

#### Coordinators appointed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Office (Public) appointed Dr Talha Muhammad Younis Al Kashmiri as the Coordinator of Prime Minister for Arab Digital Media. Waqas Mehmood was appointed as Coordinator of Prime Minister for Digital Media. Prime Minister Office made both the appointments on honorary basis and in this connection had issued the notifications.



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# Prime Minister directs reduction in energy sector circular debt

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday directed the officials concerned to reduce the circular debt in the energy sector.

The prime minister was chairing a high-level meeting here regarding the energy sector. During the meeting, the participants considered the adoption of a comprehensive strategy to control the present circular debt in the oil and gas sectors.

PM Shehbaz said the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz government completely eradicated the circular debt during its tenure of 2013-2018. He resolved to bring the problem of debt under control with continuous efforts and effective planning.

He directed that reforms in the energy sector should be undertaken in a way that the circular debt could be eliminated.

The distribution companies of natural gas should improve the system of recovery of bills, he ordered, adding no additional burden should be put on the gas and electricity consumers. He said the system for payment of bills of gas and electricity should also be made effective.

The meeting also reviewed the energy-saving plan, which would be presented before the Federal Cabinet on Tuesday.

Chief Ministers of provinces were also invited to the cabinet meeting.

The prime minister instructed that all possible steps should be taken for ensuring an increase in revenue from the energy sector. He said the energy transmission system should be improved and the losses and theft of electricity and gas should be stopped.

## No-confidence motion submitted against CM Elahi

#### F.P. Report

LAHORE: The opposition members submitted a no-confidence motion against Chief Minister Pervaiz Elahi in Punjab Assembly on Monday.

The opposition member, including PPP Parliamentary Leader Hassan Murtaza, PML-N's Khawaja Imran Nazir, Chief Whip of PML-N Tahir Khalil

Sindhu and others reached the Punjab Assembly Secretariat and submitted the no-trust motion on Monday night. The Secretary Punjab Assembly Inayat Hussain Lak received the documents.

The document submitted by the opposition members of the PPP and the PML-N of the provincial assembly have lost confidence in CM Pervaiz Elahi's ability to

lead the house as per the Constitution.

The no-trust move was moved under "Article 136 of the Constitution read with Rule 23 of the Rules of Procedure Provincial Assembly of Punjab (PAP), 1997".

Separately, a no-trust motion has also been submitted against PA Speaker Sibtain Khan under Article 53 of the Constitution.

## Imran forms body to work out seat adjustment

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Imran Khan on Monday formed a three-member committee to discuss seat adjustment with the PML-Q for the next elections.

It stated in media reports that PTI Vice President Shah Mahmood Qureshi led the committee while former defence minister Parvez Khattak and former information minister Fawad Chaudhry were its members.

The committee would hold its first meeting with Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and his son Moonis Elahi on Tuesday to decide SOPs for negotiations. The committee, sources said, would also review the electoral position of the PTI in constituencies where the PML-Q was asking for seat adjustment. It would later submit a final report on negotiations to the PTI chief.

The PML-Q has demanded seat adjustments in more than two dozen constituencies with the PTI before the dissolution of the Punjab Assembly. Last

week, Mr Khan announced that the assemblies in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would be dissolved on Dec 23.

Meanwhile, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) said on Monday new provincial assemblies would be elected for five

years if the PTI disbanded the Punjab and KP assemblies. It said by-election could not be held now after dissolution of an assembly. It also expressed resolve to hold polls within 90 days in line with the Constitution of Pakistan after the dissolution of assemblies.

### Khan's interim bail extended

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) on Monday extended the interim bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan in a case filed against him after demonstrations were held following his disqualification by the ECP in the Toshakhana case. As per details, the anti-terrorism court (ATC) judge Raja Jawad Abbas Hasan resumed the hearing where the PTI chairman's counsel Babar Awan told the court that the former prime minister and PTI chief Imran Khan is in Lahore and cannot appear before the court. The court accepted Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman's plea for exemption from personal appearance in the case and extended the interim bail till January 10.

Earlier, an anti-terrorism court (ATC) reserved a verdict on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders' pre-arrest bail plea in case of violating section 144. It is pertinent to mention here that several members of the local leadership of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) were booked in a terrorism case over alleged vandalism during the protests in Islamabad after ECP disqualified Imran Khan in Toshakhana reference. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) disqualified former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Imran Khan in the Toshakhana reference under Article 63(1)(p).

## Maryam: 'Ungrateful Khan' keeps on changing colour like chameleon

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum on Monday dubbed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan an "ungrateful person", who would change "his colour like a chameleon" once his motives were achieved.

Her remarks came in the backdrop of the current political situation that evolved after Imran Khan's announcement for the dissolution of assemblies in both Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab.

"Imran Khan is a political chameleon who changes his colour to fulfill his motives," she said while accusing him of a conspiracy aimed at bringing political instability to the country.

She said Imran Khan had the audacity to offer a lifetime extension to those whom he termed "Mir Sadiq, Mir Jafir and neutrals" in public gatherings.

**Marriyum felicitates newly elected office bearers of IHC Journalist Association**

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Monday congratulated the newly elected office bearers of Islamabad High Court (IHC) Journalist Association including its President Rizwan Qazi and General Secretary Hussain Ahmed Chaudhry.



She also felicitated the IHC Journalists Association newly elected governing body as well as its Senior Vice President Farah Mahjabeen, Senior Joint Secretary Imran Mansab Khan, Finance Secretary Haseeb Riaz Malik, Joint Secretary Basharat Raja and Press Secretary Ambreen Ali.

The minister, in a news statement, said the election of newly elected office bearers showed that the journalists reposed full confidence in them.

She hoped that the elected members would meet the expectations of their fellow reporters. The role of court reports in journalism was crucial, she remarked.

## ISPR: Soldier, two civilian martyred in suicide attack

RAWALPINDI (INP): A soldier of Pakistan Army and two civilians were martyred when a suicide bomber exploded him in North Waziristan district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said on Monday.

According to military's media wing, a suicide bomber exploded him in Miranshah area of district North Waziristan.

A soldier of Pakistan Army identified as Naik Abid 33, hailing from district Mansehra and two civilians embraced martyrdom in the suicide attack.

The intelligence agencies have initiated investigations to find out details about the suicide bomber who carried out the attack, his handlers and facilitators.

## Court extends interim bail of Buzdar till Jan 5

LAHORE (APP): An accountability court on Monday extended pre-arrest interim bail of former chief minister Punjab Sardar Usman Buzdar till January 5 in an illegal liquor licence case.

Accountability Court Judge Naseem Ahmad Virk conducted the hearing on the bail application of the former chief minister. Usman Buzdar also appeared before the court on expiry of his interim bail.

The National Accountability Bureau's (NAB) investigation officer submitted that the NAB regional board had recommended closing the inquiry into the illegal liquor licence case and the matter had been sent to NAB headquarters for final decision. He further submitted that only the NAB headquarters had the powers to close the inquiry.

At this, the court adjourned further hearing till January 5 and sought a report, besides extending pre-arrest interim bail of the former chief minister.

The NAB launched investigations against Usman Buzdar and officials of Excise & Taxation Department Punjab on charges of misuse of authority, corruption and corrupt practices.

It was alleged that the accused issued an illegal liquor licence to an under-construction hotel in violation of rules.

## FIA submits reply to LHC on Imran's petition

LAHORE (APP): The Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Monday submitted its reply to the Lahore High Court (LHC) in a petition filed by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan challenging a call-up notice by the FIA in the cipher audio leak scandal.

The reply was submitted before Justice Asjad Javaid Ghural, who heard the petition filed by the PTI chairman. In its four-page reply, the FIA requested the court to dismiss the petition as it was inadmissible. The agency further requested the court to direct the petitioner to join the inquiry as he was deliberately avoiding the process of law by not joining the inquiry proceedings.

Imran Khan's counsel sought time for submitting arguments in response to the reply filed by the FIA, during the proceedings. He further submitted that the matter should be heard after winter vacations.

Subsequently, the court conceded the request and adjourned further hearing, besides extending the interim relief given to the petitioner.

The LHC had suspended the operation of the call-up notice issued to PTI chairman Imran Khan by the FIA in the cipher audio leak scandal.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif chairs a meeting to devise a strategy on reduction of circular debt in Energy Sector.

## 300 terror incidents show poor law, order situation in KP: Rana

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Interior Rana Sanaullah Khan on Monday said there was poor law and order situation in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) as some 300 terrorist incidents had occurred in the province in a year, which was alarming.

The minister, in a statement, said the report of the national agencies about the performance of the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) of KP was an eye-opener, but the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) government there had done nothing in that regard.

Instead of strengthening the CTD, they made swaths of people with guns attack the Federation, he added. The Federal Government had offered to help build the capacity of KP police and CTD, but received no response from the provincial government till-date, the minister said.

Rana Sana said the PTI claimed that the KP had made progress during its nine-year government, but it had no money for the salaries and pensions of the employees or the martyrs.

He said there was a question mark on the 150 percent difference between the CTD Shuhada (martyrs) packages in Punjab and KP. Likewise, there had been a 70 percent difference between the salaries of CTD Punjab and CTD KP personnel. There was no training school for the CTD KP, he added. He said the KP government had paid no attention to improving the CTD and neither it had raised the issue with the Federal Government during the last nine years.

The appointment of only one officer of SSP (senior superintendent of police) rank in the province, he added, was proof of the inco-

mpetence of PTI Chairman Imran Khan and his chief minister. The attitude of Imran and his "company of bribers" on the issue of terrorism was criminal, rather it amounted to helping the terrorists, he said.

Rana Sana alleged that Imran Khan had time "to steal watches", but had no time to save people from terrorists. He was responsible for ruining KP's CTD. Instead of fighting the Federation and institutions, he should use that time in fighting terrorism, he added.

He claimed that the PTI's performance despite being in power for the last nine years was nil. The KP people had to bear the cost of Imran Khan's incompetence and corruption in the form of terrorism. The PTI leader was busy dissolving assemblies, while the terrorists were killing the innocent people of KP, he added.

## UN summit agreement to protect biodiversity historic: PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday said the agreement to protect a third of the planet by 2030 reached at the COP15 United Nations Biodiversity Summit was truly nothing short of being historic.

The prime minister, in a tweet on his Twitter handle, said, "Protecting our biodiversity is key to putting nature on a path to recovery. It reflects humanity's collective resolve to protect Mother Earth."

## Proposals discussed to reform energy sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar here on Monday chaired a follow-up meeting on reforms in Energy Sector.

The participants discussed in detail viable proposals presented by the relevant ministries for introducing reforms in power and gas sectors aiming to bring efficiency in the system, minimize wastage of energy and provide relief to the masses.

According to a press statement issued by the finance ministry, the proposals focused on bringing sustainability to the energy sector and thereby achieving economic growth in the country.

Among others, the meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Power, Khuram Dastgir Khan; Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Dr. Ayesha Ghous Pasha; Minister of State for Petroleum, Musadik Masood Malik; Special Assistant to Prime Minister on Finance, Tariq Bajwa, Secretary Power and senior officers, the statement added.

## Islamabad LB elections likely to be delayed

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The local bodies' elections are likely to be delayed in Islamabad. On the request of the Metropolitan Corporation (MC), the number of new Union Councils (UCs) are likely to be increased. The Home Ministry has sent a summary to the cabinet seeking an increase in the number of Union Councils. The summary has demanded that the cabinet increase the number of Union Councils from 101 to 125.

"101 Union Councils have been created in proportion to the 2017 population. Due to the increase in the population of Islamabad, the number of Union Councils should be increased to 125," the summary demanded. It is to be noted here that the election commission set December 31 as the date for local bodies' elections.

## BHC quashes all FIRs registered against Swati

QUETTA (INP): The Balochistan High Court (BHC) on Monday quashed all eight FIRs registered against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), Senator Azam Swati, in the province.

The BHC Justice Abdul Hameed Baloch while announcing a reserved verdict directed to quash all the cases registered against

Azam Swati after his controversial tweets against the state's institution.

It may be noted that the PTI lawmaker was booked in eight cases in Bela, Windar, Chaman and other areas of the province following his arrest by the FIA team from Islamabad.

Earlier, the Sindh police quashed all cases registered

against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Senator Azam Swati in the Larkana division.

The incarcerated PTI leader was arrested by the Sindh Police from Quetta on Saturday, and presented in front of a judicial magistrate in Qambar on Sunday. The court handed over Swati to police on three-day physical remand.



# 1320 MW coal-fired energy added to national grid: CM

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that 1320 MW of coal-fired energy has been added to the national grid during the current month and another 660 MW would be added next year.

This he said on Monday while presiding over a board meeting of Thar Coal Energy here at the CM House.

The meeting was attended by Minister Education Syed Sardar Shah, Minister Energy Imtiaz Shaikh, Advisor to CM on Law Murtaza Wahab, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, PSCM Fayaz Jatoti, DG Coal Authority Khadim Channa and others.

Minister BISP Shazia Marri, Special Assistant to PM Tariq Bajwa, Federal Secretary Energy Rashid Langrial, Federal Secretary Law Raja Naeem Akbar, and others attended the meeting through video link.

Sindh Minister for Energy Imtiaz Shaikh briefing the chief minister said that Sino-Sindh

## Murad wears ranks to newly promoted police officers

KARACHI (NNI): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah performed rank wearing ceremony of the newly promoted police officers (PSP) here at CM House.

The ceremony was attended by Minister Industries Jam Ikram Dharejo, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, Inspector General of Police Ghulam Nabi Memon, Secretary to CM Raheem Shaikh, and others.

The CM wore ranks to newly promoted PSP officers to grade BS-21, including Munir Shaikh, Tariq Dharejo, and Khaid Rind.

The PSP officers promoted to grade BS-20 wore the rank include Usman Ghani Siddiqui, Tanvir Odho, Tariq Dharejo and Attaulah Chandio.

Resources (SSR) started coal excavation work in

Block-I in January 2022 it has completed 99 percent of work to excavate 7.8 mtpa coal by December 31, 2022. He added that it was a CPEC project.

The CM was told that the Power engineering Company has installed two 660 MW coal-fired power plants for \$2 billion. Both the power plants successfully synchronized with the national grid on December 2 and December 11, 2022.

Imtiaz Shaikh told the chief minister that SECM planned to expand the mine from 7.6 Mtpa to 12.2 Mtpa mine. He said that Lucky Electric Power has started work on a 660 MW power plant for which it would be supplied 3.6 Mtpa coal. This plant would start commercial operation in 2024.

It may be noted that Thar Energy has already synchronized its 330 MW coal-fired power plant with the national Grid in October 2022 and another 330 MW would start commercial operation by 2023.

# CPEC to strengthen economy, create employment opportunities: Governor

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman has said that the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will strengthen economy, accelerate economic activities and create employment opportunities.

This was stated by him while talking to Governor Gilgit Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah who called on him at Governor House Lahore on Monday, discussed the current situation of the country and other issues of mutual interest.

Speaking on the occasion, Muhammad Balighur Rehman said the coalition government was committed

to providing relief to the people and bringing economic stability to the country.

He said that we should equip our youth with modern education so that they could play active role in the development of the country. In response to his counterpart's request regarding increasing the quota of students from Gilgit-Baltistan in the universities of Punjab, he said that efforts would be made to increase the quota of students from Gilgit-Baltistan in the universities of Punjab.

Balighur Rehman said that the people of Gilgit-Baltistan are peaceful and

it is very impressive that the crime rate in the province is very low. He further stated that the incumbent government believed in serving and providing basic facilities to the common people.

Governor Gilgit-Baltistan Syed Mehdi Shah said that it is very important to bring political and economic stability in the country for the promotion of foreign investment and tourism in Pakistan.

He further said that Gilgit-Baltistan has very beautiful tourist resorts in the world which are the center of attention of foreign tourists.



LAHORE: Pak Business Express Derailed At Jia Bagga Railway station near Lahore.

## PSP chief calls on Sindh Governor

KARACHI (APP): Pak-Sarzameen Party (PSP) chief Syed Mustafa Kamal called on Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House here on Monday.

They discussed overall situation of the country, challenges to Karachi, steps taken for the development of the city and other issues.

PSP Senior leader Anis Kaimekhani was also present on the occasion.

## SAPM Attaulah Tarar's portfolio changed

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The cabinet division on Monday issued notification of the change of portfolio of Attaulah Tarar.

Attaulah Tarar has been notified as special assistant to prime minister on interior and legal affairs.

The government has taken back his earlier portfolio of SAPM on anti-narcotics and legal affairs. According to the notification, Mr Tarar's position will be equivalent to a federal minister.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif made Mr Tarar his SAPM on interior and legal affairs on Dec 16.

## Two drown in dam near Umerkot

KARACHI (PPI): Two youths, both of whom were brothers, died Monday after falling into a dam in Kunri tehsil of Umerkot district.

According to the rescue sources, a group of youths had come to the dam on a trip when one of them slipped and fell into it.

His brother jumped into the dam to rescue him, but both of them drowned in deep water.

The deceased were identified as Shad, 17, and Anas, 15. Their bodies were shifted to Taluka Hospital of Kunri. The tragic death of two brothers sent a wave of shock and mourning among the family and the neighbours.

# CM approves Rs160 bln SIEN project for 7 districts

LAHORE (APP): Chief Minister Punjab Chaudhry Parvez Elahi has announced the biggest historic project of development of Punjab from Sutlej to Sindh and said that a wonderful plan has been devised to connect different cities with the motorway.

He said the project would also generate millions of Dollars. Chairing a meeting held in the Chief Minister's Office here on Tuesday, the Chief Minister approved the Sutlej Indus Economic Network (SIEN) Project.

He said that a new chapter of development and prosperity will open for farmers, traders, industrialists and investors. Rs.160 billion worth of the Sutlej Indus Economic Network Project (SIEN) has been approved for Kasur, Okara, Pakpattan, Vehari, Bahawalnagar, Lodhran, Bahawalpur and it would be completed in different phases. These districts would be connected with motorways, GT roads and Indus Highway, he added.

While giving details, the CM explained that in the first phase, the Kasur bypass to Lahore Ring Road G-1 SIEN Corridor will be completed with Rs.15 billion. "Seven remote districts of Punjab will be connected

with M-2, M-3, M-4, M-5 and M-11 motorways. Access to 49% of commodity-producing markets will be improved through highways. 3431 industrial units of food, agriculture and metal products will be promoted in these districts as business activities in 9 towns and small towns will be increased", he said.

Parvez Elahi said that the North-South Corridor will connect Depalpur, Pakpattan, Vehari, Multan Road, Head Sulemanki Minchinabad, Bahawalpur and Bahawalnagar Road. Changara East Interchange will be connected to Bahawalpur N-5, he added.

Meanwhile, Hasilpur will be connected with Rajana Motorway M-3 through Vehari, Burewala and Chichhwatani. Chishtian to Burewala and Sahiwal to Samundri link road will be built, he said. Bahawalnagar to Sahiwal will be connected with M-3 Motorway via Arifwala. SIEN Corridor will also be constructed from Minchinabad to Sahiwal via Pakpattan. Due to the development and creation of employment opportunities in the backward and remote districts, the pressure on the big cities will be reduced, he noted.

Allahabad will be connected to the Jaranwala Interchange M-3 Motorway through Chunian, Pattoki and Halla. Sharqpur Interchange M-3 Motorway will be connected with Raiwind Road Ring Road.

He said that establishment of specialized potato machinery centers in Pakpattan and Okara will provide economic benefits to potato farmers. By installing solar dryers and color sorters in Bahawalnagar, red chilli farmers will be able to get a better price of the crop. Vehari Industrial Estate will be converted into Agro-Industrial Park, he said and added that economic activities will increase in Kasur Small Industrial Estate and Dry Port. He said that a multi-modal freight terminal will be established in Pakpattan. Agro-industrial parks will be established in Bahawalnagar and Okara, he added.

Chief Secretary Abdullah Khan Sumbal, former Federal secretary and Chairman of Planning and Development board Salman Ghani, Secretary C&W, Secretary Planning and Development, Secretary Transport, Secretary Finance, Senior Specialist Economics Urban Unit and others attended the meeting.

# 2.8 mln people received free treatment through Sehat cards: Health Minister

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Health Minister Dr Yasmin Rashid said on Monday that providing better healthcare facilities to the people was top priority as in Punjab, more than 2.8 million citizens had received free treatment facilities through Sehat Sahulat card.

She stated this while inaugurating the 42nd Annual International Scientific Symposium here

at King Edward Medical University.

The 42nd Annual International Scientific Symposium was organized at King Edward Medical University with the collaboration of KE Almannai, KEMKANA, KEMKA UK and APNA.

Dr Yasmin Rashid said: "a professor is a role model for children as transferring knowledge to someone is a great charity".

She said that she got the opportunity to teach children in three government medical colleges of Punjab including Fatima Jinnah Medical College, King Edward Medical College and Rawalpindi Medical College.

She said that delegates from different countries came for the symposium. It

was very important to spread awareness in the symposium organized at King Edward Medical University, she added.

Dr Yasmin said that 11 mother and child hospitals were being built in Punjab. The opening of Mother & Child Block in Ganga Ram Hospital was the realization of a dream of many decades.

By the grace of Allah, a mother & child block consisting of 550 beds in Ganga Ram Hospital was operational, she said.

The provincial health minister congratulated Prof Dr Mahmoyaz and his team for organizing the international symposium.

Provincial Health Secretary Dr Ahmed Javed Qazi said the Punjab government was utilizing all

resources to provide better healthcare facilities to the people. "Through the seven medical universities of Punjab, we were providing high quality education to the children", he said.

He said that world's first University of Child Health Sciences was located in Punjab. He paid tribute to the provincial health minister Dr Yasmin Rashid for her valuable services in the health department.

Vice Chancellor King Edward Medical University Prof Dr Mahmoud Ayaz said the graduates of King Edward Medical University were still brightening the name of Pakistan in the whole world. The main objective of today's international symposium was to provide awareness to the participants, he said.



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Government and Anti Narcotics Force ANF on Monday signed agreement to run 2 drug rehabilitation centres established in Karachi.

Dr. Shereen Mustafa Secretary Social Welfare Department Government of Sindh and Lt Col Anwar Hussain Joint Director ANF signed the agreement in presence of Minister Social Welfare Department Sajid Johkio and Brigd Viqar Rizvi, Forcecommander, ANF Sindh.

As per the agreement Drug rehabilitation Center being established at Leprosy KMC hospital Manghopir and Youth development Center at Dil both Goth, Malir will be managed by the ANF.

Earlier, Chief Secretary Sindh Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput has said that rehabilitation centers for drug addicts will be established throughout Sindh and these institutions will be run under public-private partnership.

He said this today while presiding over an important meeting regarding the establishment of a center

for the rehabilitation of drug addicts in Sindh.

Commissioner Karachi Muhammad Iqbal Memon, IG Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon, Secretary School Education Ghulam Akbar Laghari, Secretary Social Welfare Department Dr. Shereen Mustafa, DG Public Private Partnership Assad Zamin and representatives of Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) participated in the meeting.

It was decided in the meeting that rehabilitation centers for drug addicts will be established in the province, which will be run under public-private partnership. Sindh Chief Secretary Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput said that provincial government will provide funds, building and other facilities and the private party will manage the drug rehabilitation centre as per international practices.

"The government will establish the centre and a well-reputed private partner will run it.", In the meeting, Chief Secretary Sindh Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput directed Director General Private Partnership Assad Zamin to prepare all the necessary

documents for the purpose.

