

Independent

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PM for health sector reforms to meet global requirement of experts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Tuesday emphasized the introduction of reforms in country's health sector with a view to meet the global requirement of health experts. The prime minister, chairing a meeting of the task force on reforms in medical education and patients care, said the reforms in the health sector was vital in current situation.

He also called for improving the standards of medical education in accordance with the contemporary requirements. The participants of the meeting were briefed on the strategy to uplift the health sector at par with international standards. The prime minister said that considering its significance, enhanced attention should be given on uplifting the nursing sector.

The meeting was also briefed on the steps taken for improvement in the health sector in coordination with the health ministry, College of Physicians and Surgeons of Pakistan, Pakistan Medical and Dental Council,

Higher Education Commission and medical universities. It was told that a three-prong strategy had been formulated for health sector reforms to enforce the rules and regulations of international standards. The participants were also apprised of the reforms strategy for the graduate and postgraduate levels in the health sector. Prime Minister Kakar appreciated the performance of the task force working under Special Assistant Dr Amir Bilal for bringing in health sector reforms.

Meanwhile Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Kakar on Tuesday lauded the services of the Bohra community for the progress of the country and said the government and nation valued their positive contribution.

The prime minister was talking to the Spiritual leader of the Dawoodi Bohra community, Dr Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin who led an eight-member delegation here at the PM House. PM Kakar felicitated Dr Saifuddin on being awarded the Nishan-e-Pakistan in recognition to his services for the country.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairs a meeting of the Taskforce for Strategic Reforms in Medical Education and Patient Care



ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi conferring the award of Nishan-i-Pakistan upon Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, Head of the Dawoodi Bohra community at a special investiture ceremony held at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Nepra hikes power tariff by Rs3.07 per unit

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (NEPRA) on Tuesday notified Rs 3.0786 per unit increase in power tariff for consumers of XWAPDA power distribution companies (DISCOs) under the fuel cost adjustment (FCA) mechanism for October 2023.

The said adjustment shall be shown separately in the consumers' bills based on units billed to the consumers in October 2023, said a notification issued here.

XWDISCOs shall reflect the fuel charges adjustment in respect of October 2023 in the billing month of December 2023.

President Alvi confers Nishan-i-Pakistan award on Bohra community head

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi on Tuesday conferred the civil award of Nishan-i-Pakistan on Dr Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin, the Head of the Dawoodi Bohra Community, in recognition of his services for Pakistan in the field of spiritual guidance and social services.

The award was conferred at a special investiture ceremony held at the Aiwan-e-Sadr and attended by the federal cabinet members as well as the representatives of the Bohra community.

According to the citation read out before the conferment of the award, Dr. Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin is the 53rd Dai-e-Mutlak whose followers are spread across all continents with a large number of them being Pakistani citizens.

The Bohra community head has a special regard for Pakistan and is an advocate of peace, harmony and goodwill.

Recounting his services in the education sector, it was told that he had contributed to the building of

the School of Law at the University of Karachi and launched a university project. Multiple healthcare institutions are operating in the name of the Bohra community head providing affordable healthcare to people.

Syedna Mufaddal Saifuddin has repeatedly emphasized the importance of conserving and protecting the environment. In the past few years alone, over 100,000 trees have been planted by his followers in different parts of Pakistan.

He also launched a global initiative named 'Project Rise' encompassing a range of areas, including healthcare, nutrition, sanitation and hygiene, environmental responsibility and conservation, and education.

He urged his followers to contribute actively to Pakistan's socioeconomic progress and explore business opportunities in the country besides developing an extensive network of schemes offering interest-free loans.

UNGA approves 4 Pakistani resolutions to promote disarmament, int'l security

UNITED NATIONS (INP): The United Nations General Assembly approved four annual Pakistani disarmament-related resolutions that are aimed at advancing the goals of regional peace and security.

