

**Imran summoned**  
ISLAMABAD (Agencies): A district and sessions court in Islamabad on Wednesday summoned former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan in a case related to his 'threatening' remarks against a female judge. Imran Khan, who was asked to appear before the court in person but he skipped the hearing and an associate lawyer Sardar Masroof appeared before the court.

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PESHAWAR: Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali signing the summary of dissolution of provincial assembly.

## KP governor dissolves assembly on CM's advice

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Haji Ghulam Ali on Wednesday signed the summary sent by Chief Minister Mahmood Khan Tuesday advising him to dissolve the provincial assembly. With the governor's signature, the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly stands dissolved on Wednesday.

Unlike his counterpart in Punjab, KP Governor Haji Ghulam Ali signed the summary of assembly dissolution well before the expiry of stipulated time. Whereas Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman, who had also received the assembly dissolution summary by Punjab Chief Minister Ch Pervaiz Elahi, did not sign it, letting it dissolve on its own on Saturday night after an expiry of 48 hours.

According to the notification issued by the Governor's House, Peshawar today, "Governor Haji Ghulam Ali under Clause (1) of Article 112 of the Constitution of Pakistan dissolves the Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with immediate effect. Henceforth, the Provincial Cabinet also stands dissolved."

The notification further states: "In terms of Clause (4) of Article 224-A of the Constitution, the incumbent Chief Minister Mr Mahmood Khan

shall continue to hold office to perform day to day affairs of the Province till the appointment of caretaker Chief Minister." The Article 224 (1A) of the Constitution binds the Chief Minister and the Opposition Leader in the outgoing assembly to appoint the Caretaker Chief Minister and sent the name to the Governor within the stipulated period of three days.

KP Chief Minister Mahmood Khan on Tuesday night advised KP Governor Haji Ghulam Ali to dissolve the provincial assembly. In the summary sent to the governor, the chief minister wrote that he was sending the advice in pursuant to Article 112(1) of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. As per the constitution, the Governor is bound to sign the summary within 48 hours and if he chooses to not sign it, the assembly dissolves automatically without the governor's assent.

Meanwhile, talking to the media here on the lawn of the Governor House on Wednesday, the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has said that instead of wasting two days, he has signed the advice of the Chief Minister for dissolution of the provincial assembly with immediate effect.

He said that the purpose of his immediate signing of the summary was to save the nation from two days of confusion and prevent the mention

of my name in the wastage of time.

The Governor Pakhtunkhwa had arranged a special reception for orphans and persons with disabilities on the green lawn of the Governor House. About 2000 from various orphanage houses and other organizations attended the reception. A large number of people including political workers, businessmen and senior officers of the civil bureaucracy also attended the function.

The Governor said that the economic conditions of the country are not in good condition as we are facing economic and political challenges. Therefore, he said that since he has taken oath of his office, he is calling for developing consensus to take the province forward according to our customs and traditions. But, the whole country has witnessed that a political party is following a single point agenda of how to create anarchy in the country and aggravate both political and economic situations and create hurdles in bringing improvement in them.

Haji Ghulam Ali said that as now the provincial assembly has been dissolved as per wish of a particular political party, then today he is appealing to the nation particularly to youth, general public and all segments of the society to keep into consideration who had brought the country to the current situation.

## Bajwa data leak: Court grants bail to journalist

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): An Islamabad sessions court on Wednesday granted bail to Bol News journalist Shahid Aslam, who was arrested by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) from Lahore last week for his alleged part in leaking personal tax data of former army chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa. During the hearing, the journalist's lawyer requested the court to accept Aslam's bail application.

Meanwhile, FIA prosecutor Zulfiqar Naqvi said that the journalist had refused to cooperate with the investigation officers and did not share his mobile or laptop passwords with them. "We have sent the electronic devices for forensics," he revealed, adding Aslam was arrested for violating Section 216 [harbouring offender who has escaped from custody or whose apprehension has been ordered] of the Pakistan Penal Code.

After hearing the arguments of both sides, the court accepted Aslam's plea and approved his bail against surety bonds worth Rs50,000. The case pertains to the report published by FactFocus last year, accusing the former army chief and his family of amassing assets worth Rs12.7bn over the past six years.

The report, authored by journalist Ahmad Noorani, cited tax records and wealth statements of Gen Bajwa and his family to corroborate the claims about the alleged accumulation of assets inside and outside Pakistan.

## Major emitters must assist global clean energy transition

DAVOS (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Wednesday said, "The historic emitters responsible for the majority of global GHG emissions need to move resources to allow developing and emerging economies to make the energy transition to renewable without compromising development."

The Federal Minister was at the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting being held in Davos. She was speaking at a panel discussion titled 'Bending the Emissions Curve' where she was joined by the Chairman of the Board, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, Shunichi Miyanaga, Chief Executive Officer, Heineken, Dolf van den Brink, and Chairman, President and Chief Executive Officer, Baker Hughes Lorenzo Simonelli.

The panel was moderated by CNBC's journalist and anchor, Steve Sedgwick. Minister Rehman said that the commitment towards net-zero by 2050 loses its meaning if the 1.5C target was no longer achievable. "We are on an ambitious track to net-zero but all of that takes a huge pause if the 1.5C target set under the Paris Agreement is under threat, as we are struggling to keep it alive.

If we continue business as usual, we are hurtling towards a 3.0C world which will be a race against time for many of us. We experience the burn much faster and harder than anybody else, and in a kind of scale that nobody has seen. We are in geographies of extreme vulnerability and



our experience of climate change and global warming is very nonlinear," she stated. Minister Rehman highlighted that the pledges and commitments toward clean energy transition are quickly abandoned when there is a threat to the world's addiction to excess energy.

"A global reset is needed because the addition to energy and consumption is taking away the futures of those that live in the arc of vulnerability, and also of those living in the developed world. It will be too late to change our addictions and habits to energy consumption as we are speeding towards a planet that's burning up, with investment in renewable energy not where it needs to be to save the planet. The Minister remarked that in tackling climate change, we are still working in silos which is counterproductive.

"At the moment, there is no standardization of the best practices for regulatory frameworks that could be shared across the board through global governance frameworks and multilateralism. For instance, if such a framework was made available for carbon pricing mechanism, it will then become a regulatory prac-

tice that the governments will feel bound to work with. We are still in silos because the multilateral system is not able to overcome the nationalisms that rise up every time there is a threat," she said.

Minister Rehman said that moral imperative only is not enough, and there is a need for a system with clear incentives and penalties as the current system is not working. Senator Sherry Rehman met with the CEO and Co-founder of Planet Labs, Will Marshall. They discussed the role of space technologies, such as satellites, can lead to several inventions that can benefit the environment, as well as role of metrological satellites as early warning systems to predict extreme weather conditions like unprecedented rains, droughts, and floods.

The Minister also joined Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari and Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar in a meeting with the Chairman of the World Economic Forum, Professor Klaus Schwab, on the sidelines where they discussed Pakistan's longstanding relationship with the World Economic Forum and promoting international cooperation.

Senator Rehman will be in Davos until 20th January 2023 during which time she will meet with political leaders, corporate executives, international organizations, climate action practitioners, media and plenary forums on climate, environmental, economic and social issues.

## In-camera meeting of NA Body on Interior postponed

ISLAMABAD (INP): The in-camera meeting of the National Assembly Standing Committee on Interior on the security situation of the country was postponed due to the non-participation of the heads of the institutions.

The NA Body expressing its concerns said that the youth are being martyred but the heads of the institutions were not attending the committee meeting called to solve the issue. It said that the in-camera meeting will not be held until heads of the security agencies dead not participate in the meeting.

The IG Islamabad and Balochistan participated in the committee meeting but heads of all other institutions did not participate.

The in-camera meeting of the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Interior was held in Parliament House on Wednesday under the chairmanship of Chairman Ahmed Hussain Dahar. Sources told INP that the meeting was attended by DG Rangers Sindh and Punjab, IGFC Balochistan, IGFC KPK, DG Gilgit-Balistan Scout, DG Coast Guard, IG Islamabad Police, IG Police, Punjab, IG Police, IG Police Sindh, IG Police Balochistan, IG Police Azad Kashmir, IG Police GB, and AIGCTD of all four provinces were summoned by the committee.

Sources said that our purpose of calling all the security agencies was to clarify the system for communication between them, for that it was necessary that the heads of all the agencies should be present in the committee, but unfortunately only IG Balochistan participated in the committee and no other IG was in the committee. The committee said that terrorism is increasing again in the country, CTD officials are getting martyred, the CTD center in KPK was bombed, but the IG Police and other law enforcement agencies are not coming in the committee meeting.

Sources said that the chairman of the committee and the members have expressed their anger over the absence of the heads of the security institutions in the committee and they said that until the heads of the institutions come to the committee, there will be no meeting of the committee on national security, after which the chairman of the committee Ahmed Hussain. Refusing to take the briefing, Dahar adjourned the in-camera meeting and directed that the in-camera meeting will not take place until the heads of all security agencies come to the committee.

## Balochistan CM demands due share from NFC

### F.P. Report

QUETTA: Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo, said on Wednesday that time and again financial crises of the province had been brought into the notice of federal government, but the policy of federal government was surprising.

In a statement, Bizenjo said that the Balochistan government was not able to pay the salaries to government employee. He said that flood affectees of the province were still awaiting relief goods during chilly weather, adding, "We can tackle the issues of our flood and rain affectees if our due share in the NFC is granted to us".

He said the Prime Minister was understanding our point of view but the concerned federal departments were not taking the issue seriously. Making an appeal to the Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif to visit Quetta along with the teams of concerned federal departments for reviewing the financial crises of the province, he said that the Prime Minister himself had visited the flood affected areas of the province and he knew the situation better than others.

# Four security men embrace martyrdom

### F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Four security personnel on Wednesday embraced martyrdom while thwarting a terrorist activity from across Pakistan-Iran Border in Chukab Sector of District Panjgur in Balochistan.

According to the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the terrorists used Iranian soil to target a convoy of security forces patrolling along the border. The martyred soldiers were identified as Sepoy Asad Ali age 25 years, Resident of Village Hamrota Tehsil Baloch District Sudhnoti, Lance Naik Fareed Ullah Khan Age 29 years, Resident of Village Pahar Khel Pakka Tehsil of District Lakki Marwat, Lance Naik Abdul Razzaq, age 31 years, Resident of Village Khawha Khel Lakki Marwat and Lance Naik Muhammad Younas Khan, age 24 years, Resident of Bachakhan Ahmed Zai Tehsil of District Lakki Marwat.

It added that the Iranian side was asked to hunt down the terrorists on their side. The President Dr Arif Alvi strongly condemned a terrorist attack targeting the security forces in Panjgur area of Balochistan. Expressing grief over the martyrdom of four security personnel in the attack, the president reiterated that the whole nation was resolved to fight out terrorism.

A day earlier, Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir visited Balochistan's Khuzdar and Basima areas where he was briefed on the prevailing security situation and the formation's operational preparedness, along with measures being taken to ensure a "peaceful



and secure environment". In a statement, the military's media wing quoted the COAS as saying that the Pakistan Army was aware of the "nefarious designs of external enemies of Pakistan" to disturb the peace in Balochistan.

Over the past few months, the law and order situation in the country has worsened, with terrorist groups executing attacks with near impunity across the country. Insurgents in Balochistan have also stepped up their violent activities and formalised a nexus with the outlawed Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

The year 2022 ended with December as the deadliest month for Pakistan as the country suffered as many as 376 terror attacks in the year that resulted in an increased number of casualties in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and

Balochistan.

Prime Minister Muhammad Sharif on Wednesday strongly condemned the killing of four security officials in a terrorist incident along the Pakistan-Iran border in Balochistan.

On his Twitter handle, he said the nation paid homage to the sacrifices of its soldiers martyred in the line of duty. The prime minister further said, "We expect Iran will ensure that its soil is not used for cross border attacks."

He paid tribute to the services and great sacrifices of the security personnel for the country. The president saluted the brave soldiers for their valor and prayed for their high ranks in paradise. He also sympathised with the bereaved family and prayed to Allah Almighty for strength to them to bear the loss with fortitude.

## NAB law amends: SC seeks details of beneficiaries

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Wednesday sought details from the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) regarding the accused who had got relief or were acquitted due to amendments in the NAB Ordinance during the previous government of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial, while heading a five-member bench which heard the petition of PTI Chairman Imran Khan against the NAB law amendments, observed that it was a fact that some 386 references were returned by the courts due to recent amendments in the NAB law.

The Federation's lawyer, Makhdom Ali Khan, said

five NAB ordinances were promulgated in the PTI government's tenure and the question was how many people were acquitted and references returned under those ordinances, besides pinpointing the beneficiaries.

He said the recent amendments were in continuity of the old law. The court should not limit itself to only 386 cases as the PTI should also tell that how many references were returned by the courts due to amendments in its government tenure.

Justice Mansoor Ali Shah remarked that there were also other laws to deal with the crimes if NAB was abolished. It was a wrong impression that the law's grip would end with abol-

ishing NAB, and it was also misperception that those acquitted from the NAB cases were deemed as innocent. Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan observed that the PTI had adopted the stance that the onus to prove charges had been changed in the amended law. It was a question as to how the recent amendments in the NAB law could be applied on the past cases. The amended law could not be applied on the cases initiated since 1985, he added.

He remarked that the recent amendments introduced in the NAB law seemed to be an amnesty scheme as an accused would go home if acquitted by an accountability of the charges. The case was adjourned till January 19.

## SC terms voting process for overseas Pakistanis difficult

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Supreme Court has remarked that the voting process for the overseas Pakistanis has been made difficult. The apex court conducted hearing of the petitions filed by PTI Chairman Imran Khan and Awami Muslim League Chief Sheikh Rashid challenging the Election Amendment Act.

The Supreme Court issued notices to the Election Commission of Pakistan. The court also issued notices to NADRA and the attorney general of Pakistan seeking their assistance on the matter. During hearing, Justice Ijazul Ahsan inquired whether the overseas Pakistanis would have to come to Pakistan or they could cast their votes from abroad. He observed that the voting process for the overseas Pakistan has been made so difficult, apparently in order to keep

them away from casting their votes.

"The right of vote (for overseas Pakistanis) has not been abolished. The problem is voting process," Justice Ahsan observed. The petitioners' lawyer said that the Supreme Court had given voting right to the overseas Pakistanis in its judgement but the amendment to the Election Act was against the spirit of court order.

He said that on the court order, NADRA developed a system and it was tested during the by-elections as an experiment. No reservations were expressed during the by-elections, he added. The court asked the NADRA and ECP to assist it whether the system was as per the requirements. With this, the judge adjourned the hearing of the case for another two weeks.

**Apex court stops judges from heading committees**

**in flood-hit areas:** The Supreme Court has ordered to remove the names of civil judges as heads of committees monitoring the restoration work in flood-affected areas. The court partially accepted the appeal of Sindh Government, however, ordered the city committees to continue their work as per the law and also instructed them to include women in these bodies.

The Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial issued a 20-page order on the appeal of Sindh Government against the verdict of Sindh High Court (SHC). The apex court ordered to ensure medical facilities for women in flood-affected areas. It also ordered the Provincial Disaster Management Authority to submit its report to the Sindh High Court regarding the restoration work after every two weeks.





## KU welcomes new students with old tradition

KARACHI (APP): The graduates of the University of Karachi, KU's alumni association--Unikarians International--along with the faculty, employees, and the administration of the varsity welcomed the new batch of students on Wednesday.

They gave a warm welcome to Nawardan Jamia (fresh students) at the Silver Jubilee Gate, the main gate of the University of Karachi, said a KU spokesperson. Unikarians International in the collaboration with the University of Karachi organised the event to welcome the fresh batch of students and their parents. A large number of students, and parents attended the central orientation program which was held adjacent to the New Administration Building of KU. Later, various departments also arranged orientation programs for newcomers.

The newly enrolled students and alumni along with Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Khalid Mahmood Iraqi, registrar, deans of all faculties, members of Senate and Syndicate, chairpersons and directors of various departments, research centers and institutes, and faculty members and employees followed the 30 Huffaz-e-Quran stepped inside the campus from the Silver Jubilee Gate while reciting the Holy Quran and completed it before reaching to the ground adjacent to the New Administration Building.

KU VC Prof. Dr. Khalid Mahmood Iraqi, President of Arts Council Karachi Muhammad Ahmed Shah, President of Unikarians International Prof. Ejaz Ahmed Faruqi, Director General Charter Inspection and Evaluation Committee Sindh HEC Nauman Ahsan spoke on the occasion.

## IGP orders for appointment of female SHO in one police station in every district

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General Police, Punjab, Aamir Zulfiqar Khan on Wednesday ordered the appointment of a female SHO in at least one police station in every district of the province within the next five days. He issued these instructions to the officers while presiding over a high-level meeting here at Safe City Authorities, Head Office Qurban Lines.

In the meeting, the future agenda of the Women Police Conference and the professional issues of women police employees were discussed. The IG Punjab directed Additional IG Training to ensure the appointment of women SHOs in all districts of the province and submit a report in due time. He said the appointment of women officials at women help desks established in all districts should be ensured in every way so that women police officers could help women citizens who were victims of crimes and social problems

# New payment method to secure and expand avenues of investment for BISP beneficiaries: Shazia

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: "A new payment method to secure and expand avenues of investment and saving for BISP beneficiaries."

Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Benazir Income Support Program (BISP)- Chairperson Shazia Atta Marri, while speaking at a Press Conference highlighted that the focus of the Conference would be on BISP. The conference was to lay focus on the introduction of a new payment mechanism for BISP.

BISP got its legal framework in 2010 with all its legislations and a legal status. Pakistan is a developing nation, however, with its economic challenges, Pakistan still has a unique program like BISP. It's the most popular in the region, and also revered in the UN on a global level. BISP currently facilitates and benefits above 8 million families. A new Payment mechanism is in need of adoption, program started in 2010, back when money order was the way to transfer funds. Then it moved to pilot program mechanism, that initiated the Benazir debit card.

Moving on and rectifying the flaws of the debit card system, in 2016 a biometric verification was piloted and officially launched. With its pros, came the cons and we faced extreme challenges during the floods, the role of middleman, delayed payments, no concept of saving as all

the money must be extracted at the same time. With all these loopholes, and increasing challenges for women to extract payments through biometric verification method, Madam Shazia Marri and her team decided to devise a method to undo the previous payment structures and devise a plan that will work.

Through this program, women who are direct beneficiaries of BISP, can now be empowered. She can be an owner of a bank account in her own capacity. She can manage savings, she can use the finances to initiate any business prospect. This method not only brings about financial literacy, but also ensures social inclusion of millions of women, benefiting from BISP. For this new mechanism to work, the Federal Minister stated that there will first be a pilot program, along with a few Banks in different regions, on a small scale, to test whether it can be sustained as a full fledged program.

The expansion won't be overnight, it will be taken up only after the pilot is run, and whatever necessary inadequacies that may arise while it's put in place, they must be rectified in the final plan.

BISP has long been known to encourage individuals to move towards registering and making CNICs, that were a prerequisite before the women who are beneficiaries of BISP, could extract the funds. Thus,

BISP has already been a catalyst in creating awareness and encouraging the populous to document and register itself, with CNICs, Birth certificates etc. BISP doesn't simply provide financial assistance, it also impacts social change, with creating and spreading certain habits that reinforce the concept of social responsibility.

BISP, has been granted 70 billion Rupees by the Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, to assist the flood affected areas. With the immense challenges that The Ministry faced, along with the on ground teams, BISP was present on the field, working tirelessly in providing the required assistance. She thanked Information Minister, Chief Minister Sindh, and relevant departments of Sindh Government for working as a liaison with the Federal Government and the BISP teams that were tasked with such a grave and crucial responsibility of utilising and handing over the resources allocated by the PM.

Federal Minister Shazia Marri said, Due to the Donor Conference in Geneva, a huge amount of funds in assistance were promised, and she was thankful to all stakeholders and Government Officials and departments, who played a crucial part in enabling BISP to play an integral part in being the front runners of flood relief assistance. She said climate change had

wreaked havoc on Pakistan this summer and affected more than 33 million people.

With Pakistan only contributing 0.1% towards the carbon emissions, yet it had to bear the brunt of its destruction, due to the negligence shown by developed and industrial nations who have immense carbon footprints. Madam Shazia Marri further said by taking the example of recent floods in Pakistan, it was important to understand that climate change was not just an environmental issue, but a threat to health, livelihood, agriculture, peace and security and the overall economy of the world.

In conclusion, she expressed that BISP has thus been in place, standing round the clock, for Flood relief and rehabilitation. She said that the looming flaws that were slapped onto the recent Ministry, by the inefficient handling of the program by the previous Government, the current Government and Federal Minister for BISP, had already reversed the exclusion of 0.8 million beneficiaries who were thrown out of the program on unfair basis. The current BISP handlers have to outdo and undo the mismanagement and unfair disbursement of funds carried out by the previous Government, while it is also tasked with keeping in with the current technological advancements and social responsibility.

## Dismal turnout reflects improper representation of Karachiites: Altaf

KARACHI (NNI): Terming dismally low fifteen percent turnout in recent local bodies' elections in the megacity Karachi improper representation of Karachiites, Pasban Democratic Party PDP Chairman Altaf Shakoor here on Wednesday demanded fresh polls after the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

The fifteen percent turnover means that other eighty-five percent voters have showed no confidence on the local government elections in Karachi and the successful candidates in fact have no real public mandate. He said it would be morally and politically incorrect to give the administration of the megacity to these candidates who don't enjoy real confidence of the Karachiites.

He said it is prudent that in the light of the ver-

dict of the Supreme Court of Pakistan new delimitations should be made in the megacity, ensuring that each consistency should have equal representation of people. He said political engineering in delimitation process should be ended for good.

He regretted that now some political quarters are giving the results of the local government elections an ethnic color. He said we reject ethnic hatred in Karachi and all overtures based on ethnic divide of the megacity. He said Karachi is a multilingual and multicultural city. All citizens living in Karachi irrespective of their language and cultural background are Karachi and no one could be discrimination. He said that we reject the new controversy being introduced by some vested interests of local and non-local Karachiites. He said all permanent residents of Karachi, having Karachi as

their permanent address on the national identity cards of locals of Karachi irrespective of which language they speak.

Altaf Shakoor said suggested that local bodies' elections should be held on the same day with elections of national and provincial assemblies so that political engineering of ruling parties should be ended for good. He said we should develop a sense of nationalism instead of dividing the Karachi on ethnic and linguistic lines.

He said that all political parties should join hands to resolve the issues of Karachi. He said in this regard a 'Karachi Charter' should be devised and signed by all stakeholders of the megacity so that their collective energies are utilised for the progress and prosperity of the megacity.

He said his party, PDP, is ready to play its role in proposed 'Karachi Charter' always and anytime.

## Federal Ombudsman extended its services to merged districts of former Tribal Agencies

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Federal Ombudsman Office has extended its services to merged districts of former Tribal Agencies and opened its two offices, one in Sadda district Kurrum and another at Wana South Waziristan to provide speedy relief and justice in those areas.

These areas deserve our full attention and should not be neglected. This was stated by the Hon'ble Federal Ombudsman Mr. Ejaz Ahmad Qureshi while addressing to the notables, heads of different government agencies and media in a press conference held at WMS regional office, D.I. Khan.

He said that four Offices in Peshawar, D.I. Khan, Swat &

Abbottabad were functioning to the fullest capacity in settled areas, however, the coverage to erstwhile tribal areas was the need of the hour.

The Ombudsman said that through innovative measures and simple procedures, 164,174 with 49% increased complaints were handled during the year 2022 without taking additional budget and employing human resources. He said that there was 95% increase was recorded in online disposal of 91,496 cases, which shows people's trust on this Secretariat.

He said that on the vision of justice at doorstep, hearing of complaints was also conducted online when requested by the complainant. Performance target

for Investigation Officers and Advisors has been enhanced to more than 100% during 2022, he added.

He said that speedy and inexpensive justice was ensured through 27 frequent inspections of public service organizations and conducting 68 Khuli Katcheries through the 17 Regional Offices around the country. He further stated that complaints worth over Rs.3 billion were addressed by this office during the last year, otherwise these cases would have added burden to the civil courts. He said that Government expenditure per complainant in disposing of complaint through Waqafi Mohtasib construes negligible amount, thus it the most cost-effective way of providing relief to the common man.

