

**Bilawal leaves for Dubai**  
KARACHI (INP): Foreign Minister and Pakistan People's Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has left for Dubai from Karachi Airport on Wednesday. Assefa Bhutto Zardari was also accompanying Bilawal Bhutto. Both PPP leaders departed for Dubai through Emirates Airlines flight EK-603. Bilawal Bhutto's Dubai visit is not an official engagement.

 @thefrontierpost

First national English daily published from Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Karachi and Washington D.C

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIX No. 10 Regd. No. 241 RAJAB 03 1444 -- THURSDAY, JANUARY 26 2023 PESHAWAR EDITION 12 PAGES Price. 20



RAHIM YAR KHAN: Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif called on with President of United Arab Emirate Mohammed Bin Zayed Al-Nahyan at Chandana Airport.

## Fespicable act of Holy Quran's desecration condemned

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan on Wednesday strongly condemned the despicable act of desecration of the Holy Quran in the Netherlands on January 22, 2023. "It is undoubtedly a provocative Islamophobic hate crime committed under the guise of freedom of expression. Such offensive acts deeply hurt the feelings of 1.5 billion Muslims around the world and can create disharmony among the international community," the Foreign Office spokesperson said in a statement.

The spokesperson said that Pakistan had always maintained that freedom of expression came with responsibilities. "We also believe that it is the responsibility of national governments and the international community at large to prevent such vile acts, which are perpetrated with the ulterior motive to provoke and incite religious hatred and violence."

The spokesperson said that the international community should raise its collective voice against Islamophobia and work together to promote inter-faith harmony and peaceful coexistence. That was the spirit behind the resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly in 2022 to mark March 15 as the International Day to Combat Islamophobia, the spokesperson added. As Pakistan's concerns were being conveyed to the authorities in the Netherlands, the spokesperson urged them to be mindful of the sentiments of the people of Pakistan and the Muslims around the world and take steps to prevent such hateful and Islamophobic acts.

## Judgment in power plant case reserved

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): An accountability court in Islamabad has reserved its verdict in the acquittal pleas filed by Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah and others in the Nooriabad Power Plant reference. AC Judge Muhammad Bashir heard the case while the accountability court will announce its reserved verdict on February 15.

At the outset of the hearing, a petition was submitted on behalf of Sindh CM Shah seeking his exemption from the court appearance for today. The NAB opposed the acquittal pleas and dismissal of the reference. The NAB prosecutor said that in the light of the Islamabad High Court judgment, the reference could not be sent back to the NAB. As per the IHC decision, the proper forum where the reference could be sent is Anti-Corruption Court, Karachi, the prosecutor added.

The lawyers, however, said that the IHC decision did not apply on this reference. The NAB prosecutor said that the accountability court did not have the jurisdiction to hear the reference.

## 'Arrest not illegal' Lahore High Court throws out plea seeking to nullify Fawad's arrest

LAHORE (Agencies): The Lahore High Court (LHC) Wednesday threw out a petition seeking to declare the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senior Vice President Fawad Chaudhry illegal, asking the former minister to approach the relevant forum for having the case against him dismissed. Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh told Fawad's counsel that his client's arrest was not "illegal" as the police had followed the rules and procedures required for detaining the former minister.

Fawad was arrested from his residence earlier today after he publicly "threatened" the members of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in a media talk outside Imran Khan's residence in Zaman Park a day ago. The LHC had ordered authorities to present Fawad before it in response to a petition filed by Fawad's cousin, Nabeel Shehzad, for the "recovery" of the former federal minister. The petitioner had filed a habeas corpus plea and urged the court to "recover" the PTI leader after the Islamabad police acquired his transitory remand. He also appealed to the court to stop any illegal action against the PTI leader.

Justice Sheikh, while hearing the plea, had ordered the authorities to present the PTI leader before the court by 1:30pm. The time was later extended to 2pm, but the authorities failed to produce Fawad before LHC. Then, the court again told the



authorities to produce Fawad at 6pm, but they failed to follow the orders. Interestingly, the orders were issued after a local court of Lahore had approved Fawad's transitory remand in a seditious case filed against him in Islamabad on the election commission's complaint. At the hearing, Fawad's lawyer informed the court that the motorcade transporting Fawad has left for Islamabad — despite the court's orders to produce the PTI leader. The government's lawyer said that he is unable to state Fawad's exact location. At this, Justice Sheikh asked the lawyer how long it will take for him to inquire about the location. The lawyer said that he needs half an hour. "Bring him back even if he is taken to Islamabad," Justice Sheikh remarked before adjourning the hearing for a while. When the case resumed, Justice Sheikh inquired where the PTI leader was. The government lawyer responded by saying that that he has spoken to everyone and the PTI leader was not in the Punjab Police's

## PTI leader presented before court

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry was presented before an Islamabad district and sessions court on Wednesday, hours after being arrested for "inciting violence against a constitutional institution". After hearing arguments, the court reserved the verdict on the Islamabad police's request for the PTI leader's eight-day physical remand.

"Call IG Punjab," responded Justice Sheikh. The judge after passing the remarks said that the police chief was not available at the moment. The judge then issued orders to IGs Punjab and Islamabad to appear before the court at 6pm. "First present Fawad and then I will hear you," remarked Justice Sheikh before issuing the summoning orders. When the hearing resumed, Fawad's lawyer said that his client has not been presented before the court despite orders. "He was arrested within the limits of Lahore and every TV channel covered it. The court's order's been violated." In his defence, IG Punjab Usman Anwar said that as the mobile signals were "weak", he could not contact the police party that was transporting the PTI leader.

(Continued on Back Page)

## Some elements trying to politicise Fawad's arrest

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Wednesday said no political victimization had been carried out during the last nine months of the coalition government as otherwise all the entire leadership of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) would have been in jail by now.

"Some elements are trying to politicise the arrest of Chaudhry Fawad Hussain associating it with freedom of expression, but let me be clear this is not a political arrest. Rather he has been arrested in a case of hurling life threats to the ECP officials and their families," the minister said while addressing a news conference.

She vehemently rejected the notion of "political revenge". Action against Fawad was taken on a complaint lodged by the Secretary of Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) at the Kohsar Police Station (Islamabad) for threatening the ECP officials, she maintained. She reiterated that the government had not instituted any case against the PTI leaders as action against them was being taken by the institutions on account of their wrongdoings, so there was no question of political victimization.

"No politician gets happy

with the arrest of another politician as it is against the spirit of democracy," she said, urging the media and the public to understand the "difference between a political arrest and a legal one". Marriyum said it was for the people, the judiciary and other institutions to decide where to draw a line. "If (PTI Chairman) Imran Khan or his spokespersons were allowed to abuse the institutions and then let off scot free the other political parties and 220 million people of Pakistan should also be given the same privilege."

She said for the past nine months the coalition government leaders had been exercising restraint over the abusive language used by the "foul-mouthed" PTI leaders and took no adverse action against them on that count. The minister boasted that no bullet was fired at any journalist, nor their ribs were broken during the last nine months. On the contrary, the PTI government resorted to every step to muzzle the media's voice.

The talk shows of those journalists, who criticized the PTI government, were off aired, and even the then information minister endorsed attacks on the newsmen, she added. Marriyum recalled that Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader Nawaz Sharif was disqualified for having an Iqama



(foreign residential permit) as part of the political victimization, but he neither abused the institutions, nor did intimidate their heads and families.

He (Nawaz Sharif) used to appear before the NAB (National Accountability Bureau) court on a daily basis with his daughter Maryam Nawaz, but never maligned that institution, she added. Recalling the misuse of the power and state resources during the "misrule of Imran Khan", she said on his orders, NAB and the Punjab Police raided the houses of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Shahid Khaqan Abbasi was arrested in her presence, she said, adding Imran Khan took revenge by making arrests of his political opponents without warrants. She said Imran Khan's spokespersons and ministers used to announce on TV screens prior to the arrest of his political opponents.

## ECP de-notifies 43 more PTI MNAs

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Wednesday de-notified 43 more Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members of the National Assembly (MNAs) following the acceptance of their resignations by NA Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf.

After the announcement of PTI MNAs' return to the National Assembly, the federal government made a move to accept their resignations in an apparent bid to reduce the number of opposition lawmakers. The de-notified PTI MNAs includes Riaz Fatyana, Sardar Tariq Hussain, Mohammad Yaqub Sheikh, Murtaza Iqbal, Sardar Mohammad Khan Leghari, Zile Humma, Rukhsana Naveed, Ghazala Saifi, Nousheen Hamid, Sobia Kamal Khan and others.

Earlier, the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) received resignations of 43 more MNAs of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf has accepted and forwarded 43 resignations of the PTI MNAs to the ECP for approval.

Prior to this the PTI Secretary General Asad Umar in his tweet said the PTI's 44 MNAs had decided to withdraw their resignations. He said the PTI has been demanding the NA speaker to accept all the resignations in one go but he remained reluctant to do the same as he announced to approve the resignations one by one after meeting with the lawmakers.

It is pertinent to mention here that after the announcement of PTI MNAs' return to the National Assembly, the federal government made a move to accept their resignations in an apparent bid to reduce the strength of opposition lawmakers. The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf had decided to resign from the National Assembly on April 11 last year, minutes before the election of Shehbaz Sharif as the new prime minister.

## Court reserves verdict on Zardari's plea

ISLAMABAD (INP): An accountability court on Wednesday reserved a decision over a petition of former president Asif Ali Zardari in the Park Lane reference.

A petition filed by former president Asif Ali Zardari on Tuesday stated that the case is not in the jurisdiction of the accountability court after the NAB law amendment in 2022. The court should either send the reference back to NAB or acquit him, the petitioner told the court.

Zardari's counsel Farooq H. Naik appeared before the court, which reserved its decision after arguments of the two sides. The Islamabad High Court has ruled recently in Adam Amin Chaudhry's case that a reference could not be taken back, the cases only to be transferred to other relevant courts, the judge remarked. "The high court's decision not relevant to this case, it is only applicable to a case of amnesty scheme and tax," Zardari's lawyer argued.

NAB Prosecutor Usman Masood opposed the acquittal plea and said that 1.5 billion amount was borrowed in this case, which later increased to an amount of 2.8 billions. The prosecutor pleaded the court to decide jurisdiction in the case.

Former president and PPP co-chairman Zardari, his sister Faryal Talpur and other accused face charges of corruption through fake bank accounts and embezzlement in the financial facility for Park Lane Private Limited and Parthenon (Pvt) Limited.

The Park Lane case being investigated under different sections of the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) 1999, and the Anti-Money Laundering Act, 2010, over Zardari's alleged involvement in a loan and its misappropriation by Parthenon Private Limited. A loan worth Rs 1.5 billion was taken from a bank and transferred to the company's account in a private bank.

# PM, UAE leaders agree to enhance ties

F.P. Report

RAHIM YAR KHAN: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday met President of the United Arab Emirates Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan wherein the two leaders expressed their resolve to further enhance brotherly bilateral relations.

The meeting took place here as the UAE president arrived in Pakistan on a private visit, a PM Office statement said. On his arrival at Chandana Airport, Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan was welcomed by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, Minister for Information Marriyum Aurangzeb, Caretaker Chief Minister of Punjab Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi and Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Syed Tariq Fatemi.

During their meeting, the prime minister recalled his recent visit to the UAE and emphasized that both countries would work on the understandings reached between the two leaders during that visit. Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan said that the brotherly relations between the two countries went back many decades and his father, who had immense love for Pakistan and its people, laid the foundation of their bilateral ties. The UAE president said that he considered Pakistan as his second home and assured the prime minister that the UAE would always stand by Pakistan.

Earlier, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will receive President of United Arab Emirates (UAE) Mohammed bin Zayed Al Nahyan on his arrival in Rahim Yar Khan today. The prime minister, during his day-long visit to Rahim Yar Khan, will welcome the UAE president at the Chandana Airport. "The two leaders will discuss further promotion of brotherly ties between Pakistan and the UAE and other matters of bilateral interest," the PM Office said.

PM urges youth to apply for loans

on easy terms under new scheme: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that under the PM Youth Business & Agriculture Scheme, the young people can apply for a loan up to Rs7.5 million on easy terms conditions while encouraging women, transgender and differently abled people to apply and contribute to national development.

Taking to his Twitter handle, Prime Minister Shehbaz wrote: "I launched PM's Youth Business & Agriculture Loan Scheme yesterday. This new scheme builds on a number of youth development programs. From PEEF loans to laptop scheme to self-employment scheme, PML-N has demonstrated its commitment to youth empowerment under leadership of MNS. "Under the current Loan Scheme, the youth can apply for a loan up to Rs75 lac on easy terms & conditions (there is no interest on loan up to Rs5 lac). I strongly encourage our women, transgenders & differently abled people to apply & contribute to national development."

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif announced the "Aasan Qarza Program" (an easy loan program) for the youth on Tuesday. The PM announced that under this program, his government would provide an easy loan of Rs0.5 million to Rs1.5 million.

PM Shehbaz made this announcement during his address to a ceremony of the easy loan program for youth in Islamabad yesterday. Youth will be provided interest-free loans up to Rs0.5 million and from Rs0.5 million to Rs1.5 million at an interest rate of 7 percent, the PM said adding that these loans will be returned in seven years. The Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif also congratulated Chris Hipkins on becoming the new prime minister of New Zealand. In a tweet, the premier wrote he looked forward to working with him to strengthen and expand the relations between the two friendly countries. "I extend my best wishes to him," he concluded.

## Pakistan & India need to solve Kashmir issue: Ned

Jaile Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: US State Department Spokesperson, Ned Price stated that Kashmir is an issue between Pakistan and India and they need to solve this issue with each other. Ned gave the reply to a question by The Frontier Post that Indian Congress leader Rahul Gandhi in a statement a day earlier had said that once in power, he will give the people of Kashmir their right of autonomy and self determination.

To another question by The Frontier Post regarding corruption reported by the Ukrainian military in the funds and support given by the United States, Ned Price stated that the United States takes transparency and accountability very seriously when it comes to

the support that the US is providing to the people of Ukraine. He said that there is a robust system in place which keeps an eye on how the Billions of Dollars aid is being used. "There are teams in Kiev and here in Washington DC which make sure that no misuse is made in these funds."

Regarding Russia, Ned Price stated that the US desires that the communication lines are always open between both countries and important issues related to prisoner exchange and durable peace can be discussed.

With regard to China buying oil from Russia, Ned Price stated that "now is not the time to do trade activities with Russia." Ned commented the same with regard to China buying oil from Iran and said



that we monitor the trade activities from Iran and that China should follow the sanctions imposed on Iran by the United States. Ned also said that "we would like to see more discussion with China" and the upcoming visit of Secretary Blinken to China will be an opportunity to discuss these issues in detail.

## ECP proposes polling dates for Punjab, KP polls

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Wednesday proposed dates for holding elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The Election Commission wrote letters to principal secretaries of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa governors about the polling day.

The ECP has suggested to hold general elections in Punjab on any date between 9 April to 13 April while in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa it proposed polling day on any date between 15 April to 17 April. The governors will decide about the final date for polling and inform the ECP.

The Election Commission of Pakistan on Tuesday had said that it was ready to hold elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces. An important meeting was held in this connection at the ECP under the chair of Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja. The meeting was told that preparations regarding setting up of polling stations and voters'

lists had been made. The CEC directed to spur efforts for conducting the polls in both the provinces.

The meeting decided to release the election schedule after governors of both the provinces would give their polling dates. The meeting was attended by the ECP members, provincial election commissioners and officials of all the wings of the commission. The meeting mulled over the preparations for the election in Punjab and KP provinces as well as by-polls on the vacant seats. The CEC asked the authorities to expedite appointments of presiding officers and other polling staff for the elections.

**ECP demands Rs20b for holding general elections:** The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), through a letter to Finance Ministry, has demanded 20 billion rupees for holding general elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and by-elections on National Assembly vacant seats, according to a report on Wednesday.

The ECP letter said that Commission needed Rs25

billion to hold elections out of which the electoral body had already received Rs5 billion. Now the Commission required Rs20 billion more. The federal government has been asked to release fund for holding elections.

The letter, written by Secretary Election Commission Omer Hameed Khan, said that Rs 45 billion were approved for holding general elections and the federal government had to release Rs25 in the current fiscal year. The electoral watchdog further said that rest of the amount (Rs20 billion) should be released forthwith so that process of holding elections could be ensured. The ECP also requested the federal government for release of supplementary grant. The expenses to hold general elections were estimated at Rs45 billion which have now increased to Rs61 billion. Election Commission has to hold elections on 297 general seats of Punjab Assembly and 115 seats of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly, besides 64 vacant seats of National Assembly.



## Sindh govt fully committed to uplift industrial zones in Karachi: Saeed

KARACHI (NNI): The Sindh government of the Pakistan People's Party is fully committed to providing maximum facilities to the industries in Karachi.

This was stated by Sindh Labour and Human Resources Minister, Saeed Ghani, on Wednesday as he met a delegation comprising office-bearers of representative associations of industrialists associated with different industrial zones in Karachi.

The delegation met Ghani, who is also PPP Karachi President, for greeting him on the overwhelming victory of the People's Party in the recently held local government polls in the city. The delegation informed the Labour Minister about problems faced by the industrialists in different industrial estates of the city.

Ghani thanked the industrialists for meeting him and said that much harm had been done to the national economy during

the previous regime of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf.

He said the concerned industrialists in Karachi had also acknowledged the efforts of the Sindh government in the last four years to improve the basic civic infrastructure of the industrial zones including reconstructing the road infrastructure. He said the Sindh government more than any other province had adopted the maximum number of laws for the welfare of the labourers and employers in view of the devolution of powers to the provinces after the 18th Constitutional Amendment.

Ghani told the delegation that the issuance of Benazir Mazdoor Card, health, educational facilities and other benefits for labourers and their family members under the aegis of Sindh Employees Social Security Institution were some of the exemplary labour initiatives of the provincial government.

Ghani assured the dele-

gation that he would continue to make efforts to uplift the civic infrastructure and

improve environmental conditions in the industrial zones of the city.



### OFFICE OF THE HOSPITAL DIRECTOR QAZI HUSSAIN AHMED MEDICAL COMPLEX-MTI NOWSHERA



#### NURSING ASSISTANT IN-HOUSE CERTIFICATE TRAINING PROGRAM

The MTI Nowshera is an autonomous medical teaching institution with a board of governors as prescribed by the government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under Medical Teaching Institutions Reform Act 2015 and amendments therein, committed to excellence in medical education, research, patient care and community involvement. The MTI Nowshera invite applications for the nursing assistant Training program from eligible candidates having citizenship of Pakistan domiciled of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

S.#	Name of Training	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS
01	Nursing Assistant	1. The applicant must meet one of the following requirements to take admission; > Matriculation with 45% minimum <b>OR</b> F.Sc/F.A 45% minimum <b>OR</b> > Complete any nursing courses from PNC recognized institutions i.e. LHV, LHW, LPN, FWW, CMW etc. 2. Must be physically capable of performing duties such as bending, lifting, and carrying heavy objects etc.

#### TERMS & CONDITIONS

- Only female candidates up to 35 years of age can submit application for this 01 year paid In-house nursing training program within 15 days from the date of advertisement. The student may not be allowed to continue any other training program at the same time.
- The institution will offer monthly stipend Rs. 10,000/- per month (Rs.15,000/- per month for candidates having nursing diploma) during initial six months and 15,000/- per month during last six months of training period.
- In-house certificate will be awarded on successful completion of 01 year training program.
- Incomplete submitted applications will not be entertained. Degree/diploma course completion certificates may be considered. All the shortlisted candidates shall produce the original documents / credentials at the time of interview (Interview date is 10th & 11th February, 2023).
- A applicant may be disqualified and/or excluded from interview if she was (a) Has ever been convicted by court of Law, (b) Knowingly furnishes any false information or suppresses any information which may lead to her disqualification, (c) Attempts to obtain support for her by improper mean, (d) Tempters with the entries in her age and academic certificates, (e) Submit forged certificates / documents for her selection and (f) Misbehaves in the interview.
- The Competent Authority shall have the undeniable vested right to increase or decrease the number of seats.
- The students must obey the code of conduct, attendance, dress code and others instructions issued from the nursing director office or course management committee.

#### HOW TO APPLY

- Application form is available free of cost from Nursing Director office or may be downloaded from official website of QHAMC/NMC [www.nmcn.edu.pk](http://www.nmcn.edu.pk)
- Applications accompanied with complete bio-data and academic / experience certificates along with 02 passport size photographs and photocopy of CNIC duly attested must reach the office of the Nursing Director MTI-Nowshera. Application can be submitted in person or through registered postal mail or courier service.
- Only shortlisted candidates may be called for interview.

**HOSPITAL DIRECTOR**  
**Medical Teaching Institution (MTI) Nowshera**

INF(P) 377/23

## France CG calls on Commissioner Karachi

KARACHI (PPI): The Consul General of France in Karachi, Alexis Chahtahtinsky, met with Commissioner Karachi Muhammad Iqbal Memon at the latter's office.

They discussed a wide range of topics, including the ways to enhance interactions in the fields of culture and education between France and Pakistan. They also talked about the opportunities that Pakistani students can avail for higher studies in the France. The Commissioner wished to have a substantial cooperation for the transfer of research-based knowledge among the universities of

both countries. Mr Chahtahtinsky and Mr Memon agreed to declare Karachi and Marseille – a port city in France – sister cities. The program to conceptualise the plan for the two cities also came under discussion.

The Consul General said he would suggest to the government of France that Marseille be declared a sister city of Karachi in order to work for the cultural and economic benefits of the two countries. He said Marseille is an old port city in southern France just like Karachi; both share similarities in trade and cultural diversity.

### GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

No. CCDB/AB/293, Dated: 23/01/2023

## CORRIGENDUM

The tender invited vide this office letter No. CCDB/AB/256, Dated: 16/01/2023 published in different newspapers on 20/01/2023 vide PID(P) No. 019/23 regarding three (03) Nos of Health Sector Schemes. The word "District Bannu may be read instead of District Lakki".

**Executive Engineer**  
Central Civil Division Pak-PWD, Bannu.

PID(P) 019-A/2023

## Addl IGP orders to suspend SHOs, SIOs over poor performance

KARACHI (APP): Additional Inspector General of Police-Karachi Javed Alam Odho on Wednesday ordered the police officers to suspend the station house officers (SHOs) and station investigation officers (SIOs) for poor performance and also initiate the departmental proceedings against them.

Presiding over a high-level meeting held at Karachi Police Office (KPO), Javed Alam Odho also indicated to paying surprise visits of any point during general hold up.

He instructed to enhance actions against street crimes, drug peddling, gambling dens and other social evils.

Karachi police chief issued instructions to coordinate and make the process of intelligence collection and sharing effective at all levels.

He said all police stations and districts should speed up the process of combing operation in sensitive areas in order to arrest the accused in all possible ways. Javed Alam Odho directed the officers concerned to take stern action against secondary markets selling and buying stolen mobiles, besides strict measures against motorcycle and vehicle thefts.

The zonal Deputy IGP's briefed the Karachi Police chief regarding the performance of their zones.

Zonal DIGPs, DIGP - CIA, District SSPs, SSPs Investigation and other senior officers attended the meeting.

