking is a heinous crime due to which many lives are lost and many houses are destroyed every year," he said.

UN envoy urges an end to sanctions in Syria

DAMASCUS, Syria (AP): In churches across long-stifled Syria, Christians marked the first Sunday services since Bashar Assad's ouster in an air of transformation. Some worshippers were in tears. Others clasped their hands in prayer.

"They are promising us that government will be formed soon and, God willing, things will become better because we got rid of the tyrant," said one worshipper, Jihad Raffoul.

"Today, our prayers are for a new page in Syria's future," said another, Suzan Barakat.

To help those efforts, the U.N. envoy for Syria called for a quick end to Western sanctions as the country's new leaders and regional and global powers discuss the way forward.

Syria has been under sanctions by the United States, the European Union and others for years as a result of Assad's brutal response to what began as peaceful anti-government protests in 2011 and spiraled into civil war.

The rebel alliance that ousted Assad and sent him into exile in Russia a week ago faces a nation deeply isolated by the sanctions, which compounded Syria's economic troubles.

But other challenges also complicate rebuilding.

The new transitional leadership has not laid out a clear vision of how the country will be governed, and the main group behind the offensive remains designated as a terrorist organization by the U.S., which nevertheless has begun making direct contact with it.

The U.N. envoy to Syria, Geir Pedersen, told reporters in Damascus that the rebels' stunningly fast offensive should be followed by a rapid international response.

"We can hopefully see a quick end to the sanctions so that we can see really a rallying around building of Syria," he said.

Parts of Syria's biggest cities are damaged or destroyed by years of fighting. Reconstruction has been stymied largely by the sanctions that aimed to prevent rebuilding of infrastructure and property in government-held areas in the absence of a political solution.

The U.N. envoy was meeting with officials from the new interim government set up by the former opposition forces who toppled Assad, led by the Islamic militant group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, or HTS. Officials in Washington have indicated that the Biden administration is considering removing the group's terror designation.

Over the weekend, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken attended an emergency meeting in Jordan with 12 foreign ministers from the Arab League, Turkey and top officials from the European Union and United Nations on how Syria should be run after a half-century of Assad family rule.

They agreed that the new government should respect the rights of minorities and women, prevent terror groups from taking hold, ensure humanitarian aid reaches those in need and secure and destroy any remaining Assad-era chemical weapons.

Syria's interim government is set to rule until March, but it has not made clear the process under which a new permanent administration would replace it. Arab foreign ministers have called for U.N.-supervised elections based on a new constitution approved by Syrians.

"We need to get the political process underway that is inclusive of all Syrians," Pedersen said. "That process obviously needs to be led by the Syrians themselves."

He also called for " justice and accountability for crimes" committed during the war, as some families continued to search for the tens of thousands of people that Assad's government had placed in prisons and detention facilities.

Many Syrian Christians, who made up 10% of the population before Syria's civil war, had either fled the country or supported Assad out of fear of Islamist insurgents. Last Sunday's church services were canceled.

"We were scared of the events taking place," said Ibrahim Shahin, a Catholic church supervisor.

But this Sunday, doors reopened and bells rang out.

In another sign of Syrians' yearning for normalcy after the whirlwind of events, schools in Damascus reopened Sunday for the first time since the insurgents marched in the capital.

At Nahla Zaidan school in the Mezzah neighborhood, teachers hoisted the three-starred revolutionary flag in place of the former government's two-starred one.

"Although I think some of them are afraid, they came to build Syria and to live the victories of this country," said Maysoun Al-Ali, the school director. "God willing, there will be more development, more security and more construction in this beloved country."

CNS visits Bahrain, meets highest leadership

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Naveed Ashraf, called on the highest civil and military leadership during an official visit to Bahrain. The Naval Chief held meetings with the King of Bahrain, His Majesty King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifa, and the Crown Prince and Prime Minister, His Royal Highness Salman bin Hamad Al Khalifa. During these meetings, discussions focused on strengthening defence cooperation and reinforcing the historic ties between Bahrain and Pakistan. The King appreciated Pakistan Navy's role and commitment to regional maritime security and stability.

Later, Chief of the Naval Staff met Commander-in-Chief of Bahrain Defence Force (BDF), Field Marshal Shaikh Khalifa bin Ahmed Al Khalifa, the Commander of the Bahrain National Guard, General Shaikh Mohammed bin Isa bin Salman Al Khalifa, and the Commander of the Royal Bahrain Naval Force (RBNF), Rear Admiral Ahmed Mohammed Ibrahim Al-Binali. During these engagements, professional matters of mutual interest, including regional maritime security and bilateral defence collaboration, were discussed.

The Naval Chief emphasized the importance of enhancing interactions between the armed forces of both countries through joint exercises, mutual visits, and training exchange programs.

Admiral Naveed Ashraf also visited RBNF Ship MANAMA and the Royal Command and Staff College. In his address at Royal Command and Staff College, the Naval Chief elaborated on current and emerging environment in the Indian Ocean Region and highlighted the need for a region-centric maritime security construct.

The Naval Chief's visit is expected to further strengthen and expand defence ties between the two brotherly nations.

MANAMA: Chief of Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf presenting souvenir to King of the Kingdom of Bahrain King Hamad Bin Isa Al Khalifa at Al Sakhir Palace.

Maryam leads Punjab multi-sectoral investment drive

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif chaired an investment conference in Guangzhou on the sixth day of her China visit, demonstrating her commitment to work even on a holiday.

Maryam Nawaz announced the establishment of a working group, the appointment of a focal person, and the creation of a help desk to facilitate investment. The roundtable conference witnessed participation from representatives of over 60 prominent companies from China and Hong Kong.

Representatives from health, artificial intelligence, agriculture, information technology, waste management, solar energy, and other sectors participated in the conference.

Key Chinese companies provided detailed briefings on their operations, while suggestions and recommendations on Pakistan-China free trade were also reviewed. Maryam Nawaz invited Chinese technology firms to launch operations in Punjab, with many expressing keen interest in investment opportunities in the province.

The Chief Minister announced plans to facilitate Chinese companies through a one-window operation, declaring Punjab as a "land of opportunities" for investors.

She also expressed gratitude to the conference attendees and briefed them on Punjab's economic, geographical, and business significance.

Chinese representatives appreciated the "No to Plastic" campaign launched in Punjab to protect the environment. Maryam Nawaz reiterated her government's commitment to banning the production, sale, and use of environmentally harmful plastics.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharifhighlighted ongoing efforts under the "Clean Punjab" initiative, including a zero-waste mission and projects to convert waste into renewable energy.

Maryam Nawaz emphasised the focus on affordable energy through windmills, solar energy, and other renewable sources.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharifwelcomed partnerships in a mega solarisation project, underscoring Punjab's growing demand for solar energy.

In agriculture, the government is modernising through mechanisation and fostering collaboration in sub-sectors such as machinery manufacturing, food processing, and hybrid seed development.

Maryam Nawaz also underlined the importance of innovation in the IT sector, welcoming investments in e-commerce, incubator centres, and e-learning.

She invited Chinese firms to contribute to making the Nawaz Sharif IT City a state-of-the-art hub. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharifnoted that Punjab aims to utilise its young, skilled workforce and explore bio and hydrogen technologies.

Maryam Nawaz described Pakistan as a gateway to Central Asia, the Middle East, and other global markets, reaffirming its strategic role in international trade. She called the positive response from Chinese investors encouraging for fostering Pak-China relations.

In health, she highlighted plans to benefit from China's telemedicine technologies, while in agriculture, she pointed to potential breakthroughs with nanotechnology and water-efficient irrigation systems.

"This is the best time for Chinese companies to seize business opportunities in Punjab," Maryam Nawaz concluded.

LESCO detects total of 168,657 power pilferers

LAHORE (INP): Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has so far detected a total of 168,657 connections from where the customers were pilfering electricity in all its circles of five districts (Lahore, Sheikhupura, Nankana Sahib, Kasur and Okara) during its ongoing anti-power theft campaign.

The LESCO spokesman told media here Sunday that the company has also submitted FIR applications against electricity thieves, out of which 157,312 FIRs have been registered in respective police stations, while 44,918 accused have been arrested by the respective police.

Grand anti-power theft operations against electricity thieves are being conducted on the directives of the Federal Power Division and the LESCO Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Engineer Shahid Haider is supervising these operations.

The LESCO chief vowed that the operations would continue without discrimination until the complete end of electricity theft. The electricity pilferers as well as the LESCO officers and employees who facilitate them are also being brought to justice.

Relief period for obtaining motorcycle licences in Punjab ends

LAHORE (INP): The relief period for obtaining motorcycle licences in Punjab ended on Sunday.

According to Additional IG Traffic, Mirza Farran Baig, starting tomorrow, December 16, strict action will be taken against those riding motorcycles without a licence. He said they granted a 42-day relief period for motorcycle licences.

From tomorrow, the 42-day learning licence rule will be reinstated, as confirmed by the spokesperson.

Additional IG Traffic stated that no one will be allowed to drive without a valid licence, and enforcement will be stringent to ensure road safety.

FAISALABAD: Advisor to Prime Minister on Political & Public Affairs Rana Sana Ullah Khan is addressing the inaugural ceremony of newly established Rescue 1122 station near Aminpur Bungalow on Narwala Bypass.

Arora inaugurates Lifestyle Furniture Expo

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister Ramesh Singh Arora inaugurated the 108th edition of (PLFE) Pakistan Lifestyle Furniture Expo at the Rosa Blanca Country Club, Raiwind Road.

He inspected several exhibition stalls, praising the creativity and craftsmanship of local manufacturers, encouraged stakeholders to continue working towards enhancing the quality and diversity of Pakistani furniture to compete effectively in international markets.

Minister Arora appreciated the diversity and quality of products displayed and stated: "the furniture industry in Pakistan holds immense potential for growth. By supporting and investing in this sector, we can not only boost our economy but also create significant employment opportunities.

It is important that the government recognizes the importance of this industry and provides the necessary resources to help it thrive. He hoped that initiatives like the Pakistan Lifestyle Furniture Expo will help bring our industry to the global forefront."

CEO PLFE Mian Faisal briefed to the minister that the expo featured over 100 top furniture brands, showcasing an impressive range of products. Major exhibitors included Diamond Supreme Foam Pvt Ltd (the official sponsor of the event), Dolce Vita, Yousuf Furniture, Home Furnishers, B&T Furniture, Quetta Carpet, Furniture Point, Habitt, Gaba Home, JC Buckman, Nevi Home, Soho Interior by Faiza, Wood Star, Ambiante, Riwaj Furniture, Furniture Emporium, Dareechay Home, Adil Furniture, Innovation Zone, Unique Home Décor, SHF Collection, Kahloon Furniture Gallery, Makeup Factory, Arbab Frames, Araish Khana, Murad Interior, Saad Interior, Wajid Handicrafts, Reflect Furniture, Ayesha Collection, Wood Curve, HK Bistra, Aamir Furniture, Glory Home, Abu Teck Zhomes, Unique Collection, Mian Furniture, Home Furniture, Furniture Republic, and many more.

He further briefed that visitors had the opportunity to purchase top-quality furniture at special discounts of up to 50% on various items displayed at the event while the expo also served as a platform for young designers and architects to observe current market trends and showcase their innovative designs alongside established professionals.

He hoped that this prestigious event will be attended by government bodies, leading businesspersons, members of the Lahore Chamber of Commerce, Members of Provincial Assembly Punjab, Honorary Consul Generals of different countries, and key stakeholders from the furniture industry.

15 dead, 1486 injured in 1519 accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least fifteen persons were killed and 1486 injured in 1418 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours. Out of these, 606 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 880 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by Rescue Medical Teams thus reducing the burden of Hospitals.

Furthermore, the analysis showed those 846 drivers, 46 underage drivers, 199 pedestrians, and 456 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes.

Govt to establish 300 Ed-Tech model schools in Kachi Abadis

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab government has introduced an innovative program, the Ed-Tech School Initiative, which aims to provide quality education to underprivileged children in urban and rural areas of Punjab.

More than 300 Ed-Tech schools will be established under this revolutionary model. The program is designed to create opportunities for students and improve the overall education system.

This step is part of the Punjab government's effort to ensure that every child has access to education and modern teaching methods, fostering a brighter future for the next generation. Educational institutions interested in participating in this program are eligible to apply. Schools that meet the following criteria are encouraged to submit their applications.

Sources in the Punjab Education Department told APP that the Ed-Tech program by the Punjab government is a groundbreaking project aimed at improving education standards by introducing digital learning tools to over 300 schools. Educational institutions with relevant experience can apply online by 30th December 2024, while the selected institutions will be notified by 7th January 2025.

Bilawal grieves over loss of previous lives on Greece coast

KARACHI (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has expressed profound sorrow over the tragic loss of lives in the migrant boat accident off the coast of Greece.

The PPP Chairman conveyed his relief upon learning about the rescue of 47 Pakistani nationals and urged the federal government to collaborate fully with Greek authorities to expedite search and rescue operations for the missing individuals.

He also emphasized the importance of facilitating communication and providing accurate information to the families of those impacted by this devastating incident.

Jamia Tur Rasheed chief calls on Sindh Governor

KARACHI (APP): Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori on Sunday met the Chancellor of Al-Ghazali University Mufti Abdul Raheem at Governor House.

In the meeting, registration of madrasahs, services of scholars and other matters of importance were discussed.

The governor said that the government would take any action only after an agreed plan of action.

Mufti Abdul Raheem said that the registration of madrasahs was a sensitive issue in which stakeholders' consultation was an important step.

Meanwhile, Governor Sindh Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori inaugurated season 4 of the Karachi Tape-Ball Premier League (KTPL) at Moin Khan Academy.

Eight teams are participating in this premier league. Speaking at the opening ceremony of the Karachi Tape ball Premier League, the Sindh Governor said that the Premier League will continue from December 14 to December 29. 'I am supporting all teams including Karachi Knight in this Premier League', he remarked.

He said that the event was showing that the city was returning towards lights. "Like this ground, now this city will also be decorated", he said.

LAHORE: Vendors selling motorbike helmets at roadside in the Provincial Capital. — APP photo

In this Difficult Time,
THE NATION STANDS WITH YOU

In response to the tragic boat capsize in Greece,
an emergency cell has been promptly established at the Pakistani Embassy in Greece under the direct instructions of
Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Thankfully,
Pakistani nationals have been
SUCCESSFULLY RESCUED AND ARE SAFE

If you are seeking information regarding your loved ones, please reach out via the following WhatsApp number
+30-6943 850188

The Government of Pakistan is committed to ensuring that all individuals responsible for this heinous crime of human trafficking are held accountable and brought to justice.

Important Reminder!
Illegal routes can lead to devastating consequences.

Ministry of Information & Broadcasting
Government of Pakistan
/GovtofPakistan
www.moib.gov.pk

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Bilawal grieves over loss of previous lives on Greece coast

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He also emphasized the importance of facilitating communication and providing accurate information to the families of those impacted by this devastating incident.

The PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari called for strict action against the culprits involved in human trafficking and advocated for strengthened global cooperation to address the growing menace of trafficking crimes. He highlighted the need to address the underlying causes driving migration in developing countries, underscoring the importance of replacing unjust political and economic systems, conflicts and wars with peace and sustainable development.

He conveyed his deepest sympathies and heartfelt condolences to the families grieving the loss of their loved ones in the Greece boat tragedy.

CM Murad grieves over boat capsize on Greece coast

The Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Sunday expressed his grief and sorrow over the migrant boat capsize on the coast of Greece.

He said that more effective action was needed to prevent illegal human trafficking.

The chief minister said that many precious lives were lost to this illegal practice.

He said that such sad incidents had happened in the past too. He further said that the common people were induced to take this wrong step.

KARACHI: Book lovers select from a variety of books on display at a stall during 19th Karachi International Book Fair at Karachi Expo Centre. — APP photo

PAKISTAN AIR FORCE

OPEN TENDER NOTICES

SEALED TENDERS ARE INVITED BY THE FOLLOWING BASES / UNITS FOR THE SUPPLY / PURCHASE / REPAIR / OVERHAULING OF MENTIONED ITEMS.

DP AIR C/O PAF BASE NUR KHAN RAWALPINDI

S. NO	IT No.	Description of Stores	No of Line Item	U/I, Qty	CAT	Opening Date	Time Period for Performance of Contract	Closing + Opening Time
01	415217/P-41 (Re-Tender)	Repair / Overhaul of Engine of MI-171 Helo	01	Ea-01	FE	14-01-25	Within 06 months after signing of contract	1000 Hrs 1030 Hrs
02	437009/P-43	Proc of PAFCOMM PABX Spares Support	12	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	31-12-24	Within 03 months after signing of contract	1000 Hrs 1030 Hrs
03	437010/P-43	Proc of Telecom Store and Execution of related work Services for Establishment of Networks	25	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	31-12-24	Within 06 months after signing of contract	1100 Hrs 1130 Hrs
04	437011/P-43	Proc of Telecom Store and Execution of related work Services to Network Infrastructure & Equipment for Extension of high-Speed Internet Access	21	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	01-01-25	Within 06 months after signing of contract	1000 Hrs 1030 Hrs
05	436939/P-43 (Re-Tender)	Proc of Hardware for Combined Mission Planning and Test Station (CMPTS)	11	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	31-12-24	Within 03 months after signing of contract	1200 Hrs 1230 Hrs
06	467294/P-46 (Re-Tender)	Stitching of blue Uniform	36	Various	PAK Rs	31-12-24	06 months after signing of contract	0930 Hrs 1000 Hrs

Contact Person / Ph No for Detail: For S. No 1 ADP-41 (051-9281361), **For S. No 3 to 5** ADP-43 (051-9527715), **For S. No 6** ADP-46 (051-9281366)

CORRIGENDUM OF ENTRIES PUBLISHED IN NEWSPAPERS / PPRA WEBSITE

S. NO	IT NO.	Description of Stores	Amendment in Opening Date FOR	Amendment in Opening Date READ	PUBLISHED IN NEWSPAPERS	REMARKS
01	**415213/P-41 (Extension)**	Overhaul of IL-78 Aircraft	17-12-24	**31-12-24**	Daily Ausaf & Frontier Post Dated 09-12-24	Opening Date Extended
02	**424558/P-42 (Extension)**	Case Life Raft for Sea Survival School, PAAK	10-12-24	**24-12-24**	Daily K2 & Frontier Post Dated 25-11-24	
03	**424560/P-42 (Extension)**	Conveyor Roller Complete Set for PAF Base Bholari	10-12-24	**24-12-24**		
04	**436978/P-43 (Extension)**	Proc of Spares for TACAN NM-7000 & 2010 and VOR	05-12-24	**24-12-24**	Daily Express Tribune & Jahan Pakistan Dated 02-12-24	
05	**437000/P-43 (Extension)**	Proc of PC Core I-5 with NVME	11-12-24	**24-12-24**	Daily K2 & Frontier Post Dated 25-11-24	
06	**436999/P-43 (Extension)**	Proc of Advanced Baseband Module	11-12-24	**26-12-24**		
07	**448411/P-44 (Extension)**	Proc of Armored Personnel Carrier	11-12-24	**18-12-24**	Daily K2 & Frontier Post Dated 25-11-24	

1. Instructions / Guidelines for participating in Tenders as per the prescribed SBD and complete specifications can be downloaded from PAF website i.e. www.paf.gov.pk under the heading "Media" "PAF Ads" 'General Instructions DP (Air) Suppliers' (for guidelines to participate in tenders) and 'Latest Advertisement' (for tender Invitation documents)
2. If Required ITs not found on PAF Website, concerned ADsP may be approached via request letter through e-mail address to (pa05@paf.gov.pk).
3. Firms, un-registered/un-indexed with DGDP interested to participate in the competition on Earnest Money are required to provide financial capability (minimum 6 months Bank Statements) proof of godown and manufacturer / stockist, 02 photocopies of NIC of the owner in case of FOR tenders and agency agreement with OEM along with the request. Request for issuance of IT will be entertained 07 days before opening date of tender.
4. A treasury Challan of Rs 2,000/- debitable to Main Head XLVII Main Head XII Sub Head A is required to be submitted by the un-registered/un-indexed firms along with the request.
5. Tender Notice is also available on PPRA website i.e. www.ppra.org.pk.

PAF HOSPITAL LAHORE (LOG) — Tele Ext 5235

Air Mattress, Ambu Bag(Pediatric), Ambu Bag Adult, Baby Cot, Baby Resuscitation Trolley, Bed Pan, Biopsy Set, Blood Warmer, Cardiotocography (CTG) Machine, Central Patient Monitoring System, CO2 Fractional Laser, Delivery Set, Delivery Table, Diagnostic Set, Dressing Tray, Drip Pusher, Drum SS gause, Examination Couchv, Examination Screen, Flexible Tendon Hammer/ Precursor, Foot Step, Foot Suction Machine, General Surgery Set, Glucometer, Height Measuring Scale, Infant Warmer, Infusion Pumps, IV Stand, Kidney tray, Laryngoscope Adult, Laryngoscope Paeds (Complete Set), Magnifying Lens, Main Resuscitation Trolley with Defibrillator, Measuring Tape, Minor Surgery Set, Nebulizer, Needle Cutter, OT instrument trolley, OT Portable light, Oxygen Cylinder (11 L) with Accessories MF, Oxygen Hood for Preterm Infant, Paeds Surgery Set, Patient's Stool Adjustable, Pen torch, Phaco Surgical Set, Pnenumatic Tourniquet Adult, Pnenumatic Tourniquet Paeds, POP Cutter, Portable Ultrasound Machine, Red Hat Pin, REGULATOR WITH GUAGE MODEL S40, Scrub Unit, Sims Speculum, Sphygmomanometer, Stethoscope, Stretcher Trolley, Trolley For Cylinder, Tuning Fork (512 Hz), Ultrasonic Nebulizer, UPS 10 KVA, UPS 5 KVA, Urinal, Vacuum Extractor, Vacuum ventouse cup, Video Laryngoscope, Weighing Machine, Wheel Chair, White Hat Pin, X-Ray View Box (Three Film Display) (Ea As Req)

PAF BASE LOWER TOPA (LOG) — 051-9543885

Air Conditioner 2 Ton + Installation (02), Hospital Bed ICU Full Fowler (04), For further information please contact on Phone Nos. 051-9543885 & 0323-9417715

PAF HOSPITAL MUSHAF — 048-950-5233

Quotations are required for supply of PVMS NA Medicines / Lab (NA Items 3 Qtr 2024-25), For further details, terms and conditions please contact 2nd in command PAF Hospital Mushaf on Tel Ext:- 048-950-5233 (OC PAF Hospital Mushaf is liable to partially of fully accept or reject any of the quotation)

PAF BASE PESHAWAR (LOG) — 091-9503867

Hiring of 20, 27 & 40 FT Flat Bed (As Req), (Quotations are required for Low Bed and High Bed) from Peshawar To Qadri (Sakardu), Peshawar To Murid (Chakwal), Peshawar To Rafiqui (Shorkot), Note: - Commercial quotations must be submitted as per single stage two envelope procedure. Detail specification may be obtained from Officer in-charge Log Sgn PAF Base, Peshawar Tel: 091-9503867, Mobile: 03207789544

PAF BASE RISALPUR (LOG) — 091-9503867

Local Repair of FE Loader, Required Work: (a) 02 Injector Assy (New Required) (b) 04 Injector Assy (Kit to be replaced), (c) Fuel Injection Pump (Plungers to be replaced, Phasing & Calibration required), Local Repair of Chain Dozor, Required Work: (a) ECU Hardware Repair (b) Replacement of components (c) Re- Installation of Software (d) ECU Installation (e) Harness and all Sensor test required, PPC Machine H/Duty and L/Duty (All Model), Transmission Oil (Synthetic & Non Synthetic), Acid Batteries 12V(35AH 40AH, 50AH, S5AH, 60AH 70AH 90AH, 135AH, 140AH, 170AH) with incomplete specification (As Req), For Specifications/ scope of work any other query please contact No. Ext—3885, Mobile No 0324-3189565

NO 7 DENTAL UNIT PAF BASE RAFIQUI — 047-5501621

PAF Base Rafiqui (No 7 Dental Unit), Rafiqui requires Quotations regarding bulk purchase of Dental Materials, List of Dental Materials can be collected from No 7 Dental Unit, PAF, Contact No - 047-5501621-5421

PAF BASE KALLAR KAHAR (LOG) — 0543-588308

Bullet Proof Jacket, Body Amour Plate Carrier, Pistol Pouch, Folding Chairs, Embedded Plate, Details / specifications / samples may please be checked from Log Sqn, PAF Base Kallar Kahar, Telephone No. 0543-588308-2281 Official Cell No. 0323-9419713, Technical & Commercial quotation must be submitted separately (Single stage two envelope) (As Req), Items will be accepted after inspection

NO 118 SED, PAF BASE MALIR (LOG) — 021-99537239

Part No: 118NSN-4634797-67-113024-1106 Noun: MOTION SIMULATOR, Part No: 118NSN-4634797-67- 113024-1107 Noun: 15 DEC SEAT ADAPTER (Ea As Req), For detail specifications, can be obtained from No 118 SED, PAF Base Malir on Telephone No 021-99537239 & Mobile No. 0323-9436563

NO 110 ALD PAF BASE LAHORE — 042-99507221

Cloth Camouflage G/Jungle (MR), Bag Helmet Flying (2022) (Ea), Stitching of Commando Uniform (PR), Note: Use 02 envelops (Commercial & Technical) for each article (b) 03 Samples for each article are required along with Technical Quote (c) Quotations without sample will be rejected (d) Quantities will be as required, Further details /complete specifications, ay be collected from No 110 ALD, PAF (Tele No 0323-9428714, 042-99507221-7205)

PAF BASE BHOLARI (LOG) — 022- 9501500

Oil Engine API:CK-4 SAE 15W-40, RTV 3145 Grey preferably 310 ML, Can Gasoline S/S (J/Can) 20.5 Ltr, Add: (Officer In charge. Logistics Squadron) PAF Base Bholari Hyderabad (Send Via Leopard Courier Service or Pakistan Post Only Preferably 'Single Stage Two Envelope' procedure vide PPRA Rule 36(b), Note: For details / specifications please contact on Telephone No. 022-9501500 Ext 2287 and Cell No 03239431714. (All parts Nos as required or equivalent) (As Required)

PAF BASE NUR KHAN (MED) — 051-9523961

Requirement of Medicines in Bulk Qty for Medical Squadron PAF Base Nur Khan, Quotation is required for Maximum Rebate on retail price. Further list of Medicine and details are available on contact Telephone No: 051-9523961 / Mobile No. 0325-4185094

PAF BASE MASROOR (LOG) — 021-99522287

Camera (DS-2TD4167 - 50/WY Thermal Bi spectrum Speed Dome), Camera (DS-2TD6267 - 100C4L/WYCKV Thermal & Bi spectrum), Tyre 700-15 6 Ply (EA As Req), For further details contact Telephone No. 021-99522287 - 99522275, Mobile No.: 0321-9835250

PAF HOSPITAL ISLAMABAD (MED) — 051-9503888

Re-Tender for provision of medicines N/A PVMS medicines 3rd Qtr 2024-25 is invited having valid drugs selling license, NTN Professional Tax certificate and GST Registration certificate, For further details, please contact PAF Hospital, Islamabad on Telephone No 051-9503888, Cell No 0343-5687103. (List of items may be collected from Medical Store PAF Hospital, Islamabad

PAF BASE SHAHBAZ (LOG) — 0722-670454

Sensor Cell (Oxygen) (or Ventilator, Dog Snifter (Arms / Explosive Search Dogs), Compressed Air System L/R (Motor Repair), Technical & commercial quotations must be packed separately and sealed properly. Specs may be obtained from Log Sqn at 0323-9439712; 0309-8925565 & Office No 0722-670454 Ext 2257

PAF BASE MUSHAF SARGODHA (LOG) — 0543-588308

Local Purchasec of Gas Liquid Oxygen, Body Worn Camera, Local Purchase of Convex Probe (Logic F8 Expert), Blood Gas Analyzer, Local Repair of Color Doppler Ultrasound Machine (SOW : Ultrasound machine is Not working and showing system Error), Local Purchase of Impress LI-ION 3000 MAH CE Battery, Local Purchase of Tlaash Pe R710 App Server (Think System St250 V3-3 Year Warranty With All Acessories), Local Purchase of 2 Way Power Divider (8-18G) {2 Way Sms Power Divider Form 8 Ghz To 18 Ghz Rated At 10 Watts}, Local Purchase of Torque Wrench (9/16 Bit) { Fixed Click Type Torque Wrench With 9/16 Bit For Tnc Connectors Pre-Set To 13 In Lbs}, Local Purchase of 30db Fix Atenuator Sma (M-Sma) { 30 Db Fixed Attenuator, Sma Male to Sma Female Black Anodized Alominium Heatsink Body Rated To 5 Watts Up to 18 Ghz}, Local Purchase of T/Wrench Running Roebuck, Local Purchase of 10 Ton Hydraulic Press Machine HP-10 (Model:HP_20s Capacity 200KN, Pressure 50MPA, Tale Size 200X300mm, Travel 200+450mm, 5000X350X 1300mm) Local Purchase of Oven Laboratory (Kelvinator Electric Range, Model:MFF3016RW), Local Purchase of 12" Coaxial Multipurpose Surf, 6.5" Coaxial Multisurface Moun, Local Repair of Hemodialysis Machine Gambro (Power I/O Board U/S), Local Repair/ Upgradation of Bullet Proof Posts (B-6 Level){Anti Corrision, Camouflage Colour, power Supply Box New,Wiring /Ducting New, Emergency Siren New, Two Way Communication New, Revolving Chair New, Exaust Fan New, LED 24 Inches 02 New, Rack 05 Feet 18 Inch New, Led Light New 15 Watt 1 by 1Feet New, LED Light Outside qty 2 120Watt New, Locks Repairing, Air Conditioner Reversible, Camera Duel Lenz Hikvision Qty 2 New, 8 Channel NVR New, IP Camera 4 Mega Pixals Full Colour Qty 4 New, Soft Barrier Lope Detection New, Road Humb 20 Feet Qty 2 New, Bracket Fan Small New, Safety and Earthing, Reflecting Pole For Cameras New, Traffic Lights Repair}, Local Purchase of Aviation Standard Carpeting, Cover Back Rest, Cover Seat, Cushion Back Rest, Cushion Seat, Seat Pilot (Note: All Material Must Be Aviation Standard CoC & Burn test report in the name of Company as per TASA EASA, CS/FAR 25.853 (A), Appendix "F", PTI and CAA united kingdom standard would be provided with material) (EA As Req), Detailed Specifications can be obtained from Log Sqn Mushaf (Sargodha) on telephone 048-555-2278

PAF BASE MINHAS (MED) — 051-9533901

Sealed tenders are invited for bulk purchase of medicines on institutional rates (Brand name) to Medical Squadron PAF Base, Minhas, List of medicines may be collected from Medical Store of Medical Squadron PAF Base, Minhas in working hours (0800 hours to 1430 hours), Cell No: - 0334-3569414

PAF HOSPITAL ISLAMABAD (LOG) — 051-9505818

Local Purchase of items: Expiratory Valve (Ventilator), Humidifier Chamber, Expiratory Cassette for Vent, Blanket (Single Ply Single Bed), SAECG Machine (Single Average ECG), Oxygen sensor, Fiber optic Cable (Laproscope), Local Repair of items: Orthoscope Tower, MRI System, Only separately Quotes Technical / Financial acceptable. Detail of Items / Specification / Scope of work may be obtained from Log Flt PAF Hospital Islamabad during working hours. For queries Tel No 051-9505818 may be contacted.