## LDA demolishes illegal constructions

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore Development Authority (LDA) on Wednesday demolished several illegal constructions in an anti-encroachment operation in different areas of the city. On directions of Director General LDA Amir Ahmed Khan, the operation was carried out by an LDA team, led by Town Planning Zone-2 Chief Town Planner Shakeel Anjum and Town Planning Director Salman Mehfooz, at Multan Road, Sabzazar Scheme, Canal Road, Katarband Road, Allama Iqbal Town and Marghazar Colony. The LDA enforcement wing and police contingent was also present at the scene. The LDA director general said that operation would continue against illegal constructions without any discrimination in the city.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Ibrar Hussain with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Liaqat Hussain citizen number 1730112736177 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Laraib Liaqat (Daughter) 2.Beena Liaqat Hussain (Spouse)3.Ibrar Hussain (Son) 4.Danyal Hussain (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA RING ROAD-DSFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Saeeda Begum with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Mir Miran Uddin citizen number 1540214159423 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Sheema Gul (Daughter), 2. Asma Gul (Daughter), 3. Haseena Tabassum Inam (Daughter), 4. Rabia (Daughter), 5. Saeeda Begum (Spouse), 6. Mian Ftrihar Udd Din (Son), 7. Muhammad Awais Uddin (Son).
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
PID/04451/22 INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MALAKAND

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Shakir Ullah with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Wahid Ullah citizen number 1730192488897 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Bas Mida (Daughter) 2.Shabina (Daughter)3.Samera (Daughter)4.Naghma Bibi (Daughter)5.Ka I s o G m (Daughter)6.Bas Pari (Spouse) 7.Shakir Ullah (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA RHO PESHAWAR-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Stephen Masih with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Nasreen Begum citizen number 1730181453926 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Robi (Daughter)2.Fouzia (Daughter)3.Christina (Daughter)4.Stephen Masih (Spouse)5.Sunny Stephen (Son) 6.Sabir Masih (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA RHO PESHAWAR-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Suhail Alam with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Nisar Muhammad citizen number 1710102591699 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Aasma Amin (Daughter) 2.Humaira Hameed (Daughter) 3.Rifat Noreen (Spouse) 4.Muhammad Abrar Alam (Son) 5.Muhammad Khushal Alam (Son)6.Suhail Alam (Son) 7.Afzal Alam (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA RHO PESHAWAR-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Waleed Akhtar with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Saeed Khan citizen number 1620220117327 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Asia Saeed (Daughter)2.Uzma Nooreen (Daughter)3.Danish (Daughter)4.Maknoon Begum (Spouse)5.Abdul Waheed Khan (Son)6.Quaid Khan (Son) 7.Waleed Akhtar (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA SWABI-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Abd Al Khan with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Sabz Ali Khan citizen number 1620209055099 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Nowsheen (Daughter) 2.Shehla Khan (Daughter) 3.Haseena (Daughter)4.Farhad Begum (Spouse)5.Abid Ali Khan (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA SWABI-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Shahbaz Khan with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Nazir citizen number 1350314091129 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Afia Nazir (Daughter)2.Subia Begum (Spouse)3.Sheryar Khan (Son)4.Shahbaz Khan (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MANSEHRA-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Mehmod Ali Qureshi with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Sheraz Mehmod Qureshi citizen number 1350306779241 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Uzma (Daughter)2.Safia Bibi (Daughter)3.Alia Bibi (Daughter) 4.Haleema Bibi (Spouse) 5.Muhammad Tawseer (Son) 6.Muhammad Saqib (Son) 7.Muhammad Shoaib (Son) 8.Roman Khan (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MANSEHRA-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Niaz Ali with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Nawas Khan citizen number 1610112819781 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Sidra Bibi (Daughter) 2.Nageena (Daughter)3.Amin (Daughter)4.Nadia (Daughter) 5.Mamlikat Bibi (Daughter) 6.Niaz Ali (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MARDAN-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Hamad with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Musarrat Afroz citizen number 1730114192358 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Komal Shahid (Daughter) 2.Hamad (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Shoaib with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Hazrat Khan citizen number 1310133376669 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Uzma (Daughter)2.Safia Bibi (Daughter)3.Alia Bibi (Daughter) 4.Haleema Bibi (Spouse) 5.Muhammad Tawseer (Son) 6.Muhammad Saqib (Son) 7.Muhammad Shoaib (Son) 8.Roman Khan (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Yasooab Ali with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Araaj Begum citizen number 1430166141716 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Naseem Akhtar (Daughter) 2.Nasreen Ahmad (Daughter) 3.Muzaffa Yasooab (Daughter) 4.Yasmine Akhtar (Daughter) 5.Yasooab Ali (Spouse)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA KOHAT-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Qazi Haq Nawaz with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Qazi Abdul Wadood citizen number 1330108609755 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Shazia Ubaid (Daughter) 2.Nadia Rizwan (Daughter) 3.Chan Bibi (Daughter)4.Qazi Faeem Gul (Son)5.Qazi Haq Nawaz (Son)6.Qazi Abdul Waheed (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Abdul Hussain with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Ramzan citizen number 1310133376669 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Aashid (Daughter) 2.Asma Abid (Daughter)3.Razia Bibi (Spouse)4.Muhammad Sajid (Son)5.Abid Hussain (Son) 6.Aashir Ramzan (Son) 7.Uzman Ramzan (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Miskeen with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Amraizan Khat citizen number 1310148538322 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Muhammad Miskeen (Son) 2.Kala Khan (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Imran Aslam with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Aslam citizen number 1330106381405 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Farhana Bibi (Daughter)2.Alaf Jan (Spouse)3.Imran Aslam (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Abdullah Khan with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Abdul Rauf Khad citizen number 1350113087321 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Hira Hassan (Daughter) 2.Umar Rauf (Daughter) 3.Asmat Bibi (Spouse) 4.Abdullah Khan (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Abdul Azam Khan with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Mir Azam Khan citizen number 1520155697203 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Ruqia Azam (Daughter) 2.Rushdah Azam (Daughter) 3.Bibi Naima (Daughter)4.Jamia Bibi (Daughter)5.Bibi Fatima (Spouse)6.Bibi Saitha (Spouse) 7.Abdul Azam Khan (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA CHITRAL-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Irfan Munir with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Munir Akhtar citizen number 1730113752651 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1.Misbah Shaheen (Spouse) 2.Muhammad Irfan Munir (Son) 3.Rizwan Munir (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
PID/04451/22 INCHARGE SFU, NADRA RING ROAD-DSFU

## PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DEPARTMENT NOWSHERA, KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

### NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING

Public Health Engineering Division Nowshera, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa invites electronic bids from eligible firms/bidders in accordance with KPRA procurement rules 2014 on single stage two envelop procedure for the following works:-

S.NO	NAME OF WORK	EARNEST MONEY including STAMP DUTY(RS)	BIDDING ENTRY FEE (Rs).	Estimated Cost (Million)	LAST DATE & TIME OF SUBMISSION OF BIDS	DATE OF OPENING OF TECHNICAL BID	DATE OF OPENING OF FINANCIAL BID
CONSTRUCTION /REHABILITATION OF SOLAR BASED TUBE WELL ALONG WITH OVERHEAD TANKS & SANITATION SCHEMES IN UC MANKI SHARIF,PAHARI KATTI KHEL, SHAHKOT, JALAZOI, NIZAMPUR, KAH, BARA BANDA, KHESHGI BALA & PANIPAN, DHERI KATTI KHEL, NOWSHERA KALAN & BADRSHI AND ZIARAT KAKA SAHIB DISTRICT NOWSHERA UNDER ADP 239/220763 FOR THE YEAR 2022-23.							
1	Pressure Pumps at V.C Khesghi Bala - (I,II,III,IV,V), Pressure Pumps at Khesghi Payan VC-(I,II,III) and Pressure Pumps at V.C Bara Banda, Kotar Pan , Mera Kandar, Khesghi Bala, Khesghi Payan, Bara Banda	1000000	14400	48.00	07-02-2023, 12.00 Noon	07-02-2023, 12.30 PM	Will be communicated in due course of time
2	Installation of Pressure Pumps / Hand Pumps/ Rotary Pressure at U.C Kahi & Nizampur	256800	3252	10.84			
3	Construction of Street Pavement, Drain, Retaining Wall, Culverts in U.C Nizampur.	394000	5310	17.70			
4	Sanitation Scheme at village Khat Killi /Qamar Khel & Hakem Abad.U.C Dheri Katti Khel.	404600	5469	18.23			
5	Installation of Pressure Pumps / Hand Pumps/ Sanitation Scheme at U.C Badrashi.	464600	6369	21.23			
6	Sanitation Scheme at U.C Nawan Killi & U.C Chowki Town.	440000	6000	20.00			
7	Sanitation Scheme at U.C Kabul River & U.C Nowshera City.	480000	6600	22.00			

#### General Terms and Conditions :-

- Bidding Document / instruction to the Bidder can be obtained from the office of the undersigned one day prior to the submission of technical & Financial bid.
- All bidders are required to be registered and active tax payer with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority.
- Additional Security shall be submitted as per KPRA Notification No. S.R.O. (14) Vol:1-24/2021-22/6058-21 dated: 10-05-2022.
- The 2% bid security should be accompanied by Stamp Duty. In case not submitted the bid will be considered as Non-responsive.
- The Nonrefundable bidding entry fee @0.03% in the shape of separate CDR of the tender cost should also be submitted along with the earnest money. In case not submitted the bid will be considered as Non-responsive.

### EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DIVISION NOWSHERA

INF(P) 305/23





PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan chairing 2nd meeting of Land Use and Building Control Council.

## 3350 accused on parole in province

PESHAWAR (APP): Parole and Probation Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has released 2675 accused in various kinds of cases during last calendar year 2022, said an official handout issued here on Wednesday.

It said that presently 3350 accused are on parole under the supervision of the department across the province. It said that the department plays a crucial and effective role in the reformation of prisoners and guides them in rehabilitation towards a positive life.

The accused currently on parole include 3182 men, 19 women, 149 teenager boys and girls.

Besides decreasing burden on prisons, release on probation also helps in saving millions of rupees of the provincial government annually.

## CEO Cantt Board holds public hearing

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Cantonment Board held a public hearing for the resolution of the problems and issues faced by the residents and trading community here on Monday.

Representing the trading community, President Tajir Ittehad (Traders' Alliance) Mujeeb-ur-Rehman, Chairman Shaukatullah Hamdard, Mian Mohammad Aqeel and Zafar Minhas highlighted problems faced by the trading community, particularly relating to property tax, professional tax, lease tax, encroachments, illegal parking, electric cables, sewage system and beautification of bazaars.

The CEO Cantonment Board took notice of all public grievances and assured resolution of all problems. He assured that the trading community would be taken on board before taking all measures in this regard.

## Cold, cloudy weather predicted for most KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Wednesday predicted that cold and cloudy weather is expected in most parts of the province, while very cold in upper parts and hilly areas.

It said that isolated drizzle and light rain with light snowfall over the hills is likely to occur over Chitral, Lower & Upper Dir, Malakand, Buner, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Torgar, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Mohmand, Khyber and Kurram districts in night.

During the last 24 hours very cold and dry weather prevailed over most parts of the province.

The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were as Peshawar City 20/01, Chitral 07/-1, Timergara 16/-1, Dir 12/-6, Mirkhani 09/-3, Kalam 10/-16, Drosht 07/-2, Saidu Sharif 16/-4, Pattan 15/07, Malam Jabba 05/-7, Takht Bhai 20/00, Kakul 12/-2, Balakot 16/02, Parachinar 12/-6, Bannu 20/01, Cherat 09/01, D.I. Khan 23/03.

The lowest temperatures recorded in the province were -16°C in Kalam, -08°C in Tirah valley of Khyber district and -07°C in Malam Jabba and -06°C in Parachinar.

# People get salvation from corrupt PTI govt in KP: Muqam

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial President Muslim League (N) and Advisor to the Prime Minister, Engineer Amir Muqam on Wednesday while reacting over the dissolution of the provincial assembly said "thanks to Allah Almighty for granting salvation to the people from the incompetent and corrupt rulers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa".

In a media statement, Amir Muqam said in the last ten years the PTI government and Imran Niazi gave nothing to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but distress and desper-

ation. Neither 350 dams were constructed nor was the economy put on the path of self sufficiency in the last ten years.

He said though we have got salvation from the corrupt PTI government in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but there were no resources in the province to pay the salaries and pension of the staff. During its regimes in Center, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab, he said the PTI failed to initiate any mega project for the welfare of the people.

The excessive cost of the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) in

Peshawar was a living example of the corruption of Imran led PTI.

During the last ten years, the official helicopter of the province was used as a rickshaw by the PTI leadership. Imran Khan caused a loss of Rs 1 billion to the national exchequer through the illegal use of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government's official helicopter.

Muqam added that the people will dissolve those who dissolved the assemblies and did nothing for the country despite being in power for years.

## Karkhano Market cleared of encroachments

PESHAWAR (APP): District administration Peshawar and Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) in a joint operation demolished encroachments erected outside markets in Karkhano Bazaar here on Wednesday.

On the directives of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar Shafiullah Khan, the Additional Assistant Commissioner (AAC), Sumera Saba along with officers of PDA carried out a joint anti-encroachment operation in Karkhano Market, the biggest shopping centre of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

During the operation encroachments erected outside and other illegal constructions were demolished through heavy machinery. A heavy contingent of police personnel was deployed to prevent any untoward incident.

It was the second similar grand anti-encroachment carried out in the bazaar a few weeks back during which all illegal encroachment were demolished, but some elements have once again erected them.

Deputy Commissioner Peshawar, Shafiullah Khan has said that the ongoing indiscriminate anti-encroachment operation will continue and stern action will be taken against those erecting encroachments.

## GHB organizes ceremony

PESHAWAR (APP): Gandhara Hindko Board (GHB) Academy here Wednesday arranged a ceremony to honor Pakistani expatriate Muhammad Zaheen whose name was inscribed on a plane as a token of appreciation for his dedicated services and punctuality while working in airline.

On the occasion, General Secretary GHB, Muhammad Ziauddin briefed the visiting guest about objectives of the board and efforts being made for promotion of Hindko literature, language and associated culture.

Expressing views in the ceremony, Muhammad Zaheen who was born in Peshawar told about his experiences during his employment of 40 year in United Airline of United States.

General Secretary GHB also announced to publish an edition special of Hinko digest in honor of Muhammad Zaheen.

It is worth mentioning that selection of Muhammad Zaheen has been made from among 85,000 employees of the airline and is considered as an honor for whole Pakistani community and dwellers of Peshawar city.

## 5 injured in cylinder blast

PESHAWAR (APP): Five people of the same family sustained serious injuries when an LPG cylinder exploded in the Dabgari Garden area here on Wednesday.

According to Rescue 1122, the cylinder blast occurred in a house near Syed Anwar Medical Center, critically injuring five people of a family.

The injured including women and children were rushed to the Lady Reading Hospital. Rescue 1122 said the condition of the two injured was critical, adding the blast also damaged the room.

# PHC suspends reinstatement order of VC Gomal varsity

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Qaiser Rashid and Justice Abdul Shakoor has granted status quo against reinstatement of Vice Chancellor (VC) Gomal varsity.

The reinstatement of VC Gomal Varsity Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad was challenged by two female professors while during hearing the petitioners and Additional Advocate General Muhammad

Suhail appeared on behalf of provincial government.

Earlier, Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad was forced to leave the position following division of assets among Gomal varsity and newly established Agriculture University D I Khan while laterally he was forced retired, the petition stated.

Moreover, on 10th Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has reinstated Dr. Iftikhar on his position while PHC has already issued status quo in this regard.

The divisional bench has issued notice to Principal Secretary to Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and ordered to explain the circumstance in which VC Gomal Varsity was reinstated despite status quo granted by PHC in this regard.

The divisional bench comprising of Chief Justice PHC Justice Qaiser Rashid and Justice Abdul Shakoor has suspended reinstatement order of VC Gomal varsity Dr. Iftikhar Ahmad while adjourned further hearing till 24th January.

# Governor hosts reception for orphan, special children at Governor House

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali on Wednesday hosted a reception for orphan and special children at the governor house and arranged special

arrangements for their entertainment.

Mayor Peshawar Zubair Ali, Commissioner Peshawar division and CCPO Peshawar were present on the occasion and provided

quality time to the visiting children. The Governor presented gifts to the children and assured them that the Governor House would always welcome them if they wanted to visit again.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali greeting with special children at Governor's House.

# City, Tehsil Council polling on January 25

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Election Commission (ECP) has fixed January 25 as the date for holding city/tehsil councils in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and has asked the members of the councils/ electoral colleges to elect presiding officers for their respective councils.

Provincial Election Commissioner in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shamshad Khan said that an official notification has been issued by the Election Commission of Pakistan in this regard.

The ECP has already appointed ROs for the polling, who have also imparted necessary orientation/training on 16th January 2023 of this month, he added.

Furthermore, nomination Forms could be obtained from the offices of ROs concerned, which could be submitted on 25th January 2023 till 1:00 PM with the RO concerned.

He also informed that scrutiny of the nomination papers would be held on the same day. About the mode of the election, he explained that polling

would be held through open division on 25th January 2023 from 2:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

The member of the said council should enter the name of the candidate of his choice in the register and the RO should declare the candidate who gets more votes as returned.

The returning candidate would take oath from the concerned RO on the same day.

## Masses urged to ensure enrollment in electoral list

PESHAWAR (APP): The Election Commission, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa urged masses to ensure enrollment in electoral lists before general elections 2023.

According to a press release issued here stated that under the Elections Act 2017 section 39, all the lists would be frozen during the issue of elections schedule.

The Election Commission, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa urged the people to ensure their enrollment and send their CNIC number on 8300 to get information about registration of their votes.

# Patwari suspended over bribery following RTPSC's decision

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A Patwari has been suspended for obtaining Rs1lac 20 thousand bribe from citizen for transfer of ancestral property in Haripur district as per Right to Public Service Commission (RTPSC), on Wednesday.

The concerned Tehsildar along with naib tehsildar and Patwari Amjad Shahzad appeared before RTPSC on complaint of Abid Khan resident of Haripur district. The applicant informed that concerned patwari is using delaying tactics in provi-

sion of ancestral property division's documents and also grabbed as Rs1 lakh 20 as bribe from the citizen.

During hearing of complaint, RTPSC found guilty Amjad Shahzad for obtaining bribery from applicant while on commission directives the transfer of ancestral property and copies were provided to the petitioner.

Deputy Commissioner has issued suspension order of Amjad Shahzad Patwari while Assistant Commissioner Ghazi nominated as enquiry officer in the case following RTPSC decision in this regard. The enquiry committee will submit inquiry report before deputy commissioner Haripur within seven days.

Chief Commissioner RTPSC Muhammad Salim Khan appreciated deputy commissioner Haripur for taking actions against concerned Patwari for obtaining bribery. He added that DC Haripur has set role model for other officers to ensure accountability among public servants.

Chief Commissioner RTPSC Muhammad Salim Khan claimed that the commission is committed to take legal actions against public servants as per law to ensure good governance.



PESHAWAR: Labourers repairing railway tracks at Faqirabad area during maintenance work.

# NWGH becomes first ISO 45001:2018 certified hospital

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Northwest General Hospital and Research Centre becomes the first hospital in Pakistan to get ISO 45001:2018 (OHSMS) certification due to occupational health and safety management system, policies, practices, resources, and work environment with international standards

to mitigate and eliminate health impacts and hazards from the work environment.

Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) is now recognised as the fifth pillar of human rights, said a press release issued here Wednesday adding that in June 2022, the International Labour Organization (ILO) adopted "Safe and Healthy Work Environment" as one

of its five fundamental principles and rights at work.

In order to achieve the ISO 45001:2018 standard, Northwest General Hospital and Research Centre has established the department of Occupational Health, Safety and Environment which is run by a team of competent safety and health professionals.

# Pesco notifies power suspension

PESHAWAR (APP): The Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) on Wednesday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Jamrud Grid Station on 19th, 21st, 24th, 26th, 28th and 31st January from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Kacha Ghari, Achini Mera, Hayatabad New feeders will face inconvenience.

It said that power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar University Grid Station on 19th, 21st, 24th, 26th, 28th and 31st January from 9

a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Achini and Abdara feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar Industrial Grid Station on 19th, 21st, 24th, 26th, 28th and 31st January from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV New Deh Bahadar, Old Deh Bahadar, Dora Road, Sheikhani, Sarband, Shahab Khel, Scheme Chowk, Landi Arabab, Sheikh Muhammad, Bara, Pishtakhara, Saida Abad, Nodia Payan feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will

also remain suspended from 66 KV PAF Base Grid Station on 19th, 21st, 24th, 26th, 28th and 31st January from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. due to which consumers of 11 KV Badabair Old, Hassan Khel, Badabair New, Mashogagar, Saphan, Zangal feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 66 KV Kuram Ghari Grid Station on 19th, 23rd, 26th and 28th January from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Fathima Khel 1 and 66 KV Kuram Ghari Transmission Line connected with 11 KV feeders will face inconven-

ience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Bannu -Kuram Garhi Transmission Line on 19th January from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 66 KV Kuram Garhi and Power House No 1 grid connected 11 KV feeders will face inconvenience.

Likewise, the power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Mardan 3 Grid Station on 19th January from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KVUET, Mardan, Ring Road, Muslim Abad and Shamshi Road feeders will face inconvenience.



PESHAWAR: Carpenter busy in making designs on wood at his workplace.





## In brief

### Lawyers strike continue F.P. Report

**TIMERGARA:** The three-day mourning for the killing of senior lawyer Abdul Latif Afridi continued in District Bar Timergara, on Wednesday. On the second day of funeral prayer, no lawyer appeared in the courts, due to which the foreigners faced difficulties and the foreigners who came from distant areas returned disappointed. Meanwhile, a delegation of journalists from District Press Club Timergara which included General Secretary Rehmatullah Swati, Syed Amjad Ali Shah, Hanifullah, Haroon Rasheed, and Bahramand Syed visited District Bar Timergara and senior advocate Abdul Latif Afridi. Expressed condolence to the lawyers on his death and paid tribute to the late lawyer Abdul Latif Afridi for the rule of law and the rule of law. And Alamzeb Advocate thanked the journalists of Timergara Press Club and said that lawyers and journalists are the support of the community.

### Langrove for keep traffic flow F.P. Report

**QUETTA:** Minister for Home, Tribal Affairs and PDMA, Mir Ziaullah Langrove, while directing the authorities of district administration, PDMA and traffic police to keep traffic flowing amid snow fall, has said that special arrangements be made during snowfall, according to a statement issued here on Wednesday. "Rescue 1122 and other concerned departments should serve actively, so that travellers and tourists may not confront hardships", adding that travelers and tourists be kept abreast of the situation through social media and other sources so as to avoid any untoward situations. He said that senior officers should remain in the field for supervision of all activities, adding, "In case of emergency, heavy machinery be used for clearing roads and highways".

### Coordinator visits training centers F.P. Report

**SWABI:** Divisional Coordinator Census, Saeed-ur-Rehman Wednesday visited training centre established in various areas of the district to train staff being selected to conduct first digital census. He visited nine training centers that are being set up in the district to train 825 staff members that would perform duties in first digital census. Highlighting significance of census, he said that accurate collection and compilation of data in vital to achieve objectives of census. He said that census provides a framework to initiate development work and urged workers to adopt extreme care and caution while compiling data. It is worth mentioning that 825 staff members were imparted training in nine centre of Swabi and 978 staff members in same number of centers established in Mardan for digital census.

### 3 fall prey to traffic accident

**LARKANA (PPI):** A man was killed and three others, including a woman, were injured during a smash between two vehicles on Sajawal Bypass in Larkana. As per details, two vehicles collided near Sajawal Bypass in Larkana. As a result, a man was killed and three other persons including a woman sustained injuries. The deceased person was identified as Dalip Kumar who was a resident of Usta Muhammad, Balochistan.

# Facilitation center for students to study abroad inaugurated

F.P. Report

**LOWER DIR:** Speakers at a function have said the Muslims across the globe are backward because of their distance from the modern education of science and technology due to which non-Muslims are dominating them. The Consultancy for Abroad Studies (CAS), a private institution arranged the function after inaugurating its office in Balambat here on Wednesday.

The All Lecturers Association provincial president Prof Jamshid Khan, director of the consultancy Dr Muhammad Ayaz, prominent religious scholar Dr Inayatullah Islahi, Haji Naik Dar, Dr Ibrahim Khan and others addressed the function. Students and youth from different areas of the district attended the function. The consultancy center director said the purpose of the center was to guide and facilitate the aspirant students to get admission abroad for higher education.

The speakers said the Western nations had fully benefited from modern science and technology and now they were leading the world in every field. They said the non-Muslims were using the modern technology not only for their worldly benefits but were also taking away the Muslim youth from their true religion Islam. They said the Muslim youth could only compete with the world if they got modern education and equipped themselves with technology. The speakers highlighted the importance of knowledge in the light of the Quran and Sunnah and urged the students to get more education. They said that education did not mean getting a suitable job but it aimed to create the best human being. They said that humans had been preferred in this universe because of their conscience and knowledge.

The speakers said the consultancy



center in the district would help students take admission in standard institutions abroad for getting higher education. They said that most of the students were being deceived by some vest interested elements in the garb of study abroad.

They said that proper coaching classes and language classes had also been planned at the center. They said that youth could get admission easily in various fields in China, Russia, Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan, Kirghizstan and Europe. They said the center would not only facilitate students but also motivate them to get admission abroad for their MBBS, MD, M.Phil and Ph.D courses with fully funded scholarships. They said that a students' counseling workshop in this regard would be held at the center on Jan, 29 in which the students would be informed about their documents' preparation and different kinds of foreign scholarships.

**Media role:** The Lower Dir

deputy commissioner Muhammad Zubair Khan Niazi has said that the media played an important role in development and resolution of public issues. He was talking to local journalists during his visit to the Timergara press club here on Wednesday. The DC congratulated the newly elected cabinet of the club and hoped that local journalists would assess the administration in identifying core public issues. The DC said the administration would also cooperate with the journalists' community.