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER PUBLIC HEALTH ENGINEERING DIVISION SWAT-II AT MATTÄ - PHONE # 0946-792276

## NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING (SINGLE STAGE TWO ENVELOP PROCEDURE)

PHE Division Swat-II at Mattä, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa invites electronic bids from eligible firms/contractors having specialization codes in accordance with KPRA Procurement Rules 2014 on Single stage Two Envelop procedure for the following works:-

S.#	Name of work	Estimated Cost (Rs. in Million).	Earnest money with Stamp duty (Rs.)	Bidding Entry Fee 0.03%
01	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at VC Shalhand Package-I	12.00	258750/-	3600
02	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at VC Taghma Package-I	12.00	258750/-	3600
03	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at PK-08 Package-I	12.00	258750/-	3600
04	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at VC Shawar-II & Adjoining Areas Package-I	12.00	258750/-	3600
05	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at Uc Kuza Bandai & Adjoining Areas Package-II	12.00	258750/-	3600
06	Improvement of Water Supply Scheme at PK-08 Package-II	10.00	218750/-	3000
07	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at Uc Bara Bandai & Adjoining Areas Package-II	12.00	258750/-	3600
08	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at Uc Pirkalay & Adjoining Areas Package-II	12.00	258750/-	3600
09	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at Uc Arkot & Adjoining Areas Package-II	12.00	258750/-	3600
10	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at VC Shawar-I & Adjoining Areas Package-II	12.00	258750/-	3600
11	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at Uc Shawar & Adjoining Areas Package-II	12.00	258750/-	3600
12	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at VC Shawar-II & Adjoining Areas Package-II	12.00	258750/-	3600
13	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at VC Shalhand Package-II	12.00	258750/-	3600
14	Street Pavement / Roads & Allied Works at VC Taghma Package-II	12.00	258750/-	3600

#### TERMS AND CONDITIONS:

- Bidding documents including instructions to Bidder can be downloaded from Public Health Engineering Department web site address [www.phedkp.gov.pk](http://www.phedkp.gov.pk).
- According to KPRA Rules the Contractor must be registered with KP Revenue Authority.
- Last date & Time of submission of the bid is 15-02-2023 at 11:00 A.M. Technical bid will be opened on the same day at 11:30 A.M in the presence of Government Contractors or their authorized representative who opt to be present whereas Financial bid will be opened after approval of technical bid by the Competent Authority.
- The Bid Security, Additional Security and detail rate analysis (If quoted rate is more than 20% below on the Engineer's Estimate) shall be submitted as per KPRA Notification No. S.R.O.(14)/Vol:1-24/2021-22/6058-71 Dated 10.05.2022 along with the bid in sealed envelope before closing date and time to the office of undersigned.
- Nonrefundable bidding entry fee @ 0.03% of estimated cost in shape of call deposit shall be submitted along the bid.
- Other terms & condition are available on PHED website or same can be obtained from office of the undersigned during the office hours.

INF(P) 414/23

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER**

## ‘Will make Pakistan a loan-free state’: Siraj-ul-Haq

LAHORE (NNI): Emir Jamat-e-Islami (JI) Siraj ul

Haq said on Wednesday that their government can make Pakistan a "loan-free" state as the country has 65 per cent, skilled youngsters.

In one of his statements, the emir said that JI being a religious party has helped Muslims as well as Non-Muslims in times of need.

He added, "If their party come into power, they would precisely focus on the agriculture sector,

education would be free for all and health services will be the responsibility of the state."

Emir Siraj-ul-Haq slammed the PDM government over the seat reservation for overseas Pakistanis and not providing enough support to orphans and specially-abled people.

Mr Siraj also said that their party made Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) a "loan-free" province,

though currently, it owed Rs1 trillion."

Furthermore, the Emir said "Pakistan has a very strong and skilled youth, cities such as Kalaam, Midian, Murree, and Malam Jabba are an embodiment of beauty in the world. The country has rich resources including coal and gold, and the state has powerful foreign ambassadors in the form of overseas Pakistanis."

## Sindh governor receives 864 tons of Turkish relief goods

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh Governor on Wednesday received 864 tons of relief goods for the flood victims from Turkish Consul General to Karachi Cemal Sangu at Karachi International Container Terminal.

Maulana Bashir Farooqui, the head of Saylani Welfare International Trust, was also present on this occasion. It is pertinent to note that a ship carrying 864 tons of relief goods from Turkey arrived at Karachi International Container Terminal.

The second ship from the same country will bring 900 tons of relief goods on February 4 in Karachi. The relief items include blankets, warm clothes for winter, food items and daily necessity items, which will be distributed among the

flood victims by NDMA.

The Sindh governor said on this occasion that Turkey had helped Pakistan in every difficult time, as the first huge relief goods came here from Turkey after the recent floods. He further said that the people of Pakistan are grateful to Turkey for its help on the occasion of the natural calamity. The Consul General of Turkey Cemal Sangu said that the people of Turkey love Pakistan immensely and added that long live Pakistan is a lesson being taught to every child of Turkey.

Meanwhile, Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori has said that we have been hearing good things for 75 years, and we all know that it is about intention and action, as even today we are questioning how the economy of

this country will run.

"We do not know our direction that where we are going. However, as a nation we can set the path to progress and prosperity," he said while addressing the Message Pakistan Conference in Karachi.

The governor Sindh said that the message of Pakistan is the message of peace and brotherhood and brotherhood and in the same way, the religion of Islam is also the message of peace and brotherhood.

He said that many nations of the world do not have their own homeland, so ask them the importance of homeland. The governor Sindh said that our ancestors made countless sacrifices for the establishment of the homeland and today we are doing our best for the stability of the country.

## GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT INVITATION OF BIDS (SINGLE STAGE TWO ENVELOPES)

Sealed tender/bids on the basis of "Single Stage Two envelopes Procedure" are hereby invited for execution of the following works from eligible contractors/firms duly enlisted/register with Pakistan Engineering council (PEC) in relevant specialization technical category and financial limit Category C-5 & above is required on percentage rates basis on Pak. PWD Schedule of Rates 2022, who process valid renewal with PEC, having renewal upto 30/06/2023.

S #	Title of Work	NIT Amount	Earnest Money	Tender Cost
	<b>DISTRICT CHARSADDA</b>			
1	Construction of Black Topped Road at UC Rajjar District Charsadda	Rs. 28,228,877/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
2	Construction of Black Topped Road at UC Payera Mairan Prang District Charsadda	Rs. 37,645,418/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
3	Construction of black Topped Road at UC Dargai Shumail Karak Junobi Karak District Charsadda	Rs.41,804,772/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
4	Construction of Black Topped Road at UC Muhammad Nari District Charsadda	Rs. 28,294,582/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
5	Construction of Black Topped Road at UC Ghunda Karkana District Charsadda	Rs. 41,804,772/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
6	Construction of Black Topped Road at UC Tamab Agra District Charsadda	Rs. 41,804,772/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
7	Construction of Black Topped Road at UC Suker Amba Dher Main Road to Hisara at District Charsadda	Rs.41,860,358/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
8	Construction of Black Topped Road at UC Haryana Kaaly to Askuralam District Charsadda	Rs.41,860,358/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
9	Construction of Black Topped Road at UC Mama Khel Aziz Khel District Charsadda	Rs. 37,945,418/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-

#### Terms and Condition for Bidding

- The constructors/firms/companies who will receive bidding documents are required to submit their bid in two separate sealed envelopes, i.e., one envelop containing technical information/data and documents of the contractor/firm required for post qualification, clearly marked as "Technical Bid", while the second envelop containing bid price clearly marked as "Financial Bid".
- The application must be accompanied with bid security in shape of CDR/deposit at call from any Scheduled Bank of Pakistan, in favour of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak.PWD, Peshawar, clearly mentioning the name of firm, whereas the difference of the tendered amount must be accompanied with Financial Bid with its sealed envelop.
- Bidders may purchase the Bidding Documents from the office of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD Peshawar at cost of Rs. 5,000/- (Non refundable upto 14/02/2023 during office hours.
- Envelopes of Technical Bid & Financial Bid shall be submitted in the office of the Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD Shami Road Peshawar on 15/02/2023 by 12.30 PM. The envelope containing Technical Bid shall be opened on same day at 01.00 P.M in the presence of Bidders representatives who opt to be present, Bids received after the prescribed date and time shall not be accepted.
- Bidders will be Technically Qualified on the basis of information provided with the Bids as per the criteria prescribed in the Bidding Documents. Once a Technical Bid received and opened in this office, no addition/subtraction/alteration of any sort of document will be acceptable.
- Pay Order/Demand draft will not be acceptable.
- All CDR once received will be credit into the Government Account and will be re-funded through Government Cheque.
- No tender will be entertained without bid security @ 4% of the bid amount if not found will be declared as non responsive.
- Every firm/contractor must provide the affidavit on stamp paper regarding the non litigation with the department.
- Under Rule 33(1) of PPRA Rules 2004, the under signed reserves the right to accept/reject any or all bids/ proposals at any time prior to acceptance of a bid or proposal.
- The documents provided by the bidders will be verified and in case found ambiguous/fake one, the firm will face immediate/appropriate penal action as per rules and law.
- METHOD OF PROCUREMENT**
  - As per PPRA rule 36(b), open competitive Bidding with "Single Stage Two Envelop" Procedure- One envelop containing Technical Proposal and the other Financial Proposal and both sealed in separate envelopes.
  - After conducting evaluation of Technical Bids, qualified firms shall be informed accordingly for opening of their Financial Bids whereas bids of unqualified firms shall be returned unopened.
  - Non-compliance of Instructions to bidders in the Tender Documents will lead to disqualification/non-responsiveness of the bid/firm.

**Nazir Ahmad**

**Executive Engineer**

**Central Civil Division No.II,**

**Pakistan Public Works Department, Shami Road Peshawar**

**Phone/Fax: 091-9211471/Fax 091-9211471,**

**E-mail: [ccd1pwdpsh@gmail.com](mailto:ccd1pwdpsh@gmail.com)**



# PHC declares removal of Dean Numerical& Physical Science unconstitutional

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice Abdul Shakoor and Justice Syed Arshad Ali declared removal of Dean Faculty of Numerical and Physical Sciences University of Peshawar Prof Dr. Yaseen Iqbal as unconstitutional.

The counsel for Prof. Dr. Yaseen Iqbal, Dean faculty of numerical and physical sciences, University of Peshawar Saifullah Mohib Kakakhel appeared before PHC. The petition was de notified as dean by Governor KP after recom-

mendation of Chief Minister.

The counsel argued that the petitioner was appointed as Dean by the chancellor for a period of 3 years till his retirement. The counsel argued that the power to remove Dean and BPS22 Officers is the senate of the University and the Governor removed him with a single stroke of a pen without following the procedure and law.

The counsel argued that the removal of dean is interference of political bodies in the autonomy of the University, wherein the political personalities want to accomodate their blue

eyed to sustain their power.

The counsel argued that the order is illegal, without lawful authority and stinks of nefarious designs on part of the chancellor/governor.

On the other hand Khalid Rehman Advocate appeared on behalf of University along with Riaz Khan Deputy Registrar and newly appointed dean Prof. Dr. Qamar Ur Zaman and Additional Advocate General, KP represented/ defended the act of government. The bench controverted the counsel for respondent that whether the Act of 2012 and basic principle which is giving opportunity of being hear

has been followed? The answer was "No".

The counsel for petitioner argued that the appointment after de-notification of petitioner is also illegal on the ground that as per Act of 2012 and schedule III a proper procedure has been laid down and it has not been followed, therefore the divisional bench after hearing both the parties accepted constitutional petition by declaring both the notifications of de-notification of petitioner (Prof. Dr. Yaseen Iqbal) and appointment of new dean (Prof. Dr. Qamar Uzaman) as against the constitution.



PESHAWAR: Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan chairing a meeting to review current financial situation.

## Strategy finalized to ensure smooth flow of traffic in city areas

PESHAWAR (APP): On the directives of Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Shafiullah Khan, Additional Deputy Commissioner Sania Safion Wednesday chaired a meeting to maintain smooth flow of traffic inside city areas.

In the meeting, they finalized a comprehensive plan, in which district administration with support of traffic police to address traffic congestion issues.

Assistant Commissioner Rao Hashim, Chief Warden Civil Defense Syed Fayaz Ali Shah, SP Traffic Muhammad Saeed Khan, Additional Assistant

Commissioner Junaid Shah, Additional Assistant Commissioner Engineer Misbah Waheed, DSP Traffic Islahuddin and others participated in the meeting.

In the meeting, the traffic problems in inner-city markets and business centers were discussed in detail and the participants presented their suggestions regarding controlling the traffic problems.

The Additional Deputy Commissioner carefully listened to all the suggestions and finally it was unanimously decided that a mega crackdown would be

launched against the encroachment s inside city areas on a daily basis.

The meeting finalized strategy to ease the flow of traffic in Ashraf Road, Chowk Yadgar, Ghanta-gar, Tehsil Gurghadi and Riti Bazaar, which will overcome most of the traffic problems.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Sania Safi directed the administrative officers and traffic officers to implement the plan as soon as possible and to launch a joint operation against the encroaching mafia to control the traffic problems in Peshawar.

## PHC orders DC to appear F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) has ordered Deputy Commissioner (DC) Mohmand to appear before on next hearing in case regarding blocked of CNIC.

During hearing Additional Advocate General and NADRA appeared before PHC in writ petition filed by Hazrat Khan.

The writ stated that petitioner's CNIC is blocked from one year while DC Mohmand cancelled the identity card in the name inquiry without his jurisdiction and requested for unblocking of CNIC.

The divisional bench of PHC comprising of Justice Rooh-ul-Amin and Justice Shakeel Ahmad ordered DC Mohmand to appear before court while adjourned further hearing.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali presiding over a meeting regarding social development and special education.

## ‘PTI disappoints nation miserably fails to deliver’

PESHAWAR (APP): Former federal minister for petroleum and natural resources, Anwar Saifullah Khan has said that the PTI chief Imran Khan has disappointed the whole nation and particularly the youth, who were his blind followers.

Speaking in a meet-the-press Programme arranged under the auspices of Peshawar Press Club (PPC) here on Wednesday, he said that electoral promises of the PTI chief regarding the construction of 5 million houses and

generation of 10 million employment opportunities have proved nothing else than rhetoric.

The former federal minister said that the PTI during its rule of over three years had miserably failed to deliver and spent energy on the victimization of political opponents in the name of accountability.

He said that the policies of the PTI government has plunged the country into a severe economic crisis and to bring it out of the prevailing situation, all

political parties are required to sign a 'Save Pakistan or Charter of Economy' and also make it part of the constitution of Pakistan to bound all governments of future for its implementation.

The senior politician was critical of the dissolution of two provincial assemblies by the PTI chief and said that it was better for the assemblies to complete their constitutional period and termed early elections a loss to both the nation and public exchequer.

## Distt Admin holds Khuli Katchry

PESHAWAR (APP): District Administration here on Wednesday organized Khuli Katchry (public hearing) in University Town and took on spot measures to provide relief to masses.

On the direction of Deputy Commissioner Peshawar Shafiullah Khan, Additional Deputy Commissioner (Relief) Muhammad Imran Khan, Assistant Commissioner Syeda Zainab Naqvi and officers of subordinate departments, Revenue staff, public representatives, public and local leaders participated in large numbers.

On this occasion, the residents of University town complained that mushroom growth of commercial activities in the residential areas which had made life miserable for them.

They also requested cleaning of drains and reconstruction of dilapidated streets to provide relief to the people.

They also sought a complete ban on entry of hand-cart vendors and other unauthorised persons.

The residents complained of low gas pressure, illegal hostels in the area. The officers of district administration assured to address their problems and issued on spot directives.

## Jamia Usmania launches BS English program



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A well-known religious Seminary, Jamia Usmania Peshawar, along with religious studies, has implemented a reg-

ular system of education from Class VIII to BS English.

Jamia Usmania has the honor of being the first religious seminary (Madrasa) in the country to offer a regular Bachelor of Science (BS) English degree along with regular teaching.

A total of 131 students are studying in BS and this is a revolutionary step and the beginning of a new era.

In the same way, the honor of obtaining the most positions in the largest board of religious Madrasahs, the Jamia Usmania, also belongs to Jamia Usmania,

said Mufti Ghulamur Rehman, while briefing the media men at the launch of the BS English program.

He stated that It is necessary to reflect the Islamic society in the education system and added that they want to convince people that religious schools are places of peace and security.

Jamia Usmania Director of Education and Provincial Director of Federal Schools Maulana Hussain Ahmed was also present. Journalists were briefed on the occasion regarding various departments of the

Jamia Usmania.

Making Jamia Usmania a role model for all religious Madrasahs and universities, he said in his comments that the role of religious seminary is important in ending the differences between Mister and Mullah; these efforts are completely compatible with modern requirements.

## 211.648 kg drugs recovered

PESHAWAR (APP): Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has recovered 211.648 Kilogram drugs of different kinds during last week.

According to a press release issued by ANF here Wednesday, contraband material was recovered during twelve operations while same number of persons were arrested.

The recovered material include ten kilogram heroin, 15,600 kilogram opium, 161.268 kilogram hashish, 10.39 kilogram methamphetamine, 10 kilogram amphetamine, 2000 Ecstasy Tabs weighing 1.250 kilogram and 17700 Aximax Tabs that weighed 3,140 kilogram.

## Meeting held to identify post Covid gaps in health system, progress

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting of Multisectoral Technical Working Group/ IHR Sub-Committee, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa here Wednesday discussed post COVID-19 gaps in health systems and progress in this regard since 2016.

The meeting chaired by Director General Health Services, KP Dr. Shaikat Ali was attended by a joint team of the Ministry of NHSR&C, Islamabad including Federal Director

General Health Dr Shabana Saleem, National Institute of Health and partners organisations including WHO, USAID/JSI and UKHSA.

During the meeting, an overview of the International Health Regulations (2005), its purpose and scope was presented by Dr. Salman from National Institute of Health, Islamabad.

Dr. Farah from WHO briefed participants on upcoming Joint External

Evaluation (JEE), its objectives, process and benefits for the country.

She explained that the recommendation of this Joint External Assessment will help us identify post COVID-19 gaps in the health systems and comprehend progress that's been made since last Joint External evaluation in 2016.

All the partners assured their technical and financial support to the upcoming

mission and the Ministry of NHSR&C, Islamabad for the upcoming mission.

Dr. Shabana Saleem Federal DG Health stated that the ministry has already done some preliminary work with the support of provincial health departments and she requested line departments to join us in future meetings. She also requested department to approach Ministry in case they need any clarification in the JEE process.

## Speakers call for harnessing youth for peace, development

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The speakers at a day-long conference here at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University on Wednesday called for harnessing and preparing youth for peace and prosperity in the country.

They said that the youth, especially females, have great potential to excel in different fields and it was imperative to train and guide them in a proper direction to contribute for the development and prosperity of the country.

They were addressing the conference held in con-

nection with the closing ceremony of a project on "Harnessing Youth for Peace". This project was an initiative of Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, supported by Community Resilience Activity-North (CRA-N), with its implementing partner Higher Education Regulatory Authority (HERA).

During the conference, 31 students from the Newly Merged Districts (NMDs) of Khyber, Kurram, North Waziristan and Orakzai presented their essays and research papers on CVE themes.

The conference provided

a platform to the students to share their findings and to open unlimited realms of discourse for further research.

Chief Guest Dr Shahzad Khan Bangash, Chief Secretary to KP and Dawood Khan, Secretary to KP, Higher Education Archives & Libraries Department graced the Closing ceremony of the project with their presence.

Prof. Dr. Safia Ahmad, Vice Chancellor Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Women University Peshawar welcomed all the guests and congratulated both the implementing organiza-

tions and partner Universities for successful completion of this Project.

She said that SBBWU was the first ever women's University of KP catering to more than 6000 female youth and trying to make female students active members of the society.

Dr Yasir Kamal Member HERA and Project Director in his address highlighted the importance of "Role of Youth in Peace building" by emphasizing that such activities bring opportunities to turn our very young people into a productive asset that could contribute significantly to the peace building within country and beyond.

Dawood Khan Secretary to Govt. of KP, Higher Education Archives and Libraries Department in his speech appreciated Higher Education Regulatory Authority (KP) for initiating hands-on training for the youth of Newly Merged Districts. He praised the concept of promoting research and essay writing and recommend the participants to become master trainer and replicate the training and become the change agent.

## Four killed in Badaber groups' clash

PESHAWAR (APP): At least four people were killed and two including a child were injured when two rival groups resorted to indiscriminate firing at each other in Sheikh Muhammadi Adda in the vicinity of Badaber police station on Wednesday.

Police said a monetary dispute led to firing between the two groups that resulted in deaths of four people and injuries to two others.

Those killed were identified as Kifayat, son of Saleem and Sahib, son of Khan Zada from the one group while from the other group, Tehseen Ullah, son of Yameen and Noor Zada, son of Nawab Khan were killed.

Two pedestrians including a 12-year-old child also sustained bullet injuries in the firing.

Soon after receiving information, the area police reached the crime scene and shifted the dead and injured to the hospital. Police also collected evidence from the site of the incident and started a search operation to nab the involved accused.



PESHAWAR: Position holders of FATA Students Federation's Award Culture Show with representative of Al-Hamid Minerals. — F.P. photo

## Power suspension notified

PESHAWAR (APP): The Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) on Wednesday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar University Grid Station on 26th and 30th January from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Danish Abad, Rahat Abad 1,2, Gharibabad feeders will face inconvenience.

It said that power supply will also remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar City Grid Station on 26th and 30th January from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. resultantly consumers

of 11 KV Faqir Abad feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Rehman Baba Grid Station on 26th January from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Kachori, Yakatooth, New Hazarkhwan, Chairman Office, Khan Must and Sharif Abad feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar Industrial Grid Station on 26th and 30th January from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. due to which consumers of 11 KV Nothia, Gulbargh, Swati Gate, Pishtakhara feeders will face

inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Gomul University Grid Station on 26th January from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV SDA, Kulachi Wala feeders will face inconvenience.

Moreover, power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Gomul University Grid Station on 26th January from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV SDA, Kulachi Wala feeders will face inconvenience.





## In brief

### Blast destroys power pylon

JAMSHORO (INP): A bomb blast brought down power pylon of a high power transmission line suspending the power supply here on Wednesday. According to details, in Khanot area of tehsil Manjhad of district Jamshoro, unknown culprits blasted power pylon of 500kv transmission line heading from Jamshoro to Dadu. As a result of destruction of power pylon, the power supply was suspended. The National Transmission and Dispatch Company (NTDC), police and bomb disposal squad reached the scene, collected the evidences and started efforts to restore the power supply.

### Dr Zakya promoted F.P. Report

BANNU: Medical Teaching Institution (MTI) Bannu Additional Medical Director along with women and children hospital's Gynecology Department head Dr Zakya Khan has been promoted to the post of professor in BPS-20. After qualifying FCPS in 2012, Dr Zakya was appointed as Gynecologist in the women and children hospital and she was promoted as assistant professor in 2014. A number of doctors had quit their jobs and others retired when operation Zarb-e-Azb was launched in North Waziristan to eliminate terrorists and destroy their sanctuaries. The military operation caused mass exodus from the tribal region, increasing patients' influx at the women and children hospital in Bannu. To cope with the patients load effectively, Dr Zakya was assigned the responsibility to head the Gynecology department at the only women and children hospital in Bannu division. In 2019, she was promoted to the post of Associate Professor in BPS-19 and the incumbent MTI Bannu Board of Governor awarded him promotion to the post of professor in BPS-20. During her professional career, she rendered valuable services in the field of health and focused on improving healthcare and patient care in the hospitals.

