

Independent

Member APNS & CPNE

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www.dailyindependent.com.pk

Quetta

Ph: 2841470/2841473 REG: No. BC-116 B/ID-445 V& XXV No. 55, Rabi-ul-Awwal 29, 1445 AH Monday October 16, 2023 Pages 12, Price Rs.15

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

Poor Palestinians facing unabated Israel aggression; Palestinian right to self-determination must be respected, demands Pakistan.

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Foreign Minister 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 of the 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.

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 regarding the humanitarian aid to sieged Palestinians, he said

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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



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

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. He regretted that the international community had failed to prevent Israel from the genocide of the Palestinian people. "Pakistan supports the establishment of an independent state for the Palestinian people that is the only solution to bring lasting peace and stability in the region," the president added.



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-kilometer 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.

Caretaker CM Punjab calls on PM

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

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

Half of Quetta city plunges into darkness after brief spell of rain

QUETTA: Almost half of the Quetta plunged into darkness after there was a brief spell of rain in the city on Sunday evening.

The rain started at around 04:00 and continued till around 06:00 PM, but it caused fault in the power supply system in different parts of the city.

According to the QESCO sources, at least 16 feeders of the city got tripped following brief spell of rain.

As a result of power suspension, the consumers faced great hardships and problems.

The power supply remained suspended till late night on Sunday.

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 Muslim, 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.

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

Bodies of six slain labourers dispatched to Multan from Quetta by helicopter; Caretaker CM dispatches coffins of labourers at Khalid Airbase; says everyone grieved over assassination of labourers; early payment of financial compensation to be ensured for martyrs & injured labourers

Independent Report

QUETTA: 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 Shafqaat, Deputy Commissioner Quetta, Ft. Lieutenant (Retd) Asad, Deputy Commissioner Kech, Hussain Jan Baloch

Caretaker govt to ensure elections in peaceful manner: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Muratza 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. The first election was held in December 1970, he added.

The Election Commission of Pakistan had announced the date for elections in the last week of January, he said while ruling out any problem in holding the election vis-à-vis weather conditions.

"After the completion of delimitation, political parties will be given 54 days for the electoral campaign," he responded to a query. Solangi said the caretaker government was taking effective measures to address economic issues.

BNP stages protest against Wadh situation

QUETTA: 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 Dehwar 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.

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 consumer 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.



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 Marrakech.

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.

Both sides expressed optimism about the potential for further collaboration and pledged to continue working together to advance their countries' economic interests.

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

Independent Report

QUETTA: 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 men.

By doing so, the government wants to spend the public budget and exchequer on the public, he maintained.

Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar believed that the consultation with educated and visionary people can be helpful in the three stages of preparation of development projects, implementation on them and their look after.

However, there is a need to set aside prejudices and discrimination in selection of the experts and researchers, adding he stressed.



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

REPATRIATION OF ILLEGAL IMMIGRANTS

DAYS REMAINING

15

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Pakistan's crackdown on Afghan migrants: balancing security and refugee rights

By **Mehmood Baloch**

Earlier this month, the Caretaker government issued an order mandating the departure of all "illegal" migrants. This directive has left millions in fear of being repatriated to the country they had fled. According to the United Nations, approximately 3.7 million Afghans, who have been escaping war, poverty, and political instability in their home country, currently reside in Pakistan. However, Islamabad's official estimate puts the number as high as 4.4 million.

Pakistani authorities argue that only around 1.4 million Afghans possess the necessary documentation, primarily the Proof of Registration (PoR) card, which permits them to remain legally in Pakistan. Essentially, the crackdown is aimed at addressing the issue of illegal immigration, targeting individuals who entered the country through unauthorized means and lack registered refugee documentation.

Regarding Balochistan, it ranks as the second-largest host province for refugees, housing 26% of the total Afghan refugee population after Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK).

This crackdown serves

the greater interests of both the host nation and the refugees, particularly in light of the upsurge in terrorism following the fall of Kabul in 2021. To illustrate, out of the 24 suicide attacks that have occurred thus far, 14 of the perpetrators have been identified as Afghan nationals. These individuals entered Pakistan through illegal means and settled in the country under the guise of being refugees, lacking any Proof of Registration (PoR) documentation. Incidents of this nature have raised doubts about the Afghan population residing in Pakistan. Those who are registered as refugees with complete documentation possess legal rights and refugee status, which makes them eligible to reside in Pakistan. In contrast, individuals lacking any form of documentation to substantiate their refugee status are subject to deportation.

Pakistan is not closing its doors to Afghan refugees; rather, it will only admit those who undergo a registration process to enter the country legally, in accordance with established international refugee standards.

This situation underscores the importance of

striking a balance between security measures and humanitarian obligations. The upsurge in terrorism incidents involving some illegal Afghan residents has heightened the urgency of addressing these issues, but it is essential to distinguish between those who genuinely pose a threat and those who are fleeing dire circumstances.

The crackdown on illegal residents should serve as an opportunity for Pakistan to streamline its refugee policy, ensuring that it aligns with international standards and respects the rights of registered refugees. The emphasis should be on providing a pathway for legal entry, which safeguards both the interests of the host nation and the well-being of refugees. It is crucial for Pakistan to continue extending a helping hand to Afghan refugees in their time of need while maintaining the rule of law and security within its borders.

Ultimately, the challenges surrounding Afghan migration to Pakistan are complex, but with thoughtful and comprehensive policies, the nation can navigate this issue while upholding its humanitarian values and maintaining its national security.



QUETTA: Provincial Caretaker Minister for Sports Nawabzada Jamal Khan Raisani giving away shields to participants of All Balochistan Women Football Trainers Workshop

HR bodies slam Israeli siege of Gaza, as 2m Gazans wait for water

LAHORE (APP): The global human rights bodies condemned on Sunday the Israeli's inhuman blockade of Gaza and demanded immediate restoration of supply of water and electricity to the Palestinian territory, one of the most crowded places on Earth.

Gaza has been under war and siege since Saturday under a constant bombardment that Gaza health officials say has killed more than 1,000 people. Israel has imposed a total siege on the Gaza Strip since last Monday, cutting off the water supply while as it kept bombing targets in the crowded Palestinian enclave.

Gaza's health ministry said on Sunday that there were dozens of Palestinians killed and wounded in Israeli air strikes on the Jabalia refugee camp. It is worth mentioning here that Arab foreign ministers on Wednesday have denounced Israel's siege of Gaza demanding that aid be "immediately" allowed to enter the blockaded enclave.

Meanwhile Israel has imposed a "complete siege" on the Gaza Strip, cutting off the water supply, food, electricity and other essential supplies, Philip Lazzarini, Commissioner General of the United Nations Refugee Agency for the Palestinians, says that Israel has cut off the water

supply by attacking Gaza, due to which water has become a big problem for the Palestinians.

According to the United Nations, water has become a matter of life and death for Gaza after the Israeli military siege. Commissioner General Philippe Lazzarini said that 2 million people currently do not have access to water, which has made their lives even more difficult, for which it is necessary to allow the delivery of fuel to Gaza.

He further said that humanitarian aid has not been allowed in Gaza for a week, due to the non-availability of clean water, Palestinians have been forced to drink dirty water, which is also spreading diseases.

On the other hand, in a statement from Israel, it has been said that it is preparing attacks on Gaza from all three routes (land, air and sea). In this regard, the Zionist forces have ordered the citizens of Gaza to emigrate.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also signaled to his troops that the next phase of the war is coming, in which Israel is expected to launch a ground attack on Gaza.

In addition, the World Health Organization (WHO) has condemned Israel's decision to evacuate Palestinians, saying that forcing hospital patients to

relocate would be a death sentence.

Former Senator Sehar Kamran, and President of Centre for Pakistan and Gulf Studies (CPGS) told APP that the people of Muslim states stand united in support of Palestine, yet the collective voice of Muslim nations lacks strength and remains unheard.

The disappointing response of international organizations like UN, and UNSC despite the alarming number of civilian casualties and Israel's use of phosphorus bombs on civilians is deeply concerning.

To a question Kamran said that till now, the escalating violence in Gaza has claimed the lives of more than 1,799 Palestinians, including 583 children and 351 women.

Given the current circumstances, it won't be possible for any Muslim state to disregard the will of their people and restore ties with Israel, she added.

Amnesty International on Friday said its Crisis-Evidence Lab (CEL) on Friday has verified that Israeli military units striking Gaza areas, are equipped with white phosphorus artillery rounds.

"We are investigating what appears to be the use of white phosphorus in Gaza, including in a strike

near a hotel on the beach in Gaza City," the rights group said in a statement.

Amnesty said white phosphorus "burns at extremely high temperatures when exposed to air can continue to burn inside flesh," "causes horrific pain life-changing injuries" and "can't be put out with water."

This is why white phosphorus should never be used in civilian areas. Gaza is one of the most thickly populated areas in the world. As we continue to closely investigate these deeply concerning cases," the Amnesty further added. "it urges Israel to ensure respect for International Humanitarian Law, (IHL) in all circumstances and at all times, civilians must be spared."

