

**Muqam meets Nawaz**  
LONDON (APP): Prime Minister Adviser, Engr Amir Muqam on Thursday held an important meeting with PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif and Senior Vice President and Chief Organizer of the party, Maryam Nawaz Sharif at London UK and exchanged political situation in KP. Nawaz directed the PML-N KP President to activate party workers for upcoming elections in KP. Consultation on party affairs also came under discussion.

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**Warrants of Imran refused**  
ISLAMABAD (Agencies): A local court in Islamabad has rejected a request from prosecutor to issue arrest warrants of PTI chief Imran in a case relating to hurling threat at female judge. Prosecutor Rizwan Abbasi requested the court to issue the arrest warrants which the court declined. Pronouncing the reserved verdict on Thursday over Imran Khan's plea seeking exemption from appearance, Judge Rana Mujahid Raheem granted exemption.

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# Pak-Russia to sign low-cost oil accord in March: Musadik

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik on Thursday said Pakistan would sign an agreement with Russia in March to get inexpensive crude oil besides a 'holistic energy security plan' by the year-end, which would be beneficial for both countries.

"In March, all commercial terms of the agreement will be finalized with Russia, following which low-cost crude oil will start arriving in Pakistan. It will be beneficial for both countries," he said while addressing a news conference here. Besides, the minister said a 'holistic energy security plan' between Pakistan and Russia would be completed by the year end, encompassing Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) and piped gas and other petroleum products.

He said there was another agreement under which Pakistan would be able to buy spot LNG cargoes from two companies identified by Russia, during the next winter season. Dr Musadik Malik said this year the government, under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, made an effective winter-gas management plan that helped ensure better supply to domestic consumers as compared to the last 10 years.

He said there was no doubt that gas consumers faced difficulties due to gas shortage and low-gas pressure, but the government made utmost efforts to minimize their sufferings. The minister said the government

was making all-out efforts to ensure the availability of cost-effective fuel throughout the year so that the wheel of the national economy could be moved at a faster pace.

He said the government wanted to provide jobs to educated youth, improved health and education facilities for the common man by achieving the required pace of economic growth coupled with the availability of affordable energy. Petroleum Minister Malik expressed confidence that around \$ 12-15 billion foreign investment would be arriving in the country's oil refineries during the coming months, and its detail would be shared in due course of time. "We are making efforts for attracting investment in the petroleum sector and ensuring energy security in the country", he said.

He said the government was importing additional 20,000 tons of Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) per month through Sui Southern Gas Company and PARCO Pearl Gas LPG to facilitate the public during the current winter season. He reminded that during the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) regime, only 20 percent of the LPG terminals' total capacity was being utilized, which caused gas shortages during the last winter season.

Malik said Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited had been issued instructions to open LPG shops at the grassroots level to provide gas at the prescribed rate of Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) and

discourage LPG-mafia. "We have imported 20,000 tons of LPG extra every month to discourage black marking and end monopoly of the private sector," he added. To meet the energy demand, he said, the government had prepared a plan in October last to provide gas supply to the public during the current winter season.

Commenting on the prevailing political situation, Dr Musadik said it was unfortunate that the PTI government invoked article 5 of the Constitution against opposition leaders who had moved a no-confidence motion against Imran Khan in the National Assembly. The minister said the supreme leader of PML-N Muhammad Nawaz Sharif was disqualified for not getting salary from his son's company.

He regretted that Muhammad Nawaz Sharif was not only removed from the slot of Prime Minister but also asked to leave the top slot of his party adding that Maryam Nawaz was awarded sentence of seven years on fake charges. Rana Sanaullah Khan was arrested on fabricated drug charges for being a critic of Imran Khan, he said. "Top leadership of Pakistan Muslim League-N has been put in jail on the fake charges by the PTI government," he recalled. Dr Musadik Malik said the tradition of declaring someone a traitor and hurting his/her religious sentiments should come to an end, but advocated for legal action against the elements breaching the laws of the land.



ISLAMABAD: Former president, Asif Ali Zardari and JUI-F chief, Maulana Fazlur Rehman called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

## PM, Zardari, Fazl discuss political situation

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Former President Asif Ali Zardari and Chief of JUI-F Maulana Fazal-ur-Rehman called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif here on Thursday.

During the meeting views were exchanged about the overall political situation in the country. Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif, Minister for Economic and Political Affairs Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafiq were also present in the meeting.

**US Ambassador to Pakistan calls on PM:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday noting the recent momentum in high-level bilateral exchanges, stressed that structured and broad-based Pakistan-US engagement was critical to advancing both countries' shared goals in bilateral and regional domains.

## Caretaker KP, Punjab cabinets take oath

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR / LAHORE: The 14-member caretaker provincial cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Thursday took oath here at the Governor House.

KP Governor Ghulam Ali administered the oath from the members of the cabinet and felicitated them and conveyed best wishes.

The cabinet members included Abdul Halim Qasuriya, Syed Masood Shah, Hamid Shah, Advocate Sawal Nazir, Bakht Nawaz, Fazl Elahi, Adnan Jalil, Shafiullah Khan, Haji Ghaffar, Khushdil Khan Malik, Taj Muhammad Afridi, Muhammad Ali Shah, Justice (R) Irshad Qaiser, Shahid Khan Khattak.

Chief Secretary Dr Shehzad Bangash, Inspector General of Police Moazzam Jah Ansari, Commissioner

Peshawar Riaz Mehsud, heads of administrative departments and other political and social personalities participated in the oath taking ceremony.

Hours after Khyber Pakhtunkhwa interim cabinet was sworn in, an 11-member Punjab interim cabinet — set to serve till general elections take place in the province — also took oath on Thursday.

Governor Baligh Ur Rehman administered the oath to the newly-appointed cabinet members held at the Governor's House. Out of the 11 cabinet members, eight ministers — Bilal Afzal, SM Tanveer, Dr Javed Akram, Ibrahim Murad, Dr Jamal Nasir, Mansoor Qadir, Syed Azfar Ali Nasir and Amir Mir — took the oath, while three others — Wahab Riaz, Tamkinat

Karim and Naseem Sadiq — couldn't attend the ceremony.

Although the reason for the other two is unknown, Pakistan's veteran fast bowler Riaz will take over as the largest province's sports minister in due time, he confirmed to media.

Besides other noted personalities, Punjab's caretaker Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi was among the attendees of the oathtaking ceremony.

Speaking on the occasion, Naqvi extended felicitation to the newly-appointed caretaker ministers and said that conducting "transparent, free and fair elections is the responsibility of the interim setup". He also vowed to ensure the peaceful conduct of the elections in the most densely populated province of the country.

## Imran was misled by some PTI leaders: Elahi

LAHORE (INP): Former Punjab Chief Minister (CM) and Pakistan Muslim League-Quaid (PML-Q) leader Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi has asserted that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan was misled by some of his party leaders.

Talking to journalists in Lahore, Pervaiz Elahi said that his government had done a remarkable job within a five-month period, suggesting that the assemblies should have completed their terms. "Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) also wanted the assemblies to complete their term," he said, regretting that Imran Khan was misguided by the people sitting left and right of him.

The former Punjab CM said that three or four PTI leaders have seriously damaged Imran Khan-led party by misguiding the former premier. Without naming anyone, Elahi said that if he had been caught earlier, the whole situations would have come under control. Thanking Imran Khan giving him the chance to become chief minister, Elahi said that PML-Q will contest the next general elections along with PTI Chairman.

## PTI's workers spend night outside Zaman Park

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers and supporters of former premier Imran Khan spent the second night outside Zaman Park to stop police from arresting him Imran Khan. A large number of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf supporters flocked to Lahore's Zaman Park over reports that government plans to arrest party chairman Imran Khan.

As senior PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry has been held from his residence in the provincial capital, other party members claimed reports that the federal government was planning the same for PTI Chairman Imran Khan, with the help of caretaker government members. As PTI leaders and workers started gathering outside Imran Khan's residence, 'Zaman Park Pohanchi' started trending on microblogging site with thousands of tweets shared by PTI activists.

## No backchannel diplomacy with India, says Hina

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar on Thursday told the Senate that there was no backchannel diplomacy going on with India.

Responding to a supplementary question of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's Senator Faisal Javed at the floor of the upper house of the parliament, she said since the government had come into power, there was no backchannel diplomacy going on between Pakistan and India. Hina made it clear that if backchannel diplomacy was result oriented, it should be done.

She said the messages, being received from India, were all conflagratory that was why; there were no talks on any kind of trade between the two neighboring countries. She expressed the possibly of talks if there was any opportunity and India comes to Pakistan's demand. "It is duty of the politicians to do right things instead of coming in the way of diplomacy," she maintained.