The resolutions were recommended on Monday by the 193-member Assembly's First Committee (Disarmament and International Security) where the texts were adopted by overwhelming support of its members. Of these, three resolutions deal with regional disarmament, conventional arms control at regional and sub-regional levels as well as Confidence Building Measures (CBMs) in the regional and sub-regional context. The fourth Pakistani resolution sought international security assurances for non-nuclear-

weapon states. The resolutions, entitled "Regional Disarmament and Confidence Building Measures" in the regional and sub-regional context, won the unanimous approval of the Assembly adopted without a vote. But the resolution on "Conventional arms control at regional and sub-regional levels" was supported by an overwhelming majority of 186 votes, with India casting the only "no vote."

The resolution titled, Conclusion of effective international arrangements to assure non-nuclear-weapon States against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons, was also approved by a large majority. It garnered 123 votes in favour to none against, with 62 abstentions.

Diplomats said that all four resolutions recognize the significance of and

complementarity between regional and global approaches to arms control, disarmament and confidence building to promote international peace, security and stability. The resolutions also draw attention to the excessive conventional military danger in the regional context - implicitly in South Asia -, propose measure to address the associated risks and encourage efforts aimed at promoting confidence building Measures (CBMs) at the regional and sub-regional levels to ease regional tensions; and further disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation measures.

They said the resolution on conventional arms control at regional and sub-regional levels acknowledges that the preservation of a balance in states' defence capabilities strengthens peace and stability.

'Tobacco smoking not an addiction, but a death pill,' says Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Information, Broadcasting and Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Solangi on Tuesday said tobacco smoking was not an addiction rather it was a death pill and a threat to human lives at the global level.



Delivering his speech at an event organised to educate children about the harmful impacts of smoking, he said like environmental destruction, smoking was also a threat to human lives.

At the outset, he said it was important to ask some important questions regarding the habit of smoking. "Smoking is a disease that kills one person every six seconds on average", Murtaza Solangi said adding

the habit of smoking continues at this intensity. Appreciating the services of those who have waged war against smoking, he termed them "the anti-smoking heroes".

He said due to business compulsions, tobacco smoking was not mentioned with other harmful substances, but now this tendency should end.

An increase in taxes on the tobacco industry was meant to discourage the tendency of smoking in society, especially the young generation, he maintained.

He said that like climate change, tobacco had been badly affecting the daily lives of human beings and increasing health sector expenditures. Solangi pledged to keep on supporting the volunteers fighting against smoking.

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Fazal questions polls feasibility amidst KP, Balochistan lawlessness

ISLAMABAD (INP): While noting that two provinces are still in a state of lawlessness and disorder, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman questioned on Tuesday whether the next general elections can be conducted under the present circumstances.

Interacting with media here, Fazl stated that his party was ready to contest elections at any given time, but stressed the need to ensure a conducive environment in all four provinces.

He also questioned how a party could run its election campaign in a state of lawlessness in the provinces of Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, recalling recent incidents of terrorism in Peshawar, Dera Ismael Khan, Tank and Lakki Marwat.

Regarding PTI's intra-party elections, Fazl expressed regret that about 40 individuals were called in for the intra-party polls, adding that the initial enthusiasm within the party had now deflated. He observed that individuals who had been forcibly brought into the PTI were now jumping ship.

Fazl indicated that the JUI-F would pursue seat adjustments under an electoral alliance with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz.

7 people including 3 children injured in blast in Peshawar

PESHAWAR (Online): An explosion left 7 people including 3 children injured on Warsak Road here on Tuesday morning.

Police said explosive was planted alongside the road near a private bank and a school. Glasses of nearby buildings splintered by the explosion.

Rescue teams rushed to the scene and shifted the



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Jamal Shah inaugurating International Sirah Exhibition on sideline of Pak-Saudi International Conference on Sirah, Civic Sense and Tolerance at IUI, Faisal Masjid Campus.

Jamal for incorporating teachings of Khutba-e-Hajjatul Wida in edu. institutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for National Heritage and Culture, Syed Jamal Shah has emphasized incorporating the teachings of Khutba e Hajjatul Wida of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) in all educational institutions. He was addressing the inaugural ceremony of an international conference on Sirah, civic sense and tolerance organized with a joint venture of Pak-Saudi Governments by the International Centre of Excellence for Sirah Studies, Islamic Research Institute, IRI of International Islamic University Islamabad (IIU) at the Quaid-e-Azam Auditorium, Faisal Masjid Campus.