He said that positive criticism was always welcomed and the local reporters should identify the public issues honestly. Appreciating the local journalists, the DC said that they had been playing an active role in development and peace. He said the journalists should highlight the projects initiated by the government in order to make people aware of its advantages.

# Students hold protest against torture on professor

F.P. Report

**MARDAN:** Students of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM) on Wednesday held protest demonstration against the physical tortures of the university professor by unknown attackers and demanded of the authorities concerned to not only trace out perpetrators of the incident but also take stern action against them.

The protesting university students blocked the Bacha Khan Square road formerly known as college chowk for several hours

with the purpose to press the government to take up the incident as serious. The protestors were condemning the incident of physical torture of AWKUM professor identified as Akhtar Khan. They were also chanting slogans like Aman Ghawaru, Aman Ghawaru (we like peace).

The Mardan city mayor Himayatullah Khan advocate also attended the students' protest demonstration. While addressing on the occasion, the city mayor strongly condemned the torture's incident of the university professor by

unknown assailants. He deplored it was very unfortunate that a university professor was unsecured in the province. He claimed that a teacher was like a father who was teaching to children of nation.

The city mayor appreciated the protesting students who had come to street against the lawlessness and cruelty. He asked the quarters concerned to take up the issue as serious, otherwise, he along with students would launch protest agitation and would keep it continue till fulfillment of their demands.

# Hygienic kits distributed in Bara

F.P. Report

**BARA:** Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) distributed hygienic kits among disabled, widows and poor segments of the tribal society in a function held here at Jansi camp, Sipah, subdivision Bara district Khyber, on Wednesday.

The welfare activity was organized by the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) merged districts chapter that was attended by forces and administration officials besides people from different walks of life. Speaking on the occasion, officials of PRCS said that decades long militancy badly affected the lives of the dwellers of Bara and efforts would be made to assist the locals to resume their routine business of life.

The officials assured that a variety of packages would be initiated to provide relief to the militancy-hit people of Bara. Head of Khedmat-e-Khalq foundation Shiekh Gul Afridi and councilors of the area thanked the Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) for granting hygienic kits to the deserving ones and said it would certainly create awareness pertaining cleanliness.

They demanded food and winter packages for the people of Bara. Prior to it, hygiene kits were distributed among the deserving people of the area.

# Non-availability of teachers lead girl's college to close

F.P. Report

**TANK:** The only government girls' degree college established for the students of Tank and its surroundings, has reached the brink of disaster. BS Urdu four-year program has been closed due to non-availability of female lecturers. The four-year BS program was changed into a two-year associate program, due to which the future of the students enrolled in BS Urdu became dark and they were forced to stay at home.

According to the rules of the higher education department, two courses cannot run simultaneously in any college, but unfortunately, this law of the higher education department is not applicable to the Government Girls Degree College tank because according to the rules, four-year BS program in any subject.

It is mandatory to appoint at least 4 regular lecturers, but in the only per mile educational institution in a backward district

like Tank, the BS Urdu program was first converted into a two-year associate degree program to be run by one lecturer due to non-availability of required lecturers. Attempts were made but the only male Urdu lecturer appointed for Associate Degree Program was also transferred from Tank to D.I. Khan and as an alternative, no female lecturer was transferred to the above mentioned college, which made the BS Urdu program.

The students who took admission were forced to sit at home. It should be added that the lecturer of the Botany BS program was replaced by DI Khan. One of the three lecturers of the English program has been replaced by D I Khan, while no female lecturer has been transferred to the college as an alternative, which has put the future of the students at stake and they are forced to think that how can they continue their educational activities in these circumstances.

The civil society will have to mobilize to save the Government Girls Degree College Tank, the only educational institution established for the students of Tank and its suburbs, from destruction because our elected MNAs, MPAs and dozens of elected chairmen and councilors have nothing to do with it, the elected national and provincial representatives have nothing to do with issues other than elections, while the elected local representatives are limited to liaising with the district administration and taking pictures, while due to regional customs.

The college students are unable to come out on the streets for their rights, due to which the college has reached the verge of destruction and sooner or later the magnificent building of the college will remain but there will be no students to study in it, so it is necessary that civil society movement should come and raised voice effectively for the rights of female students.

# Residents demand returning of ancestral land



Shafi Ullah

**MINGORA:** The residents of Totano Bandai argued competent authorities to handover their 150 Kanals ancestral land following restoration peace in the region, on Wednesday.

This was demanded by Anwar Ali, Fazal Akbar, Jamshed Mashwary and others at Swat Press Club while addressing a press conference. They added that we have already held a press conference and uses other forums to convey our message to the high ups concerned institution to retrieve our land.

After that, the local assis-

tant commissioner and deputy commissioner of Swat assured to resolve the matter within a week, but even after a month, no contact could be made. They said that Our lands have been encroached on by army camps for the past fifteen years. We live in rented houses in other villages

They said that during the insurgency in Swat, we handed over our land to the Pakistan Army where an army camp was set up. The security personnel still occupying our 150 kanal land while we are not even being allowed to go there. We also have six houses in the army camp. Only the rent of those

houses is being given to us. They said that despite owning our lands, we are living in rented houses in other villages.

The speakers said that seven tribes are affected by this army camp. We have no more patience and endurance. We cannot in any case give our lands to them now. The army camp victims demanded from the senior corps officers and senior government representatives to return our land occupied army camp and the personnel would be shifted to the cantonment, otherwise we would arrange sit-in on the streets along with our women and children.

# DPO assured people's friendly policing

F.P. Report

**LOWER CHITRAL:** District Police Officer (DPO) Lower Chitral ordered to ensure community policing for elimination of outlaw activities and sustainable peace in the area, on Wednesday.

DPO Lower Chitral issued the orders following assuming charge at the district and added that it is

directed as per the vision of Inspector General Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Regional Police Officer. DPO Lower Chitral started work on priority basis with special interest in promoting people friendly policing in the premises.

People-friendly policing trends are developing rapidly in Lower Chitral Police. There is a wave of

joy in the public sphere to see people-friendly policing flourishing in Chitral and Civil society paid tribute to DPO Lower Chitral for enhancing the public-friendliness of Lower Chitral police apart from crime prevention and security responsibilities. He has been active in presenting Lower Chitral Police as an exemplary force in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

# Social media leads to deficiency of knowledge among youth

Saqib Mushtaq

**BAHAWALPUR:** Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman while speaking at the launching ceremony of the book "22 Log" by Alumni Sajjad Parvez organized by the Islamia University of Bahawalpur at the Governor House Lahore said that there is a need to promote the culture of book reading in the society. He said that due to social media, the trend of reading books among the youth has decreased. He said that book reading should be encouraged to promote the culture of tolerance and tolerance in the society.

The Governor of Punjab said that the book "22 Log" is not only a book but the essence of the academic, intellectual, artistic and research life of 22 unemployed people. He said that this book includes detailed interviews of those personalities who have a prominent position in the field of art, education, research, journalism, literature and history.

Governor Punjab also appreciated the efforts of Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob, Vice Chancellor, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur in this

regard. Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman further said that as the chancellor, I am working to create a consortium in seven important areas by mobilizing the Vice-Chancellors of the universities of Punjab. Among them, there was a review meeting regarding the consortium established on financial discipline and governance in the universities. In which some decisions were made on how to improve the management of universities and other matters.

Speaking on this occasion, Vice Chancellor, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob said that it is a joyous occasion for me that this prestigious event is the book "22 Log" published under the efforts of Directorate of Press Media and Publications of the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. The launch ceremony is being held at the Governor's House, which is authored by Sajjad Parvez. Sajjad Parvez not only belongs to Bahawalpur region but he is also a former student of Islamia University of Bahawalpur.

The Islamia University is proud that Sajjad Parvez is the

bearer of sanctity of letter, voice and pen. His book "22 Log" is based verbatim and on interviews with leading artists of the world of art whom it is a privilege to meet, read and receive their fees. These personalities are united in their imagination, art, intelligence, thought and civilization and with their efforts, they give a new direction to the times and contribute to the process of evolution. Sajjad Parvez aired his interviews on Hawa Ka Dosh, which became part of the archive after being heard by the audience.

Vice-Chancellor said that interviewing these personalities associated with the world of literature, research, art, music, history and sound was an act of courage. But the skill with which Sajjad Parvez has presented the journey of his life in the words of these personalities is worthy of praise. He said that in this book, Sajjad Parvez has explored the lives and thoughts of famous personalities in such a way that Sajjad Parvez called me felt close to Nareesh Kumar Shad, Tahir Masood and Dr. Asif Farrakhi. The Vice-Chancellor said that his interview is also included in this book.

On this Occasion, Shahzad Ahmed Khalid, Director of Press Media and Publications said that in today's era, it is important to inform about the performance of educational institutions, no matter how famous they are. Practically, a glimpse of this awareness is possible from a newspaper headline, radio, TV channel reports and social media updates and posts. Alhamdulillah Department of Public Relations, the Islamia University of Bahawalpur is trying to convey the curricular and co-curricular activities organized in the centenary great educational institution to the public opinion in a timely manner.

Mujeeb Rehman Shami, Senior Journalist, Columnist, Anna Mufti, Screenwriter, Columnist, Novelist, Farzana Aqib, Author, Naeem Masood, Columnist, Amjad Ali Kialar, Columnist and author of the book Sajjad Pervaiz also addressed the event. On this occasion, Prof. Dr. Shazia Anjum Dean Faculty of Chemical and Biological Sciences, Prof. Dr. Jawad Hussain Dean Faculty of Management Sciences and Commerce, Prof. Dr. Aftab



Hussain Gillani, Dean Faculty of Law, Prof. Dr. Tahir Hussain Dean Faculty of Computing, Prof. Dr. Sheikh Shafiq ur Rehman Dean Faculty of Islamic Learning, Prof. Dr. Saeed Ahmed Buzdar Dean Faculty of Physical and Mathematical Sciences, Prof. Dr. Irshad Hussain Dean Faculty of Education, Prof. Dr. Mansoor Khalid Dean Faculty of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Prof. Dr. Moazzam Jameel Registrar, Prof. Dr. Abu Bakr Treasurer, Prof. Dr. Sajjad

Ahmed Paracha, Controller of Examinations, Prof. Dr. Asif Naveed Ranjha, Director Advanced Studies and Research Board, Maria Ansari, Principal University College of Art and Design, Dr. Azhar Hussain, Director of Alumni, Dr. Shanayyara, Chief Public Relations, Zahid Sulman, Additional Director, Printing Press, Fatima Junaid, Deputy Registrar Public Affairs, faculty members, professors and important personalities from various walks of life were present.





# Ukrainian civilians vanish and languish in Russian-run jails

KYIV (AP): Alina Kapatsyna often dreams about getting a phone call from her mother. In those visions, her mother tells her that she's coming home. Men in military uniforms took 45-year-old Vita Hannych away from her house in eastern Ukraine in April. She never returned. Her family later learned that Hannych, who has long suffered from seizures because of a brain cyst, is in custody in the Russian-occupied part of the Donetsk region.

Kapatsyna told The Associated Press that it remains unclear why her mother — "a peaceful, civilian and sick person" who has never held a weapon — was detained. Hannych is one of hundreds — and perhaps thousands — of Ukrainian noncombatants believed to be held by Russian forces for months following their invasion. Some are deemed to be prisoners of war, even though they never took part in the fighting. Others are in a sort of legal limbo — not facing any criminal charges or considered to be POWs. Hannych was wearing only a sweat-suit and slippers when she was seized by Russian forces occupying her village of Volodymyrivka several weeks into the Feb. 24 invasion. It is still under Moscow's control.

Her family initially thought she would come home shortly. Russian forces were known to detain people for two or three days for "filtration" and then release them, Kapatsyna said, and Hannych had no military or law enforcement connections. When she wasn't released, Kapatsyna and her 70-year-old grandmother started a search. At first, letters and visits to various Russian-installed officials and government bodies in the Donetsk region yielded no results. "The answers from everywhere were the same: 'We did not take her away.' Who took her then, if no one took

her?" said Kapatsyna, who left the village in March for the Ukrainian-controlled city of Dnipro.

Then, they finally got some clarity: Hannych was jailed in Olenivka, another Russian-controlled city, according to a letter from the Moscow-installed prosecutor's office in the Donetsk region. The jail staff told Kapatsyna's grandmother that Hannych was a sniper, allegations her family deems absurd, given her condition. Medical records seen by the AP confirmed that she had a brain cyst, as well as "residual encephalopathy" and "general convulsive attacks." Anna Vorosheva, who spent 100 days in the same facility as Hannych, recounted squalid, inhumane conditions: putrid drinking water, no heat or showers, having to sleep in shifts and hearing new prisoners screaming from being beaten.

Vorosheva, 46, said she wasn't told why she was detained, aside from "smirks and jokes about Nazis" — a reference to Russia's false claims that what it calls its "special military operation" was a campaign to "denazify" Ukraine. She also said the staff told her: "Be happy we're not beating you." Donetsk authorities labeled Hannych a POW and recently told the family she is imprisoned in the occupied city of Mariupol. It remains unclear when, if at all, she could be released. Ukraine's top human rights organization, Center for Civil Liberties, has requests concerning around 900 civilians captured by Russia since the war began, with more than half still in custody.

Dmytro Lubinets, Ukraine's human rights envoy, put the number even higher and said Friday that his office received inquiries concerning more than 20,000 "civilian hostages" detained by Russia. Russian lawyer Leonid Solovyov told the AP he has



amassed more than 100 requests concerning Ukrainian civilians. He said he was able to help 30-40 confirm the person they looked for was in Russian custody without any legal status — just like his client, Mykyta Shkriabin. The student from northeastern Ukraine's Kharkiv region was detained by Russia's military in March and has been held ever since without charges or any legal proceedings.

Shkriabin, then 19, was sheltering from the fighting in a basement with his family, according to his mother, Tetiana. During a break, he went out for supplies — and never returned. Tetiana Shkriabina told the AP that she learned from witnesses that Russian soldiers seized him. Months later, Solovyov got confirmation from Russia's Defense Ministry that Shkriabin was detained for "resisting

the special military operation." There is no such offense on the books in Russia, Solovyov said, and even if there was, Shkriabin would have been formally charged and investigated, but that hasn't happened. The ministry refused to disclose his whereabouts.

Moreover, when Solovyov filed a complaint to Russia's Investigative Committee contesting the detention, it confirmed that there are no criminal probes opened against Shkriabin, that he is neither a suspect, nor an accused. Shkriabin, who turned 20 in captivity, hasn't been labeled a POW, the lawyer said, adding: "His legal status is simply a hostage." Russia's Defense Ministry and the Interior Ministry didn't respond to requests for comment. Other cases are eerily similar to those of Shkriabin and

Hannych. In May, Russian forces detained information technology specialist Iryna Horobtsova in the southern city of Kherson when it was occupied by Moscow. They raided her apartment, seizing a laptop, two cell-phones and several flash drives, and then took her away, according to her sister, Elena Kornii. They promised her parents that she would be home that evening — but it didn't happen.

Horobtsova remained in the city and spoke out against the war on social media before she was detained, Kornii said. She had attended anti-Russia protests and also helped residents by driving them to work or finding scarce medications. "She hasn't violated any Ukrainian laws," Kornii said, noting that her sister had nothing to do with the military. Horobtsova's lawyer, Emil Kurbedinov, said he believed that Russian security forces were carrying out "purges of the disloyal" in Kherson. He learned from Russia's Federal Security Service, or FSB, that she was still in custody. The Interior Ministry in Moscow-annexed Crimea told him that Horobtsova was in a detention center there. When Kurbedinov tried to visit her, officials refused to acknowledge having any such prisoner.

As for why she was held, the lawyer said authorities told him that "she resisted the special military operation, and a decision regarding her will be made when the special military operation is over." He described her as "unlawfully imprisoned." Dmytro Orlov, mayor of the occupied city of Enerhodar in the Zaporizhzhia region, describes the fate of his deputy the same way — "an absolutely arbitrary detention."

Ivan Samoydyuk was picked up by Russian soldiers shortly after they seized the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant in March, and no charges

have been filed against him, Orlov said. "We're not even sure if he's alive!" the mayor said. "If we can't get clarity from the Russians about the fate of a deputy mayor, imagine the fate of ordinary Ukrainian civilians." Mykhailo Savva of the Expert Council of the Center for Civil Liberties said the Geneva Conventions allow a state to detain civilians temporarily in occupied areas, but "as soon as the reason that caused the detention of this civilian disappears, then this person must be released."

"No special conditions, no trades, just release," Savva said, noting that civilians can't be declared POWs under international law. International law prohibits a warring party from forcibly moving a civilian to its own territory or territory it occupies, and doing so could be deemed a war crime, said Yulia Gorbunova, a senior researcher with Human Rights Watch. POWs can be exchanged, but there is no legal mechanism for swapping noncombatants, Gorbunova said, complicating efforts to free civilians from captivity. Since the war began, however, Kyiv has been able to bring some home. Andriy Yermak, the head of Ukraine's presidential office, said on Jan. 8 that 132 civilians were brought back from Russian captivity in 2022.

Lubinets, the Ukrainian human rights ombudsman, met this month with his Russian counterpart, Tatyana Mosalkova. He said he gave Mosalkova lists of some of the 20,000 Ukrainian civilians he said were held by Russia, and "the Russian side agreed to find out where they are, in what condition and why they are being held." After getting such information, the question "of the procedure for their return" will be raised, Lubinets said.

## Jordan protests to Israel after envoy blocked from holy site

JERUSALEM (AP): Jordan summoned the Israeli ambassador to Amman to protest a move by Israeli police to block the Jordanian envoy from entering a volatile holy site in Jerusalem. The incident quickly escalated tensions between the neighbors and reflected the heightened sensitivity around the sacred compound under Israel's new ultranationalist government.

Jordan's Foreign Ministry said its ambassador to Israel, Ghassan Majali, was blocked from entering the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in Jerusalem's Old City, the third-holiest site in Islam. The site, sitting on a sprawling plateau also home to the iconic golden Dome of the Rock, is revered by Muslims as the Noble Sanctuary and by Jews as the Temple Mount. The compound is administered by Jordanian religious authorities as part of an unofficial agreement after Israel won control of east Jerusalem in the 1967 Mideast war. Israel is in charge of security at the site.

The Israeli police said that Majali arrived at the holy site "without any prior

coordination with police officials," prompting an officer at the compound entrance who didn't recognize the diplomat to notify his commander about the unexpected visit. While awaiting instructions, officers held up Majali, along with Azzam al-Khatib, the director of the Jerusalem Waqf. The ambassador refused to wait and decided to leave, Israeli police said. Some two hours later, Jordanian state-run media reported that Majali finally entered the compound without showing any kind of permission and held talks with al-Khatib, who "briefed him about the Israeli violations in Al-Aqsa."

Footage widely shared online shows Majali, among other Muslim worshippers, at the limestone Lion's Gate entrance to the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound in the Old City. An Israeli police officer blocks his path and yells at Majali in Arabic to go back, according to the video. Al-Khatib gets on the phone as the visitors argue with the officers amid the crackle of the policeman's walkie-talkie. "Had the ambassador briefly waited a few more minutes for the offi-

cer to be updated, the group would have entered," the police said, stressing that "coordination" with Israeli police was routine ahead of such visits. But Jordan described the move as an unusual provocation. The Jordanian Foreign Ministry said the Israeli ambassador had received a "strongly worded letter of protest to be conveyed immediately to his government." It said Jordanian officials do not need permission to enter the site because of the country's role as the official custodian and cautioned Israel against taking "any actions that would prejudice the sanctity of the holy places."

There was no immediate comment from the Israeli Foreign Ministry. Jordan has summoned the Israeli ambassador to Amman since Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's new right-wing and religiously conservative government took power. Earlier this month, Israel's minister of national security, the ultranationalist Itamar Ben-Gvir, visited the Jerusalem holy site despite threats from the Hamas militant group and a cascade of condemnations from across the Arab world.

Jordan, along with the Palestinians and many Muslims, views Israeli visits to the compound as an attempt to alter the status of the site and give Jewish worshippers more rights there. Ben-Gvir and other far-right ministers who vow a hard-line stance against the Palestinians have threatened to test Israel's ties with Arab states — including Jordan and Egypt that have maintained decades-long peace treaties with Israel. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi hosted Jordanian and Palestinian leaders for talks on the state of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. In a joint statement, el-Sissi, King Abdullah II of Jordan and Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas called for Israel to halt "all illegitimate, unilateral measures" that undermine the creation of an independent Palestinian state and to maintain the status quo at the Noble Sanctuary.

The smallest change at the Al-Aqsa Mosque compound one of the region's most contested sites could become a major new flashpoint between Israel and the Muslim world. Past Israeli actions there have triggered violent protests and wider conflicts.

## China's pessimistic Gen Z poses challenge for Xi post-Covid

SHANGHAI (Reuters): The first weekend after COVID-19 restrictions ended last month, dozens of young Chinese jostled in the dark at a heavy-metal concert in a tiny Shanghai music venue that reeked of sweat and hard liquor. It was the kind of freedom young Chinese had demanded in late November in protests against the zero-COVID policy that became the biggest outpouring of public anger in mainland China since President Xi Jinping took power a decade ago.

After three years of lockdowns, testing, economic hardship and isolation, many of China's Generation Z — the 280 million born between 1995 and 2010 — had found a new political voice, repudiating their stereotypes as either nationalist keyboard warriors or apolitical loafers. Pacifying a generation faced with near-record youth unemployment and some of the slowest economic growth in nearly half a century presents a policy-making challenge for Xi, who is just beginning a precedent-breaking third term. Improving young people's livelihoods without abandoning the country's export-led growth model poses inherent conflicts for a government that prioritises social stability.

This generation is the most pessimistic of all age groups in China, surveys show. While the protests succeeded in hastening the end of COVID curbs, the hurdles Chinese youth face in achieving better living standards will be harder to overcome, some analysts say. "As the road ahead for the youth gets narrower and tougher, their hopes for the future evaporate," said Wu Qiang, a former politics lecturer at Tsinghua University who is now an independent commentator in Beijing. Young people no longer had "blind confidence and adulation" towards China's leaders, he added.

Some Chinese youth who spoke to Reuters reflected the sense of frustration. "If they didn't change the policy, then more people would protest, so they had to change," said 26-year-old Alex, who declined to give her last name for fear of retribution from the authorities, in an interview before the Shanghai concert. "But I don't think young people will go back to thinking that nothing bad ever happens in China."

Young people, especially in cities, are often at the forefront of protests globally; students led China's biggest pro-democracy uprising in 1989, which Beijing crushed in a military crackdown.

## M23 rebels have not withdrawn as agreed

DAKAR (Reuters): Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi said the M23 rebel group had not fully withdrawn from areas it seized in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, accusing the militia of faking an agreed pull-back of its forces. Regional leaders brokered an agreement in November under which the Tutsi-led group was meant to withdraw from recently seized positions by Jan. 15 as part of efforts to end a conflict that has displaced at least 450,000 people and sparked a diplomatic crisis between Congo and neighbouring Rwanda.

"Despite the international pressure, the group is still there," Tshisekedi said

during a panel session at the World Economic Forum in Davos, Switzerland. "They pretend to move, they act like they are moving, but they're not. They're simply moving around, redeploying elsewhere, and they stay in the towns that they have captured," he said. His comments were the most outspoken from the Congolese authorities so far on how they view the implementation of the peace deal.

"President Tshisekedi has only this to say. It is the government that does not respect the ceasefire, it also continues to arm armed groups," said Lawrence Kanyaka, a spokesman for the M23. Earlier in January, an internal United Nations

intelligence report said it was not possible to confirm the M23's purported withdrawal from some areas due to continued signs of troop movement, and its analysis indicated the group had seized new territory elsewhere.

Tshisekedi again accused Rwanda of fuelling the conflict by supporting the rebels - an accusation levelled also by Western powers and UN experts. Rwanda firmly denies this. Several civil society organizations have called for a demonstration on Wednesday in the provincial capital, Goma, to protest delays implementing the M23 withdrawal, although the city authorities have not authorized the march.

## Million-dollar views still come with mudslide risks

MONTECITO (Agencies) Roads flooded, trees toppled, creeks raged and residents braced for the deadly catastrophe they knew could come. It was Jan. 9, five years to the day after a torrent of mud, giant boulders and debris had crashed into Montecito, their coastal town near Santa Barbara, California. Back then, hundreds of homes were damaged or destroyed, and cars were crumpled like paper. Twenty-three people died.

This time, instead of attending a memorial on the anniversary, residents faced cascading rain that threatened to roil the earth once again. They found themselves fleeing under evacuation orders, with the trauma of the past on their heels. When they were allowed to return the next day, it was with relief that no funerals needed to be planned.

Montecito can feel like a secret to those who discover it. Tucked into a steep slope, it offers grand views of sherbet-colored sunsets and a glittering sea. The serenity of the foothills provides refuge to a number of celebrities, including Oprah Winfrey, a longtime resident, and the more recent arrivals Prince Harry and his wife, Meghan. The allure of Montecito, as with many places in California, has proved to also

be its Achilles' heel where natural beauty means living on the edge of possible disaster. In December 2017, when the area was parched with drought, the immense Thomas wildfire marched through, its flames ravaging the vegetation and leaving large burn scars on the land. The following month, storms arrived, and the mountainsides came barreling down.