Balochistan Awami Paty's Senator Danesh Kumar, appreciating the Kartarpur Corridor, said there was Hinglaj Mata temple in Balochistan which was almost five

thousand years old adding that Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi was also its worshiper. He expressed the hope that if this archeological site was promoted for religious tourism between Pakistan and India, it would have good impact on the social condition of the people of this coastal area.

He asked the minister for taking any peace-building initiative for this ancient religious temple like the Kartarpur Corridor. Terming Kartarpur Corridor a good precedence, Hina said this was obviously a positive suggestion and Pakistan had always played frontman role in the execution of such peace-building projects and it would keep on doing so.

She said absolutely, there was no harm in looking in detail this specific proposal and Pakistan should continue to project such things. She said currently, the hostility was coming from other side of the border which was due to a hostile government over there. Pakistan was asked to normalize its relations with India on the international forums time and again.

"To them our response is that they should look at the

messages we have received from India," she added. The minister said banning the BBC documentary in India put a big question mark on its credibility it professed of being the biggest democracy of the world.

She was of the view that the border should remain peaceful as "it is our intention to continue to engage with India at whatever platform required." Pakistan was the country which had always learned from its history and it did not believe in generating more dead bodies on certain conflicts because more bloodshed was not in the interest of this region, she added.

The minister mentioned that Director Generals of Military Operation of both sides reached an agreement of ceasefire adding that before entering into this understanding, the two countries had a ceasefire understanding in 2003 but India did not respect the accord and violated it 13,500 times leading to the death of 310 citizens and injuring at least 1,600. She further said the latest agreement had substantially decreased cross-border incidents and expressed the hope that despite of all that Pakistan would continue the 'journey to peace'.

## IMF team due by end of month

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): An International Monetary Fund (IMF) delegation will be visiting Pakistan soon to hash out details of the stalled 9th Extended Fund Facility review, an official confirmed Thursday.

Islamabad is dealing with a severe economic crunch as the foreign exchange reserves are at their lowest levels in more than eight years and the Pakistani rupee has dropped to historic lows, with the government now eyeing to revive the bailout programme as it nears a default risk. "At the request of the authorities, an in-person Fund mission is scheduled to visit Islamabad January 31-February 9 to continue the discussions under the ninth EFF review," IMF Representative in Pakistan Esther Pérez Ruiz told private TV channel.

The representative mentioned that the delegation would be focusing on sever-

al policy areas during their meetings with the Pakistani officials, who are now taking steps to meet the Fund's prerequisites for the programme's revival. "The mission will focus on policies to restore domestic and external sustainability, including to strengthen the fiscal position with durable and high-quality measures while supporting the vulnerable and those affected by the floods; restore the viability of the power sector and reverse the continued accumulation of circular debt; and reestablish the proper functioning of the FX market, allowing the exchange rate to clear the FX shortage."

Stronger policy efforts and reforms, she said, are critical to reduce the current elevated uncertainty that weighs on the outlook, strengthening Pakistan's resilience, and obtaining financing support from official partners and the markets that are vital for Pakistan's

sustainable development. The development comes a day after Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif reiterated that the government had informed the IMF that it was keen to complete the ninth review.

"We want to conclude the terms through negotiations without any delay so that Pakistan could move ahead," the prime minister said during his address at an event in Islamabad. The prime minister, who formed the government in April after ousting Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan from office, expressed optimism that the country's other multilateral and bilateral programmes would also move forward.

The government had been reluctant to fulfil the Fund's conditions earlier and also asked the money lender to relax the conditions after cataclysmic floods hit the nation, dealing damages worth over \$30 billion.



**Home and Tribal Affairs Department**  
**Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa**

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# Sindh govt to start Pink bus service from February 1 to facilitate working women

**F.P. Report**

KARACHI: The Transport Department Sindh has taken an important initiative and decided to launch Pink People's Bus Service reserved for women. The new bus service is being launched keeping in view the commuting problems of working women particularly. The decision to this effect has been taken in a meeting chaired by Information, Transport & Mass Transit Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon at his resident due to his health reasons.

Provincial Minister announced that Pink People's Bus Service will be launched from February 1, and added that Model Colony, Shahrah-e-Faisal, to Tower route has been selected for the first route

of Pink People's Bus Service. He said that Pink Bus service will operate every 20 minutes in morning and evening during office hours, while it will operate after every hour during normal hours.

The provincial minister said that after launch of orange, red and white bus service in Karachi, now pink bus service is being started for women only. He said that Pakistan People's Party is moving fast towards fulfilling its promises made with the people of Karachi. The meeting also reviewed the operations of People's Bus Service in Sukkur, Larkana, Hyderabad and the launch of remaining Routes including route No. 4, 5, 6 and 7 in Karachi. The provincial minister directed that the operations of the

People's Bus Service should be started in Sukkur by January 29.

He also directed the Managing Director Sindh Mass Transit Authority to visit the remaining routes of the People's Bus Service in Karachi and inspect the ongoing repair work of the routes. He said that operations of people's bus service bus should be started on

routes 4, 5, 6 and 7 of Karachi as soon as possible, so that more and more citizens of Karachi should have access to modern public transport facility.

Secretary Transport Abdul Haleem Sheikh, Managing Director Sindh Mass Transit Authority Zubair Chana, Operations Manager NRTC Abdul Shakoor attended the meeting.

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif has said that Imran Khan is playing with country's economy and termed it very unfortunate.

Addressing a press conference at 180-H Model Town on Thursday, he said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) wanted that no one asked it about

inflation and poor economic condition, which country was facing just PTI government. pressure on institutions, he added.

# Imran playing with country's economy: Javed

## C&W Department organized workshop

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: The C&W Department has started the new year 2023 with renewed determination to serve the people better. In this regard, a workshop was organized at C&W Department on 19th January 2023 where the technical staff of C&W Department from across the province were trained on the latest technology for roads maintenance and condition monitoring.

It is important to highlight here that the C&W department is the first government department in the country to introduce the latest technology to monitor

the roads network in the province. C&W's new technology uses AI to detect deterioration in roads conditions and the C&W department can use this data to develop future maintenance plans. It may be mentioned here that the C&W department was one of the first government departments to use 'e-bidding' to introduce transparency.

Speaking on the occasion, the Secretary C&W Department, Engineer Syed Imtiaz Hussain Shah addressed the participants that to bring efficiency in the way the department works, we should adopt new technology.

Positions Available

Visiting Faculty Required

COMSATS University Islamabad (CU), Attock Campus invites applications from interested candidates for visiting faculty positions for the following subjects:

Department	Area of Specialization
Computer Science	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Software Engineering</li><li>Software Designed Architecture</li><li>Object Oriented Software Engineering</li><li>Mobile Application Development</li><li>Web Technology: JAVA Platform(OOP &amp; PF)</li><li>Cyber Security</li></ul>
Management Sciences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Software Testing</li><li>Artificial Intelligence</li><li>Operating Systems</li><li>Game Development</li><li>VP Net Framework</li><li>Network Security</li></ul>
Humanities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Compensation Management</li><li>Performance Management</li><li>Introduction to Business</li><li>HR Information Systems</li><li>Fundamentals of Marketing</li><li>Financial Reporting</li><li>Accounting Information System</li><li>Advanced Issues in the Financial Institution</li><li>Financial Derivative and Risk Management</li></ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>English linguistics</li><li>Integrated Marketing Communication</li><li>Brand Management</li><li>Project Management</li><li>Chinese Language</li><li>Fintech</li><li>E-Commerce</li><li>Psychology</li></ul>

How to Apply?

- Candidates having **MS or M.Phil (18 years)/Ph.D degree** from HEC recognized institutes/universities are eligible to apply for visiting faculty positions.
- Eligible candidates should apply online at <http://attock.comsats.edu.pk/Careers/ApplyOnline.aspx>
- Printout of the filled form should be sent along with copy of valid **CNIC/Passport**, all certificates/degrees (from Matric onward), experience certificates, etc. on the address given below.
- Only shortlisted candidates will be called for demonstration/interview.
- No TA/DA will be admissible.
- The candidates should apply online using the link mentioned above within **15 days** from the date of publication of this advertisement.