Similarly Human Rights Watch (HRW) late Thursday said it has verified videos showing multiple airbursts of artillery-fired white phosphorus over Gaza and Lebanon on Oct. 10 to 11.

"Israel's use of white phosphorus in military operations in Gaza and Lebanon puts civilians at risk of serious and long-term injuries," the HRW further said.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch in a statement at a weekly briefing on Thursday has strongly condemned the

"indiscriminate and disproportionate use of force" by Israeli forces against the civilian population in Gaza and called for an urgent intervention by global powers to cease hostilities.

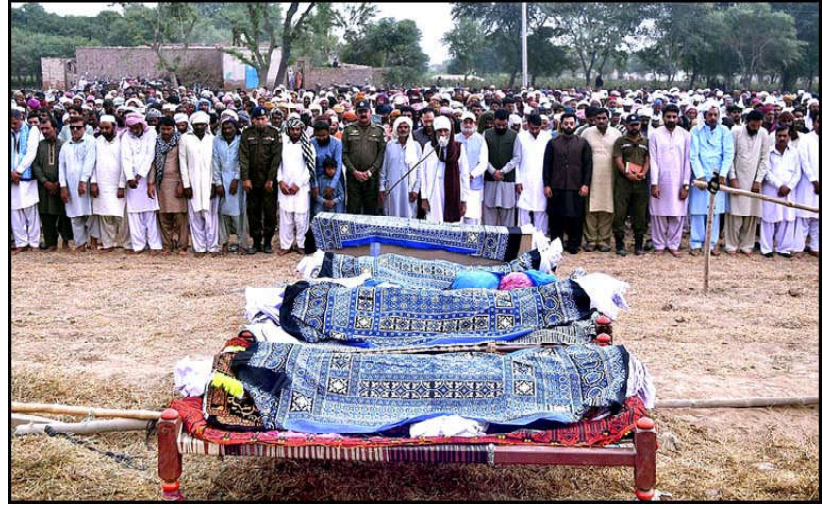
"We are deeply concerned over the fast-deteriorating and dire humanitarian situation in Gaza due to the inhumane blockade and collective punishment by Israeli forces, she added."

"The decision to cut off electricity, fuel and water supplies is unjust and should be reversed, as it would severely impact the lives of the Palestinians residing in the enclave. she said."

The spokesperson demanded Israel to "bring an immediate end to its campaign of indiscriminate bombing against the people of Gaza."

Pakistan was deeply concerned by the fast deteriorating and dire humanitarian situation in Gaza due to the "inhumane blockade and collective punishment by Israeli forces, she further informed."

It is worth mentioning here that the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has called an "urgent extraordinary meeting" on October 18, in Saudi Arabia to discuss the Israel-Gaza war, to address the "military escalation" and "threat to defenceless civilians in



MULTAN: A large number of people are attending the funeral prayer of laborers at Shujaabad who killed in firing incident in Turbat.

First upset of World Cup 2023 as mighty England downed by Afghanistan

Sports Desk

DELHI: Afghanistan outclassed "mighty" England by 69 runs to record the first major upset of the ongoing World Cup 2023 took place at the Arun Jaitley Stadium, Delhi in India.

Chasing a target of 285, England were bowled out 215 in the 41st over with Afghanistan securing a historic 69-run victory against the defending champions.

Today's win is Afghanistan's first-ever victory over England in one-day internationals (ODIs) and their second World Cup win.

Batting second, the defending champions faced challenges on the tricky Delhi wicket from the starting over as pacer Fazal Farooqi removed England's reliable opener, Jonny Bairstow with an inswinger on the first

ball of his spell. Joe Root looked in sharp touch after arriving but Mujeeb Ur Rahman's peach of a delivery sent him back to the pavilion for just 11 runs. Kipper Jos Buttler struggled from the moment he stepped on the field with the bat and was removed after just nine runs courtesy of a beauty by Naveen-ul-Haq.

Harry Brook was the only English batter to hold his ground and play a long innings as the youngster scored 66 off 61 with eight boundaries but he, too, couldn't do much and lost his wicket to Mujeeb.

Butler's men struggled badly on the dead and slow pitch and kept on losing wickets at regular intervals, losing all of their batters for 215 runs.

Rashia and Mujeeb took three wickets each,

Mohammad Nabi got two, while Farooqi and Naveen picked one. Batting first, Rahmanullah Gurbaz provided his side a flying start as they were 75-0 in just the first nine overs.

Gurbaz showcased his brilliant batting skills and played a rapid knock, scoring 80 off just 57 balls which included 12 boundaries, eight fours and four sixes.

The left-handed batter was on his way to complete a well-deserved century but a misunderstanding with his captain Hashmatullah Shahidi got him run out just 20 runs shy of a hundred.

After Gurbaz's wicket, Afghanistan lost wickets in quick succession but Ikram Ali Khil's 58 and valuable knocks by Rashid (23) and Mujeeb (28), respectively, powered Afghanistan to a fighting 284-run total.

Indian troops have martyred 85 Kashmiris so far this year

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indian troops in their unabated acts of state terrorism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IOJK) have martyred 85 Kashmiris so far this year.

According to Kashmir Media Service, of these Kashmiris, 22 were martyred in fake encounters or in custody. The personnel of the Indian army, police and paramilitary and sleuths of the dreaded National Investigation Agency and State Investigation Agency have arrested over 3000 persons during violent cordon and search operations and house raids.

The arrested persons include Hurriyat leaders, activists and journalists. Most of them were booked

under black law, Public Safety Act and the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act. Meanwhile, the All Parties Hurriyat Conference spokesman in a statement issued in Srinagar maintained that the Indian atrocities have failed to subdue the Kashmiris' resolve for freedom in the past and will meet the same fate in the future as well.

He said the Kashmiri people will continue their struggle till they achieve their UN-recognized right to self-determination. He urged the international community to play its role in resolving the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the Kashmiris' aspirations for ensuring durable peace in South Asia.



QUETTA: Head of Koh-i-Takatu tribe Qari Fateh Muhammad addressing a Press conference

Railways retrieve 1,028 acres land from illegal occupants

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has retrieved as many as 1,028 acres of its land worth millions of rupees from illegal occupants during various anti-encroachment operations across the country.

"A many as 503 acres retrieved in Punjab, 151 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 341 acres in Sindh and only 33 acres in Balochistan," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

He said that about 3,287 acres in Punjab, 832 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 5,180 acres in Sindh, and 687 acres of land in Balochistan were being encroached.

The official said that in light of the directives of the Supreme Court, the anti-encroachment operations for retrieval of encroached railway land all over the Railway network were initiated and a joint procedure order was issued to all divisional superintendents for retrieval of Railways land from encroachment.

"The anti-encroachment schedules, on a three months basis, are being prepared and sent to all concerned in line with the joint procedure order," the official added.

He said Pakistan Railways had also decided to accelerate its ongoing anti-encroachment operation against land grabbers across the country to recoup its

land from different individuals, groups, and even business organizations who were using it for residential, commercial, and agriculture purposes for decades.

"The encroachment operation will be launched with the assistance of Railway Police and district administrations of the relevant provincial governments," he added.

He said the organization was taking several steps to retrieve encroached land from the land grabbers including a detailed survey being carried out to identify the encroached land, occupied by the individuals and under illegal occupation by various government departments.

The official said that First Information Reports (FIRs) were being lodged and cases were registered and sent to PR Judicial Magistrates for expeditious trial.

The issue regarding illegal occupation and possession of Pakistan Railways' land by government departments and institutions has also been taken up with the concerned departments, he added.

The official said PR owned 167,690 acres of land across the country, of which 90,326 acres was in Punjab, 39,428 acres in Sindh, 28,228 acres in Balochistan, and 9,708 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Engine driver injured as train crashes with dumper in Tarnol

ISLAMABAD (APP): An engine driver of a train was injured in a collision with a dumper truck near Tarnol a small town of Islamabad city on early Sunday morning.

According to details, the train's driver was injured after it derailed from the railway lines following the mishap, a private news channel.

The train was coming from Multan to Rawalpindi.

Receiving the information about the accident, the security personnel arrived at the scene and launched the rescue process.

Moreover, assistance from a crane was also taken for early clearance of the area.

Polio virus detected in Lahore, Peshawar, Hub sewage samples

ISLAMABAD (NP): Polio virus traces have been gathered from sewage samples in Lahore, Peshawar and Hub.

According to media reports, Pakistan's National Polio Laboratory at the National Institute of Health (NIH), Type-1 Wild Poliovirus (WPV1) was detected in sewage samples collected from Hub, Lahore and Peshawar. "The genome sequencing of the virus, found in samples collected from Peshawar and Hub, showed that it belonged to Afghanistan. However, the process of genome sequencing of the sample, collected from Lahore, is yet to be completed," a NIH lab official said.

He added that sewage

samples collected from an area are a basic parameter to determine the success of polio campaigns. Polio, a highly infectious and incurable disease, mainly affects children under the age of five. The virus invades the nervous system and can cause paralysis or even death in some cases. Third polio case of the year 2023 was confirmed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's (KP) Bannu district on Wednesday as Pakistan struggling to get rid of the crippling disease.

