



Thousands attend JI's Gaza Solidarity March in Lahore

Thousands of citizens have attended Jamaat-e-Islami's (JI) Gaza March in Lahore to show solidarity with Palestinians in besieged densely populated strip and occupied West Bank suffering from the aggression of the Israeli occupation forces. Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) organised the Gaza Solidarity March at Lahore's Punjab University (PU) Campus Bridge... (Details on Page 8)



US to Issue 'Visa Bans against Israeli Extremists' – POLITICO

Biden has ordered his administration to draw up a plan of sanctions against Israeli settlers who attack or harass Palestinians in the West Bank, Politico reported. United States President Joe Biden has ordered his administration to draw up a plan of sanctions against Israeli Jewish settlers who attack or harass Palestinians in the West Bank, Politico reported on Saturday, citing a confidential document. (Details on Page 5)

Simultaneously published from Islamabad, Lahore and Multan

Meeting

Chinese President Xi Jinping met with King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud of Saudi Arabia.



Photo: Via Spokesperson CHN TW Page

Timely elections interim govt's biggest priority: PM Kakar



he is facing cases against him in court. Imran Khan was arrested before the caretaker government took charge, he added. The premier said, "Think 10 times before leveling allegations."

Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwarul Haq Kakar said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan is safe in prison. PTI Chairman Khan was arrested from his Lahore residence on August 5 after he was slapped with a five-year disqualification and a three-year prison term in the Toshakhana criminal case. In an interview with a private channel, PM Kakar questioned why the caretaker government is being labeled as biased. He asked that did the caretaker government imprison former prime minister Imran Khan? PM Kakar said that the PTI chief was arrested legally and

China to host Ministers from Arab, Muslim Countries to end Israel's war on Gaza

Naveed Ahmad Khan

ISLAMABAD: Ministers from Arab and Muslim-majority countries will visit China on Monday as part of a tour aimed at ending Israel's war in Gaza, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan said on Saturday. The Palestine Chronicle reported. "The first stop will be in China and will then move to a number of capitals to deliver the clear message that there must be a ceasefire immediately as well as aid and humanitarian needs must

be immediately delivered to Gaza," the Kingdom's top diplomat said in a post shared on social media platform X. Prince Faisal made the comments after a meeting with EU foreign policy chief Josep Borrell on the sidelines of the Manama Dialogue 2023 conference in Bahrain. "We must work to end this crisis and end this war on Gaza as soon as possible," Prince Faisal added. According to the Saudi Gazette, the extraordinary joint Arab-Islamic Summit, which was held in

Riyadh last week, issued a resolution tasking the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia, Jordan, Egypt, Qatar, Turkiye, Indonesia, Nigeria, and Palestine to initiate immediate international action on behalf of all member states of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) and the Arab League. "The goal is to formulate an international initiative to halt the war in Gaza and push for a genuine and serious political process, leading to a permanent and comprehensive peace in accordance with established interna-

tional references," the report said. The forthcoming meeting in Beijing was confirmed on Sunday by China's state broadcaster CCTV, citing the country's foreign ministry spokesperson Mao Ning. "During the visit, China will have in-depth communication and coordination with the delegation on ways to deescalate the ongoing Palestinian-Israeli conflict, protect civilians and seek a just settlement of the Palestinian question," said Mao. In May, a poll conducted for Arab News by Yougov found

that the majority of Palestinian respondents – 80 per cent, preferred China as a potential peace broker in the conflict with the occupation state, with the US seen as the least trusted mediator. According to the Palestinian Ministry of Health, Israel has, thus far, killed 12,300 Palestinians, including over 5,000 children and over 3,300 women. The Israeli army continues to pound civilian homes throughout the Gaza Strip with new massacres reported everywhere in the besieged enclave.

Solangi leaves for home from Maldives



News Desk

MALE(MALDIVES): The Federal Minister of Information, Broadcasting, and Parliamentary Affairs, Murtaza Solangi, left for home on Sunday after attending the Presidential Inauguration 2023. The minister was seen off by senior officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs at Male, said a Ministry of Foreign Affairs post on X, formerly Twitter.

Nawaz Sharif to be next PM, claims Marriyum Aurangzeb

Spokesman Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) leader Marriyum Aurangzeb said Sunday that the opponents already knew that Nawaz Sharif would be the next prime minister (PM). In a statement, Marriyum Aurangzeb said that the country could not bear the consequences of the politics of hatred anymore. "Whoever voted by the nation would be the next prime minister." The PML-N leader said that she would agree with Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari's statement that transparent elections will be held in the country. An individual could be declared a blue-eyed person who had been allowed to contest polls only once in 23 years, she added. She said that the nation could not get rid of inflation by exchanging harsh statements. The politician added that PML-N leaders are doing responsible politics. "We came into power at a time when Pakistan was near to default. We resumed the legislation process in the assembly to improve the situation." Marriyum Aurangzeb claimed that the opponents were raising the same slogan of 'Vote Ko Izzat Do' which



was started by Nawaz Sharif in 2017. She said that PML-N would not make tall claims and be honest with the nation. Earlier, former prime minister Nawaz Sharif said Pakistan's currency, economy and governance system had been devastated, and prices increased by five-fold. "It is our responsibility and duty to emancipate the people from price hikes and poverty," Nawaz Sharif, who returned from self-exile in London on October 21, addressing to businessmen said. Nawaz claimed that Pakistan became the 24th largest global economy between 2013 to 2017. "We kept the US dollar static at Rs 104 rate for four years. The dollar would have dropped to Rs40 to 50 if our policies and development process were not interrupted," he claimed. "People want education, health facilities and development," he said. "It is their right, and it is the responsibility of the state to provide these facilities," the PML-N leader said.

First flight of Malaysian Batik Air lands in Pakistan

Commerce Desk

KARACHI: First Kuala Lumpur-Karachi flight of Malaysia's Batik Air landed in Pakistan. The flight was given a traditional water salute upon landing at the Karachi International Airport. Batik Air of Malaysia will operate three weekly flights from Kuala Lumpur to Karachi. Malaysian Consul General and Civil Aviation Officers (CAA) welcomed the passengers. The new route strengthens the airline's ties between the countries, fostering both business and leisure travel opportunities. On November 1, Azerbaijan's national airline launched direct flight operations to Pakistan. Azerbaijan's national airline – AZAL – commenced direct flights to Pakistan, while an inaugural flight from Azerbaijan will reach Islamabad airport tonight.

Senate election likely to be held in March

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The Senate elections are anticipated to take place in the first week of March. Following the announcement of the general election, the relevant authorities initiated the preparations for the senate election as well. It is highly anticipated that the schedule for the Senate election may be released immediately after the general elections. A total of 50 senate members are expected to retire on March 11, meanwhile, the total number of senate members will remain at 96 after four seats become vacant after the merger of FATA. Following the general elections, the elections will be held for the 48 vacant seats in the Senate. Elected members from national and provincial assemblies will vote for senators. Earlier in the day, the Former president Asif Ali Zardari has said that the country has been moving towards transparent elections. Talking to media Zardari said that his People's Party has been fully prepared for the upcoming general elections. It is to be mentioned here that the Election Commission of Pakistan has announced that the elections will be held in the country on February 08 next year.