Applications should be sent to:

Incharge HR

COMSATS University Islamabad, Attock Campus

(A Public Sector University of Ministry of Science & Technology)

Kamra Road, Attock

Ph: 057-9049353

[www.comsats.edu.pk](http://www.comsats.edu.pk)

**Court Notice**

IN the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No.413/1. Institution 21/12/2022. Date of hearing. 2/2/2023. Taj Mohammad VS Deputy Commissioner Buner etc. Notice to 9.Sultan Mohammad. 11.Sultan Room sons of Said Mohammad resident of Dokada tehsel Gadezai district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 2/2/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

**Court Notice**

IN the Court of Qaisar Khan Afridi Additional District Judge II/Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar. Appeal No.64/13. Institution 8/6/2022 Date of hearing. 2/2/2023. Sarmer Khan etc VS Azizullah etc. Notice to no. 2. Asmatullah s/o Hastullah Khan. 17/2.Kamran s/o Masal Khan.53/2.Sher Hassan s/o Sataruden resident of Rega tehsel Gagra district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 2/2/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

**Court Notice**

In the court of Mr. Kaleem Ullah-II, Ilaqa Qazi Malakand at Bathkela, Case No. 159/1 of 2022, Next Date: 06/02/2023, Mr. Ihsan Ullah Versus Mr. Hanif Ullah Proclamation Against: (5) Noor ul Amin s/o Rooh ul Amin (26) Jamil (27) Khalil s/o Zubaida Bibi d/o Abdullah (Late) resident of Amin Abad Dheri Julagram Distt. Malakand. In the above title case the service of you above named defendants is not possible with ordinary means, hence you are hereby informed through this proclamation to attend this court on 06/02/2023 at 08:00am in person or through appointed agent/attorney or through counsel, otherwise you shall be place and proceed against ex-parte.

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

No. CCDB/AB/300

Dated: 25/01/2023

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders on percentage rate basis(not on individual items) are hereby invited for the works mentioned below from the approved PEC registered Contractors and Pak PWD enlisted contractors duly renewed for the current financial year 2022-23 .Tender documents can be received from the office of the undersigned during office hours on any working day on payment of tender cost **(Non-Refundable)** up to **13/02/2023** with written request on letter pad accompanied with attested copy of CNIC, Income tax Registration Certificate as active taxpayer (filer).Tenders will be issued to the proprietor of the Firm / Company or their legally authorized representatives having registered power of attorney (duly attested). The tenders in sealed cover should be received in the tender box kept in the office of undersigned on **14/02/2023 up to 12:00 PM** and the respective tenders will be opened on the same day at **12:30 PM** in the presence of contractors or their authorized representatives, having registered power of attorney.

The following instructions may be read and understood carefully in true letter and spirit, as in case of violation of any of these, the tender forms will not be issued. The documents under mentioned must be accompanied with the application, failing which no tender forms will be issued.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- No tender will be sold / issued on the date of opening of tenders.
- No tender will be issued / received thorough post, telegraph or E-Mail.
- According to PPRA Rule-25, Bid Security, as stated below against each work in the shape of CDR/Call deposit shall be furnished from any scheduled bidders CDR in the name of the Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division, Pak PWD, Bannu. No tender will be entertained without bid security as stated below against each work or less amount.
- Tenders can be purchased on the prescribed cost (Non-refundable) in Cash mentioned against the below noted works from the office of the undersigned during office hours upto **13/02/2023**.
- All CDRs once received may be credited into the Government Account and will be refunded through Government Cheque.
- 1st, 2nd, 3rd, lowest bidders CDR will be retained till acceptance of tender.
- The documents / CDR provided by the bidders if found ambiguous will be verified and in case of fake one, the firm will face immediate / appropriate penal action as per rules and law.
- Tender Notice is also available at PPRA Website ([www.ppra.org.pk](http://www.ppra.org.pk))
- Under Rule 33(1) of public Procurement Rules, 2004, the competent authority reserves the right to reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of bid or proposal.
- The submission of tenders by the contractor implies that he is fully conversant with the site of work, scope of work and terms and conditions as laid down in the tender documents.
- Note: In case of any public holiday or surprise engagement of the undersigned the schedule of closing & opening will be on 15-02-2023 or 16-02-2023 on same time**

S.No.	Name of Work	N.I.T Amount	Earnest Money /Bid Security	Period of Completion	Cost of Tender
1	Supply of Fiber Water Tanks for Poor and Needy People at Various Places /Various Union Councils District Bannu.	19,202,360	2% of Bid Amount	150 (Days)	2000/-
2	Construction/ Rehabilitation of PCC Road /Street/Solling Street and Over Head Water Tanks at the following various Street/ Place in Union Council District Bannu. i.U/C=Nuraili.U/C=Barakzai iii.U/C=Havid iv.U/C=Khojari	33,523,555	2% of Bid Amount	150 (Days)	2000/-
3	Construction/ Rehabilitation of PCC Road /Street/Solling Street at the following various Street/ Place in Union Council District Bannu. i.U/C=Mamand Khel Wazir ii.U/C=Tahti Khel iii.U/C=Jani Khel 1v.U/C=Hindi Khel	37,850,471	2% of Bid Amount	150 (Days)	2000/-
4	Construction/ Rehabilitation of PCC Road /Street/Solling Street and Over Head Water Tanks at the following various Street/ Place in Union Council District Bannu. i. U/C=Kot Qalandirlii.U/C=Mira Khel iii. U/C=Jandui Khel iv.U/C=ShahbazAzmat Khel	28,686,943	2% of Bid Amount	150 (Days)	2000/-
5	Construction/ Rehabilitation of PCC Road /Street/Solling Street and Over Head Water Tanks at the following various Street/ Place in Union Council District Bannu. i.U/C=Mandavii.U/C=Ismail Khel iii.U/C=KalakhelMastkhaniv.U/C=SlamaSikandirkhel	33,710,931	2% of Bid Amount	150 (Days)	2000/-
6	Construction/ Rehabilitation of PCC Road /Street/Solling Street and Over Head Water Tanks at the following various Street/ Place in Union Council District Bannu. i.U/C=Mandan ii.U/C=Khawajamad Mandan iii.U/C=KausarFatakheliv.U/C=Meta khel	28,935,708	2% of Bid Amount	150 (Days)	2000/-
7	Construction/ RehabilitationPCC Road /Street/Solling Street and Over Head Water Tanks at the following various Street/ Place in Union Council District Bannu. i.U/C=Ghoriwalaaii.U/C=Shamshikhel iii.U/C=NurJafhir	29,126,209	2% of Bid Amount	150 (Days)	2000/-
8	Construction/ Rehabilitation of PCC Road /Street/Solling Street and Over Head Water Tanks at the following various Street/ Place in Union Council District Bannu. i.U/C=Baratii.U/C=Kaki iii.U/C=Mamakhel (Banochi)	28,801,925	2% of Bid Amount	150 (Days)	2000/-

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

Government of Pakistan

Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division)

Directorate General of Petroleum Concessions

INVITATION TO BID FOR GRANT OF PETROLEUM EXPLORATION RIGHTS

Applications are invited for grant of petroleum exploration rights (Exploration License) over the following Blocks:

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2	PARKINI-II BLOCK-B (2564-7)	I	11	ARMALA-II (2469-11)	I
3	RASMALAN-II (2564-8)	I	12	S.W. MIANO-II (2668-24)	III
4	RASMALAN-II West (2564-9)	I	13	ZAMZAMA-II SOUTH (2667-16)	III
5	KHANPUR-II (2870-8)	II	14	SEHWAN (2667-19)	III
6	KHIU-II (3171-4)	II	15	THANO BEG-II (2567-14)	II
7	LAYYAH-II (3070-18)	II	16	PAHARPUR-II (3170-13)	II
8	ALUPUR-II (2970-10)	II	17	SOHBAT PUR (2868-8)	III
9	ZINDAN-II (3271-9)	II	18	ZORGARH-II (2868-9)	III

- Bid Documents can be obtained from the office of Director General Petroleum Concessions (DGPC) 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Petroleum House, G-5/2, Islamabad on a written request and payment of non refundable fee of US\$ 100 (or equivalent in Pak Rupees) in favour of DGPC through a bank draft. The Bid Documents can also be downloaded from the website [www.ppisonline.com](http://www.ppisonline.com) by online payment of US\$ 100.
- Sealed applications are required to be submitted by the interested exploration and production companies to DGPC, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Petroleum House, G-5/2, Islamabad, Pakistan by **10:00 a.m. (PST) on 15<sup>th</sup> May, 2023**. Applications will be opened publicly by the Bid Opening Committee on the same day at **10:30 a.m. (PST)** in DGPC office in the presence of the applicants or their representatives.
- Applicant shall also furnish bid bond with each application equivalent to 1% of the bid offered.
- Bids submitted by all applicants will be considered as irrevocable and unconditional. In case any applicant states otherwise, his bid will not be accepted and will be treated as "non responsive".
- The bidding process will be governed by and construed under the laws of Pakistan and any question or dispute regarding grant of Petroleum Right or any matter or thing connected therewith shall be resolved by arbitration in Pakistan and in accordance with laws of Pakistan as per applicable rules of Pakistan Onshore Petroleum (Exploration & Production) Rules, 2013.
- The successful applicant will be selected in accordance with the provisions of the Bidding documents. The Authority reserves the right to exercise the power to accept or reject any application. In the event of refusal to grant such petroleum right, the Authority shall as far as possible provide the reason thereof. The Authority also reserves the right to cancel or annul the bidding process without specifying any reason.
- Any bidder offering Work Units lower than the minimum threshold specified in the policy or the bidding documents shall be treated as non-responsive and his bid would not be further evaluated.
- In the event, any of the bidder(s) attempts to influence the DGPC in any manner whatsoever, it shall result in the disqualification of such bidder(s).

