

Daily Voice of Masses
Independent

Lessons in complicity

If there is one takeaway from Israel's war on Gaza—other than the fact that Israel is more than happy to commit a genocide and get away with it—it is that world powers, media (Western and some in the Global South), the entertainment industry, and even the human rights industry, are all more than capable of not just cynicism but sheer hypocrisy when it comes to their practise of rights-based discourse. As the 'truce' in Gaza began not two days back, some of the most heartbreaking scenes unfolded: Palestinian families reuniting with their children and loved ones released by Israel, some after years and years of detention for crimes as small as stone-throwing. Some children arrested years back have returned as full-blown adults, having spent years in Israeli prisons without recourse to a justice system or anything resembling justice at all. Some of the Hamas-held Israeli captives too got to see their families as a result of the temporary truce. More hostages on both sides are set for release. In total, 39 Palestinians and 13 Israelis were released, while Hamas also released ten Thai and one Filipino hostages.

As Gazans return home to a flattened city, whose every corner screams of the genocidal war waged on it, there are questions over what possible justification could ever be used for what Israel did to Gazans and those also in the West Bank. Nearly 15,000 Palestinians—including more than 6000 children—have been killed in Gaza since October 7 while more than 200 Palestinians were killed by Israeli forces and settlers in the West Bank. These numbers could have been far less had Israel agreed to Hamas' demand for a prisoner swap early on after October 7. But Israel seemed to have had one goal: flatten Gaza. Which it has, rendering its 2.3 million people starved, dehydrated, buried under rubble or running for cover from skies that rained down bombs relentlessly. With 137 aid trucks entering Gaza on Friday, aid agencies have already said much more will be needed for a starving population that also faces growing incidence of disease. Just one look at the Palestinian prisoners' details is enough to understand the brutality of Israeli occupation, many of the Palestinians having been arrested for offences such as carrying and manufacturing knives and daggers, illegally entering Israel without a permit, throwing stones or associating with hostile organizations. In the past 20 years, 13000 Palestinian children have been arrested or detained by Israel. No tears were shed by the international community, no opeds were written, no panels were arranged by incensed American or European politicians—not for these children. Israel had held 5200 Palestinians in total in its prisons, a number that increased by 3000 after October 7.

Beyond corridors: empowering Pakistan



By Syed Ali Nawaz Gilani

Pakistan's ability to maximize the benefits of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) hinges on the formulation of a practical and inclusive industrial policy. The success of CPEC in fostering Pakistan's industrial development necessitates a strategic approach that actively involves stakeholders, particularly those from medium and small industries. Without a comprehensive policy framework addressing the needs of a diverse industrial landscape, the nation may fall short of fully capitalizing on CPEC's transformative potential.

As Pakistan navigates the transformative corridors of CPEC, the wisdom of inclusive industrial policies becomes paramount. The journey towards sustainable progress echoes the sentiment that a nation's strength lies in empowering every facet of its economy. With this in mind, a pertinent question arises: Can Pakistan truly harness the full potential of CPEC without a well-crafted industrial policy that actively involves stakeholders, especially those from medium and small industries.

A critical examination of the committees overseeing CPEC's industrial policies becomes imperative. How can the composition of these committees be scrutinized to ensure diverse representation, particularly including stakeholders from medium and small industries, fostering an inclusive approach to decision-making?

In the pursuit of trans-

formative change, there's an inherent risk of bias. How can CPEC strike a balance to ensure that industrialists, benefiting from the current system, do not resist reforms that might disrupt their positions, and how can diverse stakeholder interests be accommodated?

Considerations must extend beyond immediate gains. In the intricate web of CPEC, how might we ensure that the lens through which industrialists view their involvement doesn't solely focus on the gains of their enterprises? Instead, how can it broaden to encompass broader socio-economic considerations—such as ensuring fair resource distribution, prioritizing the welfare of workers, and championing environmental sustainability?

The historical imbalance in Pakistan's industrial landscape is a challenge that CPEC must confront. How can policies be crafted to rectify historical disparities where large industrialists have thrived, leaving smaller enterprises struggling, and how can the inclusion of diverse stakeholders be a driving force in achieving a more equitable distribution of benefits?

A comprehensive analysis of the committees responsible for overseeing the industrial policies within CPEC is of utmost importance. It is essential to scrutinize the intricacies of how these committees are structured and operate to guarantee a fair and effective decision-making process. In seeking an answer to this question, the wisdom of iconic industrialist Henry Ford reverberates: "Coming together is a beginning; keeping together is progress; working together is success." The essence of this quote encapsulates the essence of our inquiry. It underscores the importance not just of assembling diverse perspectives but of ensuring their

continual inclusion and collaboration, fostering a synergy that propels us toward genuine success.

As we envision the committees overseeing CPEC's industrial policies, we must view them not merely as bureaucratic entities but as dynamic hubs where the collective aspirations of a nation converge. Inclusive decision-making, where the voices of both large and small industries are harmonized, paves the way for a transformative journey. The success of these committees lies not just in their composition but in their commitment to maintaining a vibrant, ever-evolving collaboration that mirrors the diversity and dynamism of Pakistan's industrial terrain.