PAF BASE ISLAMABAD (LOG) — 051-9505556

Hand Set Phone T-Docke, Hand Cordless Mic EW-DX 835S, Collar Cordless Mic EW-D ME4, Server High End, KVM Switch (08 port), GD Diesel Dog/Sniffer Dog (As Req), Note:- Separate Quotation (Technical and Financial) for each line item is required), For details / specifications / scope of work please contact Log Sqn on Phone No: 0323-9408714, 051-9505556, Email: Lsaq05@Paf.gov.Pk

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:-

1. General terms and conditions are mentioned in tender form (F-528A). Forms and tender notices complete details can be downloaded from PAF website "**www.paf.gov.pk**" or can be obtained from respective Bases/ Log Sqns on working days.
2. The firm must be GST and professional Tax registered having NTN.
3. Last date of submission of tenders: **31 DECEMBER, 2024 (1000 hrs)**.
4. Tenders will be opened on the same day at 1100 hours.
5. No advance payment will be made and payment will be subject to acceptance of the items by user activity.
6. Officers Commanding of the mentioned Bases/ Units reserve the right to reject any part or the entire tender on technical grounds.
7. Quotations must be valid for 90 days.
8. Sales Tax as applicable must be mentioned separately.
9. Guarantee / Warranty term / period should also be mentioned.
10. The agreement will be governed by official secret act. 1923.

http://www.paf.gov.pk

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights, Senator Samina Zehri addressing 20th anniversary celebrations of the Pakistan Mission Society

People of Pakistan stands with Lebanon in crucial time: Atta Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar on Sunday said the people of Pakistan had always supported their brothers and sisters in Lebanon in crucial times, and would continue to do so in the future.

The Minister, during a meeting with his Lebanese Counterpart Ziad Makary, acknowledged the role of Lebanon in regional peace and stability, and discussed matters of mutual interest including repatriation of stranded Pakistanis in Syria and relief supplies for the people of Lebanon who have been affected by the war.

He expressed his gratitude to the Lebanese leadership for facilitating the immediate evacuation of Pakistani citizens stranded in Syria via Beirut.

"The recent talks between the Prime Ministers of the two countries paved the way for the return of Pakistanis stranded in Syria, for which we are grateful to the Lebanese government," said the minister while referring to a contact made by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to his counterpart who took immediate action and provided immediate facilities to Pakistanis stranded in Syria.

"This shows the strength of our relations," he added.

Tarar reiterated the government's commitment to further strengthen its relations with Lebanon.

The Minister of Information of Lebanon acknowledged the support of Pakistan to the people of Lebanon, and particularly expressed gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and the government of Pakistan for sending relief supplies to the people of Lebanon.

He said Pakistan's continuous support reflects the strength of our bilateral relations.

"It was a pleasure to see a large number of Pakistanis at Beirut airport who are returning home," he remarked.

He reaffirmed his government's commitment to further strengthen bilateral relations.

PAKISTAN AIR FORCE

OPEN TENDER NOTICES

SEALED TENDERS ARE INVITED BY THE FOLLOWING BASES / UNITS FOR THE SUPPLY / PURCHASE / REPAIR / OVERHAULING OF MENTIONED ITEMS.

DP AIR C/O PAF BASE NUR KHAN RAWALPINDI

S. NO	IT No.	Description of Stores	No of Line Item	U/I, Qty	CAT	Opening Date	Time Period for Performance of Contract	Closing + Opening Time
01	415217/P-41 (Re-Tender)	Repair / Overhaul of Engine of MI-171 Helo	01	Ea-01	FE	14-01-25	Within 06 months after signing of contract	1000 Hrs 1030 Hrs
02	437009/P-43	Proc of PAFCOMM PABX Spares Support	12	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	31-12-24	Within 03 months after signing of contract	1000 Hrs 1030 Hrs
03	437010/P-43	Proc of Telecom Store and Execution of related work Services for Establishment of Networks	25	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	31-12-24	Within 06 months after signing of contract	1100 Hrs 1130 Hrs
04	437011/P-43	Proc of Telecom Store and Execution of related work Services to Network Infrastructure & Equipment for Extension of high-Speed Internet Access	21	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	01-01-25	Within 06 months after signing of contract	1000 Hrs 1030 Hrs
05	436939/P-43 (Re-Tender)	Proc of Hardware for Combined Mission Planning and Test Station (CMPTS)	11	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	31-12-24	Within 03 months after signing of contract	1200 Hrs 1230 Hrs
06	467294/P-46 (Re-Tender)	Stitching of blue Uniform	36	Various	PAK Rs	31-12-24	06 months after signing of contract	0930 Hrs 1000 Hrs

Contact Person / Ph No for Detail: For S. No 1 ADP-41 (051-9281361), **For S. No 3 to 5** ADP-43 (051-9527715), **For S. No 6** ADP-46 (051-9281366)

CORRIGENDUM OF ENTRIES PUBLISHED IN NEWSPAPERS / PPRA WEBSITE

S. NO	IT NO.	Description of Stores	Amendment in Opening Date FOR	Amendment in Opening Date READ	PUBLISHED IN NEWSPAPERS	REMARKS
01	**415213/P-41 (Extension)**	Overhaul of IL-78 Aircraft	17-12-24	**31-12-24**	Daily Ausaf & Frontier Post Dated 09-12-24	Opening Date Extended
02	**424558/P-42 (Extension)**	Case Life Raft for Sea Survival School, PAAK	10-12-24	**24-12-24**	Daily K2 & Frontier Post Dated 25-11-24	
03	**424560/P-42 (Extension)**	Conveyor Roller Complete Set for PAF Base Bholari	10-12-24	**24-12-24**		
04	**436978/P-43 (Extension)**	Proc of Spares for TACAN NM-7000 & 2010 and VOR	05-12-24	**24-12-24**	Daily Express Tribune & Jahan Pakistan Dated 02-12-24	
05	**437000/P-43 (Extension)**	Proc of PC Core I-5 with NVME	11-12-24	**24-12-24**	Daily K2 & Frontier Post Dated 25-11-24	
06	**436999/P-43 (Extension)**	Proc of Advanced Baseband Module	11-12-24	**26-12-24**		
07	**448411/P-44 (Extension)**	Proc of Armored Personnel Carrier	11-12-24	**18-12-24**	Daily K2 & Frontier Post Dated 25-11-24	

1. Instructions / Guidelines for participating in Tenders as per the prescribed SBD and complete specifications can be downloaded from PAF website i.e. www.paf.gov.pk under the heading "Media" "PAF Ads" 'General Instructions DP (Air) Suppliers' (for guidelines to participate in tenders) and 'Latest Advertisement' (for tender Invitation documents)
2. If Required ITs not found on PAF Website, concerned ADsP may be approached via request letter through e-mail address to (pa05@paf.gov.pk).
3. Firms, un-registered/un-indexed with DGDP interested to participate in the competition on Earnest Money are required to provide financial capability (minimum 6 months Bank Statements) proof of godown and manufacturer / stockist, 02 photocopies of NIC of the owner in case of FOR tenders and agency agreement with OEM along with the request. Request for issuance of IT will be entertained 07 days before opening date of tender.
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Air Mattress, Ambu Bag(Pediatric), Ambu Bag Adult, Baby Cot, Baby Resuscitation Trolley, Bed Pan, Biopsy Set, Blood Warmer, Cardiotocography (CTG) Machine, Central Patient Monitoring System, CO2 Fractional Laser, Delivery Set, Delivery Table, Diagnostic Set, Dressing Tray, Drip Pusher, Drum SS gause, Examination Couchv, Examination Screen, Flexible Tendon Hammer/ Precursor, Foot Step, Foot Suction Machine, General Surgery Set, Glucometer, Height Measuring Scale, Infant Warmer, Infusion Pumps, IV Stand, Kidney tray, Laryngoscope Adult, Laryngoscope Paeds (Complete Set), Magnifying Lens, Main Resuscitation Trolley with Defibrillator, Measuring Tape, Minor Surgery Set, Nebulizer, Needle Cutter, OT instrument trolley, OT Portable light, Oxygen Cylinder (11 L) with Accessories MF, Oxygen Hood for Preterm Infant, Paeds Surgery Set, Patient's Stool Adjustable, Pen torch, Phaco Surgical Set, Pnenumatic Tourniquet Adult, Pnenumatic Tourniquet Paeds, POP Cutter, Portable Ultrasound Machine, Red Hat Pin, REGULATOR WITH GUAGE MODEL S40, Scrub Unit, Sims Speculum, Sphygmomanometer, Stethoscope, Stretcher Trolley, Trolley For Cylinder, Tuning Fork (512 Hz), Ultrasonic Nebulizer, UPS 10 KVA, UPS 5 KVA, Urinal, Vacuum Extractor, Vacuum ventouse cup, Video Laryngoscope, Weighing Machine, Wheel Chair, White Hat Pin, X-Ray View Box (Three Film Display) (Ea As Req)

PAF BASE LOWER TOPA (LOG) — 051-9543885

Air Conditioner 2 Ton + Installation (02), Hospital Bed ICU Full Fowler (04), For further information please contact on Phone Nos. 051-9543885 & 0323-9417715

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Hiring of 20, 27 & 40 FT Flat Bed (As Req), (Quotations are required for Low Bed and High Bed) from Peshawar To Qadri (Sakardu), Peshawar To Murid (Chakwal), Peshawar To Rafiqui (Shorkot), Note: - Commercial quotations must be submitted as per single stage two envelope procedure. Detail specification may be obtained from Officer in-charge Log Sgn PAF Base, Peshawar Tel: 091-9503867, Mobile: 03207789544

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Local Repair of FE Loader, Required Work: (a) 02 Injector Assy (New Required) (b) 04 Injector Assy (Kit to be replaced), (c) Fuel Injection Pump (Plungers to be replaced, Phasing & Calibration required), Local Repair of Chain Dozor, Required Work: (a) ECU Hardware Repair (b) Replacement of components (c) Re- Installation of Software (d) ECU Installation (e) Harness and all Sensor test required, PPC Machine H/Duty and L/Duty (All Model), Transmission Oil (Synthetic & Non Synthetic), Acid Batteries 12V(35AH 40AH, 50AH, S5AH, 60AH 70AH 90AH, 135AH, 140AH, 170AH) with incomplete specification (As Req), For Specifications/ scope of work any other query please contact No. Ext—3885, Mobile No 0324-3189565

NO 7 DENTAL UNIT PAF BASE RAFIQUI — 047-5501621

PAF Base Rafiqui (No 7 Dental Unit), Rafiqui requires Quotations regarding bulk purchase of Dental Materials, List of Dental Materials can be collected from No 7 Dental Unit, PAF, Contact No - 047-5501621-5421

PAF BASE KALLAR KAHAR (LOG) — 0543-588308

Bullet Proof Jacket, Body Amour Plate Carrier, Pistol Pouch, Folding Chairs, Embedded Plate, Details / specifications / samples may please be checked from Log Sqn, PAF Base Kallar Kahar, Telephone No. 0543-588308-2281 Official Cell No. 0323-9419713, Technical & Commercial quotation must be submitted separately (Single stage two envelope) (As Req), Items will be accepted after inspection

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Part No: 118NSN-4634797-67-113024-1106 Noun: MOTION SIMULATOR, Part No: 118NSN-4634797-67- 113024-1107 Noun: 15 DEC SEAT ADAPTER (Ea As Req), For detail specifications, can be obtained from No 118 SED, PAF Base Malir on Telephone No 021-99537239 & Mobile No. 0323-9436563

NO 110 ALD PAF BASE LAHORE — 042-99507221

Cloth Camouflage G/Jungle (MR), Bag Helmet Flying (2022) (Ea), Stitching of Commando Uniform (PR), Note: Use 02 envelops (Commercial & Technical) for each article (b) 03 Samples for each article are required along with Technical Quote (c) Quotations without sample will be rejected (d) Quantities will be as required, Further details /complete specifications, ay be collected from No 110 ALD, PAF (Tele No 0323-9428714, 042-99507221-7205)

PAF BASE BHOLARI (LOG) — 022- 9501500

Oil Engine API:CK-4 SAE 15W-40, RTV 3145 Grey preferably 310 ML, Can Gasoline S/S (J/Can) 20.5 Ltr, Add: (Officer In charge. Logistics Squadron) PAF Base Bholari Hyderabad (Send Via Leopard Courier Service or Pakistan Post Only Preferably 'Single Stage Two Envelope' procedure vide PPRA Rule 36(b), Note: For details / specifications please contact on Telephone No. 022-9501500 Ext 2287 and Cell No 03239431714. (All parts Nos as required or equivalent) (As Required)

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Camera (DS-2TD4167 - 50/WY Thermal Bi spectrum Speed Dome), Camera (DS-2TD6267 - 100C4L/WYCKV Thermal & Bi spectrum), Tyre 700-15 6 Ply (EA As Req), For further details contact Telephone No. 021-99522287 - 99522275, Mobile No.: 0321-9835250

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Local Purchasec of Gas Liquid Oxygen, Body Worn Camera, Local Purchase of Convex Probe (Logic F8 Expert), Blood Gas Analyzer, Local Repair of Color Doppler Ultrasound Machine (SOW : Ultrasound machine is Not working and showing system Error), Local Purchase of Impress LI-ION 3000 MAH CE Battery, Local Purchase of Tlaash Pe R710 App Server (Think System St250 V3-3 Year Warranty With All Acessories), Local Purchase of 2 Way Power Divider (8-18G) {2 Way Sms Power Divider Form 8 Ghz To 18 Ghz Rated At 10 Watts}, Local Purchase of Torque Wrench (9/16 Bit) { Fixed Click Type Torque Wrench With 9/16 Bit For Tnc Connectors Pre-Set To 13 In Lbs}, Local Purchase of 30db Fix Atenuator Sma (M-Sma) { 30 Db Fixed Attenuator, Sma Male to Sma Female Black Anodized Alominium Heatsink Body Rated To 5 Watts Up to 18 Ghz}, Local Purchase of T/Wrench Running Roebuck, Local Purchase of 10 Ton Hydraulic Press Machine HP-10 (Model:HP_20s Capacity 200KN, Pressure 50MPA, Tale Size 200X300mm, Travel 200+450mm, 5000X350X 1300mm) Local Purchase of Oven Laboratory (Kelvinator Electric Range, Model:MFF3016RW), Local Purchase of 12" Coaxial Multipurpose Surf, 6.5" Coaxial Multisurface Moun, Local Repair of Hemodialysis Machine Gambro (Power I/O Board U/S), Local Repair/ Upgradation of Bullet Proof Posts (B-6 Level){Anti Corrision, Camouflage Colour, power Supply Box New,Wiring /Ducting New, Emergency Siren New, Two Way Communication New, Revolving Chair New, Exaust Fan New, LED 24 Inches 02 New, Rack 05 Feet 18 Inch New, Led Light New 15 Watt 1 by 1Feet New, LED Light Outside qty 2 120Watt New, Locks Repairing, Air Conditioner Reversible, Camera Duel Lenz Hikvision Qty 2 New, 8 Channel NVR New, IP Camera 4 Mega Pixals Full Colour Qty 4 New, Soft Barrier Lope Detection New, Road Humb 20 Feet Qty 2 New, Bracket Fan Small New, Safety and Earthing, Reflecting Pole For Cameras New, Traffic Lights Repair}, Local Purchase of Aviation Standard Carpeting, Cover Back Rest, Cover Seat, Cushion Back Rest, Cushion Seat, Seat Pilot (Note: All Material Must Be Aviation Standard CoC & Burn test report in the name of Company as per TASA EASA, CS/FAR 25.853 (A), Appendix "F", PTI and CAA united kingdom standard would be provided with material) (EA As Req), Detailed Specifications can be obtained from Log Sqn Mushaf (Sargodha) on telephone 048-555-2278

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PAF HOSPITAL ISLAMABAD (LOG) — 051-9505818

Local Purchase of items: Expiratory Valve (Ventilator), Humidifier Chamber, Expiratory Cassette for Vent, Blanket (Single Ply Single Bed), SAECG Machine (Single Average ECG), Oxygen sensor, Fiber optic Cable (Laproscope), Local Repair of items: Orthoscope Tower, MRI System, Only separately Quotes Technical / Financial acceptable. Detail of Items / Specification / Scope of work may be obtained from Log Flt PAF Hospital Islamabad during working hours. For queries Tel No 051-9505818 may be contacted.

PAF BASE ISLAMABAD (LOG) — 051-9505556

Hand Set Phone T-Docke, Hand Cordless Mic EW-DX 835S, Collar Cordless Mic EW-D ME4, Server High End, KVM Switch (08 port), GD Diesel Dog/Sniffer Dog (As Req), Note:- Separate Quotation (Technical and Financial) for each line item is required), For details / specifications / scope of work please contact Log Sqn on Phone No: 0323-9408714, 051-9505556, Email: Lsaq05@Paf.gov.Pk

TERMS AND CONDITIONS:-

1. General terms and conditions are mentioned in tender form (F-528A). Forms and tender notices complete details can be downloaded from PAF website "**www.paf.gov.pk**" or can be obtained from respective Bases/ Log Sqns on working days.
2. The firm must be GST and professional Tax registered having NTN.
3. Last date of submission of tenders: **31 DECEMBER, 2024 (1000 hrs)**.
4. Tenders will be opened on the same day at 1100 hours.
5. No advance payment will be made and payment will be subject to acceptance of the items by user activity.
6. Officers Commanding of the mentioned Bases/ Units reserve the right to reject any part or the entire tender on technical grounds.
7. Quotations must be valid for 90 days.
8. Sales Tax as applicable must be mentioned separately.
9. Guarantee / Warranty term / period should also be mentioned.
10. The agreement will be governed by official secret act. 1923.

http://www.paf.gov.pk

Maryam leads Punjab multi-sectoral investment drive

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif chaired an investment conference in Guangzhou on the sixth day of her China visit, demonstrating her commitment to work even on a holiday.

Maryam Nawaz announced the establishment of a working group, the appointment of a focal person, and the creation of a help desk to facilitate investment. The roundtable conference witnessed participation from representatives of over 60 prominent companies from China and Hong Kong.

Representatives from health, artificial intelligence, agriculture, information technology, waste management, solar energy, and other sectors participated in the conference.

Key Chinese companies provided detailed briefings on their operations, while suggestions and recommendations on Pakistan-China free trade were also reviewed. Maryam Nawaz invited Chinese technology firms to launch operations in Punjab, with many expressing keen interest in investment opportunities in the province.

The Chief Minister announced plans to facilitate Chinese companies through a one-window operation, declaring Punjab as a "land of opportunities" for investors.

She also expressed gratitude to the conference attendees and briefed them on Punjab's economic, geographical, and business significance.

Chinese representatives appreciated the "No to Plastic" campaign launched in Punjab to protect the environment. Maryam Nawaz reiterated her government's commitment to banning the production, sale, and use of environmentally harmful plastics.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharifhighlighted ongoing efforts under the "Clean Punjab" initiative, including a zero-waste mission and projects to convert waste into renewable energy.

Maryam Nawaz emphasised the focus on affordable energy through windmills, solar energy, and other renewable sources.

Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharifwelcomed partnerships in a mega solarisation project, underscoring Punjab's growing demand for solar energy.

In agriculture, the government is modernising through mechanisation and fostering collaboration in sub-sectors such as machinery manufacturing, food processing, and hybrid seed development.

Maryam Nawaz also underlined the importance of innovation in the IT sector, welcoming investments in e-commerce, incubator centres, and e-learning.

She invited Chinese firms to contribute to making the Nawaz Sharif IT City a state-of-the-art hub. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharifnoted that Punjab aims to utilise its young, skilled workforce and explore bio and hydrogen technologies.

Maryam Nawaz described Pakistan as a gateway to Central Asia, the Middle East, and other global markets, reaffirming its strategic role in international trade. She called the positive response from Chinese investors encouraging for fostering Pak-China relations.

In health, she highlighted plans to benefit from China's telemedicine technologies, while in agriculture, she pointed to potential breakthroughs with nanotechnology and water-efficient irrigation systems.

"This is the best time for Chinese companies to seize business opportunities in Punjab," Maryam Nawaz concluded.

PAKISTAN AIR FORCE

OPEN TENDER NOTICES

SEALED TENDERS ARE INVITED BY THE FOLLOWING BASES / UNITS FOR THE SUPPLY / PURCHASE / REPAIR / OVERHAULING OF MENTIONED ITEMS.

DP AIR C/O PAF BASE NUR KHAN RAWALPINDI

S. NO	IT No.	Description of Stores	No of Line Item	U/I, Qty	CAT	Opening Date	Time Period for Performance of Contract	Closing + Opening Time
01	415217/P-41 (Re-Tender)	Repair / Overhaul of Engine of MI-171 Helo	01	Ea-01	FE	14-01-25	Within 06 months after signing of contract	1000 Hrs 1030 Hrs
02	437009/P-43	Proc of PAFCOMM PABX Spares Support	12	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	31-12-24	Within 03 months after signing of contract	1000 Hrs 1030 Hrs
03	437010/P-43	Proc of Telecom Store and Execution of related work Services for Establishment of Networks	25	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	31-12-24	Within 06 months after signing of contract	1100 Hrs 1130 Hrs
04	437011/P-43	Proc of Telecom Store and Execution of related work Services to Network Infrastructure & Equipment for Extension of high-Speed Internet Access	21	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	01-01-25	Within 06 months after signing of contract	1000 Hrs 1030 Hrs
05	436939/P-43 (Re-Tender)	Proc of Hardware for Combined Mission Planning and Test Station (CMPTS)	11	Ea-Var	Pak Rs	31-12-24	Within 03 months after signing of contract	1200 Hrs 1230 Hrs
06	467294/P-46 (Re-Tender)	Stitching of blue Uniform	36	Various	PAK Rs	31-12-24	06 months after signing of contract	0930 Hrs 1000 Hrs

Contact Person / Ph No for Detail: For S. No 1 ADP-41 (051-9281361), **For S. No 3 to 5** ADP-43 (051-9527715), **For S. No 6** ADP-46 (051-9281366)

CORRIGENDUM OF ENTRIES PUBLISHED IN NEWSPAPERS / PPRA WEBSITE

S. NO	IT NO.	Description of Stores	Amendment in Opening Date FOR	Amendment in Opening Date READ	PUBLISHED IN NEWSPAPERS	REMARKS
01	**415213/P-41 (Extension)**	Overhaul of IL-78 Aircraft	17-12-24	**31-12-24**	Daily Ausaf & Frontier Post Dated 09-12-24	Opening Date Extended
02	**424558/P-42 (Extension)**	Case Life Raft for Sea Survival School, PAAK	10-12-24	**24-12-24**	Daily K2 & Frontier Post Dated 25-11-24	
03	**424560/P-42 (Extension)**	Conveyor Roller Complete Set for PAF Base Bholari	10-12-24	**24-12-24**		
04	**436978/P-43 (Extension)**	Proc of Spares for TACAN NM-7000 & 2010 and VOR	05-12-24	**24-12-24**	Daily Express Tribune & Jahan Pakistan Dated 02-12-24	
05	**437000/P-43 (Extension)**	Proc of PC Core I-5 with NVME	11-12-24	**24-12-24**	Daily K2 & Frontier Post Dated 25-11-24	
06	**436999/P-43 (Extension)**	Proc of Advanced Baseband Module	11-12-24	**26-12-24**		
07	**448411/P-44 (Extension)**	Proc of Armored Personnel Carrier	11-12-24	**18-12-24**	Daily K2 & Frontier Post Dated 25-11-24	

1. Instructions / Guidelines for participating in Tenders as per the prescribed SBD and complete specifications can be downloaded from PAF website i.e. www.paf.gov.pk under the heading "Media" "PAF Ads" 'General Instructions DP (Air) Suppliers' (for guidelines to participate in tenders) and 'Latest Advertisement' (for tender Invitation documents)
2. If Required ITs not found on PAF Website, concerned ADsP may be approached via request letter through e-mail address to (pa05@paf.gov.pk).
3. Firms, un-registered/un-indexed with DGDP interested to participate in the competition on Earnest Money are required to provide financial capability (minimum 6 months Bank Statements) proof of godown and manufacturer / stockist, 02 photocopies of NIC of the owner in case of FOR tenders and agency agreement with OEM along with the request. Request for issuance of IT will be entertained 07 days before opening date of tender.
4. A treasury Challan of Rs 2,000/- debitable to Main Head XLVII Main Head XII Sub Head A is required to be submitted by the un-registered/un-indexed firms along with the request.
5. Tender Notice is also available on PPRA website i.e. www.ppra.org.pk.