(Kashif Ali)

Director General (Petroleum Concessions)

Tel: 092-051-9204176 Fax: 092-051-9213245

website: [www.mpn.gov.pk](http://www.mpn.gov.pk)

NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING

Sealed Tender Based on MR-2022 (2nd Bi Annual)/Non MRS items for Below mentioned works are hereby invited on the basis of Single Stage Single Envelope Procedure from the Government Contractors registered with PEC and enlisted with Local Govt and Rural Development as per centralized procedure Enlistment policy of the Government of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa for current financial year as per following schedule.

Work No	Work Name	Estimated Cost(M)	Bid Security @2%	Last date/time of submission of electronic Tender	Date/Time of opening of Electronic Tender
1	Black Top Road at Shalkai UC Khal	25.0	50000	13th February, 2023 11:00 PM	13th February, 2023 12:00 PM

- The Financial bidding will be online through E-Bidding system. Tender form and BOQ can be filled online and downloaded from the official website of LG&RDD ([www.lgkp.gov.pk](http://www.lgkp.gov.pk)) after one day of publishing NIT.
- The bidders are required to fill electronic bids online and attach scan copy of bid security in shape of original call deposits in the name of procuring entity along with (Additional security if any) and submit hard copy of the same printed electronic bid to the procuring entity/executing Agency.
- Electronic bids and original call deposits received through fax or by hand will not be acceptable.
- Sealed bids sent through registered mail/courier service should reach up to the specified time and date as mentioned above.
- The eligible bidder must have the relevant codes for the above mentioned works as Pakistan Engineering Council
- The contractor or his representative may be present at time of opening of electronic bids opening.
- The call deposit i.e. bid security for the work/contract must be prepared after publishing of NIT, before closing time of the electronic bid apply.
- The Contractor quoting their bids up to a limit of 10% below Engineer Estimated shall submit bid security @2% only of Engineer Estimate.
- The Contractor quoting their bids more than 10% below up to 20% below on Engineer's Estimated shall submit along with their bid 8% Additional security of Engineer's estimated cost in addition to 2% bid security. If the bid is not accompanied with the required amount additional security then it will be considered as Non-Responsive and the 2% bid security shall be forfeited in favor of Government and the second lowest bidder and so on will be considered accordingly.
- Similarly, a contractor quoting bid more than 20% below shall submit with his bid an additional security on Engineers Estimated Cost equal to the differential amount of submitted bid and Engineer's Estimated along with detailed Rate Analysis (If a contractor quote e.g 25% below engineer estimated bid then he has to deposit along with his bid 2% bid security and 25% additional security of engineer estimate).In case of more than 20% below bids, if the bid is not accompanied by the detailed rate analysis and / or required amount of additional security, then the said bid shall be considered as non-responsive. All the security submitted along with such non-responsive bid shall be forfeited in favor of Government and the 2nd lowest bidder and so on will be considered accordingly.
- In case detailed rate analysis submitted with the bid is, in view of the procuring entity, not convincing, the head of the procuring entity may declare such bid as non-responsive without any forfeiture of bid security.
- Any Electronic Bidder who provide false, or materially inaccurate or incomplete or do not send information in hard will be disqualified as per KPRA Act Section 29 (1) read with KPRA Rule (43). Furthermore the procuring Entity/Executing Agency will recommend and sent cases for debarring/Blacklisting and will initiate/take action in light of approved procedure/Mechanism as per KPRA Act section 29 (2) read with KPRA Rule (44).
- Electronic Bids will remain valid for 90 days from the closing date of bids.(As decide by the Procuring Entity/Executing Agency in Light of Standard Bidding Documents).
- The PEC and KPRA registration (Active tax payer) must be valid for current Financial Year.
- The Centralized Enlisted contractors with C&W department for the current financial year who wants to participate in tendering process may approach Directorate General LG&RDD Peshawar within two days before closing time of electronic apply for uploading their names on the official website i.e. ([www.lgkp.gov.pk](http://www.lgkp.gov.pk))
- All the bidders may be deposited tender form fee Rs.0.03% on E/Cost by each participating contractor along-with earnest money.
- Work Order will be issued to contractors subject to availability of funds.
- CDRs will not be released to contractors till the award of contract.
- All applicable taxes will be recoverable as per directives of the government in vogue.
- As per KPRA Rule 37 (9) no bidder shall be allowed to withdraw his bid till award of the contract or till bid is valid, whichever is earlier.
- All relevant documents i.e current renewal of PEC/NIC must be attached with tender form
- Any addition made in terms of conditions in the NIT advertised will be implemented as per KPRA Rules.

ASSISTANT ENGINEER LG&RDD DISTRICT DIR LOWER

ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (Sr.) LG&RDD DISTRICT DIR LOWER

INF(P)#402/2023, The Frontier Post Peshawar, Date: 27-01-23





# Police prepares for elimination of terrorism: IGP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Inspector General Police Mozam Jah Ansari has said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police is the heir of the martyrs, the soldiers have made peace in the province possible by sacrificing their lives. The command of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police is for me. It is an honor, while addressing meet the Press program of Peshawar Press Club, on Thursday.

IGP said that there has been an increase in law and order problems in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for some time, but everyone knows

the reasons for this, changes in the neighboring country. He said that elements who came here after crossing the border caused some problems, but the brave men of the police made sacrifices and did not allow the wishes of the terrorists to be fulfilled. Inspector General of Police also said that the terrorists took the law into their own hands, tried and attacked the police stations, outposts and mobiles but demoralized the KP police, the effects of which would have definitely manifested in the form of frustration among the people, but the

timely actions of the police thwarted the ambitions of the enemies. He said that my message to the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is that of insecurity Don't be a victim, your police is on guard for your protection. Inshallah, there will always be prosperity in the cities, markets and schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In response to another question, the IGP said that a total of 110 cops are assigned to the security of Bani Gala and Zaman Park Lahore, when the Interior Department says The officials were called back.

## Govt responsible for economic turmoil: ATP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Amun Taraqqi Party (ATP) chairman Muhammad Faiq Shah attributed the cascading bad decisions for economic morass and criticized that the government is lacking policy to sail the country out of current crisis. Shah while chairing a meeting here at the party's central secretariat on Thursday noted the rate of USD has jacked up at 253, while inflation rose up unprecedently.

He held the incumbent coalition government responsible for rising inflation, unemployment and the devaluation of PKR against USD. He held the incumbent coalition government responsible for rising inflation, unemployment and the devaluation of PKR against USD.

Government has finalized a plan to present a Rs 200 Billion 'mini-budget', proposing imposition of heavy additional taxes on poor masses, he added. Consumer Price Index CPI in Pakistan averaged 82.73 points from 2001 until 2022, reaching an all-time high of 196.86 points in December of 2022 and a record low of 31.12 points

in July of 2001, Shah said while referring to statistical data and experts' analysis. Furthermore, he noted trade, industrial and commercial activities have slowed down owing to the energy and gas crisis. On the other hand, he added, non-opening of Letter of Credits (LCs) and scarcity of USD has further aggravating the situation. Shah said amid depressing economic conditions, the incumbent government oscillates between denying the existence of any economic crises to blaming it all on the previous regime for creating an air of political uncertainty that they claim landed the country in financial turmoil.

He said it is reportedly that the IMF had agreed to hold a dialogue with Pakistan for next week. He, however, stressed the need for exploiting the untapped indigenous resources to make the country economically self-reliant. Pakistan is currently confronted with the peril of leadership vacuum, Shah remarked while referring to the current stalemate between government and opposition that has caused the present political instability in the country.

Once again, the party chief gave high worth to dialogue to settle all issues. The ATP chairman called upon the government and opposition to set aside their political differences and work together for bringing political and economic stability in the country.

He emphasized the development of national consensus is imperative to settle all issues with unanimity. Furthermore, he asserted reforms are essential before conducting fresh elections in the country. Faiq reminded ATP has already given a holistic reforms agenda which should be implemented with letter and spirit to overcome the prevailing crisis.

He offered that ATP is ready to provide an alternative solution to the current crisis. He added we need to join hands for the sake of Pakistan's and its people's best interest. The ATP chairman warned that Pakistan enemies will take full advantage of the growing political and economic instability so we should foil their evil designs by showing unity in this time testing situation that had been confronted by the whole nation.