The journey toward comprehensive and inclusive decision-making within CPEC is a journey toward unlocking the true potential of Pakistan's industries. To echo the sentiments of Nobel laureate Amartya Sen, "Inclusive development is possible only when we foster the capabilities and participation of all individuals." It is in this spirit of fostering capabilities and participation, especially from medium and small industries, that the committees overseeing CPEC's industrial policies can truly become architects of transformative change. As they navigate the intricacies of decision-making, let them be guided by the understanding that true success lies in a collaborative and inclusive journey toward a more prosperous and harmonious future.

This scrutiny is indispensable for fostering an inclusive approach to decision-making, ensuring that the diverse needs and interests of all sectors within the industrial landscape are considered and addressed. This review is essential for ensuring fair growth. It means recognizing and considering the

Geoeconomic pivot



By Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry

For nearly two years, the subject of geoeconomics has been discussed in Pakistan's academic and official echelons. In an article published in this paper in December 2021, this writer had discussed the prospects of geoeconomics benefiting Pakistan by leveraging our economic geography to address geostrategic challenges— it being understood that geoeconomics is not a replacement for geopolitics and that both must work in tandem.

However, it is important to recognize that Pakistan's pivot to geoeconomics is different from the way the term evolved in the Cold War context. US strategists proposed to use geoeconomics to gain geopolitical advantage against adversaries. An elaborate menu of economic instruments was developed: promoting or blocking investments, market access, or infrastructure projects and imposing economic sanctions, tariff wars, and technology wars. This represented a skewed dimension of geoeconomics, while working against vulnerable ones. This is not the geoeconomic pivot to which Pakistan aspires. For Pakistan, the pivot to geoeconomics would mean benefiting from our unique economic geography.

Pakistan is at the confluence of three major theatres of global contestation. First is the Indo-Pacific region, which extends from Japan through the Pacific and Indian Oceans and ends up in India to our east. The region is at the heart of the ongoing US-

China competition. Pakistan, as a neighbour of both India and China, cannot shy away from the challenges emanating from this region.

Second is the Middle East, which extends from North Africa across the Arab heartland and ends in Iran to our southwest. Momentous winds of change are sweeping across this vast region. We can witness these in the Iran-Saudi rapprochement brokered by China, waning US influence in the region, and the Israel-Hamas conflict, which has disrupted the Arab-Israel normalisation process. As a neighbour of Iran, and located in the vicinity of the Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia, which itself is undergoing a socio-economic transformation of historic proportions, Pakistan cannot stay aloof from these developments.

Third is the Central Asian region, which is connected to both Russia and China, and straddles the energy and mineral-rich lands down to Afghanistan. Pakistan's northwestern neighbour, Russia sees this region as its backyard, while China and Turkey are both seeking to extend their influence. Here, too, the US seems to be losing ground. Any changes across Central Asia, particularly in Afghanistan, are bound to be of direct concern to Pakistan.

While this economic geography is throwing up geostrategic challenges as major power competition intensifies in all the three regions, there will also be opportunities which Pakistan can avail only if it plays its geoeconomic hand in tandem with pursuing its geopolitical goals, while understanding its limitations. These challenges and opportunities have been discussed at length in a recent book-

let, *Geoeconomic Pivot*, authored by Moeed Yusuf and Rabia Akhtar, which was discussed at a recent conference in Islamabad.—Courtesy Dawn

Commerce News

UN FAO's 40 ambitious projects to revolutionize agriculture in Pakistan: Country Rep Iqbal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization's (FAO) has unveiled a dynamic portfolio of 40 diverse projects strategically dispersed across various regions of Pakistan.

These initiatives, with varying scopes, financial parameters, and target audiences, underscore the FAO's commitment to fortifying the agriculture and food security sectors in the country.

In an exclusive panel interview with the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP), Country Representative Florence Rolle and Assistant FAOR (Programs) Dr. Aamer Irshad highlighted the proactive role of the FAO in numerous initiatives and programs aimed at strengthening Pakistan's agriculture and food security sectors. These initiatives span a spectrum, including enhancing agricultural productivity and sustainability, supporting livestock and fisheries

development, and implementing food security programs to alleviate hunger and malnutrition.

Rolle outlined FAO's 2023–2027 priorities with Pakistan: enhancing food availability, strengthening climate-responsive planning, and improving agricultural value chains. The focus includes nutrition policy, climate frameworks, support for enterprises, disease control, and women's empowerment in agriculture.

She explained that

project selection is based on a thorough consultative process, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework (UNSDCF) 2023–2027. The FAO's Country Programming Framework (CPF) for 2023–2027 involves consultations with relevant ministries, departments, academia, UN agencies, and resource partners at both federal and provincial levels. The FAO's involvement extends beyond traditional agricultural support.



RIYADH: SAPM, Jawad Sohrab Malik visits Tamkeen HR in KSA.

SAPM visits Tamkeen HR office to discuss paramedical manpower job opportunities

ISLAMABAD (APP): SAPM on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development Jawad Sohrab Malik visited Tamkeen Human Resources along with Deputy Head of Mission Moazzam Ali, Community Welfare Attaches, DG Bureau of Emigration, and Joint Secretary Emigration on Sunday. He was received by CEO Tamkeen Faris Al-Hanaki. He was briefed by the CEO about the working of the Company, said a

press release. CEO HR informed that there was a lot of demand for manpower, especially in the healthcare sector, particularly for paramedical staff.