PAF HOSPITAL LAHORE (LOG) — Tele Ext 5235

Air Mattress, Ambu Bag(Pediatric), Ambu Bag Adult, Baby Cot, Baby Resuscitation Trolley, Bed Pan, Biopsy Set, Blood Warmer, Cardiotocography (CTG) Machine, Central Patient Monitoring System, CO2 Fractional Laser, Delivery Set, Delivery Table, Diagnostic Set, Dressing Tray, Drip Pusher, Drum SS gause, Examination Couchv, Examination Screen, Flexible Tendon Hammer/ Precursor, Foot Step, Foot Suction Machine, General Surgery Set, Glucometer, Height Measuring Scale, Infant Warmer, Infusion Pumps, IV Stand, Kidney tray, Laryngoscope Adult, Laryngoscope Paeds (Complete Set), Magnifying Lens, Main Resuscitation Trolley with Defibrillator, Measuring Tape, Minor Surgery Set, Nebulizer, Needle Cutter, OT instrument trolley, OT Portable light, Oxygen Cylinder (11 L) with Accessories MF, Oxygen Hood for Preterm Infant, Paeds Surgery Set, Patient's Stool Adjustable, Pen torch, Phaco Surgical Set, Pnenumatic Tourniquet Adult, Pnenumatic Tourniquet Paeds, POP Cutter, Portable Ultrasound Machine, Red Hat Pin, REGULATOR WITH GUAGE MODEL S40, Scrub Unit, Sims Speculum, Sphygmomanometer, Stethoscope, Stretcher Trolley, Trolley For Cylinder, Tuning Fork (512 Hz), Ultrasonic Nebulizer, UPS 10 KVA, UPS 5 KVA, Urinal, Vacuum Extractor, Vacuum ventouse cup, Video Laryngoscope, Weighing Machine, Wheel Chair, White Hat Pin, X-Ray View Box (Three Film Display) (Ea As Req)

PAF BASE LOWER TOPA (LOG) — 051-9543885

Air Conditioner 2 Ton + Installation (02), Hospital Bed ICU Full Fowler (04), For further information please contact on Phone Nos. 051-9543885 & 0323-9417715

PAF HOSPITAL MUSHAF — 048-950-5233

Quotations are required for supply of PVMS NA Medicines / Lab (NA Items 3 Qtr 2024-25), For further details, terms and conditions please contact 2nd in command PAF Hospital Mushaf on Tel Ext:- 048-950-5233 (OC PAF Hospital Mushaf is liable to partially of fully accept or reject any of the quotation)

PAF BASE PESHAWAR (LOG) — 091-9503867

Hiring of 20, 27 & 40 FT Flat Bed (As Req), (Quotations are required for Low Bed and High Bed) from Peshawar To Qadri (Sakardu), Peshawar To Murid (Chakwal), Peshawar To Rafiqui (Shorkot), Note: - Commercial quotations must be submitted as per single stage two envelope procedure. Detail specification may be obtained from Officer in-charge Log Sgn PAF Base, Peshawar Tel: 091-9503867, Mobile: 03207789544

PAF BASE RISALPUR (LOG) — 091-9503867

Local Repair of FE Loader, Required Work: (a) 02 Injector Assy (New Required) (b) 04 Injector Assy (Kit to be replaced), (c) Fuel Injection Pump (Plungers to be replaced, Phasing & Calibration required), Local Repair of Chain Dozor, Required Work: (a) ECU Hardware Repair (b) Replacement of components (c) Re- Installation of Software (d) ECU Installation (e) Harness and all Sensor test required, PPC Machine H/Duty and L/Duty (All Model), Transmission Oil (Synthetic & Non Synthetic), Acid Batteries 12V(35AH 40AH, 50AH, S5AH, 60AH 70AH 90AH, 135AH, 140AH, 170AH) with incomplete specification (As Req), For Specifications/ scope of work any other query please contact No. Ext—3885, Mobile No 0324-3189565

NO 7 DENTAL UNIT PAF BASE RAFIQUI — 047-5501621

PAF Base Rafiqui (No 7 Dental Unit), Rafiqui requires Quotations regarding bulk purchase of Dental Materials, List of Dental Materials can be collected from No 7 Dental Unit, PAF, Contact No - 047-5501621-5421

PAF BASE KALLAR KAHAR (LOG) — 0543-588308

Bullet Proof Jacket, Body Amour Plate Carrier, Pistol Pouch, Folding Chairs, Embedded Plate, Details / specifications / samples may please be checked from Log Sqn, PAF Base Kallar Kahar, Telephone No. 0543-588308-2281 Official Cell No. 0323-9419713, Technical & Commercial quotation must be submitted separately (Single stage two envelope) (As Req), Items will be accepted after inspection

NO 118 SED, PAF BASE MALIR (LOG) — 021-99537239

Part No: 118NSN-4634797-67-113024-1106 Noun: MOTION SIMULATOR, Part No: 118NSN-4634797-67- 113024-1107 Noun: 15 DEC SEAT ADAPTER (Ea As Req), For detail specifications, can be obtained from No 118 SED, PAF Base Malir on Telephone No 021-99537239 & Mobile No. 0323-9436563

NO 110 ALD PAF BASE LAHORE — 042-99507221

Cloth Camouflage G/Jungle (MR), Bag Helmet Flying (2022) (Ea), Stitching of Commando Uniform (PR), Note: Use 02 envelops (Commercial & Technical) for each article (b) 03 Samples for each article are required along with Technical Quote (c) Quotations without sample will be rejected (d) Quantities will be as required, Further details /complete specifications, ay be collected from No 110 ALD, PAF (Tele No 0323-9428714, 042-99507221-7205)

PAF BASE BHOLARI (LOG) — 022- 9501500

Oil Engine API:CK-4 SAE 15W-40, RTV 3145 Grey preferably 310 ML, Can Gasoline S/S (J/Can) 20.5 Ltr, Add: (Officer In charge. Logistics Squadron) PAF Base Bholari Hyderabad (Send Via Leopard Courier Service or Pakistan Post Only Preferably 'Single Stage Two Envelope' procedure vide PPRA Rule 36(b), Note: For details / specifications please contact on Telephone No. 022-9501500 Ext 2287 and Cell No 03239431714. (All parts Nos as required or equivalent) (As Required)

PAF BASE NUR KHAN (MED) — 051-9523961

Requirement of Medicines in Bulk Qty for Medical Squadron PAF Base Nur Khan, Quotation is required for Maximum Rebate on retail price. Further list of Medicine and details are available on contact Telephone No: 051-9523961 / Mobile No. 0325-4185094

PAF BASE MASROOR (LOG) — 021-99522287

Camera (DS-2TD4167 - 50/WY Thermal Bi spectrum Speed Dome), Camera (DS-2TD6267 - 100C4L/WYCKV Thermal & Bi spectrum), Tyre 700-15 6 Ply (EA As Req), For further details contact Telephone No. 021-99522287 - 99522275, Mobile No.: 0321-9835250

PAF HOSPITAL ISLAMABAD (MED) — 051-9503888

Re-Tender for provision of medicines N/A PVMS medicines 3rd Qtr 2024-25 is invited having valid drugs selling license, NTN Professional Tax certificate and GST Registration certificate, For further details, please contact PAF Hospital, Islamabad on Telephone No 051-9503888, Cell No 0343-5687103. (List of items may be collected from Medical Store PAF Hospital, Islamabad

PAF BASE SHAHBAZ (LOG) — 0722-670454

Sensor Cell (Oxygen) (or Ventilator, Dog Snifter (Arms / Explosive Search Dogs), Compressed Air System L/R (Motor Repair), Technical & commercial quotations must be packed separately and sealed properly. Specs may be obtained from Log Sqn at 0323-9439712; 0309-8925565 & Office No 0722-670454 Ext 2257

PAF BASE MUSHAF SARGODHA (LOG) — 0543-588308

Local Purchasec of Gas Liquid Oxygen, Body Worn Camera, Local Purchase of Convex Probe (Logic F8 Expert), Blood Gas Analyzer, Local Repair of Color Doppler Ultrasound Machine (SOW : Ultrasound machine is Not working and showing system Error), Local Purchase of Impress LI-ION 3000 MAH CE Battery, Local Purchase of Tlaash Pe R710 App Server (Think System St250 V3-3 Year Warranty With All Acessories), Local Purchase of 2 Way Power Divider (8-18G) {2 Way Sms Power Divider Form 8 Ghz To 18 Ghz Rated At 10 Watts}, Local Purchase of Torque Wrench (9/16 Bit) { Fixed Click Type Torque Wrench With 9/16 Bit For Tnc Connectors Pre-Set To 13 In Lbs}, Local Purchase of 30db Fix Atenuator Sma (M-Sma) { 30 Db Fixed Attenuator, Sma Male to Sma Female Black Anodized Alominium Heatsink Body Rated To 5 Watts Up to 18 Ghz}, Local Purchase of T/Wrench Running Roebuck, Local Purchase of 10 Ton Hydraulic Press Machine HP-10 (Model:HP_20s Capacity 200KN, Pressure 50MPA, Tale Size 200X300mm, Travel 200+450mm, 5000X350X 1300mm) Local Purchase of Oven Laboratory (Kelvinator Electric Range, Model:MFF3016RW), Local Purchase of 12" Coaxial Multipurpose Surf, 6.5" Coaxial Multisurface Moun, Local Repair of Hemodialysis Machine Gambro (Power I/O Board U/S), Local Repair/ Upgradation of Bullet Proof Posts (B-6 Level){Anti Corrision, Camouflage Colour, power Supply Box New,Wiring /Ducting New, Emergency Siren New, Two Way Communication New, Revolving Chair New, Exaust Fan New, LED 24 Inches 02 New, Rack 05 Feet 18 Inch New, Led Light New 15 Watt 1 by 1Feet New, LED Light Outside qty 2 120Watt New, Locks Repairing, Air Conditioner Reversible, Camera Duel Lenz Hikvision Qty 2 New, 8 Channel NVR New, IP Camera 4 Mega Pixals Full Colour Qty 4 New, Soft Barrier Lope Detection New, Road Humb 20 Feet Qty 2 New, Bracket Fan Small New, Safety and Earthing, Reflecting Pole For Cameras New, Traffic Lights Repair}, Local Purchase of Aviation Standard Carpeting, Cover Back Rest, Cover Seat, Cushion Back Rest, Cushion Seat, Seat Pilot (Note: All Material Must Be Aviation Standard CoC & Burn test report in the name of Company as per TASA EASA, CS/FAR 25.853 (A), Appendix "F", PTI and CAA united kingdom standard would be provided with material) (EA As Req), Detailed Specifications can be obtained from Log Sqn Mushaf (Sargodha) on telephone 048-555-2278

PAF BASE MINHAS (MED) — 051-9533901

Sealed tenders are invited for bulk purchase of medicines on institutional rates (Brand name) to Medical Squadron PAF Base, Minhas, List of medicines may be collected from Medical Store of Medical Squadron PAF Base, Minhas in working hours (0800 hours to 1430 hours), Cell No: - 0334-3569414

PAF HOSPITAL ISLAMABAD (LOG) — 051-9505818

Local Purchase of items: Expiratory Valve (Ventilator), Humidifier Chamber, Expiratory Cassette for Vent, Blanket (Single Ply Single Bed), SAECG Machine (Single Average ECG), Oxygen sensor, Fiber optic Cable (Laproscope), Local Repair of items: Orthoscope Tower, MRI System, Only separately Quotes Technical / Financial acceptable. Detail of Items / Specification / Scope of work may be obtained from Log Flt PAF Hospital Islamabad during working hours. For queries Tel No 051-9505818 may be contacted.

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Hand Set Phone T-Docke, Hand Cordless Mic EW-DX 835S, Collar Cordless Mic EW-D ME4, Server High End, KVM Switch (08 port), GD Diesel Dog/Sniffer Dog (As Req), Note:- Separate Quotation (Technical and Financial) for each line item is required), For details / specifications / scope of work please contact Log Sqn on Phone No: 0323-9408714, 051-9505556, Email: Lsaq05@Paf.gov.Pk

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8. Sales Tax as applicable must be mentioned separately.
9. Guarantee / Warranty term / period should also be mentioned.
10. The agreement will be governed by official secret act. 1923.

http://www.paf.gov.pk

Minister inspects ETEA's computer based recruitment test

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR:Provincial Minister for Higher Education, Meena Khan Afridi, visited the computer-based test (CBT) center established by the Educational Testing and Evaluation Agency (ETEA) to review arrangements for the recruitment tests conducted under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Food Security Support Project. The tests, held at the Institute of Management Sciences, Peshawar, represent ETEA's fourth computer-based examination, which employs advanced technology to ensure transparency, merit, and efficiency in the recruitment process.

On this occasion, the Executive Director of ETEA, Adil Saeed Safi, gave a comprehensive briefing to the Provincial Minister, highlighting the significance, methodology, and positive impacts of the computer-based testing system.

The Provincial Minister praised ETEA's innovative efforts, describing the CBT system as a landmark initiative for promoting transparency and merit in the province.

He noted that this advanced system not only eliminates cheating and other irregularities but also enables the prompt declaration of results. Unlike the traditional testing methods, where candidates often had to wait weeks or months for their results, the CBT system provides instant results immediately after the test.

Meena Khan Afridi emphasized that ETEA has set a benchmark for educational and professional testing, playing a pioneering role in the country. He further stated that the provincial government, under the vision of PTI founder Imran Khan and the leadership of Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ali Amin Khan Gandapur, is committed to upholding transparency and meritocracy. Afridi commended ETEA for aligning with this vision through its progressive and technology-driven initiatives.

The Provincial Minister expressed optimism that ETEA would continue introducing revolutionary reforms to further strengthen the examination and evaluation processes.

He also encouraged ETEA to serve as a model institution for the rest of the country.

Speaking at the event, the Executive Director Adil Saeed Safi highlighted that ETEA is the first testing agency in Pakistan to successfully implement computer-based examinations. This initiative, he stated, not only saves time and resources but also enhances the confidence of candidates and institutions in the examination process. Safi assured that ETEA remains committed to incorporating further technology-driven advancements to enhance efficiency and reliability.

Providing details on the recent test for the Food Security Support Project, Safi shared that a total of 412 candidates had registered for the CBT, out of which 273 appeared, while 139 remained absent. Of the candidates who appeared, 59 successfully passed the test. He noted that these statistics reflect the efficiency, transparency, and fairness of the CBT system, which has significantly boosted the trust of candidates and relevant organizations in the recruitment process.

It is worth mentioning that ETEA has recently conducted several successful computer-based tests, including assessments for 1,056 candidates for Police Department (police lower posts) and recruitment tests for various positions in the Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP). These milestones underscore ETEA's commitment to excellence in testing and evaluation.

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister Ali Amin Khan Gandapur talking to media representatives at CM House on Sunday.

Miranshah Exploration and Production Block

KPOGCL completes bidding process for sale of 49pc shares

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Oil and Gas Company Limited (KPOGCL), a provincial government company engaged in oil and gas exploration in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has successfully completed the bidding process for the sale of its 49 percent share in Miran Exploration and Production Block located in North Waziristan and Kurram districts. Meanwhile, following the decision of the 51st meeting of the Council of Common Interest CCI, KPOGCL launched the bidding phase in June 2024, inviting all eligible public sector exploration and production companies including OGDCL, MPCL, PPL and GHPL to submit their financial proposals.

Furthermore, in the bidding round held on September 13, 2024, the OGDCL-led consortium, in which GHPL, PPL and MPCL bid for the 51% share in KPOGCL during the exploration phase, bear 100% of the actual costs and all costs incurred after commercial discovery made an extraordinary offer, promising to forgive. In addition to this, the overwhelming response resulted in a tie in the first round of bidding. Consequently, the management of KPOGCL, under the direction of the Board of Directors (BOD), initiated a second round of bidding to break the tie, which was held on 9 December 2024. Concluded. A consortium led by OGDCL, OGDCL, PPL and GHPL won and the second phase of bidding successfully.

As a result, the successful completion of the bidding process is mainly due to the hard work of the Board of Directors including the Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Chief Secretary KP, Advisor Finance KP, Special Assistant to Chief Minister on Energy and Power and Secretary Energy and Power completed this milestone successfully. On this occasion, the Chief Executive of KPOGCL, Engr. Nasir Khan has reiterated his commitment that through this process, direct investment of Rs. 22 billion will be made in the province. This achievement will make the company more stable and a new era of sustainable development will begin in the province he added.

Khizar condemns statements of CM about 'attacking federal govt'

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Arbab Khizer Hayat, Additional Secretary Information of PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has strongly condemned the statements by the Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regarding attacking the federal government with weapons.

He advised Ali Amin Gandapur to be mindful and responsible in his statements, emphasizing that firing bullets at the state constitutes an act of rebellion.

Arbab Khizer Hayat stated that if Amin Gandapur attempts an attack on the federation this time, he will be sent directly to Adiala Jail.

He further remarked that the provincial government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) seems to be in its final days.

Many PTI MNAs and MPAs are reportedly distancing themselves from the party.He criticized the provincial government for its increasing notoriety due to financial corruption, adding that it is losing credibility day by day.

Arbab Khizer Hayat announced that a white paper exposing the provincial government's corruption will soon be published.

Civil Disobedience Movement

Public, traders, daily-wage workers reject PTI's call

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the business community, and daily wage earners have rejected Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) civil disobedience movement, stating that such initiatives are harmful to the country's economy and its citizens.

Daily wage workers, who earn their livelihood through hard work, have termed this movement a disruption to their work, saying it adversely impacts their daily lives and income. The daily wage workers emphasized that they toil from dawn to dusk to support their families, and movements like these negatively affect their livelihood.

The public remarked that PTI's civil disobedience campaign not only disrupts their work but also harms the national economy. The public and the business community highlighted that PTI's governance from 2013 to 2020 caused significant economic damage to the country. According to them, PTI's policies were not in the nation's interest, and its decisions severely hurt the economy.

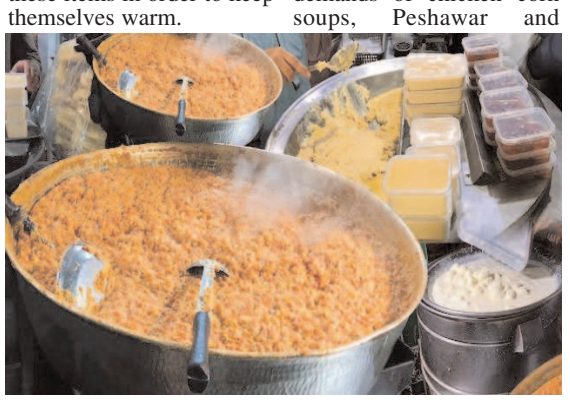
They stated that PTI's civil disobedience movement would create further difficulties and worsen the country's economic situation.

The people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, daily wage workers, and the business community urged the government to take immediate steps to counter this movement and improve the nation's economy. They stated that there is no justification for such movements in the interest of Pakistan, and the public will always remain united for the country's development.

Gajar halwa demands increase as cold wave grips Peshawar valley

PESHAWAR (APP): The demand of Gajar Halwa, Chappli Kabab and others traditional seasonal foods registered upward increase in provincial capital due to sudden fall of temperature especially in nights.

Great rush is being witnessed on the stalls and shops selling Gajar Halwa, Chappli Kabab, Sri Paye and Chicken Corn Soup alongwith Kashmiri tea in city and cantonment areas during nights in Peshawar where people along with families are seen to enjoy these items in order to keep themselves warm.



On Sunday, the shops at Namak Mandi at Peshawar City, Fawara Chowk at cantonment area and Qissa Khwani bazaars attracted a large number of foodies after the cold wave has griped Peshawar valley.

The foodies have complained about overcharging by the shopkeepers who decorated their shops with buntings to attract customers.

Vendors' shops were also setup in all main squares and bazaars keeping in view of high demands of chicken corn soups, Peshawar and Kashmiris tea, boil eggs and Gajar Halwa by the consumers.

"Chicken Corn Soup is high in demand in Peshawar. Last night, I had prepared two drums of corn soup and it all sells like hot cakes," said Fayaz Khan, a vendor at Fowara Chowk food street told APP.

The peshwarties are taking keen interest in soups, Chappli Kabab and Gajar halwa these days and some times they refused parcel orders for homes.

Khan cited the reason of high increase of consumers was due to improvement in security and law and order situation in Peshawar.

Even the influential families with kids are waiting for their turns in cars at Fawara Chowk to enjoy Chappli Kabab and chicken Halwa along a bowl of chicken corn soup at Peshawar.

"I came from Nowshera to enjoy Gajar Halwa and Peshawari green tea that is famous all over the country," said Faraz Khan, a labourer at Qisa Khwani bazaar here.

Taking a sip of Chicken corn soup at the stall, he said that inspite of the fact that there was so much dust around Peshawar, he could not resist the temptation.

He said the arrival of a large number of domestic and foreign tourists in Pakistan this year showed that peace was fully returned to the country and business activities jacked up.

Faraz Khan said one could not deny that there were host of benefits of taking chicken soup, but extreme care should be taken to ensure its hygienic serving.

"Only those should be allowed to set up stalls who assured the authorities to maintain hygienic standards and maintain quality."

They said prices of soups and Gajar halwa was comparatively high this year against last year that needed to be checked by the district administration.

PESHAWAR: A lady looking at different decorating items from a shop for the upcoming Christmas celebrations at St John's Church. — INP photo

Separation and sacrifice: The pain of December 16 in Pakistan

Muhammad Mohsin Iqbal

DECEMBER 16 marks one of the most solemn days in Pakistan's history, a day forever etched in the collective memory of the nation. It stands as a grim reminder of two harrowing tragedies-both different in nature yet equally devastating. On December 16, 1971, Pakistan faced the painful separation of East Pakistan, now Bangladesh, and on the same date in 2014, the nation was shaken to its core by the heinous attack on the Army Public School (APS) in Peshawar, which claimed the lives of 149 people, including 132 children. These events, separated by decades, continue to haunt Pakistanis, demanding reflection, accountability, and lessons for the future.

The fall of Dhaka in 1971 was not a sudden event; it was the result of political mismanagement, lack of inclusivity, and the inability to bridge growing regional and ethnic divides.

The seeds of discontent were sown over years of neglect and mistrust, culminating in a brutal conflict fueled by external interference. While the military surrender at Dhaka remains a wound which may never be healed. The real tragedy lies in the disintegration of unity and the loss of what could have been a shared future. This event underscores the importance of equitable governance, justice, and respect for diversity.

The Qur'an and Hadith emphasize the importance of self-reflection, repentance, and learning from one's mistakes as a means of personal and spiritual growth.

The Qur'an encourages believers to seek forgiveness for their errors and amend their behavior, as seen in verses like, "And those who, when they commit an indecency or wrong themselves, remember Allah and seek forgiveness for their sins..." (Surah Al-Imran, 3:135). The Hadith further underscores this principle, with the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) teaching that all humans err, but the best are those who repent and strive for improvement (Sunan Ibn Majah, 4251). Islam views mistakes as opportunities to develop humility, gain wisdom, and strengthen one's faith through sincere effort to avoid repeating them. This perspective fosters resilience and personal accountability, aligning human actions with divine guidance.

Yet, even decades later, there are aspects of this chapter that remain shrouded in secrecy. Understanding and acknowledging the full truth behind the events of 1971 could help Pakistan learn from its mistakes and build a more inclusive and resilient nation.

Fast forward to December 16, 2014, and Pakistan faced another heart-wrenching moment. The APS massacre exposed the barbarity of terrorism in its most horrifying form. Innocent children, the future of the nation, were targeted in an act of pure evil that shocked the world. This attack was not merely an assault on individuals; it was an attack on the very fabric of society.

The massacre ignited a national resolve to eradicate terrorism, leading to the implementation of the National Action Plan (NAP) and a significant military offensive. However, as the years pass, questions linger about the sustained implementation of these measures and the commitment to preventing such tragedies in the future.

In both of these tragedies, the enemies were internal or external, but they left no stone unturned to harm this country and its people.

The separation of East Pakistan was fueled by both internal discord and external exploitation, while the APS attack demonstrated the cruelty of those who seek to destabilize Pakistan by targeting its most vulnerable. These incidents highlight the need for constant vigilance, unity, and proactive measures to protect the country from such adversaries.

Both incidents brought immeasurable grief and highlighted the heavy price of division, extremism, and unresolved conflicts.

Yet, they also posed a vital question: have we truly learned from these tragedies? The separation of East Pakistan was a stark reminder of the importance of unity, justice, and political prudence.

The APS attack emphasized the need for a zero-tolerance approach to extremism and a commitment to safeguarding the lives of the most vulnerable members of society. While efforts have been made, such as counter-terrorism measures and initiatives for regional cooperation, there remains much to be done in addressing the root causes that lead to such catastrophes.

Another shared aspect of these tragedies is the lack of full transparency. While the Hamoodur Rehman Commission Report attempted to shed light on the events of 1971, much of it remained classified for years, leaving gaps in public understanding. Similarly, despite numerous investigations, the complete truth behind the APS attack, particularly in terms of lapses in security and intelligence, remains elusive.

In both cases, the absence of full disclosure has hindered the nation's ability to move forward with clarity and purpose.

The lessons from December 16 are manifold. First and foremost, there is an urgent need for introspection. Whether it is ensuring that all regions of Pakistan feel equally represented or fostering an environment where extremism finds no foothold, the path forward demands unity and vigilance. Political stability, economic inclusivity, and a commitment to the rule of law are crucial. For decades, the mistakes of the past have been repeated due to a lack of accountability and long-term planning. Both the events of 1971 and 2014 demonstrate the devastating consequences of ignoring warning signs and failing to act decisively.

Moreover, education plays a pivotal role. The APS tragedy was an attack on education itself, a stark reminder of the transformative power of knowledge and the threat it poses to those who seek to perpetuate ignorance and extremism.

A renewed focus on education, one that emphasizes critical thinking, tolerance, and national cohesion, is vital in ensuring that future generations grow up with the tools to confront challenges with resilience and unity.

Another critical lesson lies in the need for an unwavering commitment to justice. Whether it is addressing the grievances that lead to political or regional unrest or ensuring swift and effective responses to acts of terror, justice must remain a cornerstone of the nation's policies. This includes holding those responsible for past mistakes accountable and taking steps to prevent their recurrence.

As Pakistan reflects on December 16, it must do so with a sense of purpose. This day is not only a reminder of what was lost but also a call to action for what must be achieved.

The pain and grief associated with this date should serve as a catalyst for change-a change that ensures unity, security, and prosperity for all citizens. Only by learning from the past and committing to a brighter future can Pakistan truly honor the memories of those lost on this tragic date.

In brief

Seven held with drugs

SARGODHA (INP): Police arrested seven accused on Sunday and recovered narcotics and weapons from them. Police said that during an ongoing drive against drug peddlers and criminals, teams of different police stations conducted raids and arrested criminals and recovered 790 gram hashish,100 liter liquor, two pistols and a gun. The accused were identified as Adeel, Kashif, Numan, Saqib, Kausar, Afzal and Hassan. Cases have been registered against them.

Registration for 'Dhee Rani'

LODHRAN (INP): The Punjab government planned to arrange about 3000 mass weddings under the 'Dhee Rani' programme for underprivileged couples across the province. According to Social Welfare sources, the provincial government would set a quota for districts by keeping in view the received applications. Almost 166 mass weddings were scheduled to be held in Multan division for which registration is underway. About 136 applications have been received in Lodhran district while the verification process is near completion. Punjab Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz has launched 'Dhee Rani' programme to arrange the wedding ceremonies of underprivileged couples and ease the burden on their parents. Applications can be submitted through the online portal cmp.punjab.gov.pk or helpline 1312. Teams will also visit home.

Anti-polio drive in DI Khan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Deputy Commissioner Sarah Rehman has said that an anti-polio campaign will commence from Monday(Dec 16) across the district. During the campaign, all children under the age of five will be administered polio drops, she said. In this regard, she urged the public, especially parents to cooperate fully with polio teams to ensure the complete eradication of the crippling disease. " Eliminating polio is not just the government's responsibility but a collective duty of every citizen to fully cooperate with polio teams and facilitate their access to every household," she observed. The deputy commissioner also informed that eight new polio cases have recently been reported in the district which is an alarming situation. She further stated that the government was taking all necessary measures to make the anti-polio campaign a success, but its success depends heavily on public support.

Boycott of anti-polio drive

QUETTA (PPI): The Grand Health Alliance Balochistan (GHAB) on Sunday announced its decision to boycott the anti-polio drive scheduled to begin on December 16, 2024, across Balochistan. This announcement was made in a statement issued by Dr Bahar Shah, the Chairman of GHAB. The decision aligns with GHAB's ongoing protest activities and was finalized by its committee. The alliance urged all office bearers and members to actively participate in ensuring the success of the protest movement. The GHAB is a collective platform representing healthcare workers, including doctors, nurses, paramedics, and other health sector employees in Balochistan. Established to address challenges faced by the healthcare system in the province, GHAB advocates for the rights, welfare, and professional needs of its members.

Law minister inspect uplift work in Kohat

F.P. Report

KOHTA: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister on Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam Afridi Advocate has along-with the elders of the area and local party leadership visited Dhoda Sharif area in Kohat of his Constituency PK-90.

He on this occasion, besides inspecting other developmental works, also reviewed the pace of work on Dhoda Road.

He on the spot directed the authorities concerned to ensure timely completion of all developmental works without any compromise on its quality.

It may be recalled that the Dhoda Road was in dilapidated condition for the last 30 years. During his election campaign, the Law Minister had promised the elders of the area to build the said road, which he fulfilled today.

Speaking on this occasion, the Law Minister said that the provincial government of PTI is seriously working on rapid development of Kohat and Insha'Allah, wherever the work is urgently needed, he will do his best to do it on priority basis.

Aftab Alam said, unlike the past, decisions of public interest will now be made in the open court of the people instead of closed rooms and personal likes and dislikes.

He added that the developmental plan for his entire constituency will be determined keeping in view the needs of each area. He said that local committees have been activated to keep a check on the developmental projects and they have been asked that wherever any deficiency or corruption is found in the work, it should immediately be reported so that timely action can be taken.

Aftab Alam warned that the provincial government has zero tolerance for commission and corruption, whoever is found involved in it will be made a lesson for others.

KOHAT: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister on Law and Parliamentary Affairs Aftab Alam Afridi Advocate inspecting development work in Dhoda Sharif.

HYDERABAD: Women cutting sugarcane crop in Tando Allahyar.

Students of govt schools showcase skills

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Little students of government primary schools showcased their extra creative skills and talent during an annual competition concluded in Adenzai here on Saturday.

The School Leaders of the Adenzai subdivision organized the annual co-curricular competition to build community trust in government primary schools.

A total of 300 students of over 50 government primary schools from the Adenzai tehsil, showcased their academic, cultural, and creative talents in science projects, recitation of the Holy Quran, speeches, naat, national anthem and entrepreneurial skills and art exhibition.

Three semi finals were held at government primary school (GPS) Kotigram, GPS Dagai Osakai and GPS Ouch Sharqi to ensure fair judgement among the toppers.

The winners from the semifinals advanced to the grand finale held at Aghosh Center, an orphanage in Gulabad. The final competition attracted a large gathering of local community representatives, members of Parent-Teacher Committees (PTCs), teachers and students. The additional assistant commissioner Sardar Badshah, sub-divisional education officer Tariq Ahmad, ASDEOs, members from the National Commission for Human Development (NCHD) and School Leaders from across the district were also present. Position holder students and schools were awarded with trophies, shields and cash prizes. The district monitoring officer Tariq Jamal was chief guest for the final round who praised the efforts of the School Leaders to improve the education system.