PTI's Ali Nawaz Awan joins IPP

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former MNA Ali Nawaz Awan has joined Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP). As per details, the former MNA met the IPP Patron in chief Jahangir Tareen and President Aleem Khan whereas Awn Chaudhry and other party leaders were also present in the meeting. In the meeting, Ali Nawaz Awan announced that he has parted ways with PTI and officially joined Istehkam-e-Pakistan Party. The IPP leadership welcomed the former PTI leader in the party. Ali Nawaz Awan was earlier arrested in Batal area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Mansehra. The former PTI MNA was reportedly in residence of local party leader Razaullah Khan who was also arrested along with his cousins. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is already embroiled in legal battles as its top leadership remains behind bars and several senior leaders have quit the party. PTI chief Imran Khan and vice-chairman Shah Mahmood Qureshi are also incarcerated at the Adiala jail and undergoing trial in the cipher case. It is pertinent to mention here that former federal ministers and PTI leaders Ghulam Sarwar Khan and Farrukh Habib announced that they were parting ways with the party.

PPP has been fully prepared for elections, says Asif Zardari



Bureau Report

KARACHI: Former president Asif Ali Zardari has said that the country has been moving towards transparent elections. Talking to media Zardari said that his People's Party has been fully prepared for the upcoming general elections. It is to be mentioned here that the Election Commission of Pakistan has announced that the elections will be held in the country on February 08 next year. He reposed his 'full confidence' on the election commission to conduct a transparent election. Zardari, who has been co-chairman of the PPP, claimed that the People's Party has been the only political party of the country with ability to contest elections in any environment.

Smog threat: Punjab makes wearing masks mandatory

Caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi has made wearing face masks mandatory in 10 districts of the province affected due to smog. According to the notification, wearing face masks has been declared mandatory in 10 districts of Lahore and Gujranwala division. The decision was taken for all smog-affected districts of Punjab given the deteriorating air quality. Residents of Lahore, Nankana Sahib, Sheikhupura, Kasur, Gujrat, Sialkot, Narowal, Hafizabad and Mandi Bahauddin, the most affected districts by smog, have been asked to wear face masks. According to the notification, issued on behalf of the health secretary, smog posed a serious and imminent threat to public health in all age groups. "Hence, it is necessary to take all possible safety measures for prevention

CM Mohsin Naqvi inaugurates, OPD and indoor block of Institute of Cardiology Multan

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: "Mohsin Speed", pays off in Multan, the expansion project of the Institute of Cardiology, being delayed for 8 years has been completed in 5 months. Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi inaugurated OPD and indoor block of the Institute of Cardiology Multan under its expansion project and also laid the foundation stone of a 152-beds.

CM also announced the upgradation of cardiology emergency along with increasing the number of beds from 60 to 120. Mohsin Naqvi directed to complete the upgradation work by the mid of January. Mohsin Naqvi

visited Expansion Project of OPD and Indoor Block of Multan Cardiology.

CM expressed his dissatisfaction over the construction quality of floors and stairs and ordered to immediately improve their quality. CM inquired after the health of patients in the cardiology, emergency, OPD and indoor block. The patients endorsed the availability of medicines along with provision of medical test facility.

CM after inaugurating the expansion project of the Institute of Cardiology Multan and while talking with the media stated that he will sit with the party of journalists sitting in front of him after the Chief Ministership. We are doing our work, new govern-

ment is coming and they will take after remaining affairs.

The completion of Nishtar-II project is in the final phases. Construction and restoration of one ward of Nishtar-I is ongoing and then construction and restoration of other 12 wards will be done. The construction and restoration work of the Multan Children Hospital's Medical, OPD and emergency wards is in the final phases.

A pathology lab equipped with latest equipment will be established at the Children Hospital. We are providing funds for the restoration of old block of the Children Hospital and for the establishment of a Thal-

asemia Ward.

Work is ongoing on emergency basis for the restoration and improvement of medical gas system in the Children Hospital. I used to feel sorrow over seeing the plight of the emergency of children hospital and now we are making it state-of-the-art. We are working for the improvement of hospitals and will ensure timely completion of the ongoing projects.

We are working for the provision of health facilities in Punjab. We are serving the people with our available resources. The medicine budget in the government hospitals is for the one year. Meanwhile prices increased but budget was not increased.



CM Mohsin Naqvi Reaches Children Hospital Multan

Asim Tanveer

MULTAN: Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi reached the Children Hospital in Multan and reviewed the construction activities and quality by visiting the ongoing expansion project. CM ordered to complete the Children Hospital expansion project by December 20th. CM directed to shift electricity poles from the premises of Children Hospital. CM also inspected various wards of the Children Hospital and reviewed available facilities. CM inquired after the health of children patients admitted in the Old Children Hospital. Mohsin Naqvi expressed his affection compassion with the patient children and prayed for their speedy recovery. ACS South Punjab, Secretaries of Health, C&W, RPO, Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner and other officials were also present on the occasion.

Funeral prayers of Sardar Kaleem Akhtar Rabbani performed

Abdul Majeed Tahir

BALUCH: The funeral prayers of Sardar Kaleem Akhtar Rabbani, the younger brother of Azad Jammu and Kashmir's Minister of Tourism, Archeology and Mineral Resources were performed in Baloch, after which he was buried in his ancestral graveyard. Prime Minister of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Chaudhry Anwarul Haque, Government Ministers Azhar Sadiq, Raja Faisal Mumtaz Rathore, Malik Zafar, Chaudhry Akhlaq, Dewan Chaghtai, Sardar Muhammad Hussain Advocate, Qasim Majeed, Sardar Amir Altaf, Yasir Sultan, Special Assistant Ahmed Sagheer, Member Kashmir Council Sardar Sardar Anwarul Haq said that this world is very temporary and everyone has to leave here.

The funeral prayer of the deceased was led by Pir Fazl Rabbani Sajjada Nashin Darbar Alia Nirian Sharif. Addressing the condolence reference held earlier, Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwarul Haq said that this world is a big shock. We pray to Allah to grant patience to all the families of the deceased including Sardar Faheem Akhtar Rabbani and his uncle Sardar Tariq Rabbani and brothers Sardar Waseem Rabbani. Prime Minister Chaudhry Anwar-ul-Haq further said that this world is a place of action and the life hereafter depends on the actions here. Speaking on this occasion, Minister of Tourism and Archeology Sardar Faheem Akhtar Rabbani thanked the ministers including the Prime Minister and other people for coming to share their sorrow in the hour of grief. Other speakers addressed the condolence reference. He expressed his condolence to the family members of the deceased and said that the deceased was a very noble person and mourned in the entire region due to his death at a young age.

He expressed his condolence to the family members of the deceased and said that the deceased was a very noble person and mourned in the entire region due to his death at a young age.