Tamkeen was ready to fully cooperate and engage with OEC and other companies to increase the manpower import from Pakistan. He also informed that the hospitality sector was another potential sector in which there was great demand.

SAPM assured full cooperation for expedition export of manpower from Pakistan.

He also informed that a new Saudi desk has been set up in the Ministry of OP&HRD Pakistan for solving all the issues of Saudi recruitment companies. SAPM also requested cooperation in enhancing the level of skills of Pakistani workers and professionals to meet the market demands of KSA.

PR all set to procure 230 passenger coaches, 820 High Capacity Wagons

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways is set to procure 230 passenger coaches and 820 High Capacity Wagons under the Public Sector Development Programme (PSDP) aiming help to improve the speed of the trains and ensure adherence to fixed timings. "Out of the total, around 46 Completely-Built-Up (CBU) passenger coaches have been procured up till now while the remaining 184 would be manufactured in the country and the coaches would be able to travel at the speed of 160km/h," said an official in the

Ministry of Railways. "Pakistan Railways is putting maximum efforts to complete rehabilitation and reconstruction work on the railway track, improving the speed of the locomotives to carry passengers to their respective destinations on time," he added.

The infrastructure, including the track and signalling system from Karachi to Peshawar, Main Line-I (ML-I), and doubling of track from Lahore to Peshawar (462.20 Km) was also being revamped, he added.

Pak Olive National Gala concludes

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a concerted effort to raise awareness about the quality standards in the Virgin Olive Oil industry, a Virgin Olive Oil Organoleptic Competition recently took center stage, spotlighting excellence and fostering a culture of quality within the sector.

The competition served as a platform for producers to showcase their commitment to delivering superior virgin olive oil products. The conclusion of the competition marked a significant moment as awards were distributed to commend outstanding achievements, said a news release issued here on Sunday.



LAHORE: People enjoying the second day of exhibition at the Pak China Industry Exhibition at the Expo Center.

40% windfall tax on banks' profits faces uncertainty

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Board of Revenue's (FBR) notification imposing a 40% additional tax on banks' windfall profits has met with uncertainty as it requires approval from the National Assembly by February 19, 2024. The formation of the National Assembly is not expected until after the upcoming general elections, raising concerns about the timely implementation of the tax

measure. The FBR issued SRO 1588(1)/2023 on November 21, 2023, invoking its powers under Section 99D(2) of the Income Tax Ordinance to tax banks' windfall profits. The notification outlines the calculation method and formula for determining the 40% tax. However, Section 99D(3) of the Income Tax Ordinance mandates that the federal government obtain approval from the National Assembly for such a tax measure.

FBR releases updated Income tax rules 2023

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has released an updated version of the Income Tax Rules 2002, incorporating all amendments made up to November 24, 2023.

These amendments include those introduced in the current fiscal year's federal budget, as well as any changes made since June 30.

The primary goal of issuing these updated rules is to simplify the tax process for taxpayers.

Momin urges Govt to prioritize uninterrupted power supply for industrial, agri sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): President of Pakistan Business Forum Lahore Momin Ali Malik Sunday urged the government to prioritize uninterrupted power and gas supply for the industrial sector and agriculture sector during the winter season. Talking to a delegation of industrialists, he said, "The industrial sector plays a pivotal role in the economic growth and uninterrupted gas and power

supply is essential for its smooth functioning," said a news release issued here. "This will not only sustain production but also safeguard jobs and contribute to overall economic stability besides helping export targets." He said, "Timely availability of power is crucial for agricultural activities, especially during winter, to support processes such as crop drying and irrigation."

Energy secretary to brief senate committee

ISLAMABAD (Online): The matter of non-implementation of the recommendations of the Senate Energy Committee, Secretary Energy will give a briefing to the committee today (Monday). The meeting of the committee will be held in the Parliament House under the chairmanship of Senator Saifullah Abru. In the meeting, Secretary Energy and MD NESPAK will explain the non-implementation.

Naqvi inaugurates Cavalry underpass completed in record time of two months

Reviews police data report, praises crime reduction trend

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi inaugurated Lahore's Cavalry Ground Underpass on Sunday, which has been completed in a record time of two-and-a-half months, instead of six months.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, he congratulated the people of Lahore on completion of the underpass. He felicitates people of Lahore, especially the residents of Gulberg and Defence on the completion of the Cavalry underpass.

He said that people should confine themselves

within their houses on holidays for reduction in smog. They should not come out of their houses unnecessarily. "If we take care of our environment, then positive changes will come into effect," he added. The level of smog has reduced due to lessening of traffic during previous three days, he added. "We had to close the main road due to construction work and that's why Cavalry underpass was a difficult project," he said and added that with the opening of Ghora Chowk flyover on Dec 7, the route would

become signal-free from the Centre Point up to Defence Mor. About two lakh vehicles would pass through the road daily after opening of Cavalry underpass. People had to stop at three signals earlier, he added. "We are focusing more on the three important projects namely Lahore, Rawalpindi Ring Roads and the Bund Road project striving for an early completion of these projects," he added.

DG LDA, his team and the contractor completed the Cavalry underpass by working day and night, he said.