Residents of Montecito say they are more conscious of safety precautions now stocking their homes with solar-powered radios, flashlights, a generator, cots to host people and that they have a new awareness about storm drainage. But they refuse to live solely under the specter of natural disasters. It helps that recent additions to the area's infrastructure proved successful last week. "I don't think anyone here was living in fear it could happen any day again it wasn't like that," said Lizzy Fallows. "It was like a one-off thing, which is why people were spooked."

Three extraordinary weeks of atmospheric rivers have unleashed flooding, mudslides, power outages and fallen trees across California. After enjoying a reprieve, the state is expecting one more dose of rain on Wednesday, followed by a dry spell that could stretch

well into next week. Fallows, 40, grew up in Montecito and, after living for a time in San Francisco, Australia and Tanzania, fulfilled a dream when she returned four years ago with her family.

Two days after the recent evacuations, Fallows drove around the area in her Tesla, showing her three daughters the Randall Road debris basin, an \$18 million project completed last fall that filled up with flood-borne branches, rocks and debris while the water rushed from San Ysidro Creek to the ocean. "I wanted to show them how the debris basin had done its job," she said. "Not to scare them, but to show how nature is beautiful and powerful and meant to be respected. And we can coexist if we pay attention."

Nearby, Aaron Briner, Montecito's fire marshal, surveyed the creek and the Randall Road basin, which sits on land where several homes were destroyed in 2018. "It's a very odd feeling," Briner said. "Just like there's a scar there, there's a scar, I think, within each one of us." Kim Cantin says she will never shake the memory of the moment a slurry of earth, water and debris barreled into her family's cottage and swept her away.

## Japan to roll out plans to back Ukraine at 'appropriate time'

WASHINGTON (Reuters): Japan is engaged deeply on issues in Ukraine and is expected to roll out plans at the "appropriate time" to support Kyiv against Russia's invasion, White House Indo-Pacific coordinator Kurt Campbell said. "Prime Minister Kishida has a game plan and is already engaged deeply on issues in Ukraine," Campbell told a Center for Strategic and International Studies event.

US President Joe Biden and Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida met last week when Kishida was in Washington on the last stop in a tour of the G7 industrial powers. "I fully expect that at appropriate

time Japan will be rolling out specific plans to support Ukraine in a variety of ways. They are active in many of the contact group discussions about support for Ukraine and they are just a key member," Campbell said, adding that Japan was "stepping up".

Kishida last week stressed the importance of standing up to Russia's invasion, saying that if a unilateral change to the status quo went unchallenged, the same would happen elsewhere, including in Asia - an apparent reference to China's vow to reunite with self-ruled Taiwan, by force if necessary.

## Arizona dad seeking answers after son dies in state care

FLAGSTAFF, Ariz. (AP): Richard Blodgett, a single father, was jailed on a drug charge when a worker from Arizona's child welfare agency delivered the news: His son was brain dead and on life support just days after being taken into state custody. Blodgett screamed, cried and screamed some more. Jakob was his only son, a "damn cute," curious 9-year-old who loved remote control cars and video games.

Blodgett is now struggling to understand how it happened. A medical examiner listed Jakob's death in late December as natural with complications from diabetes, a condition he was diagnosed with as a toddler. Specifically, Type 1 diabetes, which means his body was unable to produce enough insulin to survive. Blodgett said he suspects the Arizona Department of Child Safety failed in its duty to protect his son, either by not monitoring his blood sugar levels or not ensuring that Jakob had enough insulin to prevent a serious, life-threatening complication known as ketoacidosis.

"They couldn't keep him alive for two weeks, two weeks," the father told The Associated Press while on a recent furlough from jail. "That's absolutely insane. That was my pride and joy. I'm lost. I'm completely lost. My family is completely lost." The Maricopa County Sheriff's Office is investigat-

ing Jakob's death. The office declined a request for an interview with Sheriff Paul Penzone, citing the ongoing investigation.

The Department of Child Safety also declined to comment specifically on the case, citing confidentiality laws. But spokesperson Darren DaRonco said, in general, that foster parents are required to receive training from a medical provider before taking in a child with any medical condition. DaRonco did not respond to further inquiries, including whether Jakob's insulin pump was removed and if the boy's regular doctor was consulted about his care questions raised by Blodgett and his mother, Cheryl Doenges. They said Jakob could not manage the insulin on his own.

In the fiscal year that ended last June, about 26 children died while in the agency's custody, including from overdoses, medical conditions, natural and still undetermined causes. In the previous fiscal year, that number was 14. The figures amount to a fatality rate of about 97 per 100,000 children during that period, the most recent for which data is available. That rate is higher than overall deaths of children in Arizona. Nationally, about 55 children died per 100,000 children in the general population of all causes in 2020 similar to Arizona's number.

Karin Kline, director of

child welfare initiatives at the Family Involvement Center in Phoenix, said the death of a child is a concern, especially if it happens under the custody of the state. "Rest assured, somebody is going to look into it if there's an inkling that the death was a result of negligence or abuse," she said.

Jakob and his father had been living at a motel when Blodgett was arrested in December. Blodgett, who already had a drug case pending and has spent time in prison, said was operating a backhoe much of the day and pulled over at a gas station to take a nap. The report from the Show Low Police Department corroborated as much, but officers wrote that they suspected Blodgett nodded off as a result of drug use. Authorities ultimately found more than 4,000 fentanyl pills in Blodgett's possession, according to the report. Blodgett was booked into jail in Holbrook and charged with one count of drug possession, Navajo County Superior Court documents show.

Blodgett told the AP he had been using fentanyl for pain management after he dropped 300 pounds with weight loss surgery. "I wasn't getting high. I wasn't abusing them. I was using them to be able to work and provide for my son," Blodgett said. "Unfortunately, they are illegal. I can't get around that.

But they were stronger than my meds, and they were working."

Jakob was alone in the motel room when an officer picked him up and alerted the Department of Child Safety, according to the police report. Blodgett said someone at the motel always checked on his son, whom he called as police confronted him. He told Jakob he got into trouble, and the boy asked if his father was going to be OK. Blodgett said. The two often traveled together in vast expanses of Arizona — taking selfies, stopping at gas stations to get snacks and playing with Nerf guns.

"The last time I got to see my son, he was already dead," Blodgett said. Doenges couldn't make the trip to see Jakob at the hospital from Washington state where she lives because of bad weather. But she asked a friend in Arizona to sit with Jakob, pray with him and play music for him so he wasn't alone even if he didn't know she was there. Furloughed from jail, Blodgett arranged for a ride to Phoenix, more than three hours away, to see his son unresponsive in a hospital bed. Hospital staff had placed a teddy bear next to the boy and a heart-shaped pendant Blodgett kept one half and the other half will be cremated with Jakob, Doenges said. Blodgett took pictures, hugged and kissed his son and talked to him.



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## Ukraine war and West's dilemma

**ACCORDING to the media, German Chancellor Olaf Scholz is under immense pressure from the European allies to approve an increase in international military support for Kyiv by allowing the export of Leopard 2 battle tanks to Ukraine. Whereas, the German Chancellor is a bit hesitant that such action might trigger a wider conflict that engulfs Berlin and become disastrous eventually.**

Russia-Ukraine Conflict has entered its second calendar year by marking 330 days with no sign of any pause and compromise as hostility is fueling relentlessly, while no direct or indirect diplomacy exists between the parties so far. The combatant militaries are using lethal arms and ammunition coupled with highly destructive war maneuvers that are causing irreparable losses to both nations. Over the past weeks, the Russian military faced multiple strategic setbacks, and Kyiv lost the important town of Suedar to Russians while a fierce battle is ongoing to gain control over strategically important city of Bukhmut. Recently, Russia has deployed a large number of its troops and heavy military equipment in Belarus, apparently to conduct a joint military drill on the Ukrainian border which prompted immense fear in western nations that Russia might launch another offensive against Kyiv from Belarusian border and Ukraineian security forces might not be able to sustain that attack. Western Strategists have suggested the provision of heavy military equipment including tanks and airplances to strengthen Kyiv's defense. Recently, UK's Rishi Sunak has announced sending a squadron of Challenger tanks to Ukraine while NATO nations are stressing the German government to scale up its military assistance to Ukraine by providing its most advanced Leopard 2 all-weather multi-terrain main battle Warmachine but so far Scholz government is reluctant to the proposal due the fear that the rivalry might not drag west into the war and a wider conflict kicks off between NATO and Russia. Meanwhile, the European Union has released Euro 3 billion in emergency aid to Kyiv to support the country's financial stability and help manage its public sector expenditures amid freezing winter in Eastern Europe.

Presently, a largescale Russian offensive against Ukraine is expected in the Spring which might come from the Belarus-Ukraine border, from Donbas Oblast, and South Western Kherson region as nearly three hundred thousand Russian troops had been trained for the proposed operation, which is likely to be unleashed in the coming months. Along similar lines, the Ukrainian military is also preparing to take back its lost territories and NATO allies are providing economic and military support to Kyiv to garner a collective victory through joint efforts. Western allies intend to launch a decisive campaign against Putin's regime by providing modern tanks, airplanes, and long-range missiles but at the same time west desires to keep itself at arm's distance from the war blazes to keep its industrial wheel running and the economy booming.

A stage is set and game planners have gathered fuel and fizz to wage a deadly war. Some use mercenaries others use hired guns but Ukrainians will pay the price in their blood. Prospects of peace are very bleak as no aggressor is ready to alter his course thus world should be ready to experience annihilation and affliction at least in the current year.

## Battle agaist polio infection

**A 5-day anti-polio campaign has been started across the country. Pakistan is one of the few countries in the world where polio is still attacking infants despite the continuous and rigorous efforts of the government and its global partners. Although the nation succeeded in reducing the number of polio cases from 20,000 to a few dozen annually, still infections are recurrently occurring in various parts of the country and it has a long way to completely eradicate the disease from our soil.**

Presently, Pakistan's failure to control this epidemic has become a stigma for the entire nation, however, the Pakistani government, and its global partners including UNICEF, the Rotary Club, Bill, and Malinda Gate Foundation, and other charitable organizations are hopeful to achieve their target through concerted efforts, public awareness, and imposition of regressive anti-polio measures across the nation.

In fact, the Immunization of children is a national and parental duty and every citizen must play his role in the accomplishment of this collective task, so Pakistan can proudly join the club of polio-free nations as early as possible.



# Eurasian country's increasingly warm ties with Moscow

**TURKISH Foreign Minister Mevlut Cav-usoglu is set to meet his U.S. counterpart Antony Blinken in Washin-gton this week. There are scant expectations among observers that the visit will resolve any of the outstanding issues in what has been an increasingly troubled bilateral relationship, with the Biden administration keeping its distance from Ankara over allegations of human rights abuses and the Eurasian country's increasingly warm ties with Moscow.**

Turkey has reaffirmed its uncompromising stance on the fraught NATO bids of Sweden and Finland, setting the stage for a showdown with serious long-term implications for both Ankara and the alliance.

Ibrahim Kalin, a spokesman for Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, said on Saturday that Ankara is “not in a position” to approve Sweden's NATO bid until all of Turkey's concerns have been addressed. “We have a time issue if they want to join NATO before the NATO summit in June,” he added, noting that Sweden's judicial system must change its legal definition of terrorism for Turkey to lift its opposition to Stockholm's accession, which requires the unanimous approval of all member states.

Stockholm and Helsinki simultaneously submitted applications to join the

alliance in May 2022, citing the new security realities brought on by Russia's February 24 invasion of Ukraine. Their accession process, which NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg assured last summer will be the fastest in the alliance's history, has been delayed indefinitely amid unresolved Turkish objections.

Ankara officials said the two Nordic countries have continued to shelter Kurdish militants, with President Erdogan insisting their accession bids cannot move forward until they agree to extradite persons sought by Turkish authorities on terrorism charges. Yet Swedish and Finnish courts have denied several extradition requests, including one reportedly pertaining to exiled dissident journalist Bulent Kenes. Cavusoglu decried the rejection as a “very negative” development, insisting that the two Nordic countries have not taken sufficient steps to satisfy Turkey's strict conditions for clearing its objection to their accession. “We no longer want to hear good words from Sweden and Finland, we want to see concrete steps,” Cavusoglu said.

Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson said early in the new year that his country has done all it could to address Ankara's concerns even as Turkish officials continue to insist Stockholm has not done nearly enough. Tensions over Sweden's NATO bid

reached a fevered pitch after footage emerged last week of an Erdogan effigy hanging from a lamppost in Stockholm, prompting a furious response from Turkish officials. “Unless the activities of terrorist organizations are halted, it is not possible for the NATO membership process to progress,” said Kalin, according to Al Jazeera.

The Nordic applicants appear no closer to sealing an accession deal with Turkey today than they were over half a year ago when talks began. Turkish experts contend Ankara is unlikely to drop its opposition to NATO enlargement until after the June election cycle in Turkey, with Erdogan facing a stiff re-election challenge against a six-party opposition coalition. Others have suggested Turkey's extradition demands from the two applicants are a facade for larger concessions it is seeking to extract from the United States — namely, a \$20 billion sale of F-16 fighter jets. Though the Biden administration has signaled it intends to greenlight the deal, at least one top senate Democrat — Bob Menendez, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee — has already vowed to block it.

It is generally consistent with Erdogan's modus operandi to levy ambitious demands vis-a-vis his interlocutors only to settle for a more modest set of concessions when all is said and

Mark Episkopos

done. Yet there is also a clear precedent for the Turkish leader doubling down in response to international pressure. Erdogan proceeded in 2018 with plans to purchase the Russian S-400 missile system despite U.S. warnings that there will be significant consequences and refused to reverse his decision even in the face of CAATSA sanctions and Turkey's costly removal from the F-35 partner program.

The current impasse over NATO enlargement could play out in several ways over the coming months. Anxious to bring the matter to a close, Washington and its allies may become progressively more heavy-handed in pressuring Ankara to back down through public and private channels. Erdogan, who is well-known for his eristic tendencies even in dealing with leaders of allied nations, may very well respond by lashing out in unpredictable ways.

Though it remains unlikely that a confrontation along these lines would lead to Turkey leaving or being expelled from NATO, it would shake the unity of the alliance at a dangerous moment for European security. Further still, an aggrieved Erdogan bent on undermining the organization from within could prove just as corrosive to NATO in the long run as a formal divorce between Turkey and the alliance.

Then there is the not-

insignificant possibility — one that appears to have grown more likely in recent weeks and months — that Turkey could end up torpedoing the NATO bids of Finland and Sweden altogether, leaving the applicants and the alliance in uncharted waters. But regardless of how the accession drama plays out, the standoff has exposed what has become a foundational challenge for NATO in the post-Cold War world: the principle of limitless horizontal expansion has heightened the risk of internal contradictions among NATO's increasingly diverse membership, making it more difficult over time to distill common geopolitical goals and to maintain the credibility of the Article V commitment that is at the heart of the alliance.

This dynamic poses a serious and growing liability for an organization that must make every major decision on a consensus basis. Turkey's actions in holding up NATO enlargement come as part of Erdogan's larger effort to chart what he sees as an independent foreign policy course between Russia and the West. Ankara rejected the maximum pressure strategy against the Kremlin adopted by NATO's leadership and most member states in response to Russia's invasion, instead positioning itself as a neutral broker between Moscow and Kyiv. Ankara's neutrality has yielded some success in the

form of the Black Sea Grain Initiative, the only significant international treaty involving both Russia and Ukraine since the war's outbreak. Erdogan has been able to carve out this niche in a unique wartime context: none of the major Western powers have been willing to engage Russia in direct talks, giving outside players opportunities to fill the void.

The conflict poses something of a paradox for Ankara. Erdogan is committed to facilitating a negotiated end to the war and came much closer than anyone else to doing so, according to reports from the failed Antalya summit in March. Yet it is precisely the war that has empowered Turkey with a degree of international clout that would otherwise have been unattainable. It remains to be seen to what extent Erdogan's successor — regardless of whether they enter office as a result of this year's election or at a later point — will seek to carry on his ambitious vision, nor is it clear how exactly the inevitable transition to a post-Ukraine War landscape will alter the strategic imperatives confronting Turkey.

The war has been a catalyst for geopolitical change, prompting both NATO and Turkey to pursue policies unthinkable in peacetime. The story of these transformations, closely tied as they are to the war's course and its eventual outcome, is still being written.

## Why did Germany fire the Minister of Defense?

Mikhail Katkov

**IN Germany, one of the most scandalous members of the government, the head of the Ministry of Defense, Christina Lambrecht, was dismissed. She left a few days before Berlin decided to send tanks to the Kyiv regime. What will change in German politics now - in the material of RIA Novosti.**

Salute instead of tanks

Lambrecht is the creation of Olaf Scholz. However, she was constantly criticized for insufficient assistance to Ukraine. Very unsuccessfully, she made a New Year's greeting. Against the backdrop of fireworks, she said that there was a war going on in the center of Europe, but thanks to this, she managed to meet many interesting people.

Lambrecht herself resigned. According to her, the media discussed her too often - and this prevented her from working normally.

Der Spiegel magazine noted that everyone in the Bundeswehr exhaled joyfully: "Finally!" According

to a January poll by the German Institute for the Study of Public Opinion (INSA), 64 percent of Germans wanted Lambrecht fired. Only nine percent rated her positively.

Lambrecht previously headed the Ministry of Justice and Consumer Protection, as well as the Department of Family Affairs. Moreover, she was going to leave politics, but the SPD was asked to help staff the cabinet of ministers.

Scholz assured that a replacement would be picked up quickly. Bild noticed: on the day of Lambrecht's resignation, the chancellor was photographed at the brewery with a full mug. "The motto is: beer instead of the Bundeswehr," the journalists sneered. Judging by the German media, this is how Lambrecht's activities in the Ministry of Defense can be characterized.

Not everything goes according to plan

The Bundeswehr lacks personnel, uniforms, equipment, spare parts, weapons,

ammunition, according to the media. And even what is, is often either broken or outdated. A year ago, the Scholz government allocated 100 billion euros for military needs, but the problems have not been solved.

"After World War II, Germany turned into a geopolitical dwarf. The Germans are not used to paying for defense. They refused to serve in the army on conscription, and in the 2010s they liquidated many military bases," explains Alexei Kuznetsov, director of INION RAS.

Lambrecht personified all this. She immediately admitted that she did not understand military ranks, but did not worry about this, since she could always turn to a subordinate "master" or "mistress." A couple of weeks after taking office, she took a vacation and went to a ski resort.

Lambrecht, of course, showed solidarity with Ukraine in every possible way. Sent APU five thou-

sand helmets. However, this was not appreciated either in Kyiv or in other NATO countries, which were already supplying the Kyiv regime with arms and ammunition with might and main.

In May 2022, Lambrecht, together with her minor son, visited a military base by helicopter, and then went to rest on the island of Sylt on it. Formally, nothing illegal, but the public was outraged.

"She should not have been appointed Minister of Defense. Lambrecht had neither the necessary experience, nor interest in the Bundeswehr, and, therefore, the ability to empathize with the fate of the 183 thousand soldiers entrusted to her," the publication Redaktionsnetzwerk Deutschland points out.

New times

According to Der Spiegel, Lambrecht will be replaced by 62-year-old Boris Pistorius, also from

the SPD. In 2019, he competed with Scholz for leadership in the party, lost, but maintained friendly relations with him. From 2006 to 2013 he was the mayor of Osnabrück, then he headed the Ministry of the Interior and Sports of the federal state of Lower Saxony. One of the most popular members of the regional government.

Berlin should officially allow third countries to supply Ukraine with German Leopard 2 tanks by the end of the week, media reported. It is expected that this will happen on January 20 at the Ramstein base - during a meeting of Kyiv's Western allies. Polish President Andrzej Duda has already promised Zelensky a Leopard company. The readiness to follow the example of Warsaw was expressed by the authorities of Finland and Denmark.

The head of the Center for German Studies at the Institute of Europe, Vladislav Belov, considers the resignation of the German Defense Minister a

symbolic milestone on the Bundeswehr's path to a big war. Even if Berlin, having allowed German tanks to be sent to Kyiv to third countries, itself remains on the sidelines, this will only be a formality that will be easily overcome over time.

"Hawks" will squeeze Scholz and the new Minister of Defense. Leopard tanks will take the fighting to a different quality. Now Berlin has few such vehicles and ammunition for them, because until 2022 they were guided by the actions of small mobile units abroad, for example, in Afghanistan and Mali. But now we are talking about the full-fledged rearmament of the Bundeswehr and the reform of army management," the expert believes.

In 2023, deliveries to the Kyiv regime will most likely be limited to a few dozen cars. With an increase in funding for the German military-industrial complex, there will be much more of them. Germany has everything you need for mass production.

## Serbia will remain reluctant to take any anti-Russian steps

Maxim Samorukov & Vuk Vuksanovic

pointment with the costs of the country's transition to democracy and a market economy also reinforces pro-Russian narratives, as that transition is associated with the West.

This leads to stunning distortions in the global outlook of many Serbs. The BCSP poll revealed that 51 percent of Serbs believed Russia to be Serbia's most important international partner, while 66 percent called Russia the country's "greatest friend."

Russia is also widely seen as a selfless ally, with only 28 percent stating that Moscow is looking after its own interests, and not just Serbia's: half of that same indicator in the EU (56 percent). Russia's allure for Serbs is so pronounced that 45 percent irrationally believe that it will be the dominant power in the twenty-first century, as opposed to 23 percent who think it will be China, and 18 percent who opted for the United States.

Another boon to Russian soft power in Serbia is the unsettled Kosovo dispute. As long as the issue aggravates the public, Serbian politicians feel compelled to oppose Kosovo's independence, which entails the need for Russian diplomatic protection.

The survey showed that

45 percent of Serbs prioritize Kosovo in foreign policy, perceiving it as "very important," while 52 percent believe that Serbia should not recognize Kosovo's independence. Russia is eager to take advantage of that, regularly reiterating its readiness to offer Serbia guarantees that Kosovo will never gain full international recognition.

None of this, however, would work so efficiently if not for the assistance of local elites. Russia's direct presence in the Serbian media landscape is limited to the web portal Sputnik Srbija and the recently established Serbian edition of the virulently pro-Kremlin RT news site. The audience of these two media outlets is far from large, since most of the Serbian public consumes pro-Russian narratives furnished by Serbian domestic media, in particular pro-government tabloids.

This way, the Serbian ruling coalition profits from the pro-Russian sentiment presented mainly among its own voter base. Our research shows that whether Serbs are pro-Western or pro-Russian tends to depend on which TV channel they watch, with pro-government media boosting pro-Russian sentiment.

Capitalizing on pro-Russian sentiment at home, Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic also uses Moscow as a convenient scarecrow in his dealings with the West. The narrative about the Russian threat and radical pro-Russian Serbs striving for power helps him to deflect Western criticism for democratic backsliding in Serbia.

This double convenience comes at a cost, however, and significantly constrains Vucic's regime in policy choices, especially on Kosovo.

Russia's popularity makes it extremely difficult for any Serbian government to make concessions on Kosovan independence, as appearing a less ardent supporter of Serbia's territorial integrity than the Kremlin runs the risk of a domestic backlash.

Reliance on Russia's popularity at home became an even greater liability after Moscow invaded Ukraine in February 2022. The Serbian leadership has found itself between a rock and a hard place, as it now faces growing Western pressure to join anti-Russian sanctions, but fears doing so because it is sure to undermine its domestic support.

According to the BCSP survey, most Serbs oppose introducing sanctions

against Russia. Among them, 44 percent said they were against sanctions because Serbia experienced them in the 1990s; 24 percent because they consider Russia to be Serbia's greatest friend; and 12 percent because of Serbia's interests in Kosovo. The comparisons with Serbian history are further proof that the real root of Russia's allure lies in Serbia's own historical experience.

Still, Russia's popularity in Serbia has its limits, and does not enable the Kremlin to simply manipulate the country's policy decisions as it sees fit. To sustain its appeal, Moscow depends on the local pro-government propaganda machine, which is run by local elites and shapes the narrative according to their interests.

The BCSP survey shows that 46 percent of polled Serbs believe that Serbia should stay neutral in the Russia-Ukraine war, confirming that a balancing act appears to be the least costly strategy for the Serbian government.

Strong sympathy toward Russia notwithstanding, the Serbian public still believes that their country should steer clear of major international conflicts. But since it is vulnerable to pressure from Moscow, Serbia will remain reluctant to take any anti-Russian steps.



# Forum in Davos goes to the dustbin of history

**S**OMETHING mysterious is happening at the World Economic Forum (WEF), which is working this week in Davos, Switzerland. The word "failure" does not sound yet, but the Western media are already writing about "deep problems" openly and massively.

This is all the more interesting, given the announcements of the event, which were inspiring and bravura. A record number of more than 2,700 participants planned to attend the forum, including more than 50 heads of state and gov-

years. The infamous billionaire and one of the symbols of multinational business referred to the "insurmountable conflict of schedules" and promised to speak at the Munich Security Conference in a month.

Then it turned out that of the G7 heads of state, only the German chancellor would come to Switzerland. And on Sunday, due to the ongoing energy crisis in the country, the president of South Africa, by the way, the largest economy in Africa, canceled a trip to the WEF. Well, already on

Irina Alksnis

Davos this year - as many as 116 billionaires registered to participate in the forum, which is 40 percent more than ten years ago. Bloomberg lamented that their number would have been even greater, but falling markets have turned many billionaires into millionaires.