"If School Leaders can organize such events using their own resources, it is a testament to their passion for education. My office will fully support similar initiatives to promote quality education", the DMO said. Additional Assistant Commissioner Adenzai, Sardar Badshah while addressing the gathering, said that he had never imagined this level of creativity and outstanding projects from students of government primary schools.

The official said that he had heard complaints about lack of basic facilities and low quality of education at public sector primary schools. The AAC lauded the efforts of the School Leaders, teachers and students for their devotion to ensure quality education.

A School Leader, Adil Nawaz told local journalists that the event reflected the power of instructional leadership and the collective efforts of School Leaders and teachers in the Adenzai Subdivision.

JUI-F CONFIDENCE: The Lower Dir chapter of the Jmaiat Ulema Islam Fazl on Saturday expressed its full confidence on the leadership of Maulana Fazl ur Rehman regarding his stand on Madaris Bill.

A meeting in this regard was held at Timergara with the JUI-F district emir Siraj ud Din in the chair. The JUI-F district general secretary Maulana Muhammad Huzaifa, former provincial minister Muzafar Said, former district chief Maulana Zahid Khan, Maulana Muhammad Nabi Shah and others spoke on the occasion. They said that obstacles were being created in seminaries' registration.

They said that the Madaris Registration bill despite the passage from the national assembly and senate was not being implemented under a conspiracy. The JUI-F leaders said that returning of the bill by the President of Pakistan with objections, was beyond understanding. They said the party workers were ready to march on Islamabad if they were called by the party chief on the matter.

EPA serves notices on 100 shopkeepers

MULTAN (APP): The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) launched a crackdown against banned single use plastic especially plastic shopping bags less than 75 microns and served notices on more than 100 shopkeepers across the district.

Assistant Director Environment Hameed Akhtar told APP here on Monday said that the amendments to the "Production and Consumption of Single Use Plastic Product Regulations 2023" have been notified.

The district plastic management committees have been formed at the district level and the deputy commissioner of the district concerned was the head of the committee.

The meeting of committee has been convened. He said that they had also held meetings with trade unions and plastic unions.

The mechanism was being developed for registration of producers, traders recyclers and collectors.

He said that the fine from Rs 5000 to Rs 50,000 would be imposed on violators after serving notices.

The premises where banned single use plastic was found could be sealed and materials confiscated.

He said that it was the part of EPA's broader initiative to promote sustainable practices and mitigate plastic pollution

Anti-polio campaign from today

F.P. Report

BUNER: Anti-polio campaign launched from today(Monday)during total 192193 under five year age children will be administered anti polio drops.

For the purpose to administering anti polio drops to target children,total 470 polio vaccination teams will perform door to door duty besides transit teams at entry points, main squares and roaming teams at crowded public places for five days.While separate teams will perform duty at fixed vaccination centers with in the health facilities too.

Total 187 area in charges will perform duty as supervisors the polio vaccination teams i.e door to door,transit point,roaming and fixed as well.Besides health facilities focal persons for anti polio campaign will be responsible for supervision of all teams and area in charges in their respective localities. Besides,10 district health monitors will monitor all of the working teams and area in charges as well.These information shared by focal person for district polio irradiation committee when contacted.He confirmed,in this regard,a high level meting had held under the chairman district polio eradication committee the deputy commissioner Kashif Qayum Khan.In the meeting, heads of working departments including security agencies and DPO participated.

He shared, preparations had finalized in the pre polio campaign meeting, as per standard criteria set by the provincial task force on polio eradication.

This anti polio campaign will continue for five days uninterrupted, decided in the meeting,said focal person.

During the campaign security will be on high alert across the district

Section 144 cr.p.c aleady enforced throughout the district,focal person confirmed.

The focal person added,for making the campaign more effective and to catch every target child,task assigned to ADCs, ACs, AACs, Tehsildars, Gurdawars, Patwaris, in-charges of hospitals and heads of all other departments, including TMOs,they will also actively monitoring the anti polio campaign.

When contacted ,PA to DPO on security arrangements,he confirmed that a comprehensive security plan had been formulated in a high level pre polio campaign meeting which had chaired by DPO Buner and decided to depute total 1200 police personnel who will be deployed for the security of polio teams during anti polio campaign while these

Security forces will be supervised by SDPOs and SHOs in their respective sub divisions and police stations besides Alert Force and QRF personnel with equiped vehicles will be deployed in Buner to keep a close eye on the security situation while DPO Buner will be in the field to assess the security during the anti polio campaign, he concluded.

Cases registered against 8 journalists

Prosecutor General takes notice

Hafiz Muhammad Aziz-ur-Rehman

HAFIZABAD: Prosecutor General Punjab Syed Farhad Ali Shah, taking notice of the case registered against 8 journalists of Hafizabad, summoned the investigation officer of the case, Malik Amjad, to his office, where he asked him to include the journalists in the investigation in the case registered against journalists in Kassoki Police Station and reprimanded the investigating officer for his lack of knowledge of the law.

On this occasion, the Prosecutor General directed to include the affected journalists in the investigation immediately. On this, all the affected journalists including Asad Javed, Hafiz Aziz-ur-Rehman, Ehsanullah Qadri, Sheikh Muhammad Javed, Syed Israr Shah, Shafaqat Watto and Shahbaz Gul, including Chairman District Press Club Amjad Parvez Chatha. Investigation officer Malik Amjad conducted an investigation on the spot and recorded their statements.

On this occasion, the Prosecutor General of Punjab, Syed Farhad Ali Shah, said that how can journalists be stopped from fulfilling their professional duties? The Prosecutor General directed the Police Investigating Officer to submit a report to exclude the journalists from the case till the next hearing.

It is worth mentioning that a few weeks ago, the Kassoki police assaulted PTI district leader and former MNA Mehdi Hasan Bhatti during a press conference at Buraj Dara. A case was registered against eight journalists under various provisions. Apart from the district bar against the said FIR, scholars and people belonging to different civil society also condemned this police brutality in strong words.

Meanwhile, Director General Population Welfare Department, Punjab, Madam Suman Ray urged the need of changing attitude and thinking to overcome increasing population.

She stated this while addressing a meeting of population officers, social mobilizers and other employes at Hafizabad. District Officer Population Muhammad Atif Ali, Tehsil Officer Saida Mushtaq also attended the meeting.

She said that government is taking solid steps to make the Population Programme successful and result-oriented.

She advised that people should be kept appropriate interval in birth of children but people were increasing birth of children without any planning and in view of their resources whereas unbridle increase in population would be caused social and economic problems in future.

She also said that interval between birth of children was necessary for the health of mother and children.

He directed the social mobilizers to create awareness among society regarding birth control in rural and far-flung areas to make measures taken by the government to overcome unbridle increase in population.

She further said that population welfare centres were working at district, tehsil, and Markaz level to provide guidance to couples about birth control and to maintain health of mother and child.

I am visiting all district to review performance of population welfare department under the vision and directions of Chief Minister's Coordinator for Population Saira Afzal Tarar, she added.

Meanwhile, World Health Organisation arranged a special two-days training session under Immunization Extension Programme for Children to improve service delivery of Charge Nurses and Lady Health Visitors at conference room of CEO Health Office Hafizabad.

Representative of WHO Dr. Ahmad Shafiq, CEO Health Dr. Zaheer Ahmad Khokhar, DHO and Preventive Services Dr, Faiq Ali Tarar, District Superintendent Vaccination Haji Zia-ul-Qamar, charge nurses and LHVs attended training programme.

Addressing the training session, speakers said that this training would be helpful for improving professional services and approach of health workers.

They said that completion of vaccination course of children to save children from different diseases.

Scholarships distributed among students

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Lakki Marwat deputy district education officer Shoukat Ali Khan distributed scholarships among the students of Government Higher Secondary School Tajazai on Sunday.

Diya Pakistan, a charitable organization, had provided the school administration with the scholarships worth Rs 352900 for distribution among poor, orphan and academically good students.

A ceremony held in this connection on the premises of the school was also attended by ADEO Dr Ihsanullah, assistant director IT Haji Khamdullah Jan, Principal Haji Khalid Wahab, teachers and parents of students.

Mr Shoukat Ali and the school's principal thanked the organization for providing scholarships for 128 students of the school.

They called upon other charitable organisations to come forward for educational sponsorship and financial assistance of the students of the backward district.

They said that the financial assistance by Dia Pakistan would prove helpful for students to meet their educational needs, besides reducing the burden of educational expenses on their parents.

HYDERABAD: Girls decorating Christmas tree at St. Thomas Church in connection with upcoming Christmas celebration.

DAMASCUS: Students line up at the Muhammad bin Al-Qasim Al-Thaqafi school as it reopens on December 15, 2024 in the Al-Maliki area of Damascus, Syria. The school reopened after a weeklong closure, as rebel forces in Syria retook the capital from longtime ruler Bashar al-Assad, who fled the country for Moscow.

Turkey to offer military training to Syria

ANKARA (Reuters): The new administration in Syria should be given a chance to govern following their constructive messages, and Turkey stands ready to provide military training if such help is requested, Turkish Defence Minister Yasar Guler said.

NATO member Turkey backed the Syrian rebels who toppled President Bashar al-Assad last weekend, ending a 13-year civil war. Turkey reopened its embassy in Damascus on Saturday, two days after its intelligence chief visited the Syrian capital.

"In their first statement, the new administration that toppled Assad announced that it would respect all government institutions, the United Nations and other international organisations," Guler told reporters in Ankara in comments authorised for publication on Sunday.

"We think that we need to see what the new administration will do and to give them a chance." When asked whether Turkey was considering military cooperation with the new Syrian government, Guler said Ankara already had military cooperation and training agreements with many countries.

"(Turkey) is ready to provide the necessary support if the new administration requests it," he added.

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The Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF), which controls some of Syria's largest oil fields, is the main ally in the U.S. coalition against Islamic State militants. It is spearheaded by the YPG, a group that Ankara sees as an extension of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), whose militant fighters have battled the Turkish state for 40 years.

"In the new period, the PKK/YPG terrorist organisation in Syria will be eliminated sooner or later," Guler said. "Members of the organisation coming from outside Syria will leave Syria. Those who are Syrian will lay down their weapons."

Guler said Turkey saw no sign of a resurgence of Islamic State in Syria, contrary to the U.S. view.

"Has anyone heard of any attacks by DAESH terrorists in Syria in the last three years? We don't see or hear anything about DAESH at the moment," he said, using the Arabic acronym for Islamic State.

Turkey has in the past told the U.S. that Ankara could deploy three commando brigades in Syria to fight Islamic State, and to run al-Hol, the detention camp for IS families, Guler said, adding that Washington had rejected both offers.

"Instead, they cooperated with the PKK/YPG terrorist organisation under the banner of fighting DAESH. But you can't fight one terrorist organisation with another terrorist organisation." Asked about the future involvement in Syria of Russia, a longstanding ally of Assad which last weekend granted him asylum, Guler said he saw no sign of a complete Russian withdrawal.

Cyclone slams into France killing at least 11

PARIS (Reuters): At least 11 people were killed after a cyclone slammed into Mayotte, the most intense storm to hit the French Indian Ocean archipelago north of Madagascar in nearly a century, French weather forecasters and authorities said on Sunday.

Cyclone Chido swept through Mayotte overnight, Meteo-France said, bringing winds of more than 200 kph (124 mph) and damaging makeshift housing, government buildings and a hospital. It was the strongest storm in more than 90 years to hit the islands, the forecaster said.

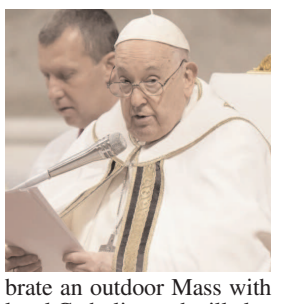
It was difficult to ascertain the precise death toll after the cyclone, which also raised concerns about access to food, water and sanitation, authorities said.

"For the toll, it's going to be complicated, because Mayotte is a Muslim land where the dead are buried within 24 hours," a French interior ministry official said.

Located nearly 8,000 km (4,970 miles) from Paris and a four-day trip by sea, Mayotte is significantly poorer than the rest of France and has grappled with gang violence and social unrest for decades. Tensions were stoked earlier this year by a water shortage.

Pope Francis, in Corsica, warns against religion that stokes divisions

AJACCIO (Reuters): Pope Francis urged Catholic priests on Sunday to guard against spiritual groups that stoke political divisions, speaking during a one-day visit to Corsica, the first by a pontiff to the French Mediterranean island.



At a conference on religion across the Mediterranean, the pontiff warned against varieties of spirituality that "seek self-aggrandisement by fuelling polemics, narrow-mindedness, divisions and exclusivist attitudes".

"The Church's pastors (are) called to be vigilant, to exercise discernment and to be constantly attentive to (these) popular forms of religiosity," the pope said. Francis, making his third and probably last foreign trip of 2024, did not name any specific religious groups.

Corsica, like much of France, has a long history of lay Catholic associations, known as confraternities. They usually focus on spiritual matters but sometimes play a role in local politics.

The pope will spend about nine hours in Ajaccio, Corsica's capital, on Sunday. After attending the conference, he will celebrate an outdoor Mass with local Catholics and will also meet French President Emmanuel Macron.

Visiting places that often do not draw international attention is part of Francis' policy of highlighting people and problems in what he calls the "peripheries" of the world. Over his 11-year papacy he has still not visited most of the capitals of Western Europe, including Paris.

Macron had invited Francis to attend the Dec. 7 reopening of Notre Dame Cathedral, five years after a devastating fire nearly destroyed the medieval building. The pope decided not to go, and the two will instead meet briefly at Ajaccio's airport on Sunday before Francis heads back to Rome.

TURNS 88 ON TUESDAY

As is now normal, Francis, who turns 88 on Tuesday, left his plane on arrival in Corsica via an elevator and used a wheelchair while greeting officials on the tarmac.

During a brief ride in an open-air popemobile from the airport, the pope waved at crowds on the street and appeared on good form, though he still has a small bruise on his chin, the result of what the Vatican described as a minor fall in his bedroom last week.

Corsica, famed for its steep, mountainous terrain and as the birthplace of Napoleon Bonaparte, is the fourth largest island in the Mediterranean. It is one of France's poorest regions, where about 20% of the population lives below the poverty line, according to government figures.

The Vatican estimates that about 81% of Corsica's population of 356,000 is Catholic. There are 83 priests on the island and some 30 Catholic nuns, it says.

Francis, originally from Argentina and the first pope from the Americas, has travelled widely around the Mediterranean since becoming pontiff in 2013, visiting Malta, the Greek island of Lesbos, and the Italian island of Lampedusa.

Bangladesh recommends feared police unit shut

DHAKA (AFP): A Bangladesh commission probing abuses during the rule of toppled leader Sheikh Hasina has recommended a much-feared armed police unit be disbanded, a senior inquiry member said Sunday.

Hasina, 77, fled by helicopter to neighboring India on August 5 as a student-led uprising stormed the prime minister's palace in Dhaka. Her government was accused of widespread human rights abuses, including the extrajudicial killing of hundreds of political opponents and the unlawful abduction and disappearance of hundreds more.

The Commission of Inquiry into Enforced Disappearances, set up by the caretaker government, said it found initial evidence that Hasina and other ex-senior officials were involved in the enforced disappearances alleged to have been carried out by the Rapid Action Battalion (RAB).

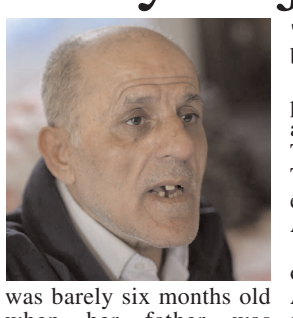
The RAB paramilitary police force was sanctioned by the United States in 2021, alongside seven of its senior officers, in response to reports of its culpability in some of the worst rights abuses committed during Hasina's 15-year-long rule.

"RAB has never abided by the law and was seldom held accountable for its atrocities, which include enforced disappearances, extrajudicial killings, and abductions," Nur Khan Liton, a member of the commission, told AFP.

The commission handed its preliminary report to the leader of the interim government Muhammad Yunus late Saturday. The Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), one of the country's largest political parties, also called for RAB's abolition.

'Endless torture': Turkish inmate recalls hell of Syria jails

MAGARACIK (AFP): Finally home in Turkey, Mehmet Erturk cannot eat the bread his wife has made him. After 20 years jailed in Syria, half his teeth are missing and the other half are threatening to fall out.



"It was torture after torture," he told AFP, miming the truncheon blows to the mouth the guards would give him at a notorious Damascus prison known as the Palestine Branch, where he spent part of his time incarcerated.

Arrested in 2004 for smuggling, Erturk finally made it back to his home to Magaracik on Monday evening, a village perched at the top of a winding road dotted with olive trees some 10 minutes from the Syrian border.

"My family thought I was dead," said the 53-year-old, whose face and manner of walking make him look 20 years older.

On the night of his release, he heard gunshots and began to pray.

"We didn't know what was happening outside. I thought I was finished," he said.

Then he heard loud hammer blows and within minutes the prison gates were flung open by the rebels who ousted Syrian strongman Bashar al-Assad.

'Like being in a coffin'

"We hadn't seen him for 11 years. We had no hope," admitted his wife Hatice, sitting cross-legged outside their home preparing bread with their youngest daughter, who was barely six months old when her father was arrested.

After he was sentenced to 15 years, the prison authorities left this father-of-four to languish in an underground dungeon, at the mercy of brutal guards.

"Our bones would pop out of the socket when they hit our wrists with hammers," he said.

"They also poured boiling water down the neck of one prisoner. The flesh from his neck just slid all the way down" to his hips, he said.

Pulling up his right trouser leg, he shows his right ankle, the skin darkened by the chain he wore.

"During the day, it was strictly forbidden to talk... there were cockroaches in the food. It was damp, it stank like a toilet," he said, recalling days "without clothes or water or food".

"It was like being in a coffin."

And there was huge overcrowding.

'Threw the dead into skips'

"They put 115, 120 people in a cell for 20 people. Many people died of starvation," he said.

And the guards just "threw the dead into rubbish skips".

Erturk said he paid the price for the hatred Syria's authorities bore for Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who early in the war urged Assad to leave.

"We Turks suffered a lot of torture for that," he told AFP, saying he was refused medication on grounds of his nationality.

He sank so low he even hoped they would hang him.

"They were taking us to a new prison block and I saw a rope hanging from the ceiling and I said: 'Thank God, I'm saved'," he said.

As he recounted the horrors, he often broke off to thank "our dear president Erdogan" for him being back, alive with his family and not one of the countless victims of Syria's brutal prison system.

Those could number more than 105,000 people since the war began in 2011, according to the London-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights (OSDH). One of his sisters passes him a handful of old photos.

In one, he is pictured with a lifelong friend called Faruk Karga, who ended up in the same prison with him shortly after the picture was taken.

But Karga never came home. "He died of starvation in prison in around 2018," said Erturk. "He weighed about 40 kilos."

Thousands protest in Israel for Gaza hostage deal

JERUSALEM (AFP): Thousands of Israelis demonstrated Saturday for a deal to release the remaining hostages still held in Gaza after more than 14 months of war against Hamas in the Palestinian territory.

"We all can agree that we have failed until now and that we can reach an agreement now," Lior Ashkenazi, a prominent Israeli actor, told a crowd gathered in the commercial hub of Tel Aviv.

Itzik Horn, whose sons Eitan and Iair are still being held captive in Gaza, said: "End the war, the time has arrived for action and the time has arrived to bring everyone home."

There has been guarded optimism in recent days that a ceasefire and hostage release deal for Gaza might finally be within reach after months of abortive mediation efforts.

Palestinian militants abducted 251 hostages during Hamas's October 2023 attack, 96 of whom remain in Gaza, including 34 the Israeli military says are dead.

Qatar, a key mediator in the negotiations, said last week there was new "momentum" for talks.

US Security of State Antony Blinken said during a visit to Jordan on Saturday: "This is the moment to finally conclude that agreement."

In Egypt, President Abdel Fattah El-Sisi met on Saturday with US National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan and Middle East envoy Brett McGurk.

"The meeting addressed efforts to reach an agreement for a ceasefire and prisoner exchange in Gaza," El-Sisi's office said.

The war in Gaza was sparked by Hamas's attack last year that resulted in the deaths of 1,208 people, mostly civilians, according to an AFP tally of Israeli official figures.

Israel's retaliatory offensive has killed at least 44,930 people in Gaza, a majority of them civilians, according to figures from the Hamas-run territory's health ministry that the United Nations considers reliable.

'Bali Nine' drug ring prisoners fly home

SYDNEY (AFP): The five remaining members of the Australian "Bali Nine" drug ring flew home Sunday after 19 years in jail in Indonesia, ending a saga that had frayed relations between the two countries.

Indonesian police arrested the nine Australians in 2005, convicting them of attempting to smuggle more than eight kilograms (18 pounds) of heroin off the holiday island of Bali.

The case drew global attention to Indonesia's unforgiving drug laws, with two of the gang executed by firing squad, while the others served hefty prison sentences.

"The Australian Government can confirm that Australian citizens, Matthew Norman, Scott Rush, Martin Stephens, Si Yi Chen, and Michael Czugaj have returned to Australia," Canberra said in a statement.

"The men will have the opportunity to continue their personal rehabilitation and reintegration in Australia."

Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the men returned in the afternoon, and he had thanked Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto for his "compassion".

"Australia shares Indonesia's concern about the serious problem illicit drugs represents," Albanese said.

"The government will continue to cooperate with Indonesia to counter narcotics trafficking and transnational crime," he told reporters.

"These Australians spent more than 19 years in prison in Indonesia. It was time for them to come home."

The Australian government did not give further details on the agreement with Jakarta.

Firing squad

An Indonesian minister told AFP the five men had left the country as prisoners but "all the responsibilities for them" had now passed to Australia.

The men were accompanied on their flight home by three officials from the Australian embassy, another Indonesian official said.

They were flown from Bali to the northern Australian city of Darwin, landing around 2:42 pm (0512 GMT), Indonesia's coordinating law, human rights, immigration and corrections ministry said.

Negotiations over the repatriation of the men reportedly picked up after Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto met Albanese on the sidelines of the APEC summit in Peru last month.

The Australian government said it had consistently advocated for them and provided consular support to them and their families during their incarceration.

It asked the media to respect their privacy.

Australia's national broadcaster ABC said the men were now free, and would not have to serve further prison time at home.

Heroin-lined suitcase

The men had been given temporary accommodation and had made voluntary undertakings to continue their rehabilitation, it said.

It is not uncommon for foreigners to be arrested for drug offences in Bali, which attracts millions of visitors to its palm-fringed beaches every year.

Macron has a new PM but the same old problems

PARIS (Reuters): When veteran centrist Francois Bayrou, France's new prime minister, was education minister in the 1990s, his plan to increase subsidies for private schools led to nationwide protests. He quickly caved in and would stay in the post for four more years.

Three decades later he will face a different force in the shape of a fractured and fractious parliament where one of his earliest tasks — as President Emmanuel Macron's fourth prime minister of the year — will be to pass a budget for 2025.

First he must name a government which, like that of his predecessor Michel Barnier, will have minority support in parliament and be vulnerable to attack from far-right and left-wing opponents.

The ouster of Barnier and his cabinet — the first time France's parliament had voted to remove a government since 1962 — seemed to stun even those behind the move. For now, there is cross-party support for emergency legislation to ensure government funding does not dry up — but then the hard work on a budget for next year will begin.

"The difficulties remain the same as under Michel Barnier," Arnaud Benedetti, a professor at the Sorbonne university, told Reuters. "At least, a motion of no-confidence doesn't seem likely in the very short-term."

A Macron aide said Bayrou was the "most consensual candidate able to bring people together." Socialists said he represented more of the same.

A career politician, Bayrou, 73, was the torch-bearer of centrism until Macron reshaped the political landscape in 2017, dynamiting the traditional mainstream parties in a campaign Bayrou rallied behind.

Bayrou has in the past talked tough on the risks posed by France's rising debt pile.

He did so again on Friday, saying the country's debt was a "moral problem" as much as a financial one. "I hear your warning on the seriousness of the situation and I agree," he told Barnier.

But he has placed a high value on keeping the peace, whether with the unions, lawmakers or the myriad of powerful vested interests in France.

Keeping the peace in a National Assembly dominated by three warring factions will be nigh-on impossible, however.

Lawmakers' pushback over the 2025 budget bill led to Barnier's downfall and left-wing leaders say they may try to topple Bayrou should he also use special constitutional powers to ram through the budget without a vote in parliament.

"Bringing onboard demands from opposition parties may be fiscally costly and the degree of fiscal consolidation may be limited next year as a result," said JP Morgan's Raphael Brun-Aguerre in a note.

Far-rights budget red lines endure

Through the week Macron held talks with party chiefs spanning the center-right Republicans to the Communists.

He appealed to all 'Republican forces' to unite but opted to resist Socialist Party calls to appoint a premier from within their ranks, unwilling to risk unwinding reforms that liberalized the euro zone's second-largest economy and placed the pension system on a more financially sound footing.

Even so, the president's 2023 pension reform will remain in his opponents' crosshairs.

"Our red lines remain," Jordan Bardella, leader of the far-right National Rally told reporters shortly after Bayrou was named. Those red lines include indexing pensions to inflation throughout 2025.

One opinion poll this week showed that 35 percent-38 percent of voters intended to support Bardella's boss, Marine Le Pen, in the next presidential election due in 2027 — a level not seen before for the far-right leader and putting her in the lead.

Furthermore, even if Bayrou's political opponents do not get in the way, the challenges for his future government will be immense. It will need to reduce the budget deficit from a projected 6.1 percent for 2024 whilst keeping protest-prone trade unions at bay, increasing military spending for Ukraine and finding ways to support an ailing industrial sector.

Barnier had promised to bring the deficit down with tax rises for the wealthy and for big companies, as well as a curbs on the planned rise in pension payments. But these measures fell by the wayside when his government was toppled.

Former finance minister Bruno Le Maire, who has been grilled by lawmakers investigating his role in France's failure to curb its deficit, gave a scathing indictment of parliament.

"This assembly taxes, spends, censors," he said. "It has long lost any sense of economic and budget realities."

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Turkey mediates deal between Somalia and Ethiopia

Somalia President Hassan Sheikh Mohamud and Ethiopian Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed have agreed to get into technical talks over landlocked Ethiopia getting a port facility in Somalia, which could be operated jointly by the two countries.

The talks between the two leaders was hosted by Turkey President Recep Tayyip Erdogan. There was a joint statement declaring the future project that Somalia and Ethiopia had agreed on. Erdogan said that the statement was future-oriented and not about the past.

Somalia and Ethiopia were at loggerheads when Ethiopia wanted to lease a port in Somaliland, the breakaway region of Somalia. Somaliland has been functioning on its own since 1991, but Somalia has not accepted its separate status. Ethiopia gaining a port there through an international agreement would have conferred legitimacy to Somaliland.

Somalia did not like the prospect, and it had threatened to expel Ethiopian troops stationed in Somalia to fight militants. Somalia was planning to move closer to Egypt, which was not on good terms with Ethiopia because of the latter's plan to build a dam over the Nile near the source.

Egypt and others fear that the dam would affect the flow of water at the lower end, and it would affect the Aswan Dam built over the Nile in Egypt. Ethiopia has been assuring that this would not happen. The Somalia-Egypt get-together would have polarised the region, and increased the tensions. Turkey did not want to lose its extended sphere of influence in Somalia.

Turkey has been playing the role of the mediator in the region of Horn of Africa and it has been offering technical and economic assistance to Somalia. Turkey is also interested in access to Somalia's ports as it is an important international maritime route.

For more than 20 years, the sea off the coast of Somalia has been dominated by pirates, disrupting movement of ships and merchandise. The waters have been monitored by the navies of the United States and also India for some time now. There have been instances of ships being seized and ransom demanded, but the frequency of disruptions has gone down.

This only goes to show that internal instability in the countries of the region and neighbourhood rivalries encourage outlaws to take control. The Turkey-mediated agreement between Somalia and Ethiopia will send out a clear signal that sovereign governments in the region are in control, and there is no scope for disruptive activities of the pirates.

The importance of maritime routes does not get the attention it deserves. Most of the merchandise movements between countries and continents are on the sea-routes, and the Indian Ocean maritime routes from South China Sea to that of Horn of Africa at the far western end of the Indian Ocean are crucial. So any agreement at the ports of call on this long route is a welcome development. The cooperation between states becomes an important issue.

The agreement that has been reached between Somalia and Ethiopia could be a harbinger of better neighbourly relations in a crucial region. And this should indeed be the model for other regions as well. National rivalries could spoil the prospects of wellbeing of all the countries. Europeans had learnt it after two drastic world wars and the death of millions, and they set up the ambitious European Union (EU).

The EU is not functioning as smoothly as it was expected but it does prevent wars over economic issues. In Africa, it is the inter-state rivalries that have become an obstacle to economic development, and even political stability. The Ethiopia-Somalia agreement could serve as a good example of cooperation.