LAHORE: A group photo of Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi along with Caretaker CM Punjab Mohsin Raza Naqvi and other members during 59th Anniversary of PTV Lahore Center.

Azam Khan slapped hefty fine for Palestine sticker on bat in National T20

Sports Desk

KARACHI: Pakistani batter Azam Khan has found himself at the centre of controversy during a National T20 Cup match against Lahore Blues, reports on social media claim.

The batter has been fined 50% of his match fees for affixing a sticker of the Palestine flag on his bat. The authorities have warned Azam Khan of potential suspension if he persists in using the flag sticker, reports say.

Earlier during the world cup 2023 match against Sri Lanka, wicket keeper batter Mohammed Rizwan chose to dedicate the win to the oppressed Palestinians in Gaza.

Rizwan took the opportunity to express his deep-rooted solidarity with the Palestinian cause via X. It was reported that Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) had asked Rizwan to delete the post, but he did not comply with it.

Notable, Pakistan ex-skipper Babar Azam also posted in favour of Gaza right after the team's return to Pakistan, and after he had left captaincy.



SWABI: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali, Chairman Higher Education Commission Professor Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed and Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr. Nasir Jamal Khattak addressing the 3rd Convocation of University of Swabi.

CM visits MDCAT center at AWKUM

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice @ Syed Arshad Hussain Shah paid a short visit to Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan on Sunday to take stock of the arrangements put in place for holding Medical and Dental College Admissions Test (MDCAT) in the centre established in the premises of the University.

The concerned authorities on duty in the centre briefed the Chief Minister about the arrangements made for the MDCAT, and said that foolproof arrangements in all respects have been put in place for holding the test in a transparent manner.

The Chief Minister was informed that a total of 5443 candidates were registered in Mardan centre for appearing in the MDCAT adding that entry

of all irrelevant persons into the premises of the centre is prohibited whereas all kinds of electronic gadgets including cell phones, wrist watches, etc. are banned in the premises. It was further told that a complete body search of all the candidates and supervising staff has been ensured while mobile service in the area has been suspended through the P a k i s t a n Telecommunications Authority.

The Chief Minister was further informed that the required strength of supervising staff has also been ensured for conducting the test in the desired manner whereas Section 144 of CrPC has already been invoked by the district administration to ban the use of all kinds of electronic gadgets in the vicinity of the centre.

China gears up to mitigate smog in Punjab

ISLAMABAD (INP): China and Pakistan are collaborating to tackle the hazardous smog and air pollution threatening the lives of over 100 million residents in Punjab province.

Three areas have been identified for China-Pakistan partnership to help Punjab address the dangerous atmospheric toxicity that has enveloped many districts over the last two months, Gwadar Pro reported on Sunday.

One area of cooperation is conducting artificial rain in smog-affected localities.

A Punjab government

official told Gwadar Pro that cloud seeding is the most effective method for inducing artificial rain, adding that arrangements with Chinese experts have been finalised.

"Chinese experts will soon visit Pakistan," he added. Artificial rain, or cloud seeding, is a weather modification technique involving the dispersion of chemicals into clouds from an aircraft to encourage precipitation.

It is used to induce rainfall in drought-stricken or pollution-laden areas.

The second area of collaboration involves using

Chinese anti-smog technology by installing smog towers in Lahore and other parts of the province.

Progress was made following a successful meeting between Punjab CM Mohsin Naqvi and Chinese Consul General Lahore Zhao Shiren.

According to the Chinese Consul General, good air quality is essential for the people of Lahore.

The Chinese Consulate Lahore has provided comprehensive documents regarding smog-eating towers built in China to the Chief Minister Office Task Force Smog.

Smog lockdown continues in Sargodha

SARGODHA (APP): A smart lockdown to contain smog was observed across the district on Sunday.

Action was also taken against industrial units, brick kilns, vehicle owners and farmers who caused air pollution and smog. Since April 1, Rs. 5.9 million fines and 61 cases have been registered.

These details were given by Deputy Commissioner Captain (Rtd) Shoab Ali about the implementation of smart

lockdown orders to control smog and steps taken by the district administration.

The DC said that after following the instructions of the Punjab government, educational institutions remained completely closed in all tehsils of the district from Friday to Sunday, while shops, shopping centers, hotels and restaurants were allowed to open after 3 o'clock.

Hotels business centres sealed for violating smog lockdown

SIALKOT (APP): The local administration sealed six hotels, eight business centres and Sunday Bazar Imam Sahib for violating the smart lockdown to combat smog. Similarly, 11 business centers including a school were sealed in Daska and 12 people were detained. Over 108 business centers have been sealed since Friday and 52 people were arrested for violating government instructions and a fine of Rs.5,80,000 was imposed. Meanwhile, during the smog lockdown in Lahai Bazar under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner (AC) Sialkot Ghulam Sarwar, a trader resisted and took a gun.

Cycling rally held in Lahore to raise awareness about smog

LAHORE (APP): A bicycle rally was held from Liberty to Valencia Town to raise awareness about dangers of smog and cycling promotion, here on Sunday.

The personnel of the Police Friendly Patrolling Unit (PFPU) also took part in the rally specially. The look of the city fades due to smog, an elderly citizen told APP while taking part in the rally. He said the blurring was not due to fog but smog, whose damages to human health were numerous.