PESHAWAR: Provincial Election Commissioner KP Shamshad Khan presenting appreciation certificate to Mrs. Romana Asad Deputy Controller Marketing (PTV). - F.P. photo

## Call for discussion on budget proposals by all stakeholders

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Centre for Peace and Development Initiative (CPDI) on Thursday released its third annual report on the state of budget transparency in Pakistan and called for the budget proposals to be widely discussed with civic groups, government agencies and key stakeholders to address deficiencies in the budgeting process at the federal and provincial levels.

It said that the participation of citizens in the budgeting process should be given legal protection and the government institutions should be obliged to consult with the citizens during the various stages of budgeting, especially the role of the members of the assembly during budgeting and its implementation.

In this regard, the member organization of Citizen Network for Budget Accountability (CNBA) Saiban Development Organization Mardan organized a dialogue on transparent budget preparations. The meeting was attended by male and female councillors,

civil society and media. Mohammad Arif said that for the last decades CPDI has been trying to improve the budgeting process from the district level to the federal level in Pakistan and to promote transparency in it.

CPDI Provincial Coordinator Shams Al Hadi and Muhammad Arif of Saiban Development Organization said that like last year, this year also at the federal and provincial levels, this process has been reviewed. As a result, a report based on "Budget transparency situation in Pakistan 2023" is released he said adding that this report not only examines budget transparency in Pakistan.

This report consists of two parts, the first part deals with requests for information sent to various federal ministries and provincial departments in which information was sought about various stages during the budgeting process. 150 requests for obtaining information were sent to the selected federal ministries and provincial departments to check transparency in the process, in which 38 requests were sent

to the federation, 112 requests to Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab and Sindh provinces.

Not a single response to all these requests was received within the stipulated time, which is very disappointing, he deplored. The second part of the report examines the comprehensiveness of the budget documents and the participation of citizens in budgeting and gave first position to KP, second to Punjab, third to Sindh and fourth to Balochistan. The report demanded that the provincial and federal governments should ensure the implementation of access to information laws and remove obstacles in the way to promote budget transparency and also extend the period of discussion and approval on the budget so that it can be discussed at length. It further said that along with this, legal protection should be given to consultation with relevant stakeholders, especially citizens, and a transparent and open budget policy based on providing maximum information should be formulated.

## RTS Commission redresses four public complaints

Hamayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Right to Public Services Commission, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa redressed four public complaints on Thursday. The bench consisting of Chief Commissioner, Mohammad Saleem Khan and Commissioner Judge, Mohammad Asim Imam heard the public complaints.

A resident from district Chitral, Sajidullah have complaint that a village of 30 houses is not being provided clean drinking water and commission directed the District Monitoring Officer (DMO), Upper Chitral to visit the concerned locality along with the concerned Sub-Division Officer (SDO) and informed the commission through photos and maps that from where the village could be provided the facility.

In light of the report submitted by the DMO, the commission has directed Public Engineering Department, Chitral for provision of water. Similarly, a resident of Islamabad, Saeed Ali Mehdi have complained that he is providing services to various of the telecommunication companies in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and 34 precious equipment have been stolen from 34 places while Police is not registering his FIR, which is must for payment of compensation by the insurance companies.

The commission has advised the complainant to review agreement signed between the insurance company and land owners, beside, writing letter to the KP Police chief to search out solutions to the issue at policy level. The third case was about hardships in deciding the boundary line of his property and the process was completed as per directives of the commission.

The complainant expressed satisfaction over the proceeding and expressed gratitude to the commission. The fourth and fifth complaints were regarding non removal of debris by the Communication and Works (C&W) Department. The bench said that companies, which are digging land for some purposes have been asked to reply.

## Legal fraternity promulgation of Lawyer protection Act

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The lawyer community from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa demanded foolproof security for legal fraternity and promulgation of Lawyers Protection Act, on Thursday.

This was demanded during general body meeting of the Peshawar High Court Bar Association (PHCBA), Peshawar Bar Association (PBA) and KPBC held today in the Safer Ullah Khan Hall at PHC Bar Room.

The agenda of the meeting was security of lawyers, promulgation of Lawyers Protection Act and security of the Bar Room. The unanimous resolutions passed by the general body that, installation of modern equipment on all entry points in the Peshawar High Court premises, to promulgated the Lawyers Protection Act within 2 weeks, KPBC to take initiative against the facilitators involved in the incident of 16th January 2023 and installation of cameras in the Bar Rooms.

The legal fraternity also condemned sanctity of the Bar room violated on 16th January 2023, complainant of the FIR in late Abdul Latif Afridi case, Sangeen Khan was appreciated and saluted by the members of the meeting for taking such brave steps.

The committee will be constituted who shall handle the private and personal issues of the lawyers, with each other as well as general public and The blasphemy of the Holy Quran in Sweden was also condemned by lawyers.



PESHAWAR: Inspector General of Police KP Moazzam Jah Ansari talking to media persons at Press Club. - F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

## High time to eliminate heredity politics: Khwaja Hoti

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) central leader Nawabzada Muhammad Khan Hoti has said that the time has come to give a new direction to the country's economic and political system, to eliminate heredity in politics and provide opportunity to the eligible people to come forward.

The artificial and incompetent leadership of the people has pushed the country into a dead end economically and politically, from which collective wisdom is needed to get the country out again, addressing a press conference at the Peshawar Press Club. He said that the current economic situation of the country is a matter of

moment for every patriotic citizen.

Man can easily understand. Nabzada Muhammad Khan Hoti said that considering the political and economic future of the country, a few like-minded friends have started a series of seminars regarding the current challenges across the country, the first of this series. The seminar was held last week in Quetta, while the second seminar will be held in Nishtar Hall, Peshawar on Saturday, January 28th Former Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, former Finance Minister Miftah Ismail, Mustafafi Nawaz Khokhar, Lashkari Raisani, Ali Ahmed Kurd, through these seminars, the current troubled economic and political situation of the country was presented to the pub-

lic. In response to a question, Nawabzada Hoti has said that if there was a democratic culture within political parties, we would not have to do these things in seminars, he clarified that this impression is not correct.

He said We are going to form a new political party, we belong to all different political parties, and we have no political ambitions, Nawabzada Hoti termed Khyber Pakhtunkhwa caretaker cabinet as disappointing and said that the cabinet of the province suffering from economic crisis. Instead of rewarding friends, I should have engaged technocrats so that the experts would have pulled the province out of the current crisis.

## New dams imperative to address country's economic, water woes

PESHAWAR (APP): The recent countrywide electricity breakdown that adversely affected industrial and domestic consumers in all provinces including KP, have necessitated complete overhauling of the power distribution and transmission system and expediting work on under-construction dams projects to address the country's economic and water woes.

As the summer was approaching fast with a possibility of exerting extra-load on the national transmission system including of the power distribution companies and PESCO, there was a need to strengthen power distribution and transmission system in all provinces including KP besides accelerating work on Mohmand, Diamir Bhasha and Kurram Tangi and other water reservoirs to avoid the Tuesday's like power breakdown incident in future.

"The recent electricity fault should be an eye-opener for all of us. It reflects that our electricity transmission and generation system was overloaded and required huge investment after the former PTI government failed to upgrade the system," said Wajid Ali Khan, former Minister and ANP leader while talking to APP on Thursday.

He said the power transmission lines and infrastructure including electricity poles affected by the floods in flood hit areas especially in northern districts of KP including Swat and Kohistan required special attention of the government.

Wajid claimed that the former PTI government has neither addressed the problem of illegal power connections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa nor completed the long awaited Mohmand dam project, resulting in prolonged power outages in the province today. He claimed that over 100 mini micro hydel power stations constructed by the former PTI government with the help of NGOs in northern KP were either destroyed or damaged by the last year summer floods due to its ill planning and wrong selection of sites, thus wasting huge financial resources. As a result, he said the energy import bill had swelled to \$27 billion, causing negative effects on the national economy and industrial production.

Ikhtair Wali Khan, PMLN KP spokesman said the recent countrywide electricity breakdown has testified that our power distribution and transmission system needed complete overhauling for which great responsibilities rest on the NTDC (national transmission and distribution company) to bring signifi-

cant improvement in it. Highly appreciating the Ministry of Energy (Power Division) and Wapda for quickly fixing the technical faults apparently developed due to delay in synchronization between Tarbela and Mangla power plants on Monday last said that power supply has been completely restored across the country including KP.

Besides laying foundation of many grid stations and transmission systems worth Rs 80 billion in the last few months by the present elected government, he said that the foundation of a mega grid station in Mansehra would soon be laid to ensure smooth transmission of electricity generated through Diamer Basha and other such mega projects to KP especially to Hazara division.

"Had former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif not launched projects of power generation and transmission besides laid foundations of nuclear power plants K-2 and K-3 in Karachi and HVDC Matiari-Lahore Transmission Line, the country would have been plunged into complete darkness today."