Addressing the opening ceremony of the conference, Minister Syed Jamal Shah said that Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) served as the epitome of civic responsibility. He was of the view that the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) consistently highlighted the significance of treating others with kindness and consideration.

Syed Jamal Shah added that one of the Prophet's (PBUH) well-known sayings encapsulates this spirit. "The best among you are those who have the best manners and character." He said this timeless wisdom underscores the importance of civic sense in the daily lives of Muslims. Earlier, the minister inaugurated the International Sirah Exhibition held in connection with the conference.

Speakers of national and international reputation unveiled timeless wisdom for success in this world and the hereafter highlighting the Sirah of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in this 2-day international conference. During the conference, more than 100 research papers will be presented by researchers and scholars of international repute. The conference will identify the historical roots of civilized social living, the causes of the lack of good manners in our society, and the reasons for cultural ignorance such as mistrust, misconceptions, conflicts, hatred and the lack of mutual understanding among various segments of Muslim societies, particularly Pakistani society.

Sanjrani, Iraqi Ambassador discuss bilateral relations, current situation in Palestine

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Senate Mohammad Sadiq Sanjrani and Ambassador of Iraq, Hamid Abbas Lafta, on Tuesday discussed bilateral relations, issues of mutual interest, and current developments, including the situation in Palestine.

respect, highlighting shared values.

He said that Pakistan attached great importance to the long-standing brotherly relations with Iraq. In the meeting, there was also a detailed discussion regarding the further enhancement of bilateral trade.



Chairman Sanjrani said that the ties between Pakistan and Iraq were rooted in religion, brotherhood, Islamic culture, and mutual

The chairman expressed admiration for the resilience of the Iraqi people, acknowledging their steadfastness in addressing their challenges.

He stressed the need to enhance direct air links between Pakistan and Iraq.

The chairman asked international powers to put pressure on Israel to stop the genocide of innocent Palestinians and end the siege of Gaza immediately, facilitating the supply of food and medicine.

The ambassador reciprocated the sentiments, affirming Iraq's perspective on its friendly relations with Pakistan. He called for expanding economic and trade ties between the two nations. The envoy commended the contributions of Pakistani expatriates working in Iraq, assuring them of every possible facilitation.

He also praised Pakistan's efforts towards unity in the Muslim world.

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Rescue teams rushed to the scene and shifted the

injured to Lady Reading hospital. The age of children who were injured range between 7 years to 10 years. The blast is said to have taken place at 9:10 am. Four kilogram explosive were used. The condition of a nine-year-old child is stated to be critical.

The investigation into blast has been started.

Pakistan Navy inducts 5th ATR aircraft into its fleet

KARACHI (APP): The induction ceremony of 5th ATR of Pakistan Navy was held at Naval Aviation Base PNS Mehran, Karachi where Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf was the Chief Guest on Tuesday. The newly inducted ATR aircraft, acquired from PIA, is equipped with day and night flying capability to undertake ferry, logistics support, Medical Evacuation (MEDEVAC), General Evacuation (GENEVAC)

and training missions, a news release said.

Pakistan Navy is in the process of acquiring ATR aircraft from various sources and is modernising them to carry out maritime reconnaissance and anti-submarine warfare missions at sea. Being a commercial aircraft it has very low operating cost as compared to tailor-made military aircraft. This is the 5th aircraft which has been acquired for the purpose.

Speaking on the occasion, Chief of the Naval Staff highlighted the importance of evolving geo-strategic environment in the Indian Ocean Region and emphasized the need to have a potent naval force in order to counter emerging challenges.

He underlined the significance of strong maritime defence for Pakistan and reiterated that the induction of modern aircraft will enhance Pakistan Navy's capability of safeguarding maritime frontiers.