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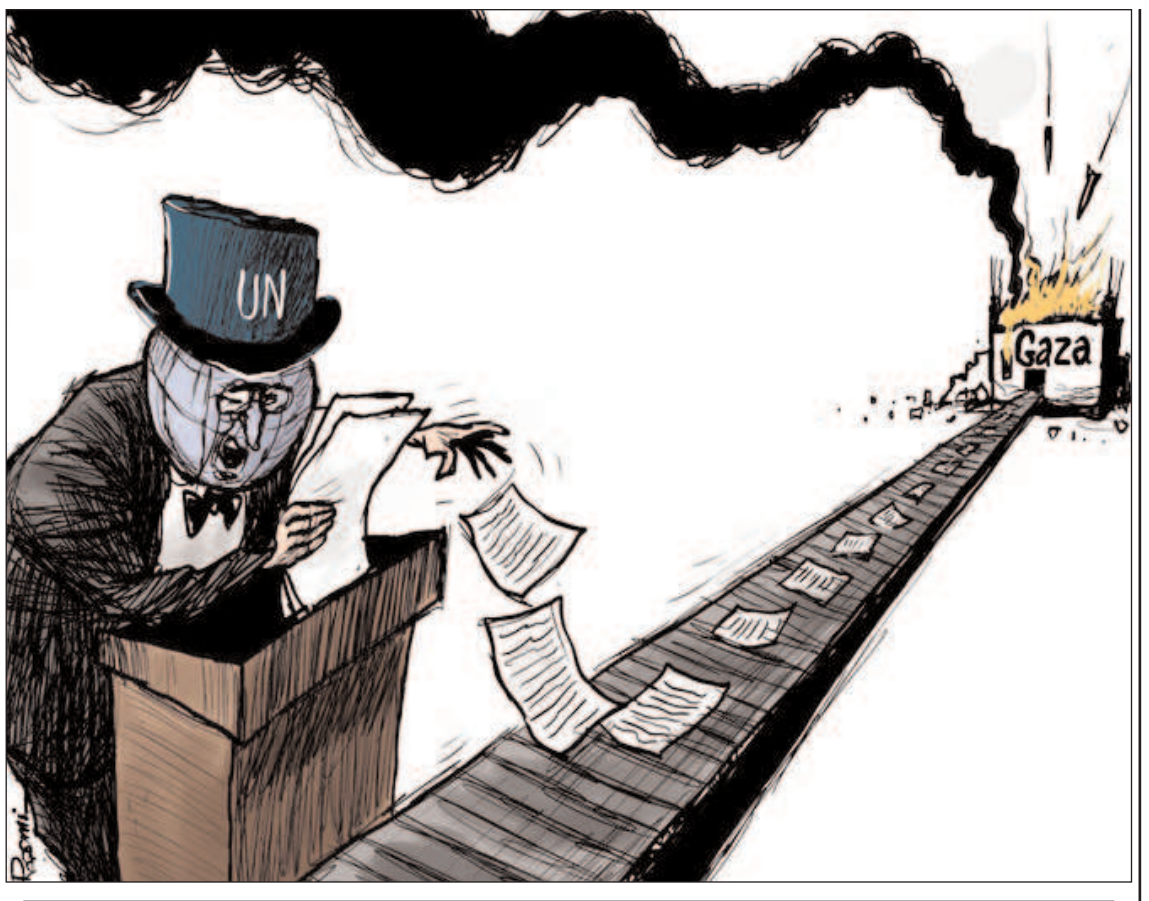

Bashar Assad's self-destructive policies

Abdulrahman Al-Rashed

Syria has witnessed two major events: the fall of Bashar Assad's regime and the rise of the Islamist group Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham to power.

The fall of Assad is the latest in a series of collapses of the fascist regimes of the 1960s, including Iraq's Saddam Hussein and Libya's Muammar Qaddafi.

Similarly, the rise of Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham represents the third wave of fundamentalist movements. The first wave was led by Ayatollah Khomeini in Tehran in the late 1970s. The second wave emerged during the revolutions of 2011, with the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, Ennahda under Rached Ghannouchi in Tunisia and the Houthis in Yemen. Now it is Syria's turn, although it is still too early to judge the outcome.

Assad's fall was expected. But it was delayed from its anticipated timeline in 2014 due to an emergency intervention that granted him an additional 10 years, supported by Iran and Russia.

We saw the Assad regime's downfall as inevitable due to its transformation into a one-man, minority-led, socialist, Baathist and Iran-aligned system. Additionally, the state itself had aged and the capabilities of its institutions had deteriorated. Since taking power, Assad failed to create a unifying identity for his regime beyond being "a necessity for Iran," which in itself brought about calamities and led to his downfall. Even his core supporters — Baathists and Alawites — abandoned him.

His intelligence agencies were also ineffective and he ignored the threats he created for himself by making Syria the primary corridor between Tehran and its areas of influence at a time when the confrontation between Iran and Israel was intensifying. He failed to understand the profound implications of the events of Oct. 7, 2023, prior to which Israel's opposition to any change in Damascus was well established. In Idlib and Ankara, both Turkiye and the Syrian opposition recognized that change had become permissible, prompting them to advance on Damascus.

Assad's policies reflected his ignorance, allowing crises to pile up on three open fronts against him: with Turkiye, the Syrian armed opposition and an indirect confrontation with Israel. These were challenges far beyond Syria's capacity to manage, making it unsurprising that they ultimately blew up in his face. How did Assad manage these crises? For example, in dealing with the refugee issue, he viewed the 3 million Syrians who fled to Turkiye as a problem for Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan to handle, which resulted in the Turkish leader's position and war against him. He rejected Erdogan's request for reconciliation or even a visit to Damascus to negotiate, as well as ignoring demands to facilitate their return. While refugees have indeed been a problem for the Ankara government, they also posed a threat to Assad's regime. The 3 million who were displaced became a reservoir for the opposition, which easily recruited thousands from among them.

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While refugees have indeed been a problem for the Ankara government, they also posed a threat to Assad's regime. The 3 million who were displaced became a reservoir for the opposition, which easily recruited thousands from among them. It is difficult to understand how Assad overlooked the danger that these armed groups occupying vast areas of Syria posed, especially when a moment of weakness could prompt them to march on the capital.

The political relationship between Turkiye and Syria has historically been a drama of love and hate. Over the past century, Damascus has remained wary of Ankara's intentions, though this has not precluded smooth relations along the border. Assad's approach to managing relations with Turkiye differed to that of his father.

During one of the crises between the two countries in 1989, Turkiye grew frustrated with Hafez Assad's support for Abdullah Ocalan, the founder of the separatist PKK. Turkiye demanded that Syria stop Ocalan's activities and hand him over. When Hafez Assad refused, Turkiye massed troops at the Bab Al-Hawa border crossing. The Syrian ruler filed a complaint with the administration of US President Bill Clinton, which responded by supporting Turkiye's demands. Realizing the balance of power favored Turkiye, backed by Israel and the US, he capitulated and expelled Ocalan, leading to his arrest in Nairobi. Hafez Assad understood that the balance of power was not in Syria's favor.

Today, with Bashar Assad gone, millions of refugees will return to their homes, while Turkiye's influence in Syria has increased, bolstered by its long-standing support for refugees and the opposition.

Turkiye aims for a Syria that is an ally, much like Iran sees Iraq as an extension of its geographical and strategic influence.

Why firms should adopt sustainability practices

Rodrigo Tavares

Saudi Arabia is home to some 245 publicly listed companies, all focused on maximizing value and delivering profits. So why should sustainability also be a priority?

Indeed, are corporate sustainability practices merely fleeting trends, regulatory obligations, government-driven initiatives, superficial reports or hollow efforts at reputation management?

Quite frankly, sustainability is not just an ethical imperative but a business one. It can significantly impact a company's profitability, longevity and resilience — either positively or negatively. By embracing sustainability, companies can reshape their business models to drive revenue growth, improve margins, optimize capital allocation and mitigate risk.

Efficient resource utilization, waste reduction and energy conservation can yield substantial cost savings, enhancing a company's bottom line. Similarly, sustainable and fair labor practices can resonate with consumers, fostering increased brand loyalty and customer preference.

Moreover, investing in sustainable technologies and practices can spur innovation, leading to the development of groundbreaking products and services. This can provide companies with a competitive edge, attract new customers and expand market share.

A strong commitment to sustainability can also reduce the cost of capital by improving creditworthiness. More than 500 academic studies have demonstrated a bidirectional positive correlation between corporate sustainability and financial returns.

Nonetheless, companies must approach sustainability with precision and meticulousness. Poorly executed sustainability initiatives can inadvertently erode value, while well-planned and properly implemented practices can significantly enhance a company's performance.

The first step toward sustainable success should be a comprehensive assessment of a company's current sustainability practices. This review should identify areas of strength and weakness, as well as opportunities for improvement.

Organizations such as Clarity AI, MSCI ESG Ratings, Sustainalytics and the Upright Project can assess a company's sustainability performance. By understanding the company's sustainability baseline, businesses can develop a tailored roadmap to enhance their value proposition.

The second critical step is to identify and shortlist sustainability practices that can significantly impact a company's financial performance and risk profile from a vast array of options. Tailoring these practices to each company's unique circumstances remains one of the most complex challenges in corporate sustainability.

It is therefore important to avoid overextending sustainability efforts. While a strong commitment to sustainability is commendable, excessive or poorly executed initiatives can divert valuable resources and distract from core business objectives. A balanced approach, focused on material issues and measurable outcomes, is essential.

Over the past few weeks, Saudi Arabia has hosted several events to discuss the merits of corporate sustainability. These include the Future Investment Initiative, the Saudi Green Initiative Forum, the One Planet Sovereign Wealth Funds CEO Summit and the UN Convention to Combat Desertification's COP16 conference.

In April, the Ministry of Economy and Planning launched the Sustainability Champions program, through which selected Saudi companies commit to transforming the sustainability practices of at least three other companies within the Kingdom, aiming to create a ripple effect that multiplies the impact across the economy.

Saudi Arabia is steadily building the foundational infrastructure to unlock the financial benefits of corporate sustainability. Now is the time for companies to embrace this challenge and seize the opportunities it offers.

Defeating Hamas has become secondary to annexation of Gaza

Yossi Mekelberg

To say that there is no dull moment in Middle Eastern politics would be a gross understatement, and the past 14 months have mainly revolved around a constant and never-ending litany of deaths, destruction, and extreme suffering. The fall of the brutal Bashar Assad regime and, before that, an agreement to end the war between Israel and Hezbollah have been the only flickers of hope and optimism.

Yet, as other events occupy the headlines, we must not forget Gaza. At the beginning of the war, the objectives set by the Israeli government were of defeating Hamas to ensure that an Oct. 7-style massacre would never be repeated, and of bringing the hostages back home, but now the fate of the captives seems no longer to be a priority for the Netanyahu government. Since there is a consensus that Hamas has by now been deprived of its capability to pose a threat to Israel and is mainly engaged in guerrilla warfare in Gaza, there has been a shift in Israel's objectives, and it is an extremely unpleasant one. What is emerging are allegations of atrocious acts of ethnic cleansing, at least in parts of the Gaza Strip, and of Israeli plans to build Israeli settlements there — two developments that should not be allowed to materialize.

Due to the circumstances, including the total surprise and magnitude of the losses inflicted by Hamas which ignited this war, a dangerous Israeli pattern of response emerged that has strong elements of revenge, and a mindset that feels justified in using excessive force and holding the entire population of Gaza guilty of the Oct. 7 attack. Israel has sought the total elimination of Hamas, while marginalizing the objective of releasing the hostages in favor of a long-term and perhaps even a permanent Israeli presence in Gaza at the expense of the Palestinians.

In the early days of the war there was an understandable and justified broad international support for Israel to go after Hamas, but there was insufficient commitment shown by the international community to prevent Israel from treating the entire population of Gaza as something between collateral damage or — supposedly because it lived under a Hamas government — as collaborators in the crime committed by that Islamist movement.

When the International Criminal Court issued arrest warrants for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and former Defense Minister Yoav Gallant, it led to bipartisan outrage in the Knesset despite growing evidence of war crimes committed by Israeli troops, and their government's shift from intentions of ethnic cleansing to operationalizing it, at least in northern Gaza. Most significantly, by now these claims of war crimes are not originating exclusively from Palestinian or international sources, but from those Israelis of conscience who are appalled by the immorality and strategic futility of the path along which Netanyahu and his ultra right-wing government are leading the country.

Moshe Ya'alon, who previously served first as Israeli military chief of staff and later as a defense minister in Netanyahu's Cabinet until falling out with the prime minister for his recklessness and his corrupting of the entire political system, is not known for his dovish outlook toward Israel's foreign affairs and most definitely not with regard to the conflict with the Palestinians.

However, Ya'alon has still felt obliged to speak up in public against what Israel is perpetrating in Gaza. In an interview with Israel's Channel 12 TV, this decorated former military commander argued that the hawks in Netanyahu's far-right Cabinet are looking to chase out the Palestinians from northern Gaza to enable them to establish settlements there. And to the surprise of his interviewer, he then declared that "the path they're dragging us down is to occupy, annex, and ethnically cleanse — look at the northern strip," and insisted that this was the true situation, despite being challenged on his view both on and off air.

But we might well ask why he should retract his claim, when Finance Minister Bezalel Smotrich suggested last month that Israel should occupy Gaza and "encourage" half of the enclave's 2.2 million Palestinians to emigrate within two years, and claimed with qualms neither ethical nor political that "it is possible to create a situation where Gaza's population will be reduced to half its current size in two years," and that Israel can afford this.

This is the chilling testimony to the state of mind within the settler movement, which has disproportionate power within the Cabinet. They believe that Israel's military power, which degraded the military capabilities of Hamas and Hezbollah, and re-established deterrence with Tehran, has instilled enough fear among the people of Gaza that they could be bribed en masse to give up their national and political rights. One dreads to think what Plan B would be for Smotrich should more than a million people refuse to accept his dirty money and leave.

In the meantime, there is mounting evidence of war crimes being committed in Gaza. An Israeli historian, Lee Mordechai, has compiled a database of thousands of videos, photos, testimonies, and shocking evidence based on eyewitness accounts, reports, and investigations that documents the horrors committed by Israel in Gaza which was exposed in the Israeli newspaper Haaretz. In his report, Mordechai, who is also a former officer in the Israeli army's Combat Engineering Corps, is said to present evidence linking soldiers to "shooting civilians waving white flags, abuse of individuals, captives and corpses, gleefully damaging or destroying houses, various structures and institutions, religious sites and looting personal belongings," among other alleged abuses of power in clear and obvious violation of international humanitarian law.

Most of the Israeli media fails its viewers miserably by neglecting to show the horrors their army is committing in Gaza on their behalf, while most of the population, in an act of willful ignorance, is not asking questions or looking for this "inconvenient truth" elsewhere. Neither the trauma of Oct. 7, nor Israelis who claim not to know about the humanitarian disaster inflicted on Gaza's population, nor any alleged crimes committed by a family member, friend or neighbor could ever serve as valid excuses for not demanding that their government bring this despicable behavior to an immediate halt.

At some point, hopefully soon, the guns will fall silent, and those who were behind them or gave orders to misuse them will have first and foremost to live with their conscience regarding how they treated innocent and defenseless people, but this might not be enough. Fighting an enemy, as cruel as it might be, is one thing; demonizing and dehumanizing other human beings, and hurting and humiliating them, is completely different. It is, therefore, no surprise that Israel's reputation in the world is at an all-time low. Even worse, however, is that Israel's appalling conduct damages Israeli society and its ability to live, one day, in peace with its Palestinian neighbors.

Gaza's libraries will rise from the ashes

Shahd Alnaami

I was five years old when I entered the Maghazi Library for the first time. My parents had just enrolled me at the nearby kindergarten, specifically because it was sending its pupils to the library for regular visits. They believed in the transformative power of books and wanted me to have access to a large collection as early as possible.

The Maghazi Library wasn't just a building; it was a portal to a world without boundaries. I remember feeling an overwhelming sense of awe as I crossed its wooden doorway. It was as if I had stepped into a different realm, where every corner whispered secrets and promised adventures.

Though modest in size, the library felt infinite to my young eyes. The walls were lined with dark wooden shelves, filled with books of all shapes and sizes. At the centre of the room was a cozy yellow-and-green couch, surrounded by a simple rug where we, the children, would gather. I still vividly remember our teacher asking us to sit around her on the rug and opening up a picture book. I was enthralled with its illustrations and letters, even though I could not yet read.

The visits to the Maghazi Library would instill in me a love for books that profoundly influenced my life. Books became more than a source of entertainment or learning; they nourished my soul and mind, shaping my identity and personality.

This love turned into pain as libraries across the Gaza Strip were destroyed, one after the other, over the past 400 days. According to the United Nations, 13 public libraries have been damaged or destroyed in Gaza. No institution has been able to estimate the destruction of the other libraries – those that are either part of cultural centres or educational institutions or are private entities – that have also been obliterated.

Among them is the library of Al-Aqsa University – one of the largest in the Gaza Strip. Seeing the images of books burning in the library was heartbreaking. It felt like fire burning my own heart. The library of my own university, the Islamic University of Gaza, where I had spent countless hours reading and studying, is also no more.

The Edward Said Library – the first English-language library in Gaza, created in the aftermath of the 2014 Israeli war on Gaza, which also destroyed libraries – is also gone. That library was established by private individuals, who donated their own books and worked against all odds to import new ones, as Israel would often block formal deliveries of books into the Strip. Their efforts reflect Palestinian love for books and drive to share knowledge and educate communities.

The attacks on Gaza's libraries are targeting not just the buildings themselves, but the very essence of what Gaza represents. They are part of the effort to erase our history and prevent future generations from becoming educated and aware of their own identity and rights. The decimation of Gaza's libraries is also aimed at destroying the strong spirit of learning among Palestinians.

The love for education and knowledge runs deep within the Palestinian culture. Reading and learning are cherished across generations, not just as means to acquire wisdom but as symbols of resilience and connection to history.

Books have always been seen as objects of high value. While the cost and Israel's restrictions often limited access to books, the respect for them was universal, cutting across socioeconomic boundaries. Even families with limited resources prioritised education and storytelling, passing down a profound appreciation for literature to their children.

More than 400 days of severe deprivation, starvation, and suffering have managed to kill some of this respect for books.

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It pains me to say that books are now used by many Palestinians as fuel for fires to cook or stay warm, given that wood and gas have become prohibitively expensive. This is our heartbreaking reality: survival comes at the cost of cultural and intellectual heritage.

But not all hope is lost. There are still efforts to preserve and safeguard what little remains of Gaza's cultural heritage.

The Maghazi Library – the book heaven of my childhood – still stands. The building remains intact and with local efforts, its books have been preserved.

I recently had the opportunity to visit it. It was an emotionally overwhelming experience, as I had not visited for many years. When I entered the library, I felt like I was returning to my childhood. I imagined "little Shahd" running between the shelves, filled with curiosity and a desire to discover everything.

I could almost hear the echoes of the laughter of my kindergarten classmates and feel the warmth of the moments we spent there together. The memory of the library is not only in its walls, but in everyone who vsited it, in every hand that flipped through a book, and every eye that immersed itself in the words of a story. The Maghazi Library, to me, is not just a library; it is part of my identity, of that little girl who learned that imagination can be a refuge and that reading can be resistance.

The occupation is targeting our minds and our bodies, but it does not realise that ideas cannot die. The value of books and libraries, the knowledge they carry, and the identities they help shape are indestructible. No matter how much they try to erase our history, they cannot silence the ideas, the culture, and the truth that live within us.

Amid the devastation, I have hope that, when the genocide ends, the libraries of Gaza will rise from the ashes. These sanctuaries of knowledge and culture can be rebuilt and stand again as beacons of resilience.

Georgia's shaky path to EU creates options for Middle East

Dr. Diana Galeeva

Almost a year ago, Georgia reached a milestone in its foreign policy when the European Commission announced the country was a candidate for EU membership. Despite that historic decision, Georgian Prime Minister Irakli Kobakhidze said last week that arrangements to join the bloc would be delayed, and membership talks would not be held until 2028 — a statement that led to rioting in Tbilisi. What is Georgia's path to the EU now, and the potential implications of this decision for the country; and what might these developments mean for the Middle East?

Given its "small state" status, Georgia is torn between Russia and the West, especially since the outbreak of the Ukraine war. Georgia, as well as Moldova, which borders Ukraine, has been feeling the effects of the polarized political field on its ability to calibrate foreign policy. In August 2008, Russia and Georgia had a brief war, after which Moscow declared the independence of South Ossetia and another breakaway province, Abkhazia, and established an armed base there.

Initially, the Georgian government expressed solidarity with Ukraine in the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Council of Europe. In March 2022, Georgia took an essential symbolic step toward EU membership, a few days after Ukraine's application. However, the country did not impose economic sanctions on Russia. Coincidentally, after the recent decisions, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky expressed his view to European partners and the US in support of Georgia's pro-EU movement, following up on Ukraine's sanctions against the Georgian government amid its crackdowns on EU protests.

Ukraine's Western backers supported this path. In an official statement on Georgia's suspension of EU accession, the US said that this "process goes against the promise to the Georgian people enshrined in their constitution to pursue full integration into the EU and NATO." Earlier, in October, the European Commission told Georgia that it would not be able to recommend opening EU membership talks with the state unless it changed political course, considering that the Georgian Dream policy is increasingly Moscow friendly.

According to the bloc's expansion policy, the commission repeated that "Georgia's accession process has de facto been halted" because of reasons such as legislation and need for electoral reform, and a new policy that requires organizations in Georgia to obtain more than 20 percent of their financial support from abroad to register as agents of foreign impact — which is regarded as "strong anti-EU narratives." After the decision of the Georgian Dream governing party to suspend its path to the EU, Dutch officials said that they would ask the EU to suspend its visa-free arrangement with Georgia, in addition to requesting an examination into the actions of the Georgian Dream government.

Despite Georgia being sandwiched by the geopolitical rivalry between Russia and the West, it seems the crisis within Europe, nonetheless, may play out positively in terms of Georgia's relations with Middle Eastern partners. Relations are already being boosted through the memorandum of understanding that has linked Georgia and the GCC since 2017, in addition to the joint action plan that was approved in 2022. This includes cooperation in the fields of politics, economy, and communications.

Individual bilateral relations with member countries have been growing, while official visits have been particularly frequent, helping to facilitate mutual benefits. In 2022, bilateral non-oil trade between Georgia and UAE reached $468 million, an increase of 110 percent over 2021, and constituting 63 percent of Georgia's trade with the entire Arab world. In 2023, the UAE signed a comprehensive economic partnership agreement with Georgia, particularly motivated by the strategic importance of Georgia, which acts as an East-West corridor to boost connectivity and trade. Its position makes Georgia an important transit hub between Asia and Europe, and this has become more important, especially for Europe in recent times. As security concerns grow around energy supplies, in particular, reliable alternative routes and markets are key.

After the official visit of Irakli Garibashvili to Saudi Arabia at the end of 2022, where the then-prime minister met Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Georgia became an area of special interest. While Georgia is now an attractive investment destination for the Kingdom, transformations in Saudi Arabia, such as the implementation of Vision 2030, and the NEOM project — a city expected to be run totally on renewable energy — have been key drivers, too. As 85 percent of Georgia's electricity comes from renewable sources, renewable energy, its technology and expertise, is a strategic priority for Georgia, and an important tool for cooperation with the energy-rich GCC states in their efforts to diversify.

In addition to renewables, relations with Saudi Arabia are strategic in the economic field, especially in agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism. In October this year, Levan Davitashvili, Georgian minister of economy and sustainable development, held a meeting with a Saudi business delegation within the framework of the Georgia-Saudi Business Forum. The highlight of the event was that Polymer Solution, Gulf Pharma, and Medical Bridge signed an agreement to bring over $52.5 million of investment to Georgia. Similarly, during recent meetings between Qatar and Georgia's leaderships, economic diplomacy — intensified economic and business relations — was discussed, which relies on Georgia's attractive investment environment and strategic location.

After the official visit of Irakli Garibashvili to Saudi Arabia at the end of 2022, where the then-prime minister met Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, Georgia became an area of special interest. While Georgia is now an attractive investment destination for the Kingdom, transformations in Saudi Arabia, such as the implementation of Vision 2030, and the NEOM project — a city expected to be run totally on renewable energy — have been key drivers, too. As 85 percent of Georgia's electricity comes from renewable sources, renewable energy, its technology and expertise, is a strategic priority for Georgia, and an important tool for cooperation with the energy-rich GCC states in their efforts to diversify. In addition to renewables, relations with Saudi Arabia are strategic in the economic field, especially in agriculture, manufacturing, and tourism. In October this year, Levan Davitashvili, Georgian minister of economy and sustainable development, held a meeting with a Saudi business delegation within the framework of the Georgia-Saudi Business Forum.

Georgia's EU route has become challenging over recent years, and depends on many internal and international factors, including the outcome of the Ukraine war, the policies of a new Trump administration toward NATO, and other geopolitical events. Nonetheless, the subsequent uncertainty opens a unique opportunity to further boost relations with alternative players, including from the Middle East, which have recently been increasing their importance. The Georgian Dream party will need to respond to further internal pressure, as pro-Western sentiment among citizens is high. But at the same time, the government will be further pressured over the consequences of greater integration, and geopolitical as well as security concerns, according to the state's evolving needs.

In such uncertain times, it will be pragmatic also to pay attention to the opportunities offered by other countries, including the Gulf states, where much progress has already been made.

Somaliland and its case for statehood

Hafed Al-Ghwell

Recently, whispers of Somaliland's impending recognition as an independent state have grown louder. Credible assertions are rife that the incoming administration in the US is not opposed to extending acknowledgment of this self-declared republic. Such a move, if realized, stands to reshape the dynamics in the Horn of Africa, a region long defined by its turbulent history and proxies bound in complex alliances in service of narrow geopolitical interests. But what does this mean for Somaliland, and how is it positioned to transform a distant aspiration into reality?

Somaliland, nestled in the northwest corner of Somalia, unilaterally declared its independence in 1991. However, despite its stable governance and booming economy, it remains largely absent from international recognition. With roots tracing back to a colonial history distinct from the rest of Somalia, Somaliland has consistently demonstrated a more democratic and stable profile than its neighbor — a sharp contrast to the turmoil that has beleaguered Somalia for decades. This compelling narrative of stability juxtaposed against regional chaos forms the bedrock on which Somaliland stakes its claim to statehood.

Recent presidential elections in Somaliland, despite periods of tension and violence leading up to the vote, have sharply elevated the argument for an independent and sovereign country. Abdirahman Mohamed Abdullahi, also known as Cirro, of the Waddani party, secured the presidency with a strong mandate, securing nearly two-thirds of the vote in a poll that highlighted the resilience of Somaliland's democratic institutions even amid regional instability. However, international recognition, particularly from a global power such as the US, would carry significant geostrategic weight.

The incoming administration in the US might view Somaliland's stability as a strategic asset against the backdrop of a volatile neighbor and an opportunity to counter the expansion of influence in the region from Washington's geopolitical rivals. Yet, such recognition risks igniting further unrest by exacerbating clan divisions within Somaliland and antagonizing Somalia, which has vehemently opposed Somaliland's independence for more than three decades. These implications extend beyond the region, potentially affecting global trade routes at the vital Bab Al-Mandab Strait chokepoint, which divides the busy Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden maritime routes. Here, Somali piracy, Houthi escalations, and a semipermanent international naval presence complicate the dynamics at play where a new country is struggling to be born.

Nevertheless, acknowledging Somaliland's de facto statehood is a step that would validate its aspirations and contributions toward a more stable region. This recognition would affirm the global community's commitment to stability and self-determination over archaic border adherence, setting a new standard for addressing similar geopolitical realities.

Somaliland's quest for recognition carries a range of potential benefits and pitfalls. On the plus side, international recognition would solidify its sovereignty, allowing for increased foreign investment and development assistance which would catalyze economic growth and improve infrastructure. Recognizing statehood would also offer Somaliland the opportunity to join international organizations, further embedding it into the global diplomatic and economic system. However, pitfalls include the risk of heightened regional instability, as recognition might prompt a severe backlash from Somalia, which considers Somaliland an integral part of its territory. Recognition could also set a precedent for other separatist movements around Africa and beyond, potentially reigniting dormant territorial disputes, which might deter some countries from supporting Somaliland's bid.

A newly independent Somaliland would realign political dynamics within the Horn of Africa. It could alter alliances and worsen existing tensions, particularly among actors who may have vested interests in either supporting or opposing Somaliland's independence. Ethiopia, for instance, with its historical ties and strategic interests in Somaliland, might endorse such recognition, seeking to counterbalance Eritrean and Somali influences in the region. Nonetheless, the geopolitics of the Horn are precarious, and the global community must quickly determine whether recognizing Somaliland would bring more stability or further complicate a delicate balance of power.

Given the potential for regional upheaval, there is an argument for establishing an international coalition to safeguard post-recognition Somaliland. Such a coalition should include key global and regional actors committed to ensuring that Somaliland's transition to recognized statehood occurs peacefully. This coalition would provide not only diplomatic backing but also tangible support in the form of security assistance and economic aid to help buffer against any immediate retaliatory measures from neighboring states or non-state actors. Establishing such a coalition would signal to Somaliland's opponents that the international community is serious about maintaining stability and supporting the country's sovereignty, potentially deterring hostile actions against it.

Opposition to Somaliland's recognition is likely to be driven primarily by Somalia, which views the move as a direct challenge to its territorial integrity. Other actors who fear the precedent this sets, especially those in restive regions, may also oppose the move indirectly seeking to impose diplomatic costs for any endorsement.