Around 300 people took part in the bicycle rally. Women and children

also participated in the rally from Liberty and reiterated their commitment to make the city smog-free.

The Police Unit, participating in the event, specially made arrangements to create awareness about causes of smog and the preventive measures.

The rally passed through Barkat Market, Jinnah Hospital, Johar Town and Shaukat Khanum before reaching Valencia Town. An official at Deputy Commissioner's office said millions of vehicles ply The Mall road everyday, adding to smoke pollution.

International News

Thousands march in Indonesia, Canada calling for permanent ceasefire in Gaza

News Desk

JAKARTA: Thousands of Indonesian protesters turned out for a peaceful march in solidarity with Palestine on Sunday, as they called for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza.

Indonesians from various cities marched through the streets of Karawang, West Java, mostly dressed in white and wearing traditional Palestinian scarves, as they waved Palestinian flags and chanted "Free Palestine."

The demonstration in Karawang was the latest in several huge protests staged across Indonesia since Israel began its deadly onslaught on Palestinian civilians in Gaza last month. Indonesians in Bali, North Sulawesi and Depok, West Java, also took to the streets over the weekend in similar marches.

Sunday's protest came on the third day of a four-day cease-fire that has allowed humanitarian aid into the besieged strip, after Israel agreed to stop the daily bombardment in exchange for the release of its hostages held by the Gaza-based militant group Hamas.

"We are calling for a permanent ceasefire ... We also demand the immediate delivery of critical humanitarian aid to Palestinians in need," protest coordinator Cecep Jasim told Media.

"These protests are important, especially for the international community, so that we can show what Israel is doing to Palestine is an act of terrorism that we must

fight against," he said. "The situation in Gaza right now is a product of Israeli violence that has hurt people's hearts across the globe."

Since early October, Israel has killed at least 14,800 people in the besieged Palestinian enclave and wounded tens of thousands more. The Israeli military has dropped about 40,000 tons of bombs on Gaza, authorities in the strip said, and carried out attacks on crucial public facilities, including hospitals and schools.

Indonesia has long been a staunch supporter of Palestine, with its people and authorities seeing Palestinian statehood as mandated by their own constitution, which calls for the abolition of colonialism.

INP adds: Thousands of protesters carried placards, waved Palestinian flags and chanted slogans before Canada's Parliament in Ottawa, demanding a permanent ceasefire in the war between Israel and Hamas.

The diverse group included Palestinian, Arab, Muslim, Jewish, anti-war, labor and social justice organizations.

The rally followed an online petition presented to lawmakers on Friday with 286,719 signatures—said to be the most of any parliamentary e-petition—urging Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to press for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza.



A Palestinian checks the damage in a street in the aftermath of an Israeli raid in Jenin, in the Israeli-occupied West Bank.



Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi, South Korean Foreign Minister Park Jin and Japanese Foreign Minister Yoko Kamikawa pose for a photo prior to the 10th trilateral foreign ministers' meeting in Busan, South Korea

China, Japan, South Korea agree to boost trilateral ties, seek summit

News Desk

SEOUL: The foreign ministers of China, Japan and South Korea agreed on Sunday to restart cooperation among the Asian neighbours and pave the way for a summit of their three leaders in the latest move to ease tensions in the vital region. Even as China and the United States mend frayed ties, including a summit this month between Presidents Xi Jinping and Joe Biden, Beijing is concerned that Washington and its key regional allies are strengthening their three-way partnership.

Beijing, Seoul and Tokyo had agreed on annual summits from 2008 to bolster diplomatic and economic exchanges, but two-way rows and the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the plan, with the three leaders last meeting in 2019.

The three top diplomats met in the South Korean port of Busan for their first such meeting since 2019, after officials of the three countries agreed in September to arrange a trilateral summit at the "earliest convenient time".

The three ministers did not specify a timeframe for the trilateral summit.

61 trucks deliver aid in northern Gaza: UN

WASHINGTON (INP): The United Nations said 61 trucks carrying medical supplies, food and water had delivered their payloads in northern Gaza, as a pause in fighting allows aid to enter the besieged coastal territory.

Another 200 trucks had been dispatched to the Gaza Strip from Nitzana, Israel, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) said in a statement, with 187 of them having made it past the border by the early evening local time.

Eleven ambulances, three coaches and a flatbed were delivered to Al-Shifa hospital, which had seen heavy fighting in recent days, "to assist with evacuations," the statement said.

"The longer the pause lasts, the more aid humanitarian agencies will be able to send in and across Gaza," it added, thanking the Palestinian and Egyptian Red Crescent groups.

The day prior, when a temporary truce between Israel and Hamas began in order to facilitate the hostage and prisoner exchange, a total of 137 trucks had delivered aid in Gaza, according to the UN.

'Act immediately,' says UN chief on visit to frozen but rapidly melting Antarctica

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Ahead of the COP28 conference in Dubai, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres says that while the frozen but rapidly melting Antarctica has been called the sleeping giant, the continent is now being awoken by the adverse impacts of climate change.

The UN chief is on a three-day official visit to Antarctica, which regulates the planet's climate because its ice and cold waters drive major ocean currents. Chilean President Gabriel Boric joined him for an official visit to Chile's Eduardo Frei Air Force Base on King George Island. He was also scheduled to visit the Collins and Nelson glaciers by boat.