Gomal varsity 132nd Syndicate meeting held under the chairmanship of VC

Adam Khan Wazir

DERA ISMAIL KHAN: Gomal University Dera Ismail Khan (GUD) 132nd Syndicate meeting was held in Peshawar under the chairmanship of Vice Chancellor Gomal University Professor Dr. Shakib Ullah on Sunday. The meeting was attended by all the members of Gomal University including Higher Education Commission (HEC) Islamabad, Higher Education Department Peshawar (HED) Establishment Section Peshawar, Finance Section Peshawar, while a member was present in an online meeting.

In the meeting, all the members expressed grief over the demise of Dera Ismail Khan's well-known lawyer Pir Amjad Ali Shah Advocate and prayers were also offered for the repose of the deceased.

Carelessness

KHARIAN: The car suffered an accident due to high speed at GT Raod, while all the people in the car and all the people walking on the road were miraculously safe.



Trade Associations urge CDA to focus on development works in markets

Tariq Khattak

ISLAMABAD: Presidents of market associations of Islamabad during a meeting at Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) showed concerns that the CDA is not doing any development works in markets due to which the traders are facing lot of problems and urged that the CDA should focus on development works in all major markets to facilitate the growth of trade activities.

Addressing the office bearers of market associations, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that traders are paying various taxes to the CDA and are making significant contribution to its revenue, therefore, it is the responsibility of the civic body to develop markets on modern lines for smooth growth of trade activities.

Engr. Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President ICCI said that unity among traders is the key requirement to get their



issues resolved and assured that the ICCI would keep fighting for their cause. Khalid Iqbal Malik, Group Leader ICCI said that the business community is the main stakeholder towards the revenue generation of the CDA and the civic body should compensate them by ensuring better development of all the markets.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President and Secretary General UBG Pakistan said that Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari is making all out efforts for resolving the key issues of the business community and assured that he would continue to work closely with the CDA to start

the needed development works in the markets.

Muhammad Ejaz Abbasi former President ICCI, Ajmal Baloch President and Akhtar Hussain Secretary General Aabpara Market, Shehzad Shabbir Abbasi President Super Market F-6 Markaz, Asad Aziz President Jinnah Super F-7 Markaz, Raja Hassan Akhtar President Blue Area, Azhar Iqbal President Melody Market, Syed Altaf Hussain Shah President Sitara Market G-7 Markaz, Akhlaq Abbasi President G-10 Markaz, Nasir Chaudhry President I&T Center G-8/1, Ahmed Khan President F-10 Markaz, Tahir Ayub

Secretary General Wholesale Fruits & Vegetable Market I-11/4, Naeem Awan President G-11 Markaz, Raja Fayyaz Gul President I-8 Markaz, Zahid Dhanial President Markazi Union Bara Kahu, Zahid Gujjar President G-10/4 I&T Centre, Muzaffar Hashmi President Milk Association Islamabad, Ajab Khan President and Waseem Abbasi Secretary General G-8 Markaz Motor Dealers, Abid Khan President G-13 Markaz, Zahid Hamid President Jewellers Association, Safdar Abbasi President I-9 Markaz, Zahir Abbasi President E-11 Markaz, Nisar Ahmed Langa President G-9/4 Khalid Chaudhry and others spoke on the occasion. They highlighted that markets need carpeting of roads, repair of footpaths, restoration of streetlights, wash rooms, filtration plants, new sewerage lines, improved sanitation and better cleaning and stressed that the CDA should do all these development in markets without further delay to facilitate the smooth growth of trade activities.

Harnessing Natural Resources in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Socio-Economic Development (Forestry potential of 2,000 billion annually)

Introduction

In the contemporary global economic landscape, marked by market downturns, the spectre of inflation, rising unemployment and persistent poverty has cast a shadow over developing nations, including Pakistan.

Compounding these economic challenges, the ongoing conflict between Ukraine and Russia has introduced another layer of complexity into this multifaceted quandary. It is essential to underscore that unemployment has long been a persistent concern in Pakistan, predating the current wave of global crises.

Context and Focus Area

Within the purview of this analysis, we direct our attention to the

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa region, located in the north-western expanse of Pakistan.

Unlike some other provinces, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa exhibits a relatively limited propensity for arable lands. This distinctive feature can be attributed to its predominantly rugged topography, characterized by rivers, forests, and mountainous terrain, which sets it apart in terms of agricultural employment opportunities. Yet, it is precisely this unique topographical profile that harbors abundant natural assets, waiting to be strategically harnessed for the purpose of catalyzing economic rejuvenation and illuminating a brighter socio-economic horizon.

Untapped Ecological Wealth

As we delve into the ecological wealth embedded in the forests and mountains of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, empirical data unveil the extent of nature's generosity. Nearly 45% of Pakistan's total forested land lies within the boundaries of this province. Nevertheless, the potential of these natural resources remains largely untapped, pushing a considerable segment of the population in regions such as Malakand, Hazara, newly merged districts & Chitral to seek employment opportunities overseas.

Economic Potential

Endowed with nature's bounty, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa possesses the latent capacity to establish an industry of monumental worth,



Asif Rafiq

approximating a staggering 2,000 Billioning Pkr. This goal can be achieved by judiciously exploiting the wealth enshrined within its forests and riverine resources. At present, the province comprises approximately 2 million hectares of forested terrain. Expert insights suggest that an endeavor to double this

expanse could potentially unlock an annual industry valued at 2 trillion rupees, facilitating gainful employment for up to 5 million individuals.

Comparative Analysis

Comparing Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Forest coverage per capita with neighbouring countries yields striking insights. China leads with 1499 square meters of forest coverage per capita, followed by Iran with 1265 square meters and India with 525 square meters. In stark contrast, Pakistan lags behind, with a mere 65 square meters per capita. These statistics underscore the substantial disparity in the utilization of forested resources, evident in the instances of China, India, and Germany.

Transformational Potential

Expanding the forested land in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, coupled with the strategic introduction of agroforestry, holds the potential to usher in a paradigm shift. The resultant benefits transcend economic prosperity, promising to alleviate the persistent scourge of unemployment. This approach charts a transformative trajectory, fostering employment opportunities within the province, and even accommodating those compelled to seek livelihoods beyond the national boundary.

Environmental Stewardship

Leveraging the abundant natural endowments of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, encompassing forests and water resources, not only

promises economic opportunities and financial dividends but also underscores a proactive approach to mitigating the pernicious effects of global environmental fluctuations. This challenge carries profound implications, not only for Pakistan but also in the broader global context.

In conclusion, the untapped ecological and economic potential of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa presents a compelling opportunity for strategic development and environmental stewardship, offering a beacon of hope in the face of economic adversity and environmental challenges.

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Decline of the BJP and Opposition to India's Policies - I

The ideology of Hindutva, aiming to shape India's cultural and political identity through a Hindu perspective, has sparked intense debate and examination. Advocates argue that it fosters a unified national identity, but there are notable apprehensions and critiques regarding its adverse effects.

