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In major relief, govt slashes petrol price by Rs. 40 per litre

The finance ministry reduces tariffs of high-speed diesel by Rs15 per litre

Monitoring Desk

ISLAMABAD: In a relief for the inflation-hit masses, the caretaker government on Sunday reduced the price of petrol by Rs40 per litre and that of high-speed diesel (HSD) by Rs15 for the next fortnight.

Sharing the latest rates of petroleum products on its official X handle, formerly known as Twitter, the Ministry of Finance said that the new price of petrol is Rs283.38 and Rs303.18 for HSD.

It said that the government has revised the con-

sumer prices of petroleum products in the wake of variations in international prices of the commodity and improvement in the exchange rate.

The new prices will come into effect from 12am (tonight, October 16) and remain in place till October 31. New prices of petroleum products for the fortnight starting from October 16 will be as follows:

In addition to this, the government also cut the prices of light diesel by Rs19.59 per litre and kerosene oil by Rs22.43 for the next fortnight. After the

massive reduction in the prices of petroleum products, the rates of kerosene oil will drop to Rs214.85 per litre.

The interim government, led by Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar, is charging zero general sales tax (GST) on all petroleum products while the rate of petroleum levy (PL) on petrol is Rs60 per litre.

In order to generate additional revenue to achieve the tax collection target for this fiscal year, the authorities, however, increased the levy on diesel by Rs5 to Rs55 per litre.



MARRAKECH: Dr. Shamshad Akhtar, Caretaker Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Economic Affairs, participated in a high-profile meeting of Finance Ministers with the Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in Marrakesh.

Share grief with bereaved families CM terms killing of labourers as extreme of brutality

ISLAMABAD: The bodies of six ill-fated labourers gunned down by unknown armed assailants in Turbat city were dispatched to Multan from Quetta on Sunday morning. The coffins of slain labourers were sent to the native area, Multan by special helicopter of Balochistan government from Khalid Airbase.

The caretaker Chief Minister, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki along with the Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafaqat, Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Flt. Lieutenant (Retd) Asad, Deputy Commissioner Kech, Hussain Jan Baloch and

other high ups were present at the time of sending of bodies at the Khalid Airbase. Earlier, bodies of slain labourers were brought to Quetta from Turbat by plane of the provincial government on Saturday night.

Meanwhile, while speaking to the heirs of labourers, Chief Minister expressed heartfelt condolence and sympathy to them and other bereaved family.

He said that every person in Balochistan is grieved over the tragic killing of labourers, and as such share grief and sorrow with the bereaved families of those killed in Turbat the other day. He said that

there's no alternate and compensation of the human lives, however, the provincial government would ensure early payment of the compensation to the bereaved families of martyrs and injured labourers.

He on the occasion described the killings of labourers as extreme of brutality, and adding he pledged to take the culprits involved in it to task at every cost. Meanwhile, the DC Kech Hussain Baloch briefed the caretaker Chief Minister about the gory incident of killing of labourers in Turbat.

He told that the slain labourers had been working in Turbat for several years.

Caretaker CM Punjab calls on PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Sunday called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar.

During the meeting, they discussed matters related to the province, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

BLA commander, associate gunned down in Turbat IBO

RAWALPINDI (INP): The security forces on Sunday claimed to have gunned down a commander of banned outfit Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) and his associate in an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in Balochistan's Turbat.

According to details, the security forces conducted an intelligence-based operation against the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA) in Balochistan's Turbat district and killed Saddam Hussain Musim, a commander of the Abdul Majeed Brigade of the group.

Saddam Hussain was also known by his aliases Guru and Jabbar. During the operation, his associate - identified as Maqsood - was also killed.

The security forces also seized a large quantity of weapons and explosive material from the possession of killed terrorists.



QUETTA: Activists of Balochistan National Party Women Wing hold a protest in favor of their demands outside QPC.

Work on key road projects in Balochistan to start soon: NHA

ISLAMABAD (INP): The National Highway Authority (NHA) will soon start construction work on the Awaran-Nal section of the Ratodero-Gwadar Motorway (M-8) and the Zhob-Qilla Saifullah section of the National Highway 50 (N-50).

The projects are of utmost importance given the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) initiative, said Shahid Ihsan Ullah, Member (West Zone), NHA, during a live session, according to a Gwadar Pro's report.

Shahid said that NHA has paid mobilization advance to contractors of all three packages of the 168-kilometre Awaran-Nal section of M-8.

They have started a land survey and will soon launch construction activities, he added.

Awaran-Nal is the last missing link in the M-8

Motorway, which links the Peshawar-Karachi Motorway with Gwadar near Sukkur in Sindh province.

Work on the 146-kilometre Hoshab-Awaran section of the M-8 is already underway. The rest of the key artery is functional.

In addition, NHA has awarded contracts for three sections of the N-50 Highway between Zhob and Qilla Saifullah, and will soon mobilize contractors for physical works, Shahid said.

Construction work is already underway on two packages of the N-50 between Qilla Saifullah and Kuchlak, a town near Quetta.

"We are striving to open certain patches of the road for traffic in November as per instructions of Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar ul Haq Kakar," Shahid said.



ISLAMABAD: The Caretaker Chief Minister of the Punjab Mohsin Naqvi calls on the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Pakistan equates Israel's siege, bombardment of Gaza with genocide of Palestinians

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani on Sunday said that Pakistan condemned the siege of Gaza as poor Palestinians were facing unabated Israel aggression and had been without water, food and power, leading to a severe human crisis. He said Israel committed a genocide against the people of Palestine and the grave situation arising out was the result of seven decades of illegal occupation of the Palestine territories. Addressing a press conference, the foreign minister said Israel should respect and implement the international laws, the United Nations Security Council and the Organization of the Islamic Cooperation (OIC) resolutions over the Palestinians' rights to self-determination for an independent state.

He said that an emergency and extraordinary meeting of the Executive Committee of the OIC would be held in Jeddah on October 18 to

discuss the ongoing situation in Palestine.

Israel had committed aggression and conducted aerial aggression over Gaza which resulted in the deaths of scores of women and children, he said, adding that any attempt to equate Israel, an aggressor, with the Palestinians' struggle for self-determination was unacceptable. Foreign Minister Jilani further stressed a separate status of Palestine under the two-state policy as accepted by the international community with an independent state of Palestine having pre-1967 borders with Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital.

He also categorically maintained that there was no change of Pakistan's policy with regard to Israel, it would continue pursuing the same policy as adopted in the past and would continue in the future till Palestinians get right their right to self-determination under the UNSC and OIC resolutions. To a question regard-

ing the humanitarian aid to sieged Palestinians, he said that they were in touch with the international community and the Muslim countries, but unfortunately, there was a complete siege of Gaza.