### Police arrest murder accused

NAUNDERO (PPI): Police claimed to have arrested on Wednesday one accused Nizamuddin son of Jam Narejo from the katcha area who is allegedly involved in killing Kamran Shaikh and injuring two others few days back during a buffalo theft attempt in Pir Jo Goth located near here. Police further claimed that the arrested criminal has confessed to the crime and the weapon used in the gunning down of a young man has also been handed over to them by him. Further investigation is underway and cops are conducting raids to arrest other accomplices of the accused. The two injured persons include Imran Shaikh and security guard Qamar Arbani who are fighting for their lives.

### Prisoners set ablaze property

GUJRANWALA (INP): The prisoners during ransack in District Jail Gujrat set ablaze property worth millions of rupees and pelted stones at police. Nine people were injured in the clashes. The prisoners of District Jail Gujrat set on fire the jail hospital, cereals godown, water filtration plants and other property rendering millions of losses. The prisoners also clashed with police and jail staff during ransack. Nine people including police officials, jail staffers and four prisoners were injured in brawl.



HYDERABAD: Workers of All Revenue Sindh Employees Association holding a protest against lawyers.

## Winter made miserable livelihood of flood victims

F.P. Report

LASBELA: Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri said that Balochistan is facing difficulties in the cold weather. There is an urgent need to take emergency measures to protect the victims from the severe cold weather in the flood-affected areas.

This was said by Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri in district Lasbela during the distribution of ration, blankets, warm clothes, milk, medicines, toys for children and other essential items in the settlements of flood victims in Chhab Mandara and Mouza Gab Mandara. On this occasion, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri distributed more than 200 blankets, warm clothes, more than 600 ration bags, medicines, 200 cartons of milk, toys for children, mosquito nets and other necessary items.

On this occasion, she said that we have promised the rehabilitation of the flood victims and all possible help and we will fulfill our promise and this will continue until the complete rehabilitation of the victims. She said that there is an urgent need to take emergency measures to protect the victims from the rigors of severe cold weather in the flood-affected areas.

More than 200 blankets, warm clothes, more than 600 ration bags, medicines, 200 cartons of milk, toys for children, mosquito nets and other necessary items were distributed. Apart from government missionaries, Pakistan Army, Navy, Air Force and NGOs as well as various personalities have personally carried

out relief and rehabilitation activities in the affected areas. Senator Samina Mumtaz and Mir Ali Hasan Zahri have played the role of messiahs who have heartache for the poor in the true sense, public circles. Emergency measures need to be stepped up for early recovery of cold weather victims, survey reports.

In a survey report on the relief and rehabilitation of the flood victims in the flood affected areas of Hub, Lasbela and Uthal, the relief and rehabilitation measures taken by the government and other institutions in the rain and flood affected areas have been reviewed.

In the report, the people belonging to different schools of thought of District Lasbela and Hub have expressed their thoughts about the rehabilitation and relief of the flood victims and said that flood affected people still need help in Balochistan and the cold weather. There is an urgent need to take measures on an emergency basis to save the victims from the rigors of the disaster. Relief and rehabilitation works are ongoing in different areas of Balochistan on behalf of the provincial and federal governments.

The report states that apart from the government missionaries, the Pakistan Army, Navy, Air Force and various NGOs as well as some personalities have personally carried out relief and rehabilitation activities in the affected areas, which caused considerable loss of life and property, which is commendable. Public circles have especially appre-

ciated the services of Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri and Mir Ali Hassan Zahri truly played the role of a messiah who had heartache for the poor and continuously helped the victims. Efforts are continuing for rehabilitation and relief. Immediately after the flood, he personally delivered aid to the affected areas on the call of Balochistan and reached out to the flood victims, which is a commendable initiative and this process is still ongoing and to be continued. They not only delivered tents, rations, blankets, milk for children, warm clothes and other necessary items to the affected areas, but also reached the remote areas affected by the floods in spite of difficulties and encouraged the victims and their sufferings.

It has been said in the report that Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri performed the best in the activities of relief and rehabilitation of the flood victims and her valuable services for the relief and rehabilitation of the flood victims in public circles and her efforts are being appreciated. She not only helped the flood victims of Balochistan with her own personal expenses, but also received domestic and foreign aid for the flood victims of Balochistan and delivered it to the affected areas in time. The report appealed to the government institutions that the winter season has become severe and there is an urgent need to speed up the measures for the early recovery of the victims in this cold weather.

## Education must to compete globally community

F.P. Report

BUNER: Elementary and Secondary Education Foundation held a daylong seminar at Daggar College with the support of the district administration and youth affairs in connection with the International Education Day, on Wednesday.

Managing Director ESED Zarif Al-Maani was the chief guest in the seminar while ADC Finance and Planning Wajid Ali Khan has represented Deputy Commissioner Shahid Ali Khan in the seminar. Elementary & Secondary Education Foundation District Program Officer Buner Shaikat Hayat Khan, Amil Khan, Numan Raza and District Youth Affairs Officer Shah Zeb Khan have participated in the seminar along with the staff.

The teachers of non-formal schools and girls' community schools and the students of the provinces have also participated in the seminar. Local leaders, political, social and religious figures and other college staff members have also participated in the seminar. Chief Guest Managing Director Zarif Al Maani ESEF ADC Wajid Ali Khan ESEF Shaikat Hayat Nauman Raza Amil Khan and District Youth Affairs Officer Shah Zeb Khan Ustad Shahid Khan and Youth Leader Arshad Khan have addressed the seminar.

The chief guest, while sharing the data in his speech, said that the rate of education in Pakistan Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Buner is very low and girl's education is even less and there is a need to pay attention to education and girls. Special attention should be given to education. He claimed that the provincial government has provided education facilities to out-of-school boys and girls near their homes by creating a system of non-formal and girls' community schools and now it can be done through mobile app and By making it easy, online education and examinations are being facilitated with facilities up to science laboratory, which will increase the rate of education, but the real education is to give priority to anthropology, knowledge of God and the service of humanity and the worship of Allah, through which the world and Success in the hereafter is guaranteed.

## 3 labourers die

THATTA (INP): Three labourers died while another was rescued when portion of a coalmine collapsed here on Wednesday.

Deputy Commissioner Thatta Ghazanfar Ali Qadri said that four miners were engaged in repair work in a coalmine in Jhampir near Meting railway station when due to water pressure, coalmine caved in resultantly they all were trapped.

The rescue personnel managed to save one labourer, bodies of two including 25-year-old Ayaz Khan s/o Fazal Gul and 34-year-old Syed Qayyum were pulled out and shifted to Civil Hospital Hyderabad. Search for body of 40-year-old Rehman s/o Wazir Umer was underway.

## Legal action initiated against 92 illegal housing societies

ATTOCK (INP): The Attock Police initiated legal proceedings against 92 illegal housing societies established in various areas of the district. The people have also been asked to keep away of making agreements and investing in these illegal societies.

Deputy Commissioner Attock Dr. Hassan Waqar Cheema on Wednesday directed the police to conduct operations against unregistered housing societies established within the jurisdiction of tehsil administration Attock, Pindigheb, Fatehjang, Hassanabad, Hazro and Jand besides warning to the general public to be more careful while making any kind of investments in these unauthorized housing schemes before getting prior information from the revenue department concerned.

He directed Attock police to lodge criminal proceedings against all these illegal business of real estate within the purview of the district Attock.

Meanwhile, FIA has also

be approached for necessary legal action against these illegal and unregistered housing societies which are floating their media campaign to deceive the general public without any permission of the relevant agencies since long.

Following the directives of the DC Attock, FIRs have been registered against these illegal housing societies which include 05 in Attock, 06 in Hazro, 22 in Hassanabad, 53 in Fatehjang, 04 in Pindigheb and 02 in tehsil Jand. However, police could not apprehend any big fish involved in this mysterious business of real estate till filing of this story.

**Goldmine exploration project worth Rs48m launched in Attock:** Additional Secretary Mines and Mineral Department Punjab Capt (Retd) Waqar Rasheed has said that the department has launched a multimillion drilling project on exploration of gold mines in Attock in collaboration with Geological Survey of Pakistan.

This was stated by him

while briefing the media at the Indus River near Attock Khurd on Wednesday. Technical experts of the Punjab Minerals and Mines Department were also present on the occasion. Responding to media queries, Capt (Retd) Waqar Rasheed said that the evaluation of the project will be completed with an estimated cost of Rupees 48.2 million. He said that the drone and magnet technology is being utilized during the underground drilling along the Indus River near Attock Khurd to get sampling of the gold mines.

He said that Province of the Punjab is full of natural resources while every district of the province has its own resources of land structure of petrography. The additional secretary further said that these mines and minerals are national assets which are being preserved. He said all out efforts are also being made to utilize these mines in the best interest of prosperity and socio-economic development of the country.

## Blind murder case traced within 48 hours

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Lower Dir police claimed to have traced a blind murder case and arrested the accused within 48 hours. Briefing local journalists at his office, the district police officer Ikramullah said that one Syed Nawab s/o Qasim Jan was found dead on a road bank near Sharbanai in the jurisdiction of Samarbagh police station the other day.

The DPO said the deceased's brother Buzarag Muhammad registered a case against the unknown killer[s] at the Samarbagh police station. He said that a police team consisting of DSP Nasir Ali Khan, SHO Samarbagh Muhammad Ikram and sub inspector Noor Hayat worked on technical ground and traced the case. The DPO said the complainant Buzarag Muhammad and his son were found involved in the case. He said the accused were interrogated who confessed to the crime and said they had killed the deceased by strangulating him.

The deceased's body was then thrown far away from his home. The handcuffed accused were also presented to the media. The Timergara headquarter DSP Fakhr e Alam Khan, SP investigation Mushtaq Ahmad and DSP Nasir Ali were also present. The DPO said the items and car used during the crime were also recovered from the accused possession. The investigation team was awarded with appreciation certificates and cash prizes for their quick action and arresting the accused.

Meanwhile a man identified as Salman 23 s/o Sultan, a resident of Gorr Maidan was killed when unknown persons opened indiscriminate firing on his car at Odigram on the Maidan bypass road in the jurisdiction of Balambat police station here. The deceased was the cousin of Hafeezullah Khaksar, the district president of Al-Khidmat Foundation. The accused [s] fled from the crime scene. The Balambat police registered a case and started investigations. The motive behind the crime

could not be ascertained at the moment as according to the family he had no enmity with anyone.

**Dir Chamber's demand:** The Dir Chamber of Commerce and Industries district president Mian Noor Alam Khan said the traders' bodies would boycott the next general elections if the political parties failed to reach a charter of economy in the country. Talking to local journalists at Timergara, he said the country was in dire need of a charter of economy without which it was difficult for the rulers to smoothly run the state's affairs.

He said the business community would boycott the next general elections if the political leadership failed to reach a charter regarding the deteriorating economy. He also complained that the former chief minister Mahmood Khan had promised to construct the chamber's office at Timergara but despite the passage of three years nothing could be done in that regard.

## Three-day free medical camp held at DHQ Lakki

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: A free medical camp arranged by Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) at district headquarters hospital, on Wednesday.

According to details, people from across the district suffering from eye diseases thronged the district headquarters hospital to get free treatment at an eye camp organized OGDCL. The company has organized the three days free eye and surgical camp with support of district administration under its corporate social responsibility (CSR) fund.

An official of the administration said that local deputy commissioner Fazal Akbar had asked the OGDCL officials to take steps for provision of free and quality healthcare to local residents. "On the first day, a large number of people both from urban and rural areas visited the camp and got them examined by

the health experts", claimed. He said that along with free medical examination, other facilities including provision of free medicines and glasses and surgeries would be provided to people suffering from eye related ailments. The official asked the people to avail free treatment at the camp and bring their computerized national identity cards with them. He said that such free medical camps would be arranged in other parts of the district.

**TMA workers killed stray dogs:** The workers of tehsil municipal administrations have killed several stray dogs during a special campaign, claimed an official here on Wednesday. The campaign was launched on the directives of local deputy commissioner Fazal Akbar following reports that stray dogs have attacked and injured several citizens in Lakki and other parts of the district. In Lakki Marwat city, over a dozen people includ-

ing children were bitten by mad dogs, prompting the administration to take notice of the situation.

The injured citizens were shifted to the Government City Hospital where they were inoculated with anti-rabies vaccine by health workers. An official of the district administration told media that after reports about dogs' bite incidents, the authorities of tehsil municipal administrations were directed to cull stray dogs in their respective areas. He said that the health and other concerned departments assisted municipal workers to poison the animals. He said that stray dogs were posing a serious threat to the citizens in Lakki city and other parts of the district. He said that killing such dogs was inevitable to save citizens from their attacks. The official said that the municipal workers poisoned and killed stray dogs, collected their bodies and disposed of them.

## Future of over 400 primary school students at stake

LARKANA (PPI): The future of over 400 primary school students is hanging in the balance when the cemented bars of their school Vernda fell down due to which panic was created among all of them including their teachers.

All ran from pillar to post for safety of their precious lives when they were so-

laced by their teachers. The school has five classrooms where over 400 little boys and girls are enrolled to get fundamental primary educa-

tion. The Education and Works Department, Larkana, has advised the school administration that two out of three classrooms and the veranda of the building are very dangerous where education of kids cannot be continued.

They have further suggested that either the students be shifted to other schools to save precious lives of the children or the classes be discontinued.

## Mother of 4 children killed

F.P. Report

TIMERGARA In Rabat Dub, the accused killed a woman by stabbing her with an axe due to a minor incident in Nagah. The people of the area protested against the incident by placing the body on the road, while Khal Police claimed to reach the accused and arrest them quickly.

According to Khal Police, Rabat Dub in Nagah, there was a recurrence of a minor issue between two neighbors after which the

accused Khan Bahadurul Nawab Khan, who is said to be an Afghan migrant, seriously injured the woman Masmaut by stabbing her with an axe. SHO khal Mehran Shah Nafri reached the scene of the incident and put the woman in a car and shifted her to District Headquarters Hospital Timergarah. She was shifted to Peshawar due to her serious injuries.

A life was lost while the people of the area protested against the incident by keep-

ing the body on the road and later DSP Head Attar Fakhar Alam and SHO Khal Mehran Shah successfully negotiated with the protestors after which the deceased dispersed peacefully among the protestors. It has been known about Khatun Musamatna that her daughter-in-law. She belongs to Chitral and she got married in Burwal Deerbala and her husband was in Saudi Arabia left Burwal Deerbala and settled in Rabat Dubnagha.



# Tornado causes damage east of Houston

TEXAS (AP): A powerful storm system took aim at the Gulf Coast, spanning a tornado that downed utility poles and power lines, overturned vehicles and ripped roofs off homes and businesses in communities east of Houston. There were no immediate reports of serious injuries.

The National Weather Service had issued a tornado emergency for that area, warning that a "large, extremely dangerous and potentially deadly tornado" was on the ground and was headed toward Baytown, about 25 miles (40 kilometers) east of Houston. The warning expired as the system moved to the east, leaving behind cooler temperatures.

Strong winds damaged commercial buildings, homes and power lines in nearby Pasadena, a city southeast of Houston. Utility poles and power lines were downed, and several vehicles, including a trailer, were damaged or flipped over in a parking lot. Footage from Houston TV station KTRK showed several businesses suffered major damage, including the city's animal shelter. Nearby, fences were laid over and shingles and sections of roofs were torn from homes, but there were no immediate reports of injuries.

The American Red Cross said it was opening a shelter in Pasadena. In Baytown, there were downed power lines and damage to homes and businesses, but no reports of serious injuries, said Baytown spokesperson Jason Calder. Officials in nearby Deer Park said the tornado did severe damage to a nursing home. Residents had to be taken away, but no one was hurt.

As emergency crews worked to restore power, Deer Park Mayor Jerry Mouton Jr. urged anyone who needed a place to stay to look outside his city. "There is one aspect of me that's amazed that no one got injured," Mouton said. "We will deal with the property and recover and rebuild." Many of the suburbs in the area have



a heavy presence of petrochemical industry sites.

Shell Chemicals' location in Deer Park was flaring, or burning off natural gas, after it lost steam because of severe weather, according to Shell spokesperson Curtis Smith. "We are taking steps to minimize any noise, light, or smoke associated with this activity, though it's expected to continue until the units are restarted," Smith said via email. "There is no threat to the community, nor are there any indications a nearby tornado touched down within the Chemicals facility."

The website PowerOutage.us, which collects live power outage data from utilities across the United States, reported about 67,000 Texas customers were without power, mostly in the Houston area and surrounding counties. The site reported about 28,000 outages in neighboring Arkansas, and about 25,000 in Louisiana. The storm system was also bringing snow and ice to much of the central US. Schools and businesses were closed across Oklahoma, which saw snowfall totals of between 1 and 6 inches (3 and 15 centimeters) across central and eastern parts of the state. Several

school districts in southwest Louisiana dismissed students in anticipation of severe weather in the area.

**7 killed in highway crash:** A young passenger of an SUV involved in a head-on collision on a Texas highway that left seven others dead remained in critical condition. The crash between the SUV and a pickup truck that veered into an oncoming lane happened on a two-lane road in suburban Comal County near San Antonio.

The Texas Department of Public Safety did not immediately release that names or ages of the victims but said in a statement that five of the victims killed were riding in the SUV, including two children and the driver. Another young passenger in the SUV was taken to a San Antonio hospital in critical condition, according to DPS. A male driver and passenger in the Ford F-150 pickup truck were pronounced dead on the scene. A preliminary investigation indicated that the pickup truck struck the SUV head-on on a farm-to-market road, according to authorities. DPS said no one else was involved in the crash. No other details were immediately released.

## Mexico wants \$700m from ex-official on trial in US

MEXICO CITY (AP): Mexico's president said his country wants to recover a big chunk of money from former Mexican security official Genaro Garcia Luna, who is on trial in New York. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said his government wants to recover \$700 million that Garcia Luna allegedly accumulated as a result of corruption.

Foreign Relations Secretary Marcelo Ebrard said Mexico has filed a lawsuit in Florida, where Garcia Luna lived after leaving Mexico. Formerly the country's top security officer, Garcia Luna is on trial in New York, accused of accepting briefcases full of cash — millions of dollars, in all — to let the notorious Sinaloa cartel operate with impunity as it sent tons of cocaine to the US. He served as secretary of public security to then-President Felipe Calderon from 2006 to 2012. His lawyers say he was a legitimate businessman who did consulting in Florida before he was arrested in 2019. López Obrador has long complained that when corrupt politicians and drug traffickers are convicted in the United States, the US seizes and keeps their fortunes, which were often largely made in Mexico.

## Environmental group accused of being Hezbollah arm

BEIRUT (AP): On the outskirts of this southern Lebanese village, workers in a pickup truck parked at a nature reserve named after a fallen fighter of the militant Hezbollah group. They took two large eucalyptus tree seedlings out of the truck and planted them. The men are from Green Without Borders, a non-governmental organization that says it aims to protect Lebanon's green areas and plant trees.

But Israel, the United States and some in Lebanon accuse the NGO of being an arm of Hezbollah to hide its military activities. They say the organization has been setting up outposts for the militant group along the border with Israel. Last month, residents in the southern Christian village of Rmaych near the border said they encountered armed men at an outpost of the organization that was blocking them from farmlands. Green Without Borders denies any link to Hezbollah, which also says it is not connected to the environmental group.

"We are not an arm for anyone," the head of Green Without Borders, Zouher Nahlil, told The Associated Press. "We as an environmental association work for all the people and we are not politicized." He spoke at the Bassam Tabaja Nature Reserve, named for a Hezbollah fighter killed in Syria in 2014, where the NGO has planted hundreds of trees. He said the organization's funding comes from the ministries of environment and agriculture as well as from wealthy Lebanese who care about the environment and municipalities, mainly in the eastern Bekaa Valley and southern Lebanon. He said he is an Agriculture Ministry employee. Since it began operations in 2009, the group has helped plant about 2 million trees, Nahlil said.

Israel and Hezbollah are archenemies and have fought several wars over the past decades, the last of which ended in August 2006. The 34-day conflict killed 1,200 in Lebanon, mostly civilians, and 160 Israelis, mostly soldiers.

The UN Security Council resolution that ended that war said the border area should be free of "any armed personnel, assets and weapons," other than those of the government and UN peacekeepers. After the war, thousands of Lebanese troops were deployed in the border zone and the UN peacekeeping force, known as UNIFIL, which has been present there since 1978, was beefed up. In a November report, UNIFIL said shipping containers and prefabricated buildings, some of them with visible Green Without Borders markings, had been set up at 16 sites along the border. In several instances, UNIFIL patrols were prevented from nearing the locations, it said.

# US and Canada not interested in sending armed force to Haiti

UNITED NATIONS (AP): The United States and Canada -- the two countries most often mentioned as possible leaders of an international armed force to help Haiti combat gangs -- showed no interest in deploying security personnel despite renewed appeals from the United Nations and Haiti for help to end worsening violence in the Western hemisphere's poorest nation.

US deputy ambassador Robert Wood told the UN Security Council that "Haiti must address its continued insecurity challenges," and he encouraged the international community to support its efforts. Canada's UN Ambassador Robert Rae said the world needs to learn from all previous military interventions in Haiti, which failed to bring long-term stability to the country, and ensure that in the future solutions "must be led by Haitians and by Haitian institutions."

Haitian Prime Minister Ariel Henry and the country's Council of Ministers sent an urgent appeal Oct. 7 calling for "the immediate deployment of a specialized armed force, in sufficient quantity" to stop the crisis caused partly by the "criminal actions of armed gangs." UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres issued the appeal, but more than three months later, no countries have stepped forward.

Helen La Lime, the UN special envoy for Haiti, reiterated the secretary-general's appeal, telling the council that "gang-related violence has reached levels not seen in years." Murders and kidnappings increased for a fourth straight year in 2022, she said, pointing to 1,359 kidnappings, more than double the number in 2021 and averaging roughly four per day, and murders up a third to 2,183, touching all segments of society including a former presidential candidate and the director of the National Police Academy.

On the political front, La Lime said, the expiration of the mandate of the last 10 senators holding office on Jan. 9 means "there is not one elected official left in the country." While this poses a "profound challenge," she said, it is also an opportunity for Haitians to look at the root causes of dysfunction in the country and address them.

The UN envoy pointed to two key developments -- the Security Council's unanimous adoption in October of a resolution imposing sanctions on individuals

and groups threatening peace and stability in the country starting with a powerful gang leader, and the Dec. 21 signing by a broad range of political, civilian, religious, trade union and private sector officials of a "National Consensus Agreement for an Inclusive Transition and Transparent Elections." The agreement sets out a calendar for installing an elected government by February 2024 including immediate steps to promote fiscal reforms and increase state revenues. La Lime said. A High Transitional Council has been named which will work with the government to make nominations to the country's highest court, she said.

La Lime said the agreement, whose adherents are growing every day, is "the most promising sign to emerge from dialogue efforts until now." With the UN sanctions, it "offer a clear path to the restoration of democracy and legitimacy," she said. But La Lime said the deployment of an international specialized force is an essential third element needed to reinforce the police, sanctions and the transition.

Without an international force, she said, "the very positive effects of the political process and the sanctions so far, will remain fragile and vulnerable to being reversed." Haiti's UN Ambassador Antonio Rodrigue cited ongoing efforts to implement the agreement but called the current situation "an emergency" and warned that restoring security is a prerequisite for the country to move forward.