He said private institutions for the partnership would be provided through a competitive bidding process. Sindh Chief Secretary Dr. Muhammad Sohail Rajput further said that a campaign related to drugs usage will be launched on media and social media to aware masses. He added that they are starting 2 rehabilitation centers with ANF; for which a MoU has been signed between ANF and Sindh. He further stated that all other private drug rehabilitation centers of province will be regulated through Sindh Healthcare Commission.

In the meeting, IG Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon said that police is taking action against drug dealers along with other agencies in the province; all the SSPs of the province have been given the task of taking action against drug dealers.

He further said that a SSP of a district has been given a certificate of appreciation for action against drug dealers while a senior officer is facing department enquiry in this regard.



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## PUBLIC NOTICE Auction of Gold

Finance facilities were extended by Mobilink Microfinance Bank Limited against the security of deposit and pledge of gold to the customer mentioned below. The customer has neglected and failed to repay the finance extended to them by Mobilink Microfinance Bank along with the markup thereon.

|                 |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| <b>Details:</b> |             |
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| Branch code     | 0017        |
| Date of auction | 21-Dec-2022 |
| Time            | 1:00 PM     |
| Call Deposit    | Rs. 800/-   |

| Customer Name | Account # | Address                                     |
|---------------|-----------|---|
| Ahmed Faraz   | 131172397 | Post Office Ghazi Salm Khand Tehsil Haripur |

Notice is hereby given to the customer in above mentioned that if payment of entire outstanding amount financed along with markup is not made by them to MMBL within 1 day of the publication of this notice, MMBL shall auction the gold ornaments and no further Public Notice shall be issued to call upon the customers to make the payments.

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## FEDERAL GOVERNMENT POLYCLINIC (PGMI), ISLAMABAD

### RE-TENDER NOTICE NO. F.2-5/2022-A

In pursuance of PPRA rules 2004, sealed bids are invited for the financial year 2022-2023 for following categories from the reputed firms having vast experience in the relevant fields, registered with Income Tax & Sales Tax Department if applicable and who are on Active Taxpayers List of Federal Board of Revenue:

| Sr. No. | Name of Tenders  | Opening Date & Time    |
|---------|--|------------------------|
| 01      | Medical Gases  | 05-01-2023 at 11:30 AM |
| 02      | Repair and Purchase of Allied Accessories of Medical Gases | - do -                 |
| 03      | Dental Material Items                                      | - do -                 |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Place of receiving tender documents               | Federal Govt. Polyclinic, (PGMI) Islamabad   |
| Tender documents fee                              | <b>Rs. 2,000.00 (Non-refundable)</b>   |
| Time for submission of tender / bid in Tender Box | <b>Upto 11:00 AM</b> (on dates mentioned against each tender schedule)   |
| Amount of CDR                                     | <b>@ Rs. 2%</b> amount of quoted items in shape of demand draft/pay order in favour of Executive Director FGPC, Islamabad. |

#### NOTE:

- Tender documents can be obtained from Accounts Branch, FGPC on written request on letter pad along-with copy Income Tax & Sales Tax Registration Certificate if applicable and proof of Active Taxpayer list of the FBR during working hours.
- The firms will adopt Single Stage Two-Envelopes procedure as provided in the PPRA Rules, 2004 36(b).
- No tender will be received after due date and time. Incomplete, conditional and without deposit at call bids will not be entertained.
- Please get tender form (Soft copy) in USB on the date of purchasing tender documents and must be submitted in shape of soft copy with tender documents.
- The Executive Director reserves the right to accept or reject any tender / all tenders in accordance to PPRA Rule 2004, 33(1).
- Tender is also available at PPRA website "www.ppra.org.pk."

**EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

PID(I) 3843/22



**PESHAWAR:** Cabinet of Abbasin Column Writers Association in a group photo with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali. — F.P. photo

## Chairman Red Crescent calls on Governor KP

**F.P. Report**

**PESHAWAR:** Chairman of Pakistan Red Crescent Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Habib Malik Orakzai on Monday met Governor Haji Ghulam Ali here at Governor House. On this occasion Chairman Red Crescent Habib Malik, presented a detailed report regarding aid, compensation and facilities given to the flood victims in the province.

The chairman said that Pakistan Red Crescent Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has helped more than 629,000 flood victims for which more than 630 million rupees were spent in this regard. He said that food, blankets, tents, free medical facilities and medicines, clean drinking water, warm clothes, mobile phone cards, and cash were provided to them with support of International Federation of the Red Cross, Norwegian Red Cross, International Committee of the Red

Cross and German Red Cross.

He further informed the Governor that these relief operations were done on an emergency basis, which is now progressing towards the rehabilitation of the victims. In the meeting, the Governor praised the performance of the Red Crescent and said that the Red Crescent will continue in the same way for the welfare of people in future also.

**Delegation of Abbasin Column Writers Association calls on KP Governor:** A delegation of Abbasin Column Writers Association led by Ziaul Haq Sarhadi on Monday called on Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali here at the Governor's House. The delegation presented proposals to the governor regarding close and effective communication between the columnists and the government and for solution of the problems being faced by masses.

Speaking to the delegation, Governor Ghulam Ali said that columnists play an important role in highlighting public opinion and bringing out the problems hidden from the government. Opinions and suggestions of columnists regarding government performance would be given importance, he said and assured the delegation that immediate steps would be taken to solve the problems being faced by them.

The delegation welcomed Governor Ghulam Ali's initiative to establish effective public relations. The delegation was comprising senior journalist and columnist Amjad Aziz Malik, Abed Akhtar Hasan, Saleem Afaqi, Waseem Shahid, Roshan Khattak Khan, Syed Talha Saeed, Munawer Shah Munawer, Waqar Ahmed Awan, Saima Mehboob and other prominent columnists.

## ANP announces candidates for Peshawar

**F.P. Report**

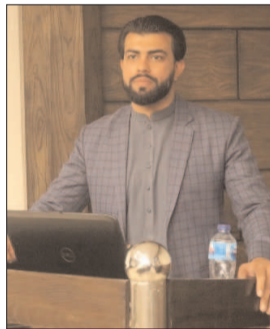
**PESHAWAR:** Awami National Party (ANP) has announced the names of candidates for next general elections 2023 from six constituencies of provincial metropolis.

In a statement issued here on Monday, Haji Siddique Afridi has been nominated as ANP candidate from PK-73 while Yasin Khalil would contest from PK-74, and Aarsala Khan Nazim from PK-75, Dr Naveedullah from PK-76, Abidullah Khan Yousafzai from PK-77 and Samar Haroon Bilour would contest from PK-78.

Chairman ANP Parliamentary Board and Provincial President, Aimal Wali Khan has approved names of the candidates for contesting in next elections from Peshawar. The ANP spokesman MPA Samar Haroon Bilour would contest from PK-78 who won this seat in 2018 elections.

## Aamir defends Ph.D thesis

**F.P. Report**



**PESHAWAR:** Engr. Muhammad Aamir Aman has successfully defended his Ph.D. in a public defense held on Friday 16th December 2022. His Ph.D. topic was "Optimal sizing and siting of Distributed Generation in a distributed system using hybrid approach".

He had supervised by Prof. Dr. Jehanzeb Khan and Dr. Sanaullah Ahmad. His foreign examiners were Prof. Dr. Raziq Yaqub from Alabama A&M University, USA, and Prof. Liu Bo from Beijing University of Posts and Telecommunications, China. While his local examiners include Prof. Dr. Yousaf Khan and Dr. Waqas Ahmad Intiaz from UET, Peshawar. The Dean faculty of engineering, Controller of Examinations, Registrar, Faculty, and students participated in his public defense.

## Jirga calls for war against narcotics

**F.P. Report**

**PESHAWAR:** Chairman, KP Qoumi Jirga Syed Kamal Shah advocate has called for launching a war on narcotics on the pattern of war against terrorism to purge society of the menace of drugs.

Talking to the media here on Monday, he said that according to unofficial statistics, the number of drug addicts in the country is over two million and we need their treatment and rehabilitation to make them useful members of society. He said that college and university students are targets of the drug mafia to ruin the future of the nation. He appreciated the ongoing crackdown against the narcotics mafia by the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police. However, he proposed a joint operation of all anti-narcotics agencies to root-out the narcotics mafia and protect the young generation. Syed Kamal Shah said that in past, their organization fought a successful battle against kidnappings for ransom and claimed that due to their efforts the crimes had declined in the province.

## Three held

**F.P. Report**

**PESHAWAR:** The Capital Metropolitan Government here on Monday launched a crackdown against encroachment in the city and apprehended three persons for hampering smooth flow of traffic.

As per the directives of Peshawar Director General Arshad Ali Zubair, DDR Noorullah and Chief Demolishing Inspector Qaisarbacha visit Ghanta Ghar, Phandu Road, Khushal Bazar and remove encroachment from the markets.

## Skyrocketing fruits prices hit common man hard

**PESHAWAR (INP):** The skyrocketed prices of fruits in Peshawar have gone beyond the purchasing power of the middle class as ironically the administration seemed helpless to ensure the sale of the fruits, a necessity for good health, on prescribed rates.

According to a market survey, the oranges, a favorite fruit in winter season, were being sold at Rs 250 to Rs 400 per dozen while in some markets the fruit vendors were charging the customers as per their own will.

The banana, a common fruit of all seasons was being sold at Rs 150 to Rs 200 while the price of per kilogram Apple was Rs 200 to Rs 300 in the mar-

ket. Abundantly available in the market, the price of per kilogram guava started from Rs 150 to Rs 200. The exorbitant prices of fruits have not only worried the middle class segment of the society but the shopkeepers also seemed troubled with the shortage of fruit buyers in the market.

APP adds: The skyrocketed prices of fruits in Peshawar have gone beyond the purchasing power of the middle class as ironically the administration seemed helpless to ensure the sale of the fruits, a necessity for good health, on prescribed rates.

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## AD&SJ confirms interm bails of PTI's activists

**Humayun Khan**

**PESHAWAR:** Additional District and Session Judge (AD&SJ) Peshawar Aftab Iqbal confirmed interm bail to five activists including Member Provincial Assembly Fazal Elahi and former Nazim Peshawar Arbab Asim for holding protest in Red Zone, on Monday.

According to prosecution, MPA Fazal Elahi, Former Nazim Arbab Asim, Ahmad Salim, Mina Khan

and Ayaz arranged protest at Red Zone Khyber Road, Peshawar following firing on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) rally.

Hundreds of PTI's activists protested in Red Zone while throwing stones on security force's vehicles and jumped into the vehicles whom videos have been viral on social media.

Latterly, police conducted investigation in this regard while nominated, Fazal Elahi, Arbab Asim, Mina Khan, Ayaz and Ahmad Salim for holding

protest in Red Zone, Khyber Road Peshawar and registered a case against them.

The counsel Ali Zaman Advocate appeared before court and argued the case while requested for confirmation of interm bail.

AD&SJ Peshawar Aftab Iqbal confirmed interm bail after conclusion of arguments to MPA Fazal Elahi, Arbab Asim, Mina Khan, Ayaz and Ahmad Salim.

## LG representatives stage protest for funds, powers

**F.P. Report**

**PESHAWAR:** The elected representatives of local government led by Chairman Ittehad Community Noor Ghulam Afridi here on Monday staged a protest demonstration in front of Peshawar Press Club (PPC) against non-transfer of funds and powers to them by the provincial government.

They said that one year of local government election has been completed on December 19 and they staged the protest on this

day to mark it as a "Dark Day", adding that the provincial government intentionally didn't provide funds and empower the LG during the period.

They criticized KP Chief Minister Mahmood Khan for not honoring his commitment made a month before to empower the LG within 15-day and said that after passage of a month time period, nothing practical was done. The participants of the protest were holding placards inscribed with slogans against PTI government and warned

that the protest would be extended to other parts of the province, if their demands were not met.

The protest besides other was attended by Vice President Jamate Islami KP, Chairmen ANP Intizar Khalil and Wali Mohammad, PTI Chairman Ataulah, JUI Chairmen Afridi Khan, and Haji Mohammad Jameel, Chairmen PPP Haji Irshad and Mehmoodul Hassan alias Wawa Khan, Nasira Ibadat Women Wing City, and minorities leader Pervaiz Iqbal.



**PESHAWAR:** Residents of Mian Essa Nandark Jalaibai holding a protest in favour of their demands. — F.P. photo

## WAPDA issues water position in rivers, dams

**F.P. Report**

**PESHAWAR:** Water & Power Development Authority (WAPDA) has issued the position of the river inflows and outflows at Tarbela, Mangla and Chashma along with the reservoirs levels and the barges on Monday morning.

According to a spokesperson of the authority inflows and outflows in Indus River 19200 cusecs and 40000 cusecs while inflows and outflows in Kabul River at Nowshera was recorded 8200 cusecs and 8200 cusecs and at Khairabad Bridge, the inflows and outflows in it was 15800 cusecs and 15800 cusecs.

Similarly, inflows and outflows in Jhelum River at Mangla was 6500 cusecs and 20000 cusecs while in inflows and outflows in

Chenab River at Marala were recorded 5300 cusecs and 2000 cusecs respectively.

Meanwhile, inflows and outflows in Jinnah Barrage were inflows 69200 cusecs and 64200 cusecs while inflows and outflows in Chashma Barrage was 44300 cusecs and 39000 cusecs, Taunsa (inflows 41800 cusecs and outflows 31800 cusecs), Guddu (inflows 32700 cusecs and outflows 25100 cusecs) Sukkur (inflows 29800 cusecs and outflows 12200 cusecs Kotri (inflows 11600 cusecs and outflows 700 cusecs) Trimmu (inflows 6400 cusecs and outflow Nil cusecs while inflows and outflows in Panjnad was recorded at 6100 cusecs and Nil cusecs respectively.

Similarly, Tarbela Dam was operating at level of 1491.90 feet against minimum operating level 1398 feet and maximum conservation level 1550 feet, live storage on Sunday morning was 2.823 million acre feet (MAF).

Mangla: Minimum operating level 1050 feet, present level 1121.20 feet, maximum conservation level 1242 feet, live storage today 0.818 MAF.

Chashma: Minimum operating level 638.15 feet, present level 641.30 feet, maximum conservation level 649 feet, live storage today 0.045 MAF.

The inflows and outflows of River Indus at Tarbela, Jinnah and Chashma, River Kabul at Nowshera and River Jhelum at Mangla have been reflected as mean flows of 24 hours, whereas the other flows have been gauged at 6.00 a.m.

## Women Caucus assures support to bill on protection of journalists

**F.P. Report**

**PESHAWAR:** Women Parliamentary Caucus of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly assured Monday Pakistan Journalists Safety Coalition (PJSC)-KP chapter and national media watchdog Freedom Network of support for bill on protection of journalists in the province.

The assurance was made during a meeting of PJSC-KP chapter with the Caucus members. Dr Sumera Shams chaired the meeting and attended by Ms Riffat Sardar, chairperson of KP Commission on Status of Women, Iqbal Khattak, Executive Director of Freedom Network, media laws expert Muhammad Aftab Alam, Nasir Hussain, president of Khyber Union of Journalists, Saiful Islama Saifi, PJSC-KP chairperson, journalist Ms Farzana Ali and a number of Caucus members.

"The Women Parliamentary Caucus takes up issues concerning human rights and protection of journalists is equally important for us," Dr Sumer Shams told the meeting. She said the Caucus's general meeting would take up this matter in its forthcoming meeting for deliberation.

Iqbal Khattak briefed the meeting on why Pakistan needed this law as



issue of impunity for crimes against journalists and media was high in the country. He said PJSC, representing broad-based stakeholders, was working on legal framework for promotion of journalists and Pakistan became the first Asian country to have passed special law on protection of journalists. He hoped similar law would also be passed by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly.

Aftab Alam shared salient features of draft protection law underlining famous three "Ps" p Prevention,

Protection and Prosecution to consider for any law, including the draft law for protection of journalists.

The meeting also passed a resolution saying that the "meeting of Women Caucus of provincial assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Pakistan Journalists Safety Coalition-KP chapter and civil society declare complete support for bringing a special legislation to end impunity for crimes against journalists and media in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province at the earliest."

## PA panel calls for focus on harmony among educational institutions

**F.P. Report**

**PESHAWAR:** Chairperson, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly Standing Committee on Higher Education, Madiha Nisar has directed for full focus on harmony among the higher educational institutions including provision of best educational guidance and character development of the students.

She was presiding over a meeting of the standing committee here in the

Conference Hall of the Provincial Assembly here on Monday. Besides, Provincial Minister for Higher Education, Kamran Khan Bangash, MPAs Sajida Hanif, Asiya Saleh Khattak, Rehana Ismail and Anita Mehsud, the Special Secretary Higher Education, Additional Secretary Law and other concerned authorities attended the meeting at large.

The Chairperson of the committee also directed the higher authorities of the department to ensure the selection of

responsible and experienced staff for higher posts. On this occasion, a woman legislator reviewed in detail complaints and objections against the Head of the Department of Islamiyat at Government Girls Degree College, Sheikh Maltoon (Mardan) and later the meeting agreed on the formation of a sub-committee for investigation and scrutiny of the complaints and objections and directed for the furnishing of report within a period of one week.

## Ex-CJ father passed away

**F.P. Report**

**PESHAWAR:** The father of Former Chief Justice Peshawar High Court and retired judge of Supreme Court Dost Muhammad Khan has passed away while his funeral prayer was offered at ancestral village Kotla Syed Khan, on Monday.

The deceased Sher Bahadar Khan was Chairman Chamber of Commerce Bannu while large number of people from every walk of life participated in funeral prayer. The deceased was brother of Dilawar Khan Advocate, father of Inayat Ullah Khan while he was grandfather of Kashif Khan Advocate, Imran Sikandari Advocate and Inam Khan.



**PESHAWAR:** Local government representatives holding a protest for acceptance of their demands. — F.P. photo



## In brief

### Sport Complex inaugurated Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: Former Chief Minister Pervaiz Khattak inaugurated newly constructed Kati-khel sport complex and added government is committed to provide facilities for youth to flourish their skills at doorsteps. Provincial Minister for Education Shahram Khan Tarakai, Dr. Imran Khan Khattak, Advisor for excise & taxation Khaleeq-ur-Rehman and Member Provincial Assembly Idriss Khattak also addressed the inaugural ceremony. They claimed that Pakistan Tehreek Insaf led government has initiated several projects in public's interest. Former Chief Minister Pervaiz Khattak said that early elections are only solution for political stability. He claimed that new election provide more strength to form governments at both provincial and federal in majority.

### Two brothers shot dead

SUKKUR (PPI): Two real brothers were shot dead by unknown assailants in Bhikhi, a suburb of Ferozwatan, near Sheikhpura on Monday. According to the police, unknown armed men in Bhikhi area gunned down Malik Adul Ghaffar and Malik Shabbaz. They had a cement and gravel shop in the area. The armed men fled after swift operation. Their bodies were shifted to a local hospital for medico-legal formalities. The police reached the crime spot and started investigation after taking dead bodies into custody. Meanwhile, a teenage boy fell victim to an acid throwing incident and succumbed to his wounds in Sukkur on Monday. Reportedly, some unknown persons threw acid on 16-year-old Amir Magasi in Freckle Colony in Sukkur. The boy was immediately taken to the Civil Hospital. His condition was quite critical as 50% of his body was burned by the acid. Doctors referred him to the Gambat Hospital. But the boy could not sustain any longer and died at Gambat Hospital. The father of the deceased boy said that the accused broke into their house and threw acid on his son. He said his family had no enmity with anyone. He demanded of authorities to provide him justice.

### Minor girl student killed

SHEIKHUPURA (INP): A minor girl student was killed and another critically injured in collision between two over speeding motorcycles here on Monday. According to details, two reckless driven bikes collided head-on on Makki Road in Feroz Watwan Town of Sheikhpura. A four-year-old girl student Mahim died on the spot in the accident while Dost Muhammad was critically injured. The body and injured were shifted to hospital for medico-legal formalities.

### Christmas day shopping

SUKKUR (INP): Christmas Day shopping is in full swing and touching its peak this year in the Sukkur city. Christian families can be seen crowding shopping centers in Shahi Bazaar, Mission Road, Chamta Gali, Ghareeb Abbad and other places to buy clothes, shoes and other necessary articles. "Every year we plan to complete our shopping well ahead of Christmas and we always end up with frantically roaming around shops at the dying hours," said Saba Masih. Ladies are best suited to do the bargaining job and they never seem content at what we buy at the given price, said shopper Farzana at a local departmental store.



**MALAKAND:** Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan inaugurating Dargai Campus, University of Swat.

## Police lines blast 13th anniversary observed

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The civil society, political activists and police officials on Monday jointly observed the 13th anniversary of the devastating bomb blast at the Timergara police lines and paid rich tributes to all the martyrs and their families.

The Shakil Shaheed Development Organization (SSDO), a welfare organization that came into being after the martyrdom of one Shakil Ahmad in the blast, arranged a function which was attended by members of civil society, relatives of the martyrs, area elders and police officials.

The SSDO chief Peer Imtiaz Ahmad informed the gathering that the anniversary was being observed one day late because of the weekend on Dec, 18 this year. The devastating blast occurred when a suicide bomber had blown up himself near the Timergara police lines mosque after a Friday's prayer on Dec 18, 2009. A total of 15 worshippers including Shakil Shaheed



were killed and 27 others injured in that incident.

The Lower Dir SP Investigation Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, SSDO chief Peer Imtiaz Ahmad, former provincial finance minister advocate Muzaffar Syed, Timergara tehsil chairman Mufti Irfanuddin, tehsil chairman Balambat Asim Shuaib, Awami National Party central vice president Hussain Shah Yousafzai, social activists Akbar Khan, Ebrash Pasha, advocate Syed Hassan Khan and PPP activist advocate Alam Zeb laid floral wreaths on the 'Yadgar e Shuhada' while a police guard presented solute to the martyrs on the occasion. Later during a function special prayers were offered for the martyrs.

Speaking on the occasion the speakers alleged the US and other western powers had inflicted the war on the people of Pakistan especially Pukhtun in the region. Paying tributes to the martyrs and their families, they said that the security forces, police personnel and civilians foiled the anti-Pakistan conspiracy and the nefarious designs of those powers. They said that lasting peace had been restored because of the martyrs' contribution. The speakers said the nation would never forget its martyrs and their sacrifices.

## 8 killed in road accident in Rojhan

ROJHAN (PPI): Eight passengers were killed and two dozen others were injured when two buses collided with each other in Rojhan on Monday.

According to details, the road accident took place on Indus Highway's Shah Wali spot, where two buses collided with each other due to dense fog. As a result, eight persons were dead and 23 others sustained wounds. The bodies and the injured were rushed to the nearby hospital.

The identity of the deceased and injured passenger is being verified. Separately, seven people, including a newly-wed couple, died and five others sustained injuries when a dumper hit the vehicle in Jhelum city of Punjab province.

According to details, the road accident occurred near the Tobar Valley on Choa Saidan Shah Road where an out-of-control dumper truck ran over a passenger car and hit several other vehicles. Upon receiving the information, rescue and police team reached the spot and shifted the injured people to a nearby hospital for medical treatment. Meanwhile, the deceased were also shifted to the hospital for medico-legal formalities. The petitioner's lawyer argued that when the gifts were taken out from Toshakhana, their details should be made public. After hearing arguments, the judge ordered the federal government to provide details of gifts given from Toshakhana by January.

## LG reps stage demo for funds

F.P. Report

PARACHINAR: All Kurram Councilors Alliance, District Kurram staged a protest demo against the refusal of privileges and uplift funds by the provincial government on Monday.

The protesting councilors also demanded the provision of privileges and development funds with immediate effect. The protesting councilors were led by Shah Mohsin Shirazi, president of the alliance.

