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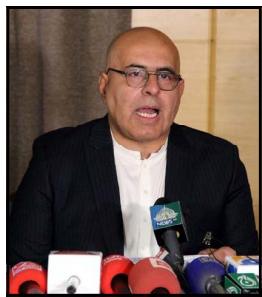
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Quetta

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Caretaker Minister Information maintains: Strict implementation continues on one-document regime at international borders

Jan Achakzai says no one to be allowed to enter Pakistan from Afghanistan without passport and visa; vows to repatriate every single illegal immigrant



Independent Report
QUETTA: The caretaker Provincial Minister for Information, Jan Achakzai has categorically stated that strict implementation is being made on the policy of one-document regime at the international border and as such no one would be allowed to cross border into Pakistan from Afghanistan without the passport and

visa. He asserted that each and every single illegal immigrant would be departed to one's country after tracing them.

He said that Pakistan has taken certain measures to establish the state writ and the repatriation of illegal immigrants to their homeland is included in the

measures taken in this regard. No hurdle would be tolerated in this regard whatsoever, Jan Achakzai asserted.

The Minister Information was addressing press conference at the Deputy Commissioner's office on Sunday afternoon.

Jan Achakzai maintained that Pakistan has started wholehearted action against the anti-state elements. He referred action against the two former employees of Pakistan army including Adil Raja and Haider Mehdi saying that it (Army) has proved by taking court martial action against them that the traitors would not be spared at all.

Jan Achakzai maintained that action against Adil Raja and Haider Mehdi is also expression of the resolve that the accountability of the traitors would be made no matter where ever they hide. The Minister said that Adil Raja and Haider Mehdi are traitors of the country, and they are exposed to the world as well.

He said that it would be tried to bring back both of them back in the country through interpolate.

Jan Achakzai also mentioned that the patriotic people of Balochistan had started campaign against these traitors in the province first of all, and by the grace of Allah Almighty, their demand was met.



Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar ul Haq Kakar has arrived in Abu Dhabi on a two-day visit to the United Arab Emirates.



LAHORE: Caretaker Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Murtaza Solangi along with Caretaker CM Punjab Mohsin Raza Naqvi cutting the 59th Anniversary cake of PTV Lahore Center.

Pakistan is all set to plead its case in COP28

ISLAMABAD (APP): In the face of escalating climate challenges, Pakistan, a country contributing less than 1% to global greenhouse gas emissions, is confronting an outsized battle against climate adversities. As the world prepares for the 28th Conference of the Parties (COP28), Pakistan's journey offers a compelling narrative of resilience and determination, according to a press release issued by the Ministry of Planning and Reforms here.

Pakistan's vulnerability to climate change is starkly evident. The World Bank notes that the country's exposure to extreme weather events has risen dramatically, with the recent floods in

Balochistan exemplifying this trend. These floods not only devastated communities but also highlighted the urgent need for climate-resilient strategies.

This disproportionate impact of global climate change on Pakistan has garnered attention at international forums like COP28, where the nation's efforts and challenges will be under global scrutiny.

Despite its minimal contribution to global emissions, Pakistan stands at the forefront of experiencing the harsh realities of a warming planet. At the heart of Pakistan's response is the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) 2023, a comprehensive framework aimed at fostering resilience and sustainability.



QUETTA: A lady Health Worker administers the polio vaccine to a child the campaign launched in Quetta, Balochistan.

EPC to issue 327 electoral symbols list for general elections 2024

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has prepared list of electoral symbols, encompassing over 300 options for political parties and independent candidates alike.

The list boasts a diverse array of symbols, ranging from eagle, lion, and crane to arrows, swords, and bats. The list includes representations as varied as cars, jeeps, bulbs, ducks, birds, and flowers.

Even everyday items like soap dishes and thermoses have found their place among the plethora of symbols, creating a unique visual narrative for the electorate.

With a total of 327 electoral symbols, the ECP ensured an extensive selection process that allows political parties and independent candidates to align their

campaigns with symbols that resonate with their ethos and communicate effectively with the voters.

Sources within the ECP claimed the much-anticipated list of election symbols is set to be unveiled next week.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) announcing the reserved verdict ordered Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) intra-party elections within 20 days.

The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) said PTI did not conduct transparent elections as per the Constitution.

The PTI should conduct the election within 20 days under the Constitution. The ECP said that intra-party election reports submit the report in seven days after the election.

PM arrives in UAE on two-day bilateral visit

ABU DHABI (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwar-ul-Haq Kakar on Sunday arrived here on a two-day visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

Minister for Justice of the UAE Abdullah Sultan bin Awad Al Nuaimi and Pakistani diplomatic staff received the prime minister on his arrival at the Abu Dhabi's Al-Bateen Airport, a Prime Minister Office Press Release said.

During his visit, the prime minister will meet President of the UAE Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed.

The visit will also include signing of MoUs between Pakistan and the UAE in a range of areas including investment cooperation in the sectors of energy, port operations projects, waste water treatment, food security, logistics, mining, aviation, and banking and financial services.

FIR register case against Bajwa, Faiz Hameed excludes from cause list

ISLAMABAD (Online): The case of application for registration of case against former Army Chief General Retired Qamar Javed Bajwa and former General Retired Faiz Hameed has been removed from the cause list.

Islamabad High Court (IHC) removed from the cause list, the case scheduled for hearing on November 28 on the application of the registration case against General Retired Qamar Javed Bajwa and General Retired Faiz Hameed.

PTV has come long way during past 59 years: Solangi

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi said on Sunday that Pakistan Television, the national broadcaster of Pakistan had come a long way during past 59 years.

This he said while delivering his speech at PTV's 59th anniversary celebration ceremony here.

Congratulating the employees of PTV on the 59th anniversary of the founding of Pakistan Television, Murtaza Solangi said 59 years ago in Lahore, his teacher Aslam Azhar started broadcast of PTV transmission by pitching a tent in the lawn of an old building.

Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi himself had been a broadcaster and journalist, who had seen this journey himself, Murtaza Solangi remarked.

Appreciating the performance of the caretaker set up of Punjab, he said

due to the changes in Punjab, Mohsin Naqvi was now looking like a benefactor to everyone. He said that Punjab had witnessed so many changes during his tenure as he would become "Sher Shah Suri" of the province.

Meanwhile in a celebration hosted by Pakistan Television Corporation (PTV) for its 59th anniversary on Sunday, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi lauded the staff for their contributions. He highlighted the beginning of a renaissance period for PTV, honoring the legacy of its first Managing Director Aslam Azhar. Solangi expressed gratitude to the dedicated PTV team, acknowledging their pivotal role in the television network's successful 59-year journey.

The event concluded with a ceremonial cake cutting, joined by Punjab Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi.

Special polio immunization drive begins in 33 districts of Balochistan province

QUETTA: The special polio immunization campaign is scheduled to commence in 33 districts of Balochistan province from today (Monday).

According to the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) for Polio Eradication, the polio campaign is being launched over three polio high risk districts including Quetta, Pishin and Killa Abdullah.

Needless to mention here is that the anti-polio campaign is already continued in the polio high risk

districts of the province. The EOC sources said that it was the third day of campaign concluded in Quetta, Pishin and Killa Abdullah. The anti-polio campaign was started in these districts on November 24, 2023.

According to EOC, it has been targeted to vaccinate over 2.5 million children below five years of age during the campaign being run all over the province.

More than 1100 teams have been formed to vaccinate the children during the campaign.

Balochistan women summit 2023 to be held in Quetta on November 28

QUETTA: The first Balochistan Women Summit 2023 is scheduled to be held under the auspices of Provincial Information Department on November 28 in Quetta.

According to an official handout issued here on Sunday, the Women Summit would be held in collaboration with Pakistan Poverty Alleviation Fund

for strengthening of women of the province.

The Governor Malik Abdul Wali Khan Kakar would be the chief guest at the event while the provincial ministers and advisers would also be participating in it. The prominent YouTubers, singers and personalities belonging to different sections of life would also be participating in the summit.

Religious leaders advocate swift global action to end oppression in Gaza

LAHORE (APP): The leaders from various faiths on Sunday collectively implored the international community to promptly intervene in putting an end to Israel's aggressive actions and brutality in Gaza.

Addressing a press conference here at Lahore Press Club, the scholars and leaders from diverse religious backgrounds, including the Chairman of the Pakistan Ulema Council, Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi, and the Chairman of the All Pakistan Minorities Alliance, Dr. Paul Bhatti emphasized that the events unfolding in Gaza transcend religious

affiliations, asserting that these actions were not targeted against any specific faith but rather against humanity.

They extended their plea to the United Nations, Europe, America, Britain, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, urging them to swiftly address the persecution of the oppressed Palestinian population and transition the current temporary ceasefire into a lasting resolution.

The leaders further advocated for the creation of an independent and sovereign Palestinian state, designating Al-Quds as its capital. Urging the interna-

tional community to promptly intervene, they underscored the need for collective efforts to address the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

Leading the presser, Ashrafi who is also the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Religious Harmony, emphasized that Islamic countries and the global community must actively address the ongoing Israeli aggression in Gaza. He called for concerted efforts to put an end to Israeli fascism, highlighting the worldwide demand for cessation of the conflict in Gaza to facilitate humanitarian relief operations.



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed, Federal Minister for Human Rights Khalil George, Islamic scholar Abdul Khabeer Azad and others showing solidarity during National Message Pakistan Peace Conference, at a local hotel in Provincial Capital.

Caretaker CM grieved over death of Mir Ismail Lehri

QUETTA: The caretaker Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Ali Mardan Khan Domki has expressed condolence and sorrow over the death of former Nazim Chiltan Town, Mir Muhammad Ismail Lehri.

In a condolence statement issued here on Sunday, the Chief Minister said that the late Ismail Lehri was a sincere and public friendly human being.

As a Nazim, Mir Ismail Lehri paid attention on the collective development of area and took measures for resolving the public issues, Mr. Domki maintained.

The Chief Minister said that we share the grief of his death with the bereaved family.

IMF reduces estimate of Pakistan's external debt requirement

ISLAMABAD (Online): International Monetary Fund (IMF) has reduced the estimate of loans required by Pakistan.

According to sources, the IMF has estimated Pakistan's external debt demand during the current fiscal year and the next fiscal year to be \$124 billion, which is \$8 billion less than the previous estimate.

2023-24 and the next financial year 2024-25, these estimates will be discussed further in the talks in February or March next

year. It should be remembered that four months ago, the IMF estimated this at 131 billion dollars, while in this way, the external public debt will reach 103 billion dollars in the total external debt, which is 5 billion dollars less than the previous estimate.

The main reason for the decline in Pakistan's demand for external debt is a reduction in the current account deficit, lower external debt repayments and debt restructuring by China.

Zardari, Bilawal to address PPP's founding day public meeting in Quetta

Independent Report

QUETTA: The central leaders of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) including former President Asif Ali Zardari and Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari would address the jalsa to be held on occasion of its 56th founding day on November 30 in Quetta.

The preparations are in progress for the public meeting of the party. This was stated by the leader of PPP, Nawab Sanaullah Zehri while speaking to the delegations

here on Sunday. He said that former President Zardari would be participating in the public meeting on desire of the people of Balochistan.