He said this aspect would be highlighted during the upcoming OIC executive committee meeting in which they would consider the coordinated response of the OIC member countries as to how to bring an end to the violence perpetrated by Israel and how to provide immediate humanitarian assistance to Palestinians. Pakistan was ready to provide humanitarian assistance and had been in touch with the Egyptian authorities, he added.

He said the OIC committee meeting would make a forceful case for the early resolution of the issue.

About Caretaker Prime Minister's upcoming visit to China on October 17-18 to attend the third Belt and

President urges UN & OIC to meet urgently for cessation of brutal Israeli action

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Sunday strongly condemning the brutalities and massacre of Palestinians in Gaza, urging the United Nations (UN) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to meet urgently for cessation of the ruthless actions.

He said the UN and the OIC should ensure that necessary medical aid, food and other supplies are urgently sent in to prevent further devastation and the human catastrophe in Palestine.

"Human history has never witnessed such cruelty and barbarism being committed by Israel at a massive level; even water, electricity, food supply and medicine have been cut off," the president said in a statement issued by the President House.

He said Israel had crossed all limits by killing children, women and innocent people.

Pakistan hosting Afghans without any monetary benefit in return: UNHCR

GENEVA (INP): United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has said on Sunday that Pakistan has been hosting Afghan refugees for the last over 40 years without receiving any funds in return.

On the other hand, the European Union Agency of Asylum and the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) have termed the presence of millions of illegal immigrants on Pakistani soil a threat to the country.

The report says that 1.7 million Afghans are living in the country illegally without any proof and reg-

istration. "Pakistan is not the only country which has decided to evict illegal Afghan nationals," it says, adding, "Iran, too, in 2021 had ordered over one million Afghans to leave the country."

Afghan nationals living in Pakistan have been facing the ire of the authorities after the apex committee a few weeks ago asked them to leave the country by October 31 or else face the music.

The decision was taken in view of their participation in incidents of violence of May 9 as well as involvement in incidents of terrorism.

Balochistan lucky to have hundreds of talented experts & researchers in public sector varities: Governor

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that the government always requires services of the experts and researchers of the relevant sectors for formulation of its economic policies, preparation of budget and planning making.

In this context, we are so lucky to have hundreds of the talented experts and researchers in our all public sector universities.

Many of these experts and scholars are foreign graduate and the provincial government can benefit

from their expertise in policy and planning making.

In addition to this, there are so many intelligent, keen and talented people belonging to different sectors with whose knowledge and experience, excellent guidance can be acquired.

The Governor also said that all the government policies and development projects are aimed at benefiting and empowering the common man. By doing so, the government wants to spend the public budget and exchequer on the public, he maintained.



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki offering Fateha for labourers who were killed in Turbat before despatching their dead bodies to Multan

Dr Shamshad Akhtar meets UAE Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Finance, Revenue and Economic Affairs Dr Shamshad Akhtar on Sunday met with Minister of State for Financial Affairs of United Arab Emirates (UAE) Mohamed bin Hadi Al Hussaini and discussed matters relating to the mutual interest.

The meeting was held on the sidelines of the annual meetings of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund at Marrakech, said a press release issued here.

The discussion focused on further strengthening economic ties between Pakistan and the UAE, exploring avenues for enhanced cooperation in finance and revenue matters, promoting investment and mutual economic growth.

Caretaker govt to ensure elections in peaceful manner: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Sunday said concerted efforts were underway to ensure the upcoming election in a peaceful and amicable environment.

Talking to Dawn News Television in a programme titled "In Focus", the minister said the caretaker government had been performing its duties and responsibilities in accordance with the constitution and law.

He said the political activities should be observed in a way that did

not affect the day-to-day affairs of the general public. "If anyone is facing harassment, they can approach the Election Commission," he said, adding the ECP was a constitutional body. Solangi said the caretaker government wanted good terms with all the political parties.

"We want to create a pleasant environment for elections and we want elections that are acceptable to everyone," he added. The minister said the electoral history of Pakistan suggested that the polls were held in the country during extreme weathers.

BNP stages protest against Wadh situation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Balochistan National Party (BNP) staged protest demonstration against the situation in Wadh here outside the Quetta press club on Sunday afternoon.

While the leaders of BNP were also present at the protest demo, mainly it was participated by the women and children.

The leader BNP and former member provincial assembly, Shakeela Naveed Delwar and others also joined the protest.

They condemned the alleged operation in Wadh and anti-BNP Chief policies of the government.

They demanded of the concerned authorities to stop the alleged Wadh operation and actions against Sardar Akhtar Mengal.

It may be mentioned here that the district administration had barred the BNP from staging protest on Saturday.

A letter was also written to the president BNP Quetta by Deputy Commissioner in this regard.



QUETTA: A rally of Jamaat-e-Islami led by Maulana Hidayatur Rehman against Israel passing through Mandan chowk

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Dirty energy

Sindh Industry Minister Younus Dagha's recent call for the 'aggressive' use of coal in the country's energy mix — given its low cost — is problematic on several counts. Although affordability is an important consideration for a financially strapped country like Pakistan, reliance on coal would be worrisome given the environmental implications. Coal is considered the dirtiest of all fossil fuels. When burned, it produces sulphuric acid and nitric acid which cause acid rain and other forms of pollution. Coal also produces the least energy for every CO2 molecule it emits into the atmosphere, thus enhancing the greenhouse effect and leading to global warming. Even if we consider Mr Dagha's argument that after the Ukraine war, Europe, China and the US increased their coal dependence, comparing Pakistan's carbon footprint to larger nations can be a misleading premise. Just because our footprint is 'miniscule' in comparison, it shouldn't give us a free pass to increase it further. And while it is easy to point out that growing economies such as India and China are heavy coal users, it must also be considered they are actively exploring and investing in renewable energy to shed their reliance on coal. Pakistan should focus on harnessing the vast potential of its own renewable resources.

It is heartening to note that according to the 10-year Indicative Generation Capacity Expansion Plan, the country aims to produce 60pc of electricity through non-fossil fuels by 2030. However, maximising the use of coal for the remaining 40pc would nullify these very efforts. Given our potential in hydel, wind and solar energy — with hydel already contributing 37.6pc to the energy mix according to August data — these indigenous, renewable sources should be further explored and optimised. While coal might offer a temporary economic respite, the environmental repercussions are far-reaching and long-term. Pakistan must carve out an energy strategy that not only caters to its immediate needs but also ensures a green and sustainable future. Published in Dawn, October 15th, 2023.



By Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

Of late, there has been a rapid growth of think tanks in Pakistan. These organisations carry out policy-related research and are a platform for dialogue to facilitate informed decision-making. The growing community of think tanks in Pakistan is linked to the larger global research community. According to the Global Go To Think Tank Report 2020, published by the Think Tank and Civil Society Programme (TTCS) of the University of Pennsylvania, there are 11,175 think tanks in the world, more than half of them in North America and Europe. The US has 1,872, the highest number for any country, according to Statista, a global data and business intelligence platform. Washington, DC, alone houses 397.