Experts frankly point out that this concentration of business only highlights the apparent decline in relevance that the WEF is experiencing, which reflects the deglobalization that is sweeping the world.

most important areas of decision-making were to be transferred to the supranational level, which would mean the elimination of national sovereignty as such. At the same time, the main beneficiary of the new system would be transnational, global capital, which would rule the planet and local authorities with the help of a vast conglomerate of various structures - from the WTO to the WHO, from the EU to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP).

And in general, the process even went in this direction. Globalists with their concepts of transhu-

manism, birth control, paid access to fresh water and other equally "attractive" ideas have managed to turn into one of the most frightening horror stories for humanity. And the growing political weight of events like the WEF, which brought together the world's most powerful people, only fueled public fears.

And now all this reputation that has been built up over decades is now blown away like a balloon simply because the leaders of the leading powers did not come to Davos. In the period of the unipolar world, it

was indeed easier for transnational capital to claim the desired status of global power: it was possible to negotiate with some of the national elites, to convince others, to buy some. However, now that the system is disintegrating, the reality is simultaneously revealed, demonstrating who actually decides the fate of specific countries and the entire planet, and whose place is in backup dances.

In this sense, Soros' cancellation of the traditional trip to the forum is extremely revealing. The inveterate businessman

**D**ESPITE some obvious differences, Brazil and the United States have a lot in common. They are both nations for-ged from European colonies in the New World; they have large territories, populations, and economies. They also have in common a tainted history of slavery, though both are now multi-ethnic federal republics where, supposedly, the rule of law is the law of the land. And from time to time, their political systems suffer from the baleful effects of populism, although the recent violence in Brazil had other causes than the instigation of a populist leader.

One significant difference, however, is constitutional longevity. While the United States has operated—at least nominally—under the same Constitution for well over 200 years, Brazil has had six constitutions so far (1824, 1891, 1934, 1945, 1967, and 1988). All but the last were brought about by revolutions or military coups.

The military regime that overthrew the government in 1964 remained in power until 1985, when it returned authority to a civil government which re-institutionalized the country with the constitution of 1988.

Notice the bad timing: the current Brazilian Constitution was drafted by a constitutional convention reeling from more than twenty years of a supposedly right-wing military dictatorship. Furthermore, the document was finished before the fall of the Berlin Wall. That explains most of the center-left, nationalist, and socialist tendencies of the current Brazilian charter. Having said that, it is also the cornerstone of the rule of law in Brazil, with a federal form of government, well-defined separation of powers, a government limited by individual rights, an independent judiciary responsible for running fair elections, and last but not least, civil control over the military.

I like to quip that the constitutional assembly established effective checks and balances, even if they did so unintentionally. Indeed, since the re-democratization of the country, two presidents have been impeached (Fernando Collor de Mello and Dilma Rousseff) and one president (Luís Ignacio "Lula" da Silva) was put in jail for corruption. I doubt you can affirm more strongly the power of the legislative and judicial branches than that.

When Lula was put in jail in April of 2018 (having been convicted of bribery that, between himself and his accomplices, reached into the billions of dollars) many Brazilians saw it as confirmation that at long last, the rule of law was firmly established in Brazil.

Both Hon. Sergio Moro, the judge who first convicted Lula, and the task force of public prosecutors who initiated the cases against him, had been part of programs with the United States Justice Department meant to train Brazilians on how to administer justice the American way. To some, that indicated that they were finally getting things right.

To Lula's lawyers, it meant that his prosecution was heavy-handed, and that judge Moro was a "CIA agent."

At about the same time (January 2019), a center-right candidate, Jair Bolsonaro, was elected president. Bolsonaro ran on a "Populist" platform, but the extent to which he appealed to the populist impulse is less clear. He promised respect for private property, a banner issue for agrribusiness. He promised to curb urban violence, a banner of the middle class. He promised to uphold conservative social values, a banner of the quarter or so of Brazilians who are Evangelicals. Most significantly, he ran as a candidate against the corruption with which Lula's Labor Party (PT) became identified, a banner for all Brazilians who had not benefited from the corruption scandals during the 13 years that PT was in power, first under Lula and later under his hand-picked successor, Dilma

Much, I think, depends on the law enforcement officers themselves. Remember how difficult it was to bring cases against social media admins who persuaded children to commit suicide. However, gradually developed and here its own successful practice. The scoundrels began to receive serious real terms.

In the meantime, I would like to remind you of the need to observe information hygiene. Wash your hands before eating. Do not catch any infection in social networks. Before buying a book or a ticket to the theater, check if the author sends his income to the VES.

While lawyers are arguing among themselves, a public boycott can be a good reminder to our bright-faced fellow citizens that things will not be the same as before. The country has changed irrevocably. Scoundrels and traitors are not welcome here.

**‘The worst form of government—except for all the others that have been tried’**

Leonidas Zelmanovitz

Rousseff. Bolsonaro was the first right-of-center president elected since the re-democratization of the country, resulting in the first actual transmission of power to an ideologically distinct party, another high mark for Brazilian democracy. From there, things went downhill.

Bolsonaro was elected without a majority in Congress and his apparent "anti-corruption" campaign, promising to put the majority of Congress in jail, understandably alienated that same majority he needed to govern effectively.

Moreover, in one of the most glaring political blunders of his political career, Bolsonaro appointed as Justice Secretary in his cabinet Judge Moro as "exhibit A" that his "anti-corruption" campaign was meant to be serious. That alienated further the political establishment, and gave some (unjustified) credence to the allegations that the verdicts against Lula were politically motivated.

Eventually, by the middle of his term, Bolsonaro reached a modus vivendi with the majority of Congress. That allowed him to fulfill a few of his campaign commitments. But his poor performance as the chief executive due to the lack of support in Congress, the accusations that he had caved in to the corrupt political class when he finally managed to get something done, and the limitations of a medium-income country without a social safety net facing the pandemic, alienated many of his supporters. Therefore, his coalition faced the 2022 elections weaker than it was in 2018.

Meanwhile, Lula was pulling all levers he could be freed from jail and to have his political rights restored. In a controversial decision in November 2019, the Supreme Court reversed its own precedents and set Lula free, effectively putting him out of reach of further guilty verdicts. The Court nullified his conviction on jurisdictional grounds and declared that the procedures against him were to be restarted at a different court. But by that time, the statute of limitations had been met, so no further prosecution could go forward.

One of the few legislative reforms that Bolsonaro was able to get from Congress was a partial reform of electoral laws establishing that the electronic ballot boxes would be required to issue printed receipts (like they do here in my state, Indiana). That victory was short-lived, however. The Supreme Court, the same court that freed Lula from jail, declared such reform unconstitutional in September 2020 based on the flimsy argument that printing the votes would risk the secrecy and liberty of voting. With that, elections in Brazil continued to be impossible to audit.

You see, the final tally of the elections is computed by an ad hoc electoral tribunal (TSE) controlled by members of the Supreme Court. In the absence of any possible instrument to perform an audit, whatever they say is the result cannot be challenged. Their decision to invalidate a law that would make such an audit possible dramatically increased the perception that the court was not impartial.

In August 2022, Supreme Court Justice Alexandre de Moraes was appointed the chief justice of the Electoral Court (TSE), just in time to preside over last year's election. Justice Moraes is a controversial figure in the country.

Under Moraes, the Electoral Court outstepped its constitutional bounds and curbed discourse by Bolsonaro supporters while curbing only the most outrageous slanders against Bolsonaro (such as the accusations leveled against him by Lula's supporters in the traditional media that Bolsonaro was a cannibal).

When the Electoral Court announced that Lula had won the second round of voting by a margin of about 1% of the votes, it is no wonder that many among the almost 50% of the voters who voted for Bolsonaro

rejected the results of the election as illegitimate.

Mind you, the perception of illegitimacy does not result from the fact that it is impossible to audit the election. It starts with the very fact that Lula was able to run after being convicted at three levels of courts (the singular judge who received the case and two appellate courts, one regional and the other national), and never acquitted.

Bolsonaro never recognized the defeat, but instructed his government to proceed with the transmission of power to the new administration, which took place on New Year's Day.

Between the second round of the elections in early November and the inauguration of Lula, the Electoral Court rejected legal challenges against the result of the election. At the same time, Bolsonaro rejected popular appeals to invoke emergency powers and left the country on the eve of Lula's inauguration.

However, tens of thousands of his supporters remained in front of military barracks around the country asking for the armed forces to intervene in what they perceived as a stolen election.

With that, we come to the events of Sunday, January 8. On that day, thousands of Bolsonaro supporters overcame insufficient barriers established by the police and invaded the presidential palace, Congress, and the palace of the Supreme Court in the national capital, Brasília, before being expelled from them in the evening and 1,500 of them arrested.

There is more than a fleeting similitude between what happened in Brasília that day and what happened in Washington, DC, on January 6, 2020.

The unjustified violence was motivated by a perception not so much that the election was stolen, but that common sense measures to prevent them from being stolen were not in place, and therefore, it is impossible to affirm the negative, that is, that it was not stolen. The one-sided narrative by the traditional media, the one-sided curbs on social media of any discourse that was identified with right-wing positions, also added to the grievances of the invading mobs. Of course, the silence of political leaders or half-baked condemnations did not help either.

Here, I think, may end the parallels between the two episodes. It remains to be seen to what extent what happened on January 8 in Brazil will serve as a pre-emptive for Lula's administration and a compliant Supreme Court to crack down on all the opposition, and not only on the rioters. Something like that would never happen in the US, right?

Lula has not helped to reduce the temperature by accusing the armed forces of negligence at best and collusion with the rioters at worst. Bolsonaro left the army as a captain before becoming a backbencher politician for 27 years. He left the army because he was not promoted in the window required for anything more than an honorable discharge. That, I think, says all you need to know about the top brass's opinion about the man.

The army, furthermore, left power at the end of the military regime having been burned by the experience, and although it is true that they have exercised some "moderating" power until that moment in history, after that, such "prerogative" has passed to the Supreme Court, as I have argued here. Consequently, it is unlikely that the Brazilian intelligence community would go rogue and take sides in a political dispute. Can we say the same for the United States?

Let us hope that the institutional checks and balances, the norms of acceptable behavior in political disputes, and the awareness of public opinion, both in Brazil and in the United States, prove sufficiently strong to uphold the rule of law, in order for us to continue to enjoy for generations to come "the worst form of government—except for all the others that have been tried."

**What is globalization anyway? What format has been promoted by theorists and practitioners of globalism in recent decades? It was supposed to create a network of international structures, which were to be gradually, but more and more widely delegated powers that had previously been exclusively the state prerogative. As a result, the most important areas of decision-making were to be transferred to the supranational level, which would mean the elimination of national sovereignty as such. At the same time, the main beneficiary of the new system would be transnational, global capital, which would rule the planet and local authorities with the help of a vast conglomerate of various structures - from the WTO to the WHO, from the EU to the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP). And in general, the process even went in this direction. Globalists with their concepts of transhumanism, birth control, paid access to fresh water and other equally "attractive" ideas have managed to turn into one of the most frightening horror stories for humanity.**

ernment. A week ago, Reuters sarcastically wrote that against the backdrop of the absence of Russians, a highly representative participation of China is expected.

And then reality took over. No, a huge crowd really came to the forum, but the point is not in quantity, but in the quality of participants. And then there were clear problems.

First, last week, George Soros suddenly announced his absence from the WEF, for whom a visit to Davos had been a mandatory item on the program for many

Monday, on the opening day of the event, an information bomb was detonated by Bloomberg, which found out that Chinese business would not come to Davos. The Chinese delegation is headed by Vice Premier Liu He, who has been working on his post for the past few weeks.

In general, the almost complete absence of the highest-level participants at the current forum is so blatant that nothing can disguise it. True, instead of presidents and prime ministers of major powers, a lot of entrepreneurs came to

Well, simply because for half a century the forum in Davos itself was a symbol of globalization.

However, it seems that things are even worse for Davos and its organizers.

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manism, birth control, paid access to fresh water and other equally "attractive" ideas have managed to turn into one of the most frightening horror stories for humanity. And the growing political weight of events like the WEF, which brought together the world's most powerful people, only fueled public fears.

And now all this reputation that has been built up over decades is now blown away like a balloon simply because the leaders of the leading powers did not come to Davos. In the period of the unipolar world, it

realized before others that in Davos there simply would be no one to negotiate with and achieve the desired decisions, which means that there was no point in going, only wasting time.

His more naive and inexperienced colleagues - even though they have accounts with nine zeros - flooded the Swiss resort and provided the main news of the World Economic Forum this year, the rush demand for girls (and boys) who arrived there to work with reduced social responsibility.

## The ‘law on scoundrels’

**T**HE hottest topic of recent days is what to do with the traitors to the motherland who fled abroad and curse us en masse from there. Almost every other day we receive the next "revelations".

The phenomenon has taken on such a scale that, for example, yesterday Secretary of the General Council of United Russia Andrei Turchak, who called for everything to be done for the speedy return to Russia of citizens who left the country, immediately made a reservation that this does not apply to those who "allowed themselves public attacks against our country and armed forces."

It is quite natural that against such a background, the post of State Duma Speaker Vyacheslav Volodin about the need to confiscate property from those who insult our society and the army predictably broke the Internet. At the time of writing, there were already 18 thousand comments. The absolute majority supports the "law on scoundrels".

People can be understood. The weapon of the most massive destruction in the NWO was the filth that people with bright faces pour on their country. Sometimes you just shrug your shoulders: where did they accumulate all this - over conversations about post-structuralism and neo-colonialism? These unfortunates are simply writhing with hatred for their own fellow citizens.

I remember that the same disgusting astonishment was caused in all normal people by the bacchanalia in social networks, where the residents of Nezalezhnaya staged about the death of people in Odessa on May 2. How many monstrous jokes there were, it is impossible even to quote this rubbish. I want to forget it, like a bad dream.

However, Ukrainians were corrupted by propaganda for a long time and skillfully and, like experimental cultures, were raised in anti-Russia. Their highest authority - the white Western gentlemen - allowed them to tear off the coating of civilization from themselves and dehumanize to the fullest.

And here in front of our own fellow citizens are writhing and foaming. Our, as they say, "inner Ukraine". They mock the grief of mothers and fathers

who have lost their children, our murdered heroes, our desire to defend our Russia, no matter what the cost.

The fact that we grew up in the same country gave them excellent knowledge of our pain points. Well, they are trying. And then, as if nothing had happened, they come to draw up a pension and tax deductions, to treat their aging bodies for free, that is, they use the infrastructure of the very state that they dream of destroying and turning into "radioactive ashes."

It was Russia that gave them the opportunity to live well, eat and drink sweetly, buy apartments for fees and successfully rent them out, having gone abroad. They impudently take advantage of what we have built over the past 20 years, and at the same time ask their Western masters to bomb us into the Stone Age, and quickly.

What can we say about people with connections or, as they said in the USSR, with "blat". For 30 years, they have grown a whole mycelium of connections, untwisted thanks to them - and now they are using this not sickly resource with might and main. Their books continue to be sold in Russian stores, their films and series are on television. When the public is already screaming, their names can be bashfully removed from the posters, but copyrights continue to drip. Cunning accountants of our theaters and film studios will be able to transfer them into a crypt, what's the problem?

An astonishing breed of nomadic parasites has bred - they seem to suck money from Russia and at the same time demand that Russia be physically destroyed. Together with us, of course, dear readers, with us.

If these citizens retain their fodder base, administrative resources, influence on the minds in Russia, then at some point they will try to return. Yes, now they are dreaming of a ride on the Abrams along Tverskaya. But it won't work out like that - and the smartest ones have already understood this. And abroad it is hungry, cold, teeth treatment is expensive, the emigration has already gnawed a hundred times within itself, the curators do not get in touch.

And now our runners will slowly seep back - "gardens", so to speak. And they will try to fall back on life-giving financial flows.

Victoria Nikiforova

Old acquaintances will be raised, old connections will be used. "What's the matter? - they will say with a blue eye. - We are citizens of Russia."

Together with them, many of them will bring all their emigrant complexes, all their envy, hatred and still inescapable resentment towards us - the victors. Am I the only one who thinks that they will pose a public danger? In my opinion, "good Russians" for the most part are a classic breeding ground for breeding very specific terrorists and extremists.

It is clear that with this disgrace I want to do something. But lawyers tell us that, for example, it is impossible to deprive citizenship of people with bright faces, even if they commit specific crimes against the state or encourage them to commit other people. This is said to be unconstitutional.

Note that the "good Russians" here again enjoy the advantages of the system that we have built in Russia. Yes, we have a democratic state, yes, our constitution is not only exemplary written, it is also honestly executed. Few countries can boast of this. Look, the Americans, just as they adopted the "Patriot Act" after the September 11 terrorist attack, did away with almost all their constitutional freedoms at once. And nothing. They've been living like this for twenty years. It is believed that the state "defends democracy" in this way. But we are not like that.

What are we? It is not difficult to predict that Volodin's initiative will face no less criticism than the proposal to revoke citizenship for discrediting the army and the NVO. What, in the opinion of an ordinary citizen, is a vile crime, in the opinion of a lawyer, is just an offense "committed using the Internet." And what is there for the violator? Well, a fine (less or more), some mandatory work. The verdict is accompanied free of charge by the halo of the sufferer from the Kremlin regime, which the convict will proudly wear and show to his curators in order to beg for another grant.

Our fellow citizens who have been discharged from the Russians are well aware of all our laws and know how to circumvent them. One can condemn a person

for lies and slander against our army. But what to do with an individual who, with mocking comments, sends friends a photo of Alexander Dugin at the place of his daughter's death? It's not like a crime, is it? It turns out that only God's court will judge this case.

Thanks, of course, to such exemplary scoundrels as Ilya Ponomarev with his coming out about some kind of terrorist group in Russia, which he joyfully made immediately after the murder of Dugina. There, of course, he told himself a very long time. With this, everything is clear.

Everything is clear with those figures who cooperate with the special services of our strategic opponents. There are specific and heavy articles of the Criminal Code. However, the attention of Western intelligence agencies still needs to be earned. Most of the "good Russians" only hope for this, cursing themselves as if they were not themselves. And there is no article on them. Vileness does not qualify as a crime.

What to do with the more cowardly scoundrels, who neatly lay straws for themselves, so that when they return home, they will not run into Russian justice? How to understand the varieties of traitors? How to separate them from each other?

It will be very sad if the law on confiscation of property in Russia is adopted, but it will be bypassed by rich and influential people - alas, they know how to circumvent laws. At the same time, it would be a pity if, for some reason, a young IT specialist, who still has his whole life ahead of him, loses his Khrushchev in Tambov or Perm. Here again the same question: how to separate the convinced traitors to the motherland from the fools who trusted them?

A separate danger is that phones and accounts are now being hacked. What prevents bright-faced hackers from creating a fake account of a well-known Russian politician in social networks and posting all sorts of nasty things on his behalf? Russians now have no access to Twitter, and Musk plans to sell abandoned accounts. Well, some patriot suddenly sees that his twitter doubly is spreading slander against the Russian army, and he will start having problems with Russian law?

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# PSX signs agreement with Karandaaz

ISLAMABAD (APP): In a landmark development for the capital market, Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) signed an agreement with Karandaaz whereby Technical Assistance (TA) grants would be given to prospective companies to be listed on the Gem Enterprise Market (GEM) Board.

The agreement was signed by MD and CEO PSX, Farrukh H Khan and CEO Karandaaz Pakistan (KRN), Waqas ul Hasan at a ceremony held at the Stock Exchange, said a press statement received here Wednesday.

In an effort to promote the GEM Board to eligible SMEs, PSX approached KRN to facilitate small businesses in raising much needed capital for the growth of their business.

With the signing of this Agreement, the PSX and KRN have joined hands to aid the eligible small to medium growth enterprises in their quest to list on the GEM Board by making

grants available to them.

Speaking at the occasion, Farrukh Khan said the initiative would help towards enhancement of Pakistan's capital market whereby we are facilitating and supporting eligible small to medium growth enterprises to list on PSX's GEM Board.

Given that cost plays a significant role in the decision-making of the small enterprises to list and raise capital, this agreement sets the ball rolling for a grant to cover part of the listing expenses for 5 eligible growth enterprises to list on the GEM Board.

Hence, this will reduce the cost of raising capital for these companies, he said adding the agreement was the culmination of the joint initiative of PSX and KRN to promote and support the SMEs to raise capital and grow their businesses by listing on the GEM Board.

He said, the signing of the agreement was a har-

binger of what's to come in the growth story of the GEM Board, its listed companies and the capital market as a whole.

The CEO of Karandaaz, Waqas ul Hasan, highlighting the role of Karandaaz in SME financing and the importance of the partnership between Karandaaz and PSX on opening financing opportunities for businesses.

He said, Karandaaz mission was to foster economic growth and create jobs through financial inclusion of unbanked individuals and unserved enterprises.

It has provided financing to 850,613 MSMEs through various financing instruments, resulting in supporting 1,006,930 jobs, and cumulatively generated an incremental revenue of PKR 199 billion for these MSMEs.

Speaking on the occasion, Jo Moir, Development Director at the British High Commission, said that the UK government had been

pleased to support the initiative through Karandaaz, adding the GEM project allows SMEs access to finance on the capital markets, enabling them to grow and fulfil their potential.

In her concluding remarks, the Chairperson of KRN and PSX, Dr. Shamshad Akhtar said that KRN brought to PSX its a unique edge and potential to unlock GEM challenges as it has evolved a broad based eco system and SME finance institutional architecture and PSX over the last year succeeded in operationalizing its GEM Board as tested by listing of few companies.

Moving forward, grant support of KRN to position enterprises for listing will open avenues for equity and debt, she said adding the listed companies would be elevated to an exclusive league within the SME segment that have demonstrated institutional maturity and ambition and prospects for growth."



ISLAMABAD: US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome meeting with Federal Minister for IT and Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): The following ships called at the Port on Tuesday, 17th January-2023, where five ships namely, MSC Madhu-B, Maersk Hartford, Xpress Bardsey, ChemroadSinyoo and Bai Lu Zuo, carrying Containers, Palm oil and Mogas, berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal and Oil Terminal respectively.

Meanwhile two more ships, Irenes Ray and Nord Tiger with containers and Steel coil also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the same day.

A total of ten ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them, two ships, N-Orhan and Ifestos left the Port on Wednesday morning, while five more ships, are expected to sail on today in the afternoon.

Cargo volume of 145,813 tonnes, comprising 117,942 tonnes imports cargo and 27,871 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 4,604 Containers (3,426 TEUs Imports and 1,178 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are 20 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them 03 ships, Irenes Ray, Chola Treasure and Paovosa Wisdom VII & another ship TBN are expected to take berths at QICT, FAP, MW-I and MW-II, on Wednesday and another containers ship, CMA CGM Orfeo is due to arrive at Port Qasim on Thursday.

## FPCCI, SBP joint body to resolve issue

LAHORE (APP): Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry President Irfan Iqbal Sheikh has said that the State Bank of Pakistan had announced a joint committee along with the FPCCI for clearing backlog of letters of credit (LCs).

The committee would comprise of four to five nominees of the FPCCI president, and almost same number of the SBP officials would be nominated by the bank governor, according to a media statement, issued by the FPCCI regional office here on Wednesday.

Irfan Iqbal Sheikh said that the committee would be co-chaired by Suleman Chawla, SVP (Senior Vice President) FPCCI. He advised the business, industry and trade community to bring their cases to the said committee.

He explained that delays were causing detention charges, demurrage, short-ages of raw materials for industrial production, closure of major industrial units.

# PSX turns around to bullish trend, gains 448.88 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Wednesday, gaining 448.88 points, a positive change of 1.17 percent, closing at 38,791.09 against 38,342.21 points the previous day.

A total of 153,090,751 shares were traded during the day as compared to 205,906,982 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs5,010 billion against Rs6,710 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 312 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 184 of them recorded gains and 109 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 19 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 19,038,426 shares at Rs1.13 per share, K-Electric Ltd with 13,145,257 shares at Rs2.19 per share, and TRG Pak Ltd with 10,185,720 shares at Rs96.58 per share.

Bhanero Textile witnessed a maximum increase of Rs71.11 per

share price, closing at Rs1,019.31, whereas the runner-up was Systems Limited with a Rs22.69 rise in its per share price to Rs480.73.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs287.00 per share closing at Rs5,308.00, followed by Pak Services with Rs161.17 decline to close at Rs1,987.83.

**Rupee closes at Rs228.90 against USD**

The exchange rate of the Pakistani rupee depreciated by 25 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Wednesday and closed at Rs228.90 against the previous day's closing of Rs228.65.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs236.75 and Rs239 respectively.

The price of the euro increased by Rs1.10 and closed at Rs248.61 against the previous day's closing of Rs247.51, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen remained unchanged to close at Rs1.77, whereas an increase of Rs3.36 was witnessed in the exchange

rate of the British pound, which was traded at Rs282.64 as compared to its last closing of Rs279.28.

The exchange rates of the Emirates dirham and Saudi riyal increased by 07 paise each to close at Rs62.32 and Rs60.94 respectively.