Ultimately, navigating this turbulence will require astute diplomacy and a clear-eyed assessment of both the risks and the long-term benefits of embracing Somaliland as the world's newest country. However, it is unclear in current contemplations, whether the incoming US administration's backing would be as pivotal in overcoming diplomatic inertia for Somaliland's recognition as experts estimate.

The coming months promise a flurry of maneuvering in a bid to clarify where the US stands regarding Somaliland's independence. And, once again, the Horn of Africa will be at the center of renewed attention as a new White House administration takes the helm.

EU broadens its horizons with South America deal

Andrew Hammond

A common perception of the EU is that it is a lumbering, sclerotic bloc that is punching well below its weight on the world stage. However, the new European Commission of President Ursula von der Leyen is moving fast, at home and abroad, in its first 100 days, including last week's big new trade deal with South America.

The concept of the first 100 days of a new political leadership dates back to at least the first US presidency of Franklin Roosevelt in 1933. In just over three months, the Roosevelt White House worked with Congress to pass dozens of laws, many directed toward reviving the US economy in the midst of the Great Depression.

The first 100 days has, therefore, typically been defined in terms of domestic policy. However, for the new European Commission, which took office on Dec. 1, foreign policy will be just as much at the fore. Perhaps the key reason for this is that of the incoming second US presidency of Donald Trump. Trump's first term saw the EU shaken by his hostility toward the bloc, and Brussels had hoped that there would be no repeat experience.

Yet, following the Nov. 5 US election, top EU officials know that the period from Jan. 20 may be the most difficult four years in the bloc's decades-long history, including a potential trade war with Washington. Trump comes into office with a different agenda from other presidents in the post-war era who, to a lesser or greater degree, saw European integration as a positive dynamic for the US. In his first term, he favored the dismemberment of the bloc.

It is in this context that von der Leyen now urgently needs to pursue a robust foreign policy that preserves and protects EU interests, at home and abroad. On the security front, perhaps the biggest challenge may come with the Ukraine war if Trump reduces or stops support for Kyiv.

Beyond this crucial issue, however, are a much wider series of foreign policy questions, as the EU seeks to broaden its range of foreign policy and economic partners following Russia's 2022 invasion. An early key test of this approach came at last week's Mercosur summit when the EU struck a big trade deal with partners in South America, sometimes described as the political "backyard" of the US.

To be sure, the EU is currently negotiating trade deals with multiple key world powers, including India. However, the most imminent possibility of a deal is with Mercosur, which includes Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, and Paraguay, to create a "new" combined market of the best part of 800 million people.

While von der Leyen and a critical mass of European national leaders, including German Chancellor Olaf Scholz, pushed the Mercosur deal hard, and got it over the line, there has been rearguard opposition. This includes most notably from French President Emmanuel Macron, who has channeled concerns about the deal from the powerful farming lobby, not just in his own nation, but also across the EU.

In part, this is because of the deal's import quotas of key agricultural products from the Mercosur bloc, either duty free or at reduced levy. These goods include beef, poultry, ethanol, sugar, maize, and soybean products.

To be sure, the new agreement is not all one-way traffic. For instance, EU producers secure increased access to Mercosur markets that could boost exports of products such as wine, cheese, milk powder, and olive oil.

However, the net agricultural benefit is forecast to strongly favor Mercosur. For instance, the EU sugar trade deficit with the South American bloc would rise to about €330 million ($346 million) by 2032 from €223 million in 2023, according to the European Commission's Joint Research Center.

Amid these economic machinations, and with a darkening foreign policy context for Europe, von der Leyen pushed the Mercosur deal so hard because she perceived if it was not concluded now, any later deal might take years, if indeed it ever materialized.

Business support is also strong for the deal. Only last month, around 80 business associations in the EU and Mercosur urged their respective governments to fast-track finalization of the trade agreement.

The corporate groups highlight that, in 2022, EU-Mercosur trade reached more than €159 billion in goods and services, with mutual investments at about €380 billion. This massive economic web of investment underpins millions of jobs. The business lobbies estimate that the agreement will significantly reduce tariffs on EU exports to Mercosur, enhancing competitiveness for EU companies by saving about €4 billion annually in duties.

This underlines that one of the pressing reasons the Mercosur trade agreement has become more important for von der Leyen is that South America is potentially key to the EU's economic diversification agenda since Russia's invasion of Ukraine. Mercosur is, potentially, a vast new source of raw materials as Europe broadens its global supply chains, a growing imperative.

Former EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell has even said that the South America region has the economic potential of becoming the "new Arabian Gulf" given its critical mineral assets such as lithium. He and many key European decision-makers perceive the Mercosur deal will pull the two regions closer geopolitically amid a broader, international competition for influence, including China and Russia seeking to strengthen diplomatic ties with resource-rich South America.

Punjab Investment Conference 2024: Advancing Economic Growth and Strategic Partnerships

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Punjab Investment conference was held in Shanghai. At the conference, significant milestones were achieved to propel Punjab towards greater economic prosperity. This landmark event was hosted by Gobi Partners, a leading venture capital firm. The conference showcased Punjab's commitment to fostering innovation, sustainable development, and global collaboration.

Gobi fund announcement: A major announcement was made with the unveiling of a dedicated 50 million USD investment fund by Gobi Partners. This fund, the first of its kind for Punjab, is aimed at supporting the entrepreneurial ecosystem, with a particular focus on tech-enabled startups in Punjab. By driving a transition toward a sustainable and digital economy, this initiative sets the stage for innovation-led growth and positions Punjab as a regional leader in technology and entrepreneurship.

Punjab's competitive edge was also prominently highlighted during the conference, with a focus on its tailored incentives that surpass regional and global benchmarks. Strategic advantages such as tax benefits, dedicated industrial zones, and seamless government facilitation were emphasized as key factors making Punjab a premier investment destination.

MOU signing between Gobi Partners and The Bank of Punjab: Further emphasizing their commitment to innovation and economic growth, Gobi Partners and The Bank of Punjab signed an agreement aimed at fostering a vibrant ecosystem for startups and SMEs. The MoU establishes a strategic collaboration to support startups and SMEs through debt financing, equity investments, tailored financial solutions, and mentorship programs. This collaboration underscores the shared vision of empowering emerging businesses and driving sustainable development in the region.

The conference further facilitated discussions aimed at fostering sustainable, long-term partnerships between Chinese enterprises and the Punjab government. Key collaborations formalized during the event included:

MOU signing between the Chinese Solar N Plus and the Government of Punjab: A pivotal partnership to advance Punjab's green energy transition through innovative solar energy projects. Where Solar N Plus will explore setting up a facility in Punjab, conduct feasibility studies, support local capacity-building, and introduce advanced solar technologies for sustainability and modernization

MOU signing between Tianjin Capital Environmental Protection Group (TJCEP) and the Government of Punjab: A transformative collaboration focusing on urban development and environmental management projects, reflecting Punjab's dedication to sustainable growth and infrastructure. The MOU outlines collaboration on waste management, water treatment, localization of environmental machinery, and pollution reduction in urban areas like Lahore.

The conference set the stage for a new era of global economic collaboration, reaffirming Punjab's role as a key international investment hub. Leadership invited global enterprises to explore the province's opportunities and pledged to strengthen partnerships and foster future growth.

ICMA International Job Fair and Education Expo 2024 held

F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: The ICMA International Job Fair and Education Expo 2024, organized in collaboration with STEVTA (Sindh Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority), took place at the Government College of Technology, Qasimabad, Hyderabad. The grand ceremony was inaugurated by the Chief Guest, Engr. Sabir Hussain Kaim Khani (MPA), along with the Honorary Secretary of ICMA International, Mr. Shaham Ahmed. The event featured a distinguished panel of guests, making it a highly impactful and successful gathering.

The expo aimed to connect young talent with opportunities by highlighting career and educational prospects. It attracted students, professionals, and social activists from Hyderabad and its surrounding areas.

The event also welcomed regional directors and heads of public and private universities, principals of schools and colleges, STEVTA institution heads, and other prominent social activists.

In his opening address, Engr. Sabir Hussain Kaim Khani praised ICMA International for its visionary initiative and highlighted the significance of bridging the gap between aspiring professionals and career and educational opportunities. Mr. Shaham Ahmed, Honorary Secretary of ICMA International, emphasized the organization's commitment to fostering professional development and providing platforms for meaningful engagement.

The expo created a dynamic environment, enabling attendees to network with top employers, explore career opportunities, and discover educational pathways. Participants appreciated the event's excellent organization and its role in inspiring and motivating future professionals.

PFC CEO lauds FPCCI for launching Pak-EU forum

LAHORE (APP): Chairman Pak-UK Joint Business Council and CEO Pakistan Furniture Council, Mian Kashif Ashfaq, has hailed the wise decision of Atif Ikram Sheikh, president Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), for successfully launching the Pakistan-EU Forum boosting exports to it's potentials among all European countries.

Talking to a delegation of foreign investors led by Muhammad Arbab Khan, President of the Pak-British Friendship Council (North West Chapter, UK), which called on him here on Sunday, he emphasized that the initiative aims to strengthen economic and trade ties between Pakistan and EU member states, fostering growth and development for the business community.

The forum's objectives include the effective utilisation of Pakistan's Generalised System of Preferences Plus (GSP+) status to enhance trade, investment, and economic cooperation. It will focus on building stronger business ties between Pakistan and EU states, with a particular emphasis on Eastern Europe, he added.

Mian Kashif said it will also engage with EU delegations in Pakistan to exchange firsthand information on economic activities and maintain a supportive environment for trade and investment.

The forum will conduct market research to identify new opportunities for trade and economic collaboration. Besides this, it will provide guidance and awareness to SMEs on meeting EU market requirements, he added. It will collaborate with the 'EU Business Network', and this partnership is expected to further boost bilateral trade and investment between Pakistan and EU countries, he concluded.

SNGPL: 611 illegal connections disconnected

F.P. Report

LAHORE: As part of its relentless crackdown on gas theft, Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) has taken firm action in Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and Islamabad. During the latest operations, 611 illegal connections were disconnected, and fines totaling Rs. 3.8 million were imposed on violators.

In Lahore, SNGPL teams disconnected 14 illegal connections and imposed fines amounting to Rs. 1.66 million. The Faisalabad regional team severed five illegal connections, addressed one compressor-related violation, and imposed fines of Rs. 0.02 million. Similarly, in Sheikhupura, fines of Rs. 1.34 million were levied on offenders involved in gas pilferage.

The Gujranwala region saw one illegal connection disconnected, with fines amounting to Rs. 0.61 million imposed on violators. In Bahawalpur, teams disconnected one illegal connection and addressed 23 compressor-related cases, while in Multan, 23 illegal connections were severed during the raids.

In Sahiwal, SNGPL disconnected one illegal connection and one compressor-related case, imposing fines totaling Rs. 0.23 million.

Meanwhile, a significant operation in Karak resulted in the disconnection of 541 illegal connections and the lodging of four FIRs against individuals involved in gas theft.

SNGPL reiterates its commitment to eradicating gas theft to ensure uninterrupted and efficient service to its valued consumers.

Shan Foods partner with SHINE Humanity

— to provide accessible healthcare

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan's leading food company, Shan Foods has partnered with SHINE Humanity to advance its goal of establishing an accessible and affordable healthcare infrastructure across the Kunri Tehsil in rural Sindh. Adhering to the UNSDG 3: Good Health and Wellbeing, this partnership is a part of Shan Foods' larger initiative "Growing Flavor", which aims to build a sustainable agricultural hub in Asia's largest red chilli production site at Kunri.

Since the pilot phase of the initiative three years ago, Shan Foods has introduced and executed a comprehensive community development plan across Kunri. The company has successfully conducted trainings and workshops focused on sustainable farming skills, providing quality seeds for a higher quality harvest, as well as fruitful trade opportunities that can help the local labor earn better livelihood under better working environments.

"We have an all-encompassing, holistic CSR vision for Kunri, where we not only train farmers and agricultural professionals to improve their chilli harvest and trade systems, but by on-boarding CSR partners such as SHINE Humanity, we are also ensuring that these communities have an improved quality of life, including the basics of healthcare, right in their locality" said Sammer Sultan, co-chairwoman of Shan Foods.

The company plans to further fortify this initiative by ensuring a safe and secure welfare infrastructure across the region, including locally accessible, affordable, and high quality healthcare opportunities for its residents. This recent partnership with SHINE Humanity aims to bring healthcare services right into the village, specifically curated to serve the requirements and health concerns of the underprivileged communities.

"As we embark on this meaningful partnership with Shan Foods, we are committed to bringing quality primary healthcare to the rural community of Kunri, Sindh. Together we're targeting to uplift the health and well-being of not only those people who work tirelessly in Shan Foods' chilli farming operations, but the entire community as well by ensuring they have access to the care they need to thrive. The end goal is to create a healthier, more sustainable future, ensuring that those who contribute so much to our food industry are given the care and dignity they truly deserve" said Faheem Khan, Chief Operating Officer, SHINE Humanity.

By having SHINE Humanity as a healthcare partner, Shan Foods' aims to cater to a community of nearly 1,000 underserved people, which is testament to the company's broader plans for community empowerment across the region.

IBA Karachi: Powering the future with green

F.P. Report

KARACHI: IBA is leading the charge toward a sustainable future with its ambitious green initiatives. As part of its ongoing commitment to environmental stewardship, IBA has introduced several groundbreaking projects aimed at reducing its carbon footprint and promoting renewable energy across its campuses & hostels.

One of the key highlights is the launch of electric-powered shuttles at the IBA Main Campus. These eco-friendly vehicles, powered by the solar plant at the campus, offer a green transportation solution for students, faculty, and staff. This initiative aligns with IBA's sustainability goals and represents a significant step towards minimizing dependency on fossil fuels, ensuring a cleaner and healthier environment.

Additionally, IBA has successfully installed a total solar capacity of 926 kWp across its campuses. The solar infrastructure includes an 826 kWp system at the Main Campus, along with newly commissioned projects of 200 kWp at the Boys Hostel and 100 kWp at the Girls Hostel. Together, these installations generate an impressive 1.235 million kWh of clean energy annually, resulting in a 33% reduction in energy costs and significant cuts in carbon emissions. The savings from these projects are further being reinvested into student scholarships, demonstrating IBA's dedication to both sustainability and community impact.

Through these efforts, IBA Karachi is not just advocating for a greener campus but is setting an example for educational institutions nationwide, showcasing the power of renewable energy in fostering a sustainable future. By embracing innovative green solutions, IBA Karachi reaffirms its commitment to environmental responsibility, solidifying its position as a leader in sustainability and a beacon of hope for a greener Pakistan.

IBA Karachi, with 70 years of Leadership, Excellence, and impact, has broadened its Academic Landscape by launching three unique schools: the School of Business Studies (SBS), the School of Economics & Social Sciences (SESS), and the School of Mathematics & Computer Science (SMCS). This strategic expansion showcases IBA's dedication to promoting innovation and driving transformative impact across diverse fields.

Court Notice

In the Court of Sidra Jalal Civil Judge-III/ Judicial Magistrate II Matta Swat. Case#.222/1. Institution 11/12/2023. Next Hearing date. 18/12/2024. Muhammad Haroon etc. VS Behramand etc. Notice to defendant.1/1) Manawar khan.1/2) ferooz khan s/o Behramand.1/3) Mst. Umar Raza.1/4) Mst. Bakht sultana. 1/5) Mst. Ghunchak. 1/6) Mst. Huma daughter Behramand. 11) shah rahim.12) Azat rahim sons Amir rahim.21/1) Mst. Dunya zada.21/2) Mst. Bachahat.21/3) Mst. Azat wala.21/4) Mst. Rahmat Alla.21/5) Mst. Naz daughters.21/6) Afzal khan.21/7) Muhammad Anwaar.22/8) Syed zaman sons Gulshan r/o shangbar Gawara tehsil matta swat. Whereas the above named cannot be served in ordinary manner it is therefore proclaimed or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court on 18/12/2024. at 8.30 am. Ex-parte proceeding will be initiated against you.

Court Notice

In the Court of Sidra Jalal Civil Judge-III Judicial Magistrate II. Matta Swat. Case # 214/1. Institution. 29/11/23. Next Hearing date. 18/12/2024.Haji Ahmad khan VS Behramand. Notice to defendant. 1/1) Nanawar khan.1/2) ferooz khan sons.1/4) Mst. Bakht sultana. 1/5) Mst. Ghunchak.1/6) Mst. Huma daughters Behramand r/o Gawara.26/1) Mst. Dunya zada widdow.26/2) Mst. Bachahat. 26/3) Mst. Rahmat Alla. 26/4) Mst Naz daughters. 26/6) Afzal khan.26/7) Muhammad anwaar. 26/8) Syed zaman sons, daughters shangbar tehsil matta swat. Whereas the above named cannot be served in ordinary manner it is therefore proclaimed or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court on 18/12/2024. at 8.30 am. Ex-parte proceeding will be initiated against you.

CTI for ECM to revive handmade carpet industry

LAHORE (APP): Carpet Training Institute (CTI) Chairperson Ejaz-ur-Rehman has proposed conducting an analytical study based on an Error Correction Model (ECM) to identify underlying causes of decline in Pakistan's handmade carpet exports, and to give viable solutions.

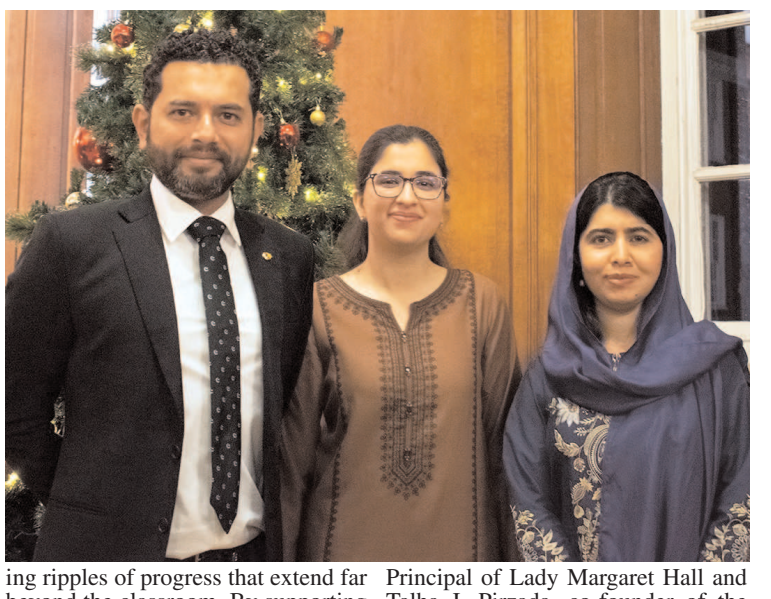
This approach, he explained, would involve statistical analysis and the application of logarithmic principles, adding that the study's findings and recommendations should be implemented in consultation with relevant public and private stakeholders.

The CTI Chairperson, in a media statement issued here Sunday, also expressed concern over the decline of Pakistan's handmade carpet industry in global markets. He noted that despite being a significant player in the industry, Pakistan's carpet exports have been steadily decreasing, while traditional competitors like India, Iran, Turkey, and Afghanistan have maintained their market share.

Ejaz-ur-Rehman suggested that a comprehensive analysis of the industry's export data from 1970 to 2023 would provide valuable insights into the decline of Pakistan's handmade carpet industry. He emphasized that the findings of this study would enable the policymakers and stakeholders to develop effective strategies for the industry's revival.

OPP hosts hi-tea celebrating Hamid Ismail, Malala Yousafzai

F.P. Report



KARACHI: The Oxford Pakistan Program (OPP) recently hosted a distinguished hi-tea at the University of Oxford, bringing together key figures committed to advancing education and empowering the next generation of leaders. The event featured Businessman and philanthropist Hamid Ismail CEO Ismail Global, Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai, scholars from the Hamid Ismail Foundation and Malala Fund, the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, the Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, and key members of the Pakistani diaspora.

The event served as a powerful reminder of the transformative impact of education. With a focus on creating opportunities for young men and women, the Oxford Pakistan Program continues to champion higher education as a tool for personal growth and social change.

Hamid Ismail, founder of the Hamid Ismail Foundation, emphasized the critical role that education plays in uplifting communities:

"Education is the most powerful tool we have for unlocking the full potential of individuals. When we provide opportunities for talented men and women to excel, we are not only empowering them to achieve their personal dreams, but we are also investing in the broader future of society. Each scholar who succeeds becomes a catalyst for change, creating ripples of progress that extend far beyond the classroom. By supporting education, we are laying the foundation for a more just, inclusive, and prosperous world for generations to come"

Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai shared her unwavering support for initiatives that empower young women and men through education. She praised the collaborative efforts of the OPP, the Hamid Ismail Foundation, and the Malala Fund in creating pathways for success for students from all walks of life.

The event also brought together the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford, the Principal of Lady Margaret Hall and Talha J. Pirzada, co-founder of the Oxford Pakistan Program, and key members of the Pakistani diaspora. These leaders reaffirmed their commitment to fostering inclusive, global partnerships that promote education and empowerment for all.

By bringing together these organizations, scholars, and leaders, the event reinforced the collective goal of making education accessible to all, regardless of background or gender. Through continued support and collaboration, the OPP is paving the way for a brighter and more equitable future.

In brief

Amiez quickest

VAL-D'ISÈRE (AFP): French skier Steven Amiez set the fastest time in the first run of the Val d'Isere slalom on Sunday to put himself in with a fine chance of claiming his first World Cup podium place. The son of 2002 Olympic slalom silver medallist Sebastien Amiez finished in 47.44 seconds, 0.32sec ahead of Norway's Henrik Kristoffersen who is looking to extend his lead at the top of the discipline and overall standings. Austria's Manuel Feller was third-quickest, 0.66sec behind the 26-year-old Amiez. "It's cool to cross the finish line and see the green light on and hear the crowd screaming," said Amiez who finished sixth in the first slalom of the winter in Finland's Levi before taking fourth place in Austria's Gurgl last month. "I'll try to do the same in the second run. I've already been in this position in lower level races so I don't see why it would change anything. "It's still a track with snow and poles, so we'll have to do the same." Another Frenchman, the Olympics slalom champion Clement Noel, decided not to race after suffering a heavy fall during Saturday's giant slalom. "I went to try (to ski) the warm-up run and I saw that it was impossible," said Noel who was aiming for a third consecutive slalom victory this season. "I can't press. I don't dare. It really hurts when I press on my leg, so there was no point in taking any unnecessary risks." Noel took a gate head-on during the first run of the giant on Saturday and finished his race in the nets. He was able to ski back down but broke several teeth and sprained his right ankle. He is now targeting a return to the piste in Alta Badia, where the next World Cup slalom takes place on December 23. The second run at Val d'Isere starts at 1200 GMT.

Bucks beat Hawks

LOS ANGELES (AFP): A dominating performance by Giannis Antetokounmpo on Saturday led the Milwaukee Bucks into the NBA Cup final, where they will face Shai Gilgeous-Alexander and the Oklahoma City Thunder for the title. Greek star Antetokounmpo scored 32 points and grabbed 14 rebounds to spark the Bucks over the Atlanta Hawks 110-102 while Canadian guard Gilgeous-Alexander netted a game-high 32 points to lead the Thunder over Houston 111-96 in the semi-finals at Las Vegas. The Bucks and Thunder will meet for the crown on Tuesday in Las Vegas. "I just wanted to be aggressive through all the ups and downs, highs and lows, and it paid off," said Gilgeous-Alexander. "Hopefully we can do the same thing on Tuesday. "If we play defense, we give ourselves a chance every night. We just have to play hard, play together and have fun." NBA scoring leader Antetokounmpo also added nine assists, four blocks and a steal while shooting 10-of-15 from the floor and 12-of-18 from the free-throw line. "We got stops. That was the most important thing," Antetokounmpo said. "They were feeling comfortable, getting to their spots. We were able to disrupt their offense. "We were moving the ball, playing team basketball, getting to our spots, knocking down a few shots down the stretch.

India beat Pakistan by nine wickets in ACC U19 Asia Cup

KUALA LUMPUR (Web Desk) : India beat Pakistan by nine wickets in the Group A match of the ACC U19 Women's Asia Cup at the Bayuemas Cricket Oval, Kuala Lumpur on Sunday afternoon.

Opting to bat first, Pakistan managed to score 67 for seven in 20 overs with wicketkeeper-batter Komal Khan top-scoring with a 32-ball 24, hitting four boundaries.

For India, Sonam Yadav bagged four wickets for six runs in four overs.

In turn, India achieved the target in 7.5 overs losing one wicket in the process. Left-hand batter G Kamilini top-scored for the side returning undefeated on 44 off 29 balls, which included four fours and three sixes.

Pakistan will now take on Nepal on Monday in their second fixture of the tournament.

The match will begin at 2pm local time.

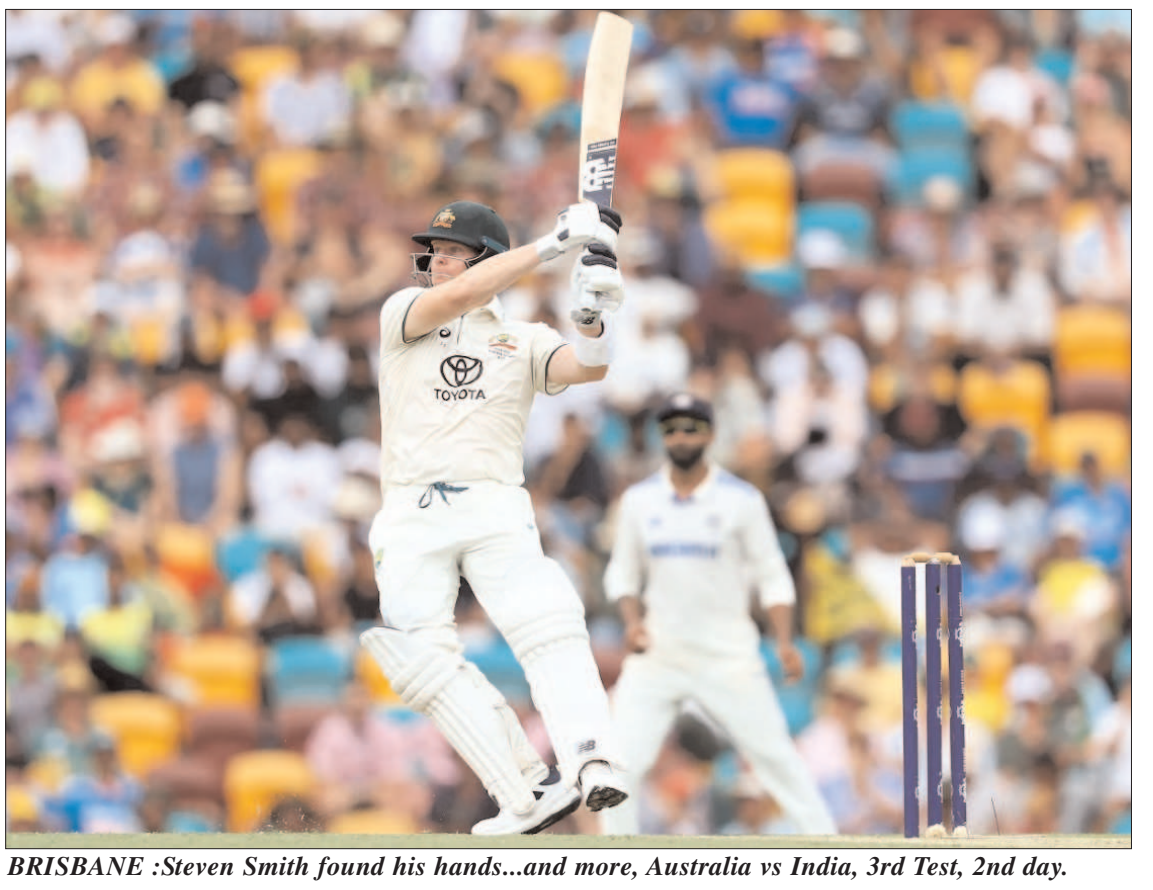
Scores in brief:

India beat Pakistan by nine wickets

Pakistan 67-7, 20 overs (Komal Khan 24; Sonam Yadav 4-6)

India 68-1, 7.5 overs (G Kamilini 44 not out; Fatima Khan 1-22)

Player of the match – G Kamilini (India).



BRISBANE :Steven Smith found his hands...and more, Australia vs India, 3rd Test, 2nd day.

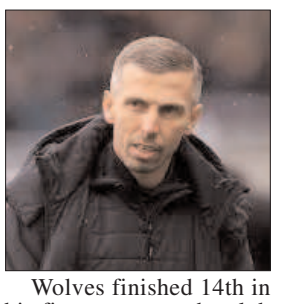
Wolves manager Gary O'Neil sacked: reports

LONDON (AFP): Gary O'Neil has been sacked as head coach of struggling Wolves after four straight Premier League defeats, according to reports on Sunday.

The club are second from bottom of the table with nine points from 16 games after Saturday's 2-1 home defeat to fellow strugglers Ipswich.

Emotions spilled over at full-time as Rayan Ait-Nouri was shown a second yellow card and Matheus Cunha also had to be restrained.

O'Neil, 41, was appointed in August 2023 following the departure of Julen Lopetegui and signed a new four-year deal with the club in August this year.



Wolves finished 14th in his first season at the club but have found themselves in a relegation scrap during the current campaign.