A major point of criticism against Hindutva is its perceived exclusiveness, which could marginalize religious and cultural minorities. By accentuating a Hindu-centric identity, there's a risk of alienating diverse communities that enrich India's fabric. This exclusivity runs counter to the secular principles outlined in the Indian Constitution, guaranteeing equal rights and protection to all citizens irrespective of their religious or cultural affiliations.

The association of Hindutva with hyper-nationalism raises concerns about communal polarization. When taken to extremes, this ideology contributes to religious tensions, disrupting the peaceful coexistence of India's diverse communities. The blurred line between cultural nationalism and religious chauvinism results in the marginalization of religious minorities and fosters an atmosphere of distrust and animosity.

Critics of Hindutva accuse some proponents of engaging in historical revisionism to align with their narrative. This revisionism involves reinterpreting historical events and figures to fit the ideology's

agenda, potentially creating a distorted understanding of India's pluralistic past and influencing public perceptions, thereby exacerbating divisions among communities.

The close association of Hindutva with the political landscape, particularly through the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), raises concerns about the erosion of secular principles. The intertwining of religion and politics undermines the secular foundation of the Indian state, impacting the rights and freedoms of individuals who don't adhere to Hinduism. The state's obligation to treat all religions equally is compromised in favor of a Hindu-centric agenda.

While Hindutva emphasizes cultural nationalism rooted in Hindu traditions, there are concerns about the potential homogenization of diverse cultures within India. The country's numerous languages, traditions, and practices contribute to its unique identity, and an overemphasis on a singular cultural narrative stifles this diversity, hindering the rich tapestry of India.

The negative aspects of Hindutva raise valid concerns about the potential marginalization of religious and cultural minorities, communal tensions, historical distortions, and threats to secularism.

The BJP and Modi staunchly adhere to

the principles of Hindutva. Since assuming office in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi's government has been under scrutiny both nationally and internationally.

A significant point of contention revolves around the economic policies implemented by the Modi government. The sudden demonetization in 2016, aimed at combating black money and corruption, faced severe backlash due to its impact on the informal economy. This move disproportionately affected small businesses and daily wage earners, leading to economic hardships for many.

The introduction of the Goods and Services Tax (GST) also drew criticism for its complexity and initial disruption to businesses. The transition posed challenges for small and medium enterprises, contributing to economic difficulties. Despite the government's initiatives such as 'Make in India' and 'Skill India,' job creation remains a concern. The promised increase in employment opportunities has not materialized as expected, resulting in a widening gap between job seekers and available opportunities.

The economic challenges brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic further intensified concerns about unemployment, prompting calls for more robust job creation strategies. Another contentious aspect associ-

ated with the Modi government is the perceived rise in social divisions and intolerance. Instances of religious and caste-based violence have increased, fostering an environment of fear and discord. The government's response to such incidents and its handling of issues related to freedom of expression have raised concerns among those advocating for a more inclusive and tolerant society. The Modi government has faced criticism for its treatment of media and freedom of expression. The use of sedition laws and the targeting of journalists have raised questions about the government's commitment to a free and vibrant press.

Environmentalists have expressed worries about the Modi government's approach to environmental conservation. The promotion of large-scale infrastructure projects and policies that relax environmental regulations has alarmed those advocating for sustainable development. These policies are seen as having long-term detrimental effects on India's natural resources and biodiversity.

India has come under scrutiny and faced criticism for its human rights record. Despite constitutional provisions aimed at eliminating untouchability and promoting social equality, caste-based discrimination remains a persistent challenge. Dalits, also known as Scheduled Castes, continue to experience discrimination and violence, with reported atrocities in various parts of the country.

To be continued



Analysis

Abdul Basit Alvi

Israel begins limited fuel deliveries to Gaza

Under mounting international pressure, Israel began limited shipments of fuel to blockaded Gaza Saturday, but the United Nations said the supplies are only half of what is needed to provide water and power for the enclave's 2.3 million people as the Israeli-bombed region struggles with an increasing humanitarian crisis. "Following long weeks of delay, the Israeli Authorities approved only half of the daily minimum requirements of fuel for humanitarian operations in Gaza," the head of the UN agency for Palestinian refugees, UNRWA, Philippe Lazzarini, said in a statement Saturday.

"This is far from enough to cover the needs for desalination plants, sewage pumps, hospitals, water pumps in shelters, aid trucks, ambulances, bakeries and communications networks to work without interruption," he added. "Humanitarian organizations should not be forced to make tough decisions between competing life-saving activities," he said. Fuel restrictions are curtailing aid efforts, the UN agency said amid reports of fresh Israeli attacks on schools and other civilian infrastructure and rising needs among more than 1.5 million displaced Gazans. Fuel deliveries for aid operations have been largely prohibited since Oct. 7.

Almost 12,000 Gazans have been killed and thousands others wounded since the conflict began, according to the latest situation report by the UN humanitarian agency (OCHA). The lack of fuel has led to communications shutdowns, shuttered water stations, hospital closures and reduced aid deliveries across Gaza. The situation has worsened since Israel closed all borders for aid deliveries into Gaza on 7 October and, through a deal with Egypt, allowed limited shipments two weeks later through the Rafah crossing.

On Wednesday, Israel allowed about 23,000 litres, or half a tanker truck, of fuel to be delivered to UNRWA for humanitarian purposes. Israel authorized 120,000 litres to be delivered on Saturday, which will only cover half of daily critical needs. UNRWA said they were informed that the same amount would be delivered every two days.

Current approved fuel deliveries into Gaza are not enough, UNRWA's chief said. "This is far from enough to cover the needs for desalination plants, sewage pumps, hospitals, water pumps in shelters, aid trucks, ambulances, bakeries and communications networks to work without interruption," Lazzarini said. "Fuel should not be restricted for these activities."

Without the full amount of fuel, he said, people will have only two-thirds of their daily needs of clean drinking water. Without adequate fuel supplies, large parts of Gaza will continue to be flooded with sewage further increasing risks of diseases, and 70 per cent of solid waste will not be removed, posing "a major health hazard", Lazzarini said.



Cartoon by Amjad Rasmī. (Courtesy of Asharq Al-Awsat)

Russia's Growing Influence in Africa, the Wagner Group's Deployment to Mali - II

Maria Waris

One of the biggest concerns about PMCs is that they are not typically subject to the same level of accountability as government militaries. This means that it can be difficult to hold them accountable for human rights abuses and other misconduct. Additionally, PMCs are often opaque and hideous, which makes it difficult to track their activities. <https://inkstickmedia.com/private-military-and-security-companies-are-a-home-grown-threat/>

Another concern is that PMCs can undermine state sovereignty. PMCs can operate in countries without the permission of the government, which can lead to a situation where PMCs are more powerful than the state. This can have a number of negative consequences, including human rights abuses and the erosion of the government's authority. PMCs can also cause conflicts as they are the exploiters which benefit from conflict so they have a tendency to prolong or even start conflicts. Additionally, PMCs are often hired to fight against weaker parties, such as rebels or insurgents. This can lead to a situation where PMCs are overmatched and unable to protect themselves, which can lead to civilian casualties.