He said that the participation and joint address of both the leaders would be clear response to those talking about differences and making bases less propaganda in this regard.

He claimed that over 40,000 workers would participate in the public meeting.

The central leaders would also begin their election campaign from Quetta.



CHAMAN: Leaders of Awami National Party Ameer Haider Khan Hoti, Asghar Khan Achakzai, Khushal Khan Kakar, Engr. Zamrak Achakzia, Mabat Kaka and others addressing a public gathering held in memory of Shuhada-e-Watan.



LAHORE: A view of deserted Mall road during smart lockdown due to Smog in Provincial Capital

Pakistani delegation explores Indonesia's religious, political model in diplomatic visit

ISLAMABAD (APP): A Pakistani delegation comprising individuals from diverse backgrounds arrived in Jakarta, Indonesia, as part of the Religious Diplomacy Programme aimed at learning from Indonesia's religious and political model on Sunday. Led by the International Religious Council for Religious Affairs (IRCRA) President Muhammad Israr Madani, the delegation is scheduled to stay in Indonesia for 10 days. Throughout their visit, they will engage with prominent religious scholars and political leaders to facilitate the exchange of exemplary democratic practices. The discussions will also focus on addressing key concerns, including education and social cohesion.

In his communication with the media, Israr emphasized that within the Muslim world, Indonesia stood out as a nation where the influence of religious elements was notably prominent with a rich and extensive history.

He underscored the significant role played by the religious community in Indonesia, particularly in the realms of politics and education. Israr pointed out that Indonesia served as an exemplary model from which Pakistan could derive valuable insights, especially in terms of integrating religion and politics.



He highlighted the steps outlined by the IRCRA as a framework for incorporating the Indonesian model into Pakistani society. Israr recommended leveraging Indonesia's experiences to foster intellectual democracy and promote religious harmony within Pakistan.

It is important to note that the recent journey of the Pakistani delegation was funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Indonesia. The delegation included religious scholars, politicians, writers, journalists, and other distinguished individuals affiliated with both government and non-government organizations.

USPCASW organizes trainings in Quetta

QUETTA (PR): With the financial support of the World Bank funded project titled "Balochistan Integrated Water Resources Management and Development Project (BIWRMDP)", One Month Long Training Course on IWRM, Hydrology, Hydraulic Structures, GIS, Climate Change and Participatory Irrigation (26 days long) from 30 October to 25 November 2023 and Networking System and Designing of Water Supply Engineering (13 days long) from 13 November to 25 November 2023 trainings were organized by U.S Pakistan Center for Advanced Studies in Water (USPCASW), Mehran University of Engineering and Technology, Jamshoro in Quetta.

A total of 50 senior and mid-level engineers from Balochistan Irrigation Department, Public Health Engineering (PHE) and Water and Sanitation Authority (WASA)

Quetta participated in the training.

Speaking at the closing session the Project Director BIWRMDP, Engineer. Barkat Ullah Kakar said that addressing the pressing challenges posed by water scarcity and climate change, the intensive training sessions on IWRM, Hydrology, Hydraulics, GIS, Climate Change and Participatory Irrigation and water supply Engineering were conducted to boost up the technical expertise of the three departments of Balochistan. MD WASA and Dr. Imran Durrani marked a pivotal step towards fostering a cadre of professionals committed to implementing sustainable water management practices. They stressed applying these learnings to safeguard our precious water resources, ensuring their availability for future generations.

Dr. Zain Kakar informed that this comprehensive program aimed to equip participants with multifaceted knowledge and practical skills essential for sustainable water management in the face of evolving environmental dynamics.

Dr. Ghulam Hussain Dars (Training Coordinator) thanked the BIWRMDP officials for sponsoring the training. He informed that the resource persons were well-versed and highly influential in their respective fields from all over Pakistan. He reiterated the support of the Water Center of Mehran UET Jamshoro in building capacity of the officials and resolving the water management issues in Balochistan Province under climate change.

The participants were satisfied with the training and said that they were actively engaged in a mix of theoretical sessions, hands-on workshops, and case studies, fostering an environment conducive to knowledge exchange and practical application.



LAHORE: Diamonds paints Players group photo with winning trophy after won the Final match between Diamond Paints VS Remounts for Patrons Aibak Polo Cup 2023 at Lahore Polo Club, Diamond Paints won the match by 8/6

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 Muhammad 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.

Despite smart lockdown Toxic smog still hangs over Lahore making it world's most polluted city

LAHORE (INP): Smog shows no signs of relenting as with the air quality index (AQI) 265, Lahore, the city of gardens, again topped the list of the world's most polluted cities on Sunday.

The AQI over the US consulate was recorded at 422, 396 over Phase-8 in Defence Housing Authority, 296 over Johar Town and 247 over The Mall.

Doctors, on the other hand, have advised people to avoid travelling unnecessarily so that they could prevent themselves from exposure to polluted air.

Temperatures continue to drop in the city with each passing day. The weather was partly cloudy in the morning. The Met Office forecast there was no chance of rain in the provincial capital during the next 24 hours.

It predicted that the maximum temperature in the city would be recorded at 23 degrees Celsius while the minimum at 13 degrees Celsius. All business activities

will remain shut and entry of vehicles on The Mall will also remain banned as there will be a complete lockdown in Lahore today as part of the steps ordered by the Punjab government to control smog in the provincial capital.

Punjab Chief Minister (CM) Syed Mohsin Naqvi, on the other hand, has expressed his gratitude to The Almighty Allah that the steps ordered by his government have started producing the desired results.

In his post on X, he has said that courtesy the steps taken by his government, the air quality index (AQI) which was 454 on November 23, dropped to 232 on Saturday.

Yesterday, on Saturday too, shops and markets in the city remained closed until 3:00 PM on Saturday on the order of the Punjab government.

However, shops selling food items, pharmacies, petrol pumps and laboratories remained open.

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 Shiran.

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.

"We have collected all the required data and information by establishing a connection with relevant authorities in China," said an official from the Chinese Consulate Lahore. "If the CM office needs further help, we will surely provide it," he added.

An official from the

CM Secretariat stated that amidst Punjab's unhealthy air quality, Chinese smog towers seem to offer a solution to the pollution crisis.

"The tower, over 100 meters tall, is designed to improve air quality in the city, where standards regularly fall short of those set by the World Health Organisation," he added.

Meanwhile, Chinese company Norinco International Pakistan Branch has signed a contract with the Environment Protection Department, Government of Punjab, to establish air quality monitoring stations across the province, with a total value of Rs 3.65 billion.



LAHORE: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Interfaith Harmony Maulana Tahir Ashrafi addressing a conference at Lahore Press Club.

Al-Azzia, Avenfield references will be heard today: IHC

ISLAMABAD (Online): Islamabad High Court (IHC) will hear the appeals against the conviction of former Prime Minister and leader of Muslim League (N) Nawaz Sharif in Al-Azzia, Avenfield references from Monday. A decision will also be taken to continue the hearing on a daily basis. Nawaz Sharif's lawyers will prepare the summary of arguments and present it in the court.

IHC Chief Justice Amir Farooq, Justice Mian Gul Hasan Aurangzeb will conduct the hearing, the former Prime Minister will appear along with his legal team.

Second All Balochistan Khan Shaheed Abdul Samad Football Tournament to hold on Dec, 01

QUETTA (APP) - Second All Balochistan Khan Shaheed Abdul Samad Football Tournament will be played at the QDA Football Ground on December 01 (Friday) at 2:00 PM.

It should be remembered that the top 32 teams of Quetta will participate in this tournament, in which 8 teams can qualify for All Balochistan, said press released issued here on Sunday.

The press release said that the draw of the tournament would be done on Tuesday, November 28 at 5:00 PM at Khyber-Afghan Football Club, Quetta.

Therefore, the secretary and representatives of all the participating teams are requested to ensure their participation in the draws by the stipulated time.

For more information, contact tournament chairman Haji Muhammad Naseem Khan Achakzai, Secretary Inamullah Khan Achakzai and press secretary Bashir Ahmed Bareach directly on their numbers.

Secretary LG directs to timely complete works of constant development projects

Quetta, Nov-26 (APP) - Secretary Local Government (LG) and Rural De-

velopment Noor Ahmed Pirani on Sunday directed to the officers to complete all the works of ongoing development projects on time with standard and no delaying would be tolerated in this regard.

He expressed these views while visiting Union Council Dasht, Municipal Corporation Pishin and District Council Pishin on Sunday.

On this occasion, Secretary Local Government Zahoorul Hassan, Divisional Director and Director Technical were also with him.

He said that Mutton market fish will be activated on war footing for facilitating to people.

Apart from this, plantations will be done in the Municipal Corporation, municipal committee and union council along with the forest department and in this regard the chief officers were urged to make a coordinated plan with the forest department.

Noor Ahmad Pirani emphasized the need to make the sanitation system more efficient and directed all the chief officers to use all their resources to improve the sanitation system and steps should be taken to solve people's problems at their doorsteps.



QUETTA: Members of Masihan-e-Balochistan are holding protest demonstration against high handedness of land grabbers, in Quetta

Nationwide anti-polio drive to begin today

ISLAMABAD (APP): A five-day anti-polio campaign will begin across the country from tomorrow to eradicate the crippling disease.

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, more than 7.4 million children up to five years of age will be administered polio drops during the campaign.

Thirty one thousand teams have been constituted to vaccinate the children. Likewise, in Balochistan, more than eleven thousand teams have been constituted for the door to door vaccination drive to inoculate 2.5 million children up to the age of five years.

According to the polio emergency operation center, vaccination campaign

in Quetta, Pishin and Qilla Abdullah has been continuing since Friday.

Similarly, in the province of Sindh, teams comprising more than 80 thousand polio workers will go door to door to administer the vaccine to over 10 million children of up-to 5 years of age in 30 districts of the province.

Meanwhile, the Sindh chief secretary has also directed the Health Department to ensure that children are administered polio drops at all railway stations and bus terminals as well.

Polio teams will also be available at bus stops, railway stations, afghan refugee camps and other public places to ensure vaccination of every child.

Security forces, residents foils terrorist attack in Lucky Marwat

LAKKI MARWAT (Online): In Laki Marwat area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province, the security forces and the people thwarted the terrorist attack.

Terrorists attacked a police post in Ahmedzai, an area adjacent to Lucky Marwat.

The police personnel posted at Ahmedzai post iden-

tified seven to eight terrorists who were having movement for the purpose of terrorist activities in Lucky Marwat and adjacent areas. The police personnel immediately targeted these terrorists.

On Hearing the firing sound, the people of the area rushed to the help of the police, on which the terrorists fled.

Annual International Culture Day organized at Pakistan Embassy College Beijing

BEIJING (APP): Over 40 countries including Pakistan and China set up their national stalls featuring a range of cultural activities such as traditional music as well as display of art, costumes and cuisines at the annual International Culture Day organized by Pakistan Embassy College (PECB) here on Sunday.