KARACHI: Group photo of Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Naveed Ashraf with officers of naval aviation at the induction ceremony of 5th ATR 75 in Pakistan Navy Aviation Fleet.

ECP to have full security for holding next elections in peaceful environment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Interior Sarfraz Ahmad Bugti on Tuesday said that the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), would have full security for holding the next elections in a peaceful environment.

The caretaker government would take necessary measures to provide all required facilities to ECP for conducting general elections in a transparent manner, he

said while talking to a private television channel. Political parties should cooperate with law enforcement agencies (LEAs), before arranging any public meeting or corner meeting for election campaign, he said.

Timely information about public gatherings or meetings would help security institutions for aking better arrangements for them, he said.

Sarfraz Bugti says

CM Naqvi chairs cabinet meeting, approves reforms

Independent Report
LAHORE: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, chairing the 33rd provincial cabinet meeting at the Civil Secretariat on Tuesday, addressed crucial matters.

The cabinet approved an increase in driving licence fees effective from January 1. Until this date, driving licences will continue to be issued at the existing rates. Starting January 1, the learner fee will surge from Rs 60 to Rs 1000, alongside an increase in LTV, HTV, and PSV licence fees. Residents of the US, Canada, and other countries can obtain a licence online by paying \$100.

During the meeting, the cabinet endorsed a transparent lottery system for allocating government land to landless farmers in Cholistan. A substantial 3,44,000 acres of land will be allocated to landless farmers at subsidized rates.

Additionally, the cabinet approved the transfer policy for MBBS and BDS students in government medical and dental colleges, allowing transfers only from high-grade merit to low-grade institutions.

The management of prison hospitals will be entrusted to the health department and a healthcare system for prisoners was also approved.

Funds were greenlit

to double the number of nursing students, and a management committee for the Institute of Public Health Lahore was established. The cabinet renewed the agreement between the Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Department and the Recep Tayyip Erdogan Health Trust for the operation of Regional Blood Centers in Multan and Bahawalpur.

Decisions were made to elevate Children's Hospital Faisalabad to the status of a medical institute under the Punjab Medical and Health Institutions Act 2003. The establishment of PKLI-2 for South Punjab in Multan Institute of Kidney Diseases was also confirmed.



GILGIT: Chief Minister Gilgit-Baltistan Haji Gulbar Khan addressing during the 27th session of Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly under the chair of Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Nazir Ahmad Advocate.

OEK's Korean language Centre generating manpower for Korea: Dr Aamir

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Technical Education, Industries, Commerce and Newly Merged Districts Affairs, Dr. Aamer Abdullah has termed the provincial government and Overseas Employment (OEK) collaboration efforts of imparting the skilled force of the province on Korean language training, a very important and useful.

He said that the manpower of the region could be able to gain more opportunities available in various professional and technical fields in Korea through this project.

He said that as a result of this effort, hundreds of trained and skilled people of the province can get honorable employment in various fields in the Korean market every year.

Governor inaugurates swimming pool

BAHAWALPUR (APP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman on Tuesday inaugurated the newly constructed swimming pool of Bahawalpur Gymkhana.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that the swimming pool was a good addition for the club members.

The governor said that a committee had been formed to affiliate Lahore Gymkhana with Bahawal Gymkhana. He appreciated the efforts of office bearers of Bahawal Gymkhana in making the club more beautiful. The governor said that Bahawal Gymkhana was a useful recreational facility for the people of the area. Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur, Zaher Anwar Jappa briefing the governor told that the funds of the gymkhana had been used transparently and all office bearers had performed their duties with dedication.

Commissioner Bahawalpur, Dr Ehtesham Anwar, General Secretary Ejaz Nazim and others were also present.



LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman in a group photo with position holders of Flower Show organized by Horticulture Society of Pakistan at Jilani Park.