"Fossil fuel pollution is heating our planet, unleashing climate anarchy in Antarctica," said Guterres, adding that the Southern Ocean has taken the majority of the heat from global warming.

"That means ice is melting into the ocean at record rates. Melting ice means sea levels are rising at record rates," he explained.

"That directly endangers the lives and livelihoods of people in coastal communities across the globe. It means homes are no longer insurable. And it threatens the very existence of some small island states."

Antarctic sea ice is at an all-time low. New figures show that this September, it was 1.5 million square kilometers smaller than the average for the time of year—"an area roughly the size of Portugal, Spain, France, and Germany combined."

Guterres noted that the Greenland ice sheet is also melting fast, losing over 250 gigatons of ice every year.

"We welcome the release of more hostages today and renew our call for the immediate and unconditional release of all hostages," the OCHA said.

"And we hope the release of more Palestinian detainees brings relief to their families and loved ones."

Exchanges continued into early Sunday, local time, with Hamas expected to free a total of 50 hostages during the four-day truce in exchange for 150 Palestinian prisoners, under an agreement brokered by Qatar, Egypt and the United States.

Hamas fighters snatched around 240 people when they broke through Gaza's militarized border with Israel on October 7, killing about 1,200 Israelis and foreigners, according to Israeli authorities.

Following the deadliest attack in its history, Israel launched an air, artillery and naval bombardment alongside a ground offensive to destroy Hamas, killing nearly 15,000 people, mostly civilians and including thousands of children, according to the Hamas government in Gaza.

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Another Israeli-owned ship seized in Indian Ocean amidst rising tensions

WASHINGTON (INP): An Israeli-owned ship became the target of a suspected drone attack in the Indian Ocean the other day.

The information was disclosed by an anonymous US defense official. The vessel in question, CMA CGM Symi, fell victim to the attack in international waters, amidst heightened concerns for regional shipping routes during Israel's conflict with Gaza.

The assault on the CMA CGM Symi occurred shortly before the commencement of a four-day ceasefire on Friday, according to Lebanon's Al-Mayadeen news network.

The risk management company Ambrey suggested that the attack was likely aimed at the vessel due to its Israeli association through the Israeli-owned shipping management company, Eastern Pacific Shipping.



KAMOKE: Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) leaders Jahangir Khan Tareen, Abdul Aleem Khan and others pose for a group photo during the party's workers convention in Kamoke

Speakers underscore significance of CPEC for Pakistan's prosperity, global collaboration

PESHAWAR (APP): Speakers at a seminar on Sunday underscored significance of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) for Pakistan's prosperity and global collaboration and stressed the importance of converting these challenges into opportunities.

Secretary Agriculture Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Javed Marwat has heralded the CPEC as a transformative game-changer for both Pakistan and the broader region.

He said that this significant project not only presented challenges but also offered unprecedented opportunities for the nation. The seminar was or-

ganized by the China Window, a Peshawar-based Chinese Cultural Center, in collaboration with the Institute of Management Sciences (IMSciences). A large number of male and female students participated in the seminar.

Javed Marwat emphasized that CPEC presented both challenges and opportunities for the region.

He said Pakistan needs to improve its industries and generate youth employment through CPEC.

Javed Marwat expressed optimism that the establishment of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) would attract investment not only from China but also from other countries around the world, including the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia.

The Secretary of Agriculture underscored the potential for agricultural development.

He pointed out that 1.1 million acres of land in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was currently barren, emphasizing the need to leverage CPEC to cultivate this land. Javed Marwat suggested that adopting China's successful agricultural model could lead to significant progress in the sector.

Javed Marwat urged the audience to view global conditions as an opportunity to turn challenges into positive outcomes. He anticipated that the SIFC would attract investors from various countries worldwide, contributing to Pakistan's economic growth.

Professor Dr. Usman Ghani, Director of IMSciences, highlighted that CPEC encompasses not only industrial investment but also educational collaboration between Pakistan and China. He acknowledged the thousands of Pakistani students benefiting from scholarships to study in top Chinese universities.

Pak, China committed to cooperation on sustainable development of rivers: Hashmi

BEIJING (APP): Pakistan and China are committed to cooperation for sustainable development and preservation of their rivers.

In this regard, the two countries signed a cooperation agreement focusing on the Indus and Yangtze rivers to explore the challenges and opportunities faced by river cultures, ecosystems and economies and engage in discussions on sustainable development of major rivers, Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi said on Saturday.

"Both countries have learnt from the historic role that all these rivers and river system have played for the civilization, human settlements and cultures," he said while talking to APP on the sidelines of the Yangtze Culture Forum held in Nanjing, China.

The forum brought together guests from all over the world to discuss and promote the shared values of humanity and establish a global network for dialogue and collaboration among major river cities.

Ambassador Hashmi acknowledged theme of the forum that focused on Yangtze River and its connections with humanity, cities and civilizations.

"As the largest river in China, Yangtze has played a significant role in economic and cultural development of several big cities along it," he added. "There are a number of ports along the Yangtze River and China has significantly preserved and used this river for not only development of human life but also for food security and connectivity." "Pakistan has also launched a big project called Living Indus Initiative that mainly deals with environmental protection and climate change," he informed.