Pakistan Ambassador

Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and several other countries showcased their cultural handicrafts, products and traditional cuisines.

Ambassador Hashmi visited stalls and exhibitions set up by students and their parents and appreciated them for showcasing handicrafts, foods and culture of their respective countries. There were fun areas

among different cultures and traditions. He described culture a powerful tool to build bridges and foster friendships between nations.

Ambassador Hashmi also underlined the significance of International Culture Day celebrations for China Pakistan relations, noting that the event served as a platform to promote



to China, Khalil Hashmi inaugurated the event as the chief guest.

Ambassadors, senior diplomats, officials, media representatives and students along with their families, members of the Pakistani and international community participated in this cultural gala.

China, Russia, Italy, Rumania, Ukraine, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Libya, Bulgaria, Bangladesh, Nepal,

and gaming zone for children. Cultural performances of various countries were also presented which were greatly enjoyed by the guests.

Ambassador Hashmi in his address commended the PECB and its students for excellent organization and for presenting the rich kaleidoscope of performances which advanced mutual understanding, respect and collaboration

the creation of China-Pakistan Community of Shared Future.

Principal, Shazia Amjad welcomed the audience and expressed gratitude for their keen interest and enthusiastic participation.

Some exquisite dance performances on tunes of Pakistan's traditional music, stunning Pakistani and Chinese songs and cultural dresses mesmerized the audience.

Govt to enhance standard of medical education

ISLAMABAD (APP): The quality of medical and dental education will be enhanced at par with international standards, considering local needs and ground realities.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Medical Education and Patient Care and Minister of State Prof. Dr. Aamir Bilal said that while chairing a high-level meeting at Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC) head office for the promotion of medical education and quality health care in the country.

He said there will be no compromise on the minimum standards and quality. The minister said that PMDC has a pivotal role in ensuring the quality and standardization of medical and dental education, professional practice, and ethical standards in the country.

He said that all necessary steps will be taken to revise existing rules and regulations of PMDC including the syllabus for MDCAT, curriculum for

undergraduate medical dental education, and accreditation standards for the accreditation of medical and dental institutes.

He emphasized that it will be ensured to standardize the MDCAT, NRE and NEB exams to stringent quality assessments, updated curricula, and modern teaching methodologies to produce competent and globally competitive healthcare professionals which are safe for society.

The meeting was attended by PMDC council members, the Federal Special Secretary for Health, President CPSP, members of the task force and sub-committees, nominee of HEC, nominees of the provincial health departments, present and former vice-chancellors, deans, experts in the field, representatives of nursing council from across the country.

The meeting was also attended by Federal Secretary Health Iftekhar Ali Shallwani and Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj President of PMDC.



Special Assistance to Prime Minister on human rights and women empowerment Mushaal Mullick addressing a seminar in Islamabad to express solidarity with the Muslims of Kashmir, Palestine and around the globe over gross human rights violations.

Anti-power pilferage campaign: Rs 34b recovered; 125, 142 people held nationwide

ISLAMABAD (APP): On the government's initiative, the fruits of effective actions against electricity thieves across the country began to emerge.

According to the statistics from September 7 to October 31, Rs 34 billion have been recovered from across the country and 125,142 people have been arrested.

From September 2023 to October 2023, losses due to electricity theft decreased by Rs 12 billion.

From November 1 to November 19, 14,769 people have been arrested while Rs 36,547 million have been recovered.

According to the statistics from November 1 to November 19, 98 people were arrested from Islamabad and Rs 175 million were recovered.

A total of 1617 people were arrested from Gujranwala, Faisalabad and Multan while Rs. 1439 million were recovered.

In the crackdown against electricity theft, a total of 121 people were arrested from Peshawar, Hyderabad, Sukkur and Quetta and Rs 5520 million were recovered.

The relevant institutions are determined to continue the crackdown against electricity theft.

Search operation conducted against illegal foreigners

Independent Report
ISLAMABAD: According to the details, the Islamabad Capital Police Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) conducted a search and combing operation against illegal foreigners at Shahzad Town police station jurisdiction, a public relations

officer said. He said that, following the special directives of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the search and combing operations are being conducted in different areas of the city, to ensure the safety and security of the Islamabad citizens.



Following these directives, a search and combing operation was conducted in different areas of Shahzad Town police stations jurisdiction by CTD, QRF and local police teams under the supervision of DSP CTD. During the search and combing operation 32 houses and 64 individuals were thoroughly checked.

ICCP Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan said that the purpose of the search and combing operations was to heighten the security in the Federal Capital. All zonal officers were directed to continue these operations in their respective areas. Citizens are also requested to cooperate with police during the checking.

52 absconders involved in heinous crime held

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Capital Police have arrested 52 absconders and proclaimed offenders involved in heinous crimes during the last week, a public relations officer said.

Following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, he said special tasks were assigned to all senior police officials to ensure the arrest of proclaimed offenders and absconders involved in heinous crimes.

During the crackdown, the Islamabad Capital Police teams have arrested 52 absconders and proclaimed offenders involved in heinous crimes during the last week. ICPO Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan said that the Islamabad Capital Police is taking all possible steps to eradicate crimes from the city, and those involved in heinous crimes and illegal activities will be dealt with iron hands. Safety of the lives and property of the citizens is the foremost priority of Islamabad Capital Police, he added.



Imam-e-Kaaba visits new campus of IIUI

ISLAMABAD (APP): Imam-e-Kaaba Dr Saleh bin Abdullah bin Humaid visited the new campus of the International Islamic University Islamabad.

He was accompanied by IIUI President, Dr Hathal Homoud Alotaibi who briefed him about the male and female campuses, faculties and facilities.

Imam-e-Kaaba also visited the site for King Salman bin Abdul Aziz grand mosque. He was briefed on the occasion that the mosque will be built at the cost of around 32 million dollars.

He was told that there will be an ample capacity in the inner hall of the Mosque where as many as 4000 male and 2000 female will offer prayer, while the yard will also have a capacity to accommodate 6000 people.

There will be a library and a museum, while there will also be a Muhammad bin Salman Auditorium for conferences in the Mosque.

Akbar came to fray for PTI transparent intra-party elections

ISLAMABAD (Online): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) founding leader Akbar S. Babar has come into field for transparent elections in the party.

Akbar S. Babar has said in his message to the party workers that ideological workers should come forward for transparent elections in the party, workers should be mobilized to ensure transparent intra-party elections in the next 20 days as per the order of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). If transparent intra-party elections are not held, the retention of the 'bat' symbol in the national elections and participation in the elections may be in jeopardy.

He said that PTI workers have to come forward to save the party from complete destruction. Akbar Babar announced the launch of a nationwide contact campaign with PTI workers and said that PTI workers should mobilize immediately to place the party from being hijacked again, in consultation with the central and ideological party members.

APHC urges world to take stock of worst human rights situation in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leaders and organizations have urged the international community to take stock of the worst human rights situation in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), as the Indian forces and its agencies, shielded by the draconian laws, kill, harass and arrest the subjugated people with impunity. According to Kashmir Media Service report on Sunday, the APHC leaders, including Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sopori, Abdul Ahad, Muhammad Saleem Zargar, Advocate Arshad Iqbal and Maulana Musab Nadi in their separate statements issued in Srinagar said a prosperous and strong Pakistan is in the best interest of the people of Jammu and Kashmir and they always pray for prosperity and stability of the country.

The leaders maintained that at a time when India was hell bent to eliminate every Kashmiri and snatch their land and government services, it is incumbent upon Pakistan to galvanize the support of the international community to force India for settlement of the Kashmir dispute as per the United Nations resolutions. They said India has forgotten the reality that the freedom movements and sentiments could not be suppressed through military and brutal tactics, adding that the Bharatiya Janata Party regime was systematically committing genocide and killing Kashmiris in fake encounters during cordon and search operations.

Meanwhile, the APHC AJK chapter's leaders Syed Faiz Naqshbandi, Altaf Hussain Wani and Shamim Shahl in their separate statement in Islamabad, have urged the international community to take notice of the worst human rights violations in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir. They urged the United Nations Council for Human Rights, Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch and other peace-loving people of the world to take cognizance of the prevailing gruesome situation of Kashmir wherein people were being killed mercilessly without any reason.



ISLAMABAD: Participants take a park in a cycle rally organized by Al-Shifa Hospital at F-9 park in Federal Capital.

World Sustainable Transport Day being observed today

ISLAMABAD (APP): First ever World Sustainable Transport Day is being observed on Sunday.

In his message on the occasion, United Nations Secretary General Antonio Guterres said there is an urgent need for a transformative shift towards more sustainable transport, emphasizing importance of cleaner energy to combat climate change.

The UN adopted a resolution earlier this year to designate November 26 as the World Sustainable Transport Day.

PIMS financial issues to be resolved soon

ISLAMABAD (APP): The government will soon address the issue of financial needs and pending salaries of staff of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS).

According to a spokesperson of the Ministry of Health, there will be no compromise on the provision of medical facilities to patients.

He said that the doctors and paramedical staff of PIMS hospital are valuable assets of the health sector.

He said that all necessary steps are being taken to provide medical facilities in the hospital.

He said no doctors and nurses are on strike in PIMS hospital.

Property, water tax increase in Islamabad, JI announces to move courts, streets

ISLAMABAD (Online): Deputy Amir Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Pakistan Mian Muhammad Aslam has announced to appear in a public hearing tomorrow, go to courts and take to the streets against the proposal of 200 percent tax increase on property and water in Islamabad.

While giving a press conference in Islamabad, Deputy Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Mian Muhammad Aslam said that there is a proposal to increase property tax and water tax by 200% in Islamabad. Deputy Amir said that tax on Islamabad can be increased only by the representatives of the local government, and only by the assembly led by the mayor of Islamabad.

How MCI administrator can increase property tax? If tax on property and water is increased, it will be illegal, Mian Aslam said.

An attempt was made once before, we canceled the notice from the High Court, he continued, CDA went in appeal, the matter has been pending in the court for four years, without waiting for the MCI decision in a pending case, to increase the tax. It has been decided that 3 percent CDA was earlier and now it wants to increase it by 2 percent more.

Mian Aslam maintained that increasing taxes by 500% in the last four years is not the limit of cruelty. There is no water in the sectors and taxes are being increased. 200% tax is also being imposed on tankers' water.

Jamaat-e-Islami rejects this proposal of tax, the drama of 27 and 28% public hearing on tax should also be stopped. Jamaat-e-Islami will go to court against these taxes. Five lakh passports are pending. If the cruel system is not withdrawn, they will protest strongly, if the taxes are not withdrawn, the youth will leave the country.

Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Islamabad Nasrullah Randhawa said that 40,000 tax is being levied on a two-and-a-half-marle house in Islamabad.



ISLAMABAD: A gypsy family is carrying bundle of dry wood on their heads for domestic use on their way at Constitution avenue.

Residents want immediate extension of Blue bus route from PWD interchange

ISLAMABAD (APP): The residents residing in different housing societies located near the Islamabad Expressway have demanded an immediate extension of the route covered by Blue Bus service up to PWD interchange after substantial road widening and construction work had been completed, easing vehicular traffic on one of the busiest arteries of the twin cities. Residents of Korang, Pakistan, Jinnah Garden, PWD, Sohan, and other adjacent societies were of the opinion that the authorities have unveiled the plying of the Blue Bus service route from Rawat but deferred it due to the condition of the road and the subsequent construction and expansion work from Korang Bridge to Rawat.