Addressing the protesting councilors, he said that they were elected nine months, but so far neither any incentive or development fund is provided to them, which he said is sheer injustice with them. He called for the restoration of the privileges and funds of the local government representatives with immediate effect, otherwise, he said that in case of non-acceptance of their demands they will spread their protest across the province.

## Daughter kills father

SHAKARGARH (PPI): A girl from Jhanday Langah area of Shakargarh on Monday slaughtered her father with an axe over an allegation of attempting to rape her.

The girl while giving her statement to the police accused her father of molesting her and that he attempted to rape her as well, this being the reason she murdered her father in his sleep.

# LG members observe black day in favor of demands

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Councilors of 36 village and neighborhood councils claimed on Monday that for the last one year, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) government has failed to supply them development funds and allot them office space to serve the people.

To mark 19th of December as black day, the representatives of local bodies (LBs) led by the city mayor Haji Shah Khalid took out a protest demonstration inside the tehsil compound. The speakers including Haji Shah Khalid and others slammed the KP government for turning deaf ears towards their problems and said offices, funds and other facilities had not been provided although one year passed, they had elected.

Local bodies government should be resorted as per the Constitution and development funds and power should be provided to the councilors so that they could resolve issues of the laymen at tehsil level at tehsil level, they remarked. All forum would be utilized to get their rights, they vowed.

The protestors carried banners and placards inscribed with slogans in favor of releasing of funds

and other privileges took out a rally from tehsil municipal office to levies gate while chanting slogans against the provincial government and dispersed peacefully.

**Rule of law key for democracy:** Rule of law and allowing the civilian departments to function as per vested power was the essence of democracy. It is condemnable to prohibit basic rights of citizens in the name of national interest.

These views were expressed by the renowned scholar and provincial secretary Awami National Party (ANP) Dr Khadim Hussain while delivering a speech as guest speaker on occasion of an awareness seminar themed "peace and democracy: role of political worker" held here in Landi Kotal press club last day.

The activity was organized by the Khadim ul Khalaq Foundation (KKF) and district chief Awami National Party (ANP) Shah Hussain Shinwari, project director Mehran Wazir, a number of political volunteers and people from different walks of life participated in it.

Dr Khadim Hussain said that restricting movement and denying right of speech was against the charter of

basic right, guaranteed by the civilized world and could not be confirmed as a positive peace. A government that comes into being through fair vote of the masses is true democracy, he added and said rule of law and rule of civilian departments and powers enjoyed by it is the essence of democracy.

Denying social contract is equivalent to negating the Constitution, Dr Khadim opined. He maintained that people in the merged district had been deprived of their basic rights in the name of security that was injustice to them.

He urged the political workers to come forward and collectively raise voice for the rule of civilian institutions, disapproved of restrictions and supported the nonviolence movement of Bacha Khan. Earlier, project director Mehran Wazir highlighted aims and purpose of the moot while district chief ANP Shah Hussain Shinwari welcomed the guests. The participants appreciated KKF setting up awareness session and said such kind of activities would certainly motivate the political workers and general masses to play their due role in restoring peace and democracy in the area.

# Next mayor of Hyderabad will be from PPP: Nasir

F.P. Report

HYDERABAD: Sindh Local Government Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah has expressed hope that the next mayor of Hyderabad will be from the Pakistan People's Party (PPP).

Addressing a public meeting of the party in Paretabad area here, the minister said the team led by Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah was

working hard to fulfill the mission of PPP's Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari. Shah informed that many development schemes in the province had been stalled due to the calamity caused by the monsoon rains and floods. He added that the government remained engaged in rescue and relief which was followed by the rehabilitation measures.

However, the minister

said the government would soon resume work on the development projects pertaining to roads, sewerage, water supply and other schemes. He claimed that the PPP's government always provided employment to the people. The minister said the PPP's Chairman had directed the CM Sindh to provide employment to the people against the thousands of vacant jobs.



**LANDI KOTAL:** Councilors holding a protest rally in favour of their demands at Tehsil compound. — F.P. photo

# Malakand residents to resist imposition of taxes

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Malakand Grand Jirga, while rejecting the imposition of any sort of taxes in the region, threatened to observe complete shutter down strike and wheel jam in all districts of the region if the government tried to bring the area into its tax net.

A meeting of the jirga in this regard was held at a local hotel in Timergara here the other day with the Jamaat-i-Islami parliamentary leader and former senior minister MPA Inayatullah Khan in the chair. Divisional and district leadership of various political parties, representatives of civil society and local governments attended the meeting.

The Jirga president and former MNA Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, JI district chief Izazul Mulk, former MPAs Malik Behram Khan, Saeed Gul, former provincial minister and PPP district president Mehmood Zeb Khan, ANP's central vice president Hussain Shah Yousafzai, Dir Quami Pasoon chief Malik Jehan Alam, PML-N's Malik Farooq Iqbal, JUI-F's Haji Khurshid Khan, president Anjuman Tajiran Timergara Haji Anwarud Din, social activist Ebrash

Pasha, government contractors' association president Ikramullah, Imran Takur and others spoke on the occasion.

In a joint declaration issued at the end the Malakand Grand Jirga also demanded the bifurcation of Malakand into two separate divisions. It said that Malakand was stretched to 29872 square kilometers with a population of 8.6 million people. It said the area elders would not let anyone sabotage the peaceful environment in the region. The Jirga also expressed anger and displeasure at the administration's action of razing plazas, shops and houses at the Timergara Khwar (dry stream). It demanded royalty for local masses and landowners from the Koto Hydro power station.

The participants were of the view that Malakand had been the worst affected region from militancy, floods, earthquakes and military operation, so the government should not impose any tax in Malakand. They demanded the federal government to announce a special package for its residents like the one announced for the merged districts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. They

said the government had not taken the elected representatives from the region while taking the decision of imposition of taxes.

The jirga said that it was the state responsibility to maintain law and order in society and curb any sort of militancy by force. The jirga said that Dir had great potential for tourism development, so the provincial government should take practical steps to develop its scenic spots like Laram Top, Shahi, Sheen Ghar and Kalpani Top in Maidan.

The Jirga said that the overseas had to travel to Peshawar to get their medical certificate. It demanded the government to set up a medical center at Timergara so that the overseas could get their certificate easily. It also demanded the establishment of an 'Etemad' office at Timergara for biometric services for all types of visas. The jirga also demanded appropriate measures for ensuring the ownership rights before finalizing the land settlement in the area. It said the government should work on the alternate route of Chakdara-Gilgit motorway via Chitral under the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project.



**HYDERABAD:** Injured policeman being shifted to ward in hospital after firing by unknown culprits.



Tuesday, December 20, 2022



LONDON: Stand Up To Racism campaigners holding banners outside the High Court.

## UK plan to send asylum-seekers to Rwanda is legal: Court

LONDON (AP): The U.K. government's plan to send asylum-seekers on a one-way trip to Rwanda is legal, two High Court judges ruled Monday in a victory for backers of the controversial policy. But the judges also said the government failed to consider the individual circumstances of the people it tried to deport, signaling further legal battles ahead before anyone is put on a plane to East Africa.

A court hearing in the case is set for next month, and appeals are likely. Several asylum-seekers, aid groups and a border officials' union filed lawsuits to stop the Conservative government acting on a deportation agreement with Rwanda that aims to deter migrants from trying to reach the U.K. by crossing the English Channel. The U.K. plans to send some migrants who arrive in the U.K. as stowaways or in small boats to the East African country, where their asylum claims would be processed. Under the plan, applicants granted asylum would stay in Rwanda rather than returning to the U.K.

"The court has concluded that it is lawful for the government to make arrangements for relocating asylum-seekers to Rwanda and for their asylum claims to be determined in Rwanda rather than in the United Kingdom," Judge Clive Lewis said. But he added that the government "must decide if there is anything about each person's particular circumstances which means that his asylum claim should be determined in the United Kingdom or whether there are other reasons why he should not be relocated to Rwanda."

"The Home Secretary has not properly considered the circumstances of the eight individual claimants whose cases we have considered," the judge said. Ever Solomon, head of the charity Refugee Council, said the group was "very disappointed" by the ruling. "Treating people who are in search of safety like human cargo and shipping them off to another country is a cruel policy that will cause great human suffering," he said.

More than 44,000 people who crossed the Channel in small boats have arrived in Britain this year, and several have died in the attempt, including four last week when a boat capsized in freezing weather. Human rights groups say the government's deal with Rwanda is illegal and unworkable, and that it is inhumane to send people thousands of miles to a country they don't want to live in. They also cite Rwanda's poor human rights record, including allegations of torture and killings of government opponents. Britain has paid Rwanda 120 million pounds (\$146 million) under the deal struck in April, but no one has yet been sent to the country. The U.K. was forced to cancel the first deportation flight at the last minute in June after the European Court of Human Rights ruled the plan carried "a real risk of irreversible harm."

The British government is determined to press on with the policy, arguing that it will deter people-trafficking gangs who ferry migrants on hazardous journeys across the Channel's busy shipping lanes. Home Secretary Suella Braverman, who has called the Channel crossings

an "invasion of our southern coast," told the Times of London it would be "unforgivable" if the government did not stop the journeys.

Rwandan government spokeswoman Yolande Makolo welcomed the British court's decision. "This is a positive step in our quest to contribute innovative, long-term solutions to the global migration crisis," she said. The U.K. government has argued that while Rwanda was the site of a genocide that killed more than 800,000 people in 1994, the country has since built a reputation for stability and economic progress. Critics say that stability comes at the cost of political repression.

The U.K. receives fewer asylum-seekers than many European nations, including Germany, France and Italy, but thousands of migrants from around the world travel to northern France each year in hopes of crossing the Channel. Some want to reach the U.K. because they have friends or family there, others because they speak English or because it's perceived to be easy to find work. The government wants to deport all migrants who arrive by unauthorized routes, and aims to strike Rwanda-style deals with other countries. Critics point out there are few authorized routes for seeking asylum in the U.K., other than those set up for people from Ukraine, Afghanistan and Hong Kong. A surge in arrivals and a U.K. bureaucratic backlog, exacerbated by the coronavirus pandemic, has led to many Channel migrants languishing in overcrowded processing centers, where there have been outbreaks of diphtheria and other diseases.

## Australia's foreign minister to meet counterpart in China

CANBERRA, Australia (AP): Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong said Monday she will meet with her counterpart, Wang Yi, in Beijing this week as Australia and China mark 50 years of diplomatic relations. China's Foreign Ministry said the visit will take place and will include a new round of long-suspended China-Australia talks on foreign and strategic issues.

The trip signals a continued thaw in relations between the two nations since Australian Prime Minister Anthony Albanese won an election victory in May, replacing the more conservative Scott Morrison in the top role. Albanese and Chinese President Xi Jinping met on the sidelines of the Group of 20 summit last month in Bali, the first such formal meeting between the leaders of the two nations in six years.

Trade will be on the agenda for Wong's meeting with Wang, as Australia continues its push for China to remove billions of dollars in sanctions which have been in place since 2020. "China has grown to become one of the world's largest economies and Australia's largest trading partner," Albanese and Wong said in a joint statement. "Trade between Australia and China, as well as strong people-to-people, cultural and business links have delivered significant benefits to both our countries."

Albanese and Wong said the trip came after the Chinese government invited Wong to meet with Wang and hold the sixth Australia-China Foreign and Strategic Dialogue, which was last held in 2018. "Australia seeks a stable relationship with China; we will cooperate where we can, disagree

where we must and engage in the national interest," Albanese and Wong said in their statement.

The visit comes after Wong and Wang earlier this year engaged in a tit-for-tat diplomatic rivalry in the Pacific as they island hopped on diplomatic visits following a failed bid by China to ink an ambitious multilateral deal with 10 South Pacific nations. Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning said China hopes the visit will build on the momentum toward improved ties established at the Bali summit.

China hopes the two countries will "push bilateral relations back to the right track and achieve sustainable development," Mao said at a daily briefing. Relations between the nations have been poor for years after China imposed trade barriers and refused

high-level exchanges in response to Australia's enactment of rules targeting foreign interference in its domestic politics. Australia and others have also sought to block Chinese inroads into the South Pacific, including Beijing's signing of a security agreement with the Solomon Islands that could result in China's stationing of troops and ships in the archipelago, which is less than 2,000 kilometers (1,200 miles) from Australia's coast.

In June, Australia said a Chinese fighter jet carried out dangerous maneuvers threatening the safety of one of its maritime surveillance planes over the South China Sea. China has also targeted Australian forces with lasers and sent surveillance ships to eavesdrop off the Australian coast as it seeks to assert its military influence in the Indo-Pacific region.

## UN and Lebanon hold memorial for killed Irish peacekeeper

BEIRUT (AP): The Lebanese army and UN peacekeepers held a memorial at the Beirut airport for an Irish soldier killed by a mob that opened fire last week at two vehicles belonging to the UN peacekeepers in southern Lebanon. The attack that killed 24-year-old Pvt. Sean Rooney of Newtowncunningham took place near the southern town of Al-Aqbiya, as he and seven other Irish peacekeepers from UN peacekeeping mission, known as UNIFIL, were on their way to the Beirut airport.

A person familiar with the investigation said local residents were angered and became aggressive when

two UNIFIL armored vehicles took a detour through Al-Aqbiya, which the residents said is not part of the area under UNIFIL's mandate. The Lebanese militant Hezbollah group, which has bases and traditional strongholds in southern Lebanon, has not commented on the attack.

One of the unidentified attackers shot Rooney in the head, a security official said. Three other Irish peacekeepers in another UNIFIL vehicle were injured when their car crashed into the aluminum shutters of a building and rolled over as it tried to flee the scene. At the airport memorial, UN peacekeepers stood by Rooney's coffin after it arrived from a hospital in the southern city of Sidon. His body was then transferred to a military carrier to be taken back to Ireland.

"We shall always keep in mind our fallen comrades in arms, as they represent an example of an unwavering commitment to UNIFIL and this country," the UNIFIL chief, Maj. Gen. Aroldo Lázaro, said at the memorial. Representatives of Lebanese caretaker Defense Minister Maurice Slim and army chief Gen. Joseph Aoun also attended. The Lebanese authorities have not yet commented on the ongoing investigation, though the security official added that seven bullets

were retrieved from the vehicle.

The Irish military declined to comment on the incident to the AP. Confrontations between residents in southern Lebanon and UNIFIL troops are not uncommon. In January, unknown perpetrators attacked Irish peacekeepers in the southern town of Bint Jbeil, vandalizing their vehicles and stealing items. The residents accused them of taking photographs of residential homes, though the UN mission denied this. UNIFIL was created to oversee the withdrawal of Israeli troops from southern Lebanon after a 1978 invasion.

## Brazil literary great Nelida Pinon dies at 85

SAO PAULO (Reuters): Writer and scholar Nelida Pinon, the first woman to preside over the Brazilian Academy of Letters (ABL), died at age 85 in Lisbon, according to the literary club and Brazilian media reports. The acclaimed author published a vast body of work translated in more than 30 countries.

Pinon won national and international awards and became an elected member of the ABL in 1989. She later chaired the literary club in 1996 and 1997, its website shows. Pinon was born in Rio de Janeiro in 1937 to a Galician family and as a child chose to be a writer, ABL's website said. She had a degree in journalism and published novels, short stories and essays, and wrote speeches and memoirs.

## Four Iranian security men killed in Iran

DUBAI (Reuters): Four members of Iran's Revolutionary Guards were killed in the country's southeast and the killers fled to neighbouring Pakistan after coming under fire, the official IRNA news agency reported on Monday. IRNA gave no further details about the incident in the Saravan area of Sistan-Baluchistan province, scene of some of the deadliest unrest during Iran's nationwide protests, and a region where security forces clash often with drug smugglers.

Citing a Revolutionary Guards statement, IRNA said three of the dead were members of the Basij, a militia affiliated with the Revolutionary Guards that has been widely deployed during a state crackdown against protesters. "The perpetrators of attack ... fled to Pakistan after receiving heavy fire," IRNA reported, citing a statement issued by the Guards.

The impoverished Sistan-Baluchistan province is home to the Baluchi minority, an ethnic group which follows Sunni Islam rather than the Shi'ite Islam of Iran's clerical leaders and has long complained of discrimination by the authorities. The provincial capital, Zahedan, was scene of some of the deadliest unrest during the wave of nationwide protests ignited by Mahsa Amini's death in morality police custody, when security forces killed at least 66 people in a crackdown on Sept. 30, according to Amnesty International.

The unrest, in which demonstrators from all walks of life have called for the fall of Iran's ruling theocracy, has posed one of the biggest challenges to the Shi'ite-ruled Islamic Republic since its 1979 revolution. A Baluchi militant group, Jaish al Adl, has previously mounted attacks on Iranian security forces in the area. Iranian authorities say the group operates from safe havens in Pakistan.

According to activist HRANA news agency, 502 protesters and 62 members of security forces had been killed as of Dec. 18 during the unrest ignited by Amini's death.

## 3 Jordanian police killed

AMMAN (Reuters): Three Jordanian police personnel were killed in a raid on hideout of suspected killers of a policeman in the southern city of Maan, a police statement said on Monday. The police said one of the suspects believed to be a militant was killed. The statement said investigations were ongoing on the incident.

Tensions have mounted in Maan and several cities in southern Jordan in particular after sporadic strikes by truck drivers protesting against high fuel prices. A senior policeman was killed by gunshots fired by rioters who clashed with security forces who had entered a neighbourhood of the desert city of Maan to quell riots, authorities said. The government vowed to take tough steps and re-deploy more anti-riot police against people who protest violently against a squeeze in living conditions.

## China reports first COVID deaths in weeks

BEIJING (Reuters): China reported its first COVID-related deaths in weeks on Monday amid rising doubts over whether the official count was capturing the full toll of a disease that is ripping through cities after the government relaxed strict anti-virus controls.

Monday's two deaths were the first to be reported by the National Health Commission (NHC) since Dec. 3, days before Beijing announced that it was lifting curbs which had largely kept the virus in check for three years but triggered widespread protests last month. Reuters journalists witnessed hearses lined up outside a designated COVID-19 crematorium in Beijing and workers in hazmat suits carrying the dead inside the facility. Reuters could not immediately establish if the deaths were due to COVID.

A hashtag on the two reported COVID deaths quickly became the top trending topic on China's Twitter-like Weibo platform on Monday. "What is the point of incomplete statistics?" asked one user. "Isn't this cheating the public?," wrote another. The NHC did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

The low number of deaths since curbs were lifted on Dec. 7 is inconsistent with the experience of other countries after similar moves. Officially China has suffered just 5,237 COVID-related deaths during the pandemic, including the latest two fatalities, a tiny fraction of its 1.4 billion population. But health experts have said China may pay a price for taking such stringent measures to shield a population that now lacks natural immunity to COVID-19 and has low vaccination rates among the elderly.

Some fear China's COVID death toll could rise above 1.5 million in coming months. Respected Chinese news outlet Caixin reported that two state media journalists had died after contracting COVID, and then that a 23-year-old medical student had also died. It was not immediately clear which, if any, of these deaths were included in official death tolls. "The (official) number is clearly an undercount of COVID deaths," said Yanzhong Huang, a global health specialist at the Council on Foreign Relations, a US think tank.

That "may reflect the lack of state ability to effectively track and monitor the disease situation on the ground after the collapse of the mass PCR testing regime, but it may also be driven by efforts to avoid mass panic over the surge of COVID deaths," he said. The NHC reported 1,995 symptomatic infections for Dec. 18, compared with 2,097 a day earlier.

But infection rates have also become an unreliable guide as far less mandatory PCR testing is being conducted following the recent easing. The NHC stopped reporting asymptomatic cases last week citing the testing drop. China's stocks fell and the yuan eased against the dollar on Monday, as investors grew concerned that surging COVID-19 cases would further weigh on the world's second-largest economy despite pledges of government support.

The virus was sweeping through trading floors in Beijing and spreading fast in the financial hub of Shanghai, with illness and absence thinning already light trade and forcing regulators to cancel a weekly meeting vetting public share sales. Japanese chipmaker Renesas Electronics Corp said on Monday it had suspended work at its Beijing plant due to COVID-19 infections.

A survey by World Economics showed on Monday China's business confidence fell in December to its lowest since January 2013. China's economy is expected to grow 3% this year, its worst performance in nearly half a century. China's chief epidemiologist Wu Zunyou said the country was in the throes of the first of three COVID waves expected this winter, which was more in line with what people said they are experiencing on the ground.

"I'd say 60-70% of my colleagues...are infected right now," Liu, a 37-year-old university canteen worker in Beijing, told Reuters, requesting to be identified by his surname. Beijing city official Xu Hejian told reporters on Monday COVID was spreading fast in the capital, putting pressure on medical resources. Still, more restrictions will be lifted, with previously-closed venues located underground, from bars to internet cafes, allowed to re-open, Xu said. Xu made no comment on any fatalities.

Beijing will speed up imports of COVID medicines amid shortages in the city's pharmacies, another official said. While top officials have been downplaying the threat posed by the Omicron strain of the virus in recent weeks, authorities remain concerned about the elderly, who have been reluctant to get vaccinated. China's vaccination rate is above 90%, but the rate for adults who have received booster shots drops to 57.9%, and to 42.3% for people aged 80 and above, government data shows. In the Shijingshan district of Beijing, medical workers have been going door-to-door offering to vaccinate elderly residents in their homes, state news agency Xinhua reported.

## Man to be sentenced in murders of eight

WAVERLY, Ohio (AP): A man convicted in the killings of eight people from another southern Ohio family faces the possibility of life in prison without parole when he is sentenced Monday. The main question is whether 31-year-old George Wagner IV will get any chance of parole, and if so, how soon. A Pike County judge may hear statements from relatives of the victims before deciding that.

Wagner denied any knowledge of his family's involvement in the 2016 shootings of seven adults and a teenager from the Rhoden family. Prosecutors said most of the victims were killed as they slept, in some cases next to their very young children, who weren't injured. Authorities alleged Wagner, his brother and their parents plotted the killings amid a dispute over custody of Wagner's niece, whose mother was among those slain.

The April 2016 shootings at three mobile homes and a camper near Piketon terrified residents in that part of rural Ohio and initially prompted speculation about drug cartel involvement. The resulting multi-million-dollar investigation and prosecution is among

the state's most extensive. Wagner was convicted on 22 counts, including aggravated murder. It's no longer a death penalty case because his brother made a plea deal to help all four Wagners avoid execution and agreed to testify against the others.

Prosecutors say Wagner shows no remorse and should be imprisoned with no chance of parole. They say what he really deserves is a death sentence and that he was spared only because of his brother's actions, not his own. The prosecution alleged Wagner was with his brother and father when they went to the homes, that he went inside, and that he helped his brother move two bodies.

Wagner's attorneys emphasize that he didn't kill anyone and say denying him "a meaningful chance of parole" would be unconstitutional cruel and unusual punishment. They also want a new trial. A hearing on that request is scheduled Monday before Judge Randy Deering in conjunction with the sentencing. Wagner's attorneys cite two main reasons in the request. One is about the jury having been selected for a potential capital case even though prosecutors would

eventually dismiss the death penalty specifications. The attorneys also say the court hindered their ability to probe the credibility of Wagner's younger brother, Edward "Jake" Wagner, by denying them access to notes about discussions between Jake and his lawyer, despite him testifying about it.

Jake Wagner pleaded guilty to aggravated murder and other charges, admitted responsibility for five of the shootings, and is expected to spend the rest of his life in prison. Angela Wagner pleaded guilty to helping to plan the slayings, and prosecutors recommended a 30-year sentence for her. Her husband, George "Billy" Wagner III, pleaded not guilty in the killings and awaits trial.