IPP to ensure stability in country: Aleem Khan

LAHORE (APP): Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) President Abdul Aleem Khan on Sunday lauded the role played by the Pakistan Army in ensuring stability of the nation. Addressing a workers' convention in Kamoke, he asserted the current state of stability owes much to the unwavering commitment of the armed forces, stating, "If this country is stable, then it is because of the Pakistan Army." The IPP president, while taking a dig at previous regimes, criticized the previous governments for making grand promises but failing to deliver. The seasoned politician asserted that, under his leadership, the party would not entertain any dissent against the military.

Talking on the local issues, Khan turned his attention to the concerns of the citizens of Kamoke.

Acknowledging challenges including inadequate healthcare facilities, lack of clean water, and subpar infrastructure, he pledged that if the IPP assumed power, Kamoke would be transformed into a model city. Khan also promised the establishment of a cardiology hospital and an overall improvement in the town's amenities.

He pointed out that the 18-month PDM government, which he referenced, was remembered for achievements and failures alike, with electricity bills becoming a lingering reminder of its tenure.

The IPP president accused previous rulers of corruption, asserting that the people's trust in the system had been eroded.



HYDERABAD: Members of Jeay Sindh Rehbar Committee are holding protest rally for acceptance of their demands, at Hyderabad press club

Lighting kills two people, over 100 cattle in Tharparkar

THARPARKAR (INP): Lightning killed two family members and more than 100 cattle in different areas of Sindh, rescue sources said on Sunday. According to details, heavy rain lashed different areas of district Tharparkar of Sindh. Lightning struck a house in Chachro area killing two people including father and son. Meanwhile, more than 100 cattle were killed in lightning incidents in Chachro and Nagarparkar areas.

MQM-P says no change in consumer service seen in HESCO

HYDERABAD (APP): The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) has deplored that the officials of Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (HESCO) still exhibited anti-consumer approaches despite changes in the company's hierarchy.

In a statement issued here on Sunday by MQM-P Hyderabad chapter's Organizer Zafar Ahmed Siddiqui and other office bearers of the party, they said they began to nurture a hope that the change in the hierarchy would bring a change in the workforce's attitude.

They said even though the company had recovered billions of rupees from the defaulting consumers and power thieves since it began the crackdown on September 7, the problems of the consumers were far from being addressed.

They claimed that prolonged outages, serving of detection bills, defects in the transmission system.



LARKANA: PST and JEST passed candidates are holding protest demonstration for appointment letters, at Jinnah Bagh in Larkana

Zardari, Nawaz fear criticising Israel will jeopardise return to power: JI Chief

DERA GHAZI KHAN (INP): Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Emir Sirajul Haq Sunday launched a scathing criticism against the rival Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), claiming that the top leadership of the parties including Asif Ali Zardari and Nawaz Sharif fear that speaking against Israel would jeopardise their chances of forming a government in future. Speaking at a political gathering in Dera Gazi Khan, Punjab, the JI emir questioned as to why mainstream politicians including Nawaz, Shehbaz, Zardari, and Bilawal are silent over the issue of Palestine. Geo News reported.

"They believe that if they speak against Israel they won't be able to come into power [in future]," Haq said while referring to the Israel-Hamas conflict which has seen more than 15,000 Palestinians — including

ECP appoints 32 RMCs for effective 2024 election monitoring

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) appointed 32 Regional Election Commissioners (RECs) as Regional Monitoring Coordinators (RMCs) to ensure effective monitoring of the 2024 General Elections.

As stated by the ECP spokesperson, the appointed Regional Coordinators will play a crucial role in guaranteeing comprehensive monitoring at the division level. They are also responsible for guiding and supervising the monitoring teams within their respective districts during the upcoming General Elections.

The ECP will establish four-tier monitoring control rooms, with Provincial, Divisional, District Monitoring Control Rooms operating under the supervision of the Central Monitoring Control Center in Islamabad.

Legal action will be initiated by the monitoring teams for any violations of the code of conduct in the upcoming elections.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) conducted a one-day online training workshop for Regional Monitoring Coordinators (RMCs), where all Regional Election Commissioners in Pakistan were equipped with the necessary skills for their roles as RMCs.



HYDERABAD: Members of Peoples Hari Committee are holding protest demonstration for acceptance of their demands, at Hyderabad press club

Chairman BISE Larkana removed from post in harassment case

HYDERABAD (APP): The Provincial Ombudsman Sindh has penalized the Chairman Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Larkana district with removal from his position and a fine of Rs 300,000 in case of harassment. According to the order, during the hearing, it was established that Chairman Nasim Ahmed Memon had harassed, intimidated and caused mental agony to school teacher Shgufta Shah during his previous stint as Principal of Public School Hyderabad. Shah penalized the Chairman in regard to 2017 through advocate Sajjad Ahmed Chandio. The ombudsman stated in the order that Memon used to send text and video messages to Shah after working hours and that he even tried to interfere in her personal life. The ombudsman noted that the accused Memon did not challenge the allegations levelled against him by Shah.

455 candidates appear in KU VS Admission Test 2024

KARACHI (INP): As many as 455 candidates appeared in the admission test of the Department of Visual Studies, University of Karachi, which was held in 12 examination rooms at the departments of economics and history on Sunday.