The demand coincides with the Capital Development Authority's (CDA) decision to roll out 160 electric buses on 13 different routes in the capital city. As the extensive work on the laying of new road lanes has been completed up to PWD interchange with smooth and rapid vehicular traffic, the route of Blue Bus service should be extended to PWD interchange to facilitate a large number of commuters, students, and office-going people, Raziq Ali Shah, a senior journalist and resident of Jinnah Garden, said on Sunday. Haji Abdul Qadoos, a trader in PWD, said that the introduction of blue bus service on the Expressway was a significant initiative to provide much-needed transport facilities to the masses, but after the completion of hassle-free traffic movement on the newly constructed multi-lane road from Korang Bridge to Naval Anchorage Housing Society, its route should be immediately expanded to PWD interchange.

Shaheena Jabeen and Humaira, two working women and residents of Korang town, opined that they conveniently moved to their workplaces located in the Blue Area regularly by boarding the Blue buses, but for reaching the Korang stand to catch the service, they still faced the issue of moving from the entrance of the society on the highway to the designated Blue bus stop via private vehicles.

"Traversing a distance from the PWD interchange to Korang by a private public vehicle is too difficult," Humaira added.

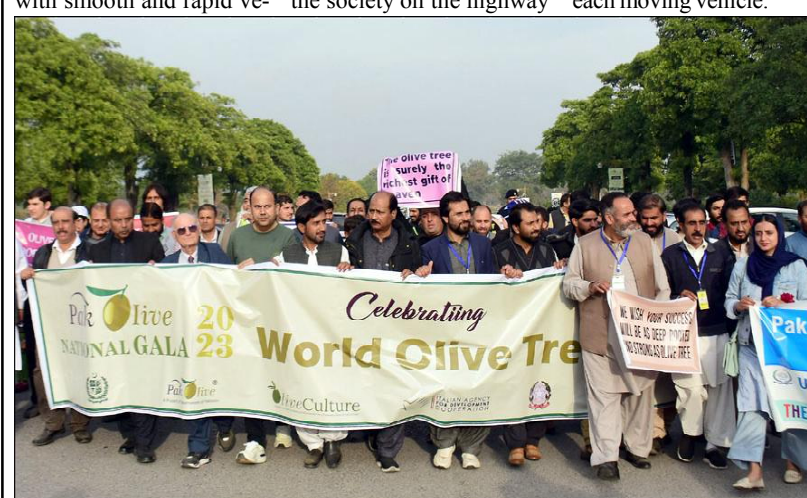
While a number of residents, including an elderly Ahmed Ghulam, suggested that alternatively, the blue bus route should also be linked by the creation of additional passages for electric buses, as announced by CDA, from different residential and commercial areas of these sprawling residential areas. "It is observed that Blue Bus service caters to the transportation needs of the residents of the Capital up to Gulberg Greens, and afterwards, commuters are facing the same old issues of moving through public transport, Jameel Babar, owner of an architect company in the Capital Enclave housing society, shared. They were of the view that the number of blue buses should also be multiplied considering the growing number of commuters who are huddled beyond capacity in each moving vehicle.

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ISLAMABAD: Participants hold a banner during a walk on the eve of World Olive Tree Day at F-9 park in Federal Capital.

FCCU's Islamabad-Rawalpindi alumni celebrates annual-2023 reunion

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad-Rawalpindi chapter of Forman Christian College University (FCCU) Alumni Association joyously held its annual reunion for alumni and their families over the weekend.

The gathering welcomed a prestigious array of attendees, including bureaucrats, ambassadors, army officers, ministers, industrialists, businessmen and other distinguished individuals, said a news release issued here Sunday.

Dr. Kauser Abdullah Malik, an esteemed alumnus and Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research, graced the event as the chief guest. Dr. Jonathan Addleton, the revered Rector of FCCU, was the guest of honor.

Notable alumni, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed and former Chairman of National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chaudhry Qamar Zaman, were also present as esteemed guests of honor.

Expressing their delight at being part of the Formanite gathering, Dr. Kauser Abdullah Malik and Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed extended their heartfelt congratulations to the Rector of FCCU for his outstanding contributions to the university's development and growth.

They lauded the multidimensional work taking place at FCCU, highlighting its pivotal role in nurturing responsible citizens. Dr. Addleton shared insightful details regarding several new initiatives that have transformed the college, emphasizing the recent naming ceremony for the sports fields and library at FC College.

Muhammad Mobeen, the chapter secretary, adeptly moderated the event, providing updates on the past year's activities and offering a preview of forthcoming plans.

He stressed the importance of active participation from every Formanite in the "A Talk with Formanite" series.

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ICT admin posted seven new ACs

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory administration has posted/ transferred seven Assistant Commissioners against vacant posts after issuance of notification from establishment division.

Over 1,47,000 bikers fined during ongoing Year for riding without helmets

ISLAMABAD: Islamabad Capital Police issued more than 1,47,000 fine tickets to motorcyclists driving their bikes without helmets during the ongoing year, a public relations officer said.

As per directions he said that the Islamabad Capital Police personnel have been directed to ensure implementation on traffic rules and regulation irrespective of status and rank and demonstrate patience and politeness while issuing traffic violation tickets to the road users.

In this regard Islamabad administration has issued orders for postings and transfer of new assistant commissioners. According to notification Abdullah Khan Swati has been posted Assistant Commissioner Secretariat Circle, Nihal Hafeez Assistant Commissioner Shalimar, Aneeq Anwar Assistant Commissioner Potohar, Kamran Asghar Assistant Commissioner Rural, Farwa Batul Assistant Commissioner Industrial Area, Aziz Khan Assistant Commissioner Nellore and Farhan Ahmed Assistant Commissioner City.



He further said that the Islamabad Capital Police is utilizing all available resources to facilitate the general public. He has appealed to the parents not to allow their children to drive bikes or cars till age of maturity.

The personnel of the force issue traffic violation tickets not as a punitive measure but the purpose is to ensure a safe road environment in the Capital and secure the lives of the people, the Chief Traffic Officer maintained.

95th birthday of famous fiction writer Bano Qudsia be celebrated on Tuesday

ISLAMABAD (Online): 95th birth anniversary of the famous fiction writer Bano Qudsia will be celebrated on Tuesday, November 28. Bano Qudsia, the author of masterpiece novels like 'Raja Gidh', was born on November 28, 1928 in Ferozpur district of East Punjab and came to Lahore after the partition of India. Due to his extreme attachment to Urdu literature, she wrote several novels in Urdu, including 'Raja Gadh' and 'Amar Bel'.

Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad has appreciated this performance and said that a vigorous campaign of Islamabad capital police had been launched as per directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan to create awareness among citizens about traffic rules.

He further said that the Islamabad Capital Police is utilizing all available resources to facilitate the general public. He has appealed to the parents not to allow their children to drive bikes or cars till age of maturity.

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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.

Much has been said and written about the double standards in the West regarding Israel's occupation and treatment of Palestinians. From Western newspapers opting to use dehumanized words for Palestinian children to BBC staffers writing to Al Jazeera to say that the BBC is guilty of a "double standard in how civilians are seen" to an alarming effort at censorship across Western universities and news media, it has been a lesson in complicity. With the temporary pause in violence taking hold, hopefully for some time, the inevitable question is: what now? Those left with dead bodies and flattened homes in Gaza will bury the dead and try to rebuild their homes – but for how long? Till the next time Israel decides it wants to kill off Palestinians? The only answer here is an end to the occupation. Nothing else will suffice.

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 transformative 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 over-

seeing 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 contributions of different industries, no matter their size, when creating the overall industrial plans for CPEC.

As Pakistan confronts challenges in its industrial landscape, there arises a critical necessity for substantial reform, aligning with China's commitment to fostering progress and innovation. How can committees involved in CPEC navigate complexities without being encumbered by the fear of disrupting the status quo, and how can an inclusive policy approach be the cornerstone for meaningful and sustainable change?

Examining global ex-

amples from places like Vietnam, Bangladesh, South Korea, Ethiopia, and Colombia sheds light on how committees unafraid to challenge established norms have propelled significant progress, and what lessons Pakistan can glean from these instances to ensure that its current initiatives become a catalyst for genuine and lasting industrial advancement. Reminding again that the success of Pakistan in harnessing the transformative potential of CPEC lies in the formulation of a practical and inclusive industrial policy. As the nation embarks on this crucial journey, the path to progress demands a collaborative approach that actively includes stakeholders from medium and small industries. Only through such an inclusive strategy can CPEC evolve into a catalyst for genuine and sustainable industrial progress in Pakistan.

The writer, serves as Secretary General of the Pakistan China Friendship Association's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa chapter. With a passion for fostering international bonds, he also lends his expertise as a Senior Media Consultant based in Peshawar, can be contacted through syed.gilani@gmail.com



By Ghazi Salahuddin

What – a senior serving police officer in Karachi is booked on a charge of robbery and kidnapping? How can one explain and understand such an act of infamy? And does this mean anything that the officer belongs to a privileged family?

I know that many would be surprised to find a suggestion of outrage and wonderment in how I have introduced this incident of a police officer's alleged involvement in high crime. This may have gone too far, but deviant behaviour on the part of our powerful officials is almost a matter of routine.

But I honestly believe that this particular case should ring alarm bells in the context of how the system is losing its footing. Or should we take this as an example of an individual's own transgression? In any case, the story demands full disclosure and the serious attention of those who profess to preside over our affairs.

Anyhow, I do need to provide a glimpse of what has been reported in the media. Newly appointed DSP Umair Tariq Bajari was arrested on Tuesday night. On Wednesday, he was remanded in police custody in a case pertaining to robbery in a raid on the house of a trader in Orangi Town.

The DSP and his two gunmen, along with some other policemen and private citizens, are booked for raiding the trader's house during the night between November 18 and 19 and looting over Rs20 million, jewelry and other valuables. A probe was immediately ordered by the IG and the enquiry report said: "The de-

Crime and police

liberate concealment of actual facts and the casual approach towards such a task reflects that the officer DSP is directly responsible for the illegal/criminal act along with his staff and private informers".

The DIG who investigated the matter recommended strict departmental and legal action against DSP Bajari for his "direct involvement in such a heinous crime". We should take note of the use of words like "illegal/criminal" and "heinous crime" in a departmental enquiry that involved a fellow officer.

There is more. There are reports of DSP Bajari being investigated in more criminal cases. One news item published on Friday said that the chief of Sindh police has ordered an inquiry "against former SSP South Imran Qureshi, DSP Bajari and others on a complaint pertaining to dacoity and kidnapping of three citizens including a retired army officer for ransom in Gulshan-e-Iqbal".

It is hard to know

whether the entire truth is being revealed and if some kind of a cover-up will be set into motion at some point. We may be justified in suspecting that other and possibly more heinous crimes may have been committed in not just the police department but also in other domains of law enforcement.