The victims were 40-year-old Christopher Rhoden Sr.; his ex-wife, 37-year-old Dana Rhoden; their three children, 20-year-old Clarence "Frankie" Rhoden, 19-year-old Hanna Rhoden, and 16-year-old Christopher Jr.; Clarence Rhoden's fiancée, 20-year-old Hannah Gilley; Christopher Rhoden Sr.'s brother, 44-year-old Kenneth Rhoden; and a cousin, 38-year-old Gary Rhoden.

## Part of haul from jewelry heist recovered

BERLIN (AP): German authorities said that they have recovered a significant part of the 18th-century treasures stolen from Dresden's Green Vault museum in a spectacular break-in more than three years ago.

Prosecutors and police said in a statement that they secured 31 items in Berlin overnight, including "several pieces that appear to be complete." They were taken to Dresden, more than 160 kilometers (100 miles) away, where police and then officials from the authority that oversees the city's art collections plan to check their authenticity and examine whether they are intact. Some prominent items are still missing, authorities said.

Statement gave no details of where exactly the items were found and in what circumstances. But they said that the find was preceded by exploratory talks between prosecutors and the defense in an ongoing trial over the theft on a possible agreement that would include the return of stolen items. They added that they can give no further information ahead of the next trial session scheduled.

Six men went on trial in Dresden in January, accused of gang robbery and arson over the Nov. 25, 2019, robbery. The German nationals were accused of stealing jewelry with a total insured value of at least 113.8 million euros (\$121 million). Officials said at

the time that the items taken included a large diamond brooch and a diamond epaulette. The treasury of Augustus the Strong of Saxony was established in 1723 and contains around 4,000 objects of gold, precious stones and other materials on display in Dresden's Royal Palace.

Prosecutors have said that the suspects laid a fire just before the break-in to cut the power supply for street lights outside the museum, and also set fire to a car in a nearby garage before fleeing to Berlin. Saxony's regional culture minister, Barbara Klepsch, said officials are waiting to see experts' assessment and discover what condition the recovered pieces are in.

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# China, after zero COVID policy

ACCORDING to the media, the highly transmissible Omicron variant is spreading across china while the pandemic has hit multiple services from education to health and catering to parcel deliveries in Beijing, Singhai, and other major cities across the country. The Funeral homes and crematoriums in Beijing, a city of 22 million populous are struggling to keep up with demand as more workers and drivers testing positive for coronavirus call in sick.

China the first camping ground for Coronavirus has witnessed unimagine restrictions and strict implementation of COVID-19 SOPs over almost the past three years, that the infection motherland received below six thousand patients till the country announced the reversal of its zero-COVID-19 strategy on December 7. Historically, the zero COVID policy was the landmark strategy of China's most powerful President Xi Jinping which received global admiration because of the successful handling and containment of the pandemic despite the fact that China was the birthplace of the deadly virus.

Although, there had been debates in the media, intellectual circles, and official meetings of the Chinese government regarding the public's anger over the unending COVID-19 restrictions and the recent Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) also discussed the issue but failed to reverse Xi's strict decision regarding the pandemic. Surprisingly, all-weather Sober and content Chinese became sick of years-long restrictions and mass protests erupted against strict COVID-19 measures in Shanghai and Beijing last month and shortly spread across the country. Thousands of people came to the streets and displayed their anger and discontent over the government's strict anti-COVID strategy, enhanced monitoring, lack of civil liberties, and socialities.

The world was astonished by the unexpected uprising of the Chinese over pandemic restrictions in such a strict and regressive environment. Some perceived it as a western conspiracy others viewed it as a potential clash between the government and the public. However, President Xi responded rationally and upheld Public desire by withdrawing the Zero-COVID policy from the country. According to reports, multiple variants of Omicron had spread across China, Hospitals, funerals, and crematory services run short in major cities, while Businesses, schools, and clubs automatically close down due to the sickness of their workers.

Although the Chinese public was wary of the government's harsh anti-COVID measures yet they did not witness the deadliest attack of the pandemic suffered by the Americans, British, Spanish, and a few other nations in the world. Earlier, the Chinese failed to acknowledge the truthfulness and sincerity of their leader who safely sailed them through the deadly plague, now the red Dragons have to face the cruelty of the virus and prove their patience amid self-imposed lockdowns and pandemic restrictions.

# Transgenders' protection

TRANSGENDERS are the most marginalized and highly deprived segment of our society. Transgender Community had been a victim of social injustice, discrimination, and hatred in the broader Indo-Subcontinent region long before the creation of Pakistan. After the independence, Pakistani society also displayed a cold shoulder toward Transgender rights largely due to a lack of knowledge, gender prejudice, and ignorance. Due to social discrimination and the absence of a regular profession or job, most members of the transgender community had been begging on the streets causing adultery and polluting the environment in society.

Historically, human rights organizations, civil society, and the Transgender community had been struggling to get their citizenry rights, social protection, and other incentives under the constitution of the state, but this section of society could not achieve its fundamental rights until 2022, largely due to biased rhetoric, fake assumptions and opposition of certain factions in the country. Apparently, a lack of legal identity had led to a nationwide denial of their social and human rights in past.

After the decades-long struggle, the government passed the Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act in Parliament in 2018 which was aimed at paving the way for their recognition as transgender persons, also providing them their due rights in government jobs, treatment under Sehat Card Plus Scheme, and other monetary and social benefits, but still, this act is under strong criticism by clerics and religious groups.

In fact, the approval of the Transgender Act will bring a positive change in Transgenders' life and they would be able to play a constructive role in society in the future.



FOR the past few weeks, politically-engaged Twitter users have either lamented or praised Elon Musk for his new ownership of Twitter, a microblogging social media website that has an outsized influence on much of American politics. Recently, he handed over a tremendous cache of internal files to a handful of free speech journalists like Bari Weiss and Matt Taibbi as part of his effort to clear the air surrounding the company's opaque content management practices.

While Musk is the hero, the villains are the ousted Vijaya Gadde and Yoel Roth, who seemed to have managed content in a highly ideological and partisan manner. They overwhelmingly favored left-wing causes and routinely fielded requests from Democratic campaigns and officials who wished to dictate what material Twitter would and would not allow. Recently, Weiss and Taibbi have revealed that Twitter freely engaged in “shadowbanning” or “deamplification,” allowing moderators to apply various methods for preventing conservative messengers from reaching their audiences. These could include preventing their tweets from “trending,” keeping their content from showing up in searches, or imposing suspensions with the thinnest of rationales.

These revelations follow years of new labeling of posts made to the site. Specifically, Twitter warned users that posts contained inaccurate information about the 2020 presidential election or COVID-19 policies. Moderators would “shadowban” or suspend accounts that violated what Twitter took to be the right kind of information to share on its platform. Those decisions were influenced by government agencies concerned about the propagation of bad ideas, such as the wrong-headed notion that the 2020 election was “stolen,” or the much more reasonable position that school lockdowns entailed greater costs than government officials admitted.

The very topic of Twitter might cause some readers to roll their eyes, but the significance of these discoveries should not be overlooked merely because one finds Twitter unpalatable. What we are seeing in the so-called “Twitter Files” is what media scholar Zongyi Zhang calls “the infrastructural turn in platforms.” As a platform for discussion becomes more relevant to government interests, governments seek to control that platform, hoping to direct it toward their own ends rather than those either of the users or owners.

**Infrastructuralization: A Chinese Technique on American Shores**

Zhang's inquiry is not focused on Twitter; it examines the trajectory of TikTok as it is used in China. Zhang finds that the government initially treated TikTok in China as more or less a frivolous nuisance, given that most content was, as it is in America, based around dancing and lip-synching short videos. The founder, Bytedance CEO Zhang Yiming, said in 2018 that his platform was not just an “information aggregation and distribu-

tion platform” but a “technology company.” These terms indicated that Yiming had embraced a neutrality ethic, in which he was happy to develop the platform in a way that drew in new users, which in turn opened greater opportunities to draw from their metadata new sources of revenue. In essence, TikTok was no different from other social media platforms like early Twitter, Facebook, and the like, on which content moderation was kept to a minimum in order to encourage new growth in the user base.

The Chinese government was not pleased and began that same year an effort to stymie the platform's embrace of content neutrality. State media pointedly criticized Yiming's approach, and TikTok users discovered they were unable to share their videos over other social media and messaging apps like WeChat. Tech giant Tencent throttled access. Yiming escaped digital purgatory by coordinating content moderation with the Chinese government. The Chinese government wanted TikTok to stress certain content in its launch of a “video encyclopedia” that stressed traditional Chinese culture and education over its previously popular content. Yiming complied and his company has since found itself freed from constraints and returning to its previous earnings.

The above is a compressed narrative that showcases the “infrastructural turn.” Once TikTok was simply a neutral platform for sharing videos, but now it is an extension of the government's broad social and cultural priorities.

Something similar seems to have happened at Twitter. At first, Twitter was a relatively small social media site that had the character of a bulletin board for the subcultures that found a home there. Perhaps the earliest (forming around 2009) was “Black Twitter,” which generated much of the vernacular used on the site, from terms like “drag” (to mock someone justly) or “to have receipts” (to have evidence against a person). There was also the formation of “Weird Catholic Twitter” or “Weird Christian Twitter” that featured a hodgepodge of communists, integralists, and “normies” (people without very online, bespoke ideological modifications to their faiths). These subcultures are the bread and butter of social media networks.

The success of Twitter as a platform did not necessarily translate into profits. Twitter has always struggled with monetizing the platform, and it has branched out in such ventures like Vine (launched in 2013 and closed in 2017) and other short-lived (2020-1) Twitter features like “Fleets,” similar to the “stories” on Facebook and Instagram. Twitter did find success, however, in certain “superusers” whose content drove people to the platform in droves—chief among them being former President Donald J. Trump. Immediately prior to Musk's acquisition of Twitter, some people noted that the number of superusers had declined, spelling possible trouble for the platform. That was part of a broader media downturn following Trump's

departure from the presidency, as well as the return to relative normalcy after most COVID restrictions came to an end.

As Matt Taibbi explains, the fall of 2020 through 2021 was the period of “erosion of [moderation] standards within the company.” This “erosion” is the same as Twitter's “infrastructural turn.” In November of 2020, Chaya Raichik started a Twitter account dubbed “Libs of TikTok” that posted weird, sometimes unsettling progressive TikTok videos, along with occasional commentary on them. Throughout 2021, as the account gained traction, Twitter moderators put the account through multiple shadowbanning techniques and repeatedly imposed temporary suspensions. 2021 began with banning Trump from the platform for his encouragement of the January 6 riot. During the early fall of 2021, Twitter used shadowbanning techniques to suppress messages by Sandford University professor Jay Bhattacharya for his warnings against COVID-19 lockdowns. As the Twitter files have revealed, the Twitter moderation team greatly expanded its mandate to suppress “disinformation” and the tools to implement this mandate. As Bari Weiss and others at The Free Press conclude:

The bottom line was: If someone in [Site Integrity Policy, Policy Escalation Support team] didn't like you, they could find a way to shut you down.

That was the subtext of this direct message from Yoel Roth to colleagues in early 2021, written in a nearly indecipherable Twitter-ese:

“A lot of times, SI [Twitter's Site Integrity team] has used technicality spam enforcements as a way to solve a problem created by Safety [team at Twitter] under-enforcing their policies.”

In a follow-up message with a colleague, Roth said he was looking for ways to marginalize accounts that had fallen into disfavor without banning them outright. Banning a user, especially a prominent one with many followers, generated bad publicity. Possible workarounds included “disabling engagements” and “deamplification/visibility filtering.”

Roth claimed the sub rosa censorship amounted to a public service. “The hypothesis underlying much of what we've implemented,” he said, “is that if exposure to, e.g., misinformation directly causes harm, we should use remediations that reduce exposure.”

Without informing either users or the suppressed accounts, Twitter moderators would suppress the reach of certain users on their platform and then lie about doing so—even before Congress.

The comparison between Chinese TikTok and Twitter is not perfect. The former is a case of imposition; the latter is one of collaboration. Leading figures within Twitter like Gadde and Roth seemed happy to work with the US government to assist in moderating against “stop the steal” conspiracy theorists, dissenters to the

government's COVID regime, and accounts lampooning “woke” Tik Tokers. This attitude reflects an elite monoculture shared between the upper echelons of Silicon Valley and the administrative state, though it is important to note that Roth and Gadde, in exercising moderation oversight, behaved as private actors in a private company.

This difference matters less, though, when it becomes clear that none of these relationships were disclosed, that moderation was heavily one-sided, and that these connections were denied under oath before Congress. In addition, the unintended consequence of these efforts was to provide fuel to the fire for conspiracy theorists of all kinds as the platform suppressed genuine scientific disagreement over how to manage the response to the virus. Perhaps worst of all is the co-mingling of these two issues, since skepticism of the 2020 election outcome was unwarranted while doubt concerning COVID lockdowns was perfectly valid. It is hard to persuade the public to discount conspiracy theories when, sometimes, the theories are true.

**The Press and a Free People**

Musk has referred to these matters as First Amendment violations, but this is not correct from the perspective of constitutional law. It is better to say that these issues touch upon the original reason for establishing freedom of the press in the first place. A “free press” contrasts with a “licensed press.” During the seventeenth century, religious and political dissenters in England objected to the requirement to procure a license to print publications, and the suppression of their efforts was partly responsible for the civil strife that engulfed the nation for the better part of that century. The issue remained relevant into the eighteenth century, prompting the once-famous Cato's Letters to demand a press free of a licensing regime in the name of encouraging public discussion.

As Michael Kent Curtis has persuasively documented, Cato's Letters, or at least the ideas expressed in them, had a strong influence on the Founders, who had fomented rebellion as well as a Constitution through the use of a free press. Far from licensing the press, the Founders agreed to subsidize newspapers with low postage rates that incurred losses covered by postage on letters. The legacy was a society in which newspapers flourished. Alexis de Tocqueville was not overly impressed with the result, but could not think of a superior arrangement. Newspapers were so prominent a part of the American culture he saw in 1831 that he remarked how the American frontiersman wandered into the wilderness with a Bible and a newspaper.

Expediting the spread of the newspaper were technological developments that rendered its production much cheaper at small and large scales. The Gordon jobber (which some still use today) is cheap and could produce small-scale publications for local civic

and political associations with ease. The steam press could churn out newspapers by the thousands for regional or even national distribution. As a result, censoring these newspapers was nearly impossible. When Elijah Lovejoy, an abolitionist, ran afoul of Democrats in Missouri in 1835, he found his printing press destroyed. He quickly procured a new one and began printing across the border in Illinois until in 1837 a mob found his press in a barn, shot him to death, and burned the barn to the ground. While Woodrow Wilson found it relatively straightforward to use war powers to censor radio, newspapers were a constant nuisance. The reason was that the stakeholders in radio were small enough to organize; printers were in the thousands. He responded by using the Committee of Public Information to uncover and suppress seditious speech against the First World War and the government, but his efforts were limited and produced some of the first Supreme Court cases ruling in favor of press freedoms.

The rise of broadcast media was simultaneous with the rise of the administrative state, and the creation in 1927 of the Federal Radio Commission, now the Federal Communications Commission, brought a licensed press back to the United States for the first time. For radio and television stations to broadcast legally over airwaves, they were required to secure a permit from the FCC and comply with the terms of use. Like all early platforms, these terms were somewhat limited at first, but by the 1950s, the infamous “Blue Book” of recommended content creation for broadcast platforms began to structure what American radio and television should look like. By no means was the FCC licensing regime inevitable—it was an ideological project. As Ronald Coase wonderfully illustrated in his paper on the subject, the competition for use of airwaves could have been easily managed through private contract, and by extending common law solutions to land use rights.

Social media combines both newspaper and broadcast features. Like newspaper printing of old, social media has a low barrier to entry for users and producers. Like broadcast media, it has incredible reach because its material is easy to access. No longer does one have to wait for the paper to arrive on a doorstep; one merely opens an app. Low barriers to entry and user-generated content are what define social media. This creates a problem for print, however, because its increasing dependence on digital distribution over social media exposes print publications to the censorship that they successfully avoided for so long.

The decline of broadcast in favor of digital technologies has created new mandates for the FCC, but we are now no longer seeing these questions addressed either by legislative efforts from elected officials or by the adjudication of judges. Now they are the province of law enforcement and other administrative agen-

cies, which directly coordinate with digital platforms to build government infrastructure into their platforms. This development is worse than licenses—at least they are publicly disseminated. Now, the de facto licenses are rooted in private communications between agencies and corporate leaders, and the full extent of these regulations is known to us only because of Musk's revelation of them. These communications are different from the Chinese interventions in TikTok only by degree, not in kind.

This kind of government infrastructuralization is possible because there are relatively few social media platforms, and because there is considerable ideological overlap between the employees of government agencies and those running the major tech companies. I do not wish to dwell on the ideological overlap too long—many, many others are already doing so. Rather, I want to draw attention to what a major loss it is for Americans to have abandoned newspapers as a mode of communication. The digitization of print meant that it became necessary to funnel print stories through a very small number of digital networks in order to reach audiences. Thus, printers lost the advantage of being so large in number as to avoid government censorship. When the New York Post broke the Hunter Biden laptop story, their story was suppressed on Twitter, and Twitter moderates even temporarily banned their official account for sharing it.

**Return to Print?**

The introduction of infrastructuralization into platforms is not so much a violation of free press in statute or case law—or at least, it is not only that. It is a direct violation of a foundational American principle, by which free people are permitted to consult whatever publications they wish for political information. The argument against a free people doing so has always come down to the same rationale: the information can be dangerous. The only thing that makes dangerous information more dangerous, however, is its suppression, as people begin to believe that the story is not just dangerous but damaging to government interests. People lose faith in a government that seeks to suppress political information against it, no matter how spurious; ironically, the suppression itself grants that spuriousness a veneer of truth.

Political solutions to this problem are difficult and not within the scope of this essay. Perhaps the best first step an individual can take is to bypass social media as a primary source for news and information and, instead, go directly to one's preferred publications online or in print. Given that online stories can be taken down or edited without notice, print is arguably the best method to preserve free discussions. As streaming sites have begun to pull digital downloads and books, media consumers have relearned the value of having hard copies of their favorite music and movies. The same can be said about what we read.

# Woke invades business

Richard M. Reinsch II

nesses being closely connected to government.

This remains one of the most enduring legacies of the financial crisis of 2008: federal bailouts for banks and other financial institutions that had been run into the ground. If support for the market goes hand in hand with corruption, then so much for markets. The distinction between being free-market and being pro-business has collapsed in the eyes of many, into just another word for elite mismanagement.

Americans were told that free trade would increase goodwill with China and make them more like us: democratic, peaceful, and liberal. That, too, seems preposterous now. As Gregg argues, free trade cannot perform miracles like that, nor should it supplant legitimate national security concerns we have with China. The final bit has been the woeful federal and state responses to Covid, which have left us buried in debt and inflation from monetary and fiscal policy hubris. The social welfare spending supposedly justified by Covid induced a significant number of Americans to leave the workforce.

Was the pro-market con-

sensus itself a mistake? Should it too be thrown out the bathwater? Gregg argues no, but he acknowledges that facts and circumstances have changed dramatically. If we are going to defend economic freedom and political freedom, then stock must be taken of where we are now.

Those of us who believe in the free market, and not necessarily a pro-business market, speak from a position of weakness. Economic growth, entrepreneurialism, and technological advancement as goals of the regulatory framework that supports the market seem to have fallen out of the conversation. They are now replaced on both the Left and the Right with calls to enlist government in various plans to boost the fortunes of the working class or various labor sectors. Meanwhile, the federal government's regulatory apparatus, along with social spending—to say nothing of the self-serving nexus between federal agencies and corporations—grows constantly. As I write this, the Biden administration is urging passage of a rule that will ease the ability of shareholder activists to intervene in the governance

of public corporations. If successful, the focus of corporations will turn even further to the limitless fads of contemporary progressivism whose every goal is to undermine profitable businesses. But many business leaders think they can purchase the Left's goodwill by aping their political action.

**Woke Invades Business**

One intrusion, embraced in certain respects by figures on the Left and Right, is stakeholder capitalism. In a 2019 statement approved by 181 CEOs, the Business Roundtable embraced “modernizing its principles on the role of a corporation.” Their former commitment to “principally serve their shareholders” no longer “accurately” fits “the ways in which we and our fellow CEOs endeavor every day to create value for all our stakeholders.”

Of course, businesses wanting to succeed would show respect and concern to employees, customers, local communities, and others potentially impacted by the corporation. But the “stakeholder” in academic literature means something else. That is, the corporation needs “democratization,” Gregg notes. This entails, “building into business planning a commitment to the principle that stakehold-

ers should be treated by businesses as ends in themselves.” Rights “flow from this commitment” and companies must actively incorporate these stakeholders in their governance structures.

The list of who counts as a stakeholder is limited only by activist imaginations and the academic literature that promotes them. Gregg quotes one stakeholder advocate urging that a stakeholder is “any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievements of the firm's objectives.” That's a limitless definition. Shareholders become just another group the corporation should consider as it makes key decisions. That the cost of capital might become prohibitively expensive, or even dry up completely, as shareholders recede in importance within the corporate structure is never really considered. The stakeholders themselves should also be embraced on the board of directors and other bodies that will advise the corporation.

On the Left, this stakeholder model has prepared the way for Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) direction, on which Gregg has led a Law &

(Continued on Page 7)

# More money doesn’t solve acquisition issues

**IN an effort to expedite aid to Ukraine, lawmakers are relinquishing accountability measures to grant the Pentagon what have been characterized as “wartime procurement powers.”**

These emergency authorities enable the Pentagon to deliver Ukraine more weapons, faster. And with fighting in eastern Ukraine intensifying, the Ukrainian military’s need for munitions only grows. Ukraine’s continued sovereignty likely depends on them.

But as the Pentagon’s “wartime procurement powers” boost production of high-priority munitions for Ukraine, lawmakers should consider how they impact the U.S. defense industry. Some emergency authorities could reduce competition in the industrial base by further consolidating weapons production, which may accelerate the provision of munitions to Ukraine but also sets the stage for even more corporate price gouging of the military.

In the final defense policy bill, which cleared the House and just passed the Senate on Thursday, lawmakers waived key contracting regulations in emergency procurement powers the Pentagon will maintain

through fiscal year 2024. In so doing, lawmakers increase the risk of wasteful spending because they simultaneously reduce the Pentagon’s due diligence to award contracts while offering companies unusually long contracts, making it easier for contractors to overcharge the government.

Congress doesn’t typically provide multi-year authorities to procure munitions smaller than Navy vessels and major aircraft, so the authorities are particularly significant — especially since they supersede usual regulations designed to prevent corporate price gouging. And while lawmakers have included other measures to limit profits and limit prices to those recently paid, they aren’t enough to prevent corporate price gouging.

According to former Pentagon acquisition chief and industry insider Ellen Lord, multi-year authorities encourage military contractors to make the capital investments necessary to increase output. Those investments increase production capacity to speed up the provision of Ukraine aid, but their staying power threatens to permanently expand the weapons industry. Lawmakers must beware the fact

that multi-year authorities give contractors greater ability to overcharge the Pentagon going forward, even if they simultaneously expedite the provision of U.S. aid to Ukraine.

In some cases, for example, contractors doing Ukraine-related work are not required to provide the Pentagon certified cost and pricing data — information the Pentagon needs to avoid getting ripped off by military contractors. The department needs this data to make sure a company fairly prices the goods and services for a job before it awards that company a contract. The Pentagon’s Office of the Inspector General has made this clear, calling cost data the most reliable source of information for pricing contracting officers “to ensure that the U.S. Government obtains the best prices when negotiating contracts for goods and services.”