In the year 2022, as many as 20 cases of poliovirus were reported across the country. Pakistan was come near to eradication of disease in year 2021 when only one case was reported in the country.



LARKANA: Activists of Dharti Dhani Tehreek are holding protest demonstration against Afghan refugees, at Jinnah Bagh in Larkana.

CM Domki...

Continued from page 1 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.

Later, the DC Kech also proceeded for Multan along with the bodies of slain labourers. It may be mentioned here that six labourers were gunned down and two others injured by unknown armed men after they barged into a house in Turbat city where they were staying.

Pakistan equates Israel's....

Continued from page 1 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 Road Forum for international cooperation, he said that the prime minister would hold meetings with the Chinese leaders, global leaders and top Chinese top business leaders.

Prime Minister Kakar would also discuss joint ventures with the Chinese companies and a number of MOUs regarding agriculture, health, industrial, green energy and space technology cooperation would be signed during the upcoming visit.

The foreign minister further said that the visit would enhance the ongoing strong bilateral cooperation between Pakistan and China as 'Iron Brothers' and would help strengthen the bilateral ties.

"The visit will also provide an opportunity to review the entire gamut of en-

tire cooperation and Pak-China strategic cooperation. The visit also marks the ten years of CPEC and Belt and Road Initiative," he added.

The foreign minister further informed that the caretaker prime minister would also visit the Xinjiang region bordering Pakistan and eight other countries of the region.

He termed the CPEC as an economic success story for both sides and a model of excellent economic cooperation despite external dimensions to certain security challenges.

Both countries coordinated to blunt the terrorist activities and the both sides had expressed satisfaction over the ongoing bilateral cooperation. They had completed the first phase of CPEC and entering into the second phase which related to industrial, technological and agricultural cooperation, he added.

The foreign minister, to a query, advised not to heed to propaganda about the CPEC, adding the railways project was the part of ongoing negotiation between the two sides and had been in the advanced stage and expressed the hope that an agreement in this regard would be concluded soon.

About the expulsion of illegal foreigners, he said the policy did not pertain to Afghans only, but it was for all the illegal foreigners living in Pakistan without legal documents.

He said Pakistan always supported Afghanistan in difficult times and there was an ongoing cooperation between the two countries in the economic and trade fields.

He termed his recent meeting with the Afghan interim foreign minister in Azerbaijan as very constructive.



ISLAMABAD: Women participants enjoying during 16th annual Rural Women Leadership Conference, in connection with International Day of Rural Women, at Lok Virsa in Federal Capital.

Annual Rural Women Conference held Empowering rural women key for sustainable development: NA Speaker

ISLAMABAD (Online): On this International Day for Rural Women, Speaker of Pakistan Raja Pervez Ashraf has said that today, we celebrate and honor the invaluable contributions of rural women worldwide. Their dedication and hard work in agriculture, food security, poverty alleviation, and rural development are the backbone of sustainable progress.

Rural women play a crucial role in shaping our societies and economies. It is imperative that we not only recognize their pivotal contributions but also take

concrete steps to ensure their well-being. This includes providing them with access to essential facilities, such as healthcare and education, which are vital for their empowerment and the progress of rural communities.

I would like to recall with pride that October 15 was declared 'National Day for Rural Women' back in 2009 by the then federal government. However, it is regretted to note that the practice was discontinued later. Our joint endeavor should be to revive the tradition, hence bringing back the focus on the challenges

and contributions of rural women in social, economic and political landscape of Pakistan.

Let us renew our commitment to supporting rural women and acknowledge their resilience, strength, and determination in the face of challenges. Together, we can create a brighter and more equitable future for all, where the voices and contributions of rural women are valued and uplifted.

Meanwhile During the second session of the 1st day of 16th Annual Rural Women Conference held here in Islamabad,

recognizing the alarming lack in birth registration of girl children and marginalized segments of the society, the speakers and the participants urged the government to devise effective mechanisms involving communities, while taking into account innovative solutions utilizing digital technologies.

Today (Sunday) is the 1st day of the conference. Every year 15 October is celebrated as international Rural Women Day according to the UN General Assembly's resolution A/RES/62/136 of 18 December 2007.

VCs Forum urges effective inter-university collaborations

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Vice Chancellors Forum concluded here yesterday with a wealth of transformative recommendations that promise to shape the landscape of higher education and effective inter-university collaborations in Pakistan.

The Forum, held under the auspices of the Inter University Consortium for Promotion of Social Sciences (IUCPSS) and the National Skills University Islamabad, was chaired by Dr. Shahid Mehmood Baig Chairman, Pakistan Science Foundation.

The participants included Dr. Tanvir Kayani Secretary General, Pakistan National Commission for UNESCO (PNCU), Prof. Dr. Muhammad Mukhtar Vice Chancellor, National Skills University Islamabad, Prof. Dr. Safia Ahmed Vice Chancellor, Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University (SBBWU) Peshawar, Dr. Syed Habib Ali Bokhari Vice Chancellor, Kohsar University, Murree, Prof. Dr. Mujahid Rector, PAF-IST Mang Hariapur-Dr. Mohammad Abid, Vice

Chancellor, City University of Science and Information Technology, Peshawar, Prof. Dr. Khalil Ahmed Iqbal Vice Chancellor, Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur and Prof. Dr. Ijaz A. Qureshi Pro Vice Chancellor, Institute of Art and Culture Lahore and others.

M u h a m m a d Murtaza Noor, National Coordinator, IUCPSS conducted the proceeding of the forum.

The senior leadership of academia Islamabad deliberations recommended bridging the gap between academia and industry, equipping the youth with necessary soft skills, bringing innovation in teaching, research and curriculum, increase in budgetary allocations for the education sector and building permanent inter university mechanism aimed at learning from another 's best practices and expertise.

The forum reached a unanimous consensus on the implementation of faculty and student exchange programs within Pakistani universities, fostering cross-institutional collaboration and enriching academic experiences.

The participants also urged for a culture of art and design to be cultivated through research and funded projects, celebrating and nurturing Pakistan's artistic and creative talents.

Recognising the need for continuous improvement, the forum recommended a focus on faculty capacity building through training and workshops to stay at the forefront of educational advancements.

To sustain the momentum of innovation, it was suggested to host VC Forum-like events on a monthly basis, promoting ongoing dialogue, knowledge sharing, and networking.

The forum also acknowledged the unique skills and talents within their institutions and proposed benefiting from them through faculty placement programs, creating an environment where universities can harness each other's strengths.

The participants also appreciated joint efforts of IUCPSS and National Skills University for organising this important academic activity.

Cylinder explosion at F-7 CNG station leaves two dead

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a devastating incident at a CNG station in sector F-7 of Islamabad, a cylinder explosion rocked the area leaving two women dead and injuries to two others including a child.

According to police and eyewitness accounts, the explosion occurred as gas was being filled into a vehicle, causing immediate panic and injuries to four

persons including two women and a child.

Law enforcement authorities swiftly responded to the scene, coordinating the rapid transfer of all four injured individuals to the nearest hospital for urgent medical attention. Despite the concerted efforts of medical staff, the two women, critically wounded in the blast, tragically succumbed to their injuries.

Gunmen open fire on police patrol in Islamabad's Sector E-12

ISLAMABAD (APP): A police patrol from Golra police station came under gunfire from unidentified assailants on Saturday in Sector E-12 which later succeeded to arrest an injured attacker.

According to reports, the police team was conducting routine surveillance when they signaled a suspicious vehicle to halt. Without warning, the occupants of the vehicle, believed to be three individuals,

began firing at the officers before making a swift getaway from the scene.

Fortunately, due to the prompt implementation of security protocols, no casualties were reported among the law enforcement personnel.

However, during the pursuit of the fleeing suspects, one of the perpetrators sustained injuries due to police firing and was subsequently apprehended by the authorities.

Elimination of land-grabbing mafias is top priority: ICCPO

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police Tarnol Police team has apprehended a land grabber during an operation against land grabbing mafias and recovered weapons with ammunition from his possession, a public Relation Officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police has initiated a grand operation against land grabbers in the federal capital in order to eliminate this menace.

Following these directions the Tarnol police team used technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending an

accused involved in illegal occupation of citizen's lands and harassment activities.

The accused was identified as Wali Khan. Police team also recovered weapons with ammunition from his possession. Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

ICCPO Dr Akbar Nasir Khan said that land grabbing activities would not be tolerated and indiscriminate action would continue against those who illegally occupy land of others. He thoroughly directed all zonal police officers to intensify this crackdown until the elimination of land grabbing from the federal capital.



ISLAMABAD: A worker is busy in cleaning vehicles outside a car showroom at sector G-8 in Federal capital.

Think tanks propose solutions for uplift of merged tribal areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a recent gathering of intellectuals, convened under the Forum for Inquiry, Knowledge, and Review (FIKAR), a think tank project affiliated with the Pakistan Development Foundation, a prominent social organization, held a concise discussion on the developmental progress in merged tribal areas.