There are two reasons why I am so keen to focus on the alleged crimes of a senior police officer belonging ostensibly to the elite segment of our society. One is my abiding concern about the manner in which Pakistani society is breaking down and how the people are left with no hope for redemption. The other seems oddly providential. It so happens that today, on the second and concluding day of the Adab Festival being held in Karachi, of which Ameena Saiyid is the moving spirit, I have to moderate the launch of a book written by Syed Kaleem Imam, a distinguished former police officer who has the rather unique distinction of having a master's degree in philoso-

phy. That is why he was known as the 'philosopher cop'. He has been the police chief in Punjab, Sindh and Islamabad.

Consider also the relevance of the title of his collection of essays – or opinion pieces published in national newspapers: "In Pursuit of an Ethical State: Reflections of a Police Chief".

Coincidentally, I have written the book's foreword. The time that I have for a conversation with Syed Kaleem Imam in today's session is short, but it should be possible to touch upon some topical aspects of how the police are engaged in the gargantuan task of law enforcement in a society that has lost its equilibrium.

Unfortunately, our media is not able to professionally investigate and analyze the many changes taking place in our society. The talk show syndrome in our news channels and social media – the chewing of the political cud – portrays the intellectual and moral bankruptcy of Pakistani society.

Rather frequently, we have a story of the kind that is the peg of this column. But we continue with business as usual.

It is possible that the leadership in the police and other departments and agencies is conscious of the challenges that the moral and intellectual deprivations of Pakistani society have aggravated. There is obviously no simple solution to a number of problems that have deep roots in how Pakistan has been governed in recent decades.

While writing my foreword for Syed Kaleem Imam's book, I became aware of the limits of the power of, say, a committed police chief. Still, there is a wealth of information and insights in how the author has highlighted the importance of moral values that, in his view, have an organic linkage with a democratic dispensation. He has shared the agony that he had to suffer throughout his career when he observed merit being disregarded.—Courtesy The News

Scrutinising intra-party polls



By Ahmed Bilal Mehboob

The Election Commission of Pakistan recently declared the intra-party elections held by the PTI on June 10, 2022, to be invalid because the party, according to the ECP order, "failed to hold, transparent, just and fair intra-party elections". The ECP, in the same order, branded the election "highly disputed/objectionable which could not be accepted at all". In fact, the order even disputed the PTI's claim of holding intra-party election.

The ECP order is unprecedented on many counts. It is difficult to recall the ECP ever declaring any intra-party poll invalid in the past, though most such elections, especially by large mainstream parties, are conducted as a mere formality, without fulfilling even the basic electoral requirement. The order is also unprecedented for its detailed scrutiny of the PTI constitution and its amendments.

The question is whether this order is meant to zero in on a single political party ahead of the general election, as is being alleged by PTI officials and party sympathisers, or whether a new paradigm has been established within the Commission and all political parties will have to undergo similar scrutiny in the future. Another related question is whether this scrutiny is limited to intra-party elections or can extend to other documents submitted by political parties, individual candidates and elected legislators relating to their finances – such as election expenses re-

turns, statements of assets and liabilities and annual statements of audited accounts by all enlisted political parties.

After reading the 12-page order of the ECP announced on Nov 23, one gets the distinct impression that the level of scrutiny applied to PTI documents has never been witnessed before. The order retraces the history of PTI constitutions and the amendments in some detail. When PTI office-bearers completed their terms of office on June 13, 2021, the party had a comprehensive 105-page constitution (2019). According to the ECP order, two key amendments were made ahead of the intra-party election. One, the electoral college was changed from all party members to national council members, and two, the procedure of casting the votes was changed from secret ballot to a show of hands. Not only did the ECP object that these amendments were not made according to the party's constitution, it also questioned whether a national council even existed at that time as its term had expired long ago. The PTI, at that point, presented a new 30-page constitution (2022), which the ECP found unacceptable in the context of intra-party elections.

The ECP order pointed to the documents required from a political party while submitting intra-party results to the Commission within seven days of holding elections. The documents ranged from a certificate (ECP's Form 65) signed by the party head or his designated representative to the names, designations, addresses and terms of elected office-bearers, along with the votes obtained by each.

If the party constitution is amended, the ECP requires a copy of the resolution passed by the competent party institution, along with the names and copies of the CNICs of the members who attended the

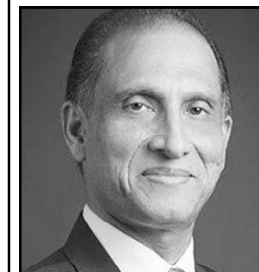
meeting. The party is also required to submit the amended constitution, with each page signed and stamped by the party head. These requirements are stipulated in Chapter IX of the Elections Act, 2017, and Chapter XI of the Election Rules, 2017. The ECP order stated that despite repeated reminders, the PTI did not submit the required documents. It is unlikely that most political parties are even aware of all these intricate details.

Until recently, the ECP was not properly organised, staffed or equipped to make sure that all legal requirements were fulfilled by the political parties and that all documents submitted by them were properly scrutinised. As a close observer of the election scene, one can say that the ECP has revamped its political finance wing over the past two years. This wing has designed and developed customised software, in addition to the development of a political finance database management system.

The name of the political finance wing may be deceptive as it is responsible for a much broader portfolio of duties, including acting as a repository of parties' constitutions, scrutiny of all amendments to party constitutions, and the monitoring of intra-party elections against the requirements of Elections Act, 2017. It also deals with the allocation of party symbols in each general election.

Although the latest ECP action may appear to be PTI-specific, the electoral watchdog's future actions may surprise all 168 enlisted parties, especially the larger ones, whose documents are generally not updated, who conduct intra-party elections as a mere formality, and whose financial records are not properly maintained or audited statements of accounts generally have key information gaps.—Courtesy Dawn

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, I had discussed the prospects of geoeconomics benefiting Pakistan by leveraging our economic geography to address geoeconomic challenges— it being understood that geoeconomics is not a replacement for geopolitics and that both must work in tandem.

However, it is important to recognise 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 suit only stronger economies, 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-Israeli normalisation process. As a neighbour of Iran, and located in the vicinity of the Gulf countries, including Saudi Arabia, which itself is undergoing a socioeconomic 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 booklet, Pakistan's Geoeconomic Pivot, authored by Moeed Yusuf and Rabia Akhtar, which was discussed at a

recent conference in Islamabad.

When the concept of geoeconomics was introduced in the National Security Policy 2022, sceptics felt that geoeconomics cannot work without first addressing Pakistan's geopolitical realities, internally and externally; ie, the so-called hard security issues. This is a valid observation. However, to keep potential geoeconomic gains unharvested until we make progress on the geopolitical and security agenda may not deliver the hard security Pakistan is looking for.

In fact, a geoeconomic approach can help Pakistan extricate itself from the security-centric agenda that it has vis-à-vis three of its four neighbours. Fresh thinking is needed regarding how the changes happening in these three regions can be transformed into economic opportunities that would benefit us economically as well as build international stakes in Pakistan's stability. A fresh approach to connectivity, development partnerships, and regional trade can open up a whole new world for us.

This may not be easy. A change of mindset is always challenging. Allama Iqbal rightly indicated in his poetry that being afraid of new ways and insisting on old ones is the only difficult stage in the life of nations.

The National Security Policy 2022 provides a good beginning by introducing a comprehensive concept of national security – traditional defence, economic security and human security – with primacy given to economic security, and within that realm to geoeconomics. The logic is not difficult to comprehend. A stronger economy brings prosperity, renders the country relevant in a global context, and makes ample resources available to defend against any aggression from outside.—Courtesy Dawn

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 and 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.

The CM commended DG LDA and his entire team on the early completion of the underpass. Provincial ministers Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, Ibrahim Hassan Murad, Mansoor Qadir, Chief Secretary, Secretary Information, Secretary Housing.



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.

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.



LAHORE: Participants take a park in a cycle rally titled "Smog Bhagao" in Provincial Capital.

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 Shaikat 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. Restriction of traffic on The Mall on Sunday would help reduce environmental pollution and control smog, he added.



SARGODHA: A view of closed markets during smart lockdown.

Three killed in road accident

ATTOCK (APP): A woman and her two children were killed in road accident on Sunday in the limits of Fatehjang Police station, near Hakla-DI Khan motorway overhead bridge.

According to Police sources, four members of the same family were going on their motorcycle when a speedy car recklessly hit them.

The woman and her three and five-year-old sons were killed on the spot while her husband got severe injuries.

The locals took the injured and bodies to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Fatehjang from where the man was shifted to Benazir Bhutto hospital Rawalpindi due to his critical condition.

Police registered a case against the unknown driver and launched further investigation.

9 illegal arm holders, liquor suppliers rounded up

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested nine illegal arms holders and liquor suppliers and recovered arms and ammunition from their possession during the crackdown here on Sunday.

According to a police spokesman, Rata Amaral police recovered 20 litres of liquor from the accused while 15 litres of liquor from Kamran and 15 litres of liquor was recovered from Wajid.

Similarly, Pirwahai police held Abdul Ghafoor and recovered 10 litres of liquor from his possession.

While, Saddar Wah police recovered 01 pistol of 30 bore from Rahimullah, 01 pistol of 30 bore was recovered from Sharaf and 01 pistol of 30 bore was also recovered from Sami.

Civil Lines Police recovered 1 pistol of 30 bore from Numan.



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 Pakistan 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.

Anti-polio vaccine drive to target over 2.585mln children

KARACHI (APP): Polio Eradication Campaign will be started from November 27 in all the 7 districts of Karachi, in which 2.585 million children will be immunised against polio.

More than 11,000 polio workers will perform their duties to achieve the target of vaccination of children under 5 years of age.

The meeting chaired by the Commissioner Karachi Muhammad Saleem Rajput reviewed the arrangements for the campaign and decided to provide full security to the teams, said a statement on Sunday.

It was informed at the meeting that two polio cases were reported from Karachi in October, becoming the first cases outside of the endemic region since January 2021.

The first child is a 24-month-old, who had an onset of weakness in his limbs on October 3, while the second child is a 31-month-old who had an onset of weakness on October 15.

Both cases were reported from the same UC Gujro of Karachi East from a high-risk population. Virus isolated from both children belongs to the YB3A cluster.

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 lodged a complaint in that regard in 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.

CM Baqar orders inquiry into Gorakh Hill project

KARACHI (APP): Caretaker Sindh Chief Minister Justice @ Maqbool Baqar has directed Karachi Water Board and other municipal organisations to stop sending the sweepers into the gutters to open them and use machinery instead of human beings to open the choked gutters.

Taking serious notice of the practice and method under which sweepers are sent inside the choked gutters, full of toxic water and gases, to open them, CM said and added he won't any organization to use inhumanly the poor people.

Baqar gave these directives to the KWSB top management in a meeting he

push a human being into the face of death just to fix a choked gutter needs to be stopped at once," he said and directed KWSB and other agencies to use machinery for opening gutters," he said.