While some US think tanks have a longer history like the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace (established in 1910) and the Brookings Institution (1916), 58 per cent of American think tanks were founded in the last 25 years, according to TTCS's programme director, Prof McGann.

Asia is catching up, as manifested by a dramatic rise in the number of think tanks since the dawn of the 21st century. Some have become iconic names in the research community, such as the China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations, which is a composite of 15 institutes, and India's Observation Research Foundation.

In Pakistan, most think tanks are sponsored

by the government while some operate with assistance from institutional or private donors, exercising considerable autonomy. The new trend is for Pakistani universities to establish research institutes as an integral part of their academic programmes. Most think tanks in Pakistan deal with strategic studies, while some focus on sectoral issues.

As elsewhere in the world, input from think tanks is increasingly engaging the attention of public policy practitioners in Pakistan. The Brookings Institution published a book titled 'The Fifth Estate: Think Tanks, Public Policy, and Governance' in 2016, arguing that think tanks constitute the fifth estate, the other four being the clergy, nobility, labour, and the press.

However, in Pakistan, academia and the research community often complain that their research work is not being utilised by the government to reform public policies, while government functionaries feel their time is spent mostly firefighting and handling the information overload rather than benefiting from the research community's creative work. They also don't find research products created by academia attractive enough because most research papers are voluminous and follow tedious research methodologies.

Think tanks are, therefore, increasingly producing short and understandable policy briefs to get information "in the right form, in the right hands, at the right time", thus effectively influencing public policy, a key aim for them. In that sense, they are a useful bridge between the government and academia.

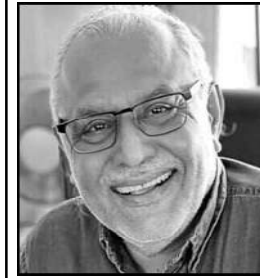
In the age of social media, AI, and big data, information flows can be overwhelming. Political leaders and other policymakers tend to absorb only concise

pointed messaging. Public and private donors also provide funding only for project-specific ideas. However, the information age can be transformative if data is handled well. For instance, ideas generated by some think tanks influence public policy in a revolutionary manner. Some research articles, such as 'End of History' or 'Clash of Civilisations' generated debate amongst academics as well as policy practitioners in nearly every country.

More recently, the US National Security Strategy of December 2017, which announced strategic competition with China as its top priority, was preceded by a flurry of research articles on spheres of influence and even a 2017 book 'Destined for War' by Graham Allison. Likewise, considerable research work on climate change has influenced global action on mitigating its adverse impacts. Given that Pakistan is confronted with monumental political, economic and social challenges, new ideas and out-of-the-box thinking are crucial. The National Security Policy announced in January 2022 had embraced many of the ideas discussed in various think tank settings. It would be important to rejuvenate the waning enthusiasm of many think tanks which were ready to build on the six-point agenda of the NSP.

Pakistan's think tanks and academia need to persevere in generating ideas that can pull the country out of testing times. Government-sponsored think tanks should not spend their energies validating the official narrative but focus on creating ideas that can galvanise national potential in a country that has a rich civilisational, religious and archaeological heritage. — Courtesy Dawn

Revolt of the hopeless



By Abbas Nasir

Since 2008, UN figures show that some 250 Israelis and over 5,500 Palestinians have been killed in the Gaza Strip, which equals a ratio of one Israeli to 22 Palestinians killed during the occupation. (It is safe to assume that most of the deaths occurred during military operations.)

If this ratio does not tell the story then the number of wounded would, as that figure is staggeringly worse. You can google the graph as also a related graphic which shows the progressive expansion of the occupation since the Nakba (the catastrophe — of expulsion) in 1948.

Neither fact is surprising because Israel's Western backers, particularly in the US, have armed it with state-of-the-art weaponry, which far exceeds the arsenals of even the most powerful militaries in the Middle East, let alone ragtag Palestinian militant groups.

Israel's military superiority is so overwhelming that it may have sapped any desire for a peace deal based on the return of some Palestinian land for a separate Arab homeland in return for security guarantees for the Jewish state.

In addition, unconditional US support has emboldened extreme right-wing Israeli political parties in power, including the one headed by Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, to rely only on military solutions and continue with the unabated expansion of Jewish settlements on Palestinian land. — Courtesy Dawn

This expansion has seen centuries-old Palestinian olive farms and agricultural fields obliterated and concrete poured down their natural water sources to seal them, under the eye of the heavily armed soldiers of the Israeli Defence Forces.

Palestinians have also been forced out of their homes during the ongoing expansion which has taken the Jewish settlement population to about 700,000. These settlements are emerging all over Israel whose 9.3 million people have over 21,000 square kilometres to inhabit.

The settlers, who are all heavily armed, treat the Palestinians in the same manner as occupation forces treat the vanquished. This is seen not only in the case of the settlements but of late also in the access to Al Aqsa Mosque. It is an unbearable daily humiliation.

Gaza is 365 square kilometres — 41km long and 12km at its widest, shrinking to 6km for a long stretch. It is fenced in on three sides and faces the Mediterranean Sea on its west. Squeezed into this 'strip' are the homes of 2.2m Palestinians.

The Jewish state's sense of military superiority and the impunity with which the US and some Western allies almost unconditionally back it, regardless of the nature of its transgressions, such as the rapid expansion of settlements in recent years, seem to have led to hubris.

For what else could explain what the militant group Hamas was able to do last week? No, this is by no means to endorse the killing of unarmed civilians. Israel has long prided itself on its exceptional intelligence, proudly claiming to have penetrated the ranks of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad and having a plethora of information about their plans, capabilities etc. If the scale and

brutality of the Hamas blitz had not shocked the Israeli nation and forced it to close ranks, accusations would have reached a crescendo by now and heads may have rolled. It was a massive intelligence failure.

If a survey in Saturday's Jerusalem Post is an accurate representation of the sentiment in Israel, once Israel's military retribution phase is over, during which Palestinians — overwhelmingly the civilian population, half of whom consist of children — are being targeted, Netanyahu's and his allies' political career may be in jeopardy as they are being blamed squarely for the Oct 7 events.

And if the ferocity of the Hamas attacks, which targeted unarmed civilians, besides military establishments, were not enough on their own, the propaganda war that was unleashed drowned out any sane voice in the outrage over unsubstantiated claims, regurgitated by no less than US President Joe Biden, that babies were beheaded and burned.

A week on, the global outrage over the Hamas atrocities is being slightly tempered with a realisation in some Western capitals, most notably Washington, DC, that their full support to Israel in the latter's 'self-defence' actions may destabilise the region if Israel tries to achieve its historical kill ratio of 1:22. It has overwhelming numerical and technological superiority over the Palestinians. Some right-wing Israelis have hinted at 'cleansing' Gaza of Palestinians. I know of several who have decided to stay on in the north, saying they have nowhere to go and they won't facilitate a second Nakba. Like you, I watch in horror. The images are heartbreaking. Humanity seems dead. — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

GCC states attain remarkable 7.3% GDP growth in 2022

MARRAKESH (SPA/APP): The Secretary-General of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), Jassem Mohamed Al-Budaiwi, emphasized that despite economic disruptions, policymakers in GCC countries have successfully alleviated the economic consequences of these challenges.

The GCC nations experienced substantial growth in their Gross Domestic Product (GDP), reaching 7.3% in 2022.

Al-Budaiwi's remarks came while attending the Arab Governors' meeting with the President of the World Bank Group, Ajay Banga. The meeting took place on the sidelines of the

annual meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank on Saturday in Marrakech, Kingdom of Morocco. During his speech, the GCC Secretary-General emphasized that economic challenges present a risk to the mutual objective of a poverty-free world characterized by sustainable development and widespread prosperity. He pointed out that the global economy is currently traversing a precarious course, with the World Bank forecasting a substantial deceleration in global economic growth in the years ahead.

Al-Budaiwi also

underscored that tackling global challenges demands a dedication to shared values and objectives, recognizing that the interdependence of nations necessitates collaborative efforts and synergy.

Furthermore, he emphasized that economic challenges present a risk to the mutual objective of a poverty-free world characterized by sustainable development and widespread prosperity. He pointed out that the global economy is currently traversing a precarious course, with the World Bank forecasting a substantial deceleration in global economic growth in the years ahead.

Al-Budaiwi also underscored that tackling global challenges demands a dedication to shared values and objectives, recognizing that the interdependence of nations necessitates collaborative efforts and synergy. Furthermore, he emphasized that economic challenges present a risk to the mutual objective of a poverty-free world characterized by sustainable development and widespread prosperity. He pointed out that the global economy is currently traversing a precarious course, with the World Bank forecasting a substantial deceleration in global economic growth in the years ahead.

organizations.

These efforts are essential to secure a more prosperous, equitable, and sustainable global future, he noted. Concluding his remarks, Al-Budaiwi praised the advancements resulting from the structural reforms implemented by GCC countries in response to economic challenges. These reforms have yielded favourable outcomes, including economic growth, an improved business environment, increased competitiveness, and a substantial rise in women's workforce participation. Furthermore, the non-oil sector experienced a notable increase of 4.8% in 2022.



Marrakech: Federal Minister for Finance, Revenue, and Economic Affairs, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar held a meeting with a high-level delegation of Moody's, the global financial services company, during her visit to Morocco for the annual meeting of WB/IMF. During the meeting, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar reiterated the government's commitment to transparency in order to foster investor confidence and maintaining a positive credit rating of Pakistan in the global financial markets.



SWAT: Governor Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali addressing office bearers of Chamber of Commerce & Industry and trader community during his visit of Swat.

New representative body registered to further cause, interests of industrialists

PESHAWAR (APP): The industrialists of Peshawar have registered a new representative body named Hayatabad Industrialist Association Peshawar to further the cause of stakeholders and to give them a proper platform to inform authorities about their issues.

The Hayatabad Industrialist Association (HIA) has been registered with Office of the Registrar of Trade Unions Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa in greater interest of industrialists and registration certificate has been received by former President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Muhammad Ishaq. In a statement issued here on Sunday, Muhammad Ishaq who is also group leader expressed gratitude to industrialists and said their cooperation and continuous support helped in materializing of this achievement.

Pakistan's exports to China surged by 100%

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan's exports to China in September 2023 have surged by an impressive 100.5% compared to the corresponding month during the previous financial year, according to the Trade Development Authority Pakistan (TDAP)'s latest report. The total value of Pakistan's exports to China in September 2023 amounted to \$350.2 million, marking a robust 100.5% increase.

Govt offers easy loans to SMEs to boost economy

MULTAN (APP): About 5.2 million Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) play an important role in strengthening the country's economy by contributing 40 percent of exports and job opportunities to 78% industrial workers.

This was stated by Assistant Director State Bank of Pakistan Kiran Anjid while addressing an awareness seminar, arranged by All Pakistan Bed Sheets and Upholstery

Association in collaboration with a leading private Bank.

Ms. Anjid passionately pointed out that out of the colossal 5.2 million SMEs operating in the country, merely six to seven percent are currently benefiting from loans provided by financial institutions. She emphatically emphasized that this number could soar to new heights, allowing these SMEs to further amplify their businesses.

Railways earn over Rs 6 million from saloons

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has generated revenue worth Rs 6,340,156 million through utilizing its 23 saloons and inspection coaches for commercial purposes, during the last three and half years.

"At present, Pakistan Railways has only 23 saloons and inspection coaches with different dignitaries of the country who are entitled to use

these saloons when needed," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

Giving the details, he said, "Two highly luxurious coaches have been allocated for the Prime Minister's Secretariat while four coaches have been allocated for the Minister for Railways, Secretary/Chairman of Railways, and another senior official in the ministry."

Punjab CM, Federal Food minister agree to stabilize cotton price

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research Dr Abdullah Kausar Malik on Sunday met caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi and exchanged views on steps aimed at increasing yield of Rabi and Kharif crops.

According to official sources, Dr Abdullah Kausar Malik congratulated the Punjab CM on record production of cotton in Punjab.

The prices of wheat and other commodities were discussed while proposal to keep wheat price same was reviewed.

Special steps for keeping cotton price stable was also discussed. There was a consensus to keep price of cotton stable through support of Trading Corporation of Pakistan (TCP).

The CM said that stability in cotton prices was essential for providing reasonable return to cotton

growers. He said the federal government should play its role in stabilizing cotton price by purchasing cotton through TCP.

Good yield of cotton was welcoming and value-added products would help in fetching good amount of forex, he added. Federal minister Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik said that releasing of sewerage water in River Ravi, canals and other rivers was harmful for water inhabitants and environment.

LESCO recovers Rs 830m from defaulters

LAHORE (INP): Lahore Electric Supply Company (LESCO) has recovered over Rs 830 million from over 26,000 defaulters in its five districts during a recovery campaign.

According to a statement issued by LESCO spokesperson, the campaign was launched under the direction of Chief Executive Engineer of LESCO Shahid Haider and was assisted by Tehsildars in all five districts.

Gems & Jewelry Show set to attract potential investors: experts

LAHORE (APP): Experts believe that the Gems and Jewelry Show 2024 would be a lead to the showcase of precious stones and gems in the international market.

Talking to APP here on Sunday, they said the aim of the event is to promote mineral and mining part of Pakistan, which is enriched with 80 per cent of Pakistan's mineral base and this exhibition is expected to

play a major role in exploring the mineral potential of the country.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar said the role of the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) is commendable in bringing all related trade bodies on one platform and supporting Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) to organise a suitable show to attract foreign investors and buyers.

Italian ambassador, Punjab CM discuss trade, investment

LAHORE (APP): Ambassador of Italy Mr. Andreas Ferrarese met with Punjab Caretaker Minister Mohsin Naqvi at Punjab House, Islamabad. Matters pertaining to enhancing cooperation in culture, tourism and trade sectors were discussed. Steps with regard to exchanging a great number of trade and cultural delegations were also discussed, said a handout issued here on Sunday.

The Italian ambassador also reiterated his resolve to continue supporting Pakistan for acquiring extension in the GSP+ status. Mohsin Naqvi thanked the Italian ambassador for his country's support for Pakistan. "Pakistan and Italy are friendly countries and time has arrived to transform their friendship into a fruitful economic relationship," he added. He highlighted that cultural and trade sectors were interlinked, adding that the Punjab government aspired to further enhance its collaboration with Italy in the sectors. "We welcome

the Italian cooperation for imparting training to police liaison officers," he said. He maintained that a proactive role by the Trade Commission was significant for enhancing trade along with providing ease in acquiring work visas. "We are launching a one-window operation for the promotion of investment in Punjab," he said, adding that Italian investors should visit Punjab and the government would provide them all possible facilitation.

3,953 FIRs, 1,131 tickets issued for violating dengue SOPs

RAWALPINDI (INP): As many as 3,953 FIRs had been registered on violations of anti-dengue SOPs from January 1 to date in various areas of the Rawalpindi district, said District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control Dr Sajjad Mehmood here Sunday.

607 premises, issued tickets to 1,131 and a fine of Rs 73,26,000 was imposed on violations of dengue SOPs in 2023. Dr Sajjad informed that around 1,855 confirmed cases had been reported in the district this year, while the number was 738 in 2021, and 3,507 in 2022 during the period.

Giving details of the penalty actions, the health officer said that the district administration, in collaboration with allied departments, had sealed

2022 during the period. The health officer further stated that presently 126 patients were admitted to the district's hospitals.

184 new infections reported in Punjab

LAHORE (INP): As many as 184 new dengue fever cases were reported in Punjab on Sunday, according to the latest data from the Health Department. This year has seen a concerning rise in dengue cases, with a total of 6,615 confirmed cases across 36 districts in Punjab. Lahore leads the tally with 2,624 cases, followed closely by Rawalpindi with 1,842 cases, Multan with 716, Gujranwala with 392, and Faisalabad with 287 cases.



HYDERABAD: Human Rights Activist Sadia Baloch, Shahnaz Sheedi, Ghufana Araeen Cotton Workers Partee and Bakhtawar site stage during Women Climate assembly during World International Rural Women day organized by Sindh Community foundation at Sindh Language Authority.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa Hajji Ghulam Ali distributing appreciation certificates among participants of a ceremony organized by All Private Sector Universities Pakistan (ASUP) at Governor House.

Foolproof security ensured for Christian worship places

LAHORE (APP): On the instructions of Inspector General Police Punjab, Dr. Usman Anwar, foolproof security was provided to Christian worship programs in churches across the province including Lahore on Sunday.

Police teams were on high alert and performed their duties for the provision of peaceful environment to the Christian citizens. Earlier, the IG Punjab had ordered security arrangements for churches

and said that SPs and supervisory officers should check the security arrangements for churches and important places by themselves, additional police personnel and snipers should be deployed at sensitive churches.

Dolphin squad, PRU, elite teams should do effective patrolling around the churches, IG Punjab said and directed that police officers and men posted on security should be on high alert, keep a close watch on evil elements around churches.

Turbat attack injured labourers brought to Multan hospital

MULTAN (INP): Two injured labourers of Turbat attack have been brought back to Multan and admitted at Nishtar Hospital on Sunday.

Commissioner Multan Amir Khattak on the instructions of Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has contacted Balochistan provincial administration for return of mortal remains of six slain labourers from Turbat.

Gunmen had killed six and injured two labourers in Balochistan's Turbat city in an overnight attack.

Punjab CM had directed the Commissioner to arrange return of the labourers in personal supervision.

Two injured have been brought back in a special flight to Multan, assistant commissioner said.

Local officials said that the attack took place in Satellite area of Turbat city.

Injured labourers have been identified as Muhammad Toheed from Narawal and Ghulam Muhammad from Shuja Abad.

The accused entered in the under-construction house of a local contractor Naseer and committed the heinous crime leaving six labourers dead and two injured, police officials said.

Vote casting is national obligation, Zia-ur-Rahim

MARDAN (APP): District Election Commission Officer Mardan Zia-ul-Rahim said that vote casting is not just a necessity but it is a national obligation of every citizen to choose the best candidate.

For the benefit of the nation, he said that according to the constitution of Pakistan, women, men, youth, disabled persons, transgender and minorities, all have equal rights to vote.

Raise awareness that they should register their vote before the elections and use it properly during the elections.

Dr. Jamal emphasizes empowering special persons

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Punjab Minister for Primary and Secondary Healthcare Dr. Jamal Nasir highlighted the government's commitment to enhancing services for persons with disabilities in his address at an event marking "World White Cane Safety Day," here on Sunday. He emphasized the remarkable progress made in this regard, stating that individuals with disabilities have demonstrated their capabilities across various aspects of life. Over recent years, concerted efforts in Pakistan have aimed to empower persons with disabilities, making them more productive citizens, he

Punjab, Sindh CMs discusses mutual strategy for cotton prices

LAHORE (APP): Sindh Caretaker Chief Minister Maqbool Baqar met with Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi at Punjab House, Islamabad, on Sunday.

Essential steps to bring stability in the cotton price were discussed during the meeting, said a handout issued here.

It was decided during the meeting to contact the federal government to bring stability in the cotton price. Both chief ministers agreed that farmers in Sindh and Punjab would be

facilitated in obtaining real profit of their crop and the Prime Minister would be formally requested for purchasing cotton through the Trading Corporation of Pakistan.

CM Mohsin Naqvi stated that farmers of Sindh and Punjab should not at all sell their cotton crops at a low price.

"We will not let the labour of farmers go waste" he added. Naqvi vowed that Punjab and Sindh would take every possible measure in this regard.

Inter-Universities Skit Competition to Mark Global Hand washing Day

PESHAWAR (Online): The Local Government Department's Water and Sanitation Cell (WatSan), in collaboration with the University of Peshawar, UNICEF, and other sector partners will hold the Inter-Universities Skit Competition, an event that aims to raise awareness about Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WatSan) issues and their possible solutions, in commemoration of Global Handwashing Day on 17th October 2023 in Agha Khan Auditorium University of Peshawar.

Furthermore, they will creatively communicate vital ideas about water, sanitation, hygiene, and the importance of handwashing in preventing disease by utilizing the art form of skits.

According to the issued press release, seven universities from Peshawar, Mardan and Charsdda are participating in the inaugural round.

Furthermore, the competition will not only showcase the talents of the students but also serve as a platform for advocating for better hygiene practices.

Likewise, the event will be attended by students, sector partners, and media representatives, all of whom will play an integral role in furthering the cause of clean water, improved sanitation, and enhanced hygiene practices.

International News

US secretary of state meets Saudi crown prince in Riyadh amid Israel-Gaza war

Monitoring Desk RYADH: US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, who has been busy on a crisis tour of the Middle East for this week, sought support on Sunday from Saudi Arabia's de facto ruler, who has warm ties with Israel but has delayed normalisation. Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman and the senior US diplomat had a nearly hour-long early morning meeting at the royal's property near Riyadh, according to a US official. "Very productive," Blinken said when asked about the meeting after returning to his hotel.

Blinken has been touring the region after Hamas fighters attacked and entered Israel from the blockaded Gaza Strip on October 7 and killed 1,300 people, mostly civilians, AFP reported. The attack sparked a massive retaliatory campaign targeting Hamas in Gaza that resulted in the killing of more than 2,300 people.

For the past few months, before the violence in the Gaza Strip region started, the Saudi crown prince had spoken of progress in US-led diplomacy to normalise relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel. Saudi Arabia has put the process on hold after the violence, and Blinken has said that disrupting Saudi-Israeli normalisation efforts may have partly

motivated the Hamas attack. The kingdom is home to Islam's two holiest sites, making recognition a historic coup for Israel, which in 2020 normalised relations with three other Arab states, according to AFP. As part of a package, Saudi Arabia — which like Israel has tense relations with Iran — has been seeking security guarantees from the United States, its long-time partner and consumer of its oil. However, Prince Mohammed is deeply controversial in the United States, where intelligence linked him to the 2018 killing of Jamal Khashoggi, a US-based Saudi journalist, which Riyadh has denied, blaming rogue operatives.

At least 2 dead, over 100 wounded as earthquake jolts Afghanistan



Palestinians queue as they wait to fill cans with fuel, amid shortages of fuel, as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict continues, at a petrol station in Khan Younis in the southern Gaza Strip.

France to deploy 7,000 soldiers after teacher's fatal stabbing

Monitoring Desk PARIS: France said it will deploy 7,000 soldiers after declaring a top-level alert following the fatal stabbing of a teacher by a Chechen-origin man, who also severely wounded three others at a school.

The attack took place in the northeastern town of Arras, home to large Jewish and Muslim populations. Police arrested the suspected attacker, Mohammed Moguchkov, who had cried the Arabic phrase "Allahu akbar!" (God is greatest), according to the preliminary el-

ements of the investigation. Authorities have suggested a probable link to the ongoing violence in the Middle East, with President Emmanuel Macron denouncing the incident as an act of "Islamist terror". The deployment of the soldiers from Operation Sentinelle will be completed by Monday evening, according to the Elysee presidential palace. Sentinelle is a French military operation with 10,000 soldiers and 4,700 police and gendarmes deployed since the aftermath of the January 2015 attacks.



People hold a demonstration in support of Palestinians in New York City.

UAE and South Korea complete talks for trade deal

Monitoring Desk DUBAI: The United Arab Emirates and South Korea have concluded talks towards a bilateral trade deal, known as a Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA), the two countries said on Saturday.

Trade and investment ties between the Gulf state and South Korea have been steadily advancing, in the first half of 2023, bilateral non-oil trade reached \$3 billion, similar to the same period last year, but up 21pc over 2021, a statement said.

The Korea Electric Power Corporation and a consortium of Korean firms also constructed all four units of the \$20 billion nuclear Barakah Power Plant in Abu Dhabi, which became operational in April this year, to help support the UAE's domestic electricity needs.

South Korea was one of the first countries with which the Gulf state launched talks for a CEPA in 2021. Three months later however, the Asian state revived dormant Free Trade Agreement (FTA) talks with the six-member Gulf Cooperation Council bloc, of which the UAE is a member.

"We resumed talks with Korea earlier this year as we were both keen to conclude a deal and advance our respective economic agendas," Thani Al Zeyoudi, UAE minister of foreign trade, said, adding the GCC FTA talks remained ongoing.

"There were about 178 South Korean firms doing businesses in the UAE as of 2022, and the Korea-UAE CEPA would enhance stability of South Korean firms entering into the UAE, while it would also support South Korean firms' activities in the Middle East and North Africa," South Korea's trade ministry said in a statement.

55 US lawmakers want Israel to follow laws

Monitoring Desk WASHINGTON: As many as 55 US lawmakers have sent a letter to President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken, calling for Israeli military operations to follow the rules of international humanitarian law, and urging the Biden administration to continue working towards peace in the region.

"We strongly believe that Israel's response must take into account the millions of innocent civilians in Gaza who themselves are victims of Hamas and are suffering the consequences of their terror campaign," said the letter, which was released to the media by Congressional Progressive Caucus Chairwoman Pramila Jayapal. Fellow Democratic lawmakers — Jan Schakowsky, Mark Pocan and Jim McGovern — joined Congresswoman Jayapal in initiating the letter, which also condemns "the terrorist attacks by Hamas on the people of Israel." This letter noted that more than 1,800 Palestinians in Gaza and more than 1,300 Israelis have already died in the ongoing conflict while more than 423,000 people have been displaced across the Gaza Strip.

Egypt's President Sisi in talks to get aid to Gaza, presidency says

Monitoring Desk CAIRO: Egypt's president Abdel Fattah al-Sisi is in talks with international and regional partners to enable aid deliveries into Gaza and to de-escalate the fighting there, his office said on Sunday.

Thousands rally in London, New York in solidarity with Palestinians

Monitoring Desk LONDON: Thousands of people rallied on Saturday in London and other UK cities for pro-Palestinian protests, amid police warnings that anyone showing support for Hamas could face arrest.

Attendees, who marched through the heart of the British capital as well as Manchester in northern England, Edinburgh in Scotland and other cities, were shadowed by a heavy police presence. Some held Palestinian flags and placards — bearing slogans including "freedom for Palestine", "end the massacre" and "sanctions for Israel" — as they made their way

towards the end-point for planned speeches. Chants of "Rishi Sunak, shame on you" could be heard. "I think all just people around the world, not just in Britain, must stand up and call for this madness (to end)," Ismail Patel, chair-man of the Friends of Al Aqsa campaign, said. In New York City, thousands rallied to show solidarity with Palestinians and draw attention to Israeli airstrikes in Gaza. Demonstrations occurred in various city neighbourhoods on Friday, where participants echoed the call for "Free Palestine" and an end to Israel's unlawful occupation of Palestinian territories.

Interaction between top leadership of China, Pakistan to propel bilateral ties to new heights: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi has said that interaction in China between the top leadership of Pakistan and China would further enhance the bilateral relationship to the new heights as the caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar would leave for China tomorrow to participate in Belt and Road Forum being hosted by the Chinese President Xi Jinping in Beijing.

Speaking at a seminar "CPEC and My Life" the other day, the minister said he was happy to know that people from the grass-root level were invited to speak

about the positive impact of the CPEC on their lives. The people had immensely benefitted from various CPEC projects such as Orange Train in Lahore, Thar Coal in Sindh and Gawadar in Balochistan, he added.

Talking about the establishment of Special Investment Facilitation Council by Pakistan to provide one-window facilities to the investors, the minister said that as the CPEC was entering into the new phase, adding Pakistan was keenly looking forward for more and more bilateral cooperation in mining, agriculture, IT and other sectors.

He said enhancement of geographical linkages

through improved road, rail and air transportation system would boost frequent people-to-people contacts and enhance understanding through academic linkages.

The higher volume of trade and businesses would result into integrated development which would eventually promote, harmony and sustainable development, he added.

"CPEC is the journey towards economic growth in the globalized world", he maintained.

Chinese ambassador to Pakistan Jiang Zaidong expressed his country's readiness to further promote CPEC in partnership with Pakistan, adding "We are ready to work with our Pa-

kistani colleagues from all walks of life to further promote the projects in the next ten years of CPEC." "What was agreed between President Xi Jinping and the Pakistani leaders for a high-quality sustainable and enhanced cooperation and support in the fields of security and development, we can implement with mutual consensus", he said.

The ambassador was of the view that Pakistan and China could jointly make the CPEC, a corridor of love and peace.

He said that mutual cooperation in new fields such as industry, agriculture, mining, science and technology and IT sectors could be increased.



QUETTA: Caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki getting detail of Turbat firing incident from relatives of labourers



KARACHI: Ameer Jamaat-i-Islami Siraj ul Haq addresses "Al Aqsa Palestine March" organized by JI at Shahrah-e-Faisal.

Sirajul Haq urges Muslim rulers to act before Gaza faces desolation

KARACHI (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) chief Sirajul Haq stated Sunday Israel and the United States will encounter a fate similar to that of NATO and Russian forces in Afghanistan.

The JI chief, while addressing the participants of the Palestine March, affirmed that Muslim rulers should not wait until Gaza was reduced to rubble, urging them to take immediate action to prevent such a dire outcome.

Haq asserted that the people of Pakistan had demonstrated their unwavering commitment to the Palestine cause, stressing that this spirit had the potential to challenge Israel and America.

The JI chief urged Army Chief Gen Asim Munir to consider the consequences of remaining silent in the face of

world events, cautioning that silence might be construed as support for America.

Haq stressed the need for action to safeguard Al-Aqsa Mosque, citing Saudi Arabia's decision to sever ties with Israel and the budding diplomatic contacts between Iran and Saudi Arabia.

"Now, it's our turn to contribute what we can. It's time we protect Gaza," avowed the JI chief while highlighting the urgency of the situation. He expressed that the death of honor was preferable to a life of humiliation.

He preached to the participants of the march the insignificance of worldly life in comparison to the hereafter, and argued that the Palestinian mujahideen held the right to protect the Al-Aqsa Mosque by all means.

Caretaker PM takes notice of purchase price of cotton crop

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul-Haq Kakar on Sunday took notice of purchase of cotton yield below the prices fixed by the government to support the farmers and directed Trading Corporation of Pakistan to take cognizance of the issue and submit a report in this regard.

The government had fixed prices of the cotton crop, but it was being observed that the crop was purchased below the fixed minimum price at some places, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister said that yielding of bumper cotton crop was a blessing for the country and its maximum profit should be reaped by the farmers.

The government had clear instructions over its purchase price so that the farmers' community could be protected against any losses, he added.

Use of principle of universal jurisdiction must be in line with int'l law: Pakistan

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Emphasizing that the principle of universal jurisdiction not be viewed as a license to infringe upon state sovereignty, Pakistan has said its application should be in compliance with international law and the UN Charter.

Speaking in the United Nations General Assembly's Sixth (Legal) Committee, Ambassador Usman Iqbal Jadoon, Deputy permanent representative of Pakistan to the UN, the principle of universal jurisdiction, in fact, was a call for the cessation of impunity, to ensure that jurisdictional loopholes are not exploited as a means to dodge justice.

(The principle of uni-

versal jurisdiction allows any state to investigate and prosecute people for serious international crimes even if they were committed in another country.)

Participating in a debate on "The scope and application of the principle of Universal Jurisdiction", the Pakistani envoy said this principle was not a primary form of jurisdiction, but to be invoked only under exceptional circumstances. "Universal jurisdiction is supplementary to territorial and national jurisdictions, not a replacement for them," he said, adding that emphasis should be placed on domestic legal remedies, which should always be the first line of response.

Aneeq warns against undermining youth with religious misconceptions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed expressed concerns over certain elements attempting to sow doubts and misconceptions among the nation's youth.

Addressing students in a recent event at Rawalpindi Arts Council, organized by the Sufia Sweet Home, he emphasized the need for young individuals to be equipped with knowledge and wisdom to tackle contemporary challenges.

Minister Aneeq

stressed the importance of fostering a strong connection with Almighty Allah and the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him). He outlined the three phases of the life of the Prophet (PBUH) as the pursuit of truth, its proclamation, and its implementation, paralleling these phases to Allama Iqbal's poetry and the interpretation of Quranic verses.

He noted that the Holy Quran holds the solution to all of humanity's issues. The minister also

pointed out that Muslims should not only be social workers but also leaders. He highlighted the significance of a united Islamic community and noted that Muslims constitute 25 per cent of humanity, making their global impact undeniable.

He said, "If we follow the right path, problems like Gaza, Burma, Kashmir would not arise." He urged scholars and leaders to guide the nation and instill hope rather than despair, emphasizing that "despair is a trait of Satan."

CTD releases list of most wanted 128 terrorists

PESHAWAR (INP): The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Sunday published the list of 128 most wanted criminals with the head money of each of the criminals enlisted in the released list.

The price on the head of wanted terrorists has also been fixed, along with the pictures, CNIC number, place, father record.

The head money of the terrorists has been fixed from Rs. 300,000 to Rs. 10 million, the document issued by CTD here on Sunday.

The name of the informant will be kept confidential, a CTD official said.

Massive voter registration drive underway for upcoming General Elections

ISLAMABAD (APP): Over 800,000 new voters are being enrolled by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), in voter lists using data obtained on October 1, 2023, enabling them to exercise their right to vote in the upcoming general elections.

According to an ECP spokesperson, the Commission has already obtained data from the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) on October 1, 2023, regarding individuals who received new computerized National Identity Cards (CNICs).

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has already removed restrictions on voter lists across the country. This allows eligible individuals to register, transfer, or correct their votes until October 25.

The suspension of electoral rolls, enacted through

clause 39 of the Election Act 2017, was in effect since July 20 this year.

Following the unfreezing of electoral lists, eligible individuals now have the opportunity to update their voter information.

He urged all eligible citizens to ensure the correctness of their voter registration, modifications, and transfers, and align their particulars with their computerized national identity card details by October 25, 2023.

Answering a question, he explained that the law mandates voter registration to align with an individual's permanent or current address, as indicated on their CNIC. Voting from a third address is prohibited. However, government employees posted in a different district or province can register their vote and their family's at the post office in their new location.

FIA officers found involved in abduction for ransom

ISLAMABAD (INP): Four Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) officers were found involved in abduction for ransom and a case was lodged against them by the Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Lahore, ARY News reported on Sunday.

The ACE Lahore registered a case against four FIA officers including two inspectors, two sub-inspectors (SI) and a citizen for their alleged involvement in the abduction for ransom.

According to the First Information Report (FIR), a citizen namely Amjad had been abducted from Hasilpur in the name of an inquiry and he was asked to pay Rs100 million as ransom for his release.

Later, the citizen agreed to pay Rs30 million ransom money which was received through a cheque.

It further stated that the accused FIA officers include Inspector Waqas Rizwan, Inspector Fakhr Abbas, SI Musadiq Azeem, Nabeel and three citizens.

The FIA spokesperson said that the sections of abduction were also included in the case and the accused officers were suspended.

Indian youth arrested for 'illegally crossing' into RYK

RAHIM YAR KHAN (INP): The local authorities have arrested an Indian youth for allegedly crossing the border into Rahim Yar Khan.

Reportedly, 17-year-old Bipin allegedly entered the Pakistani side of the border from Rajasthan, India late on October 13.

Bipin was arrested by the Cholistan Rangers and an FIR registered against him on Saturday. He was handed over to the Islamgarh police station for further action.

The FIR was registered against him under the Foreigners Act 1946 and upon searching 110 Indian rupee notes seized from his possession.

During preliminary investigation, Bipin could not give any reasonable location and reason for his presence in Pakistan.

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14 nation air exercise, Indus Shield-2023, in full swing at PAF operational air base

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Air Force (PAF)'s 14 nation air exercise, Indus Shield 2023, is in full swing at an operational air base of PAF.

The top-notch exercise stands out as one of the mega aerial warfare exercises of the region and is marked as a significant milestone in the realization of PAF's commitment to enhance its aerial capabilities alongside bolstering international cooperation, a PAF news release said.

The participation of the exercise encompasses fighter jets alongside pilots, ground crew and Air Defence Controllers from the leading Air Forces of the world.

Indus Shield-2023 has brought together elite air forces from 14 countries and will serve as a platform to showcase their professional prowess.

The participating nations include Pakistan, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, UAE, Egypt, Oman, Bahrain, Azerbaijan, Indonesia, Morocco, Uzbekistan, China and Hungary.

The exercise holds great importance as it signifies the leading role of the Pakistan Air Force in spearheading technological advancements, promoting modernization, evolving air combat tactics, and addressing contemporary aerial defence challenges.

Exercise Indus Shield also underscores the mutual commitment of participating nations to achieve shared objectives and addresses the evolving dynamics of aerial warfare in the face of common security threats.

APHC urges UN to hold India accountable for its brutalities in IIOJK

SRINAGAR (INP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) has urged the United Nations to hold India accountable for its brutalities in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

According to Kashmir Media Service, the APHC spokesman in a statement issued in Srinagar said Indian, paramilitary, police, National Investigation Agency and State Investigation Agency personnel are torturing innocent Kashmiris and seizing their properties during continued so-called cordon and search operations and house raids across the territory to suppress their righteous demand of right to self-determination.

He said several youth have been killed and thousands arrested during this

year but the world community has become a mute spectator. He urged the United Nations to play a role in settling the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the UN resolutions and aspirations of the Kashmiri people. The spokesman expressed concern over the silence adopted by the international community on the ongoing worst Indian state terrorism and gross human rights violations in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

Meanwhile, the political experts and analysts in their media interviews and statements have said that the Modi-led fascist Indian government has unleashed its dreaded agencies to suppress the Kashmiris' ongoing struggle for securing their right to self-determination.

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QUETTA: A view of 1st rain of winter in the provincial metropolis

K-Electric proposes tariff increase by over Rs3 per unit

KARACHI (INP): The consumers of Karachi Electric (K-Electric) could be in for some bad news, as the authorities are mulling over increasing the electricity tariff by over Rs3 per unit.

K-Electric has submitted an application with the National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) for an increase of Rs2.35 per unit in terms of quarterly adjustments.

According to the application, another increase of 67 paise per unit should be made in terms of arrears.

If the request is approved, the electricity con-

sumers of Karachi will bear an additional financial burden of Rs1.6 billion.

NEPRA is scheduled to hold a hearing on K-Electric's application on October 19.

Just a week ago, NEPRA had increased the cost of electricity by Rs1.71 per unit under the head of monthly fuel adjustment. The adjustment in the tariff was made for the month of August and will be charged in the bills for October. A notification for the tariff raise was also issued. The increase was not applicable to K-Electric and lifeline customers.



QUETTA: Provincial President of National Party Rehmat Saleh Baloch presiding over a meeting of political parties of Balochistan at National Party central secretariat.

Crackdown continues against tinted glasses vehicles in Quetta

QUETTA (APP)-A crackdown is against those tinted glasses vehicles and illegal number plates in Quetta.

This was stated by SHO Jinnah Town Mitha Khan while talking to the media on Sunday.

SHO Mitha Khan said that on the special instructions of IG Police DIG Quetta, SSP Quetta along with his team, strict crackdown was being carried out against those tinted glasses vehicles and illegal number plates.

He said that several tinted glasses vehicles and

number plates were seized during operation.

SHO Jinnah Town further said that the protection of property and life of the public is the first priority of police in which deficiency will not be tolerated under any circumstances.

He further said that practical steps are being taken to maintain the atmosphere of peace and order by using all their capabilities.

He said that he was taking measures to eliminate crime activities from the area.