The gathering had the participation of 15 heads of diverse institutions. It was presided over by Lt. Gen. Retired Shaheen Mazhar Mahmood, former Corps Commander of

Peshawar, and co-hosted by Muhammad Bilal Sethi, Chairman of the Pakistan Development Foundation and Prof. Dr. Qibla Ayaz, Chairman of the Council of Islamic Ideology.

Addressing the forum as a keynote speaker, Gen Shaheen said the merger of tribal areas into Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) was a significant step in 2018 aimed at integrating these historically marginalized regions into the mainstream. However, it brought about several challenges he said highlighting their possible solutions.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor is busy preparing red rose garland at his workplace at sector F-6 in Federal capital.

Solangi meets Anchorperson Masood Raza to inquire after his health

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Sunday met Anchorperson of Dunya News Masood Raza to inquire after his health.

During the meeting, the minister inquired about Masood Raza's health and prayed for his speedy recovery, said a news statement.

27 absconders, POs involved in heinous crime held

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police have arrested 33 absconders and proclaimed offenders involved in heinous crime during the last week, a public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, special tasks were assigned to all seniors' police officials to ensure the arrest of proclaimed offenders and absconders involved in heinous crimes. Following these directions, the Islamabad Capital Police Aabpara, Sihala, Ramma, Tarnol, Noon and Kohsar police stations teams have arrested 27 absconders and proclaimed offenders involved in heinous crime during the last week.

Campaign for registration of house servants and tenants data in full swing

ISLAMABAD: According to details, following the special orders of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad Capital Police "Knock the Door" campaign for the registration of employees and tenants is in full swing, a public relations officer said.

He said that, during this campaign various teams of Islamabad Capital Police are going to the streets and door-to-door to ensure the registration of tenants and domestic workers as well as to inquire about the problems faced by the citizens.

CDA retrieves 750 kanals land in Sector I-12

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) has retrieved as many as 750 kanals of its precious land from the land grabbers in Sector I-12/1,2 and 3 of the federal capital during the last week. "The authority has launched a comprehensive operation to curb encroachments in the federal capital on the directives of CDA Chairman Capt@ Anwar ul Haq," an official told APP on Sunday.

He said that the Enforcement Directorate of CDA had launched the operation in collaboration with various departments near NUST University, Sector I-12 against an illegal Afghan

settlement established over an extensive area. The official said that heavy machinery was used during the operation, resulting in the demolition of numerous rooms and livestock enclosures. During the operation, 750 kanals of land were retrieved and handed over for rapid developmental projects.

Similarly, taking stringent action against encroachments on Simly Dam Road, Karnal Sher Khan Avenue, Maandi Mor Margalla Town Phase-2 and Murree Road, the authorities removed additional sheds and fruit stalls on both the sides of the road while clearing public passages.



ISLAMABAD: A view of deserted petrol pump at Melody in Federal Capital, As Petrol prices are expected to drop below Rs290 per litre, in Pakistan, an anticipated move in response to global oil price fluctuations.

IRSA releases 103,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (INP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Sunday released 103,200 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 71,000 cusecs.

According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1528.98 feet and was 130.98 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 37,700 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively.

The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1213.75 feet, which was 163.75 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 10,100 cusecs and 40,000 cusecs respectively.

The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 53,900, 57,900, 57,000 and 20,900 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 11,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 4,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

19 professional Beggars arrested

ISLAMABAD (INP): The district administration of Islamabad arrested 19 beggars while conducting an operation against professional beggars.

According to ICT spokesman on Sunday, the operation was carried out by Civil Defense teams under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Secretariat and Assistant Director Civil Defense under the direction of Deputy Commissioner Islamabad.

The teams conducted operations against professional beggars in different areas of Islamabad, including F-7, F-9, F-10, G-10 and I-8. They arrested 19 beggars, including 14 adults and 5 children.

The adults were sent to a shelter home, while the children were sent to the Edhi Center.

Pakistan joins global observance of 'Int'l White Cane Day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan, along with global community, on Sunday observed the 'International White Cane Day', a day dedicated to raising awareness about the visually impaired and promoting their rights to independence, mobility, and social inclusion.

This international observance is a significant moment to acknowledge the challenges faced by the blind and visually-impaired individuals and to highlight the importance of accessibility and equal opportunities for them.

In Pakistan, 'International White Cane Day' was celebrated with a series of events and initiatives to improve the lives of the visually-impaired community and make the country more inclusive. The day's activities were coordinated by various organizations, government agencies, and individuals who share a common goal of empowering the blind and visually impaired. Furthermore, social media campaigns and online discussions amplified the message of International White Cane Day. People shared stories and experiences of visually-impaired individuals, highlighting their achievements and struggles, in an effort to raise awareness and promote inclusivity in the digital realm.

PKM Project: model of sustainability in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): The PKM project improves Pakistan's road network and its comprehensive transportation system, shortens travel time for travellers and freight, and reduces the drive from Multan to Sukkur from 11 to 4 hours, according to China State Construction Engineering Corporation (CSCEC) Pakistan PKM Project Sustainability Report.

The report was released at a seminar celebrating the 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), held by KASB KTrade Securities, a well-known financial think tank in Pakistan, according to Gwadar Pro. CSCEC PKM represents the highest standard in Pakistan with the highest design level and the most advanced intelligent system.

It adopts Chinese SBS modified asphalt technology and is the only one with full greening along the route and strong flood resistance capacity. Environmental protection is integrated into the entire project process, including management, design, and construction. A total of 335,800 trees were planted in the project.

The green area on both sides of the road is equivalent to 775 football fields, and the green area of other areas and service areas is equivalent to 81 football fields. During construction, 9 schools, 800 km of road, 20 bridges, 62 wells, and more than 300 watercourses for the villages have been repaired along the route. CSCEC has also organized medical teams to provide free diagnosis for more than 3,900 residents and distributed 13,200 boxes of medicines to the locals.

The project provided over 28,900 direct jobs to locals and trained over 4,500 equipment operators and over 2,300 management and technical personnel, boosting local employment.

PKM starts from Sukkur, Sindh and reaches Multan, the economic center of Punjab in the north, with a total length of 392 km and a design speed of 120 km per hour.



ISLAMABAD: Children are enjoying Sunday Holiday at Japanese Children Park in Federal capital.

Daily Voice of Masses

Independent

Monday October 16, 2023

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 Reema Omer

On Oct 11, the Supreme Court by a 10-5 majority upheld the constitutionality of provisions related to bench formation and case allocation in the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Act, 2023. Parliament's enactment of a law distributing to a committee of judges what were earlier the chief justice of Pakistan's (CJP) sole discretionary powers, and the Supreme Court upholding its constitutional validity, are both welcome and necessary first steps in recognising the 'internal' aspect of the independence of the judiciary.

A brief history of the evolution of the independence of the judiciary can help explain the meaning of 'internal' judicial independence and its significance. In essence, judicial independence means judges should be free to perform their duties in accordance with the law without any improper influence. This is important as only an independent judiciary can safeguard the rule of law, access to justice, and more generally, the fundamental rights of the people.

In Pakistan, like in many other jurisdictions, independence of the judiciary has almost entirely been seen as the institutional and functional separation of the judiciary from other branches of the state in matters such as appointments, accountability, and court administration.

However, as judiciaries in many parts of the world have become more institutionally independent with greater powers of self-governance — as has been happening in Pakistan as well — there are growing concerns about the 'internal' dimension of judicial independence, which seeks to protect individual judges from interference or improper influences from within the judiciary.

The European Court of Human Rights, for example, in a number of judgements since 2009, has

recognised "judicial independence demands that individual judges be free not only from undue influences outside the judiciary, but also from within". It has held internal judicial independence requires that judges are "free from directives or pressures from the fellow judges or those who have administrative responsibilities in the court such as the president of the court or the president of a division in the court".

One such example of 'internal' independence is ensuring court presidents or chief justices do not have arbitrary, unstructured powers to constitute benches and assign cases to individual judges. The UN Special Rapporteur on the Independence of Judges and Lawyers has said case allocation "at the discretion of the court chairperson may lead to a system where more sensitive cases are allocated to specific judges to the exclusion of others" and has argued for a mechanism that "protects judges from interference from within the judiciary", including through legislation.

A number of constitutions, particularly in Europe, recognise the right to

a 'lawful' or 'natural' judge. This right is now also seen as a safeguard against deprivation of the 'lawful judge' from within the court administration. In countries such as Germany, therefore, a 'management group' consisting of the court president and a number of judges decides how cases are allocated on the basis of predetermined 'management plans'.

These examples show allocation of cases to individual judges or benches is not solely a matter of court administration, but has serious implications for 'internal' judicial independence, and consequently, for the rule of law, access to justice, and the right to a fair trial. Parliaments, therefore, are not just competent to provide a remedy in such cases, as they have done in a number of jurisdictions, but have a duty to do so.