Everyone has dignity, respect and family behind him even if he is engaged in a small job but being civilized, educated and responsible people we must respect them and take their proper care while using their services, the CM said and added he won't any organization to use inhumanly the poor people.

Baqar gave these directives to the KWSB top management in a meeting he

had chaired at CM House recently and now similar instructions have been given to all the organisations involved in managing and maintaining the sewerage system in the province.

The chief minister taking serious notice of the misappropriation of funds meant for the Gorakh Hill Station Project, District Dadu has issued an explanation to the Director General of the Gorakh Hill Authority.

He said that the Gorakh Hill project despite using huge funds has not been completed but was reportedly [the funds] pocketed by the concerned officers.

Hotels business centres sealed for violating smog lockdown

SIALKOT (APP): The local administration sealed six hotels, eight business centers 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 out a gun. Kotwali SHO Shehbaz Ahmed recovered the weapon from the trader and said that action would be taken as per the rules.

14 injured in van-car collision in DI Khan

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): At least 14 people were injured as a car collided head-on with a van on Tank road here Sunday.

According to a Rescue 1122 spokesman, the head-on crash happened near Chehkan Adda when a van coming from Kulachi rammed into a car coming from the opposite direction. After the collision, both the vehicles slipped from the road. As a result, 14 persons on board got injured who were shifted to



GUJRANWALA: Members of Pakistan Awami League are holding demonstration in favor of Pakistan Armed Forces, at GT road in Gujranwala.

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) Shoaib 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 tehseils of the district from Friday to Sunday, while shops, shopping centers, hotels and restaurants were allowed to open after 3 o'clock.

He appreciated how the business community in Sargodha had fully cooperated with the district administration.



HYDERABAD: Workers of Jeay Sindh Qumi Mahaz hold a protest march in favor of their demands, outside press club.

Concern over rising domestic violence, murders

SARGODHA (APP): Civil society expressed deep concern over the increasing incidents of domestic violence and murder cases in the district and demanded immediate action and easy access to justice for the victims.

This was stated in a joint statement issued here on Sunday by civil society and locals. They said that domestic violence was increasing in Sargodha which reflected intolerance in society and inadequate police efforts. In this regard, the government

must take concrete steps by strictly implementing the existing laws against violence and bring the accused to justice so that such incidents can be prevented, they demanded. Muhammad Nadeem, a resident of Sargodha, said that police had to play a proactive role in resolving domestic violence incidents and murders after keeping a vigilant eye on criminal record holders. Abdul Sami, an educationist, said that domestic violence was becoming a serious situation.



KARACHI: A large number of people participating in a motorbike rally to show solidarity with Palestinians organized by Jamat e Islami from Numaish to Teen Talwar.

Kitchen Gardening: A productive way to get fresh, organic foods

PESHAWAR (APP): The green grocer was busy arranging vegetables on racks in his shop but his face was worrisome after witnessing dwindling customers ratio mostly affected by exorbitant prices of vegetables and supply due to skyrocketing fuel prices.

The overall situation seemed grim from a business point of view as some vegetables assembled on racks for display were seen losing freshness while some that are used raw for sprinkling like coriander and mint were near to decaying due to shortage of customers in the local market.

"The prices of daily use vegetables are ascending fast with each passing day in Peshawar, Nowshera, Mardan and Charsadda markets and even people belonging to middle class finding it very difficult to purchase them," said Muhammad Arif, a vegetable shop owner at Gulbahar Peshawar while talking to APP.

He said the cheapest items like coriander and mint were being sold on double and triple of the previous prices, making these items beyond the reach of customers in the local market.

increase in prices of daily use vegetables including potato, tomato, onion, lemons and others have left people with no other option than to set up kitchen gardens on available spaces in homes and even on rooftops to fulfill their families' fresh and organic food demands," he said.

He admitted that availability of proper places for kitchen garden is very difficult in cities but vegetables could be grown on rooftops by introducing innovative agricultural techniques. Vegetables that are grown in kitchen gardens are fresh, healthy, organic and full of

nutrients as compared to those that come from farms and markets, he opined and said, "Some of the reasons that affected quality of produce are unnecessary use of fertilizers to improve the yield."

Frequent use of fertilizers to increase crop production have also negatively impacted the nutritional value of vegetables and even their taste, he said and added that most important factor of kitchen gardening is money saving.

Kitchen gardening is also called home gardening or backyard gardening and refers to growing edible plants, herbs, and

vegetables in and around home. The practice is adaptable to various spaces, including small balconies, windowsills, containers, or larger backyard plots and allows individuals with limited space to still engage in productive gardening.

"One of the foremost benefits is the ability to harvest fresh and organic produce according to your needs while fruits, vegetables and herbs have higher nutritional value and superior taste compared to items brought from store or vegetable shops," said Qaisar Afridi, a kitchen gardener while talking to APP.

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

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

SAPM visits Tamkeen HR office to discuss paramedical manpower job opportunities

ISLAMABAD (INP): 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 expeditious 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.

Both sides agreed on developing a cooperation mechanism for establishing training centers for workers in Pakistan.

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

ISLAMABAD (INP): 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.

The infrastructure, including the track and signalling system from Karachi to Peshawar, Main Line-1 (ML-1), and doubling of track from Lahore to Peshawar (462.20 Km) was also being revamped, he added.

The official noted that the length of the track was 1,726 kilometres and the department has planned to improve speed up to 160 kilometres per hour in the project of up-gradation of ML-1 under the China-Pak Economic Corridor (CPEC).

He said the rolling stock being procured under this project would be capable of running at a speed of 160 km/h whereas the department had a dedicated fleet of 55 diesel-electric locomotives of 4000-4500 HP for freight operation to cater maximum haulage at higher speed.



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

Malik highlights Pakistan's abundant resources, skills for global market contribution

ISLAMABAD (APP): SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) former President Itikhar Ali Malik Sunday said Pakistan possessed a wealth of resources, skills, and industries that could contribute significantly to the global market.

Speaking to a delegation of industrialists and traders, he said, "Collaborative efforts from government, private sector, and civil society are

essential to bring about a positive change in addition to reviving the economy by placing a special emphasis on boosting exports," said a press release issued here.

He said, "Through export capabilities, we can not only generate revenue but also create employment opportunities and strengthen our international standing."

Itikhar stressed the need for initiating result-oriented comprehensive

economic reforms that encourage investment, facilitate ease of doing business, and promote entrepreneurship.

He said such measures will help rejuvenate various sectors and attract both domestic and foreign investors.

He emphasized for establishment of more specialized export zones, offering a basket of incentives to export-oriented industries.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor selling fruits at weekly Sunday bazaar Aabpara in the Federal Capital.

Afghan transit trade gets relief as bank guarantee requirement waived

ISLAMABAD (INP): The caretaker federal government has decided to waive the newly imposed requirement of a bank guarantee equal to the value of duties and taxes imposed on imported goods. The government has also scrapped the condition of a cashable financial guarantee.

According to media reports, the decision was taken after considering the concerns raised by stakeholders regarding the implementation of the new rules, which were introduced through SRO 1402(I)/2023 issued on

October 7, 2023. The rules had made it mandatory for importers to provide bank guarantees for goods imported under Afghan transit trade.

The government has now released a draft of amendments to the Customs Rules, which will waive the bank guarantee requirement for Afghan transit trade containers. Stakeholders have been asked to submit their feedback on the proposed amendments within two days, after which the amended rules will be notified through gazette notification.

SIFC efforts starts bearing fruit, first crop's harvesting begins

ISLAMABAD (Online): The results of the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) are coming out. Under Green Pakistan, SIFC's state-of-the-art corporate farm began harvesting the first crop.

Due to the efforts of the government and military leadership, the country started to set the steps of development.

Under the Green Pakistan Initiative, harvesting of corn has started in the farm established in Khanewal. This farm was inaugurated by the Army Chief and the Prime Minister in July this year in Perwal under FONGROW.

Govt sets up high-level tech committee to implement IMF tax net expansion condition

ISLAMABAD (INP): The government has set up a high-level eight-member technical committee to implement the IMF's condition of bringing 15 to 20 million new taxpayers into the tax net by June.

The committee will prepare recommendations and guidelines in one month regarding data integration and implementation of the FBR plan to expand the tax net.

The members of the committee include Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) member Inland Revenue Operations Mir Badshah Khan Wazir, member Information Technology Dr. Nasir Khan, member Digital Initiatives FB. R Karamatullah Khan Chaudhry, NADRA Chief Projects Officer Gohar

Ahmed Khan, NADRA Head of Department of NDW Syed Mushabir Hussain, FBR Chief Information Technology Zeenul Abidin Sahi and Chief Executive Officer of Pakistan Revenue Automation Limited (PRAL). Aamir Malik is included. The technical committee will prepare measures and proposals for data integration under Broadening of Taxes, IT Infrastructure Transformation Plan of FBR. Similarly, it will prepare and submit recommendations and suggestions about the implementation of the FBR project to expand the tax net. The committee will also review the IT infrastructure of the Federal Board of Revenue.

Pak Olive National Gala concludes

ISLAMABAD (Online): 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. The acknowledgement extended to the top 20 progressive olive farmers who demonstrated exemplary practices in olive cultivation, contributing to the overall improvement of the industry.

Additionally, three scientists were recognized for their exceptional field performance, emphasizing the very important role of research and innovation in advancing the virgin olive oil sector. Their contributions are instrumental in pushing the boundaries of knowledge and driving sustainable practices in olive farming.

FBR releases updated Income tax rules 2023

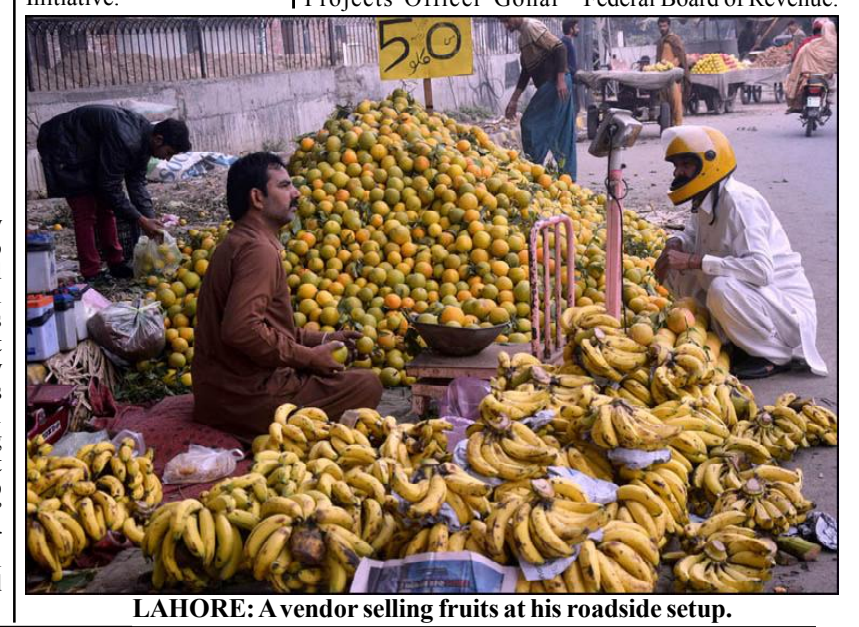
ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) has released an updated version of the Income Tax Rules 2002, incorporating all amendments made up to November 24, 2023. These amendments include those introduced in the current fiscal year's federal budget, as well as any changes made since June 30. The primary goal of issuing these updated rules is to simplify the tax process for taxpayers and eliminate any ambiguities surrounding Income Tax Day. The updated rules provide taxpayers with clear and concise guidelines on various aspects of income tax compliance, including assessment, collection, and refunds.