PMCs have also been accused of committing a variety of human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings, torture, and arbitrary detention. This is because PMCs are often not subject to the same laws and regulations as government militaries. Additionally, PMCs are often operating in conflict zones where there is little or no law and order.

Finally, the increasing use of PMCs by governments has led to concerns about the creation of a shadow army that is not subject

to democratic state control. This is a concern because PMCs are often more powerful than government militaries and are not subject to the same level of accountability. Additionally, PMCs are often hired to carry out tasks that would otherwise be performed by government militaries, such as combat operations and intelligence gathering. While PMCs can provide valuable services, such as security for humanitarian organizations and training for government forces, the potential for abuse is significant. It is important to carefully regulate and monitor the activities of PMCs. <https://apps.dtic.mil/sti/tr/pdf/ADA488740.pdf>

In Ukraine, the Wagner Group has been accused of committing war crimes, including the indiscriminate shelling of civilian areas and the execution of prisoners of war.

The Wagner Group has been accused of a wide range of wrongdoings, including human rights abuses, undermining the peace process, and interfering in the internal affairs of other countries. Since its deployment to Mali in December 2021, the Wagner Group has been accused of committing a number of human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings, looting and pillaging, and kidnappings. The group has also been accused of destroying the country's fragile peace process and supporting one side in the conflict. In addition to its activities in Mali, the Wagner Group has been accused of wrongdoings in the Central African Republic, Libya, and Ukraine. In the Central

African Republic, the group has been accused of committing human rights abuses, including the killing of civilians and the torture of prisoners. In Libya, the group has been accused of supporting the Khalifa Haftar-led Libyan National Army in its civil war against the internationally recognized Government of National Accord. The group has also been accused of planting landmines in and around the Libyan capital, Tripoli. In Ukraine, the Wagner Group has been accused of committing war crimes, including the indiscriminate shelling of civilian areas and the execution of prisoners of war.

The Wagner Group is a dangerous and destabilizing force in the world. The group's human rights abuses and its interference in the internal affairs of other countries pose a serious threat to peace and security. It is important to hold the Wagner Group accountable for its actions and to prevent it from continuing to operate with impunity. The international community must take action to hold the Wagner Group accountable and to prevent it from further destabilizing Mali. This could include imposing sanctions on the group and its members, investigating the group's human rights abuses, supporting the Malian government in its efforts to combat the Wagner Group, and raising awareness of the group's activities and its impact on Mali and the region. It is also important to address the root causes of the conflict in Mali, such as poverty, inequality, and lack of access to education and healthcare. Addressing these issues would make it more difficult for the Wagner Group to operate and would help to build a more peaceful and prosperous Mali. By taking these steps, the international community can help to protect the people of Mali from the Wagner Group's predatory ambitions and contribute to a more stable and peaceful Africa.

Writer is Student at Fatima Jinnah Women University

Does Pakistan exist on this planet? - II

The global significance of these events, often underplayed in Pakistani media, underscores the need for our leadership to delve deeper. It's crucial for Pakistan to scrutinize the meeting between two top leaders, decipher their implications, and identify areas impacting our interests. This requires strategic and tactical adjustments, along with a thorough analysis of the statements made, discerning not just the apparent but also the nuanced intentions.

There's an urgent call for Pakistani leadership across sectors to prioritize the nation's welfare over personal agendas. It's essential to transcend divisive approaches and concentrate efforts on uplifting the 95 million people currently trapped in poverty. Learning from China's remarkable feat in lifting 900 million citizens out of poverty, there's a pressing need for innovative strategies and a collective commitment toward socio-economic advancement.

Pakistan's leadership has an invaluable opportunity to leverage its strong ties with China, a global economic powerhouse, and its influential President, to chart a course towards development. Emulating China's successful economic reforms of 1978 could be a blueprint for Pakistan's growth, emphasizing market-oriented reforms, nurturing private enterprises, and attracting foreign investments through the creation of special economic zones.

Learning from China's proactive investment in education and infrastructure, Pakistan can catalyze improvements in literacy rates and enhance its workforce's skills and economic productivity.

Shifting focus from trivial issues, Pakistan can draw inspiration from China's export-led growth strategy, understanding and implementing the methodologies that propelled China to become a leading global exporter of manufactured goods.

Moreover, learning from China's restructuring of its governance model, Pakistan could transition from a static and unresponsive system to a proactive government. By strategically supporting key industries and implementing policies to attract foreign investments while safeguarding domestic businesses, Pakistan can foster a more dynamic and competitive economic environment.

It's vital for us to move beyond the self-defeating narrative that paints our nation as corrupt and directionless. Instead, we should aspire to emulate the Chinese model of rapid progress, focusing on economic transformation, enhanced living standards, and bolstered sectors like education and healthcare.

Recognizing the destructive trajectory we're on, it's imperative to comprehend that this path undermines the very fabric of our society. It also serves as a recipe for a continued decline in Pakistan's international standing, impacting various global ratings and indices used by nations, institutions, traders, and businessmen to gauge meaningful relationships with countries. Let us make a collective commitment to address internal challenges and pursue a trajectory that uplifts the nation and its citizens and prove the statement of Barrister Aitzaz Ahsan wrong. China did it, so can we.

Writer is Former Press Secretary to the President, Former Press Minister to the Embassy of Pakistan to France and Former MD, SRBC



Analysis

Qamar Bashir

Pakistan's Serene Airlines inaugural flight arrives in Beijing, China

Spokesman Report

BELJING: Pakistan's private Serene Airlines started its operation for China with its inaugural flight arriving at the Daxing International Airport Beijing on Sunday. The flight originated from Karachi while stopping in Islamabad and then left for Daxing airport in Beijing. The maiden flight was received amidst a warm welcome ceremony.

Speaking at the inaugural ceremony, Caretaker Adviser to the Prime Minister on Aviation, Air Marshal (Retd) Farhat Hussain Khan described the commencement of this flight operation as another milestone in advancing China-Pakistan relations through connectivity, travel and tourism. It also signified Pakistan's commitment to providing seamless travel facilities to the people of the two nations and fostering strong people-to-people ties.

Pakistan Ambassador to China, Khalil Hashmi said that the launch-



ing of airline services by the private sector will not only strengthen the air bridge between Pakistan and China but also boost investment, trade, travel and tourism.

The new route is poised to facilitate increased business, tourism, and cultural exchange between the two nations, he added. He noted that in

addition to bolstering economic ties, increasing air connectivity aims to contribute to the growth of the tourism sector as well. As part of the launch celebration, Serene Airlines hosted a ceremonial event at Beijing Daxing Airport, attended by government officials, diplomats and representatives from the aviation industry of China

and Pakistan. Meanwhile, the Head of Serene Air's Beijing representative office, Zeng Qiang said that the inauguration of the new China-Pakistan international route signifies the growing friendship between our two countries. We are optimistic about increased Pak-China collaboration in the aviation sector." He also highlighted the recent signing of a General Sales Agent (GSA) joint venture agreement between Serene Air and Joyu Group Air, a prominent conglomerate in China's tourism and technology sector. This partnership plays a crucial role in the marketing and sale of the newly launched route. By harnessing the industry chain capabilities and resource advantages of both companies, this collaboration aims to provide global travelers with a diverse range of products and high-quality services, he added. The airline will operate twice a week, symbolizing the strengthening of bilateral ties between Pakistan and China.