This is true for Pakistan as well. In recent years, we have seen how the CJP's arbitrary power to allocate cases has raised concerns of illegitimate influences on the functioning of the judiciary and case outcomes. Chief justices have grossly misused

their powers by assigning politically significant cases to a handful of judges to the exclusion of others, based on no clear criteria, creating a hierarchy in Supreme Court judges. Cases have been taken from particular judges and allocated to others in the middle of the proceedings. And while certain petitions have been heard promptly, others have remained pending for years.

Yet, surprisingly, a number of judges, lawyers, and other commentators still consider bench formation and case allocation an "administrative matter", and find legislation distributing these powers to a committee of the CJP and two senior-most judges outside parliament's competence and an assault on the independence of the judiciary.

How the committee constituted under the law works in practice would demonstrate how far issues related to bench formation and case allocation have been addressed, but at least this much is clear that the CJP giving up his power as the 'master of the roster' and sharing it

with other Supreme Court judges strengthens 'internal' judicial independence.

That said, it remains to be seen whether there has indeed been a paradigm shift in how the Supreme Court (and perhaps the high courts too) understand the independence of the judiciary, as many other issues continue to hamper 'internal' independence and need reform. These include opacity in the judicial appointments process and the CJP's power of 'initiation', which makes him the sole authority that can recommend names of candidates that the Judicial Commission can consider for appointment to the superior courts.

Ideally, any judicial and legislative attempts to address these issues — as well as the public response to such efforts — should be based on a holistic, contemporary understanding of judicial independence that also includes its 'internal' aspect, instead of an outdated, knee-jerk view that is enamoured by a CJP as the paterfamilias and equates independence with complete insulation of the judiciary. — Courtesy Dawn



By Ghazi Salahuddin

Chancing upon a history quiz on YouTube, I was a bit intrigued by a question on Winston Churchill. Though I vaguely had some idea about what it was about, I was a bit taken aback by how it was put.

Well, the question was: "Winston Churchill is one of the most legendary and greatest known leaders of the 20th century. However, he suffered from depression. What was the term he gave to his depression?" And the options were: "The black dog / The rough reptile / The sad clown / The surly serpent".

Interesting, isn't it? Anyway, the answer is 'the black dog', which may be appropriate for an imposing personality of Churchill's looks and character. Now, as I paused to

savour this information, I realized that the day — Tuesday — was coincidentally being observed as World Mental Health Day. Some events were held in Pakistan to underline the importance of spreading awareness about the mental well-being of the people.

As for Churchill, one point to highlight — beyond the quiz — is that he had sought medical advice to deal with his depression, which was really severe at times. There have been suggestions that he either suffered from bipolar disorder or manic depression.

People in Pakistan, particularly those who are well-known in society, would hesitate to consult the relevant physician if they suffer from any mental health problem. There is a stigma about it, making this crisis more problematic. In fact, the situation is quite frightening. In addition to lack of awareness, there is a severe shortage of the necessary health facilities and dearth of psychiatrists and clinical psychologists.

Hence, I will not go into any details about the mental health and social well-being of the ordinary citizens of Pakistan. The

picture is so scary that even looking at it would greatly enhance our collective depression of the kind that has seemingly become incurable.

But I would like to mention, in passing, the dedicated efforts of the Pakistan Association of Mental Health in raising awareness of this nationally debilitating disorder. This association was founded by distinguished psychiatrist Dr S Haroon Ahmed, who said some years ago that at least two million persons in Karachi suffer from mental, emotional, intellectual or social adjustment disorders. This would appear to be an understatement if you carefully follow reports of crime and deviant behaviour in the city on a daily basis.

According to a survey conducted some years ago (and the situation must have worsened now) every fourth house in Karachi had a psychosomatic or psychiatric problem. Every second house had one or more persons taking tranquilizers.

In a larger perspective, the WHO has said that 10-16 per cent of the general population in Pakistan suffers from mild to moderate psychiatric illness. In addition,

one per cent of the population suffers from severe mental illness. As many as 24 million people are in need of psychiatric assistance.

We often talk about the emotional benefits of a supportive family system. Experts agree that this is a positive dimension of our culture. But the family cannot be a strong defence against anxiety and depression in an impoverished society where the poverty levels are rising. In many ways, society is also changing, and it is not oblivious to global trends of depression and loneliness, thanks partly to how digital technology is impacting our lives.

There is a lot that one could say about the disdain with which the policymakers of this country look at the emotional and psychological problems of mainly the vast number of our young people. Even in the educated middle-class, more and more young people are seen to be drifting into pathological depression. One measure of what is happening to the young is that almost all of them are desperate to go abroad. Take this as evidence of

their loss of hope in the future of this country.

I have a number of stories of what the young feel and think about their present state of affairs, through personal encounters and after sharing thoughts with friends who have to deal with difficult and disturbed children. Just one example. A mother who is very close to her children reported how her son who has just stepped out of his teens very seriously posed this question: "Why is it necessary to go on living?"

Such existential feelings may be common to young people in many other countries, giving the present state of the world and the disasters that have ripped through many communities. A monumental tragedy is playing out in the Middle East and the war between Hamas and Israel has literally destroyed the peace of mind of the entire world. It is hard to imagine that so many supposedly civilized countries cannot understand the immortal longings of the Palestinians for freedom and justice.

By the way, the theme of the World Mental Health Day this year is: "Mental health is a universal human right". This in-

cludes, in the words of the WHO, "the right to be protected from mental health risks, the right to available, accessible, acceptable, and good quality care, and the right to liberty, independence and inclusion in community".

What do these words mean to us, in this country? The very reference to "liberty, independence and inclusion in community" would appear to be a fantasy. The human rights violations that our people suffer go far, far beyond the range of mental sickness. Hence, the people are not left with any strength to cope with emotional stress and anxiety and depression.

One problem is that those who wield power and authority in our society are just not concerned about the mental well-being of primarily the young. They may see it as a joke that Japan has appointed a minister for loneliness. Sweden has a minister for social affairs. There have been calls in many countries for a similar post. Britain has a minister of state for civil society. But Pakistan may prefer to just not have a civil society. — Courtesy TheNews

A struggle for sanity

Out of the box



By Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

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.

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

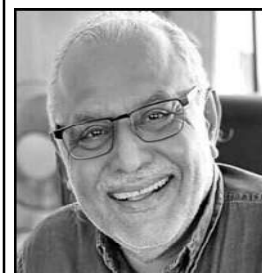
leaders and other policymakers tend to absorb only concise pointed messaging. Public and private donors also provide funding only for project-specific ideas. However, the information age can be transformative if data is handled well. For instance, ideas generated by some think tanks influence public 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.

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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.

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 heart-breaking. Humanity seems dead. — Courtesy Dawn

Interim CM Sindh seeks reports from SBCA, BoR, Police over complaints within a week

KARACHI (APP): The Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar has sought a report from the Sindh Building Control Authority (SBCA), Board of Revenue (BoR) and Police over various complaints.

He directed the SBCA to provide a detailed report on how many building maps were passed every month before August 17 and how many were passed then, according to a CM House spokesman.

He asked how many illegal buildings were sealed every month before August 17 and how many had been sealed now.

Furthermore, he also

sought a report from the Board of Revenue on how many registries were done in different categories every month in the sub-registrar offices before August 17 and how many were being done then.

He said that complaints were being received that sub-registrar offices had also slowed down the work of registries.

Moreover, the Caretaker Chief Minister Sindh also directed measures to prevent the illegal use of police mobiles and official vehicles.

He said that Police and other government agencies had been directed to maintain the log book of

their vehicles.

They should write in the log book about where the vehicle went and for what purpose as well as how far was the vehicle from the official work and how much petrol was consumed.

After how much mileage, when the oil and oil filter of the vehicle changed and when should it be changed again, he added that the log book should be verified by a senior officer, which would also be checked by the inspection teams from time to time.

All these reports should be sent to the CM Secretariat within one week.



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

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.

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.

Search and sweep operations should be continued around the sensitive places, the IG Punjab added that religious scholars, Christian community leaders, members of peace committees should promote inter-faith harmony.

In order to solve the problems of minorities on a priority basis.

Dr. Usman Anwar said that Meesaq Centers have been established where minority citizens can easily get policing services.

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.

The Italian ambassador said that the Trade Commission had launched its working to enhance mutual trade, adding, "We are taking measures to provide ease in acquiring work visas." The ambassador vowed that cooperation in the cultural, tourism and trade sectors would be further promoted.



KARACHI: Activists of civil society organize a protest demonstration to show solidarity with the people of Palestine, call for an immediate ceasefire at Karachi Press Club.

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.

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

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.

The press release furthered that this Inter-Universities Skit Competition represents a collective effort to address the pressing issues related to WatSan and celebrate the significance of Global Handwashing Day.

Vote casting is national obligation, Zia-ur-Rahim

MARDAN (APP): District Election Commission Officer Mardan Zia-ur-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.

He expressed these views while addressing a meeting organized by Saibaan Development Organization Mardan with the support of the Non-Governmental Organization Shirkat Gah.

Muhammad Arif of Saibaan Development Organization Mardan also addressed the meeting and said that the vote is the trust of the nation, so not using it properly is a betrayal.