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 help meeting 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." "Ensuring a reliable power supply to this sector will directly impact food production.



LAHORE: A vendor selling fruits at his roadside setup.

Industrial revival - Experts demand out of box solutions

FAISALABAD (APP): When the world nations are embarking on Fifth Industrial Revolution (5IR) with ample use of Artificial Intelligence, Pakistan is still struggling to rise up to this challenge from existing 2IR or 3IR.

Amidst persisting economic recession due to issues like power and raw material price hike and interest rate, Pakistan once reckoned among top ten textile countries, is now facing the challenge of its sheer survival.

Experts believe that respective governments and industrialists were collectively responsible for this situation, resulting in shut down of industries or producing costly products, unable to compete in global market.

Political instability, non-consistent policies,

use of old technologies and failure in capturing more world markets had been other factors hampering industrial growth.

This tendency also slowed down economic progress giving birth to problems like unemployment and death of foreign exchange.

"Revolution is a far cry as by the time we are just struggling to keep our industrial sector alive," remarked Muhammad Shafiq Anjum, Founder President Faisalabad Chamber of Small Traders and Industry. "Our small and medium industries are in real fix with around 70% power looms closed down in Faisalabad."

Similarly, he said, flour mills shrunk to around 50% and same was the case with other industries. "High mark up

rate and fuel prices besides other factors had spoiled our industrial sector."

He demanded consistent and holistic policies at least for a decade by involving all stakeholders for encouraging local and foreign investors.

Common men like Advocate Rana Mehmood-ul-Hassan could also feel this pang of recession pleading that political stability was must for industrial revival. "Both the local and foreign investors were fearing to invest as they are uncertain if their investment would be secure in every day changing political situation."

As Dr Sajjad Arshad Senior Vice President FCCI also described the political uncertainty as one the main reasons behind recession

besides rising interest rate and fuel prices and use of old technologies.

"Paucity of funds and cost of doing business was skyrocketing making our exportable goods too costly as compared to other countries," he said and mentioned that Bangladesh where the government had directed its banks to allocate major chunk of their loan portfolio for SMEs. "This experiment yielded positive results and their industry started performing better than ours."

He stated that Pakistan could only keep up the pace if it switches to new technologies, ensure easy financing, provide cheaper energy and encourage SMEs.

"Hundreds industrial units in Punjab have been closed

down and their revival would be an uphill task for any upcoming government. We need revolutionary and out of box solutions to revive this sector."

As most of experts are extremely worried about this situation, they come up with multiple solutions to steer country out of this recession.

"Five items are must of industrial revival including stability, long term approach, indigenization, innovation and business eco-system," said Engineer Dr Yasir Nawab Dean Faculty of School of Engineering and Technology at National Textile University.

He said investment is the basic component for industrialization as he mentioned to investment in Indonesia by many companies of Germany.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor selling Dates at weekly Sunday bazaar Aabpara in the Federal Capital.

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

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.

Jemima Goldsmith explains her 'controversial' stance on Israel-Hamas war

LONDON (INP): Former wife of the cricketer cum politician Imran Khan, Jemima Goldsmith took to Twitter to share her struggles to take a position on the ongoing deadly war between Israel and Palestine being fought at the war theatre of Gaza.

Jemima said it is a measure of the depth of their ideological intransigence and tribal myopia that so many intelligent and typically empathetic people have been incapable of grasping the simple truth that you can oppose both rising antisemitism and anti-Muslim hatred.

She argued: "You can be horrified by Hamas' massacre of Israelis and condemn Israel's ongoing killing of thousands of innocent Palestinians."

"It is so depressing to me that it is in this position which is currently the most controversial and the one that will elicit the most criticism from both sides, she added.

Israel and Hamas have agreed to a day truce in which 39 Israelis and over 150 Palestinians are being freed in patches.

Film producer Jemima said that the war has escalated both Islamophobia and anti-Semitism and she condemned both.

Explaining her point on the war in the Middle East, she argued that condemning both Israel's onslaught on Gaza civilians and Hamas on October 7 actually became a controversial stance.



People gather outside after a stampede at the venue of a music concert at the Cochin University of Science and Technology in Kochi, Kerala state, India,

Nine killed in land conflict in Mexico's Oaxaca region

OAXACA, Mexico (INP): Nine people were killed on Saturday when gunmen shot at a pickup truck in the Mexican state of Oaxaca, the local prosecutor's office said, indicating that peasant conflicts over land may have sparked the violence.

Gunmen fired on the truck as it carried people from the municipality of Santiago Milotongo to the town of Nochihtlan, where they were "ambushed," the prosecutor's office said in a statement.

"This caused nine people... to lose their lives on the spot," while four others—three women and one man—were wounded and taken to a local hospital, the statement said.

Prosecutors were seeking to determine the identities of the attackers, it added. "The aggressions between communities do not contribute to the resolution of the problems. On the contrary, they contribute to bitterness," the prosecutor's office said.

Kochi university concert: Four dead, dozens injured in south India stampede

KOCHI, India: A tragic incident unfolded at the Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT) in southwest Kerala, southern India, as at least four individuals lost their lives and dozens were left injured in a crowd crush during a planned concert at an outdoor auditorium.

The mishap occurred when a sudden downpour prompted the crowd outside the auditorium to seek cover, leading to a rush resulting in people slipping on stairs and trampling.

Expressing condolences, Kerala state governor Arif Mohammad Khan conveyed his deep shock over the demise of four students at CUSAT, offering heartfelt condolences to their families and prayers for the speedy recovery of the injured.

"A nationwide curfew has been declared with immediate effect. We strongly advise citizens to stay indoors," the statement added.

A senior official who requested anonymity said that the central prison in Freetown was open and some inmates had escaped. The prison, designed to hold 324 inmates, held over 2,000 in 2019, according to a U.S. State Department report.

It was not clear how many had broken out of the facility, but videos shared on social media showed several people fleeing from the area of the prison, while gun shots could be heard in the background.

The political situation

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.

China's Xi, Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol may not be able to meet this year, but their summit is likely in the near future, South Korea's national security advisor Cho Tae-yong told Yonhap news TV.

The ministers agreed in their 100-minute talks to advance cooperation in six areas, including security, economy and technology, and promote concrete discussions to prepare for the summit, Japan's foreign ministry said in a statement.

Greece PM laments lack of progress with UK on Parthenon Sculptures

News Desk

LONDON: Talks over a possible return of the British Museum's Parthenon Sculptures to Athens are not advancing quickly enough, Greek Prime Minister Kyriakos Mitsotakis said on Sunday as he prepared to meet British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak this week.

Athens has long campaigned for the return of the Elgin Marbles, as they are often described. The 75 metres of Parthenon frieze, 15 metopes and 17 sculptures were removed by diplomat Lord Elgin in the early 19th century, when he was ambassador to the Ottoman Empire then ruling Greece.

"We have not made as much progress as I would like in the negotiations," Mitsotakis told BBC television on Sunday. "I'm a patient man, and we've waited for hundreds of years, and I will persist in these discussions."

"We feel that the sculptures belong to Greece and that they were essentially stolen," Mitsotakis added before playing down the ownership aspect of the discussions and focusing instead on the importance of reuniting the sculptures with those in Athens.

British officials say the works were acquired legally. Sunak in March ruled out any change to a law that stops the British Museum handing the marbles back to Greece permanently, but the legislation does not prohibit a loan. George Osborne, a former British finance minister who is chairman of the museum's trustees, this month expressed hope for a deal that would allow the sculptures "to be seen in Athens".

Sierra Leone declares nationwide curfew after attack on barracks

News Desk

FREETOWN: Sierra Leone has declared a nationwide curfew after unidentified gunmen attacked a military barracks and attempted to break into an armory in the capital, Freetown, the government said on Sunday.

A government statement said the security forces were in control of the situation.

"In the early hours of Sunday, some unidentified individuals attempted to break into the military armory at the Wilberforce barracks. The have been rebuffed," Information Minister Chermor Bah said in the statement.

"A nationwide curfew has been declared with immediate effect. We strongly advise citizens to stay indoors," the statement added.

A senior official who requested anonymity said that the central prison in Freetown was open and some inmates had escaped. The prison, designed to hold 324 inmates, held over 2,000 in 2019, according to a U.S. State Department report.

It was not clear how many had broken out of the facility, but videos shared on social media showed several people fleeing from the area of the prison, while gun shots could be heard in the background.

The political situation

'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.

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.

The Symi is owned by Eastern Pacific Shipping, a Singapore-based company belonging to Israeli billionaire Idan Ofer.

In 2011, The Sunday Times in the UK reported allegations that ships owned by the Ofer family had been involved in transporting Israeli special forces units for operations, including assassinations, in the region.

The Israeli army, as reported by the Jewish Press news outlet on Saturday, stated that the Houthi rebels had seized another Israeli-owned ship in the Red Sea, identified as the Zim Luanda.

Kuwait's former defence minister receives jail sentence

News Desk

KUWAIT CITY: Kuwait's highest court on Sunday sentenced former defence and interior minister Sheikh Khalid al-Jarrah al-Sabah to seven years in prison for mishandling military funds.

Former Prime Minister Sheikh Jaber al-Mubarak al-Sabah, who faced similar charges, was ordered by the court to return the funds he mismanaged.

Both men had denied the charges. Sheikh Jaber had in 2019 resigned as prime minister, a post he had held since 2011, after lawmakers sought a no-confidence vote against Sheikh Khalid, who was interior minister at the time.

The then defence minister Sheikh Nasser Sabah al-Ahmed had issued a statement two days after the government resignation, saying the cabinet stood down to avoid addressing mismanagement of some 240 million dinars (\$778.61 million) in military funds before he assumed office.

Sheikh Jaber and Sheikh Khalid were acquitted of embezzlement charges in March 2022 but the case was revived upon an appeal from the Kuwaiti prosecution.

India bid to free 41 trapped workers enters third week

News Desk

UTTARAKHAND (INP): India's military brought in specialised equipment Sunday as efforts to free 41 trapped workers entered a third week, with digging ongoing in three directions after repeated setbacks to the operation.

The Indian airforce said Sunday that they were "responding with alacrity", as they flew in their third load to a rescue operation since the partial collapse of the under-construction Silykara road tunnel on November 12 in the Himalayan state of Uttarakhand.

Rescue officials said they called for a superheated plasma cutter to be brought to the remote mountain location, after engineers driving a metal pipe horizontally through 57 metres (187 feet) of rock and concrete ran into metal girders and construction vehicles buried in the earth.

A giant earth-boring machine snapped just nine metres from breaking through.