The in-charge KU Directorate of Admissions Dr Saima Akhter mentioned that aspiring candidates appeared in the admission test for B. Arch, B. FA, and B. Design, in the disciplines of Architecture, Fine Art, Ceramics and Glass, Islamic Arts, Graphic Design, Industrial Design, Textile Design, Film and Animation of the visual studies department of the University of Karachi. She mentioned that a two-hour long test was started at 11:00 am.

According to her, the KU would inform the candidates about the provisional merit list through email, and SMS, and they would also be able to see their results along with the necessary directives on the official web portal (www.uokadmission.edu.pk) by December 07, 2023.

Meanwhile, the KU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi, Registrar Professor Dr Abdul Waheed, Dean of Arts and Social Sciences Professor Dr Shaista Tabassum, Dr Saima Akhter, in-charge VS Syed Shamon Haider and others, Students Advisor Dr Nosheen Raza, Campus Security Advisor Dr Salman Zubair, Medical Officer and the member of KU Syndicate Dr Muhammad Hassan Auj, and others were present on this occasion and monitored the admission test proceedings.

The KU Clinic staff along with an ambulance were also present during the test proceeding. The Watch and Ward and Directorate of Admissions staff were also present for the guidance of students and separate waiting areas near the examination classrooms were established for the parents and guardians of the candidates.



KARACHI: Warm clothes are being selling at roadside stalls as the demand of warm clothes increased in city on the arrival of cold waves of winter season, at Saddar area

Brain Brown Fusion Festival Science Carnival held in SONA public school

By Tanveer Ahmad Soomro

MIRPUR MATHELO: SONA Public School and College management organized a grand ceremony in connection with Brain Brown Fusion Festival Science Carnival in Sona Public School.

Shakeel Chatha, Secretary SONA Welfare Col. Irfan Gul, Col. Shujaat Minhas, Principal SONA Public School Ibrahim Langhrab, Prof. Amanullah Shar, Ahmed Ali Soomro and a large number of male and female students from 4 different schools of district Ghotki participated.

Excellent display of intellectual ability Chairman Sona Welfare Society Muhammad Saleem Cheema distributed prizes to the students who achieved success, next year more schools of district Ghotki will be invited, it is a pleasure to see the ability of the students. Chairman Sona Welfare Society Brigadier Muhammad Salim Cheema addressed the ceremony.

According to the details, the best educational institution of Sona Public School and College in Mirpur Mathele, district Ghotki headquarters, which is managed by FFC administration of District Ghotki. Shayan Shan Festival of Brain Brown Fusion Festival was organized yesterday in which Chairman SONA Welfare Society Brigadier Muhammad Salim Cheema, Colonel Shakeel Chatha, Secretary SONA Welfare Colonel Irfan Gul, Colonel Shujaat Minhas, Prof. Amanullah Shar, including Ahmed Ali Soomro, hundreds of students from 4 different schools of District Ghotki, IBA Ubauro University of Kids Ghotki, A& Montessori System and Mari and Model School showed their intellectual prowess, in which IBA Obavoro stood second.

While the Children's University was the champion, Chairman Sona Welfare Society, Brigadier Muhammad Saleem Cheema, addressed the ceremony.

Asim Jofa's business resilience and crisis management strategies integrated into LUISS guido Carli University's curriculum

KARACHI (PR): Renowned Pakistani fashion designer Asim Jofa's exemplary business resilience and crisis management recently earned him a unique distinction. His adaptive strategies, honed through years of experience, have become a vital case study at LUISS Guido Carli University, an esteemed university based in Rome, Italy. The integration of Jofa's case study into the curriculum stands as a testament to the invaluable insights it provides for future global business leaders, particularly in the fields of business and fashion.

The invitation to incorporate Asim Jofa's case study into the academic curriculum came from Prem S. Menghwar, a distinguished faculty member of LUISS Guido Carli's Business and Management department. Recognizing the exceptional nature of Jofa's business journey, Menghwar sought to impart the entrepreneur's adaptive strategies and crisis management techniques to students, aiming to prepare them for the dynamic challenges of the global business landscape.

Asim Jofa's foray into the fashion industry began as a breath of fresh air, diverging from the family's established jewelry business. Twelve years ago, he embarked on his journey by establishing the highly exclusive and one-of-a-kind diamond boutique, 'The Diamond Gallery.' Armed with a design certification from the prestigious Central Saint Martins, Jofa rapidly made waves in the fashion industry, garnering acclaim for his collections showcased on runways in fashion capitals worldwide.

Chairman Safoora Town Inspects repaired tractor and met DGM K.E.

KARACHI: Chairman Safoora Town Rashid Khakheli said that despite less machinery Safoora Town is engaged in resolving the problems, the residents of Safoora Town will not be allowed to face the punishment of power load shedding and overbilling.

He expressed these views during a meeting with The Repaired Tractor and Deputy GM Sajjad Zaheer of K.E along with Vice Chairman Abdul Haq Baloch.

During inspection of tractor after repairing he said



that it will be used to resolve various municipal problems, machinery will be increased in a phased manner in safoora town, daily steps are being taken for the improvement of parks including fumigation.

Deputy GM, K-Electric Sajjad Zaheer met Chairman Safoora Town, Rashid Khakheli at his office in which the Chairman discussed the problems faced by the residents of Safoora Town.