"Without security, we cannot have fair, transparent and democratic elections nor can we restore the normal functioning of institutions in the country," he warned. Rodrigue urged the international community to respond to secretary-general Guterres' renewed call for the immediate deployment of an international force "to help us suppress the gangs and allow us to finalize the process of bringing democratic order back to our country." "This is an imperative right now," Rodrigue said. "We cannot wait and the security situation could worsen any day, and worsen the fate of the people who are already suffering terribly." As for suffering, UN envoy La Lime told the council that gangs have intentionally blocked access to food, water and health services -- during the current cholera outbreak -- and close to 5 million Haitians across the country are facing acute hunger.

# Rwanda shoots at Congolese military jet

KIGALI (Reuters): Rwandan forces fired at a fighter jet from Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) that it said had violated its airspace, prompting the Congolese government to accuse it of an act of war.

A video shared widely on Congolese social media showed a projectile shooting towards an airborne military plane, before exploding in the air near the plane, which continued to fly. Reuters could not immediately verify the video.

Congo denied Rwanda's accusation that the jet had been in Rwandan airspace -- the latest dispute between the two countries whose relationship has been strained by a rebel insurgency. "The Rwandan shots were directed towards a Congolese aircraft flying within Congolese territory," it said in a statement, con-

firmed the plane had landed in the provincial capital Goma without suffering major damage.

It described Rwanda's move as a "deliberate act of aggression that amounts to an act of war" aimed at undermining a peace agreement to end an offensive by the M23 rebel group. Earlier the Rwandan government said Rwandan forces had fired at the jet after it violated Rwandan airspace in Rubavu -- the same area as previous alleged violations, "prompting the government to take defensive measures."

"Rwanda asks the DRC to stop this aggression," government spokesperson Yolande Makolo said in a statement. Congo, United Nations experts and Western powers have accused Rwanda of backing the M23 in eastern Congo,

which seized several towns and villages in renewed fighting last year. Rwanda has denied any involvement. 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 the fighting that has displaced at least 450,000 people.

Congolese President Felix Tshisekedi said last week that the rebels had not fully withdrawn from those areas. In December, Rwanda said another fighter jet from Congo had briefly violated its airspace. An unarmed Congolese warplane also briefly landed at a Rwandan airport in November while on a reconnaissance mission near the border, in what Congo said was an accident.

# China Covid: Coffins sell out as rural losses mount

BEIJING (BBC): The BBC has found evidence of a considerable number of Covid-related deaths in China's rural regions, as the virus spread from big cities to more remote areas with older populations. In Xinzhou region of northern Shanxi province the coffin makers have been busy. We watched the skilled craftsmen as they carved elaborate decorations into the freshly-cut wood. Over recent months, they say, they haven't had time to stop.

One villager, a customer, told us that at times the coffins have sold out. Laughing with a dose of the black humour you find in the area, he added that those in the funeral industry had been "earning a small fortune". There has been much debate about the real number of Covid deaths in China, after the virus ripped through its megacities. Some 80% of the population -- more than a billion people -- have been infected since China scrapped restrictions in December, according to leading epidemiologist Wu Zunyou. Last weekend China reported 13,000 Covid-related deaths in less than a week, adding to the 60,000 deaths it has counted since December.

But these deaths have

been in hospitals. In rural areas there are only sparse medical facilities and those who die at home are mostly not being counted. There is not even an official estimate for the number of village deaths. But the BBC found evidence the death toll is mounting. We visited a crematorium and they too have been busy, mourners dressed in white walking forward carrying the ceremonial box which would eventually contain the remains of a loved one.

In another village, we saw one man and woman loading huge tissue paper birds onto the back of a flatbed truck. "They're cranes. You ride the crane into the afterlife," the woman said. As they packed up other elaborate, Buddhist images newly made from tissue paper they said they'd had an explosion in demand for their funeral decorations, two or three times what's normal. Everyone we met in this part of Shanxi who is connected to the funeral industry told us a similar story about an increase in deaths and they all attributed it to the coronavirus. "Some sick people are already very weak," one man said as he continued to load the truck. "Then they catch Covid, and their elderly bodies can't handle it."

We followed the truck to where the artworks were being delivered and met Wang Peiwei, whose sister-in-law had just died. The mother-of-two in her 50s had suffered from severe diabetes for years and then she caught the coronavirus. "After she got Covid she had a high fever, and her organs began to fail. Her immune system wasn't strong enough to make it," said Mr Wang. The courtyard at the family house was filling up with decorations for the ceremony. Mr Wang told us there were still more images, flowers and the like to come.

Standing in front of a tent in the courtyard where her body was covered up he explained that, on the day of the funeral, 16 people would carry her coffin and bury her in accordance with tradition. He said that, though the cost of funeral arrangements had skyrocketed because of the number of Covid deaths, they would pay the extra money in her honour. "She was a great person. We must hold a grand event to send her off, the best we can afford," he said.

Every year, hundreds of millions of younger people go back to their hometowns at this time to celebrate the Lunar New Year. It's China's most important festival.

# South Korea, Japan grapple with heavy snow chaos, delays

SEOUL (AP): Frigid winter weather gripped East Asia for the second straight day on Wednesday, causing several deaths and multiple injuries in Japan and a scramble for flights out of South Korea's resort island of Jeju following delays by snowstorms.

Heavy snow and record cold temperatures brought widespread disruptions in Japan. South Korea's Ministry of the Interior and Safety didn't immediately report any major damage or injuries from subzero temperatures and icy conditions that have affected most of the country.

But at least eight roads and 10 sea routes remained closed as of Wednesday afternoon. About 140 homes in capital Seoul and nearby regions reported busted water pressure pumps or pipes as temperatures dipped to around minus 15 to minus 20 degrees Celsius (5 degrees to minus 4 degrees Fahrenheit) across the mainland.

A man died in Oita, southern Japan, after being hit by a fallen tree and two more deaths in the northern prefecture of Niigata were

being investigated in connection with the cold weather, officials said. Two other people were found without vital signs in Okayama, western Japan. Deputy Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihiko

Isozaki told reporters that the deaths could be linked to accidents while removing snow and urged residents to refrain from such activities when nobody else is around to help in case of an emergency. About 400 homes around the country were without electricity due to power line damage caused by fallen trees, the Economy and Industry Ministry said. It said traffic disruptions caused by the snow also caused delivery delays at convenience stores in western Japan.

Thousands of people using train services in Kyoto and Shiga prefectures in western Japan were forced to stay overnight in carriages or stations, and 13 were taken to hospitals, the Fire and Disaster Management Agency said. Vehicles on major roads across the country were left stranded and hundreds of flights canceled. Kyoto prefecture reported more than

30 injuries, mostly by falling. Air traffic returned to normal after hundreds of flights in and out of Jeju were grounded because of strong winds and snow, stranding an estimated 40,000 travelers who had visited the resort island for Lunar New Year holidays. Around 540 flights, including nearly 70 that were temporarily added by transportation authorities in an emergency response, were scheduled in and out of Jeju on Wednesday alone, mostly to take passengers back to mainland cities.

The Korea Airports Corporation said the operating hours at Gimpo airport near Seoul was extended until 1 a.m. to accommodate the increased flights, which were expected to bring back 70% to 80% of the passengers who were stuck in Jeju. The island saw more than 19 centimeters (7.5 inches) of snow, while southern mainland cities and towns such as Gwangju and Gangjin reported around 10 to 12 cm (3.9 to 4.7 inches) of snow. More than 70 centimeters (27.5 inches) of snow fell on the small eastern island of Ulleung.

The winter storms appeared to be moving toward the greater Seoul area and nearby regions, where heavy snow was expected from late Wednesday to Thursday afternoon, according to the Safety Ministry, which warned about dangerous road conditions. Officials in Gyeonggi province, which surrounds Seoul, said nearly 7,000 cold-weather shelters will be open across the region and that several thousand tons of snow-clearing chemicals would be used to improve the safety of roads that may turn icy. Cold weather warnings were also issued in North Korea, where authorities reportedly called for "thorough measures" to prevent freezing temperatures from causing economic damage. Temperatures in capital Pyongyang were forecast to dip to minus 19 C (minus 2.2 F) during Wednesday morning. South Korea's Yonhap news agency said, citing a North Korean state-run radio broadcast. North Korean state media didn't immediately report any major damage or injuries caused by the weather.

# Ukraine corruption scandal claims several top officials

KYIV (AP): Several senior Ukrainian officials, including front-line governors, lost their jobs in a corruption scandal plaguing President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's government as it grapples with the nearly 11-month-old Russian invasion. Ukraine's biggest government shake-up since the war began came as US officials said Washington was poised to approve supplying Kyiv with M1 Abrams tanks, with international reluctance eroding toward sending tanks to the battlefield against the Russians.

Zelenskyy was elected in 2019 on an anti-establishment and anti-corruption platform in a country long gripped by graft, and the new allegations come as Western allies are channeling billions of dollars to help Kyiv fight against Moscow. Officials in several countries, including the United States, have demanded more accountability for the aid, given Ukraine's rampant corruption. While Zelenskyy and his aides portray the resignations and firings as proof of their efforts to crack down, the wartime scandal could play into Moscow's political attacks on the leadership in Kyiv.

On the capital's streets, Serhii Bochkarev, a 28-year-old translator, welcomed the moves. "Corruption during war is totally unacceptable because people are giving their lives to fight Russians and to defend the motherland," he said. The shake-up even touched Zelenskyy's office. Its deputy head, Kyrylo Tymoshenko, prominent for his frequent battlefield updates, quit as the president pledged to address allegations of graft -- including some related to military spending -- that embarrassed authorities and could slow Ukraine's efforts to join the European Union and NATO.

Tymoshenko asked to be relieved of his duties, according to an online decree signed by Zelenskyy and Tymoshenko's own social media posts. Neither cited a reason for the resignation. Deputy Defense Minister Viacheslav Shapovalov also resigned, local media reported, alleging his departure was linked to a scandal involving the purchase of food for Ukraine's armed forces. Deputy Prosecutor General Oleksii Symonenko also quit.

In all, four deputy ministers and five governors of front-line provinces were set

to leave their posts, the country's cabinet secretary said on the Telegram messaging app. Authorities did not announce any criminal charges. There was no immediate explanation. The departures thinned government ranks already diminished by the deaths of the interior minister, who oversaw Ukraine's police and emergency services, and others in the ministry's leadership in a helicopter crash last week.

Tymoshenko joined the presidential office in 2019 after working on Zelenskyy's media strategy during his presidential campaign. He was under investigation in connection with his personal use of luxury cars and was among officials a National Anti-Corruption Bureau of Ukraine investigator linked in September to the embezzlement of humanitarian aid worth more than \$7 million earmarked for the southern Zaporizhzhia region. He has denied the allegations. A deputy minister at the infrastructure ministry, Vasyl Lozynsky, was fired for alleged participation in a network embezzling budget funds. Ukraine's anti-corruption agency detained him while he was receiving a

\$400,000 bribe for helping to fix contracts for restoring facilities battered by Russian missile strikes, according to Infrastructure Minister Oleksandr Kubrakov. He was put under house arrest, told to surrender his passport and ordered to wear a monitoring device, in addition to not communicating with other witnesses in his case.

In an address, Zelenskyy said Ukraine's focus on the Russian invasion would not stop his government from tackling corruption, pledging: "There will be no return to what used to be in the past." Analysts say his message was that corruption won't be tolerated. "It's very hard to save the country when there's a lot of corruption," Andrii Borovyk, the executive director of Transparency International Ukraine, a nonprofit organization that fights corruption, told The Associated Press. Volodymyr Fesenko told AP the shake-up was "intended to remind officials of the entire (power) vertical that the authorities plan to continue to fight corruption in Ukraine, especially during the war, when literally everything in the country is in short supply."

The Frontier Post

JALIL AFRIDI  
Managing Editor

Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at  
Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town,  
Peshawar.

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001  
Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

“USA and Canada Toll Free Number 415-3704551

## World education and Pakistan’s frailty

**T**HE International Day of Education has been commemorated with great zeal and zest and high resolve across the globe but Pakistani leadership and nation susceptibly observed this day because of the current prevailing monetary challenges and economic uncertainty in the country. The President, Prime Minister, Speaker of the National Assembly, and Chairman of the Senate were not available to offer any national pledge on this important occasion. This year the slogan of International Day of Education was to invest in people and prioritize education.

Education is an important element for national development and social change in any nation in the world. Pakistan, being a developing nation and a third-world country significantly lags behind in achieving its goals of literacy uplift and educational development, not in formal education but also in current-day scientific and technical knowledge to fully grasp its national objectives in the contemporary world. Currently, Pakistan's literacy rate stands at 62.3 percent which is the least with respect to other competing nations in the South Asian region.

Unfortunately, the education sector had never been a priority for the successive governments in Pakistan. Pakistan's educational budget never exceeded 2 percent of the country's GDP throughout history, which remained a significant reason for educational depletion along with extreme poverty, insufficiently trained and least-educated faculty, inaccessibility, and lack of public awareness.

The public representatives failed to accurately prioritize the national agenda as the successive governments focused on symbolic development and towery projects, defense financing, elite education, and plunged the nation into foreign debt trap while ignoring the education sector, public health, and micro-financing. Such strategies led to poverty, illiteracy, communal gap, and monopoly of cartels in all sectors including education. Currently, the incumbent authorities had put the formal education aside and taken up vocational training and technical education to produce skilled youth to export manpower to foreign nations and help reduce the figures of unemployment in the country.

Realistically, no pivotal change can be brought through the promotion of vocational training except the production of skilled labour and provision of employment abroad, after all a modern formal education is essential for nation-building, technological excellence, and the grooming of the new generation. Therefore, the government must reprioritize its manifesto by increasing its investment in education sector to fully harness the youth with all modern-day skills both in technical and formal education so our nation competes with the world satisfactorily.

## Haiti’s unending violence

**T**HE UN Secretary-General António Guterres has urged the world's nations for the deployment of an international specialized armed force to Haiti and also called on governments to consider a pause in the deportation of Haitians as the country's situation spirals. According to the UN report, gang-related violence and human rights violations have reached a critical level and Haitians are suffering the worst human rights and humanitarian emergency in decades.

The poor Caribbean nation is embattled in a persistent socioeconomic and political crisis that has been marked by the global energy crisis, gang violence, violent protest, scarcity of fuel and fluid along with outbursts of cholera and famine in most parts of the country. Haiti has multiple issues however armed gangs created violence and political unrest are the core problems that shattered the weak democracy.

Earlier, a gang coalition captured an important fuel terminal in Port-au-prince and jammed the entire country. Resultantly, the interim Haitian government appealed to the United Nations and the United States to deploy specialized troops in its country to help control violence and restore peace to the nation. Several western nations including the US, Canada, and others were ready to deploy their forces in Haiti but hundreds of agents of chaos and gang members staged protests in the capital against the deployment of foreign troops and demanded foreign aid and economic assistance for their country.

Currently, the North American nation has become a hub of crimes, violence, assassinations, and kidnappings for ransom while the Police are unresourced, ill-equipped, and insufficiently trained while the government has no writ in the country. The reports suggest that several Haitian politicians and Police Officers are secretly supporting the armed gangs and received a handsome reward for their favor for criminal groups. Presently, the UN intends to deploy global troops in Haiti prior to the general election in the country for the peaceful holding of polls and a smooth transition of the government. Although the Haitian government and the International community are determined to realize peace in Haiti however, the criminal goons and their supporters seek their flourishes in chaos and rivalry, thus Haitians' future is uncertain because their nation is polarized and quarreled so far.

### Quote of the day

*Man cannot discover new lands without consenting to lose sight, for a very long time, of the shore.*  
— André Gide, French writer, Nobel 1947.

**E**ARLIER this month, the House and Se-nate Armed Services Committees named eight commissioners who will review President Joe Biden’s National Defense Strategy and provide recommendations for its implementation.

But the Commission on the National Defense Strategy, which is tasked with “examin[ing] the assumptions, objectives, defense investments, force posture and structure, operational concepts, and military risks of the NDS,” according to the Armed Services Committees, is largely comprised of individuals with financial ties to the weapons industry and U.S. government contractors, raising questions about whether the commission will take a critical eye to contractors who receive \$400 billion of the \$858 billion FY2023 defense budget.

The potential conflicts of interest start at the very top of the eight-person commission. The chair of the commission, former Rep. Jane Harman (D-Calif.), sits on the board of Iridium Communications, a satellite communications firm that was awarded a seven-year \$738.5 million contract with the Department of Defense in 2019.

“Iridium and its Board members follow Iridium’s Code of Business Conduct and Ethics and all rules and

regulations applicable to dealings with the U.S. government,” Iridium spokesman Jordan Hassin told Responsible Statecraft.

A January 11 press release announcing the commission’s roster cited Harman’s current board memberships at the Department of Homeland Security and NASA but made no mention of her Iridium board membership, which paid her \$180,000 in total compensation in 2021. Harman held 50,352 shares in Iridium, now worth approximately \$3 million, in March 2022, according to the company’s disclosures.

“The members of the Commission on the National Defense Strategy each hold long records of ethical public service and national security leadership,” a Senate Armed Services Committee spokesperson told Responsible Statecraft. “The commissioners have committed to adhering to all government ethics policies to prevent any potential conflicts of interest. Congress will provide responsible oversight throughout the Commission’s work.”

That oversight will be complicated, judging by the financial ties to government and defense contractors held by six of the eight commission members.

“Let’s face it, the National Defense Strategy and the Commission on the National Defense Strategy

**T**HE West has loudly refused oil from Russia, but buys it bypassing its own prohibitions. The British were the first to “stop” imports - and immediately set up deliveries according to various gray schemes. By winter, they came up with a new one: black gold flowed to them from Indian refineries. Oil mixtures, in which the lion's share is occupied by Russian raw materials, are acquired by almost the whole of Europe.

“Not alien to hypocrisy” London imposed an embargo on gold in July, on coal in August, and on oil in December. So, if in 2021 the UK purchased Russian oil products for almost \$600 million, by June 2022 imports had completely stopped. But, as it soon became clear, only in words.

Greenpeace, after analyzing the data of an automated tracker of super-tankers, reported: from January to July, oil from Russia was imported into the country for \$ 275 million.

“The British government is not alien to hypocrisy: to

promise” all-round support “to Ukraine and receive almost two million barrels of Russian raw materials is too much even by Boris Johnson's standards,” analysts were indignant.

The Sunday Times also wrote about it. Tankers came from the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Poland, but the oil was Russian. Formally, the laws were not violated: in Britain, the country of origin, not the manufacturer, is considered an importer.

Parliamentarians called for closing the loophole. “Who knows how many raw materials entered the market with the wrong label and, accordingly, bypassing the sanctions. We need to take action and put an end to this once and for all,” demanded the leader of the Conservatives, Ian Duncan Smith.

**New scheme**

We talked and forgot. And now a new scheme has been added. Britain has ramped up deliveries from the world's largest oil refinery, Jamnagar, on India's west coast. The raw materials there are from Russia.

New Delhi and Beijing have become Moscow's

Eli Clifton

Commission are flip sides of the same coin.” Mark Thompson, national security analyst at the Project on Government Oversight, told Responsible Statecraft. “Both are heavily infected by Pentagon spending and Pentagon contractors.”

“These folks have a vested interest in spending more,” said Thompson. “In Washington’s national security community, the way you get credibility is to work at think tanks funded by defense contractors or serving on boards of defense contractors.”

Indeed, Thompson’s characterization of who has “credibility” appears to be reflected in appointments to the Commission.

Commission member John “Jack” Keane serves on the board of IronNet, a firm that describes itself as providing “Collective Defense powered with network detection and response (NDR), we empower national security agencies to gain better visibility into the threat landscape across the private sector with anonymized data, while benefiting from the insight and vigilance of a private/public community of peers.” The firm’s 2022 second quarter report made clear that IronNet is dependent on government contracts.

“Our business depends, in part, on sales to government organizations, and

significant changes in the contracting or fiscal policies of such government organizations could have an adverse effect on our business and results of operations,” the report said. Keane received \$210,751 in total compensation from IronNet in their fiscal year ending January 31, 2022.

Ties to contractors extend beyond the commission members who serve on corporate boards.

Another commission member, Thomas Mahnken, serves as president and CEO of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment, a job that paid him \$394,924 in 2019, the last year in which financial disclosures are available. Major weapons firms, and some of the government’s biggest contractors, are listed as funders of the Center, including Aerojet Rocketdyne, BAE Systems, General Dynamics, General Dynamics, L3 Technologies, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Raytheon, and Boeing.

Similarly, commission member Roger Zakheim serves as Washington Director of the Ronald Reagan Presidential Foundation and Institute, a job that earned him \$495,500 in 2020, the last year for which financial disclosures are available. Major defense contractors play an outsized role

in funding the Foundation, including: Boeing, General Dynamics, BAE Systems, Anduril, L3Harris, Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Palantir, Raytheon, Leonardo DRS, Sierra Nevada Corporation and Thales.

Finally, employees of two major tech companies with government contracts were appointed to the commission: Alissa Starzak, Vice President and Global Head of Policy at Cloudflare and Mariah Sixkiller, General Manager of Strategic Defense at Microsoft.

Last year, Cloudflare told investors, “Our business depends, in part, on sales to the United States and foreign government organizations which are subject to a number of challenges and risks.”

When reached for comment, a Cloudflare spokesperson told Responsible Statecraft, “Alissa Starzak is one of the country’s leading experts at the intersection of national security and cyber security.

“Cloudflare is proud of the contributions that she is making to the Commission. All Cloudflare internal policies and all government ethics policies have been satisfied to prevent any potential conflict of interest,” said the spokesperson.

Microsoft, for its part, is the recipient of billions of dollars in cloud computing contracts from the

Department of Defense. The company declined to comment on Sixkiller’s appointment.

The appointment to the commission of individuals with deep ties to the contracting and weapons sectors is also consistent with campaign contributions to the chairs of both the House and Senate Armed Services Committees.

SASC chairman Sen. Jack Reed (D-R.H.) counts General Dynamics employees as the top source of campaign contributions over his entire political career, and HASC chairman Rep. Mike D. Rogers (R-Ala.) saw Lockheed Martin employees as his top source of campaign funds in the past election cycle.

As the defense budget creeps toward \$1 trillion, voices who will bring a critical eye to the NDS, and the enormous costs associated with the strategy, are unlikely to be found within the newly appointed commission.

“The nation’s security is an important responsibility, but the subordinate question is whether we’re doing it in the best way possible,” said Thompson. “It seems that the NDS commission is going to give us more of the same.” Iridium, IronNet, the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessment and the Reagan Foundation did not respond to requests for comment.

## ‘Not alien to hypocrisy’

Natalia Dembinskaya

largest trading partners. According to the International Energy Agency (IEA), since February, India has increased its purchases of Russian oil by 36 times - from 30,000 to 1.08 million barrels per day. China - up to 830 thousand. The total flow of fuel to Asia has tripled to 2.5 million. According to S&P Global Commodities at Sea, the share of China and India in offshore shipments of crude oil from Russia has reached 68 percent. “Asian giants swallowed up European barrels almost completely,” the experts stated.

**Every fifth barrel**

According to the commodity analytics platform Kpler, in 2022 the Jamnagar refinery received 215 batches of oil and fuel oil from Russia, four times more than in 2021.