Meanwhile, Wapda's authorities here told APP that work on Mohmand dam was restarted after the last year's flood devastation and its diversion system would likely be completed by the end of this year. "Most of its damages caused to the diversion system by last year's flood in last summer, were repaired and presently construction work was underway on all 11 sites of the project," the official said.

He said Mohmand dam was a multi-purpose project that on completion due in 2026 would store 1.2 MAF of water, generate 800MW electricity and help mitigate floods in Peshawar, Charsadda and Nowshera.

Besides supplementing 160,000 acres of existing land, Mohmand dam would irrigate 18,237 acres of new land in Mohmand and Charsadda, contribute 2.86 billion units of low-cost and environment friendly hydel electricity per annum to the national grid and provide 300 million gallons water per day to Peshawar for drinking purpose. "The project annual estimated benefits are estimated to be about Rs51.6 billion while Rs4.5 billion were allocated for confidence building measures (CBM) in the project area for socio-economic development of local population.

To curb illegal power connections, he said the Aerial Bundled Cable (ABC) project has been approved for high line loss feeders of Peshawar, Bannu and Khyber districts where work was start-

ed. Ikhtair Wali said work on construction on high voltage direct current (HVDC) converter station was underway at tehsil Azakhel Bala in Nowshera district under CASA-1000 Project for transmission of 1300 megawatt environment friendly electricity from Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan via Afghanistan to Pakistan.

HVDC converter station Nowshera would be linked by an HVDC transmission line to efficiently transmit electricity from hydropower-rich Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan via Afghanistan and onward to Pakistan via Torkhum, he said, adding foundation stone of a 500kV HVAC grid station has already been laid at Nowshera.

Wapda officials said about eighty percent work on multi faceted Kurram Tangi dam Project's Stage-I, being constructed in North Waziristan tribal district was completed and the remaining work to be completed by end of this year. On March 3, 2017, former Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had laid the foundation stone of Kurram Tangi dam in North Waziristan. Kurram Tangi dam was being implemented in two stages by Wapda and construction work at weir (dam) has been completed while Spira Ragha and Sphira Tala canals were almost built under stage-I. On completion, Kurram Tangi dam with a total capacity of 83.4 MW, would help control floodwater and irrigate barren 35,000-acre land besides storing 1.2MAF water. The PC-I of Shakotai dam in South Waziristan has been approved and would be completed with an estimated cost of Rs2.1 billion in three years besides a potential to irrigate 5,757 acre land in the tribal district.

## PESCO notifies power suspension

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Peshawar Electricity Supply Company (PESCO) on Thursday notified power suspension from various grids of the province on January 27 due to unavoidable maintenance work.

Power supply would remain suspended from 220 KV Shahi Bagh Grid Station from 8 AM to 4 PM, resultantly load managements would be carried out on 132 KV Shabqadar, Tangi, Rajjar, Charssada and 66 KV Ghallani and Lakkari grids connected to 11 KV feeders.

## Smuggler convicted

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Child Protection Court Peshawar has convicted smuggler for 14 years of imprisonment along with Rs5 lakh fine, on Thursday.

Special Prosecutor Irfanur-Rehman argued that accused Umar Farooq was arrested by Anti-Narcotics-4 while smuggling 15 kilograms heroin and registered FIR on 21st June 2021. He added that Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) has submitted challan following completion of investigation. Child Protection Court Peshawar has convicted the culprit for 14 years imprisonment along with Rs5 lakh fine on the basis of evidences and witness produced before court.



PESHAWAR: Journalists holding a protest demo for acceptance of their rights. - F.P. photo





## In brief

### Confiscated drugs torched

GWADAR (PPI): Customs Gwadar set ablaze confiscated drugs worth millions of rupees at a function at Nalibut area of Pasi in district Gwadar of Balochistan province on Thursday to mark the Customs Day. In order to mark the Customs Day, confiscated drugs amounting to million of rupees were set ablaze at a function held at Nalibut area of Pasi in district Gwadar. On the occasion, Collector Customs, Raza Dashti, Additional Collector, Shoukat Hayat, Deputy Collector, Wahab Sagheer, Deputy Collector, Muhammad Bakht, Judicial Magistrate, Gwadar, Muhammad Murad, Lt. Hassan Cheema of Pakistan Navy Gwadar, Additional Deputy Commissioner, Gwadar, Tariq Saleem, Assistant Protection Officer, Pakistan Coast Guard, Majid Mubarak and others were also present.

### Admn reviews supply of flour

TANK: Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Tanvir Khan visited a flour mill on Thursday to review the supply process of subsidized flour to people through designated points. Accompanied by Additional Assistant Commissioner Jamshed Alam Khan, he checked the quality of wheat and flour besides taking stock of cleanliness conditions on the premises. He also checked details of flour supplies through designated points and directed that it should be ensured that the masses get the commodity at a subsidized rate. The team said that district administration was committed to extending relief to the masses and it was warned that stern action would be taken against those found violating relevant laws.

### Fire safety training held

BANNU: Rescue 1122 Training Wing on Thursday arranged a training workshop in Bannu Woolen Mills (BWM) to apprise workers about first aid and life saving procedures during fire incidents. The training was conducted by District Emergency Officer, Muhammad Fahim who informed workers about life saving first aid procedures and techniques to reduce losses during fire eruption. He told that on the spot treatment of fire affected patient before shifting to hospital is vital to save life besides following proper steps to prevent wound contamination. He also told staff about measures needed to prevent fire eruption. Administration of Bannu Woolen Mills appreciated efforts of Rescue 1122 to train workers about life saving procedures and also suggested regular holding of these kinds of trainings.

### Motorcycle lifter arrested

WAH CANTT (INP): The Wah Cantonment police on Thursday arrested a motorcycle lifter and recovered four stolen motorcycles from his possession. Talking to newsmen, Sub-divisional Police Officer Taxila circle DSP Mian Afzaal Shah told newsmen that acting on tip-off, police apprehend Kamran who during interrogation has confessed to lifting four motorcycles from different parts of the city.

### 53 gamblers held

B A H A W A L P U R (INP): The district police have arrested 53 gamblers and recovered cash from their possession during raids in different areas of the district.

# Anti-India demos held in AJK on Indian Republic Day

MUZAFFARABAD (INP): On the appeal of All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC), protest demonstrations were held in different areas of Azad Jammu and Kashmir, today, to mark the Indian Republic Day as Black Day. The protest demonstrations were organized by Pasban-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir and Jammu and Kashmir Students and Youth Forum.

Pasban-e-Hurriyat Jammu and Kashmir held a protest demonstration at Burhan Wani Shaheed Chowk in Muzaffarabad in which a large number of people participated. The protesters were holding black flags and were shouting slogans against the Indian troops, Indian fascist Prime Minister Narendra Modi and the Government of India. They were also raising high-pitched slogans in favour of freedom and against Indian state terrorism in IIOJK.

Chairman of Pasban-e-Hurriyat Uzair Ahmad Ghazali, Leader of Opposition in Azad Kashmir Legislative Assembly Chaudhry Latif

Akbar, AJK government ministers Khawaja Farooq Ahmed, Chaudhry Abdul Rasheed, Parliamentary Secretary Pir Mazhar Shah, Hurriyat leaders Chaudhry Shaheen Iqbal, Abdul Majeed Mir, Mushtaq-ul-Islam, Directors of Liberation Commission Raja Aslam Khan, Raja Sajjad Latif Khan, Shaikat Javed Mir, Javed Ahmed Mughal, Rehabilitation Commissioner Chaudhry Mukhtar, Abdul Raziq Khan, refugee leaders Chaudhry Muhammad Mushtaq, Usman Ali Hashim, Muhammad Irshad Butt, Raja Sajeed Khan, Riaz Ahmed Awan and others led the demonstration.

The speakers on the occasion said the Kashmiri people have given a strong message to the world by observing January 26 as Black Day against the illegal military occupation of their homeland by India. The brutal military occupation completely negates India's claims of being a democratic country, they added.

They said that India's denial of the right to self-determination to the people

of Kashmir and the worst war crimes committed in IIOJK badly exposed its false claims of being a democratic country. The speakers said India's so-called Republic Day brings the worst sufferings to the people of the occupied territory, adding the Kashmiris are observing January 26 as Black Day to expose India's true face to the world. India has no right to celebrate the Republic Day and to be called a country because it has illegally occupied the territory of Jammu and Kashmir with its military power, they maintained.

The Jammu and Kashmir Students and Youth Forum also organized protest demonstrations in Muzaffarabad and other areas of AJK. The participants of these events raised slogans against Indian brutalities in IIOJK and in favour of freedom. Jammu and Kashmir Pir Panjal Freedom Movement AJK chapter also organized anti-India demonstrations and rallies in Kotly and other areas of Azad Kashmir to mark the Indian Republic Day as Black Day.