**Gold prices increase by Rs2,100 to Rs186,500 per tola**

The per tola price of 24 karat gold witnessed an increase of Rs2,100 on Wednesday and was traded at Rs186,500 against sale at Rs184,400 the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs1,801 to Rs159,894 against Rs158,093, whereas that of 10 grams of 22 karat increased to Rs146,569, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The prices of one tola silver increased by Rs30 to Rs2,100 whereas that of 10 gram silver went up by Rs16.78 to Rs1800.41.

The price of gold in the international market increased by US\$ 6 to US\$ 1,909 against its previous price of US\$ 1,903, the association reported.

# SCCI chief hails passage of SBP (Amendment) Bill 2021 in Senate

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR, Jan18: President, Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Muhammad Ishaq welcomed the passage of State Bank of Pakistan (Amendment) Bill 2021 with majority of vote, terming it as milestone achievement and important development for the smaller federating units.

Ishaq while chairing a meeting of traders and industrialists here at the chamber's house on Wednesday informed that the legislation would to rectify unjustified and inequitable credit lending that has been the long-standing demand of the smaller provinces.

Before passage of the bill the loan disbursement by commercial banks against deposits from KP and Balochistan was 1.35% only, which after the pas-

sage of bill will increase to about 5%. This will help in more trade and industrialisation in both the provinces, SCCI chief told the meeting.

The chamber's president lauded the efforts of leading businessmen of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Senator Mohsin Aziz in the Senate, who presented the SBP (Amendment) Bill 2021 in the Senate.

Furthermore, he praised Senator Mohsin Aziz who had played a pivotal role in this important legislation, which has always served the business community with full dedication and zeal and resolved their issues on priority grounds.

Terming the passage of SBP (Amendment) Bill as milestone achievement, which is long standing demand of smaller provinces, the SCCI chief hoped after the passage of

the bill, the economic and trade activities will be boosted up at optimal level that could generate more employment and business opportunities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Ishaq informed the meeting that the legislation would rectify unjustified and inequitable credit lending whereas it will ensure that the minimum credit/lending of commercial banks to the private sector for establishing industry and commercial activities in smaller provinces is at par with those provinces' total deposits.

The SCCI president elaborated that the private sector of smaller provinces of the country especially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan had a long-standing demand to eliminate improper, unjustified, and inequitable credit/lending by the commercial banks in their provinces

which is leading to continuous deprivation, disparity and slow progress of industrialization and commercial activities in those provinces.

Ishaq told participants of the meeting that the Senate Standing Committee on Finance in its report laid in the Senate observed that commercial banks cannot be forced to extend loans unless a law exists that demands the same, hence recommending bringing legislation in this regard.

Eventually, the SCCI chief said the legislation was made possible due to concerted efforts of Senator Mohsin Aziz, which had sailed through the upper house of the parliament with majority vote. He called the legislation a biggest achievement and move for the smaller provinces, which would produce tangible and positive results.

# DG Khan Cement Company shipped 2nd consignment to US

## F.P. Report

KARACHI: In year 2022, DG Khan Cement Company Limited of Nishat Group secured an order from a Group in USA to supply 600,000 tons of high-quality low alkali Cement. 1st consignment of 50,000 tons shipped in June 2022 to USA. That was for the first time in the history of Pakistan to export Cement to the sophisticated USA market.

On arrival of first ship "Tomni Felicity" in USA, customers were satisfied with its quality and demanded for continuing with the shipments. Second consignment has been successfully loaded on vessel ABU AL ABYAD which is set to sail for Houston, Texas, USA today on 18th January 2023.

"Getting to this stage was not a piece of cake", according to Director Marketing of the Company, "It was in August 2021 when we visited USA to secure this order, subsequently the customer's representatives visited our Cement plant at Hub and asked to supply high quality low alkali cement that

was developed specially for USA customer. It took a period of six months to obtain the technical certifications from USA authorities like "TXDOT", "NCDOT", "SCDOT" and "LODOT".

It was a great achievement and honor on part of Pakistan Cement Industry that opened the gates to huge USA market.

It is for the first time ever that a Pakistani Cement Manufacturer, DG Khan Cement Company has entered into USA market as the demand for construction materials in USA has increased manifolds with buyers looking for new sources of supply following President Biden's US \$ 6 trillion Infrastructure package.

Under this package, all mega infrastructure projects including freeways, bridges and roads will be rebuilt or given facelifts as some of these were constructed almost a century ago. Looking at the response from USA customers, "INTERCEM" invited Company Director Marketing, Mr. Farid Fazal to make a presentation at the International Cement

Conference in Houston which generated large number of inquiries from prospective customers.

Nishat Group is one of the largest and most diversified business groups in South East Asia, the group has now become a multidimensional conglomerate and is playing an important role in the industrial and economic development of the country. Firmly believing in "growth through professional management"

The DG Khan Cement Company Limited (DGKCC) under Nishat Group is amongst largest cement manufacturers of Pakistan with a production capacity of 25,000 tons cement per day (7,500 million tons/annum).

DGKCC has three cement plants located at Dera Ghazi Khan, Kalar Kahar and Hub.

Plants and equipment are supplied by renowned European suppliers and are based on the latest Dry Process Technology.

The DG Khan Cement Company Limited (DGKCC) is the first to use innovative technologies in the cement industry. DGKCC latest state of the

art plant located at Hub is first of its kind to have largest production line with six stage preheater tower, largest vertical grinding mill based on COPE drive system, multiple chamber cement storage silos to store different products at the same time.

The DG Khan Cement Company Limited (DGKCC)'s aim of being at the forefront in creating foundations for a prosperous tomorrow is backed by the Company's philosophy of providing outstanding value to its customers, safe and stimulating work environment for its employees, superior returns for its shareholders and special focus on corporate social responsibility, maintaining Eco-Friendly environment and contribution to reduce carbon foot prints by using renewable energy, waste heat recovery and alternate fuels.

Under present tough financial conditions and crisis in Pakistan, the Company's focus is to earn valuable foreign exchange for the country through export of Cement hoping to create opportune moments for Pakistan.

# Speakers stress for productivity led economic growth in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speakers have stressed on productivity-led economic growth in Pakistan and said that there was need to increase productivity in the country's industrial sector.

Addressing the Economic Productivity workshop here Wednesday, they said that research and development, technology and skilled manpower are extremely important aspects to increase the economic productivity.

The workshop on 'APO Vision 2025, Inclusive, Innovatio-Led Productivity Growth in the Asia-Pacific' was co-organized by National Productivity Organ-

ization (NPO), Ministry of Industries and Production and Asian Productivity Organization (APO) Tokyo Japan, said a press release issued here.

The speakers said that the Current Account Deficit in Pakistan is difficult to resolve without increasing export and foreign investment and to bring export and foreign investment in the country, it was necessary to bring productivity in the country's industrial sector.

Senior Vice President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Faad Waheed Sheikh said that technology and manpower could play

an important role in the productivity of the country. He said that currently, NPO had a very important role to increase productivity in Pakistan. The cooperation between NPO and ICCI is very important in terms of productivity in Pakistan at this time, he added.

Faad Waheed Sheikh said that no sector of the country could be developed without innovation, adding that USA was an innovative country which had ruled the world on the basis of innovation.

He said that there was need to extend information technology to more sectors in the country, which could

increase productivity in the country.

He said that smart ideas were needed in the country which would enhance economic productivity in the country and increased economic opportunities, automation of public and private sector in the country was necessary for economic productivity and innovation.

While addressing the gathering, Dr. Ali Sajid, an expert in productivity, said that industrial and agricultural productivity was very important to strengthen the country's economy. He said that economic productivity was the main driver of sustainable economic develop-

ment in the country.

Ali Sajid said that the productive culture in the country needed to acquire a productive capacity in Industrial sector, which must be worked on by the NPO. He said that to increase innovation and productivity, we have to work at both academia and industry levels. Pakistan's industrial production ranking is currently lower than the regional countries including Iran and Vietnam, he expressed.

Ali said that political stability was also coming from economic development, while politicians in our country talk about political

stability first. He said there is no concept of productivity without quality, therefore industrial and agricultural quality is essential, adding that the countries which were developed, including America and China had created wealth only through innovation.

"Our regional countries developed agriculture by increasing innovation and productivity in agriculture and today Pakistan is importing food. The reason for the lack of industrial productivity in Pakistan is that stakeholders are not consulted here. The economic development of Korea, Japan and Vietnam

is the main reason for innovation and productivity".

On this occasion, Chief Executive Officer NPO Alamgir Khan said that NPO was working on bringing the productivity culture to market the country in global market. We are starting to gain productivity in the country which is having a positive impact. We are currently working on Productivity drive and Chamber of Commerce and Industry, schools, colleges and universities, he added.

He said that NPO was working on Productivity Vision 2025, which would increase industrial efficiency in the country.

On this occasion, President Rawalpindi, Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Riffat Shaheen said that the government had to take all the business community and stakeholders on board. She said that more work was needed for industrial productivity in the country. She said that Rawalpindi Women Chamber was working together with NPO.

On this occasion, Director National Science and Technology Park, Dr Salman Naqvi said we are working on productivity and Innovation for the economic growth of country through promoting tecnology.





## In brief

**GB Ice Sports Championship**

ISLAMABAD (NNI): A colorful opening ceremony of six-day National Ice Sports Championship will be held on January 19 (Thursday) in Naltar, Gilgit Baltistan with a huge number of sports lover waiting to welcome and celebrate the scenic snow-clad mountains event. Talking to a state run news agency, an official of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) said that the championship would be attended by huge crowds including locals, tourists and adventure seekers. The six-day event would start from January 19 and conclude on January 24. The Championship is a regular annual feature of Winter Festival in Naltar, in which many teams participate to entertain the people through healthy games. Locals also establish stalls of handicrafts, fruits and foodies during the event," he added. He apprised the National Ice Sports championship every year welcomes local and international tourists coming to Gilgit-Baltistan to enjoy the event and other activities throughout the festival.

**Basketball championship**

HYDERABAD (APP): National Inter-University Basketball Championship (Zone-K) has been started here at the Sports Complex of Sindh Agricultural University Tando Jam from Wednesday. The championship which is being co-hosted by the Directorate of Sports of Sindh Agriculture University Tondo Jam and with the support of the Higher Education Commission was inaugurated by the Vice Chancellor Dr. Fateh Marri, the university spokesman informed adding that teams from IBA Sukkur, Liaquat University of Medical and Health Sciences Jamshoro, Mehran University of Engineering and Technology Jamshoro, Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur and host Sindh Agriculture University are competing for title during championship. In the first match of the championship, Mehran University defeated IBA Sukkur by 48-32. Huzaifa of Mehran University scored 16 while Sohail Ahmed netted 12 baskets. In the second match, Sindh Agriculture University defeated Liaquat University by 36-24. Muhammad Rafay of SAU scored 15 and Sameer netted 12 baskets.

**DC Gold Cup Girls Sports Festival**

PESHAWAR (APP): New Year Deputy Commissioner Gold Cup Girls Sports Festival got under way here at Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex under the aegis of district administration and District Sports Officer Charsadda on Wednesday. Athletes from various educational institutions hailing from District Charsadda are participating in six different Games including Athletics, Tug-of-War, Badminton, Hockey, Netball and traditional female Game "Chendero". Deputy Commissioner Charsadda Dr. Qasim Ali Khan, who was the chief guest on this occasion, formally inaugurated the Festival, which is the first one at Abdul Wali Khan in connection with the new year celebration. Administrator Peshawar Sports Complex Syed Jafar Shah, District Sports Officer Tahsin Ullah, Principal Aspire Grammars School Faiza Gul, Incharge Sports Government Girls Middle School Ibrahim Zai Maria, PET Shahnaz of Govt Girls Middle School Tariqabad.

# Swiatek, Pegula lead charge at rain-marred Australian Open



MELBOURNE (AFP/APP): World number one Iga Swiatek and dangerous American Jessica Pegula led the charge into the Australian Open third round on Wednesday as wild weather again played havoc. Polish title favourite Swiatek swept past Colombia's Camila Osorio 6-2, 6-3 under a closed roof on Rod Laver Arena while third seed Pegula downed Belarusian Aliaksandra Sasnovich 6-2, 7-6 (7/5).

Greece's Maria Sakkari also went through, but she looked anything but the sixth seed in a 3-6, 7-5, 6-3 struggle against Russian qualifier and college student Diana Shnaider.

Only matches on the three main stadiums, which have roofs, were able to begin on time as persistent rain compounded a scheduling backlog, with hours again lost to the conditions.

It followed intense heat then torrential rain on Tuesday, with long delays and a slew of matches called off. Swiatek said after a tough first-round test that she needed to find some extra "intensity", and

she found the spark against world number 84 Osorio.

"It was really intense physically and Camila didn't give me many points for free, so I needed to really work for every and each of them," she said.

The three-time major winner will face either 2019 US Open champion Bianca Andreescu of Canada or Spanish qualifier Cristina Bucsa in the third round. Pegula, who beat Swiatek at the United Cup this month, was clinical in the first set against 38th-ranked Sasnovich, but put through her paces in the second. But she was content with her performance ahead of a next round clash with Ukraine's Marta Kostyuk or Australian Olivia Gadecki.

"My game really suits the conditions in Australia," said Pegula. "Every tournament you want to take it one match at a time, but also have big goals."

Among the men, Italian 15th seed Jannik Sinner dropped just seven games in blowing away Argentine Tomas Martin Etcheverry 6-3, 6-2, 6-2 to power into

round three. He will play either South African Lloyd Harris or Hungary's Marton Fucsovics. Defending champion and 22-time Grand Slam winner Rafael Nadal is in action later, against 65th-ranked American Mackenzie McDonald.

Third seed Stefanos Tsitsipas and seventh seed Daniil Medvedev, who was beaten in last year's final by Nadal in a five-set thriller, are also both set to feature.

Medvedev will have to face down the home fans when he meets Australia's John Millman. Tsitsipas, who is yet to win a major, plays another Australian in 169th-ranked Rinky Hijikata.

Among the women, American Coco Gauff and Britain's former US Open champion Emma Raducanu meet as the future of women's tennis goes on full display in an evening session on Rod Laver Arena.

Gauff, 18, and Raducanu, 20, have never played each other before.

The Briton has done something Gauff never has in winning a major, but the American is ranked seventh to her opponent's 77th.

## Saudi Arabia Sports Media Federation signs MoU for sports promotion

PESHAWAR (APP): Association of International Press Sports (Asia) and Saudi Arabia Sports Media Federation Wednesday signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to work jointly for the promotion of sports and sports journalism in Asia.

The signing ceremony was held in Saudi Arabia capital city Riyadh wherein President AIPs World Gianni Merlo,

President AIPs Asia Hae Don Jung, Secretary General AIPs Asia Amjad Aziz Malik, President of Saudi Sports Media Federation Nabr

Mohammad Ali Sighi, signed the MoU in a ceremony. President Saudi Arabia Sports Media Federation assured that they would work jointly to promote and develop sports and sports journalism besides enhancing the capacity of sports journalists, who are members of the AIPs Asia.

Saudi Sports Media Federation President Jabr Mohammed Al Sighi said that Saudi Arabia has become a hub for international sports events and he was happy that his federation has worked with AIPs Asia to improve sports journalism.

Under the agreement,

Saudi Sports Media Federation AIPS would serve for Alana Congress and Executive Committee meetings will also be held in Saudi Arabia. AIPS Asia President Hae Don Jung said the agreement with the Saudi Sports Media Federation was very important. He believed that in the light of this agreement, sports journalism would work across Asia for the development and especially to improve the capacity of every young sports journalist. He expressed his gratitude to the Saudi Sports Media Federation for signing the first-of-its-kind MoU.

## Waseemuddin chairs first meeting of MMA Management Committee of Pakistan

LAHORE (NNI): The first meeting of the Pakistan Mixed Martial Arts Management Committee was held in Pakistan Olympic House Lahore under the Chairman of the Committee and Individual Member of the Pakistan Olympic Association Syed Waseemuddin Hashmi, the Deputy Chairman of the committee Muhammad Khalid Mahmood (Secretary General Pakistan Olympic Association) Secretary Muhammad Jahangir (Chairman Pakistan Karate Federation), Deputy Secretary and Lt Col (Retd) Muhammad Nasir Ejaz Tang (Secretary General Pakistan Boxing Federation).

While the members include Murtaza Hasan Bangash (Secretary General Pakistan Taekwondo Federation), Major (Retd) Mahmood Riaz (Manager Sports Karachi Port Trust), Ms.

Ambreen (Secretary Pakistan Federation), Ms. Samira Sattar (Lady Executive Member POA), Muhammad Osman Masood and Coordinator Muhammad Imran Khan participated in the meeting.

Under the directives and constitution of the Asian Mixed Martial Arts Association and the Olympic Council of Asia and the formation of the National Mixed Martial Arts Federation, various issues were considered in detail in the meeting and all matters related to Mixed Martial Arts were resolved amicably.

The formation of various committees and the names of their members were approved, under which the names of the Convener of the Constitutional Committee, Syed Waseemuddin Hashmi,

Secretary Muhammad Khalid Mahmood and Lt. Col. (retd) Muhammad Nasir Ejaz Tang are included. While the names of Muhammad Jahangir, Chairman and Lieutenant Colonel (R) Muhammad Nasir Ejaz Tang were approved for the National Selection Committee, while the names of other members will be included in the meeting after consultation with the representatives of the provinces and approval from the Chairman Mixed Martial Arts Management Committee.

In a meeting held at the Singapore Convention and Exhibition Center of the Mixed Martial Arts Association, Colonel (Retd) Mohammad Nasir Ijaz Tang of Pakistan was congratulated for being elected as a member of the Board of Directors of the Asian Mixed Martial Arts Association.

## Mooney, Litchfield surge to 10-wicket win after Brown fires

Quick Darcie Brown led a disciplined attack then fellow teenager Phoebe Litchfield hit another half-century as Australia thrashed Pakistan at the Allan Border Field to wrap up the three-match women's ODI series.

Electing to bat in Brisbane's sunny conditions, Pakistan struggled to fire in a must-win game two after losing the series opener by eight wickets in a rain-affected contest reduced to 40 overs per side. They were bowled out for just 125 after 43 overs with Brown snaring three wickets to lead a well-balanced attack.

In reply, Australia powered to an effortless 10-wicket victory inside 20 overs with impressive 19-year-old Litchfield smashing 67 off 61 balls and Beth Mooney finishing 57 not out. Coming off her 78 not out on ODI debut, Litchfield struggled early against probing bowling from quick Fatima Sana before getting off the mark in style with a sweet cover drive. She was dominant from there and played mostly orthodox, but unleashed several scoop shots to showcase her range of strokes.

Having made just one run in the series opener, Mooney was keen to make amends and started in style with a boundary off the first ball. She didn't need to take risks and toyed with Pakistan's struggling bowlers.

Mooney was mostly overshadowed by Litchfield, who played with a maturity beyond her years to become the first Australian women's batter to compile consecutive half-centuries in their first two ODIs.

It was a major disappointment for Pakistan, who are still seeking an elusive victory against all-conquering

Australia in any format.

The series will conclude at North Sydney Oval on Saturday before a trio of T20Is to wrap up Pakistan's first bilateral series in Australia since 2014. It was an improved performance from Australia's quicks, who were notably wayward in the opening game in a push for extra swing.

Seamer Kim Garth made her ODI debut for Australia and replaced Megan Schutt, who has a niggle with her knee and is being managed ahead of the upcoming T20 World Cup.

Garth opened the attack and bowled a maiden first up in an exceptional start. She continued to bowl a back of a length and found late swing during a tidy five-over spell during the first powerplay. Garth finished wicketless, but conceded just 13 runs from eight overs. She played 34 ODIs for Ireland from 2010-2018 before moving to Australia seeking full-time opportunities. Pakistan were unable to build partnerships with a number of their batters failing to capitalise on

starts much like in game one.

After opener Sidra Ameen fell in the second over, Muneeba Ali started slowly and had a reprieve when Litchfield dropped a chance at second slip before hitting Brown for a couple of powerful boundaries.

Moving around the crease trying to disrupt the bowlers, Muneeba's aggressive approach backfired when she miss-hit spinner Ash Gardner to cover point. Pakistan's bid for a competitive total nose-dived when skipper Bismah Maroof was trapped lbw to seamer Annabel Sutherland for 21. The burden again fell on veteran Nida Dar, who top-scored for Pakistan in game one with a half-century, and she had a reprieve on 16 when Brown dropped a return catch. But Dar's luck ended on 24 when she was run out at the non-striker's end after a touch from Garth in her follow through deflected onto the stumps.

Pakistan fell away as their barren run against Australia continued.



## Balochistan to finalize arrangements to bring PSL matches in Quetta

QUETTA (APP): The Balochistan government is trying its best for finalizing arrangements in order to bring the Pakistan Super League (PSL) matches in Quetta as the renovation work of Ayub Stadium had already been underway.

Chief Minister Balochistan Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo and Shahid Afridi have laid the foundation stone of the Shahid Afridi Sports complex at Saryab road Quetta.

The Cricket Academy to be established at Saryab Sports Complex is a joint effort of the Government of Balochistan and the Shahid Afridi Foundation, an official of the Balochistan government said while talking to APP on Wednesday.

He said the province had the honour to produce international players

who brought laurels to the country and the government would create more opportunities and provide facilities to the sportsmen for representing the country.

Balochistan government is currently working on the plan to set up an international-level sports complex in every division of the province with an aim to encourage youth to actively take part in sports, he informed.

The provincial government had been working to allocate special funds for extending sports facilities to bring the youth towards sports and healthy activities in the province.

He said the government would also be establishing at least one ground for females so that they could participate in co-curricular activities besides educational activities.

The official said "We are revising a mechanism to endorse sports and co-curricular activities on school and college level in the province."

He added, "If we do not engage our youth in sports and healthy activities then negative elements in the society could destroy our young generation."

He informed that the government was preparing to organize an event of sports and cultural related activities in connection with the celebration of spring festival adding that would be the first of its kind festival to participate a huge number of youth across the province.

He said we were working to appoint a large number of staff in the sports department of the province to teach and guide the sports man.

## 20-K Cup 2023: Five matches decided as event moves to quarterfinals stage

LAHORE (APP): Five more matches were decided in the 20-K Cup 2023 T20 Cricket Tournament here on Wednesday as the event is moving towards quarterfinals stage that will begin from 22nd January.

Model Town Club, Ali Garh Club, Shahkamal Club, Valencia Gymkhana and Model Town Greens registered contrasting victories in their respective matches played here at the different venues of the city.

Model Town Club defeated Township Whites by four wickets in the 31st match of the tournament. Township Whites, batting first, couldn't start well and also failed to pile up a good total as they were bundled out for 94 runs in 16.3 overs. Only M Faiq (22), Kamran Afzal (16), Shoaib (15) and Naem Khan (13) crossed the double figures. Umaid Asif and Afaq Afridi bowled brilliantly and grabbed 3 wickets each while Hassan Rizwan bagged 2 wickets. Model Town Club chased the target in 18.2 overs for the loss of 6 wickets. Haider top-scored with 29 runs while M Saleem and Obaid Shahid contributed with 20 and 14 runs. Afaq Afridi was named player of the match.

Ali Garh Club edged past Ludhiana Gymkhana Club by 2 wickets in the 32nd match. Ludhiana Gymkhana, batting first, posted a huge total of 188-8 in 20 overs with Kashid Siddique (34), Tanveer Islam (33) and M Junaid (22) playing superbly. Ali Shafiq claimed 3-36 and Ahsan Bhatti 2-15. Ali Garh Club reached home safely in 19.5 overs, losing 8 wickets. Zeeshan Ashraf hammered 79 and Faraz Ahmad fired 50. Tanveer Islam clinched 4-23 and Saeed Ullah 2-38. Zeeshan Ashraf was declared man of the match. Shah Kamal Club routed Yu Slim Club by 40 runs in the 30th match. Shahkamal Club, batting first, scored 178-10 in 19.5 overs with Azizullah cracking 71, Hamza Ahmed 28 and Imran Nazir Jr 20. Mohsin Nadeem secured 4-19, Haider Butt 2-43 and Aamer Jamal 2-31.

Yu Slim Club couldn't face the outstanding bowling of M Arslana (6-16), thus losing all their wickets for 138 in 19.4 overs. Only Mohsin Nadeem (44) and Safer Azam (25) resisted their opponents well but couldn't save their team from facing

the defeat. Besides M Arslan, Faheem Faisal bagged 2-43. Azizullah was adjudged as player of the match. Valencia Gymkhana thumped Shah Faisal Club by 85 runs in the 33rd match. Valencia Gymkhana scored 172-6 in 20 overs with Attyab Ahmad smashing 66 and Farhan Yousaf 48. Ali Manzoor claimed 2-27. Shah Faisal Club, in reply, were bundled out for 87 runs in 18.1 overs. Hassan Hameed grabbed 4-11, Saifullah 2-15 and Ibtisam Azhar 2-11.

Model Town Greens defeated Pak Lions in 29th match of the tournament. Batting first, Model Town Greens scored 172-9 in 20 overs with Taimoor Khan scoring 38 and Mirwais Khan 30. Niaz Khan secured 4-36. In reply, Pak Lions could score 158-9 in 20 overs with Afzal Tahiri hitting 36 and Hassan Nawaz 35. Mirwais Khan claimed 5-24 to emerge as player of the match.