CM KP Arshad chairs meeting Meeting deliberates on strengthening police force in merged districts

PESHAWAR (APP): An important meeting to review law and order in the province, and deliberate upon the matters related to strengthening of police force in merged districts, was held here on Tuesday with the Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Justice Syed Arshad Hussain Shah in the chair. Besides, Caretaker Provincial Ministers Dr Aamir Abdullah, Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Inspector General of Police Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur, Additional Chief Secretary

Home Muhammad Abid Majeed, and other senior officials attended the meeting. Divisional Commissioners and Regional Police Officers participated in the meeting via video link. The meeting was briefed in detail on the overall situation of law and order, challenges.

opportunities in various professional and technical fields in Korea. Dr. Abdullah expressed confidence that, as a result of this effort, hundreds of trained individuals from the province would secure honorable employment in the Korean market annually.

During a visit to the Government Technical and Vocational Centre (GTVN) in Peshawar, the minister proposed the establishment of a provincial organization or cell, modelled after the OEK, under the Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA).

KP Caretaker Minister lauds collaboration with overseas employment corporation

Independent Report
PESHAWAR: The caretaker minister for Technical Education, Industries, Commerce, and Newly Merged Districts Affairs in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Dr. Aamer Abdullah, has commended the joint initiative between the provincial government and the Overseas Employment Corporation (OEC) for Korean language training.

He emphasized the significance of this collaboration, stating that it opens doors for the region's workforce to access numerous

KP CS condemns Warsak Road blast
PESHAWAR (Online): Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry on Tuesday condemned the blast on Warsak Road and promptly sought a detailed report from authorities. He directed district administration, police, and other law enforcement agencies (LEAs) to maintain heightened vigilance in the area. The Chief Secretary prayed for swift recovery of the injured and instructed hospital administration to provide the best possible medical care to them. The Chief Secretary highlighted the sacrifices rendered by the general public and LEAs in establishing peace and tranquility in KPK.

Punjab Governor says: Govt is committed for promotion of health activities

Independent Report
LAHORE: Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman distributed shields and trophies to the prize winners of flower show, organized by the Horticultural Society of Pakistan at Jilani Park, in a ceremony held at Governor House Lahore. Vice-Chairman Horticulture Society of Pakistan, Abrar Mumtaz, Secretary General, Tariq Jilani, Convener Sajid Sambal, Marketing Head Shaista Khawar, Chairman Millat Tractor Limited Sikandar Mustafa Khan and others were present in the event.

While addressing the ceremony, Governor Punjab Muhammad

Balighur Rehman said that the government is committed to the promotion of healthy activities.

He said that the Walled City of Lahore under the leadership of Director General Walled City of Lahore Authority is doing a good job by promoting cultural activities and tourism in Lahore.

Governor Punjab said that public private partnership is a successful model in Pakistan, adding that PHA and other institutions can work on various projects through public-private partnership.

Governor Punjab said that flowers are one of the beautiful and priceless gifts of nature.



LAHORE: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi enquiring about medical facilities from mother of under treatment children at Children Emergency during his visit to Mayo Hospital.

Doctors' protest against attack on clinic of Dr. Ranjeet

Independent Report
MIRPUR MATHELO: Mirpur Mathelo doctors' protest against the attack on the clinic of child specialist Dr. Ranjeet Kumar, all private hospitals closed, doctors' protest ended on the assurance of SSP Ghotki, demanding the arrest of the attackers, Dr. Meher Chand, Dr. Satiyaan, Dr. Om Prakash, Dr. Jai Kishan, Dr. Bhajanlal and others held a press conference with Dr. Ranjit Kumar against the alleged attack on the clinic of child specialist

Dr. Ranjit Kumar in Mirpur Mathilo.

While saying that yesterday, a man named Shahid came to Lady Dr. Sapna for an ultrasound due to the premature delivery of his wife, on whose normal report he left, returned in the evening with four colleagues and rushed to the private hospital. They tortured me mercilessly and ransacked the hospital and ran away. Clinics have been opened so that ordinary patients do not have to face difficulties.

International News

Gazans running out of safe places: UN official

NORTHERN (Online): Palestinians in Gaza have been left with virtually nowhere to go as the Israeli army continues its offensive in the enclave following the end of a truce with Hamas, a UN official has said.