The plasma cutting will be used to remove the broken giant earth-boring drill and metal blocking the horizontal route, before digging will continue by hand.

Thick metal girders in the rubble are blocking the route, and using conventional oxyacetylene cutters to clear them is tricky from inside the confined pipe, only wide enough for a man to crawl through.

The air force said the

"critical" kit came from the country's Defence Research and Development Organisation, the government's defence technology research arm, without giving further details.

Uttarakhand chief minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said Saturday that vertical drilling had begun to dig 89 metres downwards, a risky route above the men in an area that has already suffered a collapse.

Work has also begun from the far side of the road tunnel, a much longer third route estimated to be around 480 metres.

The workers were seen alive for the first time on Tuesday, peering into the lens of an endoscopic camera sent by rescuers down a thin pipe through which air, food, water and electricity are being delivered.

Dhami said the men are in "good spirits", with a basic telephone exchange set up so that families of the trapped men—many of whom are migrant workers from poor families from far across India—could call in to speak to them.

Efforts have been painfully slow, complicated by falling debris and repeated breakdowns of drilling machines.

Hopes that the team was on the verge of a breakthrough on Wednesday were dashed, with a government statement warning of the "challenging Himalayan terrain".

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 organized 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 from 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.

He emphasized the positive impact of memorandums of understanding (MoU) signed between educational institutions in Pakistan, particularly in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and their Chinese counterparts. Dr. Usman Ghani said that the present era required producing such a batch of students who were skilled in technology and serve in the industry sector. Adil Salah Ud Din, Chief Commercial Officer of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Management Company (KPEZDMC), provided insights into the provincial government's initiatives to promote industrialization. He noted the establishment of factories in the Rashakai Economic Zone and the creation of special economic zones in northern and southern districts to attract domestic and international investors.



RIYADH: SAPM, Jawad Sohrab Malik meets Engr. Abdulrahman Almarwani, Deputy Governor, Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) in Saudi Arabia.

SAPM Jawad says Strengthening Pak-Saudi skills development cooperation need of hour

ISLAMABAD (INP): Headed by Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development (OP&HRD), Jawad Sohrab Malik, a Pakistani delegation on Sunday visited the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) of Saudi Arabia in Riyadh. The delegation comprised Ambassador of Pakistan Ahmad Farooq, Director General of Bureau of Emigration & Overseas Employment (BEOE) Akram Khawaja, Joint Secretary Emigration Aurangzeb, and Community Welfare Attachés, said a press release.

The Saudi side was represented by Deputy

Governor Eng. Abdulrahman Almarwani, Director General of International Cooperation Eng. Sultan Alsunaya, Supervisor at the Deputy Governor Office for Training and Quality Policies, Dr. Khaled Al-Othman, and International Cooperation Specialist at the Directorate of International Cooperation, Khaled Alshehri.

The Deputy Governor of the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) welcomed the Pakistani delegation. The meeting was held in a very cordial manner.

The Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) team gave a detailed presentation on the working of TVTC.

SAPM, Jawad Sohrab Malik appreciated the great role of the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) in the skills development of Saudi nationals. Both sides discussed ways to strengthen cooperation in skills improvement for workers. It is pertinent to note here that Navtec and Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) will soon sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in this regard. The visit of the Pakistani delegation to the Technical and Vocational Training Corporation (TVTC) was a positive step forward in strengthening cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia in the field of skills development.

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

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.

The forum, jointly hosted by UNESCO and other partners, fostered exchange and mutual learning in river basin areas, eventually constructing a shared human destiny community.

Rivers play a vital role in nurturing cities and preserving their cultural heritage and shared memories. Nanjing, the only one of China's four great ancient capitals.



BEIJING: Ambassador Khalil Hashmi speaking at International Culture Day organized by Pakistan Embassy College.

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 over 5,000 children — being martyred due to

Israeli bombardment, offensive in the besieged Gaza Strip following Hamas's October 7 attack.

The JI Emir also lambasted the former rulers belonging to PPP and PML-N along with Maulana Fazlur Rehman-led Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government for failing to deliver.

"What did they do? [other than] embezzling foreign loans," Haq said accusing the former ruling parties of destroying the country's agricultural sector. His remarks come as political parties in the country ramp up their electioneering ever since the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) — in light of the directions from the Supreme Court — held consultations with President Arif Alvi and announced the date of general elections which are scheduled to be held on February 8, 2024.

The former allies, PPP and PML-N, have also been intensifying their verbal showdown.

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Bilawal felicitates Sikh community on 554th birthday of Guru Nanak

KARACHI (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has extended felicitations to the Sikh community on the 554th birthday of Guru Nanak Devji, which is being celebrated across the globe tomorrow including at his birthplace Nankana Sahib, in Pakistan.

In his message on the eve of Guru Nanak Devji's birthday, the PPP Chairman said that his teachings are meant to spread love, peace and harmony everywhere on the globe.

Bilawal welcomed the Sikh pilgrims, who came from all over the world to Pakistan to pay homage to their Guru at his birthplace. As a custodian of the holy place of the Sikh community, the Pakistani nation and administration will provide every facility to make their pilgrimage a memorable journey, he

added. He pinpointed that it was former Prime Minister Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who first proposed a visa-free corridor to Kartarpur shrine from the Indian border and it took 30 years to achieve her dream.

Bilawal said that PPP, after forming government in the Center, will make efforts to provide facilities for Buddhist and Jainism pilgrims from all over the world to visit their sacred places in Pakistan, as both these ancient religions flourished and thrived in parts of our Indus civilization millenniums ago.

He further stated that the constitution of Pakistan offers equal opportunities to the followers of every religion, including minorities and all the people are free to perform their religious and spiritual rituals without any discrimination.



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.

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, criticised 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 at-

tention to the concerns of the citizens of Kamonke.

Acknowledging challenges including inadequate healthcare facilities, lack of clean water, and subpar infrastructure, he pledged that if the IPP assumed power, Kamonke 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.



QUETTA: Voice for Baloch Missing Persons Research Coordinator, Hurain Baloch addresses to media persons during press conference, in Quetta.

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.

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. The training workshop covered the Election Commission's monitoring framework and the creation of monitoring rooms at provincial, divisional, and district levels. Following this training, Regional Monitoring Coordinators/Regional Election Commissioners will be responsible for training District Monitoring Officers and Monitoring Teams in their respective divisions.

RMCs had already undergone a two-day training session at the Election Commission Secretariat in Islamabad two months ago.

Health official suspended on misconduct

QUETTA: A health official was suspended on charges of the misconduct in the Shaheed Benazir Hospital Quetta on Sunday.

According to the spokesman of Health Department, the services of male Nurse Sharjeel Ejaz have been placed under suspension due to the misconduct and indiscipline shown his part during duty hours.

Meanwhile, the Secretary Health Abdullah Khan warned that no misconduct and negligence would be tolerated on part of the health officials.

He said that the action would remain continued against those committed any negligence in the health department.

Gaza ceasefire be extended, says Ashrafi

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman and Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Inter-Religious Harmony Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi has said that Palestine is the problem of entire humanity and people of all religions in Pakistan have talked about peace from day one.

Addressing a press conference at the Lahore Press Club, he demanded that the war be ended and peace be established in Palestine. "The ceasefire should be extended and negotiations be held for lasting peace. In Palestine, Muslims and Christians also have holy places. But Christians do not go there because they do not want to get a visa from Israel," he added.

He said, "Peace, security and stability of Pakistan is dear to all of us. The All Pakistan Minority Alliance aims to raise voice for social justice and humanity in the country and abroad. We have done a lot of work. Rumors spread in the name of religion harm the country. Those who spread terrorism in the name of Islam will have to wage jihad against themselves."

Chairman, members CMIT visit Ormara and Pasni

QUETTA: The Chairman, Chief Minister Inspection Team, Dostain Jamalud Din along with members of CMIT, Abdul Rauf Baloch and Muhammad Qasim Mengal visited Tehsil Ormara and Pasni on Sunday.

During the visit, the Chairman and members of CMIT inspected different schemes in Ormara city.

The schemes were included: Government Girls College Ormara, Government Girls and Boys High

School's new model building, main football ground, security highway Balochistan coastal highway, besides different other schemes.

Meanwhile, they visited DIG camp office Ormara.

The Chairman CMIT directed the concerned high ups to maintain qua of work on the projects.

Similarly, he also inspected different parts of the hospital in Pasni being run with Oman's assistance.



DERA GHAZI Khan: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Sirajul Haq addressing a public gathering.

Govt sets up high-level tech committee to implement IMF tax net expansion condition

ISLAMABAD (INP): The government has set up a high-level eight-member technical committee to implement the IMF's condition of bringing 15 to 20 million new taxpayers into the tax net by June.

The committee will prepare recommendations and guidelines in one month regarding data integration and implementation of the FBR plan to expand the tax net.

The members of the committee include Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) member Inland Revenue Operations Mir Badshah Khan Wazir, member Information Technology Dr. Nasir Khan, member Digital Initiatives FB, R Karamatullah Khan Chaudhry, NADRA Chief Projects Officer Gohar Ahmed Khan, NADRA Head of Department of NDW Syed Mushabir Hussain, FBR Chief Information Technology Zeenul Abidin Sahi and Chief Executive Officer of Pakistan Revenue Automation Limited (PRAL). Aamir Malik is included.

The technical committee will prepare measures and proposals for data integration under Broadening of Taxes, IT Infrastructure Transformation Plan of FBR. Similarly, it will prepare and submit recommendations and suggestions about the implementation of the FBR project to expand the tax net.

The committee will also review the IT infrastructure of the Federal Board of Revenue and recommend the transformation and upgradation plan for FBRKET infrastructure.

The committee will also make recommendations regarding the restructuring of Pakistan Revenue Automation Limited (PRAL), a subsidiary of FBR, to transform it into a modern IT company. It will also develop data analytics and mathematical modeling using artificial intelligence to provide. The task force will also hold meetings with various relevant stakeholders to prepare recommendations and suggestions for the areas identified.

Saeed, Ruqia Hashmi express grief on demise of Ismail Lehri

QUETTA (APP) Founder and Senator of Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) Saeed Ahmad Hashmi and former provincial minister Dr. Ruqia Saeed Hashmi expressed their grief on the death of former Nazim Chaltan Town Meera Ismail Lahri. In a joint statement issued here on Sunday, they said that the deceased's services to the people of the province and especially Quetta would always be remembered. They said that they were shocked to hear about the death of former Nazim Chaltan Town and political leader Mir Ismail Lehri. They said that Mir Ismail Lehri was seriously ill for a long time, but he did not lose heart and he passed away after fighting against the diseases.

They said that due to the death of Mir Ismail Lehri, we have lost a long-time colleague and a sincere politician saying that his political and public services would always be remembered in golden letters.



PASNI: Director General PDMA Jahanzeb Khan talking with mediemen.



QUETTA: Provincial Ombudsman Balochistan Nazir Muhammad Baloch Advocate being briefed about problems facing by people of Nawan Killi during an open kutchery. Regional Director Federal Ombudsman Balochistan Ghulam Sarwar Barohi is also present