Traffic police Abbottabad imposes 265100 rupees fine on traffic violations

ABBOTTABAD (APP): To enhance the road safety and enforce traffic laws, Abbottabad traffic police on Sunday have launched a comprehensive crackdown on various traffic violations across the district and imposed 265100 rupees fine on 2634 vehicles for various traffic violations.

The initiative, led by the Inspector General (IG) Police KPK, has been executed under the guidance of Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Hazara and District Police Officer (DPO) Abbottabad Omar Tafail and the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Traffic, Arif Javed Khan.

Inspection of the vehicles was conducted on the check posts in collaboration with district police and a substantial number of motorcycles without proper number plates were seized, emphasizing the need for strict enforcement of

traffic regulations.

In a series of inspections carried out last month, the traffic police took firm action against 965 motorcyclists who were found riding without helmets, along with underage riders. These actions were carried out under the provisions of Section 279 of the Pakistan Penal Code (PPC) and Section 523/550 of the Criminal Procedure Code (CrPC).

The crackdown also targeted vehicles using non-standard or fancy number plates, resulting in fines being imposed on 654 drivers, collectively amounting to 78,600 rupees. Furthermore, 1,065 vehicles with tinted windows were imposed heavy fines a sum of 132,500 rupees and leading to the removal of the tint.

In a bid to ensure road safety, 66 vehicles were fined for the improper use of police lights.

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 added.

TJP takes out rally to show solidarity with oppressed Palestinians

KARACHI (INP): Tehreek Jawanan Pakistan (TJP) on Sunday held a 'Martyrs of Palestine and Pakistan Rally' to show solidarity with Palestinian brothers and sisters here in the metropolis.

The rally commenced from Jinnah Terminal (airport), which passed through Shahra e Faisal Drig Station, Gulshan e Iqbal, Luck One and Aisha Manzil and culminated at Karsaz.

TJP Chairman Abdullah Gul addressing the occasion, said that the people of Palestine and IIOJK stood on the right

path. He said that human rights were being violated by Israel in Palestine.

He said that the oppressed Palestinians were being brutally martyred by Israeli forces.

Gul said that Israel was targeting women and children. He said that Palestine would emerge victorious in spite of the brutal attacks of Israel.

He also lambasted India and Western countries for hatching plots against Pakistan.

The TJP chairman said that unity was the only way to prevent a conspiracy.

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.

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

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.

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

Three killed for resisting robbery in Punjab

AHMEDPUR SHARQIA (INP): Unidentified gunmen shot dead three members of a family for resisting robbery in Ahmedpur Sharqia, Punjab.

According to details, the incident occurred in Azeemwala, Ahmedpur Sharqia, Punjab, where three people including a man, his wife and a six-year-old were shot dead for resisting a robbery. After getting the information, police reached the spot and shifted the bodies to the hospital. The investigation has been launched. The incident of street crimes are on the rise in Pakistan. Earlier in August, unidentified robbers killed a young man for putting up resistance during a robbery bid near Karachi's Northern Bypass.

Heavy rain lashes parts of Punjab

LAHORE (INP): The City received heavy rain, turning the weather cold and with people taking it as a harbinger of winter.

The rain, hailstorm and strong winds also lashed different parts of upper Punjab which brought down temperature shapely but left several areas without electricity. With the torrential rain as usual parts of the City plunged into darkness as most of the Wpada feeders.



MUZAFFRABAD: People pushing an out of order loaded van at a road during rain in the city.

CM Complaint Cell resolves 486 complaints out of 747

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.

During the last 24 hours, 71 new dengue cases were reported in Lahore, 37 in Rawalpindi, 10 in Multan, 37 in Gujranwala, and eight in Faisalabad.

In the past 24 hours, six cases were reported in Sheikhpura.

On the directives of the caretaker Chief Minister Sindh Justice (Retd) Maqbool Baqar, the Public Complaint Cell had been activated for 24 hours a day.

The Caretaker Chief Minister said that the Complaint Cell was active to serve the people of the province.

He warned the Sindh government departments of action if failed to resolve the complaints of the people. He further said that strict action would also be taken against government employees, who demanded for bribes.

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.

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

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

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

"Both of them being provided medical attendance at hospital," the official added.

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.

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

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

EPD intensifies crackdown on smoky industrial units, transport

LAHORE (APP): As part of its ongoing crackdown on violators contributing to the spread of smog and pollution, the Environment Protection Department (EPD), Punjab, has carried out a targeted campaign against those found violating standard operating procedures (SOPs) including smoke-emitting vehicles, industrial units and brick kilns.

Meanwhile, after rains in the city, the Air Quality Index dropped to just 57, with authorities scrambling to maintain the rain-reduced air pollution levels. A senior official of EPD, Naseem ur Raman Shah, told APP that the DG Environment had directed the anti-smog squads to stay in the field for 24 hours, while their

performance will also be checked by senior officers.

He said that 112 industrial units were checked, while 42 were sealed and 72 issued notices during the last 24 hours.

Meanwhile Punjab Transport Secretary Ahmed Javed Qazi has also strictly warned that smoke-emitting vehicles would not be allowed to enter the roads of the provincial metropolises.

"If someone deputed on duty was found negligent in enforcing the laws, they will be dealt with sternly," he added.

He added a tree planting drive had also been launched in Lahore in a bid to control smog.

"In this connection, the Punjab Transport Authority.



HYDERABAD: Human Rights Activist Sadia Baloch, Shahnaz Sheedi, Ghufra 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.

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 global economic challenges call for sustainable solutions to alleviate their impact.

This, he said, can be achieved through collective actions and measures taken by the international community, in cooperation with global financial institutions, as well as through bilateral and multilateral agreements between countries and international

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.

PCMEA proposes authority for export sector facilitation

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Carpet Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PCMEA) has asked the government to establish an authority comprising focal persons of export sectors, foreign embassies, State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) and other related departments to remove barriers to exports, explore new markets, accessing them and effective advertising and marketing.

"It is very difficult for a country of a 250 million population to run with the current volume of exports, government patronage along with a long-term policy to promote exports is also inevitable," PCMEA Vice Chairman Usman Ashraf stated this in the Association's weekly review meeting here Sunday. The CTI (Carpet Training Institute) Chairperson Ijaz Rehman, senior central leader Abdul Latif Malik, senior member Riaz Ahmed, Saeed Khan, Major (Retd) Akhtar

Nazir, Shahid Hasan Sheikh, Umair Usman and others were also present.

Usman Ashraf said that the government, through the facilitation council, is trying to remove the red tape in the way of foreign investment and Pakistan's export sectors also require the same strategy for the promotion of exports. "All the stakeholders should be taken into confidence in formulation of policy for the promotion of exports in the future, so that a policy draft can be prepared which can yield positive results," he added.

He said that exporters were facing problems due to fluctuation in dollar exchange rates and the cost of production is increasing due to expensive labour and other reasons. The recently held International Expo is likely to lead to large-scale export deals, but due to the continued depreciation of the dollar, exporters are reluctant to sign contracts, he maintained.

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."

The official said, "Only one saloon has been allocated to the federal

government while one each has been allocated to the Governors of Sindh, Balochistan, Punjab, and the provincial governments."

In addition, eight saloons had been allocated for the Railway Headquarters Lahore, in which one each would be marked to Chief Executive Officer/General Manager (BS-22), Additional General Manager BS-21, Inspector General Railway Police, Federal Government Inspector, and four saloons were allocated for Principal Officers, he added. The official said six saloons had been allocated for Divisional Superintendents of Peshawar, Rawalpindi, Quetta, Sukkur, Lahore, and Karachi. He said that the Principal Officers of Pakistan Railways were entitled to travel at these saloons or inspection coaches only when they were on duty.

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 compared to the exports valued at \$174.7 million during the corresponding month in the previous financial year.

According to a Gwadar Pro's report, in September, Pakistan's total exports to all partner countries of the world were recorded at \$2.465 billion, with China's share amounting to \$14.20 million.

During the first quarter of FY 23-24, Pakistan's exports to all partner countries of the world reached \$6.899 billion.

PIDE conducts study on 'Life time Cost of Public Servants'

PESHAWAR (Online): Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), A Premier National Think Tank's current study has investigated the burden that each newly recruited individual (ranging from Grade 1-22) brings on the national budget.

However, politicians raise political slogans of offering public employment to a substantial number of individuals, without acknowledging that the Government's job is to create new opportunities and not offering jobs, said in a press release here on Sunday.

However, by providing employment opportunities to many individuals, especially within their own party or patronage network, politicians can cultivate a base of supporters who are more likely to vote for them in elections.

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 Amjid while addressing an awareness seminar, arranged by All Pakistan Bed Sheets and Upholstery Association in collaboration with a leading private bank.

Ms. Amjid 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.

She noted that the current lending situation in the country falls short when compared to other developing nations.

Ms. Amjid enlightened the attendees with the incredible news that loans were readily available under the Prime Minister Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Schemes, offering flexible terms that were both convenient and affordable.