Frustrations also boiled over in Monday's defeat to West Ham when Mario Lemina scuffled with Jarrod Bowen after the full-time whistle, resulting in the Wolves midfielder being stripped of the captaincy.

Wanderers were then beaten by Jack Taylor's stoppage-time header on Saturday, having taken an early lead through Matt Doherty's own goal and following the full-time scuffles, O'Neil said his players needed to "take some responsibility".

"We deal with things like that very, very seriously, as you saw last week," O'Neil said.

"It's annoying in that we've got enough to do at this moment in time, we've got enough to fix without me having to spend time on things that go on off the pitch.

"So the players do need to take some responsibility. But I'll help them with all of it so we get back to work on Monday morning."

Allen suffers agonising Scottish Open defeat

LONDON (Agencies): Northern Ireland's Mark Allen suffered an agonising defeat at the semi-final stage of the Scottish Open as Lei Peifan staged a remarkable comeback to win 6-5 after trailing 5-2.

Breaks of 73 and 97 helped Allen into a 3-0 lead in Edinburgh but the Chinese 21-year-old won the next two frames to reduce his deficit to one.

The world number five looked to be on the verge of victory when he won frames six and seven but a missed pink in the next proved crucial as his dogged opponent, ranked 84, battled his way back to win four frames in a row in an attritional contest.

Lei Peifan had never previously reached the quarter-final of a ranking tournament and has twice

lost his Tour card during his career but now finds himself in Sunday's final against compatriot Wu Yize.

Wu Yize booked his place in the decider by coming from 4-2 behind to see off another Chinese player, Xiao Guodong, 6-4, in the day's other last-four encounter.

Also aged 21, he will be competing in the second ranking event final of his career, having lost 9-7 to Neil Robertson in the English Open decider in September.

The world number 27's comeback win included a break of 115 in the ninth frame to move ahead for the first time in the match.

The two young Chinese players will contest a best-of-17 frame final on Sunday, with the winner collecting £100,000 and the Stephen Hendry Trophy.

For Allen though, he misses out on a glorious opportunity at a shot to collect a 12th ranking title and a second Scottish Open crown, having previously won the tournament in 2018.

The Antrim player had been in prolific scoring form all week at the Meadowbank Sports Centre, racking up a series of centuries on his way to the last four.

Head and Smith put Australia in control

BRISBANE (AFP): Twin century-makers Travis Head and Steve Smith put on a magnificent fourth-wicket partnership as Australia reached a commanding 405-7 at stumps on day two of the third Test against India on Sunday.

Head scored a blistering 152 and Smith a gritty 101 at the Gabba in Brisbane to put Australia in a strong position to go 2-1 up in the five-Test series.

With rain forecast over the next three days, India seem to have virtually no chance of winning the match and can only realistically hope for a draw.

After all but 13.2 overs of the first day were washed out on Saturday, India started strongly with three wickets in the first hour.

But Head and Smith batted India out of the game despite a superb spell from pace spearhead Jasprit Bumrah (5-72) after tea with the second new ball.

"The way he can put the bowlers under pressure from the outset is incredible," Smith said of Head, who smacked a sparkling 140 in a big Australia win in the second Test.

"It's nice to get into a partnership with him. The scoreboard moves so quickly."

At the close of play, Alex Carey was on 45 and Mitchell Starc was on seven.

Head, who hadn't scored a run in his previous three innings at the Gabba, looked to be playing on a different surface to his teammates.

While the other Australian batsmen struggled, Head came out firing, smashing an increasingly demoralised Indian attack to all parts of the ground.

The visitors bowled a lot straighter to Head than they did in Adelaide in the second Test but he was watchful early and punished any loose deliveries.

He brought up his century off 115 balls and his 150 off 157, hitting 18 fours in the process.

Smith's innings was in stark contrast to Head's.

He looked badly out of touch early, playing and missing multiple times and was lucky to survive several lbw shouts.

But as his innings progressed he looked more and more confident, playing with far more fluidity once he passed 50.

He brought up his 33rd Test century and his first in 18 months to a rapturous reception from the big Gabba crowd.

"It was nice to get to three figures, it's been a little while," Smith said.

"You need a bit of luck playing on these surfaces and I think I got a bit of luck early on.

"It's been pretty challenging, the new ball's been doing a fair bit on most of the wickets we've been playing on."

He fell soon after reaching his ton, edging Bumrah to Rohit Sharma at first slip with the score on 316.

'Leaking runs'

Australia resumed the day at 28-0 and lost the wickets of Usman Khawaja (21), Nathan McSweeney (9) and Marnus Labuschagne (12) in the extended first session.

But Head and Smith's partnership of 241 put India firmly on the back foot until Bumrah struck back with the new ball.

He was far more potent than the other Indian bowlers, who pitched too short for long periods, and had his fourth wicket when Mitchell Marsh was caught by Virat Kohli at second slip for five.

One run later Head finally departed, edging Bumrah to wicketkeeper Rishabh Pant to leave Australia 327-6.

India's bowling coach Morne Morkel said that while Head was in superb form, the visitors' attack had strayed from the game plan.

"From overs 50 to 80 is where we fall short, leaking runs a bit, so that's where we need to get better," he said.

"I thought first up this morning we were pretty good and at 3-70, get two more (wickets) in the scorebook and we're right back in the game.

"We've got the game plans, but executing those game plans with the softer ball is an area we have to focus on."

Quaid-e-Azam Games

Punjab wins women's swimming title

ISLAMABAD (APP): Punjab emerged victorious in the women's swimming category on Sunday at the ongoing Quaid-e-Azam Inter-Provincial Games, organized by the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB).

Islamabad secured second place, while Sindh finished third, with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa standing at fourth position. Punjab secured the top spot with 335 points, followed by Islamabad with 169 points and Sindh with 43 points. Khyber Pakhtunkhwa managed to earn 4 points, finishing fourth.

Besides others, the closing ceremony was attended by Punjab Sports Board Director General Khizar Afzal Chaudhry, who distributed prizes alongside PSB Deputy Director General Shahid Islam. The event was attended by PSB Director Admin Ihtesham-ul-Haq, Event Director Chaudhry Saeed Akhtar, and a large number of spectators.

Athletes securing first position in the championship received Rs. 20,000 each, while runners-up and third-place winners were awarded Rs. 15,000 and Rs. 10,000 respectively, along with medals.

The event saw participation from seven women's teams representing Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sindh, Balochistan, Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Islamabad. Men's swimming events are also part of the ongoing competitions.

Mohammad Irfan also bids farewell to int'l cricket

LAHORE (Monitroing Desk): After Mohammad Amir and Imad Wasim hanged their boots, lanky left-arm fast bowler Mohammad Irfan has also bid adieu to the international cricket.

Irfan's decision came shortly after all-rounder Imad Wasim and another left-hand pacer Mohammad Amir also bid goodbye to the game just a day earlier,

This decision made Irfan the third Pakistani cricketer to retire in the space of 36 hours. Irfan made his announcement via a social media post, thanking his teammates, coaches, and fans for their support.

Irfan's retirement isn't expected to significantly impact Pakistan's current squad, as he has not played an international match in over five years. Since then, the 42-year-old has remained active in domestic cricket, most recently representing Khan Research Laboratories in the President's Cup, a Pakistani List A competition.

Despite his absence from the international scene, Irfan's towering 7'1" frame and his left-arm pace made him a formidable figure during his prime, and he will always be remembered as the tallest player in the cricket history.

The fast bowler enjoyed a productive career in white-ball teams during the early to mid-2010s. Irfan, at his peak, troubled some of the best batters in the world. One of his most memorable performances came in 2013 during an ODI against South Africa, where he dismissed key players such as AB de Villiers.

NZ power to 340-run lead in third Test as England crumble

HAMILTON (AFP): England's hopes of a series clean sweep all but evaporated on Sunday as they capitulated on day two of the third Test to trail New Zealand by 340 runs.

With fast bowler Will O'Rourke firing the home side skittled England for 143, before the Black Caps reached 136-3 by stumps in their second innings in Hamilton. It was easily their best day of a series in which they had been outplayed by England until now.

New Zealand's controlled strokeplay in the final session was in contrast to some chaotic English batting between lunch and tea where they lost their last eight wickets for 66 runs.

"It hasn't been our best day, it's as simple as that," said England assistant coach Paul Collingwood.

At the close, Kane Williamson was at the crease on 50 and Rachin Ravindra two.

Williamson put on 89 for the second wicket with Will Young (60) following the departure of captain Tom Latham for 19.

Scoreless nightwatchman O'Rourke gave England captain Ben Stokes (2-45) a second wicket soon before the close.

It was O'Rourke (3-33) who ripped out three key England wickets in a ferocious spell after lunch, before Matt Henry (4-48) and Mitchell Santner (3-7) instigated a late collapse.

Jacob Bethell (12) was the first to fall to O'Rourke, caught at point, before the towering quick prised out the ICC ranked first and second-best Test batters, Harry Brook and Joe Root.

After scoring match-changing centuries in each of the two big England wins, in Christchurch and Wellington, Brook lasted only one ball.

He played on to an in-swinger, prompting a roar of approval from the small crowd on a hot, still day at Seddon Park.

Root departed for 32 in O'Rourke's next over, caught at point off a limp cut shot from a delivery that bounced sharply.

Collingwood conceded O'Rourke's bowling had thrust New Zealand onto the front foot.

"I think we witnessed a pretty special hostile spell of Test bowling," he said.

"The way that he really pumped his legs and got the energy out of the wicket and the bounce, it caused a lot of problems for us. It really broke us open."

Santner reinforced New Zealand's commanding position by removing Ollie Pope (24) and Stokes (27) in his first seven deliveries after the pair had put on 52 for the sixth wicket.

The last five wickets fell for nine runs but, ahead by 204 runs, New Zealand declined the opportunity to enforce the follow-on.

'A big one'

O'Rourke was pleased to make an impact after struggling for his best form against England's aggressive batting in the first two Tests. "I was feeling good. My role on the team is to sort of run in hard, try to hit the pitch hard and I guess get something different out of our attack," said O'Rourke, who gained particular pleasure from dismissing Brook.

"It was a pretty big one for us, he's obviously dealt to us a lot this year so to get him out nice and early was pretty cool." England had reached 54-2 at lunch. Zak Crawley fell to Henry for the fifth time in five innings this series, caught-and-bowled for 21 to continue a miserable run of form.

The impressive Henry struck again in the same over, trapping fellow opener Ben Duckett lbw for 11.

Earlier, England took more than an hour to claim the last New Zealand wicket after the home side resumed their first innings at 315-9.

New Zealand faced a further 15.1 overs and scored 32 runs before top-scorer Santner was bowled for 76 by Matthew Potts (4-90), having added 26 to his overnight score.

Atalanta maintain Serie A lead as Juve held

MILAN (AFP): Atalanta's bid for a first Serie A title continued on Saturday with a club-record 10th straight league win, 1-0 at Cagliari, as Dusan Vlahovic saved Juventus with a last-gasp penalty in a 2-2 draw with bottom club Venezia.

Nicolo Zaniolo made sure Atalanta stayed top of Serie A this weekend with the goal which decided a hard-fought encounter in Sardinia, the Italy international forward stroking home the winner from Raoul Bellanova's cut-back in the 66th minute.

Atalanta, guided by veteran coach Gian Piero Gasperini, have emerged as genuine Scudetto challengers for the first time in their history and stay two points clear at the top of the league with closest challengers Napoli on their heels following a 3-1 win at Udinese.

However, Gasperini was not happy with his players' performances as, after impressing in Tuesday's 3-2 defeat to Real Madrid, they struggled against Cagliari who are 15th and only two points above the relegation zone.

Atalanta, who also struck the post through Ademola Lookman almost straight after Zaniolo's winner, only came away with all three points thanks to a brilliant performance between the sticks from Marco Carnesecchi who made at least six great saves including one from Leonardo Pavoletti in stoppage time.

"A good chunk of this team, not everyone, needs to grow up a bit and get the same mentality as the core group of the squad," said Gasperini. whose decision to make three substitutions at half-time was a sign of his dissatisfaction.

Zaniolo's strike was his third of the season and a further sign of new life after a difficult last few years, but Gasperini later criticised him for being booked while celebrating his goal, calling "intolerable" him whipping his shirt as it fired up the home crowd.

"We cannot afford that every time he scores a goal he fires up the crows and turns our advantage into a disadvantage it's already the second time that he's done it," Gasperini told reporters.

Napoli, missing injured star Khvicha Kvaratskhelia, came back from a goal down to secure the three points at the Bluenergy Stadium where they sealed a historic third league crown last year.

Napoli 'on right track'

Trailing at the break after Florian Thauvin netted on the rebound from his own saved 22nd-minute penalty, Napoli roared back in the second half to delight their large and loud travelling support with strikes from Romelu Lukaku and Andre-Frank Zambo Anguissa and Lautaro Giannetti's own goal.

Napoli are four points ahead of Lazio and third-placed Inter, who face off in Rome on Monday night, and Fiorentina with the Viola at Bologna on Saturday.

"I said after we lost to Lazio (last weekend) that we're on the right track," said Conte to DAZN.

"The team needs to keep playing this kind of football, dictate the game, keep the ball and press when we don't have it."

Juventus are nine points behind Atalanta in sixth after following up on their Champions League win over Manchester City with an awful performance against Venezia which was met with loud disapproval from supporters despite Vlahovic's late leveller.

Vlahovic struck his 11th goal of the season from the spot after Antonio Candela was penalised for handball, but the goal was met with a combination of cheers and jeers from frustrated fans who watched their team's 12th draw of the season.

ISLAMABAD: Chairperson of Senate Standing Committee on Human Rights, Senator Samina Zehri addressing 20th anniversary celebrations of the Pakistan Mission Society. —APP Photo

Musadik ensures energy balance and economic recovery

ISLAMABAD (APP):Minister for Petroleum, Musadik Malik, said on Sunday that the government is making significant progress on the economic front with clear signs of recovery.

Speaking to a private news channel, he highlighted key economic improvements, stating, "Today, Pakistan's economy is moving towards stability. The rupee has remained stable for over a year, interest rates have decreased, inflation rates are lower, and the stock exchange is performing exceptionally well."

Addressing concerns about gas supply, the minister said that domestic consumers were being prioritized. "We are providing gas to households, and any surplus is being directed to industries," he said.

Minister also said that 66-70% of gas consumers are benefiting from subsidies, reaffirming the government's commitment to supporting vulnerable segments of society. "Relief to the lower-income class is our top priority," he added.

The minister underscored the government's dedication to ensuring energy balance and economic stability for the country's progress.

Benazir Hunarmand Programme to empower deserving individuals

ISLAMABAD (APP): The internationally acclaimed Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has envisioned to empower underprivileged segments of society by launching the Benazir Hunarmand Programme soon.

According to an official source, around 40 semi-skilled individuals from deserving backgrounds will receive international-standard skill training in the pilot phase of the initiative. The programme aims to equip participants with advanced vocational skills while facilitating their employment opportunities abroad.

This initiative aligns with Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's enduring legacy of uplifting the underprivileged and promoting self-reliance through skill development. The programme is expected to expand in the future, providing many more individuals with the skills to improve their livelihoods and contribute to the nation's development.

Chairperson, BISP, Senator Rubina Khalid has been engaged with national and international organizations for collaborations to provide skill training to deserving beneficiaries.

According to the Chairperson BISP, Rubina Khalid, "Economic empowerment is the solution to all problems, and this concept aligns with the vision of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. Skill is the greatest asset."

She said that BISP has been actively engaging with international organizations, including the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Lives and Livelihood Fund, Islamic Development Bank, and other skill training institutions, to introduce high-quality skill training programs for its beneficiaries.

Around 9.6 million families are currently benefiting from the program, with the number expected to reach 10 million soon.

The Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) is one of Pakistan's largest social safety net initiatives, launched in July 2008 with the aim of reducing poverty and providing financial assistance to the most vulnerable segments of society.

The program primarily targets women as direct beneficiaries, empowering them financially to support their families through unconditional cash transfers and other social protection measures.

The program uses a scientifically designed poverty scorecard and a National Socio-Economic Registry (NSER) to identify eligible families.

Over the years, the BISP has expanded its scope to include several initiatives such as Education Stipend, Benazir Nashonuma and Undergraduate Scholarship Programme, besides providing targeted financial support during natural disasters and health emergencies.

Since its inception, BISP has gained international recognition as a model social safety net program. It continues to play a critical role in alleviating poverty, promoting gender equity, and providing economic stability to millions of Pakistani households.

Punjab tops in health services with innovative solutions, quality care: DG Gondal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General Health Services Punjab, Dr. Muhammad Ilyas Gondal Sunday said that the province has emerged as a trailblazer in healthcare services under the visionary leadership of Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz, with significant improvements in health outcomes and patient satisfaction.

DG in an interview with PTV news channel said that the province's healthcare system has achieved remarkable milestones, solidifying its position as a leader in the sector.

The province's healthcare system has witnessed a remarkable transformation, with state-of-the-art facilities and specialized treatment services being made accessible to the common masses, Dr. Gondal noted.

Chief Minister Maryam Nawaz Sharif's vision for Punjab's healthcare is truly transformative, he hailed.

Her commitment to providing top-notch healthcare to the people of Punjab is evident in her flagship projects, such as the "Clinic on Wheels" and free medicine for slum dwellers, he mentioned.

These initiatives are a historic step towards ensuring accessible and affordable healthcare for all, particularly the underprivileged, he added.

Responding to a query, the Director General revealed that new hospitals are urgently needed and in a significant move, the Chief Minister will soon be inaugurating a state-of-the-art Cardiology Hospital in Sargodha and a Cancer Hospital in Lahore, aiming to bridge the gap in healthcare services and meet the demands of the time.

The Director General appreciated the significant progress made in Punjab's healthcare sector, particularly the establishment of around 32 field hospitals and health units, adding, these facilities are closely monitored at both the district and divisional levels, ensuring effective healthcare delivery to the masses.

He also disclosed that the Punjab government has planned to revamp the healthcare infrastructure by converting some underutilized public hospitals into private hospitals.

This strategic move aims to optimize resource allocation, enhance the quality of healthcare services and increase accessibility for the masses, he added.

Responding to another query about awareness programs for communicable and non-communicable diseases, the Director General explained that the government is actively conducting workshops, seminars and other projects at the district level to educate the public.

Additionally, special sessions are being organized in schools to sensitize the younger generation about the prevention and management of these diseases, he mentioned.

Gondal also emphasized the crucial role of community involvement in combating TB, Dengue and Polio.

He acknowledged the government's efforts but stressed that community participation is vital in achieving success.

Punjab's remarkable progress in reducing Polio cases serves as a testament to the power of collective action. By working together, we can make significant strides in controlling and preventing these diseases, he added.

He stressed the importance of people's awareness on population control, stressing that family planning is crucial in ensuring that the population growth aligns with available resources.

He noted that excessive population growth is not in line with the World Health Organization's (WHO) recommended GDP growth rate of 5%.

This highlights the need for sustainable population growth to ensure economic stability and development, he concluded.

Schools to remain closed on Dec 16

ISLAMABAD (INP): In commemoration of the martyrs of the Army Public School Peshawar tragedy, the Deputy Commissioners of Islamabad, Lahore, and Rawalpindi have announced holiday on December 16.

As a result, all public and private schools, as well as colleges, will remain closed in Islamabad, Lahore, and Rawalpindi. However, universities in Lahore will remain open.

The notification issued by the Deputy Commissioners states that all educational institutions in the districts will observe a holiday on December 16.

On Dec 16, 2014 six terrorists stormed the school and martyred around 150 students and teachers.

After this tragic incident, the government chalked out the National Action Plan (NAP) to eliminate terrorism from the country.

Anti-polio drive to start from Monday

ISLAMABAD (APP): The national anti-polio campaign will start from Monday in 143 specific districts of the country.

More than 44 million children will be vaccinated against polio during the campaign. The last anti-polio campaign of the year 2024 is being launched from December 16 to 22.

In a video message, Prime Minister's Focal Person for Polio Eradication Ayesha Raza Farooq said, "We are determined to make the vaccine accessible to all children up to the age of five years.

"As a mother, I appeal to you to open your doors to polio workers and give all your children up to the age of five the mandatory polio drops." She said that the polio vaccine is completely safe, effective and being provided absolutely free of cost.

She said that the routine vaccination is necessary to protect against this crippling disease and other deadly diseases.

She paid tributes to the brave frontline polio workers who are serving in difficult circumstances. "Our frontline workers are the real heroes in the ongoing struggle against polio."

IRSA releases 77,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 77,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 39,600 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1476.56 feet and was 78.56 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 18,000 cusecs and 36,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1141.55 feet, which was 91.55 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,500 cusecs and 25,000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa , Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 44,700, 41,500, 34,000 and 4,400 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 10,700 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 1,800 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

December 16 reminds nation to unite against terrorism: President

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Asif Ali Zardari said the day of December 16, 2014 reminded the nation to get united against terrorism and increase their efforts to eliminate this menace.

In a message on the tenth anniversary of the Army Public School Peshawar attack, he said on 16th December, 2014 the terrorists attacked the future of our children and nation.

On this day, he said the terrorists mercilessly killed our citizens including our children, adding the terrorists showed their animosity towards public by attacking teachers and children. Attack on the children was cruel and against humanity, he added.

The President said the tragedy of APS made it clear that agenda of the terrorists was to create chaos and anarchy in the country.

The day of December 16 left un-erasable imprints on the collective memory of the nation, he continued.

President Zardari said that our sympathies were with the heirs of the innocent children. This day reminded of the sacrifices of the nation in the war against terrorism, he remarked.

He said the incidents like APS tragedy exposed the real face of terrorists and Khawarij and the Pakistani nation would not let the terrorists succeed in their nefarious designs.

The APS tragedy united the nation against terrorism. The history was witness that Pakistani nation did not lose courage in the face of tragedies, he stressed.

He said the political leadership of Pakistan also sacrificed in the war against terrorism, adding, "Today we pay tribute to the brave soldiers, security organizations and citizens for their sacrifices against terrorism. We will not let go in vain the sacrifices of our children, leaders and the citizens."

He reiterated the determination to root out the remains of terrorism and extremism from Pakistan.

"The international community have to make collective efforts to eradicate terrorism," The President concluded.

We focus on public service, not propaganda: Qaiser

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Maritime Affairs, Qaiser Ahmed Sheikh, said on Sunday that the coalition government was committed to serve the public rather than engaging in divisive politics.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that the government's top priority was national development, rather than wasting time on what he described as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaaf's (PTI) politics of chaos and allegations.

"Our allies are united and the coalition government is strong. We are focusing on public service, not propaganda," he added.

Answering question on political stability, he said that negotiations were essential, but they must be approached with sincerity and seriousness.

He further said that the government achieved lot of success on economic front. He painted the main points that IT exports have increased, foreign reserves are improving, adding that, Inflation has been reduced and the stock market is performing exceptionally well. He further said that the government successfully secured an IMF package, restoring confidence among international financial institutions.

IESCO notifies power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP):Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Sunday issued a power suspension programme for Tuesday 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 from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, Bhara Kahu- I & II, Athal, Shahpur, New Marvi, Sharifabad, Zia Masjid, Highway, CDA Office, Frash Town, Krotile Hotel, G-10/1, Fazal Ghi Mill, SES, I-10/4, G-11/3, Dargah, Pindi Point, Dhala, Balawara, Shahdara Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, 6th Road, Affendi Colony, Shukrial, Al Noor Colony, Service Road, APHS, Dhok Hukmdad, Major Masood, Gulshanabad, Gulzar Shaheed, Subhanuddin, Eid Gah, Gwalmandi, Jami Masjid, Committee Chowk, Azizabad, Race Course, Kamalabad, Nust Road, I-16/4, I-16, Benazir Bhutto Shaheed Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Zaraj-I & II, Zeta-I, IST, Dhok Awan, Mohra Nagyal, Pakistan Railway, Adamji Road, Bustan Khan Road, Car Chowk, Mohra Nagyal, Murri Brewery, Park View, Lala Zar, Shahpur, Gulshan Fatima, UC Lakhan, Jhawara, Chahan, Mansoor Shaheed, Lahtrar-I, Seep Abrar, New Choah, Fazal Ahmed Shaheed, Panjar, Sagri, Mandra. II, Pind Jatla, Karnab Kaswal, Raman, CB Khan. 2 Feeders, Attock Circle, Pind Pran, Velly, Sangjani, Shahulla Dutta, Paswal, MPCHS B-17, Sher Shah Suri, Taxla, HMC Road, Dhirak, Bahlot, Bin Bola, Paswal, New City Block.I,A,N,G, Lalazar,Islampura,Hassan Abdal,Darya Sharif, GBC.3, Miskeenabad, Attock Rural, Wisa, DI Colony,Soni Gharibwal,Minyawala, Murat,Qutbal ,Bhindar, Mahfuz Shaheed, Ahmadal, Gul Muhammad, Dhakner Feeders, Jhelum Circle,F-7Kachhari,F-13Gurmala, Shakrela, Puran, F-8Civil Line,F-9 Chak Daulat, Major Riaz Shaheed, Dina.I Bakralah, Pedial, Nathwala, Safdar Shaheed, F-12 Singhui, Mumtaz Shaheed, Dinah-4 City, Ward No. 8, Ghauri Dhimak, Pind Mate Khan, Mal Awan, Karsal, Qazian Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Tharpal, Line Park, Miani, Daulatala, Dhadial Rural, Dhoda ,Pinwal, Dandoot, Duffer, Tuba, PD Khan, Abdullahpur, Dhala, Nila, Dharnal, Murt, Jatla, Pira Fatial, Tau Muharram Khan, Khawan Feeders, From 08:00 AM to 05:00 PM, Naumanpura. I & III Feeders, GSO Circle, From 09:00 AM to 04:00 PM, Kaler Kahar, Miani, Khairpur, Padrar, Istiqlal Camp, PAF Klarkahar, Manara Feeders and surrounding areas.

Veteran PML-N Leader Sadiq-ul-Farooq dies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Veteran PML-N leader and former press secretary to former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Muhammad Sadiq-ul-Farooq, passed away on Sunday due to complications from a prolonged illness.

Family sources have confirmed that Muhammad Sadiq-ul-Farooq, who had been receiving treatment in hospital for kidney disease, passed away, private news channels reported. Sadiq-ul-Farooq had a remarkable career, marked by his leadership roles in several prominent organizations.

He served as the chairman of the House Building Finance Corporation, playing a crucial role in shaping the country's housing finance sector. Additionally, he chaired the Evacuee Waqf Properties Board, overseeing the management of evacuee properties and promoting the welfare of affected communities.

Furthermore, Sadiq-ul-Farooq held the position of Press Secretary, utilizing his expertise in communication to effectively represent the government's interests. The passing of Muhammad Sadiq-ul-Farooq has sent shock waves across the nation, with condolences pouring in from various quarters.

Politicians, government officials and social leaders have all come forward to express their deepest sympathies and sorrow over the loss of this distinguished individual. Leaders from the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) have been particularly vocal in their tributes, remembering Sadiq-ul-Farooq' s invaluable contributions to the party and his tireless efforts in promoting its ideals.

The funeral prayer for the deceased will be held on Friday at the H-11 Graveyard in Islamabad.

AIOU's academic workshops begins

ISLAMABAD (APP): Online workshops for the BS, B.Ed., and Postgraduate programs offered in the Fall 2024 semester of the Allama Iqbal Open University will begin today (Monday, December 16).

According to the AIOU, to facilitate students, those enrolled in these programs have been divided into different groups. The workshops for the first batch will start on December 16, the second batch on December 23, and the third batch on December 31.

The schedule for the remaining batches is being finalized. Students will attend their classes online via the LMS portal. Usernames and passwords for accessing the online classes have been sent to students via SMS.

The students who have not received their login credentials are advised to contact the nearest regional campus. Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Nasir Mehmood has instructed regional campuses to provide all possible assistance to students. Those without computer and internet access will be provided free access to computers and the internet at the regional campuses.

E-vehicles shuttle service to be started in Saddar's 'Pedestrian Bank Road'

RAWALPINDI (APP): The recently revamped Bank Road, Saddar has reshaped the market landscape through its conversion into a pedestrians' bazaar. The remodelling project of Rawalpindi Cantonment Board (RCB) entails the full removal of motorized vehicles, expanded car parking and undergrounding of electric cables.

To further facilitate the citizens, a shuttle service comprising electric vehicles will be started soon. Section I, from Murree Road to the Canning Road of the project which was recently completed and opened for the public, is receiving appreciation by the general public and the business community. In a brief interaction with APP, Ali Irfan Rizvi, Cantt Board's CEO informed him that four E-vehicles would be available in a month, for section one.

"We have received two e-vehicles and two more will be received in the next two weeks totalling four which will serve the citizens as shuttle service from parking areas; 'Potohar-1' to the market outlets", said Rizvi while talking on the pedestrian management mechanism in the market after removal of private vehicles. The remodeling project cost about Rs. 350.0 million for the civil works done by Rawalpindi Cantonment Board and Rs. 750.0 million for electrical works undergrounding electric cable etc., done by the IESCO. For redressal of the crowd management and the traffic congestion in Saddar areas, the Cantt Board has broadly categorized three parking areas, one for each section.