Given the defense industry’s history of overcharging the Pentagon, sometimes to the tune of more than 3,000 percent, lawmakers should only be strengthening requirements for contractors to provide certified cost and pricing information — not expanding opportunities for contractors to price gouge.

Boeing already appears to be pushing the envelope on certified cost and pricing data with a proposal to develop a new long-range precision strike weapon for Ukraine. The Pentagon is now considering the company’s plan to produce ground-launched small diameter bombs (GLSDB), which includes a waiver to exempt the company from providing cost and pricing information before winning the contract award.

It’s unclear why Boeing needs a waiver, especially since the GLSDB is a combination of the GBU-39 small diameter bomb and the M26 rocket motor — both of which are common and sourced relatively easily from existing U.S. suppliers. But industry’s resistance to providing the Pentagon certified cost and pricing data is likely driven more by profits than by time sensitivity.

In fact, there’s little evidence to suggest providing the Pentagon certified cost and pricing data even slows contractors down. The Pentagon doesn’t track when contractors delay providing cost and pricing data (much less for how long) and the pressure is on con-

tracting officers to make a contract award in a timely manner rather than on the contractors competing for awards.

Boeing’s recent proposal reflects just one accountability gap in the Pentagon’s acquisition process that the war in Ukraine has highlighted. Beyond the issue of corporate price gouging, the Pentagon already struggles to deliver weapons and equipment on time and within budget. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) reported this summer that over half of major defense acquisition programs (MDAPS) reported delays to capability deliveries in the past year, with several programs stating the total delay time was unknown.

In 2020, the GAO reported that the average delivery delay for MDAPS was over two years, and that the cost growth was over \$628 billion — or 54 percent in total cost growth. The GAO was unable to evaluate cost growth of MDAPS in 2022 due to lack of data.

With fewer guardrails in place, the Department of Defense is likely to dig itself an even deeper hole as wartime procurement authorities expand both pro-

duction capacity and the margin for waste. Because of this, advancing a more accountable weapons acquisition process at the Pentagon is more important than ever.

But oversight is too often viewed as an impediment to acquisition efforts rather than a strength. One anonymous senior congressional aide has said “we can’t pussyfoot around with minimum-sustaining-rate buys of these munitions,” implying that the United States is playing around without wartime procurement authorities that bypass oversight measures. The staffer even expressed disbelief that one could prioritize anything more than “buying a ton of munitions for the next few years, for our operational plans against China and continuing to supply Ukraine.”

It’s telling that this anonymous source mentioned China before Ukraine in a discussion explicitly focused on Ukraine war contracting. They note “operational plans” that I would very much like to see. That aside, their comments reflect an increasingly common association between expanding production capacity to support the Ukrainian war

effort and preparing for a war against China. But the entity most interested in a military conflict with China is the U.S. defense industry — the same industry with the most to gain from lawmakers compromising on accountability measures in weapons acquisition that will expand as the war in Ukraine continues.

There is no doubt the defense industry will leverage capital investments made to service Ukraine as a means to maintain increased weapons production even after the war eventually ends. At the recent Reagan National Defense Forum, industry executives and Pentagon officials discussed how the war in Ukraine has illuminated industry’s vulnerabilities — specifically in the context of producing weapons for a potential war with Russia or China. But lawmakers can’t allow the war in Ukraine to become another pathway for contractors to pursue excess profits at the expense of the Pentagon and taxpayers. More money doesn’t solve acquisition issues; it exacerbates existing ones and clears the path to more waste, fraud, and abuse.

Take the Navy’s latest surface ship programs. The

Zumwalt-class destroyer and the Littoral Combat Ship are multi-billion-dollar acquisition disasters that left the Navy with ships unable to perform their intended duties. Both programs were packed with new technologies and constructed before their development was complete, the perfect recipe for expensive disappointment. Indeed, the Navy has already tried and failed to decommission LCSs, the youngest of which were only commissioned 2 years ago! These problems are real and growing, and lawmakers can only ignore acquisition issues for so long before even billions of dollars can’t mask reality.

The United States has done the right thing helping Ukraine defend its sovereignty, but that shouldn’t mean lawmakers throw their hands up when it comes to accountable weapons acquisition. The anniversary of Russia’s gruesome invasion of Ukraine is fast approaching, and the United States can’t afford to continue neglecting longstanding acquisition issues only compounded by efforts to quickly deliver Ukraine the resources it needs to defend its borders.

**SITTING reading a book in a pre-WWI café in Trieste, Robert Kaplan looks about him and sees “a complex and completed civilization, ill at ease with itself.” Much the same might be said of Adriatic: A Concert of Civilizations at the End of the Modern Age.**

Trieste sits in a sliver of Italy largely surrounded by Slovenia. It is cosmopolitan; the population has roots in Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Slovenia, as well as Italy. The city’s ambience is the result of ancient interactions between Greek Orthodox, Catholicism, and Islam. For centuries the diversity of Trieste was facilitated by the polyglot Austro-Hungarian Empire. After 1918, however, with the rise of state nationalism, Trieste’s location meant bitterness. Memories of atrocities by Yugoslav Communist partisans against Italians in WW2 linger, so here the European Union is welcomed, with people hoping it can function “as a de facto replacement for the Habsburg Empire.” People in Trieste are sophisticated, but their ethnicities and history do not make them confident about self-rule, and so they hope for the return of empire as a political form that will allow them to sit and drink coffee cosseted in the “warm yellows and chocolate browns” of their pre-WWI cafes.

They hope that empire will be a benevolent EU, but the city knows that another, very different empire, sits in the offering. “Trieste is Central European intimacy with an Italian-global spin” but its people are gloomily aware that looming is “the new and vast maritime empire of China [which] threatens to overwhelm all of these European associations.”

Kaplan is an American thought leader on geopolitics and the author of twenty books. He holds out the

Adriatic—the sea edged by Italy, Slovenia, Croatia, Montenegro, and Albania, and supporting storied and subtle cities like Ravenna, Venice, Zagreb, Dubrovnik, and Corfu—as a model of governance for our newly minted world.

The Adriatic is “a geographical metaphor for an age that is passing: the modern age itself in Europe.” The book continues the theme of Kaplan’s tremendous volumes *The Coming Anarchy* and *The Return of Marco Polo’s World* that the moment of the unipolar world—the age of American dominance and the famed rules-based order—is over. The region surveyed in his latest volume is “the globe in miniature. Indeed, the civilizational subtleties of the Adriatic now encompass the world.” Nation states and their hard borders are withering and being replaced by cosmopolitan trading city-states, new wannabe Venices.

The Adriatic is a region with “a growing emphasis on city-states and the half-hidden traditions of empire,” which easily connects with the early modern sensibility of concordia. At the start of the scientific revolution, and absent a hegemonic power, elites in the trading cities of the region managed far-flung commercial interests in a milieu with plenty of ethnicities, but no strident state-sponsored nationalisms. The early modern period was not all milk and honey, but a *modus vivendi* was found that allowed highly diverse peoples to muddle along profitably, albeit with elbows being thrown on occasion. The new world we find ourselves in demands we revisit the historic Adriatic and find our way through to a similar concert of autonomous cities operating adroitly within parameters set by the geopolitical flexes of the American, Chinese, European, and Russian empires. The prob-

lem with Kaplan’s vision is that the conversations he reports with various constituents on the ground do not make one confident that they find the ideal of concordia quite so charming. Perhaps Kaplan is not confident either, which might explain why the book is conceptually difficult. Adriatic is not as well-wrought as previous books.

Perhaps Adriatic’s diffidence stems from Kaplan losing some confidence in himself. Visitors to Law & Liberty are big readers and will enjoy Kaplan’s declaration that he intends to treat books as “characters in this journey as much as the landscapes.” “Truly, I travel in order to read.” Much of the volume is about books, which leads Kaplan to a caution. Trying to correct his past errors, he warns readers about the limits of his own work, and that of other journalists. At every stage of his journey, he tells us about the books he reads either by locals or by academics expert in themes raised by the location. It is a way to educate the reader that each of the places visited is complex, and forbiddingly so. For this reason, he is especially laudatory about difficult books written by academics. He is not naïve about the poor quality of some academic work but, at its best, he thinks university monographs not merely indispensable, but significantly, “the only way to escape the deafening monotone of the commentariat.” The genres he mentions include travelogue, history, art history, geography, politics, and strategic studies. He is also historical in his reading, frequently citing hundred-year-old texts.

At one point he expresses frustration that he cannot find the right form for the book. He is unsure whether he is writing travelogue, long-form journalism, or a geopolitical manifesto. What he might have added is that the book is, at least in part, a confession. Kaplan makes use of Noel

Malcolm’s massive *Agents of Empire: Knights, Corsairs, Jesuits and Spies in the Sixteenth-Century Mediterranean World*, and there is a backstory. This is not only a great book, he admits, but by an author who took Kaplan to task for his *Balkan Ghosts* thirty years ago. Malcolm’s review, says Kaplan, was savage, and it cut him deeply. It was a case of an elite professor schooling a journalist for forcefully stating things about places and events he barely understood. Over the years, Kaplan says, he has grown in appreciation for the patience of the scholar whose list of books cannot possibly match that of Kaplan. He accepts the professorial with better grace now, “seeing it as an opportunity for self-improvement, rather than for resentment.” But there is more. Kaplan’s book reputedly saddened President Bill Clinton and had some causal role in the American war in Serbia. Kaplan reports utter shame for the hawkish positions he took over both the Serbian War and the Second Iraq War and concedes he urged others to war in places that he, in fact, knew relatively little about. Parts of this book are a lamentation, a witness to the snares warned about in *Ecclesiastes*. It is brave writing.

Venice receives a lot of attention in Adriatic because, well, the city always does. Perhaps no other city has inspired so much commentary and great art as Venice. Its historical, literary, and artistic legacy is unparalleled. Kaplan recalls that when he was a young man the city schooled him on the need to be more learned. “Venice was a delicious put-down, and still is.” Giving the Middle Ages more credit than many writers do, Venice is proof that “without the medieval centuries, there would have been no West as we know it.” The

Graham McAleer

medieval synthesis it perfected, makes Venice a rebuke in our day: “the right-wing nationalists want pure ethnic nations, but the metamorphosis of Venice works against that notion.” The Republic of Venice represented the triumph of a closed elite managing the twin pressures of culture and geography adroitly.

The aristocrats of Venice understood “that geopolitics—the battle for space and power—is eternal.” The tonic, they understood, was realism. For the city to endure in the hothouse of Adriatic politics it was necessary that its leaders think “tragically in order to avoid tragedy.” The history of Venice teaches that order comes before freedom, interests before values, “and yet realism requires beauty or else it slips into coarseness and vulgarity: this, too, is the genius of Venice.” Enlightened tolerance at home meant a stable base camp for rapacity abroad. Kaplan does not imagine the world aborning will be peaceful but its cut and thrust might, if inspired by the Venetian Republic, at least be less hateful and more beautiful.

Yet, one of its lessons seems naively expressed: “The Venetians, somewhat like the present-day Chinese about to commercially invade these waters, had no ideology or universal values to export to the world.” Perhaps more than his other books, Adriatic expresses how Kaplan wishes the world would be rather than what appears to be happening. Kevin Rudd, Australia’s ex-Prime Minister and an acknowledged China expert, certainly would not agree with Kaplan’s account of China as ideologically lite.

On his tour of the Adriatic, Kaplan sits in a lot of fantastic cafes and talks to a lot of sophisticates. A Trieste journalist, Mario Nordio, evokes the spirit Kaplan wishes for the

world: “I am a spiritual son of Adenauer, who, ever since I was young, has harbored a profound sympathy for the Habsburg Empire.” Nordio expresses a sentiment common to a certain class in the region that the mark of true nobility is to be “a man above nationality” in the Habsburg tradition: “My old home, the Monarchy, alone was a great mansion with many doors and many chambers, for every condition of men.” “Such a patriotism,” adds Kaplan, “is almost contemporary, even futuristic, in its character.” Likely because of language, his interviews are restricted to the intellectual class — journalists, professors, and graduate students. Yet even some of these conversations leave him depressed. Sometimes they express his own view of cosmopolitanism, with a flourish of romanticism for the Habsburg double eagle, but frequently they express populism, which seems to surprise him. In one footnote he admits that after his conversations in Slovenia he was blindsided when the people elected a Trump-like populist only months after he had left the country. Not all the stakeholders in the region share Kaplan’s sense that:

Now, saving the West can only mean advancing to a sturdy cosmopolitanism that can accept and absorb migrants, and not retreating into a coarse and reactionary nationalism: for the West grew gradually and inexorably, if not always directly, in the direction of liberalism. Europe, in other words, in order to save itself and the West, must become a system of states whose societies internally are international in scope and tradition.

The limits of language restricting Kaplan’s perceptions may have been compounded by a tactical mistake. One Trieste journalist proposes that diplomats are detached from understanding the world because their

portal is the airport, while a genuine grasp of the ebb and flow of peoples, sentiments, and the true weight of events would require the portal to be the train station. Kaplan does not take up this opportunity for intimacy with regular folk: he appears to have missed encounters with locals by touring the region by car.

Kaplan is better traveled than most people on the planet, and certainly, none approach him when it comes to traveling the world so thoughtfully, yet can he really be so surprised that nativism is strong when, for example, Europe’s migration crisis has even overwhelmed liberal Sweden? Far from the Adriatic, Sweden has received a flow of migrants who passed through it, so many in fact that now a full fifth of its population is foreign-born: that’s 2 million out of Sweden’s 10 million people. It seems odd that so fine an analyst as Kaplan dismisses populism as just “a swan song for the age of nationalism itself,” whilst other strategists, like John Mearsheimer, think nationalism a property of human nature and its sentiments the most powerful in world politics.

Adriatic would benefit from Kaplan finding his old analytic swagger again. He cannot square the conversations he had in Slovenia with the fact that the electorate just a little after elected a Trumpian rightist. There seems to be plenty of reasons Kaplan might have come away from the country with a poor reading of its direction, yet he all but backs into a conspiracy theory: “with Orbán’s help [Janez Janša] built a propaganda network that garnered many followers. It was an example that we are truly at the end of the modern world and into the post-modern one, in which absurdity combines with globalization to produce unimaginable outcomes. It was humbling to see a country whose experts had

impressed me with such probity to drift for a time into illogic.”

Kaplan’s eager use of Noel Malcolm’s research into the “upper reaches” of the Ottoman bureaucracy seems problematic. This elite, we are told, included “many ‘renegades’ (converts to Islam) from Italy, Croatia, Hungary, Austria and elsewhere, whose native language and mental formation were Western.” Kaplan finds attractive the contemporary analogue: “The knowledge and policy elite among us inhabit a very cosmopolitan milieu... a world of a former narrow and aristocratic elite morphing into a larger global upper class, one full of opportunities and risks.” Yet, we don’t normally think of biting the hand that feeds a virtue. Renegade is hardly a positive word, which is why Kaplan finesses it with scare quotes. Back in the day, I imagine these converts were thought apostates to their religion and traitors to their nations, and what are we to think of this modern variant of cynical chancers?

Even if we could warm to this morally detached elite, there are two further problems. One problem is evident from Kaplan’s trip to Albania. Kaplan acknowledges that some of those unmoored from nation, and adept at surfing the currents and eddies of risk in our postmodern condition, are crime families. I wish Kaplan had addressed the populist point that loyalty to a land is a requirement for rule of law. Further, as John Gray points out, the track record of these “masters of the universe” in understanding and managing the world is risible). Kaplan might find these slick operators attractive, but I wish he’d addressed in a complete way whether the populist impatience with decades of lurching from one financial and military crisis to another merits serious analytical consideration.

## Woke invades business

(Continued from Page 6)

Liberty forum. Major investment firms, corporations, and increasingly the federal government embrace ESG. The ultimate goal is to make corporations ESG-compliant, or risk being ostracized—unable to receive capital or be listed on the NASDAQ and New York Stock Exchange. The federal government is likely to add teeth to this regime if it’s not resisted firmly.

In The Next American Economy, Gregg asks the most significant questions: What is the purpose of the corporation? Why does it exist? Why does stakeholder capitalism assume that profit is easy and will endlessly fund various social justice objectives, even those that make profits difficult or impossible to generate? The old way of corporations existing first and foremost to make a profit for shareholders has been damned by many. That, they insist, is the old economy of predatory capitalism built by the white man. Here, the aims of the woke agenda find their way into the boardroom through ESG investing, as antiracist ideology, gender ideology, environmentalism, and

egalitarianism stalk the decisions of corporate leaders.

Many CEOs have predictably tried to embrace this agenda, cynically or not. But, as Gregg notes, the purpose of such an agenda is to destroy corporate capitalism. ESG corporatism inextricably links corporations with an ever-growing list of labor, environmental, racial and gender, local community, and various other activist groups. The corporation in this view exists for how it can serve the social justice good.

In the end, corporations will be so wedded to these groups that they approach operating like a state, servicing numerous constituencies. Logically speaking, the corporation will cease to exist. The one thing that a corporation can accomplish, i.e., return a profit to shareholders, will be buried by a thousand and one interest groups pilfering it or preventing it. State capitalism would become the long-term result of ESG corporatism. Less controlling policies are also now advanced on a bipartisan basis.

**The Story of American Manufacturing**  
A significant number of

voices on the Left and the Right contend that America has lost millions of manufacturing jobs, producing devastating consequences for communities and families across the country. The fallout, many argue, has not been exclusively economic, with widespread social disorders stemming from deindustrialization, including for male laborers who have struggled to find different employment. In what has become almost received wisdom, the depletion of the manufacturing sector by global trade, most particularly with China, has hurt America and shrunk the middle class.

The proffered solution is to embrace industrial policy, which would boost the number of middle-class manufacturing jobs by the federal government directly favoring the manufacturing sector. This could happen through any number of policy levers, such as favorable government loans to manufacturing companies, various tax incentives for preferred companies, tariffs, targeted investments, and other options. Gregg refutes the common view of manufacturing decline, adding substantial wrinkles to the story. America has an

incredibly productive manufacturing sector, worthy of the strongest and most complex economy in the world.

First, the decline in manufacturing jobs has happened simultaneously with rising manufacturing output in the U.S. to the tune of 180 percent growth between 1972 and 2007. American manufacturing in most categories is the world trendsetter. And we remain a major destination for manufacturing investment for global capital. And although manufacturing jobs declined from 19 million in 1979 to 12 million in 2016, total employment grew by over 50 million jobs during this same period. Many believe these are low-paying, service-sector jobs, but the average non-supervisory wage in the service sector is higher than the manufacturing sector, per the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Gregg adds that most of the manufacturing jobs that have been lost—80-90 percent—cannot be blamed on global trade but on automation and technology. We continue to manufacture, but we do so more efficiently. China-Shock did happen, and certain estimates place the manufacturing

jobs that were lost in the realm of 1-2 million between 1999-2011. But millions more jobs were created during this same period. And China Shock is now over. Before the pandemic, as Nicholas Eberstadt states, there were widespread job openings in manufacturing, construction, mining, and other fields that paid workers well.

What precisely would be gained by the federal government propping up work that technology and markets had mostly replaced? If those jobs were recreated in America by federal assistance, what would the average manufacturing wage be? Wouldn’t it decline unless the costs of inefficient production could be placed on consumers in the form of higher prices? But this only underscores Gregg’s point that industrial policy is inherently statist and builds crony capitalist connections between protected industries and companies and the federal government. Capital, investments, corporate strategy, and decision-making are no longer following consumer demand but government policy, making our economy more inefficient while

boosting the size of government and increasing the wallet sizes of those tethered to the state.

To be clear, there is obviously a national security situation with China that may require American corporations to move or delink much of their production from that country. Gregg does not argue that trade with China should be increased or maintained at current levels because of economic efficiency, which increasingly no longer exists as China resorts to an aggressive interventionist model that will drown its own economy.

What industrial policy does have working in its favor is a narrative, a moral core, and something intuitive that many can grasp. Who doesn’t want the working class to thrive? Who doesn’t want many opportunities for Americans to enter and remain in the middle class? Many remember the old manufacturing America and associate it with a certain kind of

economic prosperity. What many do not pay sufficient attention to are the ways that the sexual revolution, secularism, family breakdown, and large amounts of social welfare spending have contributed mightily to many social pathologies that are plaguing us. The attempt to pin the blame for these ills on capitalism or trade, a move made by many on the Right and the Left, skips over the hard part. In making the wrong diagnosis, they also prescribe the wrong remedy, one that will not solve the problem, for example, of a sizable percentage of able-bodied men not working.

Gregg argues that the contest with state capitalism—and industrial policy is certainly that—will require more than economic logic to show its deficiencies. What must be recovered is the idea that America is a nation built on important principles, including economic freedom. We are a trading nation. America’s robustness has ultimately

been built on commerce and the discipline and virtues it requires and can further enlarge.

Gregg looks to a series of authors who underlined how America once bred and encouraged in certain citizens the traits needed to thrive in a free economy. The Federalist Papers insist on America being a free economic country that will not engage in mercantilism, the most widespread practice of that time. Instead, Federalist 8 lists the habits required for republican self-government and for free enterprise as practices that will reinforce one another and make America strong.

Ultimately, a superior form of populism must embrace the free market, which makes the standard of economic life the consumer choices of the common citizen. Our goal as conservatives must be to protect this freedom from state intervention that would turn the market into a host of the parasitic Left and government class.

### Important Notice

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# Industrialists urge govt to take serious steps for resolution of issues

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Industrialists expressed serious apprehensions over charging of Sui gas rates on Regasified Liquefied Natural Gas (RLNG) rates to industries, fixed billing, and quarter tariff adjustments, collection of fuel price adjustments in power bills and unnecessary actions and issuance of notices by Employees' Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI).

The Manufactures urged the government and relevant authorities to take prompt and serious initiatives to resolve all aforementioned issues to promote industrialization in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The matters discussed by a delegation of manufacturers that was led by Industrialists Association Peshawar (IAP) president Malik Imran Ishaq during a meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali in Governor House Peshawar, said in a press release issued here on Monday.

The IAP delegation was consisted on Group leader

Ghazanfar Bilour, SVP Ayub Zakori, Dr Maqbool, Haji Afzal, Muqtasid Ahsan, Haris Mufti, Junaid Afzal, Saad Zahid, Ahmed Mustafa, Malik Mohsin, Malik Nouman and Malik Adnan, among others.

Sr. General Manager SNGPL Arbab Saqib, GM SNGPL Taj Ali Khan, Chief Pesco Engr Syed Nabi Gul and Regional Head EOBI Ashfaq Ahmed along with their staff members attended the meeting.

Malik Imran Ishaq informed the house regarding charges of Sui gas on RLNG rates to industries, issues pertaining to PESCO, TESCO and EOBI.

He said factories in Hayatabad Industrial Estates were being charged Sui gas rates on RNLG, which are approximately 300% higher than natural gas.

During the meeting, the IAP president also raised the issue of low gas pressure and faulty supply system.

Malik Ishaq on the occasion pointed out issues relating to Pesco and Tesco, in which include fixed billing, quarter tariff adjust-

ment, fuel price adjustment, peak hours' tariff and others.

The IAP president also informed the meeting regarding EOBI issues, mostly pertaining to notices for collection of fee must be served according to directions, decisions and orders of Courts, as all amendments in EOBI act through money bills have been termed as ultra vires.