A significant 25 percent of these loans have been earmarked specifically for women entrepreneurs, heralding a new era of inclusivity and empowerment.

The seminar, graced by representatives of APBUMA and a leading private bank, shed light on the immense potential of SMEs and the boundless opportunities they hold for nation's economy. It is a beacon of hope and an

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 percent 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.

The Trade Corporation of Pakistan sources told APP that the event is expected to invite investment and help facilitate trade in precious stones and minerals in the country, adding it would also provide a golden opportunity for local businesses to explore and expand their business potential across Pakistan and beyond. They said that Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) have immense potential in the mine and minerals industry as both regions have a wide range of most exquisite gemstones.

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. Ban on releasing sewerage water into rivers was inevitable to conserve environment. The CM directed the WASA Managing Director and Deputy Commissioner Lahore to evolve a strategy under the supervision of Federal Minister Dr Kausar Abdullah Malik in this regard.

Gold prices in Pak experience massive increase

ISLAMABAD (INP): the price of 24-karat gold in Pakistan has surged to Rs208,000 per tola, while those interested in 22-karat gold can now acquire it at Rs190,667 per tola on Sunday.

For individuals seeking to purchase smaller quantities, the rates are equally appealing. Presently, 10 grams of 24-karat gold are priced at Rs178,326, with 10 grams of 22-karat gold available for Rs163,466.

It's important to note that gold rates in Pakistan can change multiple times during the day in response to global market dynamics.

These rates are gathered from reputable sources, mainly located in Karachi and Multan. For the most precise gold rates according to your city's market, we recommend consulting your local gold dealers and jewelers.

For those closely monitoring the gold market, it is advisable to stay vigilant as rates continue to react to global developments in the world of gold.

Rest assured, we are committed to keeping our readers well-informed and will provide regular updates on the gold market in Pakistan.



HYDERABAD: Sindh Abadgar Ittehad Leader, Nawab Zubair Talpur addresses to media persons during press conference, at Hyderabad press club.

Farmers demand enforcement of government fixed rates for cotton, rice, sugarcane crops

HYDERABAD (APP): The Sindh Abadgar Ittehad, an association of farmers lobbying for their rights, has requested the provincial government to ensure that they are paid the government-fixed rates of cotton, rice and sugarcane.

At a press conference at Hyderabad Press Club here on Sunday Ittehad's President Nawab Zubair Talpur also demanded cancellation of the FIR lodged against the growers and journalists protesting in Khairpur district.

He said the FIR was registered against the persons staging a protest outside a cotton factory because of the alleged unfair rates at which they were buying cotton.

He said on the one hand the government expressed

the desire to promote advanced agriculture techniques but on the other hand the measures necessary for the economic viability of the sector appear missing.

Talpur added that the provincial government had fixed the rates of Rs 8,500 per 40 kilograms for cotton, Rs 4,500 per 40 kg for rice and Rs 600 per 40 kg for sugarcane.

He maintained that the farmers were not being paid the government fixed rates which amounted to violation of the country's law by the purchasers.

He called for immediate steps to stop the exploitation of the farmers.

Abdul Raheem Dars, Muhammad Javed, Abdul Razaq and other office bearers of Ittehad were also present on the occasion.

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.

He said the thirty year dominance of the former association of industrialists (IAP) has been ended that is a good omen for industrialists who since long were in dire need of having a body that would represent their genuine concerns and problems. He said the registered association was indispensable for industrialists as their concerns were not addressed according to their wishes due to the unavailability of a dedicated forum.



PESHAWAR: Dry fruits are being selling at a shop, at Saddar Bazar in Peshawar.



LAHORE: A large numbers of people are busy is buying warm clothes at a Landa Bazaar in Provincial Capital.

Hari Welfare Association issues peasant's rights report

NAWABSHAH (APP): During the local government elections held in June and July 2022, peasants and rural workers were entirely overlooked and not included in the party-based electoral process in Sindh,

It was pointed out by the speakers at the launching ceremony of the 8th report, titled "The State of Peasants' Rights in Sindh in 2022 at the HWA office Nawabshah.

The report is compiled by Hari Welfare Association which sheds light on the challenging circumstances faced by peasants and rural workers in Sindh.

HWA President Akram Ali Khakheli highlighted that in 2022, the plight of peasants and rural laborers

remained dire while no positive initiatives were taken to improve their situation.

The Sindh Women Agriculture Workers Act (SWAWA), a significant law passed in 2019, saw no efforts towards implementation in 2022.

The SWAWA covers a wide range of provisions that, if enforced diligently, would benefit rural women in Sindh. However, these provisions remained largely unimplemented.

The report highlights the need for enforcement of laws such as the Sindh Tenancy Act 1950, the Sindh Tenancy Amendment Act 2013, the Sindh Bonded Labor (Abolition) System Act 2015, and the Sindh Industrial Relations Act 2013.

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

Monitoring Desk
RIYADH: 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 rela-

tions 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 longtime 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.

President Joe Biden — who once vowed to make the kingdom a pariah — drew protests at home after a visit to Saudi Arabia last year when he shared a friendly fist-bump with Prince Mohammed.



United Arab Emirates' Minister of Foreign Trade Thani Al Zeyoudi and South Korea's Trade Minister Dukgeun Ahn meet in Seoul, South Korea.

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 elements 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 to protect parts of the country deemed sensitive from terrorism.

"This school was struck by the barbarity of Islamist terrorism," Macron said after visiting the school, adding that the victim had "probably saved many lives" with his courage in blocking the attacker.

Macron said another attempted attack in another region had been foiled by security forces. According to the interior ministry, the president was referring to the arrest of a "radicalised" man who was arrested leaving a prayer hall in the Yvelines region of Paris.

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

Monitoring Desk
KABUL: A powerful 6.3-magnitude earthquake has hit western Afghanistan, killing at least two people and wounding more than 100 others, in the same region where thousands of people died in tremors last week.

According to the US Geological Survey, the latest quake's epicentre was about 21 miles (34km) outside Herat, the provincial capital.

The quake hit just after 8:00am (0330 GMT). The aid group Doctors Without Borders said two people were reported dead while Herat regional hospital received more than 100 people injured in Sunday's quake.

Residents in the city of Herat had just begun returning to their homes again when the quake hit, after days of sleeping outside fearing aftershocks from last week's tremors.

"Herat's people are panicked and scared," said 27-year-old shopkeeper Hamid Nizami.

New Zealand National Party's Luxon to lead new government

Monitoring Desk
WELLINGTON: New Zealand's centre-right National Party led by Christopher Luxon will form a new government with its preferred coalition party ACT, as Prime Minister Chris Hipkins conceded his Labour Party could not form a government after Saturday's general election.

The National Party, now in opposition, had 39% of the votes with 92% counted, while the ACT party had 9%. That would give the two parties enough seats to form a government, according to the Electoral Commission.

"On the numbers tonight National will be in the position to lead the next government," Luxon, a former executive who once ran Air New Zealand and entered politics just three years ago, told supporters in Auckland.

"We will make this an even better country," National won over

voters by promising relief for struggling middle-income New Zealanders, and to bring historically high inflation under control while reducing the country's debt.

"The overwhelming driver was dissatisfaction with the (Labour government)," said political commentator and former National staffer Ben Thomas.

Under former leader Jacinda Ardern, Labour in 2020 became the first party to capture an outright majority since New Zealand switched to a mixed member proportional system in 1996.

But Labour has since lost support, with many New Zealanders disgruntled over the country's long COVID-19 lockdown and the rising cost of living.

Hipkins has tried to re-engage with those voters, focusing on what he termed "bread-and-butter issues", but was unable to gain traction in the polls.

Support for Japan PM Kishida's cabinet falls to lowest since 2021

Monitoring Desk
TOKYO: Support for the cabinet of Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida has fallen to 32.3%, the lowest since it was formed in 2021, Kyodo News said on Sunday, based on its own opinion poll.

The figure was down 7.5 points from September's poll and was worse than the support of 33.1% for the cabinet at the end of last year, the agency said.

As many as 58.6% of respondents in the telephone poll carried out on Saturday and Sunday said they did not expect much benefit from an economic package the government plans to compile by the end of this month.

The poll also showed that 63.2% of respondents see the need for a cut in income tax to enable them to cope with inflation.



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 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.

"However this current conflict plays out, we feel strongly that the US government and the global community must continue the tough work to achieve lasting peace in the region."

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

Monitoring Desk
CAIRO: Egypt's president Abdel Fattah el-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.

Israeli bombardments on the Gaza side of the Rafah crossing into Egypt, the main crossing out of Gaza not controlled by Israel, have disrupted operations there. Aid from several countries has been building up in Egypt's Sinai peninsula due to a failure to reach a deal enabling its safe delivery to Gaza and enabling evacuations of some foreign passport holders through the Rafah crossing into Egypt.



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.

Gaza residents lose entire families, fear more destruction

Monitoring Desk
GAZA: As Israel prepared on Sunday for a ground assault on the Hamas-controlled Gaza Strip, Palestinians who have lost family members in air strikes were bracing for more destruction.