The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) is shifting its focus to the southern part of Gaza and has urged the population to evacuate. However, Palestinians and human rights groups have condemned the move after the area was initially declared a safe zone when Israel launched retaliatory strikes following the Hamas attack of October 7.

The head of the UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in Gaza (UNRWA), Thomas

White, said on Monday that "people are pleading for advice on where to find safety. We have nothing to tell them."

According to media reports, heavy fighting has taken place near the largest city in southern Gaza, Khan Younis, around 10km from the Rafah border crossing with Egypt.

The IDF warned Gazans on Monday that some areas in the north and east of Khan Younis are "extremely dangerous," offering them a way to a reach refugee camp in the Rafah district.

The same day, White said the humanitarian situation "worsens by the hour" as another wave of displacement was underway and the roads leading



BEIJING: Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi in a group photo with Ambassadors of European Union and its member countries.

Israel mulls flooding Hamas tunnels - WSJ

NEW YORK (Online): Israel is considering using seawater to flood the extensive network of tunnels under Gaza, used by Hamas militants to smuggle goods in and out of the Palestinian enclave, the Wall Street Journal reported on Monday, citing sources.

According to US officials interviewed by the paper, the Israeli military assembled an extensive flooding system not far from the Al-Shati refugee camp in northwest Gaza in mid-November. The unit reportedly consists of five pumps capable of drawing thousands of cubic meters of water per hour from the Mediterranean Sea, potentially allowing Israel to flood the underground maze within a few weeks.

The Israeli government informed the US, its key ally,

of the initiative last month, sparking debate about whether the plan was feasible, as well as its pros and cons, WSJ sources said. They noted that no final decision on its execution has yet been made and that it is unclear how ready Israel is to implement it. The plan, the report says, could drive Hamas fighters out of the sprawling system of tunnels, which span hundreds of kilometers, with some passages reaching into Egypt.

The network also provides Hamas and other local Islamist groups with formidable cover from missile strikes and allows them to evade Israel's blockade. Some tunnels are tall enough for an average man to stand up in, are built from reinforced concrete, and boast a network of communication lines. How-

ever, some US officials are said to have serious doubts about the plan. "We are not sure how successful pumping will be, since nobody knows the details of the tunnels and the ground around them," one source said.

Meanwhile, Jon Alterman, a senior vice-president at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, warned in a WSJ interview that it was hard to estimate how much seawater would seep into the ground or what impact the pumping would have on water and sewage infrastructure.

This sentiment was echoed by Wim Zwijnenburg, an environmental expert, who noted that the flooding could wash hazardous materials out of the tunnels, further contaminating the soil.

China says Afghan Taliban must reform before full diplomatic ties

Monitoring Desk
BEIJING: China said on Tuesday Afghanistan's Taliban government will need to introduce political reforms, improve security and mend relations with its neighbours before receiving full diplomatic recognition.

Beijing does not formally recognise Afghanistan's Taliban rulers, although both countries host each others' ambassadors and have maintained diplomatic engagement.

"China has always believed that Afghanistan should not be excluded from the international community," foreign ministry spokesperson Wang

Wenbin said on Tuesday when asked if China would now recognise the Taliban government.

"We hope that Afghanistan will further respond to the expectations of the international community, build an open and inclusive political structure (and) implement moderate and stable domestic and foreign policies," he said.

Wang also said China urged Kabul to "resolutely combat all types of terrorist forces, live in harmony with all countries around the world, especially neighbouring countries, and integrate with the international community at an early date".



GAZA: A man carrying dead body of a child who martyred during Israeli attack.

Qatar pushing to repair truce, bring comprehensive end to Gaza war

Monitoring Desk
DOHA: Qatar is pressing for a comprehensive end to the war in Gaza and is working to repair a collapsed truce agreement between Israel and Hamas, its emir said on Tuesday. "We are constantly working to renew (the truce) and to alleviate the burden of our people in the Gaza Strip, but truces are not an alternative for a comprehensive ceasefire," Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani said in a speech to Gulf leaders gathered in the Qatari capital Doha.