## Woman injured in hand grenade attack at house

### F.P. Report

PARACHINAR: Unknown culprits attacked residence of Gul Hussain with hand grenade in which one woman critically injured while it is third similar ambush in a row on the public.

According to sources, the house of Kachkana named Gul Hussain in the nearby village of Parachinar has also been hit by a hand grenade. As a result of the hand grenade attack, a woman inside the house has also been injured and has been shifted to DHQ Hospital for first aid. It should be noted that this is the third incident of this kind that has taken place recently, however, no one was injured in the first two incidents.

The first attack was carried out in the dark of night on the house of a local journalist Muhammad Ali, while the second grenade attack was targeted at the residence of Haji Tahir Hussain, the uncle of Minister for Overseas Sajid Hussain Tori, in the dark of night. One thing or another, the same method of incident is also telling a lot and the evidence found at the crime scene. Also, keep pointing out many questions Search operations are also being conducted in the area regarding such hidden unknown suspects.

The criminal elements have started using modern methods to carry out the crime cases very carefully. It may be that like other districts, the tribal police force will also have to provide modern investigation, powers and investigation opportunities, because the police force has been trained regularly, but they have not been provided with such facilities so far.

The most basic needs of the police force, how long will the cases against unknown persons have to be closed in every department for all types of cases, which cases should be pursued so that it is useful to punish an accused in the right direction or else. As always, victims will be abused by good people in society, justice is difficult to deliver and the police department is also abused will be done. The police force has registered the incident report and investigation is continued in this regard.



QUETTA: Vendors sitting around burning woods to warm themselves during cold weather.

## Rs500m approved for primary-college books

QUETTA (PPI): Farah Azeem Shah, the spokesperson for provincial government, said Thursday that Chief Minister Balochistan, Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo was pursuing education friendly policies, adding that approval for releasing funds amounting to Rs500 million for publication of syllabus-books from primary to college level and its free of cost distribution during the fiscal year 2023 had been granted despite meagre resources

and financial constraints. In a statement, she said that in view of the educational priorities in the province, practical measures were being adopted. She stated that issuing permanent orders in respect of 1493 teachers serving under Global Partnership for Education (GPE) was the vivid example in that regard.

Shah said problems of the universities had been addressed on priority basis, adding that in order to bring improvement in

the educational sector, laptops had been distributed so as to promote research culture in the province.

Shah said that education plays a significant role for reformation and uplifting any society, adding that keeping in view the significance and importance of education, the incumbent provincial government would keep taking steps to ensure providing facilities to the teachers and students at any cost.

## Langove seeks report on ASF employee's death

QUETTA (PPI): Minister for Home, Tribal Affairs and PDMA, Mir Ziarullah Langove while condemning the death of an employee of Airport Security Force (ASF) in an armed attack at Samungli Road area of Quetta, has sought a report of the incident from the Inspector General of Police,

Balochistan and concerned authorities, according to a statement issued here on Thursday.

Expressing grave concern over the increasing acts of terrorism, he directed the authorities to take strict action against perpetrators of the crime. He said that security forces had taken concrete action

against terrorists and rendered great sacrifices, adding that the blood of the martyrs would not go in vain. Expressing condolence over the incident, he prayed that may Almighty Allah rest the departed soul internal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear the loss with equanimity.



QUETTA: Chief Custom Collector Abdul Qadir Memon giving best performance certificate to a participant during International Custom Day ceremony.

## Journalists hold protest against registration of FIR

### F.P. Report

MARDAN: Members of Mardan Press Club here on Thursday held protest demonstration against the registration of serious charges against Director News of a private news channel and demanded of the government to squash those charges and FIRs against him.

Led by president of Mardan press club Bakht Muhammad Yousafzai and general secretary Shahab Akbar, the Mardan based journalists condemned and criticize the government for leveling serious charges against Imad Yousaf-director news of a private news channel.

The protesting journalists raised voices in favour of free journalism, besides, were chanting slogans against the government for taking illegal actions against the journalist's community.

Prominent among the journalists who address on the occasion, urged the quarters concerned to stop registration of baseless allegations and charges against journalists. They also asked the government to provide security to journalists and did not create any hurdles in way of free journalism. They pressed the government to make accountable to the alleged killers of slain journalist Arshad Sharif.

**Farmers' workshop held:** Pakistan Tobacco Board arranged farmer's workshop at Pakistan Tobacco Company Shergarh area of Mardan depot on production technology, on Thursday.

Director Research and Development (R&D) Officers of Pakistan Tobacco Board and company's representatives apprised the farmers of different aspects of improving production and quality of tobacco.

The farmers were trained on seed bed management, land preparation, transplantation and best cultural practices, hybrids, fertilizers, disease and pest management along with leaf picking and curing.

## Proactive policing against crimes directed

### F.P. Report

KOHAT: District Police Officer (DPO) Kohat Abdur Rauf Qaisrani directed to ensure proactive and community policing for elimination of crimes along with outlawed from the society for sustainable peace, on Thursday.

This he said while chairing meeting regarding elimination of crimes in Deputy Superintendent of Police (SP) operations Bilal Ahmad, Sub-DPOs, Station House Officers and Investigation Officers were present. DPO ordered the participants to ensure immediate relief to deprived segments of society.

DPO Kohat Abdur Rauf Qaisrani ordered indiscriminate actions against culprits including land grabbers, drug-dealers and proclaimed offenders. He added to establish human intelligence network for elimination of crimes and criminals from the society for achieving sustainable peace.

## Winter plantation drive kicked off in Dir

### F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Zubair Khan Niazi formally kicked off the winter plantation drive by planting a deodar tree during a simple function held at Balambat here the other day. The additional deputy commissioner finance Jan Muhammad, divisional forest officer Shah Khalid, assistant director local government and rural development Nizam Durrani and other officials were also present.

Talking to local journalists after the inauguration the DC said that about 1.2 million saplings would be distributed among local farmers free of cost. He said the sub divisional forest offices at Timergara, Chakdara and Samarbagh would provide saplings to the farmers to be planted this winter. The DC said

that any farmer by filling a form and providing his CNIC copy could get those saplings from their respective forest offices. The DC directed the forest officers to identify suitable sites after a ground survey for the winter plantation drive in the district. He said that schools, colleges, sports grounds, public parks, hospitals, banks of water channels and community lands should be selected for the plantation. He asked the public to fully cooperate with the forest staff to make the drive a success.

Also in the day the additional deputy commissioner Abdul Wali Khan directed the Pesco authorities to immediately shift the electricity poles and transmission line from the schools' buildings. He gave the direction during a meeting of the education steering committee held at Balambat. The district

monitoring officer education Tariq Jamal briefed the participants about the performance and needs of the department. The ADC also directed the education officers to deduct salaries from the habitual absent staff of the education department. The concerned authorities were directed to start rehabilitation work on the schools damaged by floods.

He said the district education officers male and female should provide the list of those schools to the executive engineer building so that further measures could be taken. The ADC said the government Maktab school which had adequate land for construction should be upgraded to primary level. He said the schools' administration should complete the repair work in its respective institutions during the current winter vacations.

## Police arrests 7 alleged culprits including 2 POs

### F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Police have arrested scores of criminals and drug traffickers during a special crackdown against anti-social elements and miscreants in parts of Lakki Marwat district on Thursday.

An official said that district police officer Ziauddin Ahmed formed different police parties and tasked them to apprehend wanted men and outlaws in the limits of their respective police stations.

"A party of Ghaznikhel

police station raided a suspected hideout in Tajazai area and captured a PO Akhtar Zaman", maintained the official, adding that the cops also seized a pistol and bullets from the arrested man and shifted him to the police station. He said that a proclaimed offender Adnan who had been wanted by Naurang police in a double murder case was tasked during a raid in the Nar Muhammad Ghaznikhel area.

The official said that a party of Tajori police station

also arrested a hardened criminal and three suspects during a raid and seized an AK 47 assault rifle and ammunition from them.

The official claimed that police also held four drug traffickers including Safwan, Shakoor, Rehmatullah and Aurangzeb and recovered 1830 grams hashish, 550 grams heroin and small quantity of ice drug from them. He said that separate cases were registered against the drug peddlers in concerned police stations.

## Public demands provision of flour apolitically

### F.P. Report

BUNER: The public demanded non-stop provision of subsidized flour along with abolishment of quota on political basis and urged for good governance because people facing humiliation in the government's offices, on Thursday.

These demands were made during 'Kuli Katcheri' from Deputy Commissioner Shahid Ali Khan while DPO Imran Khan ADC Akhtar Nawaz Khan AC Mehri Ali Shah AAC Faisal Khan Tahsildar Ajmal Khan TMO Amin Khan and heads of working depart-

ments elders of the area lawyers of district bar and public largely attended.