Plane with 117 Russians evacuated from Gaza takes off for Moscow



TASS

MOSCOW: A Russian emergency ministry's plane with 117 Russian nationals who were evacuated from the Gaza Strip on Saturday has taken off from Cairo for Moscow, the emergency ministry said.

"The Russian emergency ministry's plane has taken off from Cairo for Moscow. The Il-76 plane is carrying 117 compatriots to Russia. They are accompanied by the ministry's medics and psychologists," it said.

Since November 12, more than 550 Russians, including 230 children, have been evacuated from the Gaza Strip. A total of 408 of them have already been taken to Moscow by the emergency ministry's four flights.

Russian Foreign Ministry Spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said earlier that the lists of those willing to be evacuated from the Gaza Strip have more than 1,000 names. Increasingly more Russians are seeking to evacuate from the enclave, the Russian emergency ministry said and pledged to take every one of them to the homeland.

Int'l forum on propaganda of hatred, violence in media to be held in Jeddah on Nov 26

News Desk

JEDDAH: International forum on the "propaganda of hatred and violence in media" organized by the Union of OIC News Agencies (UNA) and the Assistant Secretariat for Corporate Communication in the Muslim World League (MWL) will be held here on November 26 (Sunday). The forum will be attended by the directors of news agencies in UNA member states, heads of international unions of news agencies, representatives of international media institutions, and media organs affiliated with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, in addition to a large number of diplomats and journalists.

The forum aims to provide an international platform for discussing ways to reduce the fanning of hatred and violence in the media and to work on enhancing the role of responsible and balanced media. This is especially relevant to media coverage of sensitive cultural and religious issues, according to a press release issued by UNA. Additionally, the forum seeks to explore ways in which media can invest in promoting communication between religions and cultures. Furthermore, the forum aims to provide general guidelines and principles for media dealing with complex and sensitive issues that often serve as a cause for disputes and conflicts. This will be achieved through sessions and panel discussions involving officials, media experts, intellectuals, and religious leaders.

US to Issue 'Visa Bans against Israeli Extremists' - POLITICO

News Desk

ISLAMABAD: Biden has ordered his administration to draw up a plan of sanctions against Israeli settlers who attack or harass Palestinians in the West Bank, Politico reported.

United States President Joe Biden has ordered his administration to draw up a plan of sanctions against Israeli Jewish settlers who attack or harass Palestinians in the West Bank, Politico reported on Saturday, citing a confidential document.

A cabinet memo was reportedly read out to the outlet by a senior US official.

Settlers on the Move: 'Season of Blessing' Turns Bloody in the West Bank

The memo had been sent to top Biden administration officials, including US Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen, directing their departments "to develop policy options for expeditious



action against those responsible for the conduct of violence in the West Bank." A list of possible restrictions is said to include visa bans.

The US may impose restrictions specifically on persons who "have directly or indirectly engaged in actions or policies that threaten the security

or stability of the West Bank," and who have taken part in intimidating or displacing civilians there, the document reportedly says.

Young Palestinian Man Killed during Jewish Settler Attack in Huwvara

Other grounds for sanctions could allegedly include human rights viola-

tions and actions that "significantly obstruct, disrupt or prevent efforts to achieve a two-state solution."

In an op-ed published on Saturday in the Washington Post, Biden reaffirmed his commitment to the two-state solution.

While refraining from calling for a ceasefire in Gaza, Biden wrote that he was opposed to any forcible displacement of Palestinians from the enclave, and to its reoccupation or blockading by Israeli forces.

He also noted that he told Tel Aviv that "extremist violence against Palestinians in the West Bank must stop."

To punish those engaged in those activities, Washington is ready "to take [its] own steps, including issuing visa bans against extremists attacking civilians in the West Bank," Biden added.

Over 600,000 Israelis live in Jewish-only settlements across occupied East Jerusalem and the West Bank in violation of international law.

Palestine Bleeds Again

Heartless Israel dumps anger on innocent Palestinians in Gaza

Amjad Mehmood

The innocent Palestinians of Gaza City have been facing deadly carnage from the Israeli forces since October 7, 2023. According to media reports, over 12,000 innocent Palestinians including a minimum of 4,500 children and females are martyred by Israeli forces while thousands more are missing or injured under the debris. It's been over a month since Israeli missiles invaded Gaza Strip, a land of 2.3 million population. The destruction is unprecedented as a result of Israeli government's inimical approach by violating all of war rules and launching the most intense bombing campaigns in recent history. Reportedly, Israeli forces launched 12,000 attacks across the besieged territory of Gaza from October 7 to November 1, 2023.

According to the Euro-Med Human Rights Monitor, as reported by Al-Jazeera, Israel has dropped more than 25,000 tonnes of explosives on the Gaza Strip since the start of war which is equivalent to two nuclear bombs. To compare the intensity of explosives showered on Palestinians in Gaza, one can easily understand that the nuclear bomb "Little Boy" dropped by the US on Hiroshima in Japan during World War II generated 15,000 tonnes of high explosives which destroyed everything within a one-mile radius.

Al-Jazeera reported that according to satellite image analysis based on Sentinel-1 radar data by researchers Corey Scher of CUNY Graduate Center and Jamon Van Den Hoek of Oregon State University, about 18% of overall buildings in Gaza Strip have been damaged since the start of war. This damage is further categorized as 30-40% in North Gaza, 24-32% in Gaza City, 6-9% in Deir el-Balah, 5-8% in Khan Younis and 3-5% in Rafah.



Photo by Mohammed Al-Masri/Reuters

The recent satellite images and photographs that surfaced on media platforms show that buildings in the entire city are leveled to the ground including hospitals, schools, mosques, churches, and homes. Food, water, communication, internet, and medical systems in Gaza were completely trampled after Israeli forces attacks. The reports collected by the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), World Health Organization (WHO), and the Palestinian government depict that about 222,000 residential units were damaged with more than 40,000 completely destroyed while 278 educational facilities, 270 healthcare facilities, 9 places of worship, 45 ambulances and 11 bakeries are either damaged or completely destroyed as a result of Israeli attacks up to November 7, 2023. The largest medical facility in the Gaza Strip, Al-Shifa Hospital is one of 270 healthcare facilities that the Israeli military has attacked.

The traumatic situation in

Palestine jolted the world and protests started everywhere including in the United States, United Kingdom, Europe, Middle East, and Asia against the Palestinians' genocide. The millions of protesters chanted against Israeli provocations and stressed upon their governments and world superpowers to stop the war in Gaza.