"More than 400 vehicles can be parked in Potohar-1 parking whereas Potohar-2 which can accommodate 220 plus vehicles, is further being expanded. Varan Bus Station has also been made available for parking having a parking capacity of 300 plus vehicles", said the Rawalpindi Cantt Board chief. He urged the citizens to visit the reshaped bazaar with confidence and enjoy their shopping. He also said that the work was undergoing with same pace in other sections.

Citizens are happy over the long-awaited 'peaceful shopping environment' in Saddar which home to the historic central market of the Cantonment. Nadim Malik, a resident of the area said that he was enjoying his car's safe parking and the food points available in the market. "Earlier, I remained uncertain of my car's security due to irregular parking and a jumbled array of bikes", he said adding that shopping is done when one has peace of mind. He further said that bringing his family to market has also become easy. Nabila, a housewife said that she was happy to bring her old mother to the market, which she thinks was not easy in past due to jarring vehicles' sounds and mismanaged parking.

"Even old moms and dads enjoy this peaceful environment" she said and added "Walking on tuff tiles, illuminating lamps and some food points collectively have made it easy for us to enjoy visiting the Bank Road". With marginal critics, the majority of the traders' community also appreciates the 'changed bazaar'. Amir Mughal, a shopkeeper said that businessmen must appreciate the remodeling initiative. He noted that easy access to the market was the first impression of any bazaar for customers.

"When people notice absence of the smooth entry and exit points of a bazaar, they generally tend to decline visiting it. Therefore, the peace of mind and a welcoming environment draw the market's overall appealing image, which itself serves as an attracting tool", he said.

The Frontier Post
AFGHANISTAN
Jamadi Us Sanni 13, 1446 — Monday, December 16, 2024

Malnutrition cases decreased

BAZARAK (BNA): The number of malnutrition cases in Panjshir has declined during the first nine months of this year compared to the same period last year. According to Dr. Hujjatullah Mohammadi, the Director of Public Health in Panjshir, 6,000 cases of malnutrition were recorded in the current year, compared to 7,472 cases in the corresponding period of the previous year. This reflects a reduction of 1,472 cases.

Ambassador attends expo

KABUL (BNA): Fazal Mohammad Haqqani, the Acting Ambassador of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan to Tehran, visited the 12th Iran Lab Expo, which showcased advanced laboratory technology and equipment. According to a statement from the embassy, this exhibition was organized by Iranian scientific and technological foundations. During his visit, Haqqani explored numerous companies and their state-of-the-art laboratory innovations.

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

Nimroz residents complain about limited health services

NIMROZ (TOLOnews): Some residents of Nimroz province have expressed concerns about the low quality of services and limited capacity of the provincial hospital in this province.

They say that due to the lack of necessary facilities and capacity in this hospital, patients' problems are not being adequately addressed.

Sher Khan, a resident of Nimroz, said: "The service capacity of the provincial hospital in Zaranj city is low, and our patients are not being properly cared for. I urge the officials in the caretaker government to expedite the construction and operationalization of the 100-bed hospital in this province."

Toryalai, another resident of Nimroz, added: "Whenever we have a patient and take them to the provincial hospital, we face many challenges. Traffic congestion and noise make it difficult to get the patient to the hospital on time. We call on local officials to complete the 100-bed hospital as soon as possible."

Local officials in Nimroz say the construction of the 100-bed hospital has been completed, and with its operations set to begin soon, patients' problems will be resolved.

Mohammad Qasim Khalid, the governor of Nimroz, stated: "The construction of the 100-bed hospital in this province has been completed, and with its operations starting in the near future, patients' issues will be resolved."

The construction of the 100-bed hospital in Nimroz province began in 2018 (1397 in the solar calendar) under the previous government, but with the return of the Islamic Emirate to power, the project was halted.

This project has since been resumed and is expected to be operational soon.

Oman interested in investing in Afghanistan

KABUL (Ariana News): An Omani official on Sunday expressed interest in investing in antimony and oil mines in Afghanistan during his visit to Kabul.

According to a press release from the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, Ali Al-Zad Ali, chairman of the Oman Chamber of Commerce and Investment, said in a meeting with the acting minister, Hedayatullah Badri, that his country will also offer scholarships to Afghan students.

Badri welcomed Oman's interest in investing in Afghanistan and pledged cooperation according to the law and principles.

Antimony is a semi-metal. In its metallic form it is silvery, hard and brittle. It is used in the electronics industry.

Kabul residents call for serious action on air pollution

KABUL (TOLOnews): Kabul residents are expressing concerns about the increasing air pollution in recent days. They are calling on the interim government authorities to address this challenge seriously.

Abdul Qader, a Kabul resident, said: "Our request to the government is to lower the price of firewood so that people can use it. Air pollution causes illnesses in both children and adults."

Ahmad Jawad, another Kabul resident, stated:" People in Afghanistan cannot afford to buy firewood, so they burn plastic and tires instead." Doctors believe that air pollution causes various diseases, especially respiratory illnesses.

Sohrab Arab, a physician, said: "One of the main reasons for hospitalizations of children and adults during the winter season is air pollution, which leads to respiratory, cardiac, and infectious diseases. If left untreated in the long term, it can also result in respiratory system cancers."

Munir Ahmad Karimi, another doctor, said: "Air pollution directly affects all of the body's systems and contributes to various illnesses."

Meanwhile, Kabul Municipality officials have announced nighttime patrols to monitor air pollution.

A representative from Kabul Municipality stated that these patrols aim to identify major sources of air pollution and to supervise activities that typically exacerbate pollution during both day and night.

Nematullah Barakzai, a Kabul Municipality representative, said: "In accordance with municipal regulations, all high-rise buildings and public bathhouses across Kabul are being inspected to ensure they have active filters during their operations."

Sayed Mohammad Suleimankhil, an environmental expert, said: "Efforts to control pollution require comprehensive public awareness campaigns and policy enforcement."

Additionally, the National Environmental Protection Agency has assured ongoing efforts to combat air pollution in the capital.

Ahmad Faisal Baryalai, head of inspection and monitoring at the agency, said: "We are consistently and strictly advising high-rise buildings and facilities with heating systems to ensure their filtration systems are operational."

Bayat Foundation delivers aid to vulnerable families in Kabul west

KABUL (Ariana News): The Bayat Foundation has begun distributing winter food packages to vulnerable families in the seventh district of Kabul.

These donations, which include essential food supplies, will continue through winter, in order to assist families facing significant economic hardships, poverty, and hunger.

The aid packages contain basic necessities such as flour, rice, and cooking oil, which are crucial for families as they navigate the difficult winter months.

Haji Mohammad Ismail, Deputy Head of the Bayat Foundation, explained the purpose of the initiative: "This year, we launched our winter aid distribution. Today, we are in Kabul's 7th district, where we are providing support to those identified by our team. The packages include flour, rice, and cooking oil to help ease their struggles during this challenging season."

He added: "Our assistance will soon reach other areas of Kabul and other provinces, God willing."

For many recipients, the aid arrived at a critical time. One resident shared their gratitude: "With no work available and many families struggling, these packages of rice, flour, and oil are incredibly helpful. They will make a significant difference for us this winter."

Local residents expressed their appreciation for the Bayat Foundation's efforts, noting how important this assistance is as the community faces both the cold weather and ongoing poverty.

"We are grateful to the Bayat Foundation for always standing with our poor and needy. This help will go a long way in solving the problems our people face during the winter," said one Kabul resident.

For nearly two decades, the Bayat Foundation has been a consistent source of support, providing food and non-food aid to thousands of families across Afghanistan's central regions and provinces, particularly during the harsh winter months.

Baradar chairs session

KABUL (BNA): A special meeting was held today under the chairmanship of Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund, Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, at Marmarin Palace to follow up on the economic issues discussed with the Russian delegation.

According to the Press Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, the meeting involved detailed discussions, after which directives were issued to the Ministries of Energy and Water, Mines and Petroleum, Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock, Public Works, Urban Development and Housing, Transport and Civil Aviation, and Industry and Commerce.

Additionally, the Directorate of Railways under the Ministry of Public Works and the General Directorate of Emirati Companies were instructed to identify major national economic projects within their respective sectors and share comprehensive information about them with the Prime Minister's Office.

These projects will then be presented to the Russian Federation's National Security Council, led by Secretary Sergei Shoigu, who visited Kabul with a high-level delegation on December 5th.

During their visit, the Russian delegation discussed enhancing economic cooperation, trade, and transit between the two countries in a meeting with the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs. Both sides emphasized the importance of joint efforts in these areas.

The meeting also included discussions on key economic sectors in which Russian companies have shown investment interest. After in-depth deliberations, the Inter-Ministerial Investment Committee under the Deputy PM for Economic Affairs was tasked with organizing an online session to facilitate better coordination with the interested Russian companies.

22 workers rescued alive from collapsed coal mine

SAMANGAN (TOLOnews): Asmatullah Moradi, the spokesperson for the governor of Samangan, stated that 22 workers who had been trapped under the rubble following the collapse of a coal mine in Dara-e-Suf Payeen district of the province have been rescued.

According to Moradi, the incident occurred yesterday evening in the Safed Khak area of Dara-e-Suf Payeen district.

The spokesperson for the governor of Samangan said: "Fortunately, 22 individuals who had been trapped under the rubble after the collapse of the coal mine in Dara-e-Suf Payeen district of Samangan province were rescued alive by local authorities and rescue teams."

Osman Hamidi, the director of the Samangan Provincial Hospital, stated: "Efforts are ongoing to quickly rescue our fellow citizens trapped in the mine, and medical teams along with ambulances have been dispatched to the area by the Samangan Department of Public Health."

Earlier, the spokesperson for the governor of Samangan told TOLOnews that approximately 35 workers were trapped under the rubble of the coal mine in Dara-e-Suf Payeen district.

Environmental experts warn that if mining is not carried out in a standardized manner, a large number of workers will lose their lives.

Ghulam Nabi Khurami, an environmental expert, said: "Unfortunately, most mining in Afghanistan is done without proper standards. When mining does not follow environmental and sustainable development principles, challenges will persist. If the Islamic Emirate coordinates with the Environmental Protection Agency for mining operations, such tragic incidents would never occur."

Most mining activities in the country are conducted in non-standard ways and using traditional methods, posing a significant risk to the lives of workers.

Rising firewood prices leave Herat residents struggling to stay warm

HERAT (TOLOnews): A number of residents in Herat say that with the onset of cold weather, the prices of firewood and charcoal have risen in the markets of this province.

They add that due to poverty and the high cost of firewood, they cannot afford to heat their homes.

Mohammad Tahir, a resident of Herat, said: "I wanted to buy firewood; its price was 80 to 90 Afghanis per seven kilos. four kilos of charcoal has reached 200 Afghanis. I can't afford to buy it."

Mahmood, another resident of Herat, added: "How can we get through the winter days? Since morning, I've earned only 10 Afghanis. How can I buy firewood? Previously, conditions were better, and I could afford firewood."

Some sellers in the firewood and coal market in the southern part of Herat city say that the prices have increased, and the number of their customers has decreased compared to last year.

Abdul Qayoom, one of the sellers, said: "This year, coal prices are higher than in previous years because the roads are blocked, and charcoal is not being transported. Last year, the price of coal was 180 Afghanis, but now it has reached 230 to 240 Afghanis."

Mohammad Azam, another seller, said: "As prices rise, people's purchasing power decreases. Most of the buyers of firewood and charcoal are impoverished individuals."

On the other hand, Herat's local officials have assured that they will take the necessary measures to prevent an increase in fuel prices this winter.

Abdul Hadi Noori, the spokesperson for Herat municipality, said: "I assure you that Herat municipality has assigned a team to monitor market prices. The governor and the Chamber of Commerce are also part of this team."

The rise in firewood and charcoal prices during the cold season has made life harder for impoverished people.

Finding food on the one hand and heating their homes on the other has become a serious concern for many poor families during the winter.

Unexploded ordnance claims 137 lives in 2024

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Directorate of Mine Action Coordination says that since the beginning of 2024, 137 people have been killed and 330 others injured as a result of unexploded ordnance detonations.

Nooruddin Rustamkhil, the head of this directorate, told TOLOnews that during this period, 150 square kilometers of land across the country have been cleared of unexploded mines.

He said: "Since the start of 2024, nearly 240 incidents have occurred nationwide, resulting in a total of 470 victims. Among them, 386 are children who have either been martyred or injured."

The breakdown of fatalities caused by mines and unexploded ordnance in 2024 is as 10 men, 2 women, 103 boys and 22 girls.

The breakdown of injuries caused by mines and unexploded ordnance in 2024 is as 53 men, 16 women, 226 boys and 38 girls.

Rustamkhil also stated that 57 teams are actively working to raise public awareness about the dangers of mines.

Minister and envoy discuss mining, trade

KABUL (BNA): Nooruddin Azizi, the Acting Minister of Industry and Commerce, met today with Engineer Ali Al-Zad Ali, the representative of the Omani government and head of Oman's Chamber of Commerce and Investment.

According to a statement from the Ministry of Industry and Commerce, the discussion focused on Oman's potential investment in Afghanistan's mining sector, establishing an international laboratory for mineral products, creating a joint chamber of commerce between the two countries, and increasing bilateral trade.

Previously, the Omani representative met with Mullah Hidayatullah Badri, the Acting Minister of Mines and Petroleum, where they discussed scholarships for Afghan students and Oman's interest in investing in Afghanistan's antimony and petroleum sectors.

Hidden treasures of Narenj Hill: Unveiling Kabul's ancient past

KABUL (TOLOnews): Narenj Hill is one of the historical and ancient sites of Kabul, located approximately one kilometer from the Bala Hissar of Kabul.

Sultan Masoud Moradi, the head of the Artifact Restoration Department at the Archaeology Directorate, while showcasing artifacts from the hill, shares various narratives about the history of this ancient heritage.

He said: "Narenj Hill is situated behind Zamburak Shah Mountain, about one kilometer from Bala Hissar of Kabul. Overall, this site contains a Buddhist temple."

On Narenj Hill, there was a Buddhist temple that dates back to the Kushan, Hephthalite, Kabul Shahs, and even the Islamic periods (Saffarids).

This temple was first discovered in 1833 by the British explorer Charles Masson. Later, in 2004, Afghan archaeologists, in collaboration with France, began surveying and excavating the hill, a process that continued until 2012.

Over fifty movable artifacts, including sculptures, coins, and other relics, have been transferred from this historic hill to the National Museum.

Additionally, 18 stupas, including the central stupa and votive stupas, have been preserved at this site.

Abdul Rahman Noori, a professional member of the Archaeology Directorate, stated: "We have protected two important sections of Narenj Hill, namely Zone 10 and Zone 14. The artifacts are currently in good condition, and we are now working to safeguard other parts of Narenj Hill in the future."

Ahmad Faheem, a resident of the area, explained the reason for the hill's name, Narenj (meaning "orange"): "This place was previously a Buddhist fire temple, and during past governments, yellow flowers grew on this hill, which is why it came to be known as Narenj Hill."

According to the Archaeology Directorate, the hill has been excavated eleven times by archaeologists, leading to the discovery of diverse artifacts.

Gandapur blames PDM govt for deteriorating law, order in KP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Ali Amin Khan Gandapur has stated that during the tenure of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan, the country maintained peace and stability.

However, he criticized the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government for deteriorating law and order, claiming that the government is now preoccupied with undermining PTI instead of addressing core issues.

Talking to the representatives of international media at the Chief Minister's House on Sunday, Gandapur remarked, "When I assumed office, the law and order situation was dire.

We are now prioritizing its improvement, police forces have been put on the frontline in some areas, and we are focusing on strengthening police and Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) operations in southern and merged districts."

He emphasized that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is on the frontline in the fight against terrorism, asserting, "Despite the challenges, our performance surpasses other provinces, we are the only province to have achieved the IMF targets, with a 44% increase in revenue over the past nine months, demonstrating our effective governance."

Highlighting the province's development strides, the Chief Minister shared that KP released more development funds in six months than previous governments managed in an entire year.

"We've decentralized power to improve governance and established the Awami Complaints Portal, resolving 67% of public grievances so far," he added.

Gandapur also mentioned initiatives like the establishment of a specialized mining company for efficient resource management and the construction of a provincial power transmission line to supply electricity from local power plants. These projects, he stated, are crucial for economic self-reliance and development.

On regional security, Gandapur reiterated the need for dialogue with Afghanistan to address cross-border challenges. "We have consistently raised this in provincial and federal apex committees. With a shared border and ongoing security threats, meaningful engagement with Afghanistan is essential.

Unfortunately, the federal government has not taken practical steps," The Chief Minister highlighted recent counterterrorism successes in the southern districts, expressing confidence in defeating terrorism with the support of security forces and the public.

Expressing concerns about protests and missing PTI workers, Gandapur said "We have serious concerns about missing workers, and 68 have sustained bullet injuries, and we demand the release of all illegally detained political leaders and the return of our stolen mandate."

He also criticized the excessive use of force during protests, claiming, "we faced direct gunfire, with injured workers being shot at further when we tried to evacuate them.

Despite the violence, we ensured the safe return of 100 Punjab police officials captured during protests." Concluding his remarks, the Chief Minister stated that PTI's sacrifices for democracy and true freedom remain unparalleled in Pakistan's political history.

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister addressing a gathering marked to offer prayers for those who lost their lives in D-Chowk.

Nation stands united against terrorism on APS tragedy: PM

LAHORE (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif reiterated the nation's unwavering resolve to combat terrorism as he marked the 10th anniversary of the devastating Army Public School (APS) tragedy on Sunday.

In his heartfelt message, he said that December 16, 2014, was a day of unimaginable sorrow when cowardly terrorists attacked APS Peshawar, martyring 144 innocent individuals, the majority of whom were young children.

"These ruthless, inhumane terrorists wreaked devastation and tore apart dreams, futures, and hopes. A decade has passed, but the pain of losing those innocent lives remains fresh," he said.

PM Shehbaz Sharif emphasized that the sacrifices of the children and teachers who lost their lives in this brutal attack will never be forgotten.

He paid tribute to their bravery, saluted their families for their resilience, and honored the efforts of Pakistan's security forces in standing firm against the enemies of the nation.

He further stated, "The entire nation stands united like a solid wall against cowardly terrorists and, Insha'Allah, will continue to do so.

These miscreants, acting on the behest of foreign enemies, have no connection to religion or societal values and target innocent Pakistanis for their nefarious agendas."

The prime minister urged the nation to renew its commitment to building a peaceful and secure Pakistan. "No child should ever again face such cruelty, and no family should have to endure this loss. It is our duty to ensure that the sacrifices made on December 16, 2014, were not in vain," he asserted.

The APS tragedy remains one of the darkest days in Pakistan's history. "We will never forget. We will never forgive," PM Shehbaz Sharif declared, vowing to continue the fight against terrorism.

Consensus eludes as Kurram peace jirga meets for 9th day

KURRAM (INP): The marathon peace jirga, being held in Kohat to deliberate upon ways to restore law and order situation in Parachinar town of Kurram District where since July about 200 people had been killed in clashes, has taken its discussions into ninth consecutive day with no consensus in sight.

The participants from both sides of the sectarian divide held lengthy parleys at the grand jirga chiefly focused on reopening of main roads and some other important issues.

Representatives of provincial and district governments were also on hand for assistance but evolving a consensus on peace and security in Kurram was still a far cry.

MNA and parliamentary leader Majlis Wahdat-e-Muslimeen (MWM) Engineer Hameed Hussain said that due to closure of roads local people were facing numerous difficulties to shop for groceries and other essential commodities for daily use.

He further said that due to non-availability of medicines, and food items miseries and hardships of local people were multiplying day by day. He said the participants of the jirga should focus on reopening of the roads and security of the locals on priority basis.

The lawmaker said that in case of their failure, MWM will start an agitation movement for immediate provision of relief to the people of Kurram.

Social activist Mir Afzal Khan said that due to clash between the rival tribes the exit and entry points of Kurram had been closed for the last 67 days.

People were facing severe conditions due to the biting along with shortage of essential daily-life commodities and suspension of petrol and gas supplies in the area.

Deputy Commissioner Javedullah Mehsud said that measures were being taken to reopen roads for supply of medicines and daily consumable items.

Thousands of residents are stranded without food and medicines in parts of remote Kurram district, which borders Afghanistan, as the government struggles to restore calm after deadly clashes between Sunni and Shiite tribes stemming from decades-old tensions over farmland.

"Our generations yearn for peace," 72-year-old Ghulam told at his home in Parachinar, the main town in Kurram district.

Kurram, known as the "Parrot's Beak" for its protrusion into neighbouring Afghanistan, is bounded by dizzyingly high mountains, the northern flank of which includes the Tora Bora caves.

"I have never experienced peace in my life and have no hope my coming generations will live free of fear," Ghulam said.

The latest round of violence in Kurram erupted in May and intensified in July, when gunmen opened fire on a council of elders attempting to settle the latest round of disagreements over land.

Various truces announced since then have held for only weeks or days at a time.

More than 300 shops and over 200 homes in Sunni areas have been destroyed, often by fire, and hundreds of families have fled.

Trump taps Grenell as envoy

WASHINGTON (Reuters): U.S. President-elect Donald Trump named his social media platform CEO Devin Nunes to lead an intelligence advisory panel and said his former intelligence chief Richard Grenell would run "special missions" in places such as U.S. adversaries Venezuela and North Korea.

"Ric will work in some of the hottest spots around the World, including Venezuela and North Korea," Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform. "Ric will continue to fight for Peace through Strength, and always put AMERICA FIRST."

Trump did not name any other specific countries such as Iran in his post naming Grenell as the "Presidential Envoy for Special Missions."

Grenell previously served as acting director of national intelligence during Trump's 2017-21 term and was Trump's ambassador to Germany and a special presidential envoy for Serbia and Kosovo peace negotiations. Nunes, a former U.S. lawmaker who runs Trump's Truth Social platform, will serve as chairman of the President's Intelligence Advisory Board, which offers independent assessments of intelligence agencies' effectiveness and planning.

A longtime Trump defender who led the U.S. House of Representatives Intelligence Committee during part of Trump's first White House term, Nunes will remain CEO while also serving on the White House panel, Trump said in a separate post on Truth Social, which is part of Trump Media & Technology Group.

Naqvi meets Saudi Minister of State

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Interior Minister Mohsin Naqvi met with Saudi Minister of State for Interior Dr. Khalid Mohammed Abdullah Al Battal here on Sunday.

On his arrival, he was warmly welcomed by the Saudi Minister of State for Interior Dr. Khalid Mohammed Abdullah Al Battal and Pakistani Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Ahmed Farooq.

During the meeting, matters of mutual interest and Pakistan-Saudi Arabia relations were discussed in detail.

Mohsin Naqvi felicitated the Saudi leadership and the people on being awarded the hosting rights for the 2034 FIFA World Cup and expressed good wishes for the event.

He said that Saudi Arabia is a brotherly Islamic country and Pakistan's most trusted friend, adding that Pakistan takes pride in this friendship.

The Interior minister further stated that Saudi Arabia has always shown immense love and sincerity towards Pakistan.

He also appreciated Mohsin Naqvi appreciated Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman's vision of 2030 which paves the way for achieving progress and prosperity.

The Saudi Minister of State for Interior said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia are enjoying very close and cordial relations.

He expressed the hope that important meetings with Saudi officials during the visit of Interior Minister will further enhance ties between the two countries.

18th Constitutional amendment empowered provinces: Gilani

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Syed Yousaf Raza Gilani Sunday said that 18th Constitutional Amendment was instrumental in empowering provinces to take ownership of their health-related affairs, allowing for local solutions tailored to the unique needs of their populations.

"The devolution of powers helped in creating a more inclusive, participatory framework for healthcare governance" the Chairman Senate made these remarks at a Health Awareness and Recognition Seminar.

"It is time to reaffirm our collective dedication to improving healthcare in Pakistan. Together, we can ensure that our people not only receive the care they deserve but also live in a society that values health as a cornerstone of its development", the Chairman Senate said.

While addressing the participants, he recalled his tenure as prime minister, taking concrete steps to strengthen the healthcare sector, focusing on improving primary healthcare services and bridging the gap in access between urban and rural areas.

He informed that the government promoted public-private partnerships under his leadership to enhance resource mobilization and encouraged investments in human resource development to address the shortage of skilled healthcare professionals. "One of the most transformative milestones during that period was the 18th Constitutional Amendment", he stated.

He remarked that access to healthcare is not just a basic human right but also the foundation for national progress and in countries like Pakistan facing grave health challenges, we must advocate for preventative healthcare.

He commended Tianshi International Pakistan for organizing the important event to raise awareness about critical health issues.

"Senate continues to prioritize discussions and oversee policies aimed at strengthening our healthcare system and removing barriers to accessing quality care. Today's seminar is a testament to our collective resolve to raise health awareness and promote wellbeing", he added.

In closing, Chairman Senate emphasized that Pakistan must unite for better healthcare, focusing on rural development and innovation.

Germany warns Assad supporters

BERLIN (AP): Germany's foreign minister is warning anyone involved in atrocities for the ousted Syrian government against seeking refuge in her country, saying they would face "the full force of the law."

Germany has been a major destination for Syrian refugees over the past decade, and several hundred thousand Syrian nationals live there. In rulings since 2021, former Syrian secret police officers already have been convicted in Germany for overseeing or facilitating the abuse of detainees.

"To any of (former President Bashar) Assad's torturers who might be considering fleeing to Germany now, I can only say clearly: We will bring all the regime's henchmen to account for their terrible crimes with the full force of the law," Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock told Sunday's edition of the Bild am Sonntag newspaper.

Baerbock called for international security authorities and intelligence services to work closely together.

Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said Germany is "extremely vigilant" and pointed to border checks that the country already has put in place on its frontiers as it tries to reduce irregular migration.

She told Bild am Sonntag that "no one who participated in atrocities is safe from prosecution here." She said the convictions already handed down show that Germany pursues such crimes rigorously and should act as a deterrent against people involved in them going there.

More broadly, German officials have stressed that many well-integrated arrivals of recent years will be welcome to stay after the removal of Assad. That was followed by some talk of Syrians going home, which Chancellor Olaf Scholz acknowledged in a video released Friday "deeply unsettled" them.

"Anyone who is working here, who is well integrated, is and remains welcome in Germany," he said. "That goes without saying."

"Some of the refugees hope they can soon return to their homeland. We will support that as soon as the situation allows," he added. But "only the coming days, weeks and months will show what direction Syria takes after Assad."

South Korean democracy holds firm against Yoon's martial law bid

SEOUL (AFP): South Korea's swift rebuke of martial law and removal of President Yoon Suk Yeol from office have been hailed in the country as evidence of the strength of its young democratic institutions.

Yoon's bid to suspend civilian rule and claims of a communist conspiracy harkened back to the dark days of dictatorship in South Korea four decades ago, when human rights abuses by military and security forces were widespread.

But the fallout from the failed attempt was immediate and South Korea's institutions kicked in — Yoon's inner circle were swiftly placed under police investigation and hauled before a parliament demanding answers.

Lawmakers rapidly launched impeachment proceedings against Yoon for his alleged "insurrection" and attempt to override the country's democratic constitution.

And on Saturday he was removed by a secret ballot in a tense vote in the ornate parliamentary chamber.

The vote sparked wild jubilation on the streets of Seoul — opinion polls suggested more than 75 percent of the public supported impeachment.

"This situation has provided the Korean people with an invaluable lesson on what democracy truly entails and how our democratic republic can be protected," lawyer Yun Boknam, president of Lawyers for a Democratic Society, told AFP.

"For the people this has been a transforming experience in building a more powerful democratic consciousness among them."

Bordering isolated, totalitarian North Korea and separated by a strip of sea from vast and authoritarian China, South Korea has for years been a posterchild for boisterous, democratic rule in East Asia.

Forged in the chaos and bloodshed of the 1980s anti-dictatorship movement — from which many of the country's current crop of politicians emerged — South Koreans have long sought to challenge their leaders in raucous street protests and vibrant displays of dissent.

And its strong rebuke of authoritarian rule this week again saw it buck a global trend towards autocratic politics, from the re-election this year of Donald Trump in the United States to a surge in right-wing populism in Europe.

That trend has seen UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres warn that democratic values are "under assault" globally — pointing to rising attacks and restrictions on media and human rights defenders.

But for many South Koreans, there was never any doubt that the country would turn back the clock.

"What we have witnessed over the past two weeks is a testament to the fact that it is now impossible to regress the country to its authoritarian past," said Bae Kang-hoon, co-founder of political think tank Valid.

"There is a red line drawn in the minds of the Korean people: that the country should never regress back to military rule," Bae told AFP.

"Yoon's martial law proclamation clearly crossed that line for many."

Should the Constitutional Court remove him from power, Yoon will gain the ignominious distinction of being only the second South Korean president to have been impeached.

Fellow conservative Park Geun-hye — who Yoon, as chief prosecutor, played a key role in removing — was also impeached under very similar circumstances.

But in the wake of that impeachment, South Korea "failed" to ensure the popular momentum that brought down Park translated into real change, Kim Jeong-min of analysis service Korea Pro told AFP.

"For this popular will to translate into better government will require a wholesale review of the constitution and the system," she said.

And Lim Ji-bong, constitutional law professor at Sogang University, stressed that "too much power" has been concentrated in the presidency.

Reforms could see the country "weaken the so-called 'imperial presidency' by getting rid of many of the president's powers and investing them in the legislature", he suggested.

ISTANBUL: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Attaullah Tarar meeting with his Lebanese Counterpart Ziad Makary

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