Governor KP took serious note of industrialists' issues and issued directives to senior officers concerned on the spot for amicable resolution of all issues. He assured to take the matters of fixed billing, QTA, FPA and Peak hours with the federal government, standing committee on Power and Nepra.

Ghulam Ali directed Chief Pesco to engage with Tesco to plan and execute dismantling of Tesco feeders and relocating them to grid stations of Jamrud and Bara, adding that this task will release 40 MV and help in addition to further feeders in grid stations through bifurcation.

Governor KP asked

Chief Pesco to settle the issue of occupation of plot for SDO office and complaint office. He said the plot has been occupied by Tesco within the jurisdiction of Pesco in IEP.

Similarly, the KP Governor instructed the Chief Pesco to use all resources, human for resolution of all issues.

He also issued directives to Chief Pesco to seek all possibilities for approval of permits for IEP on Sunday.

Governor KP also assured to take up and review all matters of SNGPL, Pesco, Tesco and EOBI with concerned federal quarters, standing committees and regulators along with IAP. Improvement and relief shall be observed very soon.

Malik Imran Ishaq thanked Governor KP for taking serious notice of industrialists' issues and issuance of directives on the spot for their amicable resolution.

At last, the Group leader presented a crest and traditional turban to the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali.



SIALKOT: Irena Gancheva Ambassador of Republic of Bulgaria to Pakistan addressing to Business community at SCCI.

## Indonesia keen to strengthen trade relations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of the Republic of Indonesia, Adam M. Tugio here on Monday emphasized on strengthening bilateral economic and trade relations with Pakistan.

During a call on meeting with Finance Minister, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, the Ambassador appreciated Pakistan government for supporting joint venture projects between the two countries.

Both discussed measures to strengthen bilateral relations between the two countries, according to press statement issued by the Finance Ministry. They agreed to extend full support to enhance bilateral relations between both the countries.

On the occasion, the Finance Minister highlighted profound historical and brotherly relations between the two countries.

He shared that Pakistan attaches great importance to its relations with Indonesia and expressed satisfaction over the magnitude of economic and trade and investment cooperation and expressed the desire of his government to further deepen the trade and economic partnership between the two countries.

Dar extended sympathy over loss of lives in recent earthquake disasters in Indonesia, the statement added.

## Tractors' sale drops 52% in 5 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): The sale of tractors in the country dropped from 22,003 units during July-November (2021-22) to 10,498 units during the corresponding period of current fiscal year, showing a decrease of 52 percent.

On yearly basis the sale of tractors also plunged by 73 percent from 4,617 units in November 2021 to 1,240 units in same month of current year, according to latest data released by Pakistan Automotive Manufacturing Association (PAMA).

Similarly, sale of trucks and buses also posted a decline of 39 percent as it fell to 1,661 units during first five months of previous fiscal year from 2,727 units sold during same period of current fiscal year.

On yearly basis, some 342 units of trucks and buses were sold during the month of November 2022 compared to the sale of 532 units during the corresponding month of previous year, thus showing a decrease of 35.7 percent.

## Kyrgyzstan wants enhanced trade ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ulanbek Totuiaev, Ambassador of Kyrgyzstan to Pakistan, said that his country wanted enhanced trade relations with Pakistan as both countries had good potential to do trade. He said that Kyrgyzstan exported 3,000 tons of coal this year to Pakistan and being a rich country in natural resources, can supply more items to Pakistan.

He said that Pakistan can export many products to Kyrgyzstan including pharmaceuticals, textiles, and agricultural products. He said that Pakistani mangoes and citrus have also great potential in Kyrgyzstan. He

# Sustainable peace in province vital for prosperous Pakistan

QUETTA (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Businesses Forum Balochistan Chapter, Daroo Khan Achakzai on Monday said the province had a high concentration of natural resources, including oil, coal, gold, copper and gas reserves, and it provided a vital link to connect the country with Central Asian Republics and a number of other countries in the Indian Ocean for trade and economic activities.

Addressing members of the Chaman Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCCI), he said, "Because of our own weaknesses and mistakes, we have yet not been able to fully exploit this potential".

He said that General Syed Asim Munir since assuming the office of Chief of Army Staff, had been visiting important places, which indicated his priorities and efforts to

uphold peace and security in the country.

"During a visit to Quetta and Turbat, the army chief vowed that every effort would be made for security and safety of the people of Balochistan ensuring peaceful environment for its socio-economic development", he added.

"Given its geo-strategic and geo-economic importance, Pakistan's prosperous future is linked with Balochistan".

He further said the launch of CPEC had provided an opportunity to move in that direction, but still a lot more needed to be done to bring into use the province's immense treasures in the form of natural resources.

"We have no doubt in saying that hostile elements were still operating in the province and they must be chased out of the land, and apprehended at the earliest.

"Sustainable peace will only come in the province by resolving long standing issues and grievances of the Baloch people. A serious effort needs to be made on part of federal government, so that our people could not be further exploited by the enemies of Pakistan", Achakzai stated.

PBF Vice Chairperson Sana Durrani suggested that a Grand Dialogue involving Baloch leadership should be held where a road map should be worked out for Balochistan's development. "This road map must show sincerity of purpose and commitment on part of government to address grievances of Balochistan people", she added.

"Time has come to undo the negligence and mistakes of past and move forward with a spirit of unity to ensure a bright future for every region of Pakistan", Durrani said.

# Pakistan-Bulgaria should focus on trade balance

SIALKOT (APP): Bulgarian Ambassador to Pakistan Irena Gancheva said on Monday that both countries should focus on trade balance as the current figures about trade were not as per the existing potential.

Addressing the business community at Sialkot Chamber of Commerce & Industry (SCCI), she said that Bulgaria had an important geographical location, which made Bulgaria a vital hub for entering to European market.

She shared that Bulgaria would definitely support Pakistan in getting the GSP+ status back, says a news release.

She requested the SCCI to send proposal for single-country exhibition, so that the same could be forwarded to the Bulgarian

Chamber of Commerce & Industry for facilitation. She appreciated the role of Sialkot in economic development of the country.

Speaking on the occasion, SCCI President Abdul Ghafoor Malik welcomed the honorable guest and said that Pakistan and Bulgaria had been enjoying friendly ties built on mutual respect and identical views on global and regional developments.

He said that Pakistan attached extreme importance to Eastern European countries, especially Bulgaria and looks forward to further building upon friendly relations.

Abdul Ghafoor Malik said: "We are thankful to Bulgaria which has always assured us of offering support to Pakistan for retain-

ing the GSP+ status and has confirmed its backing to positively review Pakistan's GSP+ facility.

He suggested a few measures to broaden the scope of trade between the two countries which were: both countries should facilitate single-country trade exhibitions & encourage frequent exchanges of trade delegations; encourage Bulgarian businesses to explore joint ventures possibilities in Pakistan; signing of Memorandum of Understanding with prominent Bulgarian chambers of commerce & industry in order to promote B2B.

SCCI Senior Vice President Wahub Jahangir, Vice President SCCI Amer Majeed Sheikh and Sialkot business community were also present on the occasion.

# Hyundai Nishat Motor and Shell Pakistan sign agreement

## F.P. Report

LAHORE: Hyundai Nishat Motor (Private) Limited (HNMP) has collaborated with Shell, the leading global supplier of finished lubricants for 16 years, to launch co-branded lubricant products exclusively designed for Hyundai vehicles.

The collaboration will create the fully synthetic, next-generation co-branded lubricant 5W-30 AH, specially formulated and built to keep the Hyundai vehicle's engine running at full performance.

The Chief Executive Officer of Hyundai Nishat Motor, Mr. Hasan Mansha said, "Hyundai Motor has complete trust in the high-quality lubricants and fueling products marketed by Shell all over the world. This collaboration reflects the inspiration of both companies for innovation and greater reliability in auto-

mobiles which is based on extensive research and development."

The Chief Executive & Managing Director of Shell Pakistan Limited, Mr. Waqar Siddiqui, expressed his commitment to introducing a fully synthetic lubricant, "We are pleased to work in cohesion with a world-class automobile producer, like Hyundai. This exclusively designed new lubricant formula for unmatched cleansing of the Hyundai vehicle engines, mile after mile, to ensure peak performance in the long run. We have the vision to promise the well-being of our consumers by providing environmentally sustainable solutions for the energy sector."

Hyundai Nishat Motor strives to provide a wide range of automotive choices to the Pakistani market. HNMP, with its values and standards of excellence, is working diligently



to become Pakistan's most trustworthy and valued automobile brand.

Shell Pakistan Limited is an integrated energy company with unmatched expertise, resources, and technologies to meet the country's growing demand for oil and gas. The collab-

oration is a testament to Shell's commitment to delivering the best service to our valued customers. Hyundai Motor and Shell are dedicated to innovating for the betterment of their customer base and creating sustainable solutions that progress lifestyle.

# 28.43% increase in export

ISLAMABAD (APP): The exports from the country in the rupee term witnessed an increase of 28.43 percent during the first five months of the current fiscal year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reported.

Exports during July-November (2022-23) totaled Rs. 2,661,304 million as against Rs. 2,072,145 million during the corresponding period of last year showing an increase of 28.43%, according to provisional data released by PBS.

On year-on-year basis, the exports increased by 5.89 percent in November

2022 to Rs.531,599 million against the exports of Rs.502,009 million during November 2021.

On month-on-month basis, the exports increased 1.10% in November when compared to the exports of Rs. 525,831 million in October 2022.

The main commodities of exports during November 2022 were knitwear (Rs. 88,974 million), ready-made garments (Rs. 72,620 million), bed wear (Rs. 49,457 million), rice other than Basmati (Rs.34,909 million), cotton cloth (Rs. 34,140 million), towels (Rs.20,597 million), fish and fish preparations (Rs.11,382 million), rice

Basmati (Rs.10,252 million), cotton yarn (Rs.9,533 million) and surgical goods & medical instruments (Rs.8,343 million).

On the other hand, imports during July - November (2022-23) totaled Rs. 5,841,359 million as against Rs. 5,532,271 million during the corresponding period of last year showing an increase of 5.59%.

On YoY and MoM basis, imports into Pakistan during November, 2022 amounted to Rs. 1,152,054 million (provisional) as against Rs. 1,039,036 million in October 2022 and Rs. 1,366,681 million during November 2021 show-

ing an increase of 10.88% over October 2021 but a decrease of 15.70% over November 2021.

The main commodities of imports during November 2022 were petroleum products (Rs. 157,448 million), petroleum crude (Rs.121,378 million), natural gas, liquefied (Rs.70,725 million), palm oil (Rs. 70,720 million), plastic materials (Rs. 42,730 million), raw cotton (Rs.38,923 million), fertilizer manufactured (Rs.37,281 million), electrical machinery & apparatus (Rs.34,692 million), medicinal products (Rs.34,487 million) and Iron & steel (Rs.34,170 million).



## In brief

## Pele praises Messi, Mbappe

BRASÍLIA (Agencies): Brazilian legend Pele has congratulated Argentina and their superstar Lionel Messi for winning the 2022 FIFA World Cup and French star Kylian Mbappe for scoring four goals in the final. "Today, football continues to tell its story, as always, in an enthralling way," the 82-year-old wrote on Instagram. "Messi winning his first World Cup, as his trajectory deserved." "Congratulations Argentina! Certainly Diego is smiling now," he added, referring to the late Argentine football legend and his once greatest rival, Diego Armando Maradona. Pele also praised Mbappe. "My dear friend, Mbappe, scoring four goals in a final. What a gift it was to watch this spectacle to the future of our sport," he wrote. He also reserved special praise for Morocco, which became the first African nation to reach a World Cup semifinal. "And I couldn't fail to congratulate Morocco for the incredible campaign. It's great to see Africa shine," Pele said. On Sunday, Argentina bagged their third FIFA World Cup title by beating France 4-2 on penalties, after 120 minutes ended with a 3-3 draw. Pele, who helped Brazil win three World Cups in 1958, 1962, and 1970, is Brazil's leading scorer with 77 goals in 92 matches for his country and is regarded as one of the greatest footballers of all time.

## New Zealand announce ODI squad

WELLINGTON (Agencies): New Zealand have announced split ODI squads for their upcoming tours of India and Pakistan in January to manage player and staff workloads, as all-rounder Henry Shipley gets a maiden call-up. NZ will play three ODIs each in Pakistan and India. NZ ODI and Test captains Kane Williamson and Tim Southee will return home after the Pakistan ODIs in Karachi (January 10, 12, 14), along with coaches Gary Stead and Shane Jurgensen, to prepare for the England home Test series in mid-February. For the three ODIs (January 18, 21, 24) and T20I (January 27, 29, February 1) series against India, Luke Ronchi will take over as head coach who will be assisted by NZC network coaches Bob Carter and Paul Wiseman. Auckland Aces left-hander Mark Chapman and Otago Volts pace-bowler Jacob Duffy will replace Williamson and Southee, while Tom Latham will captain the ODI series against India. Leg-spinner Ish Sodhi (37 ODIs) and batter Henry Nicholls (58 ODIs) have been recalled for both series. However, the squad for the T20I series against India will be announced after the opening rounds of the Dream11 Super Smash in NZ. ODI squads v Pakistan and India Kane Williamson (c) (Pakistan ODIs only), Tom Latham (captain - India ODIs), Finn Allen, Michael Bracewell, Mark Chapman (India ODIs only), Devon Conway, Jacob Duffy (India ODI's only), Lockie Ferguson, Matt Henry, Adam Milne, Daryl Mitchell, Henry Nicholls, Glenn Phillips, Mitchell Santner, Henry Shipley, Ish Sodhi, Tim Southee (Pakistan ODIs only) Shipley gets maiden call-up Greendale Canterbury's 26-year-old Henry Shipley is a tall (1.96m) right-arm pace bowler and middle-order power batsman. He has been a stand-out player on the domestic scene for the past few seasons, delivering multiple match-winning performances across the formats, impressing the selectors with his all-round skills.



KARACHI: Rehan Ahmed of England celebrates the wicket of Agha Salman of Pakistan, after becoming the youngest debutant in men's Test history to take a five-for during day three of the Third Test.

## Another batting collapse leaves Pakistan on the brink of 3-0 series defeat

KARACHI (Monitoring Desj): Teenage leg-spinner Rehan Ahmed became the youngest debutant to take five wickets in an innings and set England on course for a victory after three days of play in the third and final Test in Karachi on Monday.

Ahmed, who at 18 years 126 days old on Saturday became the youngest ever to play a Test for England, grabbed five for 48 to bundle Pakistan out for 216, giving his team a target of 167 runs with 75 minutes and two days to play. Openers Zak Crawley and Ben Duckett plundered 87 by the 12th over before spinner Abrar Ahmed dismissed Crawley for 41 and Rehan Ahmed for 10.

Duckett was unbeaten on 50 and skipper Ben Stokes 10 as England, 112 for two at close, need just 55 runs to inflict a first-ever whitewash on Pakistan on home ground. England, on Pakistan's first Test tour in 17 years, won the first Test in Rawalpindi by 74 runs and the second in Multan by 26 runs.

Pakistan fell prey to a spin-assisted National Bank Cricket Arena pitch, losing their last seven wickets for a mere 52 runs with skipper Babar Azam scoring 54 and Saud Shakeel 53. Rehan Ahmed said the feeling was great. "I don't think it has sunk in yet, but yes I am very grateful," he

said, admitting Azam's scalp was special. "I bowled better balls and not get wickets so to get a wicket is a wicket and it is nice, especially when it is Babar." Rehan Ahmed built on fellow spinner Jack Leach's three wickets off just six balls in the morning session by taking his first three off just 17.

He left Australian fast bowler Pat Cummins behind who, at 18 years 193 days old, took five wickets in his debut Test against South Africa at Johannesburg in 2011.

Surprisingly, he had not bowled in the first session, which saw Pakistan reach 99 for three. Ahmed came on after Babar and Saud had put on a valiant rebuilding effort through a fourth wicket stand of 110 runs.

The pair took Pakistan to 164 before the skipper made an uncharacteristic misjudgement, soon after he reached 1,000 Test runs for the year. Leach had Pakistan reeling after he knocked over openers Shan Masood and Abdullah Shafique and veteran Azhar Ali, appearing in his last match, with only one run added.

Ahmed oversaw an equally brutal passage of play, removing Babar (54), Mohammad Rizwan (7) and Saud in the space of six overs for the addition of a paltry 13 runs. Mohammad Wasim (two) and Salman Agha (21) also fell to Ahmed. Saud

admitted Pakistan batters committed mistakes. "We ourselves didn't want this situation to come," said Saud. "We committed mistakes especially Babar and I played loose shots and that caused a collapse from which it was tough to overcome."

Pakistan started the fourth day on nearly even footing, with openers Abdullah and Shan looking set and erasing England's 50-run lead without the loss of a wicket. But any optimism was snatched away by England's methodical spinners. Leach bowled Shan -- attempting an ill-advised reverse sweep -- for 24, which brought down the first cluster of wickets.

Earlier in the day, top-order stalwart Azhar Ali was denied a fairy tale ending to his storied career that has spanned 97 Tests and 7,142 runs. Azhar was beaten by spin as he played a forward push on the final ball of Leach's momentum-changing double-wicket maiden. His stumps shattered, Azhar walked off the field for the last time, ending 12 years as a first-team regular.

The England players clapped as Azhar trudged back to the dressing room, while Pakistan's players raised their bats at the boundary for a ceremonial guard of honour. Among the handful of spectators were Azhar's wife and three sons.



KARACHI: Azhar Ali walked off to a guard of honour from his team-mates.

## Magic get the better of Celtics again, Nets rally to beat Pistons

LOS ANGELES (AFP/APP): NBA top draft pick Paolo Banchero scored 31 points to lead surging Orlando to a 95-92 victory in Boston on Sunday, the Magic's second win over the Celtics in three days.

Banchero, who scored 22 points in the first half, connected on six of his seven three-point attempts.

The Magic, whose slow season start included a nine-game losing streak, have now won six straight.

Their second consecutive win in Boston meant the Celtics, who fell to 22-9, slipped a hair behind the 21-8 Milwaukee Bucks atop the Eastern Conference. Elsewhere there were big wins for the Brooklyn Nets and Golden State Warriors -- thanks to big nights from Kevin Durant and Jordan Poole.

Durant scored 43 points and the Nets erased a 17-point halftime deficit to beat the Pistons 124-121 in Detroit while Poole scored 43 for the reigning champion Warriors in a 126-110 victory in Toronto. In Boston, the Celtics were without their leading scor-

er, Jayson Tatum, who missed the game for personal reasons.

Jaylen Brown led Boston with 24 points, Marcus Smart added 15 and Grant Williams chipped in 14. After struggling to find shots in the first half, the Celtics put together a 16-6 scoring run in the third and took a 71-68 lead into the fourth quarter. Boston trailed by one in the final minute when Grant Williams couldn't get an inbounds pass to Brown and Orlando scored again. Williams then missed a three-pointer as time expired.

Celtics coach Joe Mazzulla said there was no need to panic, despite the fact that the Celtics have lost four of their last five games. "We have to continue to work, we have to continue to build consistency and habits," he said. "Our guys are doing a lot of good things." Banchero, 20, said Orlando's recent focus on defensive intensity paid off down the stretch. "It showed right there on those last two possessions," he said. "We were locked in."

Brooklyn star Kevin Durant said defense was the key to the Nets' rally. Trailing 71-54 at halftime, the Nets out-scored the Pistons 44-25 in the third quarter and held on for the win. Durant scored 26 points in the third period. Kyrie Irving added 38 points for the Nets, whose seven-point lead was cut to one by Bojan Bogdanovic's running three-pointer with 40.1 seconds to play.

Irving made two free throws to push the lead back to three, but a basket by Detroit's Alec Burks pulled the Pistons back within one before Durant made two free throws that were enough for the final margin. "I thought they took it to us in that first half," Durant said. "They were downhill, getting to the rim whenever they wanted to get into our paint."

"I just think we upped the pressure, upped the physicality and were able to get back in the game."

In Toronto, Poole's 43 were a career high. The Warriors jumped on the Raptors early on the way to just their third road win of the season.

## Benzema announces end to int'l career with France

DOHA (Agencies): Ballon D'Or winner Karim Benzema announced he was ending his international career on Monday, the day after France lost in the World Cup final to Argentina.

"I made the effort and the mistakes it took to be where I am today and I'm proud of it! I wrote my story and ours ends," Benzema, 35, wrote on Twitter.

Benzema, who scored 37 goals for France in 97 appearances, had to withdraw from France's World Cup squad before their first match due to a left thigh injury.

The Real Madrid player, who won the Ballon d'Or award in October, had been desperate to feature in Qatar having not been selected when France won the World Cup in Russia four years ago.

He was frozen out of the France team for five and a half years because of his involvement in a blackmail scandal over a sextape involving his former teammate Mathieu Valbuena.

In a trial last year he was handed a one-year suspended prison sentence and fined 75,000 euros (\$79,500).

For the Qatar World Cup, coach Didier Deschamps opted not to call up a replacement and France still had depth in their squad, particularly in an attack led by 23-year-old Kylian Mbappe.

Paris Saint-Germain forward Mbappe won the World Cup Golden Boot award with eight goals, including a hat-trick in Sunday's penalty shootout defeat by Argentina following a 3-3 draw at the end of extra time.

## Lionel Messi says will continue Argentina career after WC win

DOHA (INP): Argentina star Lionel Messi on Sunday vowed to continue playing for his country despite finally realising his lifetime ambition of winning the World Cup. "I want to keep experiencing a few more matches as world champion," Messi, 35, told Argentine television following the country's epic penalty shoot-out victory over France in the World Cup final in Doha.

But Messi admitted his career was almost finished after the Argentina captain landed the one major international trophy missing from his collection.

The Paris Saint-Germain forward scored two goals in the stunning and chaotic final that ended 3-3 after 120 absorbing minutes, before the seven-time Ballon d'Or winner netted his spot-kick in the shoot-out that Argentina won 4-2. "Obviously I would like to end my career with this, I cannot ask for more," said Messi. "My career is nearly over because these are my last years."

And after so many disappointments on the biggest stage in football, including losing the 2014 World Cup final to Germany in Brazil, Messi said he always felt his time would come. "It's crazy that it happened at the time it happened, but it's amazing," he said.

"It's amazing that it could end this way. I said previously that God was going to grant me this and I don't know why but I felt it was going to be this time."

Turning his attentions to the match itself, Messi said it was hard to explain after Argentina let slip a two-goal lead late in the game for the second time, following their quarter-final victory over the Netherlands a week earlier.

Argentina led 2-0 at half-time and went 3-2 up during extra-time but a Kylian Mbappe hat-trick, with two late goals in normal time and another in the extra period, pinned Argentina back, taking the game to penalties.

"It was a very strange match, the same as the other one against the Netherlands, and then when we went ahead in extra-time it happened again," said Messi.

## Venus Williams given Australian Open wildcard



MELBOURNE (Agencies): Venus Williams has been awarded a wildcard to compete in January's Australian Open at the age of 42. The American will be back in Melbourne 25 years after her debut in the tournament, which begins on 16 January. Williams won just three matches in 13 tournaments last season but is yet to show any inclination to follow her sister Serena into retirement.

A seven-time Grand Slam champion in singles, she was beaten in the Australian Open final in 2003 and 2017.

"I am very excited to be returning to Melbourne. It will be an honour to play for the fans again," said Williams, who has won five doubles titles in Melbourne.

"I've been competing in the country for over 20 years now and the Australian community has always supported me wholeheartedly. "I'm looking forward to making more memories at the tournament this year."