The UK purchased about ten million barrels of diesel and other petroleum products from Jamnagar. In 2021, there were only four. The flow has especially intensified since December, when the embargo was introduced.

market, emphasize Facts Global Energy.

**Ends in the water**

Companies assured that they carefully check the origin of raw materials. For example, Shell is trying “by all means” to avoid “fuel that may contain something from Russia.”

BP has “very strict procedures and controls to enforce sanctions.” Certificates of origin are required from each counterparty.

However, even before the embargo, experts warned that it was pointless. It’s like looking for a needle in a haystack.

“Documents can be drawn up in such a way that you won’t find out anything. The easiest way: we fill Russian ESPO into tankers, we approach the Indian ship, where there is already oil from the Middle East. We mix: Saudi 70 percent, ours - 30. And we send it further. Try to check”, explains Leonid Khazanov, an independent industrial expert.

For every taste

Similar mixtures were tried all over Europe. In particular, Shell was happy to buy such raw materials

last spring. Traders dubbed it “Latvian”, because the “blend” was prepared in the port of Ventspils.

There are also historical precedents. Thus, sanctions Iranian and Venezuelan oil was sold in the Far East as a “Malaysian” or “Singaporean” mixture.

Now, according to Bloomberg, Russian ingredients predominate in “Singapore”. The island city-state is the most important international hub for the removal of hydrocarbons from Western prohibitions.

According to consulting firm Miyabi Industries, traders are leasing land-based storage tanks and floating offshore storage facilities in Singapore en masse. Russian oil is mixed with other grades and re-exported to third countries.

According to the analytical company Vortexa, Singapore’s terminals accepted twice as much Russian raw materials and fuel oil in December as compared to a year earlier. The blended oil products then go to Northeast Asia and from there to Europe. With price markups, but “cleared from sanctions.”

## ‘It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is’

**J**AMES R. Rogers recently wrote for Law & Liberty that the Supreme Court’s decision in West Virginia v. EPA last term established “no new doctrine.” By this, he seemed to mean that there was nothing in the decision that had not already been outlined by the Court in a series of cases that have narrowed the scope of what is known as Chevron deference. This is the principle that the Court established in a 1984 case, NRDC v. Chevron, that lower courts should defer to an agency’s interpretation of its statutory authority where that interpretation was “reasonable.”

But in West Va. v. EPA, it is more likely that the Court has now set out a new standard—the Major Questions Doctrine—for determining when an administrative agency has stepped beyond the bounds it has been given by Congress. Rather than the end of what Mr. Rogers sees as the Court’s innovations in this area, it is more likely to be the beginning of a new era, where the Major Questions Doctrine (MQD) supersedes Chevron deference. The courts will decide what is “reasonable,” not the agency.

Although the EPA’s regulation at issue in the case could easily have been categorized as extreme and unprecedented—it required

existing coal-burning power plants to cease or diminish operations and invest in other power systems—the use of the MQD had little to do with that. It was simply a finding, 6-3, that this rule went too far and was not authorized by the Clean Air Act. Although issued under the name “Major Questions Doctrine,” the same idea could be applicable in any case where the Court believes an administrative action goes beyond what was specifically authorized by Congress.

In this sense, West Va.’s outcome was no different from the theories the Court used in narrowing Chevron; it was just issued under a different rubric. But that isn’t the end of the matter. Despite its name, the MQD is broadly applicable to any case where an agency exceeds its remit. Its issuance could explain why, in recent cases described below, the Court has simply stopped invoking or citing Chevron where it would normally be applicable. Its use might also eliminate the need for litigants to use the Non-Delegation Doctrine (NDD) as a blanket challenge to the legal basis of an agency’s authority; the MQD could do just as well for this purpose. In other words, adopting the MQD as a substitute for Chevron could simplify the whole process of challenging the legal underpinnings of agency rules and

regulations.

It would not be surprising to find that the conservative Court was dissatisfied with the degree of latitude that the lower courts, under Chevron, had been giving to agencies. After all, the Administrative Procedure Act states that “the reviewing court shall... interpret constitutional and statutory provisions, and determine the meaning or applicability of the terms of any agency action,” and the Senate Report on the APA said that judicial review of agency powers “is indispensable since its mere existence generally precludes the arbitrary exercise of powers or the assumption of powers not granted.”

Chevron deference would seem inconsistent with these congressional instructions. Yet, other than Chevron, the Court does not have a standard that would guide lower courts in addressing the scope of administrative authority. Then there is the opposite question, addressed by the NDD—whether an agency was given too much authority. The Constitution says that “all legislative authority herein granted shall be vested in a Congress of the United States” and the courts have interpreted this to mean that, under the Constitution’s separation of powers, Congress cannot

delegate its legislative authority—generally understood to mean policy-making—to executive agencies.

But to make an argument based on the NDD, a litigant had to argue that the specific words of a statute gave the agency unconstitutional legislative powers. In practice, this was a difficult standard for the courts to apply. A good example was Whitman v. American Trucking Association, a 2001 case in which the ATA challenged the broad authority that Congress granted to the EPA in the Clean Air Act as an unconstitutional delegation. Writing for the Court in that case, Justice Scalia cited the key language of the act as follows: “to set primary air quality standards ‘the attainment and maintenance of which...are requisite to protect the public health...’” The word “requisite,” he concluded, sufficiently hedged the delegation to meet the requirements of the NDD.

To implement the MQD, on the other hand, all a litigant would have to show is that the agency’s regulations exceeded its authority from Congress, not that it was an unconstitutional delegation.

After the ATA decision, some members of the Court then turned to questioning Chevron itself. In a 2013 case, City of Arlington v.

FCC, the city challenged the FCC’s authority to set the period during which a locality had to make a citing decision for wireless facilities. Justice Scalia, a long supporter of Chevron, authored the decision in favor of the FCC on Chevron grounds, but Chief Justice Roberts dissented, joined by Justices Kennedy and Alito. Roberts’ dissent quoted Chief Justice Marshall’s famous statement in Marbury v. Madison: “It is emphatically the province and duty of the judicial department to say what the law is.” But then he continued that in finding Chevron deference a reviewing court must determine that Congress “has in fact actually delegated to the agency lawmaking power over the ambiguity at issue.” This was a new and much narrower interpretation of Chevron and would weaken it substantially. To remove all doubt about his position, Roberts ended his dissent with this: “We do not leave it to the agency to decide when it is in charge.”

This was not the last Chevron case to reach the Supreme Court. In 2018, Pereira v. Sessions was decided 8-1 (Alito dissenting), but the Court did not invoke or even mention Chevron because it found no ambiguity in the statute involved. This was one of Justice Kennedy’s last cases before his retirement, and

he concurred in the decision but noted his unease with Chevron: “It seems necessary and appropriate to reconsider in an appropriate case, the premises that underlie Chevron, and how courts have implemented that decision.”

Then, in 2022, two other cases reached the Court, both involving government reimbursement of hospitals. There was certainly ambiguity in the statutory language, but the Court managed to resolve both without citing Chevron. This suggests that the Court no longer supports Chevron deference, but also that it does not want to overrule a unanimous 1984 Supreme Court decision. Instead, it has introduced a new standard, the MQD, under which the courts can decide whether statutory language alone supports an agency’s regulation.

If so, in the future, when lower courts confront a challenge to an agency’s authority from Congress, it may well be considered within the ambit of the MQD, where the key question is whether Congress gave the agency the authority it claims, without any consideration by the court whether agency’s claim is “reasonable.” All this suggests that West Va. v. EPA is not the endpoint of the Court’s use of the Major Questions Doctrine, but the beginning.

# ‘Is this treason?’

“Is this treason?” - Without further ado, the Fox News host asks the head of the Committee on Oversight and Accountability of the US House of Representatives, James Comer, on the air. The congressman, not expecting such a turn, is speechless for a few seconds. It can be understood - after all, the program is about the President of the United States. It is Joe Biden that the Republicans are now publicly accusing of treason, and this is a direct basis for both impeachment and criminal investigation of the activities of members of the president's family.

How did old Joe come to such a life, turning from a treasure of the nation into a traitor to the motherland? The scandal was triggered by documents labeled "Top Secret". They were suddenly found in the president's personal office in the Washington office of the Penn Biden Center, although by law they should have been transferred to the National Archives long ago.

The X-Files date back to that exciting period in Biden's career when he was Vice President under Obama, and his son Hunter actively solicited bribes from the Ukrainian establishment, funded mysterious biolabs, and openly traded access to his dad's body. Among the most sensitive documents are intelligence reports - in particular on Iran, Great Britain and Ukraine. The question involuntarily arises, what personal interest did Biden have when he stored these papers at his place? What did he really want to hide?

At the suggestion of the Republicans, the indifferent public began to ask these questions. The White House reflected them in its classic style: "What is it?"

The administration's official version was that presidential aides had

found the documents themselves and announced their existence. However, this lie was immediately exposed. Secret materials were found back in November, on the eve of the midterm elections. But then the scandal could destroy the Democratic Party, and the president's aides did everything to make sure that Biden's failure was known only in January.

The Democratic Party has offered Attorney General Merrick Garland to oversee the case. It looked like a natural slap in the face of public opinion, because Merrick Garland, without hiding at all, serves the interests of the Democratic Party.

Then the administration began to demonstrate how the president diligently cooperates with the investigation. The Bidens have been allowed to search their luxurious mansion in Wilmington, Delaware. Joe and Jill left the house, and for twelve hours the estate was furrowed by representatives of the Department of Justice.

Didn't have to search long. A few more secret documents were found right in the garage, not far from the famous Biden sports car. This is a powerful "Corvette" of 1967 - a very beautiful car of those times when the oil crisis has not yet forced Americans to change to small cars. In his youth, Biden liked to drive it under two hundred km / h. However, he still drives it now - to the horror of those around him, of course. Somewhere under the bottom of this beautiful machine in patriarchal simplicity lay folders with secret documents.

How did it happen? Journalists asked Biden. "My corvette is in a locked garage, okay?" the President of the United States answered. "They (documents. — Approx. ed.) weren't just lying around on the street..." Regarding the top secret

Victoria Nikiforova

documents at the Penn Biden Center, he said that completely forgot about them and knows nothing.

Sleepy Joe probably forgot, but in general, such handling of classified files is a serious crime. Secret files must be kept at the National Archives and nowhere else. Literally a few months ago, the same Biden was worth the wing of Donald Trump, on whose estate documents with the Top Secret stamp were also found. Based on these findings, a whole investigation arose. Trump is still being hauled in for interrogations and the media are zealously washing his bones.

Biden is getting away with everything. True, Merrick Garland, feigning impartiality, appointed Trump's man, Prosecutor Robert Hur, to investigate this case. However, Hur does not dig into the most interesting questions related to this case. The political opponents of the Biden clan had natural suspicions that the family could trade top secret documents to the side.

For example, his son Hunter, a patented drug addict, a libertine and a bribe taker, lived in the Wilmington Biden mansion more than once. Did he play in the garage with his dad's papers? Well, if he just twisted them into joints. But what if he passed them on for a considerable price to his numerous counterparts?

The Bidens' ill-wishers began to correlate the compromising evidence from Hunter's legendary laptop with the dates on the papers and found a lot of interesting things. While Joe was shoving paperwork into his personal stash, Hunter was receiving a lot of money and valuable gifts from a variety of shady businessmen. One Chinese gave him, for example, a round diamond of more than three carats. In total, during that

period, Hunter had one hundred and fifty accounts, into which money flowed from all over the world. So why did he get them?

Of interest is the fact that the Penn Biden Center is closely affiliated with the University of Pennsylvania, and this university officially receives tens of millions of dollars in funding from China every year. At the same time, China is also officially declared in the United States as the number one strategic adversary. And here already the question of an American journalist about high treason does not seem such an exaggeration.

Today, the Republicans are trying to make the garage scandal an excuse to gain access to all the bank accounts of the Biden family. They are very interested in the activities of the Biden Center for Diplomacy, as well as the paintings of Hunter Biden - this tireless dude has recently closed up to contemporary artists and now sells his "canvases" for several hundred thousand dollars apiece. This opens up a wide field for investigations of bribes, money laundering, fraud with the budget.

Another interesting question is how did this case come out at all and why do all the new secret files come to light so carefully, in metered portions, without letting the scandal die out?

Speaking impartially, it looks like today not only society and the US army are split, but also the special services. Some of the "clerical" openly works for the Democratic Party, and some - for the Republicans. Those guys who serve the Republicans regularly leak dirt on the Bidens to the press. Here is the current scandal with secret documents. Here is Hunter's legendary laptop, which looks like just a convenient excuse to publish all the new results of many years of surveillance of the presi-

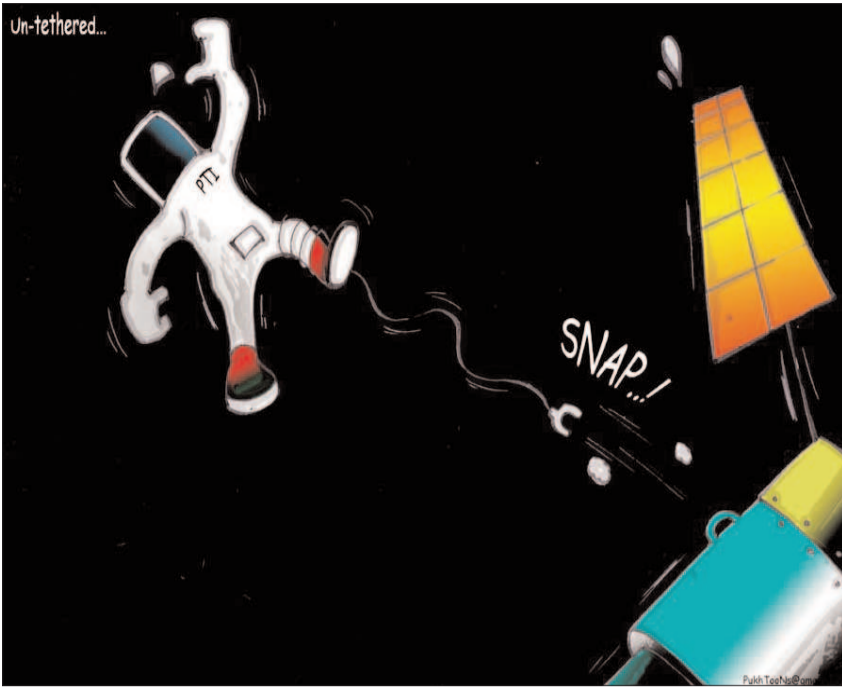
dent's son. He does not let himself be forgotten and it is not known how the diary of the president's daughter was obtained with a shocking compromising evidence on her father.

Interestingly, Hillary Clinton's detractors managed to bring down Hillary Clinton with the help of a very similar scandal. In 2016, a Democratic presidential candidate was convicted of sending state secret materials via personal email. Those elections, as we remember, Hillary lost.

Will the Biden story come to impeachment? Highly doubtful. First, the Democrats have a majority in the Senate, and they will be able to block this initiative. Secondly, the Republicans, although they hate Biden, do not know what to do after his impeachment either. After all, Joe will be replaced by an even more unpleasant Kamala Harris. This woman is completely devoid of intelligence, charisma, and independence. It will be even more obedient to follow all the instructions of Obama - or whoever is there today, on behalf of the deep state, steers America.

Rather, the point here is that American politics is already living in 2024. The Republicans need a scandal with secret documents in order to exchange Biden for Trump. The same Comer, with whom we began our story, has already proposed in Congress to simultaneously close both investigations - both against the president and against the ex-president - and no longer dishonor before the voters.

Such an outcome would strengthen Trump's position in the 2024 presidential election and, accordingly, weaken Biden. It seems that many employees in the American intelligence services are looking forward to the Republicans' victory and are doing everything to bring it closer.



## Iran and Turkey appear to have taken military matters into their own hands

**IN his recent visit to Iraq, the White House coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa, Brett McGurk, focused much of his attention on Iraqi Kurdistan. This region has been a relatively stable part of Iraq, post-2003, but now faces a heightened risk of internal fragmentation and external threat. Frequent foreign attacks undermine prospects for stabilizing Iraq two decades after the U.S. invasion. The formation of a consensus Iraqi government in October, which includes both major Kurdish parties, presents an opportunity to resolve internal**

Hamzeh Hadad

chief of staff of the Peshmerga, the Kurdish security forces, in National Security Council meetings in Baghdad.

In addition, Iran has claimed responsibility for attacking Iranian-Kurdish opposition groups based in Iraqi Kurdistan. This happened in response to the protests in Iran over the killing of Jina "Mahsa" Amini. Iranian authorities attempted to distract and rally citizens around the flag by attacking "separatist" groups and blaming them for recent unrest. Attacks in September killed a pregnant woman in the town of Koye, and ballistic

growing division between the KDP and the PUK, which has intensified since the death of former Iraqi President and PUK leader, Jalal Talabani, in 2017. Internal division within the more dominant KDP is also likely to worsen as long-time leader, Masoud Barzani, grows older and more distant from politics. The fight for political dominance between his son, Masrour Barzani, and his nephew, Nechirvan Barzani, may plunge Kurdish politics into further chaos. If a conflict emerges between these potential heirs, it will draw in their allies from the rest of Iraq.

Despite Kurdish aspirations to democracy, Iraqi

**Turkey claims to have official approval to operate, but Iraq's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has denounced these attacks. It is believed that the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has allowed these operations to take place in defiance of Baghdad. Turkish airstrikes have continued in 2023 — the latest attack took place on Jan. 9 in Duhok. Prime Minister Mohammed al-Sudani has called for greater cooperation to guard Iraq's borders and has begun including the chief of staff of the Peshmerga, the Kurdish security forces, in National Security Council meetings in Baghdad.**

**Kurdish issues, as well as outstanding ones with Baghdad, but this can be done only with American support.**

Ensuring stability in Iraqi Kurdistan is important for the U.S. and its allies. The region plays host to coalition troops and various international organizations serving Iraq and Syria. Moreover, previous instances of instability in Iraqi Kurdistan, such as the financial crisis in 2020, triggered major refugee flows into Europe.

For many years, NATO member Turkey has had military bases in Iraq to fight the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK), which both Ankara and Washington view as a terrorist group. Turkish airstrikes and skirmishes have killed many Turkish and PKK fighters, as well as Iraqi civilians. In late July, public anger with Turkey peaked when a Turkish airstrike hit a park in Duhok governorate, killing at least eight civilians and wounding more than 20, many of whom were tourists from central and southern Iraq. These operations also have displaced many families, most notably indigenous minorities such as Yazidis and Assyrians.

Turkey claims to have official approval to operate, but Iraq's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has denounced these attacks. It is believed that the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) has allowed these operations to take place in defiance of Baghdad. Turkish airstrikes have continued in 2023 — the latest attack took place on Jan. 9 in Duhok. Prime Minister Mohammed al-Sudani has called for greater cooperation to guard Iraq's borders and has begun including the

missiles were launched in November, targeting more Iranian-Kurdish opposition groups. In March, Erbil was hit with 12 ballistic missiles but Iran claimed to target Israeli intelligence presence.

Iran and Turkey appear to have taken military matters into their own hands, claiming Iraq is incapable of handling the opposition groups that have taken refuge in Iraqi Kurdistan. The past two decades have witnessed a breakdown in Iraqi security capacity in the face of civil war and terrorism. The Iraqi state has been weakened militarily over the years and the training it received from the Global Coalition is focused only on countering ISIS and not on bolstering overall military capabilities. The security set up with the KRG means that Iraqi Security Forces (ISF) have no presence there, despite border security being an important federal matter.

The United States has condemned attacks by Iran and Turkey but has done little to prevent their recurrence. Moreover, there has been little cooperation between the ISF and Kurdish Peshmerga forces since the defeat of ISIS. It will be difficult to achieve integration between the ISF and the Kurdish Peshmerga, since the Peshmerga operate as two separate forces — one belonging to the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) and the other to the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) — despite American military backing premised on the promise of unification. These divisions raise fears of a new civil war, a dangerous development that could spill over into the rest of Iraq.

American policymakers need to be wary of the

Kurdistan has never held elections on time; the 2022 elections were postponed for one year. Although elections can't change the dominant political landscape, they can force the two parties to form a government together. A KRG with a renewed legal mandate would enjoy greater legitimacy when dealing with the federal Iraqi government. The Kurdish elections can be held alongside the provincial Iraqi elections in 2023, to save costs and maintain democratic practices.

This type of coordination and integration could build trust that leads to the resolution of more sensitive matters, such as border security. Given that Kurdish parties welcome partnership at the federal level, by leading ministries and holding the Iraqi presidency, they should similarly welcome partnership in securing Iraq's federal borders. Unlike in the past, weak Iraqi borders are hurting the Kurdish region much more than the rest of Iraq.

The U.S. should encourage negotiations between Kurdish parties and their counterparts in Baghdad. Recently, the Iranian Foreign Ministry offered to mediate between Baghdad and Iraqi Kurdistan, which undoubtedly would bring Iranian interests to the forefront. Iran's influence in Iraqi Kurdistan is a concern, especially given that a commemoration of Qassem Soleimani was held in Erbil and Sulaymaniyah and attended by high-level Kurdish officials. Considering this, the U.S. should present itself as an alternate mediator and build upon McGurk's visit, especially considering American investment in Iraqi democracy.

## Geopolitical competition, regional tensions will be the main stories to watch in Central Asia in 2023

**POLITICAL turmoil and uncertainty beset Central Asia in 2022. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan faced domestic, regional and international challenges exacerbated by the war in Ukraine. This brought into sharp relief both the systemic threats to peace and stability on the ground and regional authoritarian governments' capacity to placate if not eliminate them.**

**Regime survival was tested in Kazakhstan when violent protests rocked the country in January last year. Kazakh authorities classified the events as a coup attempt. The government alleged criminals and terrorists, at the behest of security chiefs close to former president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, carried out the violence. Kazakhstan's current President, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, spent the rest of the year shoring up his power. He first held a constitutional referendum in June and then called snap elections in November, which he comfortably won. Despite talk about the dawn of a 'new Kazakhstan', featuring true democracy and social justice, Tokayev's actions were aimed at dismantling Nazarbayev's power and legitimising his rule until at least 2029. Turkmenistan, instead, witnessed a smooth power transition between two presidents in March 2022. This was due to the dynastic nature of the change: former president Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow passed on the baton to his son, now President, Serdar Berdimuhamedow. Yet the new head of Central Asia's most closed state inherited a slew of socioeconomic issues including food shortages, unemployment and skyrocketing inflation. If prices for natural gas — Turkmenistan's main export commodity — fall, the regime may find itself in dire straits. Tensions between central and regional authorities were the main source of domestic instability in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Tajikistan grappled with protests in the fractious Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast, while Uzbekistan dealt with civil unrest in Karakalpakstan.**

Regime survival was tested in Kazakhstan when violent protests rocked the country in January last year. Kazakh authorities classified the events as a coup attempt. The government alleged criminals and terrorists, at the behest of security chiefs close to former president, Nursultan Nazarbayev, carried out the violence.