On Thursday (January 19, 2023), Model Town Whites will take on Tu Slim Club in the 34th match of the tournament. Lucky Star will face City Gymkhana in 35th match and Shah Faisal Club will play against Ali Garh Club in the 36th match.

## Maj Gen Saeed-ul-Zaman Janjua Memorial Polo Cup 2023: two Matches decided

LAHORE (APP): Platinum Homes/Master Paints and Diamond Paints/Nagina Group recorded victories on the second day of Maj Gen Saeed-ul-Zaman Janjua Memorial Polo Cup 2023 sponsored by JS Bank here at the Jinnah Polo Fields on Wednesday.

In the first match of the day, Platinum Homes/Master Paints defeated Black Horse Paints by a close margin of 7½-6. Amirreza Behboudi was in sublime form and fired in fabulous five goals while Farooq Amin Sufi and Agha Musa Ali Khan converted one goal each for Platinum Homes/Master Paints.

Hissam Ali Haider and Abdul Rehman Monnoo thrashed in three goals each for Black Horse Paints.

The first chukker started with both the sides scoring one goal each to make it 1-1. Platinum Homes/Master Paints then started playing aggressively and thrashed in two back-to-back goals to earn a 3-1 lead by the end of the second

chukker. They maintained their supremacy in the third chukker as well and converted three impressive goals against one by Black Horse Paints to stretch their lead to 6-2.

Black Horse played better polo in the fourth and last chukker and fired in four goals against one by Platinum Homes to make it 6-7 but it proved too little too late for Black Horse, who lost the match by 6-7½ as Platinum Homes/Master Paints had a half goal handicap advantage.

Raja Sami Ullah and Omer Asjad Malhi officiated the match as field umpires.

In the second match of the day, Diamond Paints/Nagina Group outsmarted Pindi Express Polo Team by 10-6. Nico Roberts played superb polo and smashed in five phenomenal goals while Lt Col Omer Minhas (R) hammered an impressive hat-trick of goals and Mir Shoaib Ahmed and Omer Ellahi Shaikh scored one goal each

for Diamond Paints/Nagina Group. Raja Mikael Sami malletted three goals and Ibrahim Khalil struck two from Pindi Express.

Diamond Paints/Nagina Group dominated the match right from the beginning as they gained 2-1 lead in the first chukker, then 4-2 lead in the second chukker.

They then thrashed a hat-trick in the third chukker against one by Pindi Express to earn a 7-3 lead, while in the fourth and last chukker, both the sides slammed in three goals each and Diamond Paints/Nagina emerged as winners by 10-6. Shah Shamy Alam and Ahmad Bilal Riaz supervised the match as field umpires.

Jinnah Polo Fields President Lt Col Shoaib Aftab (Retd), JS Bank Regional Head Majid Qureshi, polo players, their families and polo lovers were also present on this occasion.

Tomorrow (Thursday), only one will be played at Jinnah Polo Fields at 2:30 pm.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 26,500 cusecs water

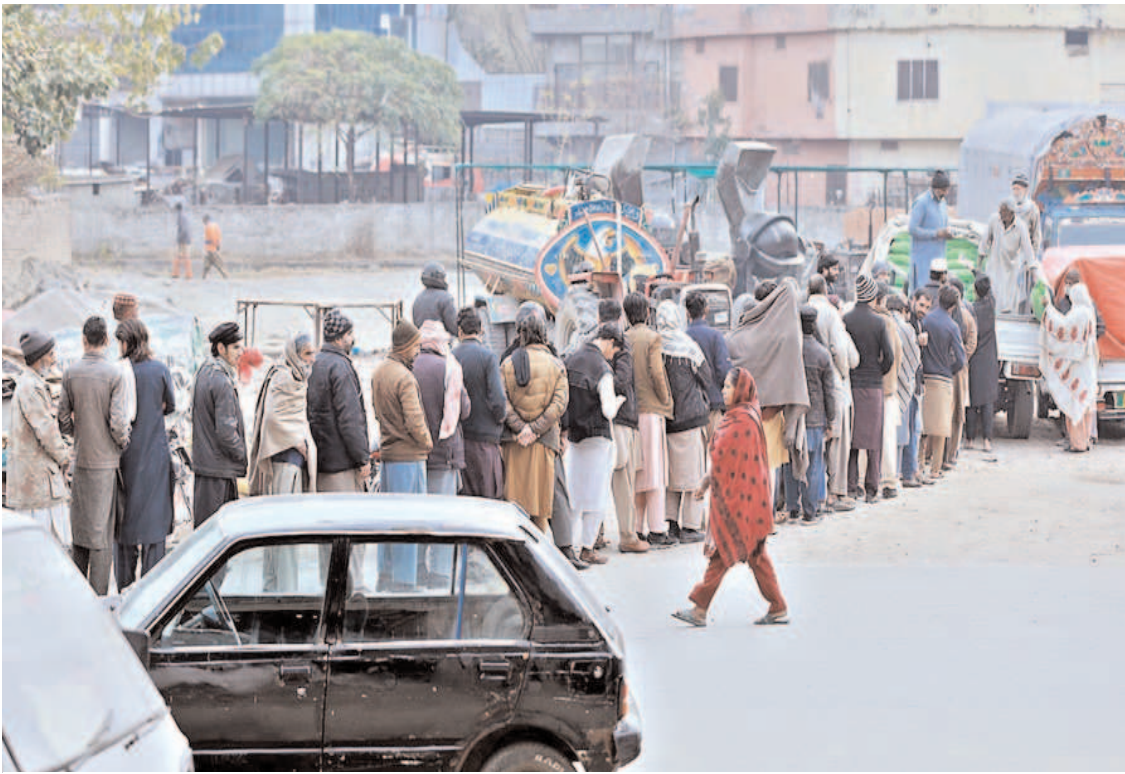
ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 26,500 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 43,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1498.76 feet and was 100.76 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow in the dam was recorded as 16,300 cusecs while the outflow was 8,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1123.95 feet, which was 73.95 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded as 8,700 cusecs and 100 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 11,800, 18,200, 4,000 and 4,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 11,500 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 6,900 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

### CTP hold awareness walk

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi and Markazi Anjuman Tajran Cantt organized an awareness walk to educate road users about traffic rules. Additional Deputy Commissioner Nosheen Israr, SDPO Azhar Shah, DSP Traffic Headquarters Raja Nisar, In-charge Traffic Cantt Circle Ali Rafiq, Traffic Police Education Wing, President Anjuman Tajran Cantt Sheikh Hafeez and other officials participated. During the walk, citizens were given awareness about traffic rules and road safety measures. On the occasion, Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Rawalpindi Taimur Khan said that most of the deaths due to accidents on highways are the result of lack of knowledge about traffic laws. Due to the awareness campaigns, there was a significant reduction in accidents in 2022 compared to the previous year. He further said that behavior change is possible only through traffic laws and road safety awareness campaigns. Before driving on roads, it is the prime duty for road users to follow the traffic rules and regulations, he added.

### Power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Wednesday issued a power suspension programme for Thursday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to an IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM, Islamabad Circle, Abpara, Punjab House, Iqbal Town, Farash Town, Sharifabad, UC Road, F-8/1, G-9/4, I-8/1, I-10/4, Golra II, Railway Road, T&T, Company Bagh, Kohala, Pearl Cantonment, Kotli Sattian, Balawara, Anguri, NCP, Mengyal, Shahdara, Shahpur, Khayaban, Iqbal, Pirsoha, Quaid-e-Azam, University, Punjab House, Bari Imam, Mandala, Athal, Mangat, Desto, Treat, Bhara Kahu. 2, Golf Club Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, B Block, 4th Road, Nora Road, Katarian, Holy Family, Khurram Colony, Farooq Azam Dhok Hekmad, City, Major Masood, Sarafa Bazar, Jinnah Road, Mohammadi Chowk, Dhok Hasu, Bani, Azizabad, Peshawar Road, Multabad, NRC, Dhok Chaudharyan, Captain Amir, Azharabad.



ISLAMABAD: People queued to purchase subsidized floor from a delivery truck at Committee Chowk.

## Chandio hopes JI to respect public mandate

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senior leader of Pakistan People Party (PPP) Maula Bakhsh Chandio Wednesday expressed the hope that Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Sirajul Haq would respect the public mandate after the recent Local Government (LG) elections held in Sindh and play role in strengthening the nascent democracy. "It is expected from the JI Ameer that he will take a political decision [regarding the new mayor of Karachi], keeping in view the current political situation in the country," he said while addressing a news conference here.

He said the political situation in the country would have improved further, if all political parties had participated in the

local bodies' election in Karachi to respect the mandate of each other. He asked the Jamaat-e-Islami to respect the mandate of the people of Karachi who had given the decision in the favor of Pakistan Peoples Party in the local body's elections. The former senator said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan's politics had no future in national politics due to his political immaturity and rigidity. He urged the political forces in Karachi not to push the metropolitian into 'fire and blood' again. "Karachi is the business hub and its peoples have desired peace, progress and development," he added. Maula Bakhsh Chandio regretted that an

attempt was being made for a quite some time by anti-state elements to create chaos and anarchy in the country, and vowed to foil any such nefarious design by the democratic forces at every level. "The PPP is a true democratic party, and we had suggested all political parties to participate in the LG polls to strengthen the democratic norms in the country and empower the public representatives at the grassroots level," he added. "If any conspiracy is hatched against PPP [after the LG polls,] it will be taken as a conspiracy against democracy. The PPP has emerged a largest single party in the province and its mandate should be respected," he remarked.

## 'No negligence to be tolerated in anti-Polio drive'

RAWALPINDI (APP): Deputy Commissioner Shoaib Ali on Wednesday said that strict action would be taken against those showing negligence in the anti-polio drive.

Chairing a meeting to review the ongoing anti-polio drive that started on January 16, he directed the health officials to strictly monitor the anti-polio campaign while staying in the field to avoid any irregularities. Shoaib said that Polio was a National issue, and it was the obligation of all to play an influential role in making the country Polio free.

The DC directed the officials concerned to cover the Polio drops refusal cases on the same day. Meanwhile, Incharge of the anti-polio drive, Chaudary Muhammad Hussain, informed APP that over 450,000 children had been administered the polio vaccine. He said that around 3,787 polio teams, 858 area In-charges and 243 medical officers participated in the campaign. In addition, children were also immunized at 320 fixed centres and 182 transit points in the district.

He said the target to cover more than 947,000 children below five would be achieved by January 22. He said staff deployed for the campaign had been told that no negligence would be tolerated.

## Wasif Ali Wasif was remembered

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Famous Urdu poet, writer and sufi intellectual Wasif Ali Wasif was remembered on his 30th death anniversary being observed on Wednesday. Born on January 15, 1929 in Khushab, he was famous for his unique literary style. No contemporary Urdu writer is more cited in quotations than Wasif.

Master of aphorism, he had almost a miraculous ability to capture a rainbow of meaning in a few dewdrops of well-chosen words. Many of his aphorisms have become proverbs in recent years. His book "Kiran Kiran Suraj" containing these aphorisms remained a best seller for many years. He used to write short essays on topics like love, life, fortune, fear, hope, expectation, promise, prayer, happiness, sorrow and so on with the clear objective of highlighting the true spirit of Islam.

## Govt term can only be extended in exceptional circumstances: Shahid

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former prime minister and PML-N leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Wednesday said that the government's tenure can only be extended in extra-ordinary circumstances.

Talking to a private TV channel, he said, "Such step without exceptional situation will not be a positive measure," he said. "We are fond of talking about some points, 'technocrat setup' is one of them," Abbasi said. "As a politician it is my duty to oppose all undemocratic and unconstitutional acts," former prime minister said.

"Assad Qaisar should disclose who had

given him the message about a 'technocrat setup', PML-N leader said. "He should give the name, if technocrat setup suggested from the platform of PML-N, I will oppose it," he said. "Nothing has been discussed about a technocratic setup within our party," he added.

"How truth could be expected from a speaker who violates the constitution," PML-N leader said. "We always search for miracles but there is no miraculous solution of the issues of the country," he said.

"Decisions taken so far are nothing, we have to continue a long process of difficult decisions," he added.

## Govt to re-launch laptop scheme for university students

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government has decided to once again launch laptop scheme for University students with a budget of Rs10 billion.

According to details, the announcement was made by Minister for Planning and Development Ahsan Iqbal while addressing a

ceremony in Islamabad.

Addressing the ceremony, the federal minister said that under this scheme one hundred thousand laptops will be provided to the students on merit to digitally empower them.

Ahsan Iqbal noted that National Bank of Pakistan (NBA) has also been

asked to develop laptop leasing products so that every university student has access to an affordable laptop. The planning minister further said that given the size of young population, Pakistan can turn Information Technology into one of its competitive advantages.

## Islamabad police launch 'Knock the Door' campaign

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad police have launched the 'Knock the Door' campaign to register tenants and domestic servants which would urge the citizens to be more cautious before accommodating any person in their houses.

The police source said that the campaign has been launched following directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan following which the registration of employees and tenants would be ensured.

He said that police officials would go door-to-door and register house servants and tenants keeping in view the protection of the lives and property of citizens in the federal capital Islamabad.

Counter Terrorism Department (CTD)

Islamabad, the source said, had registered data of 244 tenants and house employees within the jurisdiction of Aabpara police station.

The purpose of this campaign is to avoid any untoward incident and maintain law and order in the city. The registration of tenants and domestic workers would help to have a close eye on mischievous elements and suspects.

Police teams led by a senior upper subordinate of each police station of Islamabad would be included in the drive with a questionnaire about the details of tenants living in the houses. He elaborated that teams would be comprised of lady cops the male cops while personnel of the CTD and police commandos would remain ready in the police sta-

tions to tackle any untoward situation that occurs during the checking drive.

The police teams would provide a written questionnaire to the house owners to deposit their answers with the documents with a copy of their national identity card, a copy of the rent agreement with the tenant, and other documents required for the registration.

He urged the house owners to verify the backgrounds of people before giving them employment. The evil-minded elements can disguise themselves as ordinary citizens and cause damage by engaging in serious incidents like theft and house robbery. He further said that the federal capital police cared for the people and were committed to ensuring the protection to their lives and property.

## ANF seize over 1151 kg drugs, arrest 28 drug pushers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) seized 1151.015 kg of drugs, 13.32 kg of suspected substance, 400 kg Betel Nut and 38 kg 'Ratan Pan Masala' worth US\$ 38.020 million internationally, arrested 28 drug pushers including two women and two Afghan Nationals, impounded nine vehicles while conducting 39 counter-narcotics operations throughout the country during last week.

According to ANF spokesman, the seized drugs comprised 9,317 kg Heroin, 975.995 kg Hashish, 117.122 kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 23.600 kg Opium, 6.232 kg Amphetamine, 0.354 kg Marijuana/Weed, 0.530 kg Ketamine, 10 Ecstasy Tabs, 8000 Ruchi-2 Tabs, 16.5 kg socked Ice, 13.2 kg suspected substance, 400 kg Betel Nut and 38 kg 'Ratan Pan Masala'. In Balochistan, ANF recovered 835.99 kg of drugs in three operations and arrested two afghan nationals involved in drug smuggling. The seized drugs comprised 700 kg Hashish, 115.5 kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 20 kg Opium and 0.490 kg Heroin.

In Punjab ANF, recovered 38.675 kg of drugs in six operations and arrested two persons including a female involved in drug smuggling and impounded two vehicles. The seized drugs comprised 0.295 kg

Heroin, 37.5 kg Hashish, 0.300 kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 0.530 kg Ketamine and 0.050 kg Marijuana.

In KPK, the force recovered 115.444 Kg of Drugs in 11 operations and arrested seven persons involved in drug smuggling and impounded two vehicles. The seized drugs comprised 5.624 kg Heroin and 109.82 kg Hashish.

In Sindh, the ANF recovered 117.344 kg of drugs, 13.32 kg of suspected substance, 400 kg Betel Nut and 38 kg 'Ratan Pan Masala' in seven operations, arrested five persons involved in drug smuggling and impounded two vehicles. The seized drugs comprised 2.080 kg Heroin, 114 kg Hashish and 1.264 kg Methamphetamine (Ice). ANF North recovered 43.562 kg of drugs in 12 operations, arrested 12 persons including a female involved in smuggling and impounded three vehicles. The seized drugs comprised 3.6 kg Opium, 0.828 kg Heroin, 14.675 kg Hashish, 0.058 kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 6.232 kg Amphetamine (Ice), 0.304 kg Weed, 8000 Ruchi-2 Tabs (1.358 kg), 10 Ecstasy Tabs (0.007 kg) and 16.5 kg socked Ice.

All cases have been registered at respective ANF Police Stations under CNS Act 1997 (Amended 2022) while further investigations are under process.



ISLAMABAD: Capital police removing black sheet from a car window at Khayaban-e-Suhrawardy Road.

## Rs. 99.42m utilized under Science Talent Farming Scheme during 2021-22

ISLAMABAD (APP): An amount of Rs. 99.42 million was utilized for the monetary benefits and the additional interventions designed for the students under the Science Talent Farming Scheme (STFS) Phase-I of Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) during the year 2021-22.

According to an official source, the main objective behind the STFS, conceived by PSF, was to support and groom the talented but less privileged science students from government schools, in their studies and groom them to become productive scientists.

The scheme was also aimed at grooming and supporting the selected students by progressively exposing them to advancements in science and mathematics through inquiry-based learning approach and arrange training sessions for students on Inquiry Based Science Education (IBSE). The scheme also focused on promotion or popularization of Science and Technology through different platforms including but not limited to social, print and digital media for teenagers, young adults and specifically, the out of school children. Besides, a database or tracking system was also established of all the beneficiary students of the project.

Under the STFS, as many as 500 students are selected each year through evaluation by a specialized testing agency e.g. NTS, CTS etc. Scientific aptitude test is conducted in three phases including Specialized written or screening test, Paper Based IQ Test 60 and Presentation

on innovative ideas/Interview

The scholarships of Rs.15,000 per month is given to each successful student for 05 years while for the disable students, the scholarship amount is Rs. 18,000/- per month. The programme also provide tuition fee of Rs.10,000 per year for each student. Under the STFS, research projects are developed by each student every year, under the supervision of a university teacher or researcher while science graduates also provide guidance to these students.

Science lectures, Presentations, Film/Planetarium Shows and Hands on activities through Mobile Science Labs as well visits to universities and Science and Technology organizations both at national and international levels were also part of the programme.

Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF) is the apex body for promotion and funding of scientific and technological research and other related activities in the country.

The activities and programmes undertaken by the Foundation included Promotion and Financing of Scientific Research in the Country and the Utilization of the Research Results, Promotion and Popularization of Science in Society, International Liaison and Establishment of Comprehensive Scientific and Technological Information Dissemination Centers. The main functions of the foundation include research support, and science popularization, planning and development etc., are performed by the Science Wing of the Foundation.



UN top envoy arrived Kabul

KABUL (Agencies): Senior UN officials have arrived in Kabul for talks as UN chief voice landed Kabul. The UN delegation, which arrived Monday, includes Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed and Sima Bahous, executive secretary of UN Women, spokesman Farhan Haq said, quoting foreign media. Some other sources have confirmed the arrival of the UN officials to Kabul, but the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan has not said anything on their arrival so far.

1,000 drug addicts collected

KABUL (BNA) Personal Security of Kabul collected 1000 drug addicts from different parts of Kabul city in few days. The IEA's spokesman, Zabihullah Mujahid, About a thousand drug addicts were collected from different parts of Kabul city and transferred to the hospital, to save them from the cold weather. The issues of drug addicts in the country raised concern with the cold weather, and seventy of them have died due to the cold weather in Herat alone so far.

Work on key dam to be completed in spring

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Ministry of Energy and Water said that work on the construction of the Shah wa Arus Dam in Kabul is expected to be completed in the coming spring. The dam is located in the Shakardara district in the north of Kabul city. MoEW officials said work on the project has been completed by 97 percent. They added that the project will irrigate 3,600 acres of agricultural land and produce 1.2 megawatts of power. "The construction of the project was kicked off in 2010 and it is expected to be completed by the next spring," said Aminullah Ihsas, the project manager. "The construction of the project was delayed due to some reasons and it was resumed after the Islamic Emirate came to power," said Mujeeb Rahman Haqpal, head of the Kabul water management department of the MoEW. In charge of the project, Aminullah Ihsas said the construction of the dam cost more than \$50 million.

Oil deal increases China's strategic interest

KABUL (Khaama Press): Chinese company's oil deal with the Taliban government increases the economic and security cooperation between Kabul and Beijing, which "will undermine US interests in the region and the ability to respond.", Analysts say. Early this month, the Taliban signed the extraction contract of the Amu oil field with the Chinese company- China Petroleum Economics and Information Research Center (CPEIC) in the northern Afghanistan-Amu Darya basin, raising alarm bells in the west. The signing ceremony took place on January 5 in the presence of Chinese Ambassador to Afghanistan Wang Yu, the Acting Minister of Mines and petroleum of Afghanistan, Shahabuddin Delaware, and other senior Taliban figures, including Abdul Ghani Baradar, the acting deputy Prime minister for economic affairs. The amount of investment will be more than USD 500 million with 20 % of Afghanistan's share, and the oil extraction capacity is estimated from 200 to 1000 tons a day; expected that 3000 jobs will be created for Afghans inside the country. This is the first significant energy investment by the Chinese company since the takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban in August 2021. Experts believe that such an agreement and investment by a Chinese company increases the economic and security cooperation between Kabul and Beijing, which "will undermine America's interests in the region and the ability to respond", wrote Sajoyan, a researcher at the American Foreign Policy Council in Washington. Despite the growing terror threat and the recent attack on Chinese business travelers, Beijing signed the major oil riches field in Afghanistan. According to a Washington-based analyst, China wants to address the rising demand for crude oil. Meanwhile, there is a security concern about the several Uyghur separatist movements labelled as terrorist groups by the United Nations and the US Department of State.

Afghan Interior Minister meets EU delegation



KABUL (Khaama Press): Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani, the Acting Interior Minister of the Islamic Emirate met with Raffaella Lodice, Head of the European Union Delegation to Afghanistan on Wednesday. The Acting Interior Minister praised the active role the European Union mission is playing in Afghanistan during these difficult times, particularly the organization's humanitarian aid and support programs saving the lives of thousands of vulnerable Afghan families across the country. Mr. Haqqani wholeheartedly appreciated the EU for standing with the people of Afghanistan amid these challenging economic times. For her part, Raffaella Lodice thanked the Acting Interior Minister for taking significant actions to ensure the security of the international humanitarian aid workers to continue working for the people of Afghanistan across fields. The meeting comes as the United Nations delegation have already arrived in Kabul for talks with the Taliban authorities on human rights, girls' education, women's work issue, and more. The UN delegation includes Deputy Secretary-General Amina Mohammed and Sima Bahous, executive secretary of UN Women, spokesman Farhan Haq said, according to official sources. Taliban's latest gender-based restrictions barring girls and women from attending university and working with non-governmental aid organizations prompted worldwide condemnations, calling for Afghanistan's de facto regime to reverse the decision and respect basic human rights. UN secretary general Antonio Guterres says nothing can justify keeping girls out of the classroom, and it is the responsibility of the Taliban authorities to provide equal chances for boys and girls to get an education in a peaceful environment. The Taliban-run administration of Kabul is currently faced with critical challenges including poverty, hunger, security, and unemployment – too big for them to find comprehensive solutions.

Families of drug addicts admitted to rehab center

KABUL (TOLOnews): Amidst a campaign to round up drug addicts from the city, at least 10 members of the families of drug addicts, including women and children, were admitted to the 150-bed rehab center in Kabul. Officials said the families were living under a bridge in the Pul-e-Sokhta area west of Kabul. "Our team members went to the area and rounded up eight drug addicts and took them to the center," said Mursal Sadat, social manager of a rehab center. Zulaikha, the daughter of a drug addict, said she spent one night with her father under the bridge in the area. "We need shelter. We don't have a shelter," said Zulaikha said. Rukhshana, the mother of Zulaikha, said she lost her three children after her husband got addicted to drugs. "My youngest child was four years old and I lost him, and my eldest son was five years old and we lost him too," said Rukhshana, mother of Zulaikha. Royya, 16, daughter of a drug addict, said she was seven years old when she started using drugs. She also used to sell drugs, she said. "I was addicted to drugs because of my family and I sold drugs under the bridge," said Royya. Officials of the Ministry of Interior Affairs said that they have rounded up more than 10,000 drug addicts. "So far, we have rounded up 10,000 drug addicts from all over the country. At least 6,500 of them are from Kabul and Herat," said Abdul Nafi Takor, Ministry of Interior Affairs spokesman. This ministry said that the process will continue until they collect all drug addicts. This comes as dozens of drug addicts have lost their lives due to hypothermia in different parts of the country amidst an unprecedented fall in temperature.