Williams is ranked 1,007th in the world and her last competitive singles match was a first-round defeat at the US Open in August, having played just four tournaments in 2022. The Grand Slam in New York was the last for Williams' sister Serena, who announced she was "evolving away" from tennis before the tournament.

Nine-time champion Novak Djokovic is also set to compete in Melbourne - a year after being deported from Australia because of his Covid-19 vaccination status.

## Lahore Open Polo: Master Paints Black, Remington Pharma record victories

LAHORE (APP): Master Paints Black and Remington Pharma recorded contrasting victories in Coca-Cola Lahore Open Polo Championship here at the Lahore Polo Club on Monday.

The first match of the day saw majestic Manuel Carranza cracking a double hat-trick to guide Master Paints Black to a sparkling 10-6 success over Barry's/DS Polo in the first match of the day.

Besides a superb six-goal contribution from the hero of the day Carranza, phenomenal Syed Aun Mohammed Rizvi also played a key role in his team's triumph as he thrashed in two tremendous goals while Sufi Muhammad Haroon and Sufi Muhammad Amir converted one goal apiece from the winning side.

On the other hand, Rulo Trotz played well for the losing team and contributed with an impressive hat-trick while Nafees Barry and Daniyal Sheikh slammed in two and one goal respectively.

Jhon Fisher and Amirreza Behboudi officiated the match as field umpires. Hamza Mawaz Khan's heroics helped Remington Pharma edge out Platinum Homes by 8-7 in the thrilling second match of the day.

The enthralling encounter was tied 7-7 at the end of fourth round, so it was decided in the sudden death chukker, where Ahmed Bilal Riaz smashed in the match-winning goal for Remington Pharma.

High-flying Hamza was in sublime form, and he played excellent polo and fired in with fabulous five goals while Ahmed Zubair Butt thrashed in two tremendous goals and Ahmed Bilal Riaz scored one goal for Remington Pharma.

Amirreza Behboudi of Iran was also in great form and displayed outstanding pony and mallet work. He skillfully converted superb six goals for Platinum Homes while Bilal Noon slammed in the remaining one but their efforts couldn't bear the fruits for their side, which lost the crucial match by a margin of just one goal in the sudden death chukker.

Jhon Fisher and Nicolas Ruiz Ghuinazu supervised the match as field umpires.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 70,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 70,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 42,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1491.20 feet and was 93.20 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 20,600 cusecs while outflow as 36,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1120.30 feet, which was 70.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 7,200 cusecs and 20,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded 32,100, 30,500, 22,000 and 12,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 8,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 2,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### Efforts afoot to make Islamabad safest city

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Eagle Squad of Islamabad Capital Police is playing a vital role in crime prevention from the city, a police public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of the Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, the Eagle Squad is working under a safe city which is deployed in different areas of the city for patrolling. During the last 24 hours, the Eagle Squad checked a total of 4384 pedestrians, 2031 motorcycles and 1129 vehicles during snap checking, of which 110 suspicious motorcycles and 13 vehicles were impounded. Eagle Squad also ensured the arrest of the numerous accused involved in mobile snatching and heinous crimes. The Eagle squad also removed tinted glasses from 127 vehicles which are not allowed in the federal capital. SSP Operations appreciated the performance of the eagle squad and said that Islamabad Capital Police is taking all out efforts to curb the crime from the city. "Safety and security of the citizens is our prime responsibility and no stone would be unturned to save the lives and property of the citizens" He maintained.

### Two POs arrested

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested two proclaimed offenders wanted in murder cum robbery cases here on Monday, informed police spokesman. According to details, Kahuta police nabbed Chan Mehboob, who was wanted in murder cum robbery. During the robbery attempt, Mehfooz bibi was killed and Muhammad Riaz got injured due to indiscriminate firing. The case was registered in April 2021. Similarly, Mandra police have arrested proclaimed offender Ajmal who had opened fire along with other colleagues due to old enmity and injured Muhammad Iqbal. The case was registered in Mandra police station in September 2020. SP Saddar Muhammad Nabil Khokhar appreciated the performance of police teams on the arrest of the accused and said that the arrested accused will be produced before the court with solid evidence. The crackdown against anti social elements will continue, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Banners of political parties seen hanging in UC-2 constituency in connection with the local Government election coming ahead, located on G-7 area. —APP Photo

## BISP reaching poorest of poor in remote areas: Kundi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday said reaching out to the poorest segments in remote locations like erstwhile FATA, Gilgit Baltistan and other such areas is the topmost priority area for BISP cash assistance Kafalat programme.

During a briefing to Parliamentarians from Ex-FATA at the Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Kundi said that Parliamentarian's role in identifying and mobilising the most deserving benefi-

aries is of critical importance. They should actively participate in this important cause of social uplift of under-privileged families.

Parliamentarians of erstwhile FATA districts which included Sajid Khan Toori, Mohsin Dawar, Maulana Abdul Shakoor and Maulana Muhammad Jamal Uddin attended the briefing. Secretary BISP, Yusuf Khan was also present in the meeting.

Director General NSER, Naveed Akbar and DG Cash Transfer Noor Rehman briefed the MNAs on the ongoing projects and cover-

age of BISP in Ex -FATA districts. Around 776684 households have been surveyed through local teachers of those areas and 387000 beneficiaries are eligible for cash assistance under Benazir Kafalat Programme. The ex-FATA MNAs were informed that those households who are not surveyed can get themselves registered so that they can be included in the quarterly cash assistance of Rs 7000/-.

The delegation was also briefed on Nashunama and Undergraduate Scholarship initiatives of the BISP.

### No dengue case reported

RAWALPINDI (APP): District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC) Dr Sajjad Mehmood on Monday said that no dengue case had been reported in the district during the last 72 hours.

He said that four patients were already under treatment to the two city hospitals, including two of each to the District Headquarters and Benazir Bhutto Hospitals. The health officer informed that out of the total admitted patients, two belonged to Rawalpindi and one to Islamabad and Bannu.

In collaboration with allied departments, the Dr Sajjad stated that the district administration had registered two FIRs, sealed six premises, issued Challans to 26, notices to 317, and a fine of Rs 11,500 imposed on violations of anti-dengue SOPs from December 12 to date.

During indoor surveillance, he informed that 1,261 anti-dengue teams checked 27,334 houses in the last 24 hours and found dengue larvae at 19 homes.

Similarly, he added that 512 teams, during outdoor surveillance, inspected 12,055 spots and detected larvae in one place.

### Railways to restore Fareed Express

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railway is all set to restore the operation of the Fareed Express passenger train from Lahore to Karachi to facilitate the passengers of the area from December 22.

"The train operation is halted due to the flash floods washed away the tracks at various places in the country which now have been restored," an official in the Ministry of Railways told APP.

He said that Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique had directed the concerned officials to resume the operation of Fareed Express with maximum facilities for the passengers.

The official said that as many as 18 coaches would be added to the Fareed Express while the train would start its journey from Lahore, through Pakpatan to Karachi railway station.

He said that Pakistan Railways had started advance booking of Fareed Express and on the direction of the Minister for Railways, the department had taken special care of occupancy, cleanliness, and punctuality of the trains in all stations.

The official said the train would run under the management of a private company Ms. S Jamil & Co and the department had allowed the company to start reservations for the train.

It is pertinent to mention here that, the passengers had also de-manded Pakistan Railways authorities of resumption of Fareed Express, the only train which runs between Lahore-Karachi-Lahore via Vehari-Burewala.

They said that the locals, who wished to travel by it to La-hore or Karachi, have been facing inconvenience for over two months as it is the only train on this track.

## Imran's politics pushes PTI to blind alley: Sherry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Monday said Imran Khan's politics of intimidation has led Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) to such a blind alley that it had run out of political options.

In a series of tweets, the Minister said Imran Khan did not believe in parliamentary democracy nor in dialogue. "When you do the politics of fascism instead of democratic and

constitutional politics, this will be the end."

Senator Rehman underlined that the differences between Imran Khan and his allies were exposed whereas the PTI members were also unhappy with Imran Khan's decision. "It means only one person wants to dissolve break the assemblies. In the past, Ishaq Khan and dictators had dissolved the assemblies, Imran Khan's thinking is not different from them."

She added that Khan

was blaming others for the failure of his political narrative. When the narrative of foreign conspiracy was exposed, he (Imran Khan) started blaming the former chief of army staff for the success of no confidence motion.

The Minister said Imran Khan had a misconception that the government and institutions would accept their demands under pressure. "Only Parliament can get them out of this blind alley."

## SNGPL disconnects over 15 gas connections for illegal compressors use

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Task Force of Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) on Monday launched a crackdown against users of illegal compressors in the Islamabad Region, who were involved in depriving other consumers of gas in the peak winter season and putting people's lives at risk.

During the operation, SNGPL inspection teams visited different localities including Bhara Kahu, Taxila, Margalla Valley and Koth Hathiya and disconnected more than 15 connections after they found

the users involved in illegal activity of compressor installation.

"The operation will continue unabated till bringing the illegal activity to a complete end," spokesman for the SNGPL Islamabad Region Shahid Akram told APP.

He said it was unfair that some elements deprived other consumers of smooth supply of gas by installing electronic/sucking devices to manage better pressure for themselves.

He said the SNGPL vigilance teams and special task force were busy in

conducting a detailed survey of all sectors, societies and other localities, within the Islamabad region including capital territory, Murree, Kahuta, Attock, Fateh Jang and Taxilla to take legal action against compressor users.

The SNGPL spokesman said domestic consumers had appreciated the operation against this illegal activity and urged the local administration to take appropriate measures for preventing the sale of illegal compressors and other devices used to increase the gas pressure.

## NDMA Chairman acknowledges relief efforts of Muslim Hands

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Syed Javid Gillani, Executive Director Muslim Hands, Pakistan called on Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik here on Monday.

Syed Javid Gillani apprised Chairman NDMA of working scope of his organization in Pakistan and progress on construction of climate-friendly houses in

areas of Mastung and Jafarabad in Balochistan by Muslim Hands.

He also invited Chairman NDMA to inaugurate the newly built houses upon completion in January 2023. Chairman NDMA acknowledged the relief efforts by Muslim Hands during Floods 2022 and its active participation in ongoing rehabilitation phase.

He emphasized on laying out a comprehensive

humanitarian response model for donors and international as well as local NGOs for well-coordinated and tangible outcomes of relief and rehabilitation process.

He highlighted the upcoming NDMA's public declaration to indicate contours of future Disasters' Management Plan in Pakistan after consultation with all key stakeholders.

## ANF seizes over 115 kg drugs, 1200 intoxicated tablets

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan seized over 115 kg of drugs and 1200 intoxicated tablets and arrested five accused including two women during seven counter-narcotics operations throughout the country, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He said that the ANF in an operation at Islamabad International Airport recovered 516 grams of Ice drug and 104 grams of heroin from the possession of a passenger resident of Khyber who was going to

Bahrain. 704 grams of charras was also recovered from the trolley bag of another Bahrain-bound passenger resident of Hangu.

In a joint operation at the Islamabad International Airport, ANF and ASF seized 1200 intoxicated tablets and held an accused resident of Mirpur who was going to Manchester.

The spokesman further said that ANF and ASF recovered 1933 grams of Ice drug at Lahore Airport from the possession of a Bahrain-bound female passenger resident of Narowal.

ANF Balochistan in an operation recovered five kg of charras from the possession of a woman going to Karachi from Quetta.

In another raid, ANF Balochistan also seized over 97 kg of charras and two kg of opium from Quetta. In a raid conducted near Chaman Bypass, ANF seized 4.8 kg of charras and 10.7 kg of other suspected material.

Separate cases have been registered at respective ANF Police Stations under CNS Act 1997 while further investigations are under process, he added.

## Sections of Motorway M2 closed due to fog, dropped visibility

ISLAMABAD. (APP): National Highways and Motorway Police (NHMP) closed different sections of Motorway M2 due to dense fog and dropped visibility here on Monday.

Talking to APP an official of NHMP Inspector Saqib Waheed said that considering the visibility and fog, motorway police has closed different sections including Lillah Interchange to Lahore and Salim Interchange to Kot Momin.

He said that the visibili-

ty had dropped due to dense fog on main roads in plain areas during the night, due to which certain routes were closed.

While giving road safety tips to motorists, he informed the road users should try to travel in daylight and avoid travelling at night. He assured that all available resources would be utilised to provide safe and sound passage to road users in foggy weather.

He requested the citizens to drive carefully and refrain from crossing the

permitted speed limits while travelling on highways and motorways, and in open areas which were engulfed by thick fog. He urged motorists to use fog lights while driving at night due to the fog that has engulfed most cities.

He also advised that in the foggy season, the middle distance between the vehicles should be more than in normal conditions, adding that before starting the journey, an advisory from helpline 130 could be beneficial.

## 3 'sheesha bars' sealed; as many as managers arrested

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration on Monday clamped down against 'sheesha bars', profiteers, encroachments, and illegal petrol-selling outlets.

On the instructions of the deputy commissioner ICT, the assistant commissioners visited sheesha centers and cafés, expressed displeasure over the situation, and sealed three sheesha bars.

On his direction, three managers were arrested, said a press release issued by the ICT administration. During the visit, the

administration seized Hukkas, their substances, flavored tobacco, and coals. The administration warned violators and directed them not to serve sheesha/hukkaks till the finalization of rules, otherwise, stern action would be taken against offenders.

ACs inspected 109 different areas to ensure adherence to the government-notified rate list for essential items. During the visits, profiteers were fined of Rs 12,500 for overcharging, whereas, seven professional beggars were also arrested.

Meanwhile, the assistant commissioner Secretariat inspected the dairy shops, chicken and meat shops, general stores, and restaurants checking the hygiene standards, and compliance with the price list. In the meantime, the assistant commissioner ordered the confiscation of 20 kilogram of polythene bags.

Furthermore, the administration also sealed three illegal petrol-selling agencies; one illegal LPG filling station, and arrested one person for violation.



ISLAMABAD: ISLAMABAD: A CDA staffer cuts the tree branches at Aabpara. —APP Photo

## IESCO notifies power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Monday issued a power suspension programme for Tuesday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work.

According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 08:00 AM to 04:00 PM, 132KV Grid Station Kotli Sattian, from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, Bani Gala, Imran Khan, CDA Flat, PM Staff Colony, ISI, Pandorian, Ghori Garden, Simli Dam, Lohi Bhir, F-8/3, G-10/2, I-8/1, I-8 Center, I-10/2, G-13/4 Ext, Dargah, Bhara Kahu, Kaldna, Bahrain, Patriata, Upper Topa, Pir Suhawah, Anguri, Shahpur, Shahdara, Mangyal, Disto, T&T, Trit, Bhara Kaho To, Golf City, Bhara Kaho, NIH, Athal, NCP, Daman

Koh, Quaid-e-Azam University, Punjab House, Bri Imam, Mandla Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Bank Road Two, Sir Syed Road, Makkah Chowk, Madina Town One, Mohra Nagyal, Murree Brewery, Major Riaz, 502 Workshop, Rajar, Garja One, Cantt, Mansoor Shaheed, Lahtrar One, Kallar Syedan, Ghazan Khan, Hamid Jhangi, Pind Jatlan, Sukhu, Syed Kasran, Chak Baili Khan-2 Feeders, Attock Circle, Jalala, Bohi Gher, Haru, Dharek, Valley, Purmiana, Garhi Afghanistan, Hassan Abdal, Colonel Sher Khan, Pathargarh, Maskinabad, Attock Cantt, Tin Mela, Bagh, Neelam, Shah Dir, Shamsabad, Hattian, GBHP, Qaziabad, Soni, Karpa, Bhatiyot, Qutbal, Chhab, Fateh Jang, Laniwala Dharnal, Khore, Bohi Gher, Salargah, Haru, Ghori, Mushtaq Shaheed, Jalala,

Nawababad Feeders, Jhelum Circle, F-9 Chak Daulat, M Major Riaz Shaheed, Dina-I Bakrara, Dumeli, Khali Kholi, Mumtaz Shaheed, Ward 8, Jermot, Nai Khanqah, Baba Shaheed, Chhappar Sharif, Thakra, Galiana, Kantrila, RTM, KTM Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Baharpur, Millat Chowk, Jamal Wall, Islamia Chowk, Kaler Kahar, Daultala, Dhadyal City, Dhoda, Bhikri, Katas, Dhariala Jalap, Lillaha Town, KS Mines, Jalapur, Bluxar, Pipili, Lawah, Murt, Jatla, Parafatial, Khoiyan Feeders, G.S.O Circle, from 09:00 AM to 04:00 PM, Modern Flour Mill, Miltabad, Chakra, New Race Course, Dhok Chowdhury, KTM, Range Road, Zircon Heights, Galiana, EC Mill, RT Mill, Mandira, Smoot, LTC, Hamid Jhangi, KTM 2, Kantrala, Pakistan Cement Factory Feeder and surrounding.

### School reconstruction work

NANGARHAR (Agencies): A reconstruction of a school building in the Gushti district of the Nangarhar province of Afghanistan has been completed says officials of the Nangarhar Education Department. The Nangarhar Education officials said that the reconstruction work of the primary school in Gushti District has been completed with the financial support of the SIDA Foundation at the cost of 4.5 million Afghanis.

## The Frontier Post

Jamadi-ul-Awwal 25, 1444 — Tuesday, December 20, 2022

### Drugs discovered

KABUL (Agencies): Local security officials of the provinces says that their police personnel have discovered 394kg of drugs in the Nangarhar and Laghman provinces. The Laghman security officials arrested two people while trafficking 314kg of drugs by vehicle in the province. Meanwhile, the Nangarhar security officials arrested 4 people on charge smuggling 80kg of drugs in the Dur baba district of the province.

## Business licenses issued to over 150 foreign investors

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Ministry of Industry and Commerce (MoIC) said that business licenses have been issued to at least 150 foreign investors in the country over the past year.

Akhundzada Abdul Salam, a spokesman for the ministry, said that many facilities have been provided for investment in the country.

He added that investors from China, Russia, the US, UK and Arab nations have shown interest for investment in the country.

"Around 150 foreign companies have invested in Afghanistan. Majority of the companies were from China, Russia, England and the US as well as Arab

nations," he said.

"The people of Afghanistan need electricity. The private sector and the Afghan people should join hands together and work for the betterment of the situation," said Mohammad Younis Mohmand, the acting head of the Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment.

This comes as some Chinese nationals called on the Islamic Emirate to provide security for their investments in the country.

"I have invested in Afghanistan in the past two decades. At first I was importing good quality Chinese commodities to Afghanistan. Then, I invested in a steel plant. I

have invested around \$5 million in Afghanistan so far," said head of China Town of Kabul.

The deputy minister of economy, Abdul Latif Nazari, said foreign investment can play a positive role in the economic development of Afghanistan.

"Currently, due to security, elimination of administrative corruption and supportive facilities, the ground has been paved for foreign investment," Nazari said.

Earlier, the economic commission of the Prime Minister, led by the deputy prime minister, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, urged Afghan investors abroad to return to the country and invest in Afghanistan.

## Residents concerned at poor telecom services

NEILI (Pajhwok): A number of residents of central Daikundi province complain that the telecommunication networks do not work properly, while in some places people have no access to telecommunication services.

Mohammad Akbar, a resident of Miramor district, said there was weak telecom signals in their area and they had to climb mountains or high places in order to make a call.

In addition to voice call, Akbar said he needed internet as well and he lost so many opportunities due to lack of proper telecommunication and internet services. "Telephone is not working in our house and we have to travel about 30 minutes in order to make a contact with someone or climb to high places," he added.

Gul Mohammad Ahmadi, an inhabitant of Ashtarli district, said no telecom firm was operating in their area so he had to go to a high place in order to make a call.

He said people of very limited areas in their district had access to the telecom and internet services.

The resident of Daikundi urged the government to address the telecom issue as soon as possible.

Ehsanullah Asim, director of telecommunication and information, told Pajhwok that telecom firms were operating in all the districts, but some villages were deprived of telecommunication services due to being in the mountains.

He said the government was striving to provide all the facilities to the citizens.

## IEA seeks removal of sanctions

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Islamic Emirate urged the international community to remove sanctions on Afghanistan and solve issues through diplomatic efforts.

"I think it is the time to remove obstacles and solve issues through diplomatic channels and facilitate the support to the people of Afghanistan," said Bilal Karimi, deputy spokesman for the Islamic Emirate.

Recently, the deputy minister of economy, Abdul Latif Nazari, said the existing sanctions have caused economic issues in the country.

"The sanctions and freezing of Afghan assets have left a negative impact on the livelihood of the Afghan people," he said.

Analysts said that the sanctions should be lifted to address the current problems in the country. "Looking into the global experiences, imposition of sanction is not a solution. It is important that organizations should work jointly with the current government," said Najibullah, a political analyst.

"These individuals who are leading the Islamic Emirate and are sanctioned by the international community want the right of the Afghan nation from the world," said Mohammad Khalid Musleh, a political affairs analyst.

## Polio vaccination drive begins in 26 provinces



KABUL (TOLOnews): The polio vaccination campaign kicked off in 26 provinces of the country, including the capital city, Kabul, on Monday.

The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) said that seven million children will be vaccinated in this campaign. According to MoPH statistics, two positive polio cases have been registered this year. It will be the last phase of the polio vaccination campaign in the country for this year.

"The campaign will continue for four days and at least seven million children will be vaccinated in 26 provinces of the country," said Sharafat Zaman Amerkhail, a spokesman for the MoPH.

Kabul residents welcomed the campaign and said they were ready to cooperate. "We are happy with the polio vaccination campaign and we are ready to implement it for our children," said Parwiz, a Kabul resident.

"We are happy from the Ministry of Public Health that it vaccinates our children and prevents them from being paralyzed," said Abdul Majeed, a resident of Kabul.

Polio vaccination campaign workers asked Kabul residents to cooperate with them in the process. They said that children should be vaccinated every three months to be protected against poliovirus.

"It is a dangerous disease. It is a viral disease

that paralyzes the body. It majorly affects children under the age of five," said Asma, a vaccinator.

"I call on families that when we go to their houses, they should bring their children for the vaccination and they should cooperate with us," said Zarmina, a vaccinator. Figures by the Ministry of Public Health show that four positive cases of polio were recorded in the country last year. In 2020, it was 56 positive cases in Afghanistan.

## Book sales, reading culture dwindle in Takhar province

TALOQAN (Pajhwok): Booksellers in northern Takhar province says their business have declined and looking to convert their bookstores into grocery stores.

They say the purchase and sale of books have hit an all-time low in Takhar, where people — especially youth — have lost interest in reading.

Abdul Wahid, a bookseller, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "The market of books was good in the past, we could sell up to 15 books daily, but lately we even did not sell even a single book. We will switch to another alternative if the situation continues like this."

He also concerned about the lack of interest of youth into reading books and use of social media. He believed that reading books could further increase the capacity of youth.

Baryalay, another bookseller in Taloqan city, said after last year's political change in the country and migration of university teachers,

bookstalls, where youth and other individuals used to gather, have gone quiet. This has put a direct negative impact on booksellers.

He stressed the need for strengthening of culture of reading among the people.

Ainuddin Mutmain, director of

information and culture, acknowledged a decline bookselling business in Takhar, saying local officials striving to promote book-reading culture.

He pledged to launch book-reading competitions and arrange exhibitions to encourage the reading culture among people.



## Students seek reopening of schools

KABUL (TOLOnews): A number of girls from primary schools asked the Islamic Emirate to reopen secondary schools for girls in Afghanistan.

The students who passed the last exams of grade six said they are concerned about continuing their education.

Two siblings, Musawir and Aisha, said they have goals for their future, but Aisha cannot chase those dreams because she will not be able to continue secondary schooling due to the closure of schools for girls.