Um Mohammad Al-Laham's 4-year-old granddaughter Fulla Al-Laham lay in a Gaza hospital. She said an Israeli air strike hit the family home, killing 14 people including Fulla's parents, siblings and members of her extended family.

"All of a sudden and without warning, they bombed the house on top of the residents inside. No-

one survived except my grandchild Fulla," said the grandmother, who has witnessed many wars between Hamas and the Israeli army over the years.

She says this is the toughest.

"Fourteen people martyred, no-one was left except Fulla," she said. "She doesn't talk, nothing, just lays in her bed and they give medicine."

One other 4-year-old child in the family had also been left with almost no relatives, the grandmother said.

Israel has unleashed the heaviest air strikes ever on Gaza.

Israeli communications minister seeks shutdown of Al Jazeera bureau

Monitoring Desk
JERUSALEM: Israel's communications minister said on Sunday he was seeking a possible closure of Al Jazeera's local bureau, and accused the Qatari news station of pro-Hamas incitement and of exposing Israeli soldiers to potential attack from Gaza.

The proposal to shut down Al Jazeera had been vetted by Israeli security officials and was being vetted by legal experts, Shloma Karhi said, adding that he would bring it to the cabinet later in the day.

Al Jazeera and the government in Doha had no immediate comment.

Poland holds high-stakes election amid rows over democratic rule

Monitoring Desk
WARSAW: Poles vote on Sunday in a parliamentary election the nationalist Law and Justice (PiS) hopes will earn it an unprecedented third term in office, while the opposition warns it could put the country on a path towards leaving the European Union.

Opinion polls suggest PiS will come out ahead but could lose its majority amid intensifying discontent over its democratic record, which has cost Poland billions of euros in EU aid, and concerns over women's rights

and the cost of living.

With war raging in neighbouring Ukraine and a migrant crisis brewing, the EU and Washington are watching the vote closely, although both PiS and its mainstream opposition support NATO-member Poland's key role in providing military and logistical support to Kyiv. PiS has cast the election as a choice between security from unfettered migration, which it says its opponents support, and a creeping westernisation it sees as contrary to Poland's Catholic character.

Britain urged Israel to show restraint

Monitoring Desk
LONDON: Britain remains supportive of Israel's right to defend itself but has urged it to show restraint in any military action against Palestinian militant group Hamas to minimise harm to civilians, foreign minister James Cleverly said. Speaking to the media on Sunday, Cleverly said he had raised the need to minimise civilian casualties in conversations with the Israeli government. "Restraint, discipline - these are the hallmarks of the Israeli defence force that I want to see," Cleverly told Sky News.

Putin says Russian forces improving positions along front line in Ukraine

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: President Vladimir Putin said Russian forces have bolstered their positions across the entire front line in Ukraine after what he said was the failure of Ukraine's counteroffensive this year.

Putin's decision in 2022 to send tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine started a war that has left swathes of Ukraine devastated and hundreds of thousands of people dead or injured.

Russia currently controls about 17.5% of Ukrainian territory and a four-month-old Ukrainian counteroffensive this year by Ukrainian forces has made almost no net territorial

gains, according to Western analyses of the territory held by Russia.

While Ukraine took back territory taken by Russia last year, the Ukrainian army has struggled to penetrate Russian lines which have been bolstered with minefields and thousands of extra Russian troops. "As for the counteroffensive, which is allegedly stalling, it has failed," Putin said in video remarks posted to social media by Kremlin journalist Pavel Zarubin. "The opposing side is preparing new active offensive operations. We see it and we know it." Putin said when asked about the battle for the eastern Ukrainian town of Avdiivka.

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" was 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, chairman 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.

Ahead of the London protest, the city's Metropolitan Police Service said it would deploy more than 1,000 officers, as the events thousands of miles away reverberate in Britain and elsewhere.

War in Ukraine's eastern front 'significantly worsened', says general

Monitoring Desk
KYIV: Fighting along the northern portion of Ukraine's eastern front has "significantly worsened" in recent days, the commander of Kyiv's ground forces said on Saturday.

Oleksandr Syrskyi, who was visiting Ukrainian troops in the area, said Russian forces had regrouped after suffering losses and were attacking around the village of Makiivka and towards the city of Kupiansk.

"The main objective of the enemy is the defeat of a grouping of our troops, the encirclement of Kupiansk and to reach the Oskil River," he said in comments carried by an official military platform.

Syrskyi added that Russian forces were carrying out "dozens" of assaults each day, but that Ukrainian troops had been ready and were holding their ground.

A four-month-old Ukrainian counteroffensive has made some progress in both the east, near Bakhmut, and in the south, where Kyiv hopes to reach the Sea of Azov, but gains

have been incremental.

Kyiv reported "heated" fighting around its eastern city of Avdiivka, saying Russian forces had "not stopped assaulting" the symbolic industrial hub for days in their attempt to surround it.

Ukraine last week said Russia had stepped up assaults on the frontline city, which lies just 15 kilometres from Moscow-held Donetsk.

Avdiivka has been a symbol of Ukrainian resistance since 2014, after it briefly fell to Russian-backed separatists.

Russian forces now control territory to the east, north and south of Avdiivka.

"For the fifth day already, the enemy has not stopped either assaulting or shelling positions around the city," Vitaliy Barabash, the head of the city, said on Ukrainian television. "It is very heated, very heated," he said of the fighting. "They are trying to surround the city," Barabash added, claiming that Moscow was deploying "more new forces" to the area.

Ecuadoreans weigh economic, security pledges in presidential ballot

Monitoring Desk
QUITO: Ecuadoreans will choose their next president on Sunday, weighing pledges to improve the economy and control a spiraling security situation from a businessman who is heir to a banana fortune and a leftist who would be the country's first woman leader.

Voters' top concerns largely center on the economy - which has struggled since the coronavirus pandemic and motivated many thousands of Ecuadoreans to migrate - and rising crime, including increases in murders, robberies and prison riots.

The violence, which the outgoing government blames on drug gangs, reached a crescendo during the campaign with the murder of anti-corruption candidate Fernando Villavicencio, who was shot dead while leaving a Quito campaign event in August.

Business scion Daniel Noboa, 35, has led recent polling, but at least two surveys put voting intention for him and Luisa Gonzalez, a protégé of former President Rafael Correa, within the margin of error. Gonzalez,

won 34% of the vote in the first round.

She has said she would bring back the popular social spending that characterized Correa's decade in power, pledging free medicine, increased worker protections and direct aid to those in need. She also has promised to use \$2.5 billion from international reserves to shore up the economy. Noboa, also an ex-lawmaker who has promised job creation - especially for young people - was a surprise entrant to the run-off, winning 23% in the first round. He is the son of multimillionaire banana magnate Alvaro Noboa, who himself ran unsuccessfully for president numerous times.

Outgoing President Guillermo Lasso called the election early to avoid impeachment on charges he disregarded warnings of embezzlement related to a contract at a state company. He has denied the charges.

The winner will govern only between December and May 2025, when the victor of regularly scheduled elections will take office.



French police officers patrol in front of the Louvre museum, closed for security reasons, in Paris, as French government puts the nation on its highest state of alert after a deadly knife attack in northern France.

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 Anwaarul 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 gross-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 Pakistani 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.



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



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

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 universal 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.

Universal jurisdiction should only apply to severe crimes, such as war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, which have international repercussions, Jadoon said.

Caretaker PM takes notice of purchase price of cotton crop

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-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.

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 held 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.

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 Suffa 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 hope the nation and instill hope rather than despair, emphasizing that "despair is a trait of Satan."

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 Fakhar 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.



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

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, Turkey, 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.

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 un-freezing 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.



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

Dr. Qibla condemns Israel's expansionist policies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Council of Islamic Ideology (CII) Dr. Qibla Ayaz and its members strongly condemned Israel's expansionist policies, as they were using the recent conflict to further their reprehensible colonial objectives.

He, in a statement, said last week's attacks on Gaza by Israel had blatantly violated international laws, targeting civilian populations, including children, elderly and women.

Dr. Qibla emphasized that the Pakistani people stood in solidarity with the Palestinian resistance movement, and the founding father of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah's policy regarding Palestine was still considered relevant by the Pakistani people.

He said that it was imperative for the world to understand that Israel had been occupying Palestine aggressively for nearly 75 years, depriving Palestinians of their rights and disregarding international laws and United Nations resolutions.

He said that the council asserted that a viable solution to this issue was impossible without the establishment of an independent Palestinian state.

He called for an emergency meeting of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to initiate effective diplomatic actions.

These actions should not only prevent aggression by Israel but also make earnest efforts to establish an independent Palestinian state, with Al-Quds as its capital, based on clear and just policies, he maintained.

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.

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 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.

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.

CTD releases list of most wanted 128 terrorists

PESHAWAR (INP): The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Sunday published the list of 128 more 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.



QUETTA: Activists of Quetta Foundation hold a protest to express solidarity with Palestine, while the protesters are burning the Israeli flag at the end front of the press club.

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 paisas per unit should be made in terms of arrears.

If the request is approved, the electricity consumers 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.