The British Empire took control of the area known as "Palestine" after the defeat of the Ottoman Empire which ruled in the Middle East during World War I. The tension between Jews and Palestinian Arabs started when the United Kingdom started to establish a 'national home' in Palestine for Jewish refugees. The Balfour Declaration of 1917, a pledge made by then Foreign Secretary Arthur Balfour to Britain's Jewish community set the tone of the century's biggest dispute over the peace of land. This declaration was also endorsed by the newly-created League of Nations (later formed as the United Nations) in 1922. The number of Jewish

refugees in the state of Palestine grew significantly between the 1920s to 1940s as a majority of them were fleeing from persecution in Europe, especially the Nazi Holocaust in World War II. The Jewish settlement in Palestine caused the violence between Jews and Arabs. Later in 1947, the United Nations voted for Palestine to be split into separate Jewish (Israel) and Arab (Palestine) states, with Jerusalem becoming an international city. In 1948, incapable of solving the problem, Britain withdrew and Jewish leaders declared the creation of the State of Israel.

BBC News in its recent report explained the history of the Israel-Gaza war stating that Israel occupied East Jerusalem, West Bank, most of the Syrian Golan Heights, Gaza, and the Egyptian Sinai Peninsula as a result of the 1967 war and pushed the Palestinian refugees and their descendants to live in Gaza and the West Bank, as well as in neighboring Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. The Israeli government never allowed the Pales-



Photo by Abed Rahim Khatib/picture-alliance/dpa/AP

tinians to return to their homes considering them a threat to its existence as a Jewish state. Currently, Israel occupies the West Bank and claims the whole of Jerusalem as its capital, and contrary to this Palestinians claim East Jerusalem as their capital. The United States is the only country on earth that recognized Jerusalem as Israel's capital during President Donald Trump's regime. During the last 50 years, Israel has built settlements in the West Bank and East Jerusalem and made the place home to 0.7 million Jews. The United Nations Security Council considers these settlements illegal under international law however, Israeli obduracy admits no law in the world and no rules of humanity.

Media has very limited access in the war zone in Gaza and communication systems are completely wrecked by Israeli forces attacks. The reporting about actual damage on the ground is quite a difficult task hence, embedded journalism through military-con-

trolled mouthpieces is at its peak presenting the whole scenario as a counterattack in self-defense against Hamas militants who have launched a targeted operation to damage Israel on October 7, 2023. The Jews' stronghold in Western media is serving the common cause of greater Israel by justifying the war crimes. Turkish and Arab media outlets are reporting to some extent the facts of Israeli forces' deadly attacks on innocent inhabitants of Gaza.

Despite the public dissent, President Biden's government in the US and Prime Minister Rishi Sunak's government in the United Kingdom completely backing to Israel. The role of United Nations Security Council (UNSC) and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) is not more than a puppet. Both global leading platforms restricted their role to request Israel to stop attacking Gaza when already over 12,000 innocent Palestinians have lost their lives and the city is tumbledown.

Palestine and Israel have cher-

ished vitriolic ties since the British Empire laid the foundation of conflict by accommodating Jewish refugees in the state of Palestine. Over the years, the mighty Israel occupied over 60% of the Palestinian land. In recent media talks, Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu expressed his thoughts to remain 'determined' to continue bombardment on Gaza.

Peaceful coexistence within the legitimate boundaries is the only solution for Palestine and Israel. Wars just bring destruction and ruin the lives of people for years to come. Gaza is facing non-stop hostility and an inhuman attitude from Israeli forces. The symbolic support of the world is neither stopping Israel from illegal oppression nor healing the wounds of innocent Palestinians. The world superpowers, the United Nations, and influential Muslim countries should play a proactive cum practical role in stopping the carnage of Palestinians by halting Israel to carry out further war crimes.

Solidarity with Palestine

LAHORE: Ameer-e Jamaat-e-Islami Sirajul Haq addressing the participants of the Gaza March in Lahore.



Photo: Spokesman

Thousands attend JI's Gaza Solidarity March in Lahore

Bureau Report

LAHORE: Thousands of citizens have attended Jamaat-e-Islami's (JI) Gaza March in Lahore to show solidarity with Palestinians in besieged densely populated strip and occupied West Bank suffering from the aggression of the Israeli occupation forces.

Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) organised the Gaza Solidarity March at Lahore's Punjab University (PU) Campus Bridge today which was attended by thousands of citizens including women and children. The massive public event was addressed

by JI Pakistan Ameer Sirajul Haq, politicians and clerics. Protesters chanted pro-Palestinian slogans and demanded an end to Israeli aggression in Gaza.

While addressing the Gaza March, JI Pakistan Ameer Sirajul Haq said that the innocent children of Gaza were waiting for the help of Muslim countries amid Israeli bombardment.

He slammed rulers of the Muslim countries for doing nothing for the relief of Palestinians except making tall claims. He also criticised that the rulers of the Muslim countries did nothing in the Organisa-

tion of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) summit except for consolation.

Related: Muslim rulers must provide military aid to Palestinians in Gaza: Sirajul Haq

"A dead resolution was passed in the OIC summit, ineffective to provide any relief to the Palestinians and stop inhumane actions of the Israeli occupation forces."

He lauded the Western nationals including the United Kingdom (UK), France, Australia, Ireland, United States (US) and Canada for showing solidarity with the Palestin-

ians. Haq said that the French people forced their government to change its narrative through a powerful campaign.

"The people of Australia and Canada have also exhibited solidarity with Palestinians. I also thank the people of Ireland, Washington and London for raising strong voices for Gaza."

The JI Pakistan Ameer said that the massive rally was a 'message of death' to the enemy. "Israel is an evil state created by the imperialist forces. Palestinians have never accepted Israel and they are standing firmly against the occupation

forces."

He said that Israeli people are also protesting against Benjamin Netanyahu. Our public event gives a message to Gaza that they are not alone and we are standing side-by-side in this Jihad."

Sirajul Haq slammed the Pakistani rulers, saying, "I wanted to see the prime minister, chief minister, Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) politicians in this march but the political personalities are currently busy lobbying in Balochistan and Sindh [for the forthcoming general elections]."

Yemeni Armed Forces seize Israeli ship in Red Sea: Al-Mayadeen

Monitoring Desk

The Yemeni Naval Forces captured an Israeli-linked ship in the Red Sea, the Lebanese Al Mayadeen news network reported on Sunday, citing sources familiar with the matter.

Reportedly, 52 crew members were detained, Al Mayadeen's sources added, revealing that the Yemeni Armed Forces were working on revealing their identities and nationalities.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's office confirmed the news, blaming Iran for the incident.

According to Israeli media, "the ship captured by the Yemenis is owned by Israeli businessman Rami Ungar."

"The cargo ship, Bahamas-flagged Galaxy Leader, was leased from a British company partly owned by Israeli Rami Ungar to a Japanese company," The Jerusalem post reported.

An Israeli military spokesperson described the event as "a very dangerous development."



Earlier on Sunday, Yemen's Armed Forces, allied with the Ansarallah resistance movement, had announced that they would target all vessels associated with Israel in the Red Sea, calling on countries to withdraw their citizens operating on such ships.