Kazakhstan's current President, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, spent the rest of the year shoring up his power. He first held a constitutional referendum in June and then called snap elections in November, which he comfortably won. Despite talk about the dawn of a 'new Kazakhstan', featuring true democracy and social justice, Tokayev's actions were aimed at dismantling Nazarbayev's power and legitimising his

rule until at least 2029. Turkmenistan, instead, witnessed a smooth power transition between two presidents in March 2022. This was due to the dynastic nature of the change: former president Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow passed on the baton to his son, now President, Serdar Berdimuhamedow. Yet the new head of Central Asia's most closed state inherited a slew of socioeconomic issues including food shortages, unemployment and skyrocketing inflation. If

prices for natural gas — Turkmenistan's main export commodity — fall, the regime may find itself in dire straits. Tensions between central and regional authorities were the main source of domestic instability in Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. Tajikistan grappled with protests in the fractious Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast, while Uzbekistan dealt with civil unrest in Karakalpakstan. The use of force restored order in both instances yet the regimes failed to address the root causes of the rumblings in these periphery regions. Longstanding cross-border conflicts over land, water and state boundaries also simmered in 2022. Border clashes between Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan in the Ferghana Valley left

Kirill Nourzhanov

hundreds dead and wounded and led to mass population displacement. The final demarcation of the Kyrgyz-Uzbek border negotiated in October last year may have improved bilateral relations but it also precipitated resentment and resistance in Kyrgyzstan.

Meanwhile, Afghanistan remained a source of security threats to all Central Asian countries. Besides Tajikistan, Central Asian countries tried to normalise

signed an agreement on regional cooperation at the summit, while Tajikistan and Turkmenistan asked for more time to consider the document. Apprehension about Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan as potential 'big brothers' still prevents tangible collaborative projects in the region.

The conflict in Ukraine affected Central Asian countries' global relations. They tried to stay neutral in the unfolding confrontation between Russia on the one hand and Ukraine and its

Western allies on the other. Kazakhstan's foreign minister, for instance, repeatedly stated that his country would neither join the sanctions against Moscow nor help Moscow bust them. The Russia-Ukraine war also increased the strategic and economic value of Central Asia to Russia. Although the Kremlin did not push for loyalty from the countries that are nominally its allies and friends, it was content to see the region as a breach in the wall of international isolation and a reliable commercial partner.

In 2022, trade between Russia and the Central Asian republics grew impressively. This ranged from 22 per cent in the case of Tajikistan, to 42 per cent in the case of Kyrgyzstan. Russian President Vladimir Putin visited all five coun-

tries during the year and took part in a summit with Central Asian countries in October, promising more Russian infrastructure investment. Tajikistan's President Emomali Rahmon also demanded more attention and respect from Moscow at the summit, though Putin stated that relations between the Kremlin and Central Asian republics would never follow the Soviet pattern.

The European Union also engaged in diplomacy with Central Asia last year.

Visiting Kazakhstan after Putin in October, European Council President, Charles Michel, discussed with President Tokayev how to mitigate the unintended consequences of EU sanctions on Russia on Kazakhstan's economy. In December, the EU foreign policy head, Josep Borrell, hinted that the region could receive part of a 300 billion euro (US\$323 billion) connectivity development budget. This referred to a transport route connecting China to Turkey dubbed the 'Middle Corridor', bypassing Russia and going across the Caspian Sea.

Geopolitical competition, regional tensions and the maintenance of authoritarian regimes, including the dynastic transition in Tajikistan, will be the main stories to watch in Central Asia in 2023.

### Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or tehsil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



**PESHAWAR:** Ambassador of Turkey addressing businessmen at Chamber of Small Traders and Industry during his visit to Chamber. — F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

## Oil, gas exploration companies active under CSR

**PESHAWAR** (APP): Domestic and foreign companies working for the exploration of oil and gas in the southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are actively participating in social and welfare activities and making efforts to bring positive changes in the lives of the people.

It is necessary to formulate laws to bring, for which all the stakeholders will have to gather on a platform and give suggestions for it so that these welfare works may be highlighted as an institutional duty in the future.

These views were expressed the participants in a consultative workshop held under the auspices of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Oil and Gas Company Limited (KPOGCL), a subsidiary of the Energy & Power Department KP, in collaboration with the Pakistan Petroleum Exploration and Production Com-

panies Association (PPEPCA) in the southern districts of the province, Kohat, Hangu, Karak, Lucky Marwat, Dera Ismail Khan, Okzai, said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

President of PPEPCA/ CEO KPOGCL Nasir Khan and representatives of OGDCL, MPCL, MoL, PPL and AEPL, the companies working for oil and gas exploration attended the workshop.

While addressing the workshop, Nasir Khan, MPCL representative Miss Huma zafar, Brig. Mahmood, Col. Iqbal, Syed Kamal, Zahoor Khattak informed the participants that the companies working for oil and gas exploration in the southern districts of the province are public service. They are engaged in various welfare works to teach local people jobs and skills including education, health, food, water with passion.

Moreover, several public

welfare oriented projects have completed under Corporate Social Responsibilities (CSR) through the platform of PPEPCA, from which the local population is benefiting from the same facilities as the developed areas by using the funds received as royalties and the funds allocated for welfare works. On the other hand, the local people consider the projects as their own and lead to cooperation.

The participants have urged the government institutions and government officials to sponsor these welfare works, continue them on institutional basis under a prevailing mechanism, and give suggestions from the platform of PPEPCA to further expand them.

At the end of the workshop, the participants were awarded with appreciation shields and it was promised that similar workshops would be held in other parts of the country soon.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

**KARACHI** (APP): Three ships namely, Maersk Columbus, GSL Ningbo and Nordtigris carrying Containers and Steel coil, berthed at Qasim International Containers Terminal and Multi Purpose Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile three more ships, Annita, Rigel and Sloman Hebe scheduled to load/offload Cement and Palm oil also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the same day.

A total of 09 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them an oil tanker 'Clear-ocean Mesquite' left the Port on Wednesday morning, while 05 more ships, Maersk Columbus, Nordtigris, Greener VI, Seapower I and Al-Maha are expected to sail on today in the afternoon.

A cargo volume of 163,835 tonnes, comprising 141,021 tonnes imports cargo and 22,814 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 4,212 Containers (2,870 TEUs Imports and 1,342 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, Annita, ChemroadDita and AAI Prelude & 02 more ships, EM Astoria and Ullswater scheduled to load/offload Cement, Palm oil, Wheat, Containers and LPG are expected to take berths at MW-2, LCT, FAP, QICT and EVTL on Wednesday.

## US envoy to Pakistan visits SCCI

**SIALKOT** (APP): USA Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) for a meeting with members of the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

The Ambassador was warmly received by President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik along with other officials.

According to the SCCI Press release, while addressing to the house President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik, mentioned that both the United States of America and Pakistan were celebrating 75 years of bilateral partnership.

Malik emphasized on the areas of mutual interest including enhanced trading linkages, women empowerment, green environment & sustainable production.

Abdul Ghafoor Malik further mentioned that the United States of America could extend its cooperation, expertise, technological support, and a conceptual framework to promote the model of Sialkot, across Pakistan.

He said that USA was the top trading partner of Pakistan and that both countries should focus on further improving the bilateral trade. In this regard, he mentioned about cooperation from US Embassy in exchanging trade delegations, participation in US based trade exhibitions, and finding common grounds for collaboration mutually beneficial for businesses of both countries.

Ambassador of the USA to Pakistan Donald Blome, in his address shared that the United States was committed to helping Pakistan mitigate the effects of climate change, promotion of sustainable energy, encouraging women's participation, and enhancing bilateral trade.

Asian equities fluctuated as traders in several countries returned from the Lunar New Year break with recession

## PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 729 points

**ISLAMABAD** (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on the third consecutive day on Wednesday, gaining 729.25 points, a positive change of 1.87 percent, closing at 39,784.90 against 39,055.65 points the previous day.

A total of 269,493,715 shares were traded during the day as compared to 179,760,927 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs10.574 billion against Rs6.368 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 339 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 225 of them recorded gains and 92 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 22 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall

Telecom with 20,618,001 shares at Rs1.19 per share, TPL Properties with 14,463,924 shares at Rs15.99 per share, and Pak Petroleum with 13,282,160 shares at Rs80.17 per share.

Rafhan Maize witnessed a maximum increase of Rs485.91 per share price, closing at Rs8,381.75, whereas the runner-up was Sapphire Tex with a Rs476.35 rise in its per share price to Rs1,094.35.

Philip Morris Pak witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs42.72 per share closing at Rs527.03, followed by Ismail Ind with Rs37.50 declines to close at Rs462.50.

**Rupee closes at Rs230.89 against dollar**

The exchange rate of the Pakistani rupee depreciated by 49 paisa against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Wednesday and

closed at Rs230.89 against the previous day's closing of Rs230.40.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs240.60 and Rs243.00 respectively.

The price of the euro appreciated by 27 paisa and closed at Rs251.28 against the previous day's closing of Rs251.01, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen remained unchanged to close at Rs1.77, whereas a decrease of Rs1.76 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British pound, which was traded at Rs284.19 as compared to its last closing of Rs285.95.

The exchange rates of the Emirates dirham and Saudi riyal increased by 16 paisa and 13 paisa to close at Rs62.86 and Rs61.49

respectively.

**Gold prices jump to Rs190,600 per tola**

The per tola price of 24 karat gold witnessed an increase of Rs1,300 on Wednesday and was traded all-time high at Rs190,600 against sale at Rs189,300 the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold increased by Rs1,115 to Rs163,409 against Rs162,294, whereas that of 10 grams of 22 karat increased to Rs149,791 from Rs148,770, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of one tola and ten gram silver remained constant at Rs2,100 and Rs1,800.41 respectively. The price of gold in the international market decreased by US\$13 to US\$1,925 as compared to its sale at US\$1,938 on the last trading day, the association reported.

## UK working to enhance trade, investment in Pakistan: Sarah

**LAHORE** (APP): Deputy High Commissioner and Trade Director for Pakistan Sarah Mooney said on Wednesday that the UK was working to increase trade and investment in Pakistan.

She was talking to the business community at Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI), where LCCI President Kashif Anwar and Senior Vice President Chaudhry Zafar Mahmood also spoke.

Sarah Mooney said, "The High Commission is researching to identify those products which could get significant success in the UK's market and after identifying those products, we would come back to Pakistan's business community."

The deputy high commissioner said that floods caused devastation and disaster in Pakistan and "I am very encouraged to see that the British citizens contributed around 100 million pounds for the flood relief efforts. The British government has a disaster relief fund and the UK citizens are contributing to that fund".

She said, "We have 96 per cent duty-free products coming from Pakistan and are working on the rest. Education is our priority area where we want to collaborate with the Pakistani

institutions and enhance cooperation and we are also keen to support education below university level. The other areas in which we are interested include sustainable growth, green energy and infrastructure development. Lastly, the healthcare is our other priority area."

Sarah Mooney added, "We must go forward to change the style of partnership between Pakistan and United Kingdom which should be a genuine partnership where we bring investment and expertise to Pakistan and to take benefit from the expertise in Pakistan."

LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that Lahore Chamber had always attached great value to have good working relations with British High Commission for the sake of exploring ways to further strengthen bilateral ties. He said that the United Kingdom had been one of the major trading partners of Pakistan and was currently the fourth largest export market for Pakistani products.

According to the State Bank of Pakistan statistics, he mentioned, Pakistan's exports to UK were around US\$2.2 billion in 2021-22 as compared to around US\$2 billion in 2020-21. On the other hand, Pakistan's imports from the

UK were US\$869 million in 2021-22 as compared to US\$780 million in 2020-21. "Pakistan's exports to the UK are dominated heavily by textiles. We are of the view that the bilateral trade volume, which currently stands around US\$3 billion, should be taken to at least US\$10 billion," he added.

The LCCI president said that they were thankful that even after Brexit, the United Kingdom had kept on giving them the same level of market access, as there was under the GSP plus status. "We have learnt that the UK government had launched the Developing Countries Trading Scheme through which Pakistan will continue to benefit from duty free exports to the UK."

Furthermore this scheme will remove tariffs on more than 150 products exported from Pakistan. Please share with us more details of the said scheme."

He said that Pakistan was facing steep economic challenges. The devastating floods of 2022 affected 33 million people in Pakistan and more than 1,700 people lost their lives. The total economic losses were estimated to be over US\$30 billion. The sectors of housing, agriculture, livestock, and infrastructure suffered the most significant dam-

ages. He said that the current foreign exchange crisis had forced restrictions on the ability of banks to open LCs. Shipping containers were stuck at ports which were creating threats to the supply chain of manufacturing and industrial sectors.

Kashif Anwar said that there were great opportunities for the British companies to enter into joint ventures with Pakistani companies and enhance economic cooperation in the areas of healthcare, education, green energy, infrastructure, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, IT, mining and tourism. Combating climate change was an important area where both the countries needed to enhance cooperation. He said that there was also a great potential for enhancing Pakistan's food sector exports to the UK. For this purpose, the Pakistani exporters needed better guidance for meeting the UK standards to gain deeper penetration into its food market.

He said that the LCCI was particularly concentrating on the development of SMEs with special focus on women entrepreneurs. "We would certainly like to collaborate with British High Commission for attaining the desired results," he concluded.

## AHZ Associates organizes educational expo

### F.P. Report

**RAWALPINDI:** AHZ Associates organized an educational expo at Pearl Continental Hotel Rawalpindi. In which AHZ Associates Country Head Mufijul Haq and Regional Head Liaquat Shabir specially participated.

The purpose of the expo was clear. The aim was to provide guidance to male and female students who wanted to get education in the country.

Representatives of British universities and more than 1000 male and female students participated in the expo.



Will continue to provide free services and guidance

to students. So that the youth can give their services to the country by getting

education abroad and prove to be an asset for Pakistan

## Stocks slip before US economic updates

**LONDON** (AFP/APP): European stock markets slid Wednesday as investors awaited key company earnings and economic growth data in the United States.

Traders "are waiting for some direction from across the Atlantic as US earnings season gets into full swing and key economic announcements loom at the end of the week", said AJ Bell investment director Russ Mould. Investors will later track the latest results from electric carmaker Tesla, headed by Twitter owner and billionaire Elon Musk.

That follows this week's earnings gloom from US corporate titans Microsoft and Johnson & Johnson.

"Traders are keen to see how Musk's primary business performed over the period," added Tickmill analyst James Harte. Markets will then absorb fourth-quarter economic growth data for the world's biggest economy on Thursday.

Asian equities fluctuated as traders in several countries returned from the Lunar New Year break with recession

fears still causing concern.

While markets have enjoyed a strong start to the year as a slowdown in inflation gives central banks room to temper their interest rate hikes, focus is now turning to the economic impact of last year's increases.

Worries about the growth outlook, and the impact of higher rates on company profits, are also offsetting optimism over China's reopening from years of zero-Covid measures.

Data showing a slight improvement in US factory and services activity was unable to settle nerves, with figures still showing the sectors in contraction.

Focus is also turning to next week's Federal Reserve policy meeting, with speculation growing that it will lift rates by 25 basis points.

Oil firmed as traders weighed the prospects of recession against the outlook for demand from China as it emerges from its zero-Covid policy.

Hong Kong, Shanghai and Taipei remained closed for the Lunar New Year holiday.

## Tokyo shares end higher

**TOKYO** (AFP/APP): Tokyo stocks managed a four-day winning streak Wednesday as worries eased about a global economic slowdown while traders waited for corporate earnings season to get into full swing.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index opened in the red but steadily moved upward to end 0.35 percent higher, or 95.82 points, to close at 27,395.01. The broader Topix index firmed 0.39 percent, or 7.77 points, to 1,980.69.

Relative stability in Japanese bond yields and speculation that the US Fed could decelerate or even stop its rate hikes eased the worries of Tokyo investors.

In early trade, the market came under profit-taking pressure after the Nikkei marked three winning sessions and the Nasdaq fell overnight. The Nikkei's gains "brewed short-term overheating caution," bringing the market under selling pressure, IwaiCosmo Securities said in a note.

"But it appears that the stability of domestic yields and speculation about an early termination of US rate hikes were encouraging investors sentiment," the brokerage said.

## U Bank, Pathfinder Group join hands — to extend Digital Financial Services



### F.P. Report

**KARACHI:** U Microfinance Bank (U Bank) and Pathfinder Group have entered into a strategic collaboration to utilize organizational strengths to offer digital financial services and other banking-related services to customers.

The signing ceremony took place at the Pakistan Pavilion, held on the sidelines of World Economic Forum 2023 in Davos - Switzerland, where the Memorandum of Understanding was signed by Kabeer Naqvi, President & CEO -

U Microfinance Bank and Zarrar Sehgal, Chairman - Pathfinder Group, in the presence of Ikram Sehgal, Co-Chairman - Pathfinder Group, and other senior management members from both the organizations.

Speaking at the occasion, Kabeer Naqvi, President & CEO - U Microfinance Bank stated, "As a mission-driven bank with financial inclusion for citizens across all societal segments as our objective, we are glad to have entered into this collaboration with Pathfinder Group. This gives us an opportunity to

expand our digital outreach and bring the unbanked population into the financial ecosystem in an efficient manner."

Zarrar Sehgal, Chairman - Pathfinder Group, shared his views on the importance of this strategic partnership agreement. He stated that such partnerships will help economically empower the masses and have a long-lasting impact on digital financial inclusion in Pakistan. Pathfinder group looks forward to working closely with U Bank to create impact and bring inclusion.

## Thailand offers to develop sustainable tourism: Envoy

**MULTAN** (APP): Thailand's Ambassador to Pakistan, Chakkird Krachaiwong, suggested on Wednesday that his country was looking forward to working with Pakistan on sustainable tourism as they have a lot of experience in it.

"We have a lot of experience in terms of tourism and would like to share it for sustainable tourism in Pakistan. We are looking forward now to working with Punjab and other provinces for it," he said while addressing the executive body at the Multan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI) here.

Tourist police can also be formed to deal with tourists because normal police did not know how to deal with them because they can only tackle robbery and other routine

crimes, he said and added that he wanted more and more to visit Pakistan to experience for themselves the generosity and hospitality of Pakistanis.

The envoy regretted that this part of Pakistan has been represented in the eyes of international media, adding that tourists informed the country was quite different to what they had seen in the news."I contribute some of my travel experience to Pakistan and will write an article about Multan too which will hopefully be published in Thailand too." Mr Chakkird maintained.

He noted that a Thai rubber was used in football made by Pakistan for the last world cup and added that his country was an expert in the food processing industry for which good

packaging. The envoy informed that they would share the information of a trade exhibition held in Thailand to businessmen here and added that they had visited some textile factories today to have first-hand knowledge.

Thailand is also an agricultural country as Pakistan is and facing challenges in this connection, he observed.

He ensured to forward proposals of business and other issues highlighted by MCCI to Bangkok for formal approval and redressal. Earlier, in his welcome address, MCCI president Mian Rashid Iqbal shed light on the history of Multan and its popularity across the world for its matchless mangoes, sohan halwa, cotton and other products.



In brief

Taimoor defends heavyweight title

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Boxer, Taimoor Khan knocked out Aekkaphob Auraiwan (Thailand) in the second round of the title bout and defended Asian Boxing Federation Heavyweight title at Bangkok on Wednesday. Aekkaphob Auraiwan could not stand against mighty punches from the defending champion. The umpires stopped the fight immediately after Auraiwan fell down. Taimoor was announced the winner after which he has also qualified for World Boxing Association Intercontinental championship.

Sania reaches Final

MELBOURNE (Agencies): Indian tennis star Sania Mirza alongside compatriot Rohan Bopanna reached the ongoing Australian Open 2023 final in Mixed Doubles on Wednesday. The all-Indian duo of Sania and Bopanna outclassed the third-seeded American-British duo of Desirae Krawczyk and Neal Skupski in the semi-final to make it to the final of the grand slam event. The Indian pair had to fight hard to down the reigning Wimbledon champions 7-6(5), 6-7(5), 10-6 in an enthralling semi-final that lasted one hour and 52 minutes. Krawczyk-Skupski forced the tiebreaker by winning the second frame to determine the outcome of the exciting semifinal. However, Sania-Bopanna kept their composure to prevail 10-6. Notably, Sania-Bopanna was given a walkover by the Latvian-Spanish pair of Jelena Ostapenko and David Vega Hernandez in the quarter-final on Tuesday.

Women's IPL franchises

NEW DELHI (Agencies): The five franchises for the inaugural Women's Premier League in India have been sold for ₹465m. The WPL, which takes place in March, is a women's version of the Indian Premier League (IPL), the world's biggest Twenty20 franchise competition. Owners of three existing IPL teams - Royal Challengers Bangalore, Mumbai Indians and Delhi Capitals - secured the rights for women's franchises. The other two teams were awarded to Adani Group and Capri Global. Those sides will be based in Ahmedabad and Lucknow respectively. The owners of four other IPL franchises, Kolkata Knight Riders, Punjab Kings, Rajasthan Royals and Sunrisers Hyderabad, were unsuccessful with their bids. Former England cricketer and BBC Test Match Special commentator Isa Guha described the deal as "a landmark day for the women's game." The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) previously sold the media rights for the WPL to Viacom 18 for approximately ₹96m. BCCI secretary Jay Shah described the deal as "transformative" for women's cricket. "A record-breaking start for the inaugural Women's Premier League and expected nothing less!" former India captain Mithali Raj said on social media. "It will truly revolutionise women's cricket as we know it." Current India player Smriti Mandhana added that it was a "pioneering move" and a "brilliant step forward for Indian women's cricket". A player auction will now be held before the tournament, which is expected to take place at the beginning of February.



MELBOURNE: Novak Djokovic celebrates after winning in the Quarterfinal singles match against Andrey Rublev during day ten of the 2023 Australian Open.

First KP Badminton League to start from Jan 27: Nadeem Khan

PESHAWAR (APP): The first Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Badminton League will start on January 27 at the Peshawar sports Complex in which six of the best teams comprising players of national juniors and seniors of the province will compete. International players Murad Ali and Qari Adnan are participating as well. Nadeem Khan and Hayatullah, the two senior coaches and members of the organizing committee of the Directorate of Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa told media men. The six teams of

Peshawar Falcon, Bannu Green, The Royal, KP Police, Future Champions KP, JJ Sports Peshawar, and Badminton League will continue till January 30. He said that the purpose of this league is to prepare the players for the National Junior and Senior Championship to be played next month. The juniors will get to learn a lot from the senior players. He also thanked Director General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Khalid Khan for organizing this League, who showed special interest in organizing this league.

Hopefully, the players and fans will get to see the best matches in badminton, Nadeem Khan said. National Champion Murad Ali, South Asian Champion Qari Adnan, National Junior Player Mohammad Zaid, U19 Umar Jahangir, U15 Champion Fahad Ahmed, U13 Champion Najam Saqib, U16 Champion Taimur Khan, Shoaib Riaz, Abdullah Latif, Zuhair Khan are in this league. Many junior and senior players including Khalil, Tahir Khan, Uzair Khan, Hamza Khan, Afnan Khan will be part of the league.