Qatar, where several political leaders of Hamas are based, has been leading negotiations between Israel and the Palestinian militant group.

Those talks led to a truce that ultimately lasted for seven days before hostilities resumed on Friday.

During the truce, Hamas released dozens of hostages held in Gaza in exchange for hundreds of Palestinian prisoners, and Israel allowed humanitarian aid to flow into the coastal enclave.

Former US ambassador charged with spying for Cuba

Monitoring Desk
MIAMI: A former US ambassador to Bolivia and member of the National Security Council has been charged with spying for Cuba for 40 years, the Justice Department announced on Monday.

The charges against Victor Manuel Rocha, 73, "exposes one of the highest-reaching and longest-lasting infiltrations of the United States government by a foreign agent," Attorney General Merrick Garland said in a statement explaining the charges.

Rocha, a naturalised US citizen originally from Colombia, allegedly began aiding Havana as a "covert agent of Cuba's General Directorate of Intelligence" in 1981, and his espionage activities continued to the present, the statement said.

"Those who have the privilege of serving in the government of the United States are given an enormous amount of trust by the public we serve," Garland said.

11 hikers die as volcano erupts in Indonesia

Monitoring Desk
AGAM: Eleven hikers were found dead on Monday and another 12 were missing after a volcano erupted in Indonesia, with rescuers racing to carry injured and burned survivors down the mountain on foot.

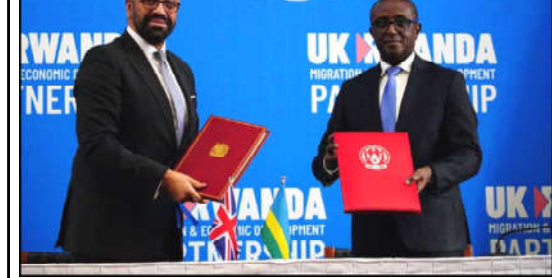
Rescuers worked through the night to find dozens of hikers stranded on Mount Marapi on the island of Sumatra after it spewed an ash tower 3,000 metres (9,340 feet) — taller than the volcano itself — into the sky on Sunday.

The dead hikers were found near Marapi's crater after the 2,891-metre volcano rained ash on nearby villages, according to a local rescue official. Twelve were missing, three more were found alive and 49 had safely descended from the crater, some with burns and fractures, the official said. "Until now I have not received any information," said Dasman, father of missing hiker Zakir Habibi, who made a two-hour drive from Padang city to the base of the mountain last night in hope of good news.

Putin to visit UAE, Saudi Arabia this week

Monitoring Desk
MOSCOW: Russian President Vladimir Putin will visit the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia this week, Russian news outlet Shot reported on Monday, citing Putin's aide Yuri Ushakov.

The reported visit comes after the OPEC+ group of oil producers, which includes all three countries, agreed last Thursday to voluntary output cuts totalling 2.2 million barrels a day.



British Home Secretary James Cleverly and Rwandan Minister of Foreign Affairs Vincent Biruta sign a new treaty, in Kigali, Rwanda.

Senior EU official warns of huge security risk in Europe over Christmas as Israel-Hamas war rages

Monitoring Desk
BRUSSELS: Europe faces a "huge risk of terrorist attacks" over the Christmas holiday period due to the fallout from the war between Israel and the Palestinian militant group Hamas, the European Union's home affairs commissioner warned Tuesday.

The warning came as French investigators probe a fatal weekend attack near the Eiffel Tower in Paris. Questions were raised about the mental health of the suspect, who swore allegiance to the extremist Islamic State group before

stabbing a German-Filipino tourist to death and injuring two other people with a hammer.

"With the war between Israel and Hamas, and the polarization it causes in our society, with the upcoming holiday season, there is a huge risk of terrorist attacks in the European Union," EU Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson told reporters.

"We saw (it happening) recently in Paris, unfortunately we have seen it earlier as well," she said, as EU interior ministers gathered in Brussels.