"To provide relief to our oppressed people in Gaza," the armed forces announced, "they will target ... ships carrying the flag of the Zionist entity, ships operated by Israeli companies, ships owned by Israeli companies."

Jawad Sohrab Malik meets Pakistani Community in Jeddah



Spokesman Report

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Mr. Jawad Sohrab Malik held a detail exchange of views with Saudi employers and Human resource management executives in Jeddah. During the meeting SAPM highlighted the importance of human resource development as per requirements of Saudi market and economy. He emphasized that the close coordination and robust exchange of ideas among stakeholders of overseas employment is of critical value to ensure capitalization of the opportunities for Pakistani manpower in the market of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

SAPM also held an interaction with the Pakistani community at the Consulate

General of Pakistan Jeddah. Community notables and businessmen interacted with SAPM on wide range of issues including issues faced by expatriates. SAPM assured the community that the government of Pakistan is fully committed to support Pakistani community in Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and other countries. Mr. Malik shared the ongoing efforts being made by the Ministry of Overseas Pakistanis to look after the interests of overseas Pakistanis, particularly those living in the kingdom, and ensure their welfare. The event was attended by a cross-section of the Pakistani diaspora in Jeddah, including businessmen, professionals, and entrepreneurs. The SAPM's visit to KSA is part of an effort to further strengthen manpower employment cooperation between the two countries.

WHO warns of global measles threat as Pakistan fails in vaccinating children

Monitoring Desk

GENEVA: A latest report warns that measles cases in 2022 increased by 18 per cent and deaths by 43pc globally – a sharp increase when compared to 2021 – following years of declines in vaccination coverage.

"This takes the estimated number of measles cases to 9 million and deaths to 136,000 – mostly among children," says a report prepared jointly by the World Health Organization (WHO) and the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Unfortunately, Pakistan is among the 10 countries – for the second consecutive year – with the highest

number of infants who did not receive MCV1 (first dose of the measles-containing vaccine). These 10 countries accounted for 55pc of all children worldwide who did not receive MCV1.

Nigeria (3 million), Democratic Republic of the Congo (1.8 million), Ethiopia (1.7 million), India (1.1 million), Pakistan (1.1 million), Angola (0.8 million), Philippines (0.8 million), Indonesia (0.7 million), Brazil (0.5 million) and Madagascar (0.5 million).

According to the WHO, measles continues to pose a relentlessly increasing threat to children. In 2022, 37 countries experienced large or disruptive measles outbreaks compared with 22 countries



in 2021. Of the countries experiencing outbreaks, 28 were in Africa, six in the Eastern Mediterranean, two in the Southeast Asia and one in Europe.

"The increase in measles outbreaks and deaths is staggering, but unfortunately, not unexpected given the declining vaccination rates we've seen in the past few years," said John Vertefeuille, director of CDC's Global Immunization Division.

"Measles cases anywhere pose a risk to all countries and communities where

people are under-vaccinated. Urgent, targeted efforts are critical to prevent measles disease and deaths."

Measles is preventable with two doses of measles vaccine. While a modest increase in global vaccination coverage occurred in 2022 from 2021, there were still 33 million children who missed a measles vaccine dose: nearly 22 million missed their first dose and an additional 11 million missed their second dose.

The global vaccine coverage rate of the first dose, at 83pc, and second dose, at 74pc, were still well under the 95pc coverage with two doses that is necessary to protect communities from outbreaks.

Low-income countries, where the risk of death from measles is highest, continue to have the lowest vaccination rates at only 66pc – a rate that shows no recovery at all from the backsliding during the pandemic.

"The lack of recovery in measles vaccine coverage in low-income countries following the pandemic is an alarm bell for action. Measles is called the inequity virus for good reason. It is the disease that will find and attack those who aren't protected," said Kate O'Brien, WHO Director for Immunization, Vaccine and Biologicals.

"Children everywhere have the right to be protected by the lifesaving measles vaccine, no matter where they live."

Fazlur Reman elected JUI-F chief for five years

Bureau Report

PESHAWAR: The Jamiat-i-Ulema Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) Central General Council elected on Sunday Fazlur Rehman chief of JUI-F and Abdul Ghafoor Haideri, general secretary for the next five years.

JUI-F general meeting held under chairmanship of Maulana Fazlur Rehman and members from Sindh, Punjab, KP, tribal districts, Balochistan, Gilgat Baltistan and Azad Kashmir participated in the meeting.

JUI-F spokesperson Muhammad Aslam Ghori said a report was presented in the meeting regarding the Election on February 8, Gaza current situation and Fazlur Rehman's visit to Qatar.

Crackdown continues against fake medicines

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: The crackdown is underway against illegal profiteering on drugs and fake unregistered medicines across the country. The crackdown was started on the direction of caretaker federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan, spokesperson of the Ministry of Health said on Sunday.

He said that distributors, pharmacies and medical stores are being raided in all major cities across the country. He said in Karachi, the DRAP team inspected the pharmacies and medical stores in different areas. The team raided Irfan Medicos in DHA Karachi and various pharmacies in Gulshan Iqbal and Gulistan Johar. He said that Heparin injection was being sold at more than the approved price. He added Heparin injection was being sold for Rs 3500 instead of Rs 800. Similarly, Tramal Injection and Augmentin DS Suspension Hydraline Syrup were also being sold at a higher price. He said that Ventolin Inhaler Tegeral and tablets Augmentin DS were also being sold at higher prices.

Govt strongly committed to fighting T. B. Free diagnosis and treatment available at 1700 centers across Pakistan

Commerce Desk

ISLAMABAD: Government of Pakistan is strongly committed to eliminating T. B. and all out effort is being made in this regard. This was shared by Federal Secretary Health Ifthikhar Ali Shallwani while addressing the Union Conference on Lung Health in Paris. Substantial resources have been allocated by the Government for diagnosis and quality treatment of the disease, he shared.

The Government has committed 33 million dollars to the cause. There are 1700 free state-of-the-art diagnostic and treatment facilities operating in the length and breadth of Pakistan, he shared. During the Year 2022, more than 424,566 TB cases were successfully treated across the country. The treatment success rate remained 94% of the TB cases notified in Year 2021. The diagnostic services include the network of 1,800 microscopy labs, 420 molecular diagnostics GeneXpert, 17 Culture labs and 3 DST labs.

Pakistan budget insufficient to tackle climate change: IMF

City Desk

ISLAMABAD: The International Monetary Fund (IMF) said on Sunday Pakistan had limited budget to tackle the aggravated climate condition in the country.

An IMF report on public investment indicated, Pakistani economy might be affected by 9 percent by the natural disruptions.

The report said Pakistan was among the countries more likely to be effected by the climate change and earlier 30 million people were affected by the floods in 2022.

The report said Pakistan's developmental budget was 14 time more than the climate budget and every year since 2000, Pakistan was facing over \$2billion losses due to the climate change. Around 500 people were being killed and over four million people were affected, the report said.

Agriculture and infrastructure was being destroyed in Pakistan, the report said, adding that Pakistan was required to prioritise climate change projects.

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