Shiffrin adds to record total with 84th win in another GS

SAN VIGILIO DI MAREBBE (AP): Mikaela Shiffrin didn't wait long to add to her record total of World Cup wins. A day after securing record victory No. 83, Shiffrin added her 84th win on Wednesday in another giant slalom on the same course. And like how she did it a day earlier, Shiffrin led from start to finish, dominating the first run down the steep Erta course and then adding to her advantage in the second run. Shiffrin finished a massive 0.82 seconds ahead of two-time Olympic silver medalist Ragnhild Mowinckel and 1.19 ahead of Olympic champion Sara Hector. When Shiffrin reached the finish after her second run, she collapsed to the snow in apparent exhaustion — with her skis still attached to her boots — before Mowinckel and Hector came over to congratulate her and help her up. "Oh my gosh," Shiffrin said. "I was pushing so hard and I just hoped I ended up on the right side of all the gates. Now I'm a



bit dead mentally — just so tired. But when you ski like that it keeps your energy going so just an incredible feeling." While Tuesday's win moved Shiffrin ahead of the previous women's mark of 82 victories held by former American teammate Lindsey Vonn, Wednesday's victory moved her within two of the overall record — of 86 wins held by Ingemar Stenmark. Vonn retired four years ago when injuries cut her career short, while Stenmark raced in the 1970s and 80s. If Shiffrin wins two slaloms in Spindleruv Mlyn, Czech Republic, this weekend, she could match Stenmark on Sunday. "Technically, it is possible," Shiffrin said with a laugh. "We'll see if I can put the energy on my slalom

skis for two more races. "It's been busy, and I am in a kind of an unfortunate time of my monthly cycle, so I'm more tired right now. We just normalized talking about that," she added. Spindleruv was where Shiffrin made her World Cup debut as a 15-year-old prodigy nearly 12 years ago. "It's a special place for me," she said. "So I'm really looking forward to go." Former World Cup giant slalom champion Marta Bassino was on track for the podium before she lost control a few gates from the finish and plowed through a gate, which hit her hard in the shins. It was Shiffrin's 10th win of the season and her 19th career victory in giant slalom, moving her within one of Vreni Schneider's record of 20 in the discipline. Shiffrin said she had a late night after her record-breaking day. "But it was a really nice evening," she said. "It was so nice to see messages from people and so much support and so much excitement about the race."

Indian field hockey dreams of return to glory days

NEW DELHI (AFP): Kids with sticks dribble balls, weave and bob in Sansarpur, the cradle of Indian field hockey. But the village's glory days, as well as those of the national team, are a thing of the past. India crashed out of the World Cup at the group stage on Sunday, the latest in a series of humiliations for a country that won six consecutive Olympic golds between 1928 and 1956. Watching the children train and ruing the sport's sad decline is medal-winner Balbir Singh Kular, one of no fewer than 14 Olympic hockey players produced by Sansarpur in northern India. "We failed because we didn't change ourselves and we thought we have been winning gold," 79-year-old Balbir told AFP. "Starting with grounds, equipment, infrastructure and rules, they all keep changing. Another big change was when astroturf came but you can't make excuses," he said. India has won eight Olympic

gold medals, but its last was in 1980. In the 2008 Olympics, India failed to even qualify. The team has won just one World Cup since the competition began in 1971. — Decline — Until the 1980s hockey packed out stadiums and was played in streets across India, but it has now become a single-column story in national newspapers. It has been eclipsed by cricket and faces competition for eyeballs from football and even kabaddi, a traditional village sport with its own franchise tournament and glamorous stars. The reasons for the decline of Indian hockey are many and include poor administration and a lack of facilities, particularly artificial astroturf pitches. This new surface, as well as changes to the rules, put Indians at a disadvantage with their style of play and favoured better-funded and equipped nations like Australia and Belgium. In Sansarpur, former player and author Popinder

Singh Kular blamed the decline of talent from the village on families moving abroad in search of better economic opportunities than hockey can provide. "The rise and fall comes in life and in hockey. There is improvement in Indian hockey but in Sansarpur it so happened that families, which produced top players, moved out of this village and many went overseas," Popinder told AFP. — 'Bright future' — But there is hope for the future of Indian hockey on the other side of the country in the eastern state of Odisha. There, state-of-the-art hockey stadiums in Bhubaneswar and Rourkela — which hosted recent World Cup matches — have become the new breeding ground of young players. Coupled with the arrival of foreign coaches — although several were sacked — this has reaped dividends, with India winning bronze in the previous Olympics and a Commonwealth Games silver last year.

Djokovic, Sabalenka roll into Australian Open semi-finals

MELBOURNE (Agencies): Novak Djokovic was two wins away from a 22nd Grand Slam crown after bulldozing into the Australian Open semi-finals on Wednesday, while Aryna Sabalenka was equally impressive in reaching the women's last four. Serbia's Djokovic delivered a masterclass to crush Russian fifth seed Andrey Rublev 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 on Rod Laver Arena and set up a meeting with Tommy Paul for a place in Sunday's final. Djokovic's quest to go level with great rival Rafael Nadal on a leading 22 major titles carries an air of inevitability. The 35-year-old has struggled with a hamstring injury in the early rounds at Melbourne Park but was dominant during his fourth-round demolition of Alex de Minaur and was equally clinical against the outclassed Rublev. "I don't want to be happy with my tennis, honestly," Djokovic told an adoring Rod Laver Arena. "I've been playing very solid from the back of the court and I really love playing in these conditions and this court." Victory for the red-hot favourite propelled him into a 44th Grand Slam semi-final to close the gap on Roger Federer's all-time record of 46. Anything other than a rampant win for Djokovic against unseeded Paul would amount to a massive upset, albeit at a tournament that has seen

numerous shocks in the men's and women's draws. Paul defeated his fellow American Ben Shelton 7-6 (8/6), 6-3, 5-7, 6-4 to reach his first major semi-final. But former world number one Djokovic, who can return to the top of the rankings if he wins the Australian Open for a record-extending 10th time, will be a whole new prospect. Paul, ranked 35, and the Serb great have never played each other before. "I saw him in the locker room after I finished my match. He said, congrats," said the 25-year-old, adding they had practised together before. "Obviously he's pretty comfortable here in Australia," the American added. "It's going to be a challenging match but I'm playing some of my best tennis, so it's a good time." The other semi-final is between third seed Stefanos Tsitsipas and Russian 18th seed Karen Khachanov. — Ominous Sabalenka — Sabalenka set up a semi-final with surprise-package Magda Linette after once again displaying the kind of form and finesse which has made her favourite for the women's title. The Belarusian fifth seed defeated Croatia's Donna Vekic 6-3, 6-2 as she closes on a first Grand Slam title. The match was closer than the score suggested, but Sabalenka was in scintillating form -- she is yet to

drop a set in Melbourne and has won all nine matches in 2023. It is a far cry from a year ago, when she struggled badly with her serve and was reduced to tears at an Australian Open warm-up tournament. "It feels really special to be in the semi-finals here, it was a tough match," said Sabalenka, 24, who was competing in her first Australian Open quarter-final. "I'm super happy with the win and it was so great to play here today, the atmosphere was unbelievable." Sabalenka will play unseeded Linette for a place in Saturday's final after the Pole marched into her first major semi-final at the age of 30. Linette stunned former world number one Karolina Pliskova 6-3, 7-5 to continue flying the flag for Poland after the shock exit of world number one Iga Swiatek. "I'm so emotional, I can't really believe it," said Linette, ranked 45 in the world. "It's a dream come true. I'm super grateful and happy. Thank you for cheering and supporting, I really needed this. "So we keep going. I don't want to get too excited because we are still in the tournament," added the Pole. Two-time Melbourne champion Victoria Azarenka, also from Belarus, will face Moscow-born Kazakh Elena Rybakina in the other semi-final.

India stops own baseball team from entering Pakistan at Wagah border  
Palestinian team arrives for West Asia Baseball cup

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): The Indian government continues to politicize the sports as the authorities stopped its own baseball team from entering Pakistan at the Wagah border. According to the details, the Indian baseball team is coming to Pakistan to take part in the West Asia Baseball Cup tournament. When the team reached the Wagah border, the Indian security officials stopped the team from entering Pakistan despite having Pakistan visas and no objection certificate. The Indian government has not given clearance to the baseball team yet despite the lapse of more than four hours. President Pakistan Baseball Federation Syed Fakhr Shah said they were in constant touch with the Indian Baseball Federation and trying that Indian authorities give clearance to their team to enter Pakistan. West Asia Baseball Cup will start in Islamabad on Jan 26. Palestine, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Indai and Nepal are the participating teams along with hosts Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD (APP): Baseball Federation (PBF) Syed Fakhr Ali Shah told APP that seven countries were participating in the tournament. Bangladesh, Nepal and Indian contingent would also arrive today (January 25) while President Pakistan Afghanistan and Sri

Lankan baseball teams would reach tomorrow. "It will be the 15th edition of the Cup. The event will be played in a round-robin system", he said. He also appreciated Pakistan Sports Board and Sports Board Punjab for their cooperation in organising the international event successfully. The PBF President also thanked the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Inter-Provincial Coordination for issuing timely visas and permits to the participating teams.

3rd Allama Iqbal Polo Tournament

Master Paints, SQ Seagold victorious

LAHORE (APP): Master Paints and SQ Seagold emerged victorious in the 3rd Allama Iqbal Polo Tournament, sponsored by Lahore Smart City here at the Jinnah Polo Fields on Wednesday. The first match of the second day proved a nail-biting encounter, where Master Paints team defeated Platinum Homes/Master Paints by a narrow margin of 10-9. Platinum Homes/Master Paints were enjoying an 8-2 lead after two chukkers, but Master Paints played brilliantly in the third and fourth chukkers and edged past Platinum Homes/Master Paints by a close margin of 10-9. Raja Temur Nadeem was the hero of the day from the winning side as he smashed in six superb goals while Shah Qubilai Alam thrashed in three tremendous goals and Farooq Amin Sufi struck one. From the losing side, Amirreza Behboudi fired in five fantastic goals while Sufi Muhammad Haroon and Agha Musa Ali Khan

banged in a brace each. Platinum Homes/Master Paints dominated the match right from the word go as they fired in five goals against one by Master Paints to gain 5-1 lead. They maintained their dominance in the second chukker and thrashed in three goals against one by Master Paints to stretch their lead to 8-2. Master Paints then made a tremendous comeback and banged in a brace against one by their opponents to reduce the margin to 4-9. The fourth and last chukker was fully dominated by Platinum Homes/Master Paints, as they hammered five fabulous goals to win the match by 10-9. The second match of the day saw SQ Seagold polo team defeating 4 Corps polo team by 7-5. Raja Jalal Arsalan and Omer Asjad Malhi from SQ Seagold team played brilliantly. Despite falling twice, Raja Jalal Arsalan cracked a classic quartet while Omer Asjad Malhi scored a brilliant brace and

Bilal Hayat Noon struck one goal. Raja Mikael Sami hammered a hat-trick of goals from team 4 Corps while the remaining two were converted by Ibrahim Khalil. 4 Corps started the match in great style as they scored two back-to-back goals to gain a 2-0 lead. The second chukker was evenly poised as both the sides struck two goals each with 4 Corps still enjoying 4-2 lead. The third chukker was dominated by SQ Seagold by hammering a hat-trick of goals to take 5-4 lead. In the fourth and last chukker, SQ Seagold thrashed in three goals against one by 4 Corps to win the match by 7-5. Jinnah Polo Fields President Lt Col Shoaib Aftab (R), Secretary Major Ali Taimur (R), polo families and a large number of spectators were present on the occasion to witness and enjoy the exciting and enthralling matches played on the second of the prestigious tournament.

5th Sindh Games concludes

NAWABSHAH. (APP): The Fifth Sindh Games held between the colleges of District Shaheed Benazirabad, Sanghar and Naushehro Feroze of Shaheed Benazirabad Division concluded here on Wednesday. In this regard Department of College education Shaheed Benazirabad organized the concluding ceremony at Bilawal Sports Stadium, Commissioner Abdul Aleem Lashari was chief guest on the occasion. Addressing the concluding ceremony, Commissioner said "Crowded play grounds means empty hospitals", and advised the youth to take active part in extra-curricular activities side by side in curricular activities. He said that Sindh College Education took a good step for holding Sindh College Games, which would have positive impact on health of the youth. Commissioner said that he was pleased to watch these prestigious competitions at Nawabshah while sports would be promoted. He congratulated the teachers of the children who brought the students into the ground and gave them opportunities

to show their capabilities in sports. He said that winning and losing is a part of the game. He expressed hope that winning teams would take part in provincial games in the next phase with the same zeal and spirit and would lighten the name of their division, college, parents and teachers. Addressing the occasion, Regional Director Colleges Shaheed Benazirabad, Prof Shahida Taj Abro welcomed the guests adding that the Fifth Sindh College Games were organized under Department of College Education on the instructions of Provincial Education Minister Syed Sardar Ali Shah. She said that the winning teams of Shaheed Benazirabad, Sanghar and Naushehro Feroze districts colleges took part in the games at divisional level following which winners would take part in provincial level games in the next phase. On the occasion Regional Director Colleges presented Sindh traditional gift Ajrak to guests. The closing ceremony of Fifth College Games was participated by Chairman Education board Shaheed Benazirabad Prof

Muhammad Farooq Hassan, Controller Examination Ahsan Ali Bhutto, Deputy Controller Muhammad Hassan Khoso, Additional Director Colleges Abdul Sattar Pirzada, Deputy Director Colleges Qamaruddin Keerio, Assistant Director Atta Muhammad Siyal, Prof Muhammad Nawaz Kumbhar, Principal Government Girls Degree College Lala Rukh Baloch, Vigilance Officer Utility Stores Niaz Ali Siyal, Principals of all three district colleges, teachers and girl and boy students in large number. On the occasion students games were held separately in which 400 meter Rally Race was won by SBA Colleges team while in Basketball boys game SBA stood on first position, Sanghar on second and Naushehro Feroze remained on third position. In girls Basketball competition Sanghar stood on first while SBA stood on second position. Commissioner Abdul Aleem Lahsari and Regional Director Colleges Prof Shahida Taj Abro distributed medals and trophies among the winning teams.



## In brief

### Woman gives birth to four babies

ISLAMABAD (APP): A young woman gave birth to quadruplets on Wednesday in the federal capital's private hospital, a spokesperson of the health institute confirmed. "All four babies - one baby girl and three baby boys and the mother are safe and sound. The joy of family had no bounds after they received the news of her giving birth to four children," he said talking to APP. He said that the Obstetrics and Gynecology Department treated this complex case by cesarean section. He said that the parents are pleased and grateful to Allah Almighty and the hospital team for the careful treatment of the case. Head of the Obstetrics and Gynaecology Department Prof. Dr. Bushra Kant congratulated and appreciated her dedicated team of doctors, nurses, and support staff for handling the delivery case successfully. She also paid tribute to the management for their continuous support and encouragement. Imran Ali Ghouri, head of the hospital's Communications section, said that Obstetrics and Gynaecology Department is functioning with a state-of-the-art facility where such cases as well as other complex pregnancy and delivery cases are regularly treated with a high success rate. He added that the hospital provides comprehensive health-care to all, especially mother and child care, following international quality standards.

### 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 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, Orchard Scheme, CDA Pump, Supermarket, Burma, Wahidabad, Karpa, G-8/I, Scheme.II, Khanna Dock, New F-9 PARK, G-10/3, International School, I-10/4, G-11/4, F-11/3, Rahara, CM PakZong, Bahria Enclosure, Isolation Hospital, Kaldana, Barin, TDCP, PAC, Shahdara, Anguri, NCP, Magniyal, Shahdara, Shahpur, Khayaban Iqbal, Peer Suhawah, Quaid-e-Azam University, Punjab House, Bri Imam, Mandala, Athal, Desto, T&T, Treat, Bhara Kaho, II, Golf City, Bhara Kaho, NIH Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, Sadiqabad, A Block, Effendi Colony, National Market, Fourth Road, Nora Road, Katarian, Holy Family, Curry Road, Service Road, Tamasaabad, Committee Chowk, Gulshanabad, Sarafa Bazar, Jannah Road, Mangtal, Bani, Kyani, Muslimabad, Dhok Chowdhury, Captain Amir, Golra, MFM, Noon, Rata Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Kashmir Road, Sir Syed Road, PAF, CBR.II, Morgah, Gulstan Colony, Major Riaz, 502 Workshop, Hayal, Quaid-e-Azam Colony, Cantt, New Rawat, Lahtrar, I, Sep-Ibrar, Fazal Ahmed, New Chawah, Nara Mattur, Mandra, Bisalai, Sukho, Raman, Murt, Zaraj, Dhok Awan, IST, Mora Nagyal, New Rawati Feeders, Attock Circle, Nawababad, Salargah, Bohi Ghar, Wahadat Colony, Kala Khan, Wapda Town, MVHS D-17, Shahia, Munirabad, AWC Housing, Rashid Minhas, Shafi Chauhan, Nar Topa.



ISLAMABAD: A group photo 20-member delegation of Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) comprising the newly elected Vice Chairman of the PBC and the Chairman Executive Committee PBC along with the former Vice Chairman (PBC) called upon the Hon'ble Chief Justice of Pakistan Mr. Justice Umar Ata Bandial at the Supreme Court of Pakistan. Discussions were held upon wide ranging matters of mutual interest.

## Pakistan worst affected by climate crisis: Shazia Marri

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) Shazia Marri on Wednesday said that Pakistan was among the most vulnerable and worst affected countries suffered by the climate crisis despite its less than 1% contribution in carbon emissions.

While speaking to a World Bank delegation in Islamabad on Wednesday, she vowed to make Pakistan more resilient against climate-related disasters, which were increasing poverty in Pakistan.

She said that Pakistan and particularly the BISP highly value its partnership with the World Bank (WB) who always supported Pakistan during the crisis.

The minister also welcomed the technical support offered by the World Bank for introducing

Dynamic Registry Survey for BISP Beneficiaries.

Shazia Marri at the outset apprised the WB delegation that smooth and seamless disbursement of cash assistant was an evolving process and BISP is introducing new cash disbursement method through individual Bank Accounts.

She informed that initially the initiative will be introduced on a pilot basis in some selected districts which will be further expanded to the whole of the country. This step will be a great leap towards financial autonomy of beneficiary women and they will also be able to plan their savings, the minister highlighted.

She also informed that BISP also intends to start SMS for beneficiaries so that they get their updated status through SMS on their phone. Chairperson BISP while emphasizing the equal opportunities for the marginalized and vulnera-

ble segments of the society said that to empower the transgender community, BISP has brought them under Benazir Kafaalat net without the requirement of the PMT score.

Formal launching of 'Inclusion of Transgender Community in BISP Kafaalat net' will be done by the end of the current week, she added.

Speaking at the outset Senior Social Protection Specialist, Mr. Amjad Zafar Khan, lauded the working of the program, especially during the recent floods and said that BISP safety nets had supported the economy in many different ways. Moreover, WB representative Ms. Melis U.Guven appreciated various initiatives of BSIP for social protection and urged that these efforts should be documented and published at a larger scale so that other countries from the developing nations can learn from this program.

## Hajj expenses expected to exceed Rs 1 mln this year

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Hajj expenses are expected to cost beyond Rs 1 million under the government scheme this year, said official sources.

The resources ruled out the possibility of inexpensive Hajj due to the "global economic situation, burgeoning inflation and depreciation of rupees in the international market".

They further said there were no chances of "Hajj subsidy" by the government this year too.

The sources said the announcement of Hajj Policy, 2023 was expected to be tabled by the end of February and the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony was planning for the early agreement with the scheduled banks for receiving the Hajj applications.

They said along with Hajj applications, a passport, three photographs, a Corona vaccination certificate, and the pilgrim

and his/ her heir's computerized national identity card would be required.

They said the bank account was mandatory for all the Hajj applicants. "Saudi Arabia has lifted the ban on pilgrims over 65 years of age," sources added. For this purpose, sources said, the ministry had intensified communication with airlines, banks, Saudi authorities, and other stakeholders for the smooth sailing of Hajj operation.

## Govt committed to strengthen its precursor control regime for drug regulation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Narcotics Control, Nawabzada Shazain Bugti Wednesday said that the government is committed to strengthening its precursor control regime in pursuance of its commitments to address the World Drug Problem under the principle of common and shared responsibility.

Addressing the launching ceremony of the automated Precursor Management System (PMS), the minister highlighted that the up-gradation is the centerpiece of the government's modernization drive and has greatly contributed towards its long-term goals and objectives.

He said that the upgradation has enabled the Ministry of Narcotics Control in drug regulation, and countering drug abuse and associated health issues affecting the young Pakistani strata, particularly in educational settings.

He also thanked UNODC for its continued technical support that led to the design and automation of Pakistan's PMS.

In her remarks, Federal Secretary of the Ministry of Narcotics Control Ms. Humaira Ahmed highlighted that the new automated PMS is a manifestation of the government's broader vision to automate the entire process of registration and issuance of 'No-Objection Certificate (NOC)' to the chemical and pharmaceutical industry for importing, exporting and utilizing controlled precursor chemicals.

"The requests for grant of NOC can now be generated electronically and all steps (including document submission, utilization details, and import licenses) have also been automated. It will also significantly improve transparency and trust among the public-private stakeholders concerned", she said.

Addressing the event Dr. Jeremy

Milsom, Representative UNODC Country Office in Pakistan highlighted that the new web-based PMS has significantly enhanced the capacities of these national authorities to collect or receive, process, interpret data and approve requests related to import and legitimate industrial use of controlled precursor chemicals in a more secure and real-time manner.

"This technical capacity-building initiative will improve Pakistan's precursor control regime and improve 'ease-of-doing businesses' for the Pakistani chemical and pharmaceutical industry, he said. Hence, this capacity development has paved the way for attaining the objectives of the Government of Pakistan's Anti Narcotics Policy 2019, and our shared aspirations under the provisions of UNODC's Pakistan Country Program III (2022-2025)", Dr. Milsom said.

In a comprehensive presentation on the PMS, Senior Joint Secretary of the Ministry of Narcotics Control Sabino Sikandar Jalal apprised about the design and functioning of web-based information management and application processing system that has replaced manual processing system.

The newly developed system will be focusing on public companies' registration, requests for importing controlled precursor chemicals for industrial use, issuance of 'No Objection Certificate (NOC)', and submission of utilization details of imported controlled chemicals.

In his remarks, the former Chairman of the PCMA, Mr. Zafar Mahmood expressed satisfaction with PMS and highlighted that one of the leading objectives of the PCMA was to anticipate, suggest, and respond to the Government of Pakistan's regulatory policy and practices.

## ANF recovers over 266 kg drugs in five operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting five counter-narcotics operations seized over 266 kg narcotics and arrested three accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday. He informed ANF in an operation recovered 167 kg charras from Quetta and arrested an accused resident of Quetta.

In another operation conducted in 'Kuchlak' area, ANF also recovered 85 kg charras from a rainy nullah. The spokesman informed that ANF North in an operation near 'Thalian' Interchange Rawalpindi managed to recover six kg charras and 4.8 kg opium from secret cavities of a car.

In fourth operation ANF seized 3.6 kg charras from the possession of an accused resident of 'Nankana Sahib' rounded up from Faisalabad. In fifth operation ANF managed to recover 80 heroin-filled capsules from the possession of a Bahrain-bound passenger resident of Attock going on flight no GF-791. The spokesman said that separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.

## Railways starts upgradation work

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has accelerated the upgradation work involving the private sector to improve services in passenger trains as well as major railway stations to address the growing issues, especially sanitation issues.

The department was of the view that the cleanliness-related services in trains and at major stations, including Lahore, Faisalabad, Karachi, Rawalpindi, Quetta, Peshawar, Khanewal, Sukkur, Sahiwal, Multan and Bahawalpur were not satisfactory," an official in the Ministry told APP.

He said that if services of the private sector were hired under a fast-track policy, the hygiene conditions at stations and in trains could be improved which would also restore the confidence of passengers in the department.

The official said Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique also asked the officials to accelerate efforts to bring uniformity in the design and signboards of stalls at the major railway stations under a policy.