The elders namely Arifullah Mian Bakht Wali Hafiz Ziaur Rehman Jamshed Khan Irfan Ali Afzal Khan Taj Mohammad Khan Sher Alam Khan Advocates Tariq Nazir Irshad Khan Mushtaq Khan and others represented public. The elders blamed tautism was in progress and the public servants come late and go early besides land owners' names wrong spelling in computerization record.

They complained Atta shortage self-made price rates, dilapidated conditions of newly constructed

roads marble over loading trucks short of teaching staff for GGDC Hashimiar load shedding and alleged violation of merit in assistant posts in DC office on the directions of ex MPs.

The elders were eager to find solution to these problems till next Khuli Kacheri so as to satisfy them. The DC while responding claimed that elders raised public issues were listed and its early solution would be found out so as to share feedback within a month adding public must highlight issues and assured that administration would address them in larger public interests as soon as possible.

## Police rescued passengers following snowfall

### F.P. Report

CHITRAL: Police rescued hundreds of vehicles going in Lower Chitral district in extreme rain and snowfall at Lowari to avoid any mishap due to weather calamity.

On the instructions of District Police Officer (DPO) Lower Chitral Nasir Mehmood, SDPO Darosh Iqbal Karim along with heavy police presence helped in moving the vehicles affected by heavy snowfall between Lowari Tunnel and Mirkhani towards Darosh. Several affected passengers told



local media over the phone that the police also helped these passengers get food and other facilities to resume their journey. Appreciating the spirit of the policemen, he said that they did not care for their lives and helped the vehicles stuck in Lowari to reach safe places by pushing

them. Meanwhile, all the valleys of Upper and Lower Chitral districts are receiving reports of continuous rain and snowfall for the last 36 hours and Mastuj, Yarkhun, Laspur, Ower, Karimabad, Lotkoh, Sheshikoh and Sirsa received one and a half to two feet of snow. Motor vehicle traffic has been suspended in many valleys including Trich, Brughal, Khot. Both the districts of Chitral have been plunged into darkness due to disconnection from National Grid at Lowari Top of Chitral.





## Colombia's once most-wanted drug lord pleads guilty

NEW YORK (AP): A Colombian man who was once one of the world's most-wanted drug lords pleaded guilty to US smuggling charges, admitting that he led a cartel and paramilitary group that trafficked in cocaine and deadly violence.

"Tons of cocaine were moved with my permission or at my direction," Dairo Antonio Úsuga, better known as Otoniel, told a Brooklyn federal court. "There was a lot of violence with the guerillas and the criminal gangs," he added, and acknowledged that "in military work, homicides were committed." Úsuga, 51, will face at least 20 years in prison when sentenced, prosecutors said. But the US government agreed not to seek a life sentence in order to secure his extradition from Colombia last year, according to US District Judge Dora Irizarry.

As part of his plea deal, he agreed to forfeit \$216 million. Úsuga presided over the Gulf Clan, which terrorized much of northern Colombia to control major cocaine-smuggling routes. US authorities have called him one of the most dangerous drug traffickers on the planet, and he was Colombia's most-wanted kingpin. "With today's guilty plea, the bloody reign of the most violent and significant Colombian narcotics trafficker since Pablo Escobar is over," Brooklyn US Attorney Breon Peace said in a statement. Defense lawyer Paul

Nalven said Úsuga was "very remorseful" and portrayed him as "a child of the cycle of violence" that has wracked Colombia throughout his life. Úsuga, who has a fourth-grade education, was dragged into guerrilla warfare at age 16, the attorney said. After his arrest, Úsuga asked his cartel to stop attacking police, and he's hoping something fruitful comes of the six-month cease-fire that recently took effect between President Gustavo Petro's administration and five armed groups, including the Gulf Clan, in hopes of fostering a lasting peace. "He'd like to see a better Colombia," Nalven said.

The Gulf Clan, also known as the Gaitanist Self Defense Forces of Colombia, has thousands of military-garbed members who battle rival gangs, paramilitary groups, and Colombian authorities in order to keep a bloody hold on its turf near the Panama border, prosecutors said. Cocaine smuggling pays for it all — including, Úsuga admitted, through "taxes" that the group has charged on any cocaine produced, stored or transported through its territory. Úsuga ordered the killing and torture of perceived enemies, offered bounties for slaying police and soldiers, and directed campaigns to go after them with military-grade weapons, according to prosecutors. He flexed his power by declaring a "strike" that shut down businesses and

forced people to stay home — on pain of death — for days in the cartel's turf, prosecutors said.

Úsuga was named in a series of US indictments going back to 2009. The US Drug Enforcement Administration offered a \$5 million reward for information leading to his arrest, and the Colombian government offered \$800,000. Over the years, Colombian authorities arrested or killed hundreds of cartel members, deployed over 1,000 police officers to hunt for the kingpin and publicized the US reward by dropping flyers out of helicopters.

But Úsuga eluded capture until 2021 through a combination of corruption, connections to both left- and right-wing combatants in his country's internal conflict — he'd been part of groups on both sides — and living off the grid in the countryside. He reportedly used a different safe house every night. When he was apprehended, former Colombian President Iván Duque said Úsuga was "not only the most dangerous drug trafficker in the world, but he is murderer of social leaders, abuser of boys, girls and adolescents, a murderer of policemen."

Úsuga was extradited to the US this past May. He pleaded guilty to leading a continuing criminal enterprise and various drug trafficking charges that involve nearly 97,000 kg (107 tons) of cocaine that was ultimately bound for the US.

## COVID infections exceeded 7m daily: China

HONG KONG (Reuters): China's daily new COVID-19 infections hit a peak of more than 7 million per day around Dec. 22, while deaths reached a daily peak of more than 4,000 on Jan. 4, the country's Centre for Disease Control and Prevention said.

The figures, published on the centre's website, come after a prominent government scientist said over the weekend that 80% of China's 1.4 billion population have already been infected, making the possibility of a big COVID-19 rebound over the next two or three months remote. "Around December 22, 2022, the number of infected people and the number of fever outpatient consultations reached a peak," it said with the number of new infections "exceeding 7 million per day and the number of daily fever outpatient consultations peaking at 2.867 million".

China has passed the peak of COVID patients in fever clinics, emergency rooms and with critical conditions, a National Health Commission official said last week. Nearly 60,000 people with COVID had died in hospital as of Jan. 12, roughly a month after China abruptly dismantled its strict zero-COVID policy, according to government data.

But some experts said that figure probably vastly undercounts the full impact, as it excludes those who die at home and because many doctors have said they are discouraged from citing COVID as a cause of death.

## Palestinian workers strike

RAMALLAH (Reuters): Schools, clinics and some municipal services in the West Bank were closed as workers went on strike for a third day amid an escalating funding squeeze on the United Nations agency that pays their wages. Around 3,700 workers in the West Bank joined the strike, demanding an across-the-board pay increase of 200 Jordanian dinars (\$281.81) a month from the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA).

"The strike will go on until UNRWA accepts our demands," said Jamal Abdullah, head of the union representing workers paid by the agency in the West Bank. UNRWA appealed for \$1.6 billion in funding for schools, health-care and aid in Gaza, the West Bank, Jordan, Syria and Lebanon, where most Palestinian refugees or their descendants from various Arab-Israeli conflicts live.

With donations to the agency hit by crises across the world, compounded by inflation and supply chain disruptions, there was no immediate prospect of relief. "All indications point out that it is going to be a difficult year," said Adnan Abu Hasna, spokesman of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) in Gaza City. With health clinics closed, some 50,000 school students shut out of their classrooms, and rubbish piled up in the streets, the strike added to the daily struggle faced by people in deprived areas of the West Bank.

"Cleaners aren't working, so garbage and dirt are piling up next to houses and stores," said Hussein Zaid, a resident of Jalazone camp outside Ramallah, where UNRWA supports a health centre and two schools. "If you go into the camp, you will not be able to pass because of the dirt and garbage." In Gaza, the blockaded southern coastal strip run by the Islamist movement Hamas, there was only one brief stoppage this week but pressure mounted for humanitarian supplies that many refugees depend on for food.

Nahed Abu Amira, 63, who said his 24-member family depended entirely on UNRWA aid to survive, said cooking oil and flour allocations in the aid packages they received had become smaller in recent months as food prices have surged globally. "I am afraid UNRWA may suspend the food aid; if that happens our households would be ruined, and we won't be able to eat or drink," he said.

## Ukraine forces pull back from Donbas town after onslaught

KYIV (AP): Ukrainian forces have conducted an organized retreat from a town in the eastern region of the Donbas, an official said, in what is a rare but modest battlefield triumph for the Kremlin after a series of setbacks in its invasion that began almