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Level-playing field a must for free and fair elections: President Alvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday emphasized that for the future of the country, free, fair and credible elections should be held in which all the political parties be given a level-playing field to contest.

In an interview with a private TV (Geo News) talk show, the president said different quarters were talking about ensuring level-playing field to all the political parties in the country.

He said the basic norm should be the democracy and all the political leaders should be given equal opportunities to contest the upcoming elections. To a question, the president maintained that he had condemned 9th May incidents as he was always against such acts of damaged and destruction.

To another query, he said that the constitution provided that a president might continue in the office

till election of his successor and as the electoral requirement could not be met in the absence of assemblies, so leaving his office in vacuum was not good for him. In the parliamentary system, changes could take place to governments, he said adding, in the past, unconstitutional elements had derailed the democratic system in the country.

The president expressed that despite difficult times, the country was moving on the path to democracy and there was a path to move forward. Appreciating former premier Benazir Bhutto, the president recollected that during 2001 when he was arrested and sent to jail, he was told by the jail authorities that contrary to dictatorship era, the environment in jails had been changed under the PPP government.

He said credit should be given to the PPP as a political party that was the standard bearer of democ-

racy and women's rights. The president also lauded former president Asif Ali Zardari for raising the slogan of 'Pakistan Khappay'.

To a question, the president said the people had the confidence in the superior courts and appreciated incumbent Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Qazi Faez Isa as 'highly respectable personality', adding that the CJP had unified the court.

The nation had great expectations from Justice Qazi Faez Isa, he said and expressed the optimism that the CJP would deliver.

The president also reiterated that he had not sent reference against Justice Isa, as he had received it from the office of former prime minister who also maintained that he was not willing to send it.

Elaborating his viewpoint, the president said that the democratic system in the country was continu-

ing but there was always a danger from a lobby that had been working to project that the democratic system in the country had failed.

"There is need to unite the country. Pardoning and forbearing are the qualities that can build nations," he added.

In the religion of Islam, he said, consultation and public opinion were given due importance and with regard to the democratic system, the Islamic traditions were marvelous, he opined.

About holding of elections in the country, the president said that the matter was subjudice before the courts that would decide the issue. President Alvi termed the number of out of school children, mental health, malnutrition and stunting issues as the grave ones which could not be resolved if they continued their political wrangling.

The president reiterated that two-state was the only solution to Palestine issue, adding on March 23, 1943 two resolutions were passed, one for Pakistan and other for Palestine. Pakistan pursued a policy over Palestine as pronounced by its founder Q u a i d - e - A z a m Muhammad Ali Jinnah, he maintained.

Feeling immense grief over a video clip showing a Palestinian child, identifying the bodies of his parents, the president decried it as huge cruelty to the Palestinian people and stressed that no one could accept such inhuman acts. The president said in the Islamic teachings, sanctity was accorded to a human life.

To a query, he replied that on September 13, he had sent a letter to the Election Commission of Pakistan for holding of elections in the country and suggestion to consult the superior judiciary over the issue.

He also sought a comprehensive report on the resistance faced during the anti-power theft drive in Balochistan and other allied issues.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a review meeting regarding the Anti-Power Theft Campaign 2023.

PM for accelerated efforts to curb power theft in AJK, Sindh, Quetta

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday directed the relevant authorities to accelerate their efforts to curb electricity theft in Azad Jammu & Kashmir, Sindh and Quetta.

The prime minister, chairing a review meeting on the anti-power theft campaign, also instructed to speed up the solarisation of agriculture tube-wells.

He also sought a comprehensive report on the resistance faced during the anti-power theft drive in Balochistan and other allied issues.

The prime minister told the participants of the meeting that it was the caretaker government's responsibility to leave behind an established system for the next democratic

government concerning the steps like anti-power theft campaign.

The prime minister was briefed on the outcomes of the campaign since its launch. He was told that the process was going on successfully in collaboration with the provincial governments.

It was informed that under the campaign, a total of 19,415 power thieves were arrested and 39,836 First Information Reports were registered against power theft since September. Around 189 government officials had also been suspended over their involvement in the electricity theft.

The meeting was told that the campaign against the electricity theft remained the most successful in Mardan where the

power theft ratio declined from 43 percent to 13 percent.

The participants were told that Rs 14 billion had been recovered under the campaign till September 30.

Prime Minister Kakar lauded the performance of the Energy Ministry, power distribution companies, and relevant federal and provincial authorities for the successes achieved in the campaign.

The meeting was also apprised of the outcomes of the countrywide analysis to find out the causes behind the power theft.

Caretaker federal ministers for interior, energy and information & broadcasting, provincial chief secretaries and relevant federal secretaries attended the meeting.



QUETTA: Different delegations meeting with Governor Balochistan Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar

Mutual civility, respect to difference of opinion & acceptance of each other can bridge gap among masses: Governor

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Governor Balochistan, Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar has stated that democracy is actually name of rule of people in which mutual civility and respect to difference of opinion and acceptance of each other are compulsory elements. These can help bridge the gaps between the masses and that by promoting the environment of dialogue, honoring mutual respect and by sharing the grief and sorrow of one another.

These views were

expressed by the Governor while speaking to different delegations who called on him here on Wednesday.

He said that we have to take benefit from the ever changing world, human consciousness and the modern technology and development.

He noted with concern that we have just been away from the big objectives and high human values after falling prey to the meaningless differences and unnecessary hatred.

He said that major-

ity of the conscious and educated personalities have also kept them disassociated from the high values, public interests and human development in lust of greed and money.

As a result, as a whole selfishness and favoritism has increased our backwardness, adding he regretfully pointed out.

The Governor stressed that it is high time to awake the whole society and promote mutual understanding and respect among the masses.

Ultimatum to return home country for all foreigners, not for Afghans only: Sarfraz Bugti

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Interior Minister for Sarfraz Bugti on Wednesday clarified that the ultimatum for returning home before November 1 is for all foreigners and not just for Afghan refugees.

Briefing the Senate's Standing Committee on Interior, he said the impression was wrong that only Afghan citizens were being evacuated and after the deadline only passports and visa would be allowed to enter Pakistan.

The minister further apprised the committee that the government had talked about illegal residents, but the wrong message was sent however, its message was not only for Afghan citizens, but for all illegal residents.

He said that no country in the world allowed any nonimmigrant to settle as permanent citizen and start businesses without documentation.

The minister said, the government owned only as a guest if someone had a

refugee card or a valid visa but the impression was given that this was an ethnic issue whereas the government clearly talked about eviction of all illegal residents.

Bugti said that he was not aware of the issue of Biharis living illegally in the country, but the matter would be investigated.

The minister said that the other counties in the world forcefully deport illegal immigrants in accordance with the international and national laws of immigration and citizenship.

Speaking to the media person after the meeting, Bugti said that no extension had been proposed for the date of November 1 given to the people residing illegally in the country.

From November 1, it had to be ensured that anyone coming into the country would bring a passport and those living without visa would be deported with force to their country of origin, he added.

Jan appeals to political parties to act as bridge between government & masses

Independent Report

QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai to play role of bridge between the government and masses so as to find best solution to their problems.

The Chief Minister said that the interim provincial government is determined to resolve the public issues effectively under the leadership of Chief Minister Mir Ali Mardan Domki.

He said that the issues of the masses being confronted in education, health and others would be resolved on priority basis.

Moreover, the issues related to the governance, passport, NADRA and medicines would be resolved at the earliest.

The caretaker Provincial Minister was speaking during meeting with participants of protest dharna in Chaman on Wednesday.

Jan Achakzai maintained that peaceful protest is democratic right of every one, and we are actively

working to resolve all the genuine issues.

He assured that the provision of basic human requirements would be ensured.

He said that it is second round of the dialogue with participants of dharna, in which the Provincial Minister assured of his wholehearted cooperation for resolving their genuine demands, and agreed to continue the negotiations.

The incumbent government desires to promote trade with its neighbouring countries. The markets would be established at the border so as to promote the trade activities, the Minister said. Moreover, the illegal immigrants would be repatriated to their homeland, however, the people meeting the legal requirements would not be bothered at all, he asserted.

Jan Achakzai also said that the Chief Minister has also constituted a committee for the comprehensive and effective solution to their issues.



CHAMAN: Caretaker Information Minister of Balochistan Jan Achakzai talking with mediapersons

CS directs DCs to complete election preparations, improve service delivery

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Chief Secretary Balochistan, Shakeel Qadir Khan has directed all the deputy commissioners to complete the preparations for general elections implementing the directives issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). He also directed all the officers to expedite the steps for bringing improvement in the service delivery in their respective departments.

He said that the officers are deputed for the public service and as such they should take steps for provision of the basic facilities to masses at their doorstep.

The Chief Secretary was presiding over the meeting of divisional commissioners and deputy commissioners conference here on Wednesday. The meeting reviewed the situation and matters related to prevention of smuggling of oil, provision of facilities in education and

health sectors, price control committee, repatriation of illegal immigrants and action against the electricity pilferers. Those who were present in the meeting were included Additional Chief Secretary Home, Zahid Saleem, Secretary Industries, Dr Muhammad Akbar Harifal, senior Member Board of Revenue, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir, Secretary Health, Asfandyar Kakar, Secretary Law, Kalimullah Babar, Commissioner Quetta, Muhammad Hamza Shafiqat, Director General, Levies, Naseebullah Kakar.

The Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners participated in the meeting through video link.

Addressing the meeting, Chief Secretary said that provision of health facilities and quality education is necessary for improvement of the society and the provincial government is taking steps for improvement in both the sectors.

FM Jilani, Kyrgyz president discuss strengthening bilateral ties

BISHKEK (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister Jilil Abbas Jilani on Wednesday called on President of Kyrgyzstan Sadyr Zhaparov, and exchanged views on the current state and prospects of Kyrgyz-Pakistani bilateral cooperation.

The meeting took place on the sidelines of the 22nd meeting of the Council of Heads of Government (CHG) of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization being held in Bishkek.

On Thursday, Pakistan will assume the Chair of CHG SCO. The meeting will be attended by the heads of government of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan, vice-president of Iran, and foreign ministers of Pakistan and India.

Two robbers killed in police encounter

QUETTA (INP): Two robbers were killed, another injured and held after exchange of fire with police in the provincial capital on Tuesday-Wednesday midnight.

The police engaged a three-member gang of robbers fleeing after committing robbery and an encounter took place near Eastern Bypass Bakra Mandi, Quetta.

In cross firing, two robbers were killed and another injured and arrested.



QUETTA: Balochistan Caretaker Minister for Sports and Culture Jamal Khan Raisani addressing a press conference at Civil Secretariat.

Recent accords with China to add new chapter to CPEC: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Wednesday said Pakistan was committed to the implementation of projects recently concluded with China in diverse sectors.

He said the recent agreements between the two countries would add a new chapter to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

In a meeting with Chinese Ambassador Jiang Zaidong, he said China's Belt and Road Initiative was the guarantor of the development and prosperity of the entire region.

The prime minister expressed gratitude to Chinese President Xi Jinping and the Chinese leadership for the warm welcome and arrangements during his recent visit to China.

"Pakistan will take strong steps to implement the Memorandum of Understanding and agreements signed during my recent visit to China," he said.

He said the friendship between China and Pakistan was "higher than the towering mountains and deeper than the deep seas".

He mentioned that the people of both countries were benefiting from the fruits of CPEC. He Chinese ambassador assured the prime minister of China's full cooperation in the development and economic stability of Pakistan.

PTI chairman challenges his indictment in cipher case

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman on Wednesday challenged his indictment before the Islamabad High Court (IHC) in the cipher case under the Official Secrets Act.

The PTI chief, in his petition, stated that his indictment was made in a haste by the trial court and it was a violation of Criminal Procedure 1898, and articles 4 and 10A of the Constitution. He said that the charges could be framed after seven days of providing the copy of the challan to the defence, and prayed the court to set aside the indictment as it would be violation of fundamental rights if the trial is concluded in haste.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication, Dr. Umar Saif, and Caretaker Federal Minister for Information & Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi addressing Press Conference.

Dr Saif highlights gov't's revolutionary initiatives for boosting IT exports

ISLAMABAD (APP):

Caretaker Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunications Dr Umar Saif on Wednesday highlighted the revolutionary initiatives undertaken by the ministry in the last two months to bolster exports of the IT and telecom sectors.

Addressing a press conference along with Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi, he said the government would provide interest-free loans to free-lancers for establishing e-working centers.

He said each freelancer would receive financial assistance of Rs 100,000 to set up their own e-working center. The initiative was aimed at addressing the challenge of lack of suitable workplaces for freelancers so that they could work in a conducive and peaceful environment, he added.

Dr Saif asserted that each freelancer could earn upto \$30,000 annually which would significantly contribute to the national economy.

He projected that the measures could increase IT

sector's exports by \$3 billion.

The minister said the government was also working for easy access to loans and investments for IT startups, with the expectation of attracting external investments of upto \$1 billion within the next six months. Referring to the skill gap within the IT workforce, Dr Saif said the Pakistani universities currently produced 20,000 to 22,000 IT graduates, but only 2,000 of them managed to secure employment.

The IT Ministry would introduce a standard quality test in all the universities across Pakistan to ensure job opportunities for fresh graduates, he added.

"We have made significant decisions to revamp IT education in universities in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission, the National Computing Accreditation Council, the Examination Testing Council, the Pakistan Software Export Board, and the Pakistan Software Houses Association."

REPATRIATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

DAYS REMAINING

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in f @GovtOfPakistan

Daily Voice of Masses Independent

Military courts

With a five-judge bench of the Supreme Court unanimously ruling that all civilians accused of involvement in "events arising from and out of" May 9 and 10 be tried by criminal courts instead of under the Army Act, the state would be better off honouring the verdict instead of finding new ways to work around it.

The superior judiciary has taken a rather dim view of the security forces' decision to court-martial civilians, whose crimes involved rioting and vandalism of state property — including military infrastructure.

This measure had seemed quite excessive even when it was first announced, but has now been deemed unlawful as well.

Not only that, the majority of the bench has held that the provisions of the Army Act which allowed for it to be applied to civilians, in certain cases, are ultra vires the Constitution, and, therefore, without any legal effect. Thus, a solid legal line has been drawn between the civilian and military domains.

Attorney General Mansoor Usman Awan has said that the federal government will appeal the decision under the recently validated Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act, 2023. Before proceeding, the government should be asked: to what end?

Separately, some experts believe that the cases being tried under military courts will now end up in special courts instead of ordinary courts because the accused may be charged with violating the Official Secrets Act. This will ensure that proceedings remain opaque and the accused are tried under charges much more serious than their alleged crimes appear to be.

Again: why, and to what end? There is no question that some overzealous individuals took political agitation against the arrest of their leader much too far, crossing lines that should never have been crossed.

But does this mean they ought to be treated on a par with actual traitors, enemy combatants, and foreign spies? Do the convictions being sought really fit their crimes?

There are laws aplenty to deal with those involved in rioting and vandalism; there is no need for an intervention by elements outside the civilian domain. If any wrong has been committed against any state institution, the matter should be taken to the country's judiciary for redress. The massive imbalance of power between ordinary citizens and the establishment would have worsened if the latter was allowed to sit in judgement over the former. It is encouraging to see the Supreme Court take a firm stance on the matter. One hopes that the cases of those who have been languishing behind bars for the last many months will be resolved by the civil courts soon. Meanwhile, bigger issues need our attention, the most important one being what is to be done regarding those who have made a mockery of the Constitution over the past few months.

The anti-colonialist



Rafia Zakaria

The history of South Asia and most other outposts of the British (or the Dutch or French) is replete with the struggles of the ancestors of contemporary populations against colonisers who occupied the subcontinent for over two centuries.

The sum total of post-colonial history taught in most of the countries created as the sun set on the British Empire are, in fact, a compendium of the struggles of heroic fighters and thinkers who paved the way for independence.

Generations of people educated in these post-colonial nations have grown up with a consciousness of a once-glorious past that was interrupted by the machinations of colonial powers, who inveigled their way into South Asia or Africa or any of the many other places that were "discovered" by white explorers in their quest to find resources to monopolise, people to subjugate, and lands to occupy.

The advent of the British East India Company or the Dutch East India Company saw the deployment of "trade" interests that sought to amass raw material that the future colonisers set about gathering up.

Everyone knows what happened next: trade gave way to administration, and doddering monarchies or tribal kingdoms were converted into colonies that were administered and then ruled by the white men who had first presented their presence and their intentions as benign.

The history of colonialism and the fact that it led to the looting of vast portions of the world for the benefit of white and Western home populations is thus well known by those who suffered under the yoke of colonial occupation. It is, however, markedly less well known by the populations of colonising nations.

In the UK, many still insist that the British colonisers were 'benevolent' and brought only good things to the subcontinent, notwithstanding the compelling evidence of carnage or pillage of former colonies. There is still less awareness of the hobbling of long-existing systems of law, administration and cultural production that followed colonisation.

Academic departments in the UK and US have attempted to correct this incorrect recollection of the past. In the American context, post-colonial historians have focused on the lie behind the much-popularised premise that the explorer Christopher Columbus 'discovered' America as an example of how the presence of Native Americans has been erased in American history to give the impression that America was somehow less real until the white colonisers arrived.

They have also focused on the systematic annihilation of Native Americans by white settler-colonialists so that a vast continent would become their own.

For all the good intentions of post-colonial historians, their efforts of the past half century have seemed mostly futile. Why, many readers of post-colonial history wondered, would anyone care about how the white and Western world had amassed its cultural, historical and material wealth when they did not have to. Several demographic and racial transformations of the Western world have occurred over the years.

In the UK, British Muslim populations — the progeny of labourers who had migrated from Pakistan, entered a third generation. The children of the formerly colonised are now a part of the former colonial power.

In the US, the efforts of Black Americans, whose ancestors had been forced onto ships as human cargo of the Atlantic slave trade, exposed how so much of the country had been built by the formerly enslaved. The exploitation of these slaves and the organised campaign against Native Americans took place simultaneously.

In the case of Native Americans, historians pointed out, entire tribes were decimated and their lands taken over and occupied, often through the use of despicable tactics such as distributing blankets infected with smallpox.

In the UK, the demographics of cities like London, which now have large Muslim populations, have also contributed to an otherwise unprecedented groundswell of support. Of course, other factors, such as the availability of Palestinian voices on social media, have bolstered sympathy for them too.

Similarly, American misadventures in Afghanistan and Iraq have made young people far more sceptical of occupation by colonialists than their ancestors might have been.

Even so, the change in world opinion and the willingness of protesters to denounce what Israel has done to promote an apartheid state, signal the possibility that the critique of history put forth by the formerly conquered and colonised may finally have seeped into the world's consciousness.

— Courtesy Dawn

Past is prelude



Mahir Ali

Someone encountering the Middle East conflict for the first time in the current pages of the Western media could be excused for assuming that Palestinian-Israeli history began on Oct 7, 2023, with the spectacular Hamas breakout that led to unconscionable acts of violence in Kibbutzim adjacent to the Gaza Strip.

Some of the victims, murdered or abducted, were peace activists, with mentalities far removed from the belligerent attitudes of all too many illegal West Bank settlers. Primarily, though, they were human beings subjected to the kind of violence no one should have to endure.

Much the same could be said about what Palestinians have been subjected to since 1948, with the effort redoubled in 1967.

But in reckoning with what became of Palestine, one should go back at least to the Balfour Declaration, 1917, wherein colonial Britain offered Zionists a homeland for European Jews, who suffered under outrageous anti-Semitism long before the Nazis emerged and adopted extermination as an exemplar of extreme misanthropy.

Before adopting the unspeakable concept of a 'final solution', however, the Nazis toyed with the idea of mass expulsion. Madagascar was once seen as a possible destination, and they weren't entirely averse to Palestine as an alternative. This led to a degree of Nazi-Zionist collaboration, which has been anathematised as a wicked lie despite historical evidence.

The campaign wasn't successful, because most German and other European Jews preferred the idea of emigrating elsewhere, including the US and UK. A possibly apocryphal anecdote from the 19th century mentions a couple of emissaries to the 'promised land' who reported to the rabbi in Vienna: "The bride is beautiful, but she is already married to another man."

In the early 20th century, Zionists who leaned towards communism and fantasised about establishing a country where they would resist the depredations of both Jewish and Arab capitalists by teaming up with the Palestinian proletariat were opposed by other Jewish groups represented at the first few Comintern congresses.

More broadly, though, the backing for the establishment of Israel by its initial advocates in many cases had less to do with belated empathy for the Jews than with the wish they would go away. At the same time, Stalinist Soviet Union and its supporters in the West, especially the US, were enthusiastic about the Israeli project at its inception.

Some were able to look past their blind spots. Others, including the Anglo-Saxon Five Eyes nations and Germany and France, choose to let Israel get away with murder.

The collective punishment being inflicted on Gaza, supposedly with the aim of obliterating Hamas, has many antecedents. The Nazis were particularly enthusiastic — Lidice on the outskirts of Prague, in what is now the Czech Republic, and Oradour-sur-Glane stand out as particularly egregious revanchist massacres — but it carried on despite the 'never again' vows, with the US and its allies establishing landmarks from Korea and Vietnam to Iraq and Afghanistan. So it should come as no surprise that Israel's emergence as an expert raises few hackles.

It does help to explain, though, why far-right groups and governments from the US and Europe to India and even the Middle East admire Israel's ruthless pursuit of ethno-nationalist fantasies, even though it can involve murky moral compromises. The mainstream Western media, for instance, is unlikely to delve too deeply into Israel's facilitation of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1980s as a counterweight to the Palestine Liber-a-tion Organisation. The success of this strategy led to Hamas, a Bro-ther-hood offshoot, winning the 2006 Palestinian elections — and then being denied the democratic right to rule via the Palestinian Authority.

It took over Gaza from Fatah after Israel vacated the tiny territory in 2005 without ceding control of its borders. Given that Gaza was abandoned precisely because Ariel Sharon wanted to abandon negotiations over the West Bank, everything went according to plan. As recently as four years ago, Benjamin Netanyahu told his Likud associates: "Those who want to thwart the possibility of a Palestinian state should support the strengthening of Hamas and the transfer of money to Hamas. This is part of our strategy." That strategy came undone earlier this month and, unlike his military and intelligence chiefs, Netanyahu has not apologised to his compatriots for his government's negligence. But when heads eventually roll for an unforgivable lack of foresight, the prime minister is unlikely to survive. Meanwhile, it would be interesting to see the reaction if Hamas were to throw back at Israel an amended version of Golda Meir's infamous words: "We can forgive the Arabs for killing our children. We cannot forgive them for forcing us to kill their children." — Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

Chief Manager SBP says Immediate steps being taken to strengthen economy, facilitate business community

FAISALABAD (APP): Economy has been put on the revival track while State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) will take immediate practical and result-oriented steps in consultation with Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) to further strengthen the economy and facilitate the business community, said Waqas Kashif Bajwa Chief Manager SBP Faisalabad.

Addressing a meeting at FCCI, he said that the bank-related complaints are resolved expeditiously while the office of Banking Ombudsman is also operational in Faisalabad. However, industrial and commercial sectors must be given awareness about this institution so that they could avail from its presence.

He said that Islamic banks are earning more profit as compared to the conventional banks. "However, the market forces may play its role in equitable distribution of profit after all banks are switched over to the Islamic banking by the year 2027", he said and added

that the SBP has fined many banks on unethical practices and its amount has been deposited in the charity fund.

He said that the SBP is encouraging Islamic banking and in this connection, he could arrange a meeting of Sharia experts with FCCI members in order to dispel their apprehensions.

He stressed the need to enhance linkages and connectivity with the business community and said that FCCI is the right forum to cultivate cordial relations between SBP and

PR all set to upgrade Rawalpindi Railway Station

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways is all set to upgrade and commercialize the Victoria-era Rawalpindi Railway Station aimed at facilitating the passengers and making it the business hub, considering its location in the centre of business activities.

"The Railway Station is built a century ago in a British style, the value addition to station and its surroundings would make it commercially viable and would generate significant revenues for all the stakeholders involved", an official in the Ministry told APP.

He said the upgradation was already decided in a meeting that reviewed the upgradation as well as commercialization plan of Rawalpindi Railway Station, and observed that the railway stations will remain important commercial hub in the future, earning substantial revenue and generating economic opportunities at a large scale.

Shipping Activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Six ships namely, Maersk Detroit, MSC Yukta-X, Ardmore Chippewa, SinarMalahayati, Leader and Kanha, carrying Containers, Palm oil, Chemicals, Mogas and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Engro Terminal, FOTCO Terminal and Sui Southern Terminal respectively on Tuesday. Meanwhile two more ships, Amalia and Marangas Kalymnos carrying Gasoline and LNG



ISLAMABAD: The High Commissioner of Australia H.E. Mr. Neil Hawkins called on Federal Minister for Privatization Fawad Hasan Fawad.

Canadian firm expresses interest to invest in KP mining sector

Independent Report PESHAWAR: A high-level delegation of Canadian Mineral Sector Investment Company "TYTAN COPPER", called on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Industries Commerce, Technical Education and Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Dr. Aamir Abdullah, here in his office, at Civil Secretariat Peshawar and expressed their interest in investing in the mineral sector of the province.

The delegation was headed by chairman of the company, David Michael Thompson, while Secretary of Mines and Mineral Development,

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Hamidullah Shah, Director Exploration Muhammad Amir, and other relevant officers were also present in the meeting.

During the meeting, the Canadian company working in the mineral sector informed the caretaker minister about its activities in various sectors of minerals and expressed its desire to invest in the mineral sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, especially related to copper deposits.

The delegation told the caretaker minister that the same company wants to invest in the province in mineral exploration and safe mining of Cooper precious natural resources

in accordance with international standards in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and desirous to work with province in exploration and mining of this mineral.

During the meeting, the delegation indicated that the company can also invest in marble and granite in the province.

On this occasion, the caretaker minister welcomed the Canadian investor delegation to invest in the province and said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government values foreign investment in the province and assured them that investing here would be beneficial for the economic prosperity of the province.

Sindh gov't to enhance collaboration with SMEDA

LAHORE (APP): The Government of Sindh has enhanced collaboration with the Small and Medium Enterprises Development Authority (SMEDA) to spur pace of SME development in Sindh province. Sindh Secretary Industry and Commerce Abdul Rasheed Solangi held a meeting with SMEDA experts here at SMEDA Head Office on Wednesday to discuss prospects of promoting SMEs in the province. Sindh Small

Industries Corporation (SSIC) Managing Director Dr Sarwat Faheem and Punjab Small Industries Corporation (PSIC) Managing Director Asim Javaid Hashmi also attended the meeting, while SMEDA team was led by Socrat Aman Rana, General Manager (Central Support). Abdul Rasheed Solangi said the government of Sindh was keen to promote employment opportunities and curb poverty in the province through SME development.

PSX gains 149 more points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) on Wednesday witnessed bullish trend, gaining 149.19 points, a positive change of 0.29 percent, closing at 51,177.13 points against 51,027.94 points the previous day. A total of 427,393,948 shares valuing Rs. 15,509 billion were traded during the day as compared to 321,403,857 shares valuing Rs. 11,091 billion the previous day. As many as 351 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 175 of them recorded gains and 160 sustained losses.

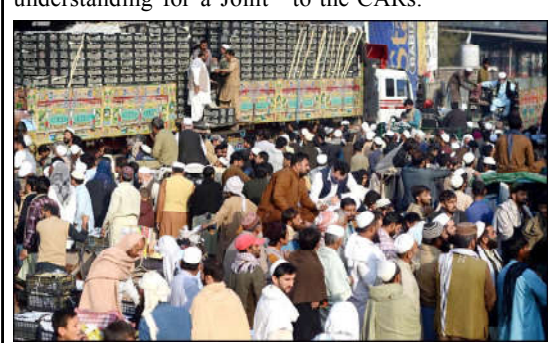
Pak-CARs trade increase in first quarter of current FY, 2023-24

ISLAMABAD (APP): The trade between Pakistan and Central Asia Republics (CARs) has increased in the first quarter of the current Fiscal Year 2023-24, as compared to last year 2022-23 in the same period, which will further strengthen regional integration.

Working Group on Trade and Investment in May 2020 to encourage trade between the two countries, Pakistan and Uzbekistan also signed a Transit Trade Agreement among other agreements to improve transit trade in 2021.

This agreement covers commerce and transit of commodities by road and rail as well as customs processes and will shift Uzbekistan's entire trade from Iran's Port Bandar Abbas to Pakistani seaports. It will also connect Pakistan seaports to the CARs.

The trade between regional countries including Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan with Pakistan has reached an all-time high. Pakistan and Uzbekistan signed a memorandum of understanding for a Joint



PESHAWAR: A view of rush on fruit mandi.

LCCI President suggests formation of industry-led Skill Council

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) President Kashif Anwar has suggested formation of an industry-led skill council.

devaluation, need of skilled human resources, current account deficit and importance of raw materials availability.

Sajid Khokhar said that TEVTA is now focusing to fill the skill gap, terming TEVTA as the nursery of industry.

He was talking to TEVTA (Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority) Chairman Muhammad Sajid Khokhar, who called on him here at Lahore Chamber on Wednesday. LCCI Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt was also present.

The LCCI President and TEVTA Chairman were agreed on a point that there is a dire need of strong liaison between TEVTA and the chambers.

He said that TEVTA has 41 colleges in Punjab, and an Institute Advisory Committee comprising people from the industry and it evaluate inputs from the industry.

Kashif Anwar also spoke about rupee



PESHAWAR: Members of All Pakistan CNG Association are holding protest demonstration against CNG Tariff hike, at University road in Peshawar

Governor Punjab says Conducive environment for business community vital to development of the country

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman attended the opening ceremony of Pak Water and Energy Expo at Expo Center Lahore on Wednesday as a special guest.

Addressing the ceremony, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said a conducive environment for the business community is vital to the development of the country.

He said that such exhibitions create opportunities for the business community to show case their products, which contribute positively to the economy. He said that such activities give opportunities to business community and institutions to foster opportunities for exchange of technology and innovative solutions.

Governor Punjab said that in this exhibition, national and international

companies are exhibiting their products and offering innovative solutions, new technology in water, energy, and environment sectors. He said that water plays a very important role in our lives. He said that provision of clean water reduces the burden on the health sector. Governor Punjab said that the sewage water should also be put in the rivers after cleaning. He said that it is a matter of great honour that the products of Pakistani



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman inspecting different projects at Pak Water & Energy Expo at Expo Center Lahore.

Governor visits Afghan Consulate to condole over deaths in earthquake

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali here on Wednesday visited the Afghan Consulate and met with Consul General, Hafiz Muhib Ullah Shakir.

A statement from the Governor's House, said the Governor expressed heartfelt sympathies over the deaths and destruction of over 50000 homes and buildings due to an earthquake in the Herat province of Afghanistan.

The Governor on his behalf and the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's extended condolences to the Afghan Consul

General and said we equally share the grief of Afghan people and government at this critical hour.

The Governor said Afghanistan was our brotherly neighboring country and both the people share the common moments of grief and happiness.

The Afghan Consul General thanked the Governor for visiting the consulate and said we were thankful to the people and government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for sharing our grief and providing services and respect to the people of Afghanistan.

Drug control officials for inspection of medical stores in Kohat

KOHAT (APP): Drug Inspector Kohat Muhammad Irfan Wazir, along with the officials of Drug Control Kohat, conducted a detailed inspection of medical stores here in Kohat on Wednesday. According to the DC office, on the instruction of Deputy Commissioner Kohat Dr. Azmatullah Wazir, Drug Inspector Kohat Muhammad Irfan Wazir, along with the officials of the Drug Control Team.

DC for intensified efforts to curb electricity theft

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Deputy Commissioner Abbottabad Khalid Iqbal on Wednesday while chairing a meeting addressed critical concerns related to electricity theft prevention and the recovery of outstanding dues. The meeting, held under the auspices of the District Enforcement Committee, featured comprehensive briefings on actions taken against those involved in electricity theft, courtesy of the Peshawar Electric Supply Company (PESCO).

PFA stops production of five bakeries in Lahore.

LAHORE: The enforcement teams of the Punjab Food Authority (PFA) on Wednesday stopped the production of five well-known bakeries on quality parameters and violations of the labelling laws during different raids in the provincial metropolis. On the directions of PFA Director General Raja Jahangir Anwar, food safety teams

launched an inspection drive against bakeries in Lahore to ensure the provision of adulteration-free food. The teams thoroughly inspected the hygiene, food quality and safety standards during a daylong operation.

Raja Jahangir Anwar said that the authority shut down the production units of five bakeries on Dil Muhammad Road, Defence Road.

CM Punjab directs to complete safe city projects within stipulated time

Independent Report
LAHORE: Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi while issuing directions to complete the Safe City projects of Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Gujranwala within stipulated period of time stated that the process of purchasing necessary equipment along with construction of buildings should be timely completed.

Communication & Works Department should ensure completion of the construction of building within stipulated time. CM directed the RPOs of Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Gujranwala to personally oversee the projects. CM stated that all cameras of

Lahore Safe City Project will be made functional at the earliest. CM presided over an important meeting at the Punjab Safe City Authority Office in which progress was reviewed on the Safe City projects of Rawalpindi, Faisalabad and Gujranwala. The proposals to bring improvements in the Emergency Services 15 and making paperless working of the Punjab Safe City Authority were reviewed during the meeting. CM was informed during the briefing that 2000 cameras will be made functional by the first week of November in Lahore. IG Police gave a briefing with regard to progress being made in the Safe City.



MUZZAFERABAD: Students are attending the classes at open air schools in the different areas of the Azad Kashmir, as after millions rupees of education fund, students are studying with building.

Physical fitness very important in stressful times: Dr. Javed

Independent Report
LAHORE: Caretaker Provincial Health Ministers Professor Dr. Javed Akram and Dr. Jamal Nasir attended the annual sports day ceremony of Fatima Jinnah Medical University as special guests. Vice Chancellor King Edward Medical University Prof. Dr. Mahmood Ayaz, Vice Chancellor Fatima Jinnah Medical University Prof. Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal, Pro Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Kamran Khalid, Registrar Prof. Dr. Nadeem,

Principal Prof. Dr. Noreen Akmal and a large number of students including faculty members of FJMU. Provincial Health Ministers Prof. Dr. Javed Akram and Dr. Jamal Nasir also distributed trophies and cash prizes among the children who won the first, second and third positions in the annual sports day of Fatima Jinnah Medical University.

In his address to the participants of the event, the caretaker provincial health minister Prof. Dr. Javed Akram said.

CM's aide Dr. Riaz Anwar advocates thalassemia awareness at RMI event

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Rahman Medical Institute (RMI) on Wednesday held Thalassemia Awareness event to educate the community about this devastating genetic blood disorder. Dr. Riaz Anwar, Special Advisor to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Chief Minister on Health, graced the event as guest of honour. Addressing the gathering, he emphasized the critical need to raise public awareness about thalassemia as a means of combating the disease's prevalence. He urged the public to undergo thalassemia screenings, particularly before marriage, to safeguard future generations from its

devastating consequences. Shafiq ur Rahman, Chief Executive Officer of RMI, highlighted his institute's ongoing efforts in thalassemia prevention and awareness. He informed that RMI is committed to screening more than two thousand children, and later they will work as ambassadors to bolster the campaign against thalassemia.

Dr. Shah Taj Khan, Head of Pathology at RMI, drew attention to the lack of government-level data on thalassemia, despite its prevalence. She pointed out that by venturing into every district in the province, children affected by thalassemia can be identified.

Addl. IGP visits ABAD House

KARACHI (APP): Additional Inspector General of Police Karachi Khadim Hussain Rind on Wednesday said the police should be informed timely about the land grabbers and encroachments to ensure swift action against the involved culprits.

In a meeting with the Association of Builders and Developers (ABAD) during his visit to ABAD House, he said the police had arrested number of accused involved in extortion, according to a police spokesman.

AIG of police said that the process of evacuation of illegal immigrants was also underway. Rind said strict actions were being taken against the criminal elements in the city.

International News

Turkey's Erdogan says Hamas is not terrorist organisation, cancels trip to Israel

Monitoring Desk
ANKARA: Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, in his strongest comments yet on the Gaza conflict, said on Wednesday the Palestinian militant group Hamas was not a terrorist organisation but a liberation group fighting to protect Palestinian lands. NATO member Turkey condemned the civilian deaths caused by Hamas' Oct. 7 rampage in southern Israel, but also urged Israeli forces to act with restraint in

their response. Ankara has strongly criticised Israel's bombardment of Gaza. "Hamas is not a terrorist organisation, it is a liberation group, 'mujahideen' waging a battle to protect its lands and people," he told lawmakers from his ruling AK Party, using an Arabic word denoting those who fight for their faith. Unlike many of its NATO allies and the European Union, Turkey does not consider Hamas

a terrorist organisation and hosts members of the group on its territory. Ankara backs a two-state solution to the decades-old Israel-Palestinian conflict. Advertisement Scroll to continue Erdogan also slammed Western powers for supporting Israel's bombing of Gaza and called for an immediate ceasefire, the unhindered entry of humanitarian aid into Gaza and for Muslim countries to work together to stop the violence.



Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan attends a meeting with members of parliament from his ruling AK Party (AKP) at the Turkish parliament in Ankara, Turkey.

Record 114 million people now displaced worldwide: UN

Monitoring Desk
UNITED NATIONS: The number of people worldwide living in forced displacement from their homes is estimated to have exceeded 114 million, the United Nations said Wednesday — a record figure.

"The number of people displaced by war, persecution, violence and human rights violations globally is likely to have exceeded 114 million at the end of September," UNHCR, the UN refugee agency, said in a statement. The main drivers in the first half of 2023 were the conflicts in Ukraine, Sudan, Myanmar and the Democratic Republic of

Congo; a prolonged humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan; and a combination of drought, floods and insecurity in Somalia, UNHCR said. "The world's focus now is — rightly — on the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza. But globally, far too many conflicts are proliferating or escalating, shattering innocent lives and uprooting people," said UN refugee chief Filippo Grandi.

"The international community's inability to solve conflicts or prevent new ones is driving displacement and misery. We must look within, work together to end conflicts and allow refugees and other displaced people to return

home or restart their lives," he said in a statement.

In its Mid-Year Trends Report, which analyses forced displacement during the first six months of 2023, UNHCR said that by the end of June, 110 million people had been forcibly displaced worldwide.

That figure was up 1.6 million from the end of 2022. A UNHCR spokesman confirmed to AFP that the new figure was a record since the agency began collecting data in 1975. Since Israel launched withering strikes on Gaza in response to the October 7 Hamas attack, the number of people internally displaced within Gaza is estimated at about 1.4 million.

Hezbollah holds talks with Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad leadership

Monitoring Desk
BEIRUT: The leader of Lebanon's Hezbollah group held talks on Wednesday in Beirut with senior Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad figures in a key meeting of three top anti-Israel militant groups amid the war raging in Gaza.

In neighboring Syria, meanwhile, state media said an Israeli airstrike hit the international airport in the northern city of Aleppo on Wednesday, damaging its runway and putting it out of service.

There was no immediate comment from Israel on the reported strike.

Following the meeting in Lebanon, a brief statement said Hezbollah's leader Hassan Nasrallah agreed with Hamas' Saleh al-Arouri and Islamic Jihad's leader Ziad al-Nakhleh on the next steps that the three — along with

other Iran-backed militants — should take at this "sensitive stage" in the Middle East.

Their goal, according to the statement carried on Hezbollah-run and Lebanese state media, was to achieve "a real victory for the resistance in Gaza and Palestine" and halt Israel's "treacherous and brutal aggression against our oppressed and steadfast people in Gaza and the West Bank".

No other details were provided. The meeting came as the war between Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian militant group that rules the Gaza Strip, is now in its third week. The fighting, triggered by Hamas' deadly incursion into Israel on Oct. 7 that killed more than 1,400 people in Israel, has killed more than 5,700 Palestinians in Gaza.

Egypt's Sisi says Cairo playing positive role in de-escalating Gaza crisis

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi said on Wednesday that his country was playing a "very positive role" trying to de-escalate and find a diplomatic solution to the conflict between Israel and Hamas.

Egypt has taken an active role in negotiating access to aid for people in Gaza through the Rafah crossing, which it shares with Gaza, as well as in negotiations for hostage releases, while advocating for a ceasefire in the conflict.

Inspecting scores of Egyptian warplanes, tanks, and other military hardware at an exercise on the western edge of the Sinai Peninsula, about 135 miles (215 km) from Egypt's border with the Gaza strip, he said that though Egypt had considerable military capabilities it would only ever use them wisely and in self-defence. "It's very important when you have this kind of power that you use it reasonably, wisely, and maturely and you don't overstep and have illusions about your own strength," he said, alluding to internal calls for Egypt to involve itself in the conflict.

"You have this capability to defend yourself ... never let anger or fervour cause you to overstep," he said. Sisi, who met French President Emmanuel Macron in Cairo later on Wednesday, said the military exercise had been intended for events to mark the 50th anniversary of the 1973 war against Israel that started on Oct. 6, but had been postponed due to the conflict. Speaking with Macron, Sisi said both leaders had agreed that any move to displace Gazans into Egypt's Sinai peninsula - a move he had previously warned that Egypt would not bear.

New Zealand opens inquest into Christchurch mosques attack

Monitoring Desk
WELLINGTON: An inquest into New Zealand's 2019 mosque killings opened Tuesday, with relatives of the 51 people who died in the massacre hoping to discover if any lives could have been saved. White supremacist Brenton Tarrant shot and killed 51 Muslim worshippers at two Christchurch mosques on March 15, 2019, in New Zealand's deadliest

modern-day mass shooting. Deputy chief coroner Brigitte Windley opened the inquiry in Christchurch, saying it would "look at what we may learn from this atrocity and speak for those who have lost their lives in an effort to protect the living". Maha Galal, spokesperson for the "15 March Whanau Trust" representing some of the victims' relatives, said there was an "urgent need for answers".

Lula approval falls on perception Brazil economy slipping -Genial/ Quaest poll

Monitoring Desk
BRASILIA: Approval of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva's performance has fallen in the last two months as Brazilians worry that Latin America's largest economy is worsening, a new Genial/Quaest poll showed on Wednesday. Approval of his way of governing has fallen to 54% in October from 60% in August.



Lebanon's Hezbollah leader Sayyed Hassan Nasrallah meets Jihad Secretary General Ziyad al-Nakhlah and deputy leader of Hamas, Sheikh Saleh al-Arouri at an unidentified location in this handout image released.

Seven die as fog causes 158 crashes in US

Monitoring Desk
WASHINGTON: A large cloud of fog enveloping a highway led to at least 158 car crashes and seven deaths in the southern US state of Louisiana, authorities said on Monday. The so-called "super fog," which US media reported was caused by a mixture of marsh fires and dense fog, led to a massive pileup on Interstate 55, about 30 miles (48 kilometres) outside of New Orleans, the Louisiana State Police said in a statement.

Photos posted by the police showed both lanes of the highway bridge where the incident occurred blocked off by the wreckage, which included dozens of charred vehicles. A fire had erupted on the highway, police said. One vehicle appeared to have driven off the bridge and into the water below.

More than 25 people were taken to hospital, not counting the "many victims (who) sought medical assistance on their own."

China's defence ministry blasts Pentagon's annual report

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China's defence ministry on Wednesday denounced the U.S. Defense Department's annual report on China, saying it distorts the country's security policy and military strategy. Over the next decade, the People's Republic of China will rapidly modernise, diversify, and expand its nuclear forces, the Pentagon said in its report to U.S. Congress.



BEIJING: Chairman Senate of Pakistan, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, along with the Pakistani Delegation, witnessed a memorandum of understanding (MOU) signing ceremony between TGood, a leading Chinese Company, and the REC group of Pakistan.

Pak-China cooperation in art, culture important for stronger friendship: Jamal Shah

BEIJING (APP): Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Syed Jamal Shah has said that building bridges through art and culture between Pakistan and China is important and significant.

"The opportunity for us to work with our Chinese brothers and sisters and express our bonds through people-to-people contacts and bridges in the form of art such as film will make our friendship more resilient and more lasting," the minister told the Global Times. Jamal Shah also attended the screening of Ba'Tie Girl in Beijing and awarded the Pakistan-China Cultural Exchange

Envoy award to Xie Peng, the producer of the film.

While trade and commerce under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) have great economic importance, Jamal Shah noted that building bridges through art and culture is equally or even more significant. The minister also noted that the film reflects the growing cultural and collaborative ties between Pakistan and China.

"I think the culture corridor should be the strongest corridor, not because I'm an artist myself, but because art and culture is the best possible means of communication. It is the most effective one," Jamal

Shah said.

The friendship between Pakistan and China is higher than mountains, sweeter than honey and stronger than steel. And today we are going to see such friendship through film, Pakistani Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque said ahead of the screening of the film Ba'Tie Girl.

The film Ba'Tie Girl is the first major co-production by Pakistani and Chinese producers. Translating to "Dost Larki" in Urdu, the title means "the girl from ironclad brother Pakistan." It embodies the essence of friendship between the peoples of China and Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Ambassador of People's Republic of China to Pakistan H.E. Jiang Zaidong calls on the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Shania Khan promises to expand circle of services under BAEF further

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Advisor to caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan for Social Welfare, Ms. Shania Khan has promised that the circle of healthcare services and medical treatment would be expanded further under the Balochistan Awami Endowment Fund (BAEF).

In addition to this, the system of provision of quality medical treatment facilities would also be improved further.

This was stated by the Advisor to caretaker CM during her visit to the Agha Khan Hospital (AKH) and Liaquat National Hospital (LNH) Karachi the other day.

She was accompanied by the Secretary Social Welfare, Syed Sikandar

Shah and Director General, Tariq Javed Mengal and other concerned high ups.

During the visit, Ms. Shania Khan met the patients being treated under BAEF at the two major hospitals of Karachi.

Meanwhile, she also met the administration of both the hospitals and discussed with them the medical services being provided to the patients there.

At the outset, she expressed satisfaction over the medical services being provided to the patients under BAEF, however, adding she talked with the management of the hospitals for brining more improvement in the facilities.

Earlier, Ms. Shania also inquired about the medical treatment from the patients in the Karachi hospitals.

Over Rs. 1.23 bn recovered from defaulters, pilferers as QESCO drive continues

Independent Report

QUETTA: More than Rs. 1.23 billion have so far been recovered from the electricity utility bills defaulters and pilferers during the crackdown continued by the Quetta Electric Supply Company (QESCO) all over the province including Quetta.

According to the spokesman of QESCO, over Rs. 1.7 billion have been recovered from the defaulters on account of the dues while over Rs. 0.16 billion have been recovered from those involved in pilferage of electricity, on account of the fine charged them.

Meanwhile, 308 more power connections of the defaulters were disconnected and 10 transformers were removed during last 24 hours in different areas of the province including Quetta.

In addition to this, 53 shunt and tempered meters were also removed in the metropolis, the spokesman informed.

Moreover, a total of 1368 applications have been submitted in the police stations to file cases against the power pilferers.

However, 386 FIRs have so far been registered against the power pilferers in the province, QESCO spokesman maintained.



QUETTA: Provincial Election Commissioner Balochistan Sharifullah listening demands of All Parties regarding local bodies elections

Stop war, open urgent aid corridor to Gaza, Pakistan tells UNSC

UNITED NATIONS (APP): At a tense U.N. Security Council meeting on Tuesday, Pakistan reiterated its strong condemnation of Israeli air strikes and military action in Gaza, warning that further massive civilian casualties in the Palestinian enclave could trigger a "wider and more dangerous" conflict.

"Pakistan calls for an immediate and unconditional ceasefire," Ambassador Munir Akram said during a 15-member Council's high-level debate on the ongoing conflict between Israel and Palestine.

"Continuation of the Israeli campaign in the Gaza will lead to further massive civilian casualties and could trigger a wider and more dangerous conflict," the Pakistani envoy told the meeting addressed

by a total of 86 speakers from countries and regional groups - including more than twenty ministers - that pushed the conflict to the centre of world geopolitics.

Opening the debate, U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said the situation "is growing more dire by the hour" as he repeated his call for an immediate humanitarian ceasefire.

Referring to the Hamas attacks against Israelis in border towns on Oct. 7, Guterres said they "did not happen in a vacuum", with the Palestinian people being subjected to 56 years of suffocating occupation, during which they saw their land devoured by settlements and plagued by violence; their economy stifled; their people displaced; their homes demol-

ished, and their hopes for a political solution vanishing. However, he said, Hamas' attacks cannot justify the collective punishment of the Palestinian people.

Those pointed words from the secretary-general drew a hostile reaction from Israel's diplomats. Israeli ambassador to the UN Gilad Erdan called on him to "resign immediately" in a tweet, and at the stakeout outside the Security Council. Israeli Foreign Minister Eli Cohen also tweeted that he would not be meeting with the UN chief today for a scheduled bilateral.

Ambassador Erdan told reporters at the stakeout that in noting the Hamas attacks "did not happen in a vacuum" in his address to the Council, the UN chief was "justifying terrorism". In response to ques-

tions concerning the Israeli Foreign Minister's tweet, UN Spokesperson Stephane Dujarric said that the Secretary-General would be meeting family representatives of hostages being held by Hamas in Gaza, adding they would be accompanied by a representative of the Israel's Permanent Mission to the UN.

In his speech to the Security Council, Ambassador Akram conveyed Pakistan's full support and solidarity with Palestinian brothers and sisters in these tragic and challenging times.

Israel's relentless and indiscriminate bombardment of Gaza over the last 17 days has killed more than 5,000 people and injured another 15,000, the Pakistani envoy said, "strongly and unequivocally" condemning Israel's airstrikes and military actions in Gaza, particularly attacks on schools, residential buildings and hospitals.

"These Israeli attacks on civilians, civilian objects and infrastructure, blockade of water, food and fuel as well as the forced transfer of people from the occupied territory, are flagrant violations of international humanitarian law and amount to war crimes," he said, adding, "Those responsible for these atrocious crimes must be held accountable."

Ambassador Akram regretted the Security Council has been unable to issue a call for a ceasefire. In this regard, a heavy responsibility rests on those who contribute to the prolongation of this conflict, he said.

Ashrafi reiterates Pakistan's unequivocal stance on Palestine, urges global intervention

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Representative to the Prime Minister on Religious Harmony and Pakistani Diaspora in the Middle East and Islamic Countries, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi on Wednesday reiterated Pakistan's unequivocal stance on the Palestine issue, making it clear to the international community.

He extended his appreciation for the Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir, who reaffirmed Pakistan's unwavering moral, political, and diplomatic support to the Palestinian people, emphasizing that this support would persist through all challenges.

Ashrafi, who also holds the position of Pakistani Ulema Council Chairman, highlighted the significance of a recent meeting between General Asim Munir and Palestinian Ambassador Ahmad Jawad Rabeel. He underscored that "this meeting serves as a testament to Pakistan's steadfast commitment to its policies on Palestine."

He firmly stated that the Pakistani government

and its armed forces were fully aligned on the issue of Palestine and categorically condemned any acts of terrorism against the Palestinian population. He emphasized Pakistan's support for an independent Palestinian state, with its capital in Al-Qudus (Jerusalem).

He said General Asim Munir had rightly given the call to the international community to play an active role in compelling Israel to cease its continued atrocities against innocent Palestinian people. He condemned Israeli attacks on the civilian population, particularly on children, women, and hospitals, labelling these actions as war crimes.

In a message to the Palestinian people, Ashrafi assured them of Pakistan's solidarity, stating, "Although we are far away physically, our hearts beat with you."

He expressed optimism that Palestine would soon attain its long-awaited independence, emphasizing that the resilience of the Palestinian people would not be swayed by the current Israeli barbarism.



RAWALPINDI: Secretary Defence, Lt Gen (Retd) Hamood uz Zaman Khan and Brunei Permanent Secretary Defence, Brig Gen (Retd) Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Alirupendi Bin Haji Perudin signing MoM, in Ministry of Defence.

Court declares 10 key PTI leaders as absconders

ISLAMABAD (APP): An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) on Wednesday declared the ten leaders of PTI as absconder while issuing perpetual arrest warrants against them in case pertaining to the vandalizing at judicial complex.

The declared court absconder include Murad Saeed, Asad Umar, Ali Amin Gandapur, Shibli Faraz, Farukh Habib, Hammad Azhar, Omar Ayub Khan, Ali Nawaz Awan, Hassan Khan Niazi, Umar Sultan and Muhammad Asim.

ATC Judge Abul Hasnat Muhammad Zulfqarain heard the aforesaid case and declared the accused absconder due to continuous absence from proceeding.

The court instructed the police to present the accused before it after arresting them.

It may be mentioned here that the capital police had registered case against the accused for protesting and vandalizing the public property during the appearance of chairman PTI in judicial complex.

6th Round of Pakistan-Brunei Joint Defence Working Committee concludes

RAWALPINDI (APP): The 6th Round of Pakistan-Brunei Joint Defence Working Committee (JDWC) concluded on Wednesday at the Ministry of Defence, which was held from October 23-25.

Secretary Defence, Lt Gen @ Hamood uz Zaman Khan led the Pakistan delegation while Brunei delegation was led by Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Defence Brunei Daussalam, Brig Gen @ Dato Seri Pahlawan Haji Alirupendi Bin Haji Perudin, a news release said.

During the JDWC meeting, matters of mutual interest including whole spectrum of bilateral defence cooperation, were discussed.

Both sides showed satisfaction over various areas of common interest, including security, counter-terrorism and prevailing regional environment. Further, matters related to training, exchange visits and co-production of defence equipment, were also deliberated upon.

Talks were held in a most cordial and congenial environment. Delegation leaders resolved to work together for enhanced cooperation in defence and security related fields. It was agreed that 7th Round of Pakistan-Brunei JDWC meeting will be held in Brunei on mutually agreed dates.

Sindh Governor, Pir Pagaro discuss political situation of Sindh

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori and Pir Pagara Sibghatullah Shah Rashidi on Wednesday discussed the prevailing situation of the Sindh province.

The Sindh Governor visited the residence of Pir Sahib Pagaro here, according to a statement issued by the Governor's House.

Talking to Pir Pagaro, Kamran Khan Tessori said that all the stakeholders should unite on one platform for the prosperity and development of the country.



ISLAMABAD: EDG/PIO Dr. Tariq Mahmood Khan in a Group Photo with a delegation of Regional Media Association at PID Headquarters.

PIO assures fair distribution of advertisement to regional newspapers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Principal Information Officer (PIO) Dr. Tariq Mahmood Khan on Wednesday said that all-out efforts would be made to ensure fair distribution of advertisements among the regional newspapers.

He made these remarks during a meeting with a delegation of the Regional Media Association, that included its Chairman Chaudhry Qurban Hussain, Vice Chairman Atiq Khan, President Faraz Khattak and others.

The delegation welcomed the initiative of the PIO regarding the distribution of advertisements.

On the occasion, the PIO said that measures were being taken to bring improvement in the regional newspapers and fair distribution of advertisements would be ensured for all newspapers.

He made these remarks during a meeting with a delegation of the Regional Media Association, that included its Chairman Chaudhry Qurban Hussain, Vice Chairman Atiq Khan, President Faraz Khattak and others.

The delegation welcomed the initiative of the PIO regarding the distribution of advertisements.

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ECP invites foreign media, observers for coverage of election

ISLAMABAD (Online): Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has invited foreign media and observers for coverage of general election.

According to media reports ECP has maintained open door policy for the registration of foreign media and observers.

Every foreign journalist and observer will have to file all documents and particulars.

No one who is affiliated with political party will be registered as observer.

Sedition case: Wherever Shahbaz Gill is seen, he be arrested and presented in the court: Sessions court

ISLAMABAD (Online): Sessions Court Islamabad has once again issued non-bailable arrest warrants of PTI leader Shahbaz Gill in sedition case.

Sedition case came up for hearing in Sessions court Islamabad Wednesday.

Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra of Sessions Court remarked the non-bailable arrest warrants of Shahbaz Gill are issued again. Shahbaz Gill be arrested wherever he is seen and he be presented in the court.

It has been told the court has abolished trial of co-accused while issuing arrest warrants.

The judge said in this regard that Supreme Court (SC) has directed to end trial of co-accused. The trial is abolished in the case to the extent of co-accused.

The court has earlier declared Shahbaz Gill proclaimed offender. The court declared Shahbaz Gill pro-

claimed offender due to his persistent absence.

Judge Tahir Abbas Sipra remarked the proceedings of abscondment against Shahbaz Gill will be cancelled only when he appears in person before the court. Shahbaz Gill had gone outside the country for 4 weeks. He has started playing tricks. He was made to escape from country.

Upon it counsel for Shahbaz Gill told the court his client has gone outside the country due to ailment. He has not fled.

During the hearing of the case FIA and NADRA filed report regarding properties of Shahbaz Gill in the court.

The court rejected two applications of Shahbaz Gill. The court rejected the petitions of Shahbaz Gill seeking halting the proceedings of the case and his attendance in the court through video links.

Two terrorists killed in DI Khan operation

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): The district police on Wednesday killed two most-wanted terrorists in an intelligence-based operation (IBO) in the limits of Paroa Police Station.

According to a police spokesman, the operation was conducted on the information about the presence of terrorists Shoaib and Noman in the area who were killed in the exchange of fire.

The terrorists belonging to the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) Bali Khiaara group, were wanted in several cases of attacks on police and other security forces, besides sectarian target killing, the spokesman said. The government had announced a bounty of Rs 1 million for Shoaib, he said, adding, that a passerby was also injured in the exchange of fire.

SC to take up case about general elections on Nov 2

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court (SC) will take up the case pertaining to the holding general elections within 90 days after dissolution of the assemblies for hearing on November 2. A three-member SC bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Qazi Faez Isa and comprising Justice Athar Minallah and Justice Amin ud Din Khan will hear the case.

In the last hearing, the court had sought replies from the Federation and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA), Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI) and others have filed petitions for holding of general elections in 90 days of the assemblies' dissolution.

Mushaal Malik appeal UN to put pressure on India release of detainees, resolve Kashmir dispute

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Human Rights Minister Mushaal Malik Wednesday expressed his concern over the plight of illegally detained Hurriyat leaders and activists and appealed to the United Nations to put pressure on India to release the detainees and resolve the Kashmir dispute as per Security Council resolutions.

"Kashmiri people must be granted an opportunity to decide their future by themselves", she said while talking to a Private news channel.

The Modi's government is using illegal and crude tactics to prevent Kashmiri Hurriyat leaders from the freedom movement, she added.

She urged the interna-

tional community and world human rights organizations to force India to stop its state terrorism in IIOJK and to give the Kashmiris their right to self-determination.

Minister said that the jail authorities were not only treating these detainees inhumanely but also intentionally prolonging their illegal detention by not presenting them in courts on the days of hearing of the false cases registered against them.

Kashmiris will not accept anything less than freedom from India, because they have rendered unprecedented sacrifices and are determined to continue their struggle till complete success, she added.



QUETTA: Baloch Human Rights Activist, Mama Qadeer addresses to media persons during press conference, at a protest camp in Quetta.

Gas supply to remain suspended in parts of Quetta, Kalat, Ziarat, Mastung, other areas today

Independent Report

QUETTA: The Sui Gas supply is scheduled to remain suspended in different areas of the Balochistan province including Kalat, Ziarat, Mastung, Magochar, Pishin, Khad kocha, Huramzai and different other areas besides various parts of Quetta today (Thursday).

According to an official announcement made by the Sui Southern Gas Supply Company (SSGC) on Wednesday, the parts of Quetta where the gas supply would remain sus-

pended today are included Samungli, Killi Nauhisar, PAF base, Nawab Killi, Killi Paind Khan, Killi Barat, Killi Gull Muhammad, Sara Ghurgai, Survey 144, Chashma Achozai, Baleli, Garden Housing scheme, Darwaish abad, Ghaza Band scouts, and their adjoining areas.

The SSGC has asked the gas consumers to make alternative arrangements of gas for energy.

However, the company has expressed regret over the inconvenience to be caused to the consumers.