## Tarar regrets threats hurled by PTI leaders to state institutions

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Interior Attaullah Tarar has regretted the threats hurled by the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) leaders to the state institutions including Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

Addressing a news conference along with PML-N leader Abid Sher Ali here in Islamabad on Wednesday, he said the case has been registered against PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry in accordance

with the law for threatening the ECP, Chief Election Commissioner and ECP's Members. He said the case will also proceed as per the law. "We do not believe in any political vengeance", he added. PML-N leader Abid Sher Ali said due process was followed in the appointment of the caretaker Chief Minister Punjab. He said the case against Fawad Chaudhry is not politically motivated but those who will challenge the state will have to face the law.

## Inquiry underway against former PMC on giving contracts to fake companies

ISLAMABAD (APP): Scams of millions of rupees are under inquiry against the former management of the Pakistan Medical Commission (PMC) for giving contracts to ghost companies.

According to official sources at Pakistan Medical and Dental Council (PMDC), these companies were not even registered at the time of bidding but the contracts were awarded to these companies which is a clear violation of rules and regulations.

They said that the past management of PMC was also involved in many other irregularities like the PMC handed over the inspections to another public sector organization to conduct an inspection of medical and dental colleges while a detailed procedure was adopted by any institution seeking recognition with PMDC. As a regulator, the PMDC used to monitor, inspect and regulate all the medical and dental colleges, they added.

They said that as per PMDC rules the local students were registered by PMDC after passing the recognized institutions whereas the PMC created three exams for a full license, provisional license and temporary license.

They said that PMDC was internationally accredited whereas the PMC faced a lot of problems in accreditation with international stakeholders which created panic among the doctors working abroad.

Similarly, foreign graduates were put under some pathway not given in the act as the act refers to preparing assessment criteria, they added.

Unlike PMDC's method of taking NEB exams through one recognized public university to register foreign graduate students, the MBBS or BDS local students who used to give five university exams had to give again NLE National licensing exit exam and then were given a full license, they added.

They said that as per PMDC rules the local students were registered by PMDC after passing the recognized institutions whereas the PMC created three exams for a full license, provisional license and temporary license.

They said that PMDC was internationally accredited whereas the PMC faced a lot of problems in accreditation with international stakeholders which created panic among the doctors working abroad.

They said that the PMC conducted the entry test by arranging it through an external testing authority, which resulted in depriving over 50 percent of Sindh students to get admissions in medical and dental colleges. They said that the capable students have been deprived of admissions as no criteria for awarding these marks were given to the colleges and it was according to their whims and wishes that those students were selected on the wrong exam held by the PMC.

They said that due to this situation, thousands of students have obtained admissions abroad giving a colossal loss to the country money up to nine billion rupees. They said that as per the PMDC bill, the composition of the council is nominated having representation of all the provinces' health bodies, universities or stakeholders to give their input in policy-making for its smooth implementation.

## Chairman HEC urges varsities to highlight achievements for improved global positioning

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Higher Education Commission (HEC) Dr Mukhtar Ahmed on Wednesday urged the universities to highlight achievements for improved global positioning.

He was addressing an international seminar on 'Pakistan's Growing Global Impact: A Data Masterclass by the Times Higher Education (THE)' for the public and private sector universities of Pakistan.

The seminar was organised by the Higher Education Commission (HEC), in collaboration with the University of Lahore (UoL).

Representatives of universities from different parts of the country took a keen interest in the explanations of parameters and standards set by THE in the global rankings. The event focused on 'THE World University Ranking' and other rankings relevant to the region.

Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed delivered a presentation on the National Ranking Standards and Mechanisms.

"During the last two decades, HEC has done pretty well in the higher education sector, and I am confident that if our universities learn from this opportunity and position themselves accordingly by showcasing their achievements, the global landscape of top universities will include many Pakistani institutes," the Chairman said.

Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed emphasised that Pakistani universities need to collate their data and highlight their achievements in the submissions made to global ranking agencies. He also underlined how, in terms of the ranking requirements, the standards of Pakistani universities are different from those of the universities in other countries of the world.

Keynote speaker of the event, Chief

Global Affairs Officer of THE Mr. Phil Baty, provided a detailed breakdown of the World University Rankings methodology as well as data and in-depth analysis based on the most recent ranking, so universities could gain an understanding of how to best position themselves in order to enter and excel in the World University Rankings, Emerging Economies University Rankings, Impact Rankings, and Asia University Rankings.

Mr. Baty also provided exclusive analysis of Pakistan's performance across THE's flagship global rankings, the prestigious THE World University Rankings, and the pioneering THE Impact Rankings, along with the country's current worldwide status. "Pakistan is making rapid progress. In fact, it is matching China in its pace of improvement. The key qualities of Pakistani universities are citations, quality of research as opposed to the volume of research, and above all, doing it without adequate funding," Baty shared, adding that despite all these factors, Pakistan has not achieved the international reputation it deserves because only doing is not enough. "You need to present your achievements and send us more and more data, and I am willing to help and guide the universities that struggle with this part."

Times Higher Education (THE) is the company behind the world's most influential university ranking, with almost five decades of experience as a source of analysis and insight into higher education. Its ranking has been the gold standard for global, research-intensive universities for 15 years and spans the world with over 25 million annual users.



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Shazia Marri, Federal Minister, and Chairperson BISP, chairs a meeting with a World Bank delegation.

### Needy families received aid

PARWAN (Agencies): Food items distributed to thousands of needy families in Jabal al-Saraj district of Parwan on Wednesday. A local official of the province, Mawlavi Abdul Maroof Haqjo, said that with the support of the World Food Programme (WFP), food items distributed to 3,150 needy families in that district. Each family, receives 50kg flour, 5 liters cooking oil, 6 kilodals of chickpeas and some salt and nutrition to children and mothers.

### ARCS assists affectees

BAGHLAN (Agencies): The Afghan RCS provided food and non-food aid to families affected by severe cold and snow in Baghlan. The provincial head of Baghlan RCS, Dr. Jan M. Musa Zai, said that food and non-food aid has been distributed for the families affected by severe cold in different sites. Each family received five blankets, one tarpaulin, six bars of soap, one kilo of tea, five packets of macaroni, two jumpers, five packets of washing powder and a package of children's toys.

Asia is comparable to a living body composed of soil and water. The heart that beats inside the body is Afghanistan. The destruction of Afghanistan would be the destruction of Asia. And in its progress and prosperity lies the well-being of Asia. - Allama Iqbal

## Uzbekistan electricity to be imported, says MOFA

KABUL (TOLONews): The Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on Wednesday that imported electricity from Uzbekistan will be connected to Afghanistan, and Tashkent will export 250 MW of electricity to Afghanistan. "Today (4Dalwa) the Foreign Ministry of Uzbekistan assured the Foreign Ministry of Afghanistan that the power ministry of this country has made the necessary preparations to reconnect 250 MW elec-

tricity to Kabul in the next 24 hours," said Zia Ahmad, deputy spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The Ministry of Energy of Uzbekistan tweeted that the cutoff of exported electricity to Afghanistan was due to problems in supplying fuel to the country's thermal power plants due to excessively cold weather. Meanwhile, Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat announced that they had signed an agreement to extend

imported electricity from Turkmenistan for 2023. "An agreement for electricity has been extended with Turkmenistan, and according to that Turkmenistan will export electricity in 2023," said Hekmatullah Maiwandi, DABS spokesman. Residents of Kabul said that the lack of electricity creates many challenges. "We are faced with challenges in this season, all people need electricity but there is no electricity....,"

said Noor Mohammad, a Kabul resident. "We have electricity for one hour and for ten hours we have no electricity," said Esmatullah, a Kabul resident. Afghanistan imports the electricity it needs from Central Asia countries and Iran and most electricity is imported from Uzbekistan. One month ago an agreement of 420MW of electricity worth \$100 million was signed with Uzbekistan for 2023.

### Public awareness program organized

HELMAND (Agencies): A public awareness program held for hundreds of children in Helmand, public awareness about unexploded ordnance.

Officials of the Department of Labor and Social Affairs of Helmand said that in the Nawa district of this province, 900 children attended a public awareness program about unexploded ordnance.

An official of the Child Protection Network of the Department of Labor and Social Affairs in Helmand said that in the Nawa district of this province, public awareness was held to children and people of the region about unexploded ordnance.

The people of Nawa district asked the authorities to build local schools for their children and provide them with education.

### 10 criminals arrested by Kabul Police

KABUL (Agencies): Police of Kabul arrested 10 people on charges of different crimes, from 3th police district on Wednesday.

The police arrested 10 people in the last three days, from the 3th police district, said the Ministry of Interior in a statement.

4 people arrested by the police on charge with the robbery of mobile phones from people, 2 other arrested robbing of people houses and another 4 people arrested on charges of drugs trafficking and dealing, added to the ministry's statement.

The statement said that the detainees will be introduced relevant judicial bodies after police's investigation.

## IEA pledge solving problems of people



KABUL (Agencies): The Deputy Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Mawlavi Abdul Salam Hanafi, met with local officials of Badghis province.

During the meeting, Mawlavi Mohammad Saleh Pardel, the governor of Abkamari district of Badghis, shared details about the economic, social, governance and security situation with Deputy Prime Minister Hanafi.

In the meantime, Mawlavi Ghulam Sakhi Azad reminded of sacrifices made by Badghis's Mujahideen of Badghis during invasion time and said they will always be ready to support the Islamic government.

He raised his concern in the sector of dealing with the economic problems of the people of Badghis and asked for the attention of the officials of the IEA.

For his part, Mawlavi Abdul Salam Hanafi said:

"The people and the Mujahideen have fulfilled their responsibility towards the country and the system, now it is the responsibility of the officials to fulfill their commitment to the nation and the Mujahideen."

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan pledge it one of its responsibility to deal with the problems of the people, mainly the Mujahideen, and will take action to address the people's problems.

## Tearing, desecration of Holy Quran condemned

KABUL (Agencies): The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's Foreign Ministry deeply condemns in the strongest possible terms the tearing and desecration of the Holy Qur'an by a bigoted politician in The Hague, Netherlands.

A statement the ministry of foreign affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan called on the Dutch government to punish the extremist and end his political activities to

prevent the systematic spread of contempt and bigoted hatred towards sacred religious of Islam and Muslims.

Iran on Saturday strongly condemned the burning of the Quran, Islam's holy book, by a Swedish-Danish right-wing extremist in Sweden, calling it an attempt to stoke hatred and violence against Muslims.

Saudi Arabia issued a statement on Tuesday condemning the tearing of the

Quran by an extremist in the Netherlands.

The summons came days after a similar protest outside the Turkish embassy in Stockholm threatened to sink Sweden's ambitions to join the NATO defense bloc.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Monday that Sweden could no longer expect support for its NATO membership bid following its decision to allow an anti-Islam protester to burn the Quran.

## No permanent deprivation in women's education issue

KABUL (Agencies): The country's acting Interior Minister, Khalifa Sirajuddin Haqqani, met with UN top delegation, led by Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Martin Griffiths.

According to the Ministry of Interior's statement Griffiths said that without a doubt, some progress has been made here and we should not criticize each other's actions; because too much criticism prevents understanding and elevates problems but women's education and work are the basic rights that we demand to be restored.

For his part, Acting Minister of Interior, Haqqani, welcoming UN Under Secretary General and his accompanying delegation, Affairs thanked the UN and International Organizations for their humanitarian aid to Afghans Haqqani stated that there has never been any proposal of depriving girls from education, but there is a difference of opinion in the education system which is resolvable.

"Afghanistan was in wars and hardships for almost half a century, so it is necessary for all Afghans to put in a lot of hard work for this country to stand on

its feet through education; education is our own need; It is also a necessity for the well-being of our nation," Haqqani added.

Minister Haqqani also highlighted that after several decades, a unified and sovereign state has been established in Afghanistan; security has been strengthened, so the International Community should support these developments.

On his visit, Martin Griffiths met with a number of senior officials of IEA, including the Ministries of Refugees and Repatriations and Rural Reconstruction and Development.

### Truckers decry extortion, harassment

HERAT CITY (Pajhwok) Afghan truck drivers say they are no longer extorted inside Afghanistan, but Iranian security forces continue to take money from them illegally under different pretexts.

The drivers, who carry transit goods between Afghanistan and Iran complain Iranian security forces harass and extort them. They say when they cross the border into Iran, border security forces of the neighboring country force them to pay extra money.

They told Pajhwok Afghan News extortion on this side of the border has reached zero, but the illegal practice continues on the Iranian land.

Alauddin, one of the drivers, told Pajhwok Afghan News that Afghan drivers usually kept legal documents with them, but still Iranian security forces stopped them and took money from them under different pretexts.

Sayed Ahmad, another driver, corroborated Alauddin's claim, saying they were charged extra money at the Iranian Customs. He asked officials of Afghanistan to address this issue through diplomatic channels.

Mawlavi Hakimullah Omari, deputy director of Herat Customs office, said, they would share and solve the problem of Afghan drivers with Iranians through talks. He said "after the Islamic Emirate returned to power, corruption has zeroed and no one has so far complained about corruption during the previous years against the Herat customs office."

Customs revenue this year surged by 30 percent compared to the previous year, Omari said. "We have so far collected 8.121 billion afis revenue during the first 11 months of this year, while the revenue of the similar period last year was 5 billion afis," he added.

Omar Khatib, the director of Weighbridge of the provincial Customs Office, said corruption at the scale had reached zero.

Overloaded trucks are returned back every day by their office, Khatib said.

The drives are bound to load their trucks according to the regulation of MoF, or they will not be allowed to proceed, he added.

## Extreme cold kills people and livestock



KABUL (Khaama Press): Afghanistan's harsh winter has taken the lives of more than 175 people and livestock across the country, with the death toll rising in the coming week, Taliban officials said.

Amid the dire humanitarian crisis, Afghanistan is suffering one of its coldest winters, with temperatures plummeting to as low as minus 28 degrees Celsius, far below the average temperature of 0-5 degrees Celsius in the country.

The impact of the harsh winter has been worsened by the disruption of aid distribution to vulnerable families due to the ban on women employees of non-governmental aid organizations in the country.

Providing winterization, food and other basic living requirements is of paramount importance to the

local people who are struggling to survive during the harsh winter.

Shafiullah Rahimi, a spokesman for the Taliban's Ministry of Disaster Management on Tuesday said that Around 70,000 livestock have also frozen to death across the country.

"The harsh winter has been disastrous - taking the lives of vulnerable people and livestock, with limited aid ordinary people receive. We call on the international community and aid organizations to extend their helping hands to the people of Afghanistan during these difficult times," a local resident in Kabul said to Khaama Press.

Since the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021, the country has been plunged into an economic and humanitarian crisis. Natural disasters including

flash floods, land slings, and now extreme weather conditions have added to the problem of ordinary people who are struggling for survival.

According to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) nearly 28.3 million people, roughly two-thirds of Afghanistan's population are in immediate need of humanitarian aid to survive.

Meanwhile, a senior UN delegation headed by Amina Mohammed, the UN's Deputy Secretary-General visited Afghanistan last week and asked the Taliban authorities to lift the ban on women and girls so that aid organizations would accelerate their assistance and help the Afghan people during these difficult times.

## Ban on NGO female employees not be lifted, says Minister

KABUL (Khaama Press): Mullah Mohammad Abbas Akhund, the Acting Minister of Disaster Management of the Islamic Emirate has said the decree banning women employees from working for NGOs will not be lifted, and the international community should respect the Islamic culture of Afghanistan.

Mohammad Abbas Akhund on Tuesday told to BBC the world should respect Afghan culture, and reiterated that restrictions on female employees working with government and non-governmental organizations will not be removed.

The Taliban minister's remarks come as a senior United Nations delegation visited Afghanistan last week, and met with high-ranking interim authorities of the country aimed at removing the imposed gender-based restriction on Afghan women and girls.

The UN Deputy Secretary General Amina Mohammad stated to the



media that a timeline should be set and the "Taliban" should be forced to remove restrictions accordingly. Without a clear timeline, these temporary restrictions could continue up to another 50 years, therefore, a proper timeline is urgently needed to address the issue.

Meanwhile, Josep Borrell Fontelles, High Representative of the European Union said on

Tuesday that the EU and the UN will stand with Afghan women and girls in all circumstances.

Ned Price, US States Department's Spokesperson in a press conference on Tuesday stated that restricting women employees working for NGOs has caused an 80 percent decline in the activities of aid organizations in the recent past.

The ban on NGO employees has negatively affected the aid distribution among needy families across the country during these difficult times - with the harsh winter hitting vulnerable people the worst. Hundreds of people and livestock have died in the country's coldest winter so far according to United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA) report.

## Transparency distribution of aid to needy stressed



KABUL (Agencies): Acting Economy Minister, Qari Din Mohammad Hanif, met with Martin Griffiths, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and his accompanying delegation.

UN top official Griffiths in this meeting with

Minister of Economy reminded saying that the United Nations attracting 4.6 billion dollars in humanitarian aid for 28 million Afghan citizens in the year 2023.

Minister Hanif, welcoming the humanitarian aid of the United Nations to improve the living condi-

tions of the people; he stressed on the transparency and fair distribution of humanitarian aid to needy.

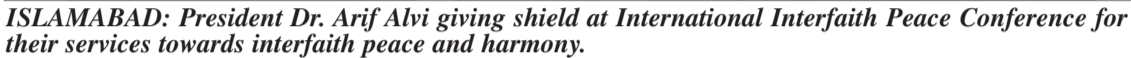
The Acting Economy Minister, called for coordination of relevant ministries and departments, stressed providing permanent job opportunities for the people.

### Issues discussed in meeting

KABUL (Agencies): Presided by Alhaji Mullah M. Hassan Akhund, Prime Minister of IEA, the 20th cabinet meeting was held to discuss some crucial issues.

The cabinet meeting approved the process of the assessment of the houses of the General Directorate of Affairs with some amendments. The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum's proposal for holding exhibitions of precious stones, metals, and mining materials of Afghanistan in different countries was also approved.

Ministry of Water and Energy was directed to work on strengthening the banks of the Amu Darya, to prevent further erosion, the cabinet stressed rebuilding the damaged areas and protecting areas at risk of destruction, by making short and long-term plans.



## F.P. Report

Secretary Dr. Shehzad  
Bangash, Additional Chief  
Secretary Ikramullah,

The meeting discussed and reviewed various matters related to current economic condition and financial situation with special focus on the budgeted transfers withheld by the federal government. Briefing about the financial constraints due to non-transfer of the budgeted shares by the federation and other related matters, it was informed that the federal government has allocated a grant of only Rs 60 billion for newly merged districts for fiscal year in 2022-23 against a minimum current budget requirement of Rs.89.5 billion for salary and non-salary expendi-

It was informed on the occasion that the actual Own Source Revenue of the province has increased more than double in the past three years but it is not enough to meet the requirements and the province mostly depends on the federal transfers.

The counsel for petitioner argued that ineligible candidates were recruited on posts of electricians and civil sub-engineer while requested for termination of appointments and demand enquiry against competent authorities.

Federal Minister for  
Finance and Revenue  
Senator Mohammad Ishaq  
Dar presided over the meet-  
ing of the Economic  
Coordination Committee  
(ECC) of the Cabinet.  
Federal Minister for  
Commerce Syed Naveed  
Qamar, Federal Minister for  
Power Mr. Khurram Dastgir  
Khan, Federal Minister for  
Planning and Special  
Initiatives Mr. Ahsan Iqbal,  
Federal Minister for  
Industries and Production  
Syed Murtaza Mahmud,  
Minister of State for  
Finance and Revenue Dr.  
Aisha Ghous Pasha, Mr.  
Shahid Khanaqha Abbasi  
MNA/Ex-PM, SAPM on  
Finance Mr. Tariq Bajwa,  
SAPM on Revenue Mr.  
Tariq Mehmood Pasha,  
SAPM on Government  
Effectiveness Dr.  
Muhammad Jehanzeb

The ECC considered another summary of the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) and allowed one-year extended Well Testing (EWT) over Umair SE-1 Discovery Guddu (E.L) w.e.f. start of production under EWT arrangements. It was informed that an exploration licence (EL) was granted over Guddu Block in 1999, operated by M/s OGDCL. Based on the results of seismic data, OGDCL has made a new discovery in the Guddu EL from the Habib Rahi Limestone and Pirkoh

The ECC considered a summary of the Ministry of Poverty alleviation and Social Safety on subsidy for wheat seed (Rabi 2022-23) and allowed the provision of Rs. 8.39 billion through TSG in favour of BISP for cash subsidy to farmers of flood affected areas instead of provision of wheat seeds as per recommendations of the Committee. Further, the ECC directed BISP to initiate cash disbursement through its partner bank as per eligibility criteria and the amount to be disbursed to each eligible person identified by Government of Sindh.

## F.P. Report

He said that it was the duty of the Islamic society to protect the religious places of other religions, provide security and respect to their religious leaders and give equal rights to them under the law. He added that Muslim societies are responsible to protect the honor, dignity, life and properties of followers of all other religions. The President said that religion was wrongly labelled as the reason for war as most of the wars fought in the recent history were by those countries which had the knowl-

He added that hate speech, speech inciting violence, promoting racism and bigotry should be curbed and discouraged at all forums. The President called for ending discrimination in the treatment of refugees, saying that refugees should not be discriminated on the basis of their colour, race, religion, or place of origin. He said that Pakistan hosted 4 million Afghan refugees for 4 decades without discrimination and imposing conditions, and the world needed to learn from

He said that Pakistani religious scholars had issued a unanimous religious decree against suicide attacks, terrorism and extremism. Earlier, the President distributed awards among the representatives of different religions for their efforts towards the promotion of peace, harmony and respect for humanity.

The PTI chief asked the polls organising authority on what basis did it choose the name of Punjab interim chief minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi. "Did the election commission not know about Mohsin Naqvi's background? He played the maximum role in toppling our government. Wasn't he with [Pakistan Peoples Party's Co-Chairman] Asif Ali Zardari in the Sindh House? Didn't he call Mohsin Naqvi his own son?" Khan questioned the electoral authority. He

ice in the matter if the JIT has been formed under the supervision of the chief justice himself. However, he said: "I have no hope for justice if those who I believed were involved in the attack — Rana Sanaullah and Shehbaz Sharif — are sitting in the federal government."

The chief justice remarked that it was the right of everyone to file the petition in any court, however, the PTI's lawyer would have to clarify whether the Lahore High Court (LHC) had declared that it would not take up the issue related to the ECP's decision on October 21.

(Continued from Page 1)

The counsel also urged the judge to order the police to uncuff his client's hands. Instead of both hands only one should be handcuffed, he added. At this, the judge remarked that the lawyer was wasting the court's time over frivolous arguments. Fawad's lawyer also told the magistrate that a habeas corpus plea was pending before a high court and till that is decided his client's transitory remand should not be approved. The magistrate then adjourned the hearing for a few minutes. Once the hearing resumed, the court approved the transitory remand of the PTI leader to transfer Fawad to Islamabad and present him in a court of the federal capital.

The lawyer contested that the case was politically motivated and questioned whether the election commission had sought permission from the federal government to lodge the case. In response, the judge asked what did the lawyer's client want from the court. "We want the court to declare Fawad Chaudhry's arrest illegal," he said. Then, the judge asked the lawyer what was unlawful in Fawad's arrest. He added that the PTI leader

At the outset of the hearing, the prosecution told the judge that Islamabad Police had registered a case against Fawad. The prosecution