Aisha asked the government to reopen secondary schools for girls.

at home," said Mina Gul, mother of a student.

In another part of the city, dozens of girls participated in an event to explore their talents.

"I study in an education center and I want other girls to study in the education center," said Mursal, a student.

"We don't want students to be disappointed and want to open schools for them," said Sadaf, a student.

Analysts said the closure of secondary schools for girls will have a negative impact on the world's interaction with the Islamic Emirate.

"The closure of schools will create distance between the people and the government. The people will lose their trust in the government and there will be a big distance between the government and the international community if the situation continues," said Hekmatullah Mirzaee, a lecturer.

Earlier, the Islamic emirate emphasized that the government is not against girls' education and that secondary schools will be opened with the provision of suitable conditions within the framework of Islamic law.

## Drug addicts received medical treatment in Herat

HERAT (Agencies): Local officials in Herat say that 110 drug addicts, reunited with their families after receiving medical treatment.

The Director of anti-narcotics department of Herat, said 110 drug addicts who have been under treatment for some time now, after recovery, they returned to their families.

The department have saved 3,700 people from this deadly disease in the

past year and this process is still continues. According to him, one thousand and two hundred drug addicts are currently under treatment in this province.

**5 Acres of Poppy land Eradicate in Laghman**

Local security officials of Laghman said, that the anti-narcotic department of the province, eradicated 5 acres of poppy land in the Badpash district of the province.

The Laghman security spokesman Yunus Yousufzi said that the anti-narcotic department officials with the cooperation of tribal elders of the Badpash district eradicated 5 Jeribs of poppy land in the province.

The elders of the districts pledged that they will stop the cultivation of poppies and will start efforts to replace this herb with other beneficial extension cultivations in the district.



## Tanazur debaters stress over inclusive Islamic system

KABUL (Pajhwok): Guests at this week Tanazur discussion said that reasons that bring into play Qisas and Hudud should be eradicated and other Islamic orders alongside Hudud should be also enforced to make the system inclusively Islamic.

Some guests believed that each Islamic order had its own place and importance and should be implemented.

The discussion started on Saturday evening on 5:30pm Afghanistan time and continued for two hours.

Three guests talked about the issue and 1,315 people listened the programme live.

In the past one year some people have been flogged over the crime they committed but on December 1, a man who stabbed another person to death was executed in public under Qisas Law.

Other orders should be implemented as well.

Religious Scholar Mawlana Abdul Sabour Abasi said Sharia is not only the name of implementing Hudud Law but Sharia is a completed system and Allah wants Islamic governments to implement all Sharia laws but currently this is a misunderstanding that the implementation of Qisas was the entire Sharia.

He said: "Allah Almighty said in Surat Al-Maidah to cut off the hands of robber man and robber woman, this is a punishment for their actions and a lesson for others. This matter is explained in Sura Al-Maidah and verses that revealed before this Sura discussed Zakat and Ushar and the issue of financial support for the people. Therefore before the implementation of punishment the issues related to Zakat and financial support to the

people should be addressed to prevent someone from stealing. If the hunger of the people is not satisfied, then in my opinion it is not healthy to implement half of the Shariat and not to pay attention to the other half."

"Haquallah — Rights of Allah — prevails in the implementation of Hudud, therefore, the jurists have said that the Hudud punishment can be cancelled over doubts, other things related to the Hudud should also be implemented, such as you have not enforced the zakat system, the economic system of Islam has not been implemented, interest is involved, there is poverty and a man has millions of rupees, but he does not pay zakat, so you should take zakat from that person and give it to the poor before the implementation of Hudud," he added.

Referring to the implementation of Hudud in public

place, Mawlavi Abbas said: "The presence of two people during execution can be qualified for the term public while the presence of a large crowd can also be qualified for the term public in Sharia."

He also criticised the judicial system of government and said the currently judicial system belonged to a group and the judges have not passed through a proper procedure but they became judge on the bases of relationship and references.

He said how would people and the world would believe on such a system, adding that Sharia Court are formed on the bases of credential, qualification while Organizational Court is formed from the members of an organization.

"Officials don't trust the system; It has been one year that there is no constitution, there is no press law, individuals will be better persons, there is no doubt

about it, but the system working right now is of their own will and wish," he said.

**Preciousness urged**

Religious Scholar and Writer Mufti Basharat said Hudud and Qisas implementation is the order of Allah and nobody has any contradiction in this regard, all Muslims are agreed on this point.

He said: "A system does not become Islamic by Qisas and Hudud, but Islam is a perfect religion for all matters of life and the authorities of the Islamic system are obliged to implement all the rules of the religion, not only Qisas and Hudud. It should be noted that every order of religion is important in its place and should be enforced."

He added that the Sharia limit has not yet been issued on theft; it does not mean that the Islamic Emirate will implement

Qisas and ignore punishment to thief, investigation and diligence to implement these orders is also a Sharia order. Hudud has been implemented once in the past 18 months, so it seems that the system is very strict in this regard.

Forgiveness is better than execution, the judge and ruler will advise the heir of the deceased to forgive, but when the decision to the ruler he does not have the right to amend it, he said.

The Islamic Emirate is working to prevent interest and establish zakat and the Islamic economic system, and this does not mean that if there is no economic system, the limits will be suspended because the judge is obliged and cannot offer relaxation in the Sharia law, according to Mufti Basharat.

Referring to the execution of limits in public, he said: "The more people there are, the more lessons

will be learned, but I agree that such incidents should not be made public and the Islamic Emirate does not allow them."

He said the appointment of judges in the Islamic system has been done through examination and a proper system and there is no illegal appointment, if anybody existed he should be brought in the government notice.

**Hudud should be implemented on all equally**

Legal affairs expert Abdul Shakour Dadras termed public awareness vital before the implementation of Qisas. "I request that the people should understand so that doubts do not arise in the issuing of Qisas and with this the society will also be reformed."

He said there was injustice, poverty and idleness in the society people are ignorant, that's why if causes don't go away the situation

cannot improve, spreading fear is not essential, when the reasons behind the crimes are eliminated the crimes will reduce itself.

He added Hudud doesn't recognize elite or middle class, rich or poor, but it is implemented equally on all and if there is imbalance in the implementation of Tazeerat then it could cause mistrust in the society.

"Why don't we have an internal consultation program? These programs should be started with every class of society, such as scholars, economists, teachers, etc to improve of lives and protection our territorial integrity," he said.

He called on government to be patient, hear all criticism and respond to every objection to resolve the problems through talks.

He stressed there was need for crucial engagement as well because living without international community was not possible.

# President for further cementing Pak-Italy ties

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday stressed bilateral relationship with Italy in the fields of defence, agriculture, animal husbandry and information technology. He made these remarks while talking to Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Italy, Ali Javed, here at the Aiwan-e-Sadr.

During the meeting, the president appreciated the idea of establishing manufacturing units by Pakistani diasporas in the industrial-free zone of Italy for manufacturing and exporting Pakistani goods and products in Italy and rest of the Europe.

He said the avenues for exports of human intellect, knowledge and skills online to Italy by our IT professionals and related fields needed to be explored.

This way, he said, the human resource would be retained in Pakistan whereas their skills and knowledge could be shared.

He said the country needed a skilled workforce for industrial, agricultural and manufacturing development.

The president said that the Ambassador and the entire ancillary staff in Italy should focus their energy on resolving the issues and problems faced by the Pakistani diasporas in Italy and provide them with the necessary support, and counselling services online and at their doorsteps.

The president advised the ambassador-designate to keep close linkages with the Chambers of Commerce in Pakistan and major industrial and manufacturing entities of Pakistan and explore the possibility of joint ventures with the Italian counterparts.

He said that Italian investors must be encouraged to shift their industrial units to Pakistan and benefit from the cost-effective labour, availability of raw materials, and investment-friendly policies in our country.

The president said that

there was a need to highlight the atrocities being committed perpetually by India in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IIOJK), and the increasing incidences of intimidation, harassment, and marginalization of minorities, especially Muslims, and the increasing trend of Islamophobia in India, which was putting the life and property of the Muslims of India in great danger.

The president said that Pakistan and Italy had a commonality of views on a number of regional and global issues, particularly reforming the UN Security Council and both countries should work closely on all issues of common interest.

He said that the Strategic Engagement Plan signed between the two countries in 2013 provided an excellent framework to steer bilateral and multilateral cooperation forward in a holistic and sustained manner and expressed hope that the Ambassador-designate would work towards enhancing these engagements.

ments.

The president said that Italy was one of the largest trading partners of Pakistan in the EU and among the top ten globally.

There was great potential for expanding bilateral trade and investment due to the complementarities between the two countries' economies, he added.

He further said that the existing trade of around US\$ 1.3 billion did not represent the true potential on both sides and there was a need to make concerted efforts to increase the volume.

The president said that a fairly large number of Pakistanis (approximately 200,000) were living in Italy and contributing towards the socio-economic development of the country and urged that the welfare of these Pakistanis should be the most priority.

Apart from working on traditional economic diplomacy, the ambassador-designate should also look for new avenues of cooperation, especially start-ups, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Former Interior Minister Sheikh Rasheed meeting with President Dr. Arif Alvi at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

**President urged to use powers to ensure polls**

RAWALPINDI (INP): Awami Muslim League (AMP) head Sheikh Rashid Ahmed urged President Arif Alvi to use his constitutional powers as the coalition government is running away from holding fresh elections in the country.

The 72-year-old politician, who served as the interior minister during the PTI government in Centre, is fully supporting Imran Khan's demand for elections in the country.

Taking to Twitter, he said the PTI chief had kept his word by announcing the date for the dissolution of assemblies in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP). Apart from it, it's a fact that public was fed up with political uncertainty, he said.

People shied away from investing in the country as "dacoits" were ruling, he said, adding: "The country is in grip of inflation and terrorism and they [government] are running away from elections."

Meanwhile, the AMP chairman also called on President Alvi on Monday and the discussed political situation in the country.

**Shot down 4 US-made missiles, says Moscow**

MOSCOW (AFP/APP): Moscow said Monday that its air defence systems had shot down four US-made missiles over a southern Russian region bordering Ukraine, in one of its first such claims in nearly 10 months of fighting.

"Four American 'HARM' anti-radar missiles were shot down in the airspace over the Belgorod region," Russia's defence ministry said in a statement on social media, referring to a region that says it is regularly hit by Ukrainian strikes.

Designed to target air defence systems equipped with radars, "HARM" missiles have a range of more than 48 kilometres.

The missiles, which were first deployed in 1984, have been adapted so they can be fired from Kyiv's Soviet-era warplanes.

**Assailants injured policeman**

HYDERABAD (APP): Three unknown assailants travelling in a rickshaw shot and injured a policeman deployed at a snap-checking spot in the limits of GOR police station as they took away his official weapon.

According to the Station House Officer (SHO) of GOR police station Akhtar Hussain Katpar, Constable Imtiaz Ali was shot in the abdomen after he stopped a rickshaw on the road near the GTC ground.

The Station House Officer (SHO) said that 2 cops belonging to 15 emergency police were performing snap-checking on the said road when the rickshaw passed through the place.

The suspects in the rickshaw ran away on foot from the spot but the police arrested the rickshaw driver, he added.

The Station House Officer informed that the driver told the police that he picked up the passengers from Nai Pul area and they were supposed to be dropped off somewhere in Latifabad unit 7.

## Sehat Card Plus initiative as a flagship achievement of KP govt

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan has termed the Sehat Card Plus initiative as a flagship achievement of the provincial government which, in addition to providing free healthcare facilities, is also playing an important role in providing social security to citizens by reducing burden of healthcare expenses and improving the standard of living.

In a statement issued from Chief Minister's Secretariat, the Chief Minister maintained that Sehat Card Plus has revolutionized the health sector in the province adding that the initiative has ensured provision of uniform healthcare facilities to all segments of the society irrespective of their social status due to which it has been widely

appreciated at national and international level.

According to details, a total of 1,058,797 patients have been admitted under Sehat Card Plus from January 2022 till November 2022 and Rs. 25,834 million has been spent on their treatment. During the same period, 73 kidney transplants and 49 liver transplants have been carried out at a cost of Rs. 102 million and 199 million respectively.

As far as category wise admissions of patients is concerned, a total of 47,679 patients of cardiology, 146,840 of general surgery, 124,328 of Gyne, 142,615 of medical, 16,340 of neuro surgery, 52,481 of orthopedic, 37,384 of oncology, 42,914 of urology, 3,388 of cardiac surgery, 48,386 of throat, 55,229 of ophthalmology, 171,195 of dialysis and 1,768 patients of peads

cardiology have been admitted during the last eleven months.

Keeping in view the utility and benefits of the Sehat Card Plus initiative, the government is taking pragmatic efforts to include treatment of diseases that are currently not covered in the Sehat Card.

In order to provide legal cover and to ensure sustainability of the programme, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Universal Health Coverage Act 2022 has also been passed from the Provincial Assembly.

Mahmood Khan concluded that the Sehat Card Plus is an important achievement of the incumbent provincial government towards the establishment of an Islamic Welfare state as per the manifesto of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

## Toshakhana gifts: Lahore High Court seeks details of all recipients

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore High Court on Monday sought details of all recipients, who have retained gifts from the Toshakhana from 1947 till date.

Lahore High Court (LHC) Justice Asim Hafeez issued the order while hearing a petition filed by a citizen named Munir Ahmed through his counsel Advocate Azhar Siddique. The petitioner argued that the details of the gifts obtained by the officials from Toshakhana should be made public.

The federal government's lawyer while oppos-

ing the plea said in his statement that said the details about the gifts could not be provided since they are confidential. The court ordered the federal government to submit the details by January 16, adding that it would be decided then if the details are confidential or not.

Established in 1974, Tosha-khana is a department under the administrative control of the Cabinet Division and stores precious gifts given to rulers, parliamentarians, bureaucrats and officials by heads of other governments,

states and foreign dignitaries as a goodwill gesture.

It has valuables ranging from bulletproof cars, gold-plated souvenirs, expensive paintings to watches, ornaments, rugs and swords. The existence of the Toshakhana represents a very standard practice in global diplomacy.

Whenever the leaders of two countries meet, it is customary to exchange gifts. In most democratic states, however, these gifts are considered the property of the state and received by individuals on behalf of the country.

## UN urge Taliban to stop attacks against Pakistan

UNITED NATIONS (APP): United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres Monday called on Afghan Taliban to prevent terrorist organizations from attacking Pakistan or any other neighbouring country from the Afghan territory, saying the UN was in discussions with the de facto authorities in this regard.

"We consider that it is absolutely essential for the Taliban not to allow any form of terrorist activity that might have an impact in relation to Pakistan, as in relation to any other country of the region," the UN chief said in response to a question from APP correspond-

ent about the stepped-up cross-border terrorist attacks from Tehreek-i-Taliban against Pakistan that have resulted in many casualties.

"There are several clear things that we believe the Taliban must deliver from the point of view of the interests of the international community and from the point of view of the interest of Afghanistan itself," he said at his year-end press conference. "One thing that they must deliver in relation to the inclusion in the power structures in Afghanistan," the secretary-general said, emphasizing that all ethnic groups in Afghanistan should be represented.

"A second aspect is in relation to human rights and particularly women and girls' rights, the right of women to work, the rights of girls to attend school at all levels without discrimination," he said.

"And there is another clear ask from the international community, which is for Afghanistan to stop all forms of activity of terrorist organizations that from Afghanistan represent the threat to neighboring countries, including Pakistan, and so we are actively engaged in our discussions with the Taliban de facto authorities in relation to this," the UN chief added.

## Malaysian PM Anwar wins confidence vote

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP/APP): Malaysian Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim won a confidence vote in parliament Monday, cementing his mandate a month after an inconclusive election result forced him to ally with the graft-tainted party of his former political rivals.

The affirmation of support was done via voice vote late in the day, with those in favour of Anwar's leadership drowning out those opposed, said Johari Abdul, speaker of the lower house of parliament.

Anwar told AFP he had

the support of 148 members of the 222-seat legislature, giving him the two-thirds majority necessary to pass reforms after a divisive November 19 general election.

House speaker Johari, a close Anwar ally, got 147 votes when he was elected to his post earlier Monday, with one MP from the ruling coalition absent, said Shamsul Iskandar Mohamad Akin, an aide to the premier. He had earlier said the speaker got 148 votes.

Analysts said the strong majority should bring politi-

cal stability to the Southeast Asian nation, which has seen four leadership changes in as many years.

Anwar's Pakatan Harapan (Alliance of Hope) coalition won 82 seats, leading rivals but falling short of the simple majority needed to form a government.

A days-long political stalemate followed, as a rival group led by former prime minister Muhyiddin Yassin said it had also garnered majority support, forcing Malaysia's king to intervene.

## CTD hostage situation continued

BANNU (INP): The hostage situation in the Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) police station in Bannu district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa continues after almost 17 hours as the militants occupying the compound of the police station on Monday reiterated their demand for safe passage to Afghanistan.

The militants reportedly control the entire police station compound. As per reports, the body of a policeman, who was martyred last night by the firing of the militants, has been transferred to the police lines.

Roads adjacent to the CTD compound and Bannu cantonment have been closed to traffic due to the security situation in the area. According to reports, the militants have appealed to Bannu's scholars and leaders for talks.

A day earlier, at least two CTD officials were martyred and many more injured after a militant overpowered interrogators, snatched an AK-47 rifle, and opened fire inside the CTD facility.

In Peshawar, K-P government officials said that the situation was under "complete control" and efforts were being made to foil the "evil intentions of the criminals". "There has been no infiltration in Bannu Cantonment," a KP government spokesperson claimed.

## Eight killed, 18 injured in bus collision

RAJANPUR (INP): At least eight people were killed and 18 others were injured early on Monday morning, when two buses collided on the highway near Rajanpur in Punjab.

Police said that that the two buses were heading in opposite directions but collided with each other due to the dense fog on the highway. As a result of the crash, eight passengers were killed on spot while 18 others sustained injuries.

The injured and bodies of the dead were pulled out and rushed to a nearby local hospital.

The process of identifying the dead is being carried out. According to the rescue team, one of the buses was travelling to Karachi from Peshawar and the other one was coming back to Rajanpur from Quetta.

The accident happened at Shahwali due to intense fog in the area.

The rescue team reached the spot as the accident was reported.

The bodies and the injured were shifted to a nearby state hospital. Punjab Chief Minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi while taking notice of the incident sought a report.

He expressed his grievance and extended condolences to the bereaved families.

Governor Punjab Balighur Rehman also expressed sympathies with the bereaved families and prayed for the early recovery of the injured.

## Imran given shut up call by his own CM Punjab: Sharjeel Inam Memon

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Sindh Information, Transport & Mass Transit Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon has said that Imran Khan has been given a shut-up call by his own Chief Minister and added that Chaudhry Pervez Elahi has reminded Imran Khan about its stature. He said that Pervez Elahi is a wise politician, who has seen the opportunity and timely played his cards. The Minister expressed these views in a statement on Monday.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that Pervaiz Elahi has demanded a guarantee from Imran Khan for 30 seats in the upcoming elections in Gujarat, Chakwal and other districts of Punjab.

He said that those who earned the title of the biggest dacoit of Punjab has fallen heavily on Imran Khan today.

The Minister said that Imran Khan had taken the state as a cricket ground, where he wanted to make all decisions on his wishes. He warned that the coalition government and the

people of Pakistan will thwart every destabilization plans of Imran Khan and its party.

He added that date of dissolution of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies was announced after performing witchcraft and black magic. Imran Khan and PTI are trying to turn the country into sorcery ground and Mr. Niazi and his accomplices want to make decisions about the survival of the country and the nation through witchcraft and fortune-telling.

**SIDCL directed to redesign BRT Orange Line for its integration with Green Line:**

Provincial Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon has said that BRT orange Line (Abdul Sattar Edhi) is fully operational and serving the citizens of Karachi with modern, safe and affordable mode of public transport. But it is not as busy as the People's Bus Service.

Provincial Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Memon while responding

to call attention notice on BRT Abdul Sattar Orange Line in the Sindh Assembly said that BRT Orange Line has to be integrated with BRT Green Line. The minister said that Sindh Infrastructure Development Company Limited (SIDCL) an organization formed by the Federal Government to manage the green line project, has been directed to redesign the Orange Line project to connect it will green line bus services.

He said that BRT orange line will be completely connected to the green line and it will operate till Nagan Chowrangi.

He said that a good number of passengers are benefiting from the operations BRT orange line.

Sharjeel Inam Memon said that the transport department is working day and night on public transport projects, not only in Karachi but in the entire province.

He added that public transport system is being improved and hoped that the citizens will soon see a big change in the public transport sector.

### Tarbela Dam:

## Committee discusses in detail sedimentation

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Senate Senate Standing Committee on Water Resources discussed in detail sedimentation at Tarbela Dam and measures taken to address it; plot allocation to affectees of Tarbela Dam and encroachment of the same.

Meeting of the Senate Body held at Parliament Lodges, Islamabad on Monday under the chair of Senator Syed Muhammad Sabir Shah was attended by Senator Sana Jamali, Senator Taj Haider, Senator Gurdeep Singh, Senator Dr. Muhammad Humayun Mohmand, and senior officers from the Ministry of Water Resources, WAPDA, along with all concerned.

Speaking on the occasion, members of the committee were of the view that while looking at ways to desilt the dam, measures must be taken to allow sediment flow to a certain

degree, since this ensures land fertility. The Committee stressed the need for moving closer towards nature and adopting alternative energy solutions crucial for the survival and growth. The Ministry was directed to formulate a report that would outline long and short term measures to deal with this issue. A detailed briefing on Bhasha Dam is to be made in the next meeting as well.

Reviewing details of plot allocation to affectees of Tarbela Dam Commission, the Committee was informed that the number of affectees that have been compensated is 1744. 450 affectees filed writ petitions before Peshawar High Court Abbotabad Bench for allotment of alternate agricultural land and enhancement of compensation against WAPDA, Federal Government, Government

of Punjab and Sindh.

Based on information provided by 450 affectees, only one affectee was found eligible with respect to allotment of alternate agricultural land as per eligibility criteria of Federal Government policy of 1967-68.

Since the case is in Court and is subjudice, the Committee stressed the need for the perspective of both parties emphasizing an out of Court settlement.

Discussing unauthorized occupancy of allotted land to affectees of Tarbela Dam in Punjab and Sindh, WAPDA was of the view that no such information regarding this issue was available with it as it is the domain of the provincial governments. Moreover it was suggested that if the Committee comes across any such case it may forward the same to the Ministry.

## Pak-Saudia enjoy close fraternal: Shahzain Bugti

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal Minister for Narcotics Control Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti has said that Pakistan and Saudi Arabia enjoy close bilateral, fraternal and historical cooperation in all fields.

He stated this while talking to Director General of the General Directorate of Narcotics Control of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia H.E Mr. Mohammad Bin Sead Al-Qarni who called on him at his office on Monday.

Nawabzada Shahzain Bugti said that Pakistan highly values its relation with Saudi Arabia and consider it as a brotherly State.

"We really appreciate the generous support and sincere cooperation of the brotherly State during the recent flood," he maintained.

The minister further stated that the government and people of Pakistan would like to further diversify the bilateral cooperation beyond the economic

domain to counter narcotics and anti smuggling efforts between the two states.

Speaking on the occasion, the visiting dignitary said that Saudi Arabia and Pakistan are confident friends and brothers. Their Historical relationship is based on mutual respect and trust. He said that Saudi Arabia has always taken and appreciated Counter Narcotics and Anti Smuggling efforts and would like to play its role in this regard.