Ripped banknotes problematic

GHAZNI CITY (Pajhwok): The increasing number of worn-out banknotes in circulation is fuelling concerns among residents of southern Ghazni province. They say the growing number of old banknotes in the province has created many problems for them. Banknotes of all denominations have become old, but the 10, 20, 50 and 100 afghani bills have become so ragged that they cannot be used any longer, inhabitants claim. They asked the officials concerned to address the issue because old bills have landed businesspeople and members of the general public in a difficult situation. Najibullah, a shopkeeper in Ghazni City, told Pajhwok Afghan News: "When customers buy things, they provide us with torn banknotes, which other clients refuse to accept. They reason the bills are so old." The problem is the banknotes are now too old to use, according to Najibullah, who urged the authorities to replace the bills. Nazar Gul, another shopkeeper, also raised the same issue. He estimated of his 5,000 afs daily sales, he receives 2,000 afs notes in good condition. The rest of money he is paid is unacceptable for others. The government should take steps to resolve problems of shopkeepers and their customers, Gul added. But those who purchase goods from shopkeepers and companies claim at times they come to blows with sellers because of frayed banknotes. Bismillah, an inhabitant of Andar district, Shopkeepers and representatives of companies don't accept old notes, a big problem for customers and shopkeepers."

Haji Juma Taraki, deputy head of the Ghazni Moneychangers Union, acknowledged the worn-out bills had created problems for the people. Taraki told Pajhwok the government previously collected damaged banknotes every two or three years. Over the past four year, however, no such drive had been carried out, he deplored. It was the responsibility of the central bank (Da Afghanistan Bank) to take such bills out of circulation, he explained. "We have shared this issue time and again with officials of Da Afghanistan Bank, who promised to resolve it soon," Taraki pointed out. Pajhwok tried to get the view of the Da Afghanistan Bank's provincial branch, but officials there refused to comment in this regard. But Hasiibullah Noori, spokesman for the central bank in Kabul, said: "It is a normal thing for us to print banknotes and inject them into the market in line with our fiscal policy and market requirement..." Economists believe releasing new banknotes into the market and withdrawing damaged bills create transaction-related facilities. The former government had signed an agreement with a Polish company on the printing of 10 billion afghani banknotes. Central bank officials had acknowledged on November 10, 2021 taking the delivery of the first batch of the newly-printed banknotes. No new banknotes have since been circulated.

HERAT (TOLOnews): At least 140 people were hospitalized for carbon monoxide poisoning in Herat province, officials said. Officials said that many of the patients are children and women poisoned by carbon monoxide at home. "Within the past 24 hours, 130 to 140 patients have been brought to the emergency ward of the hospital," said Ahmad Farhad Afzali, head of the hospital. Herat residents said that they are using gas as the only option to warm their homes. "It was cold and my family turned on the gas. I would have lost 21 members of my family if I had arrived five minutes late," said Abdul Qadir, a Herat resident who brought his family to the regional hospital in the province. "We don't have power, and we are forced to use the gas. So far, two of my family members have died of carbon monoxide poisoning," said Shakila, a resident of Herat. Doctors warned that negligence in the use of gas could be deadly for families. "The negligence of families causes carbon monoxide poisoning and it causes devastating incidents," said Mohammad Daud Hashimi, a doctor at the hospital. Health officials said that the sudden fall in the temperature has increased the number of their patients. "We have dismissed some of them who recovered and were in good condition," said Abdul Sami Sadaat, an official of the hospital. This comes as some families use coal for warming their homes which also causes carbon monoxide poisoning among people.

Work on Afghan-Uzbek joint market completed

KABUL (Agencies): Uzbek officials say that the construction of the first phase of the Afghanistan-Uzbekistan joint market on the border line between the two countries has been completed and the distribution of shops for traders has begun. Qut Jore Youf, the deputy of the Afghan-Uzbek joint market, told media that this project was created to expand business relations and create jobs for Afghans and the people of Uzbekistan. In this market, along with Uzbek traders, Afghan traders and entrepreneurs can also sell their work and activities. Mr. Jore Youf said: More than four thousand shops, health centers, restaurants and guest houses will be built in this market. Afghan citizens can shop in this market for ten days without receiving a visa. Meanwhile, the officials of the Balkh Chamber of Commerce and Investment and traders say that the creation of this market can provide a basis for showcasing the country's domestic products and expanding the economic activities of traders. On the other hand, officials of the Balkh Chamber of Commerce and Investment says that the establishment of this market can provide a platform for the display of Afghanistan's domestic products and the expansion of the economic activities of Afghan businessmen. The market being built to expand the economic relations between Afghanistan and Uzbekistan and to provide business opportunities for the businessmen of the two countries.

FM stresses strengthen ties with Indonesia



KABUL (Agencies): Country's Acting Foreign Minister, Amir Khan Muttaqi in a telephone conversation with the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, stressed on the strengthen of ties between the two countries. Mrs. Ritno Marsudi, Foreign Minister of Indonesia, in this telephone conversation with Amir Khan Muttaqi, Afghanistan Foreign Minister, expressed her condolences on the recent explosion at the gate of the Ministry that caused to the death of a number of employees, said Afghan Foreign Ministry in a statement. According to the Afghan Foreign Ministry's statement in this telephone conversation, both sides discussed on other related mutual interest issues. For his part, Foreign Minister thanked Mrs. Marsudi for her sympathy and both sides stressed the strengthening of ties between the two countries.

Political and humanitarian issues should be separated



KABUL (Agencies): Deputy Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in a meeting with Deputy Director of "IRC" organization said: "That political affairs and humanitarian issues, should be separated." Deputy Prime Minister, Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi, met with Mrs. Medlien Deputy of International Rescue Committee "IRC" organization. Ms. Medlien said: "IRC" has been active in the sector of humanitarian aid in many countries, including Afghanistan, for many years, adding that the organization, after the regime changed on August 15, 2021, according to the needs of the people of Afghanistan, this country did not leave and continued to help the people. She asked the officials of the Islamic Emirate to increase their cooperation with this organization in order to continue providing assistance to the people of Afghanistan in various sectors. Ms. Medlien said that currently eight thousand and seven hundred people, including men and women, are working in this organization. In a situation where people are in need of cooperation, it is necessary to continue providing aid to the deserving, in this regard, we want the cooperation of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, she added. For his part, Deputy PM Hanafi, while hailing the humanitarian activities of the "IRC" called the continuation of the activities of this organization important, said "After nearly half a century of war and insecurity and the cold winter of this year, the people of Afghanistan need more humanitarian aid. In this meeting, Hanafi stressed that the political and humanitarian issues should be separated adding that humanitarian aid should not be link to political issues. Deputy PM Hanafi, called the issues of drug addicts challenging problems and asked the "IRC" organization to cooperate with the Islamic Emirate in the field of collecting and treating drug addicts in the country.

140 people hospitalized for carbon monoxide poisoning in Herat

HERAT (TOLOnews): At least 140 people were hospitalized for carbon monoxide poisoning in Herat province, officials said. Officials said that many of the patients are children and women poisoned by carbon monoxide at home. "Within the past 24 hours, 130 to 140 patients have been brought to the emergency ward of the hospital," said Ahmad Farhad Afzali, head of the hospital. Herat residents said that they are using gas as the only option to warm their homes. "It was cold and my family turned on the gas. I would have lost 21 members of my family if I had arrived five minutes late," said Abdul Qadir, a Herat resident who brought his family to the regional hospital in the province. "We don't have power, and we are forced to use the gas. So far, two of my family members have died of carbon monoxide poisoning," said Shakila, a resident of Herat. Doctors warned that negligence in the use of gas could be deadly for families. "The negligence of families causes carbon monoxide poisoning and it causes devastating incidents," said Mohammad Daud Hashimi, a doctor at the hospital. Health officials said that the sudden fall in the temperature has increased the number of their patients. "We have dismissed some of them who recovered and were in good condition," said Abdul Sami Sadaat, an official of the hospital. This comes as some families use coal for warming their homes which also causes carbon monoxide poisoning among people.

CARE resumes activities in Afghanistan

KABUL (TOLOnews): CARE, an international aid agency, in a statement said it will be resuming its health and nutrition operations in Afghanistan after obtaining the necessary assurances from the Ministry of Public Health that "our female staff will be able to carry out their work safely and unfettered, both in community-based and support roles." Earlier, Save the Children announced that it would resume some of its activities in the country. "Our female colleagues are an essential part of our organization and we cannot deliver a principled response without them, so we welcome the opportunity to resume our health and nutrition operations given the scope of the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan," the statement said. The Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) said there have been no restrictions for women in the health sector and that CARE had stopped operations based on its own decision. "First of all, the staff belonging to the Ministry of Public Health have not faced any problems and their operations are underway," said Sharafat Zaman Amarkhil, a spokesman for the public health ministry. "Some of the organizations have stopped their activities due to misunderstanding. A meeting took place in this regard and these organizations have resumed their activities." Analysts said that the caretaker government should cancel its decision on banning women from working in NGOs and education.

FM stresses strengthen ties with Indonesia



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LAHORE: Women activists of Jamat-e-Islami holding a protest in favour of their demands at Liberty Chowk.

## PTI's 'appeasement' policy towards TTP created issues: FM

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari Tuesday blamed the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) led government for creating problems for Pakistan through its policy of "appeasement" towards the outlawed Tahreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP).

During an interview with Al Jazeera, Bilawal termed Khan's approach "wrong" and assured that the incumbent government has put an end to the PTI's approach. Bilawal said that the government — in its National Security Council (NSC) meeting with top political and military leadership — decided that it would "not tolerate" terrorist groups in Pakistan and violators of the law.

Pakistan has witnessed a sharp rise in terrorism incidents, especially in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan, during the past couple of months after the TTP announced to end ceasefire with Pakistan. The Pakistani Taliban, comprising of local fighters mostly, shares some ideolog-

ical affinity with the neighbouring Afghanistan's Taliban rulers.

Islamabad has repeatedly said that Afghanistan's soil is being used against Pakistan, however, the claims have been denied by Kabul. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, has also asked the government in Kabul — without naming it — not to provide safe havens to terrorist groups on its soil. Despite the Afghan government's ban on women from working in NGOs, the foreign minister reiterated the need to engage with the Taliban. "The solution is to engage the Afghan government and try to convince them to live up to their promises to the international community whether it is to do with women's rights or the issue of terrorism," said Bilawal. The PPP leader ruled out the possibility of disengaging, saying that it is not even an option for Pakistan as both countries share a long and porous border.

Talking about the attack on Pakistan's Head of Mission to Kabul

Ubaid-ur-Rehman Nizamani, the foreign minister confirmed that he had not called him back home. "He was due back for some briefings and dialogues. I hope we will have the security necessary to send him soon," he said.

According to the statistics released by an Islamabad-based think-tank, Pakistan Institute for Conflict and Security Studies (PICSS), the number of militant attacks increased by 44% in December compared to November 2022. In December, the militants carried out 49 attacks in which 56 people were killed including 32 security forces personnel and 17 civilians.

In these attacks, 81 people also got injured including 31 security forces personnel and 50 civilians. The report added that December saw the highest number of militant attacks in a single month in 2022. The PICSS data also shows that the year 2022 saw a 28% increase in terror attacks compared with 2021 which is also the highest during the last five years.

## No 'relationship' with new military leadership now: Imran

LAHORE (Agencies): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan said on Wednesday that his party currently had no contact with the new military leadership. The deposed prime minister, speaking during an interview with BBC Urdu, denies links with army chief General Syed Asim Munir and claimed that the general elections will take place in April 2023.

Blaming former army chief Gen (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa for "helping the government in ruling the country", the PTI chief predicted that the government will now be "forced to hold general elections this April". "When they came into power, they ended their corruption cases worth Rs1,100 billion," he said. Censuring the incumbent government for the economic crisis in the country, the former premier said that Pakistan's economic conditions were never like this, emphasising that fair and transparent polls are the only solution to these problems.

of their cases have been forgiven." He said that in a bid to move towards free and fair elections, his party "sacrificed" two assemblies — Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab. "Now this government will be forced into holding elections in April."

Explaining the reason behind the ongoing economic crisis, the ex-PM said that no investor or businessperson trusts the incumbent government and neither do foreign investors. "Pakistan has been plunged into a quagmire. To save the country from a Sri Lanka-like situation, we need free and fair elections," the PTI chairman said. Khan said he feared another economic crisis was in the offing as the foreign exchange reserves had depleted to \$4 billion and commodities of the same value were stuck at the ports because of the shortage of dollars.

"The prices of commodities are rising, unemployment is increasing, and industries are shutting down," the PTI chief said. Pakistan's economy has crumbled alongside a simmering political crisis, with the rupee plummeting and inflation at decades-high levels, while devastating floods and a major shortage of energy have piled on further pressure. The South Asian nation's enormous national debt — currently \$274 billion, or nearly 90% of gross domestic product — and the endless

effort to service it makes Pakistan particularly vulnerable to economic shocks.

Shedding light on the political situation in Punjab, the former prime minister said that the establishment tried to make Parvez Elahi the chief minister with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz's (PML-N) backing. "Elahi was loyal to us, we had to return the favour and now they will be merged in PTI and become a part of us," the former premier said. He further added that "someone should ask them why had they brought down our government through a foreign conspiracy?"

Khan went on to say that the economy under our government was performing very well in 17 years. What were we doing wrong that our government was brought down?" The former premier maintained that after ousting PTI from power, now they are unable to maintain the economy, adding that "Gen Bajwa was told that if this conspiracy becomes successful then the economy could not be sustained." They could not maintain the economic condition and the market immediately lost confidence in the incumbents, the former premier added. After assuming power, they realised that they did not have any road map for ameliorating the economic conditions of Pakistan.

### Siraj on LG polls: Don't try to test our patience

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Sirajul Haq has said the Returning Officers (ROs) were forced to change the results by the Sindh government in Karachi local bodies polls.

Addressing a press conference in Islamabad on Wednesday, he said that the rigging in Sunday's election was conducted by the PPP's government to prove the provincial ruling party as the leading party in the port city.

Sirajul Haq while quoting results from Farm 11, said that the JI had been declared winner in 94 union councils. But, he added, the election results were delayed and then changed at the offices of the ROs. "We want our mandate back," he demanded, asserting the JI was ready to serve the people of Karachi. He said the JI was a peaceful party but it had many options to take back its mandate. "Don't try to test our patience," he said.

The JI chief hoped the PPP co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari will play the role to bring Karachi out of confusion. "I expect Asif Zardari will issue directions to the PPP Sindh chapter to accept the JI mandate." The JI chief said the victory of his party in Karachi was not unexpected. Whenever transparent elections were held in the port city, the people put confidence on the JI, he added, mentioning late Abdustar Afghani and late Naimtullah Khan who had served as Mayor Karachi and proved their brilliance.

He said that Karachi was financial jugular vein of the country and it had long been experiencing instability. He said the JI would return peace and prosperity in the biggest city and fulfill the expectations of the Karachiites. Sirajul Haq said the PDM, the PPP and the PTI added to the miseries of the masses, bringing political and economic crises.

### IHC adjourns Swati's plea against CDA

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court on Wednesday adjourned the contempt plea filed by PTI Senator Azam Swati against the Capital Development Authority's.

As per details, the court rejected the plea to issue a contempt notice to the respondents. Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir said that the contempt plea which the petitioner mentioned, was neither the court order nor the petitioner's plea. The court remarked that the petitioner himself is ready to demolish illegal construction but urged to stop the authorities from demolishing the illegally constructed farmhouses.

There is no mention in the petition to de-seal the property, Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir added. Earlier, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) suspended the CDA notice to seal PTI Senator Azam Swati's farmhouse.

## Sindh LG polls: PPP, PTI workers clash in Keamari

KARACHI (Agencies): PTI and PPP workers clashed outside the Keamari deputy commissioner's (DC) office in Karachi on Wednesday, pelting either side with stones during the consolidation of the results of the recently held local government elections in Sindh.

On Wednesday, the PTI accused the PPP of attacking its workers while the Keamari DC maintained that PTI workers forcibly entered the office and harassed staff. Keamari DC Mukhtiar Abro, who is also the district returning officer, told media that the PTI workers had "encircled" his office.

He alleged that PTI's Ali Haider Zaidi and others forcibly entered the premises and broke the locks. "The PTI workers ransacked the computer and harassed staff including female returning officers who were busy performing their electoral duty," he said. He further said that PTI workers threw stones and broke the windows of several vehicles. He said police took action against the hooliganism and removed the party workers from the DC office.

Abro said a first information report would be lodged against PTI leaders and workers over the incident. A handout issued by the Keamari police said SSP Fida Hussain Janwari had reached the spot and brought the situation under control. The statement said district police arrived at the scene with water cannons and other equipment to deal with any emergency situation. It added that the situation was currently under control and all political workers had been dispersed.

A reporter and a cameraman of private TV channel had sustained injuries during the clash. He said that the two were provided first aid at Abbasi Shaheed Hospital and were later shifted to Aga Khan University. Zaidi, on the other hand,

alleged that he had gone to meet his candidates and talk to the press when PPP "goons prepared with stones and under full protection of Sindh police attacked".

"Media men and PTI workers sustained injuries," he said. Talking to 92 News, Zaidi said PTI workers were camped outside the DC office since Monday, awaiting the official results. He said that he had visited the office to talk to party workers. "They already had PPP goons stationed there with sticks and stones, and as soon as I was set to begin talking to the media, they started throwing them," he said.

Zaidi alleged that the hooliganism occurred with "police protection". PTI Karachi leader Alamgir Khan alleged that PPP workers entered the DC office and vandalised the place, adding that a party worker was "severely injured" in the violence. PTI Senator Faisal Javed also strongly condemned the incident, saying that it was an example of "hooliganism at its peak". He urged the courts to take notice of the incident.

PTI Karachi president Bilal Ghaffar announced a protest for outside the DC office and instructed party workers to reach the site at 8pm. "The PTI will protest against the Sindh government's use of official machinery in local elections," he said. Meanwhile, PPP Senator Waqar Mehdi said that electoral staff were busy compiling and consolidating the results of the LG polls when the PTI workers, led by Zaidi, Bilal Ghaffar and others, "resorted to hooliganism and attacked PPP workers who were also present there".

"The PTI workers also ransacked the offices," he added. Mehdi said the police had brought the situation under control. The senator accused the PTI of "creating chaos" in the metropolis as they could "not tolerate their defeat" in the LG polls.

## KP Government approves first-ever Urban Policy

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mahmood Khan chaired the 2nd meeting of the Land Use and Building Control Council in which formal approval was accorded to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Urban Policy 2030 along with its action plan, said an official handout issued here on Wednesday.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has become the first ever province across Pakistan having its own Urban Policy. The council also approved master plans for Mardan city, Wana Urban Areas (South Waziristan) and Urban areas of Miran Shah and Mir Ali (North Waziristan).

The policy has been prepared by the Urban Policy and Planning Unit and Sub-National Governance Programme after a rigorous consultative effort spanning over 12 months. The policy has inputs from both local and foreign experts as well as Public input obtained through massive advertisement via print, electronic and social media, webinar, and seminars across the province.

The Chief Minister stressed on the need for effective implementation of the master plans and directed the authorities concerned to come up with a pragmatic implementation mechanism within the

next three months adding that ultimate goal behind all this effort is to have a well-organized and useful land use and management system in accordance with the contemporary needs and requirements of the cities and Urban Centres in the province. "Streamlining the civic facilities in all sectors is the need of the hour," we cannot afford any delay or negligence to this effect", he added.

Briefing about the major components and principles of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Urban Policy, it was told that the policy applies to all cities in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and will be applicable to Urban Area Development Authorities and the Authorities under the KP Tourism Act. Policy targets will be reviewed after every 2 years till 2030, and then developed for 3-5 years on a rolling basis.

According to details, the policy encourages development of smart cities, having due consideration of social, environmental and gender considerations in city development. The city administrators will have the flexibility to chalk out their own city management plans in accordance with the needs and requirements of their respective areas.

Key components of urban policy include: Land Use and Floor Area Planning; Affordable

Housing; Economic & Real Estate Development; Municipal Services & Livability; Traffic & Mobility ease; Tourism in Cities and in the Northern Zone; Institutional Capacity Building to implement policy properly and Strategic City Management Planning etc. The forum was also briefed in details about the master planning for cities and was told that the master planning of four cities, including Mardan, Wana, Miran Shah and Mir Ali, has been completed whereas master plans of 16 other major cities of the province will also be completed by March this year.

These Master plans will make it easier for the Planning and Development Department to conceive, design, implement and monitor development schemes. The master plans will also ensure that the guiding principles of the provincial government regarding preservation of agricultural land and other green areas are not violated. These master plans have been prepared keeping in view the projected population of the cities by 2042 and increasing demand of civic facilities in near future. Current land uses and population density have been observed carefully and viable master plans have been finalized in consultation with all the stakeholders.

## Joint work to resolve economic issues: President

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: While talking to the Presidents of Chambers of Commerce and Industry from across the country, President Dr Arif Alvi has said that the parliament, judiciary, government and business community needed to work in tandem to identify the issues faced by the nation and resolve them with commitment and efficiency to bring about political, economic and financial stability in the country.

He said all those voices who were predicting the derailment of the political and democratic process needed to be discouraged wholeheartedly. He said democracy in Pakistan should be sustained and strengthened with each passing day. The President expressed these views while talking to the Presidents and representatives of 54 chambers of commerce and industry from across the country, including the representatives of women's chambers of commerce, small and medium chambers of commerce, APTMA, P@SHA, Pakistan Poultry Association, and the Stock Exchange, here at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Wednesday.

Representatives of Karachi, Lahore, Faisalabad, Sarhad and Rawalpindi chambers of commerce, and the pharmaceutical sector were also present during the meeting. Speaking on the occasion, the President said that Pakistan was facing an economic situation which necessitated the holding of general elections in agreement and consensus of all the political stakeholders to elect a fully representative government empow-

ered and mandated to take critical and difficult decisions and provide solutions to the problems and issues faced by the nation on the political, economic and financial fronts.

The President said that signing the agreement with the IMF was an important decision which was likely to help the country resolve its financial and economic difficulties, and added that a representative government mandated by the people could sell the difficult decisions to the people of Pakistan. He termed the political stability in the country as the basic and most vital element for creating financial and economic stability and stressed the need for all political stakeholders to promptly start negotiations and deliberations on setting out an agreed-upon date for holding general elections.

Replying to a question, the President appreciated the establishment for its intent to avoid involvement in political affairs and stressed upon the political forces to jointly grab this opportunity and resort to democratic means of resolving the issues faced by the nation and lead it toward progress and prosperity. The President said most of the country's import bill comprised of petroleum products used for energy production and transportation, adding that this cost could be substantially reduced by adopting an all-encompassing energy, water, and gas conservation strategy, which was implementable and could deliver results with the commitment and support of the business community.

He also emphasized the shifting of

business and industrial processes to green energy, like solar and wind, to not only reduce the import bill but also to protect the environment. He said there was no dearth of ideas in Pakistan but there seemed to be a communication gap between decision-making authorities, target populations, and agencies responsible for their implementation. The President stated that Pakistan took the right decisions at the right time to contain and counter the COVID-19 pandemic and through the coordinated efforts of all the stakeholders, we were able to defeat the pandemic in an effective manner as compared to regional as well as other countries of the world.

He said by adopting a similar approach, we could identify the issues confronted by the nation on the political, economic and financial fronts, find out consensus-based and fully sold-out solutions, and implement them with full commitment in an efficient and proactive manner, which would help in coming out of our present economic problems. The President said the women's chambers of commerce should provide leadership to women entrepreneurs and start-ups and help them in securing loans from the banks to start and set up their own businesses. He said although the banks had promised 100% disbursement of loans to all the women applying for loans, unfortunately only 5% of the loans set out had been availed. He asked the women's chambers of commerce to lead the way and facilitate women in securing loans to promote their businesses.



He also emphasised the need to utilize the skill training programs launched by Meta to help women gain marketable skills and sell their products and services online. He said Pakistan needed to promote the cottage industry in the country, especially at the grassroots level, adding that unlike the prevailing thinking, the scope of the cottage industry had expanded to include gemstone and diamond processing, chip design, and other sophisticated fields.

The President sought the focus of the business community in five areas of importance, including the provision of a harassment-free work environment to women working in businesses, factories and industries, adding that women's inclusion and financial empowerment was the most important step for the economic growth of the country. He said differently-abled persons, who made up about 10 per cent of the population, were not included in the economic mainstream and stressed upon the

business community to create customized and productive jobs to give them gainful employment which also added value to the employers.

He said the business community's active involvement was needed for reducing the burden of mental health issues which was at 24% in Pakistan, reducing the mortality rate due to breast cancer, and bringing out-of-school children to the school system. He expressed his dismay over the dismal situation of the primary school enrolment rate of children in Pakistan, which as per the World Bank's latest report was only 68% in Pakistan, whereas in India, Sri Lanka and Bangladesh, it was over 98%.

He said it was a grave situation and all stakeholders including the business community needed to take decisive steps to ensure the enrolment of children. While commenting on the proposals of the business community, the President said that the Trust Laws of the country needed to be amended to facilitate the registration and oper-

ation of Trusts easier which would help in the promotion of business in the country. He stressed early resolution of the issues faced by the business community amicably and prudently to improve the prevailing situation. He said a consultative process should be started as soon as possible to help the business community to resolve their issues in terms of taxation, import clearance and opening of Lines of Credit.

During the meeting, the representatives of the business community shared their concerns regarding the economic situation of the country and suggested solutions to overcome the present financial issues. The President was also informed by the business community about the non-clearance of raw materials used to make life-saving drugs at the country's ports, which according to one member of the business community, if not handled promptly would lead to the shortage of essential and life-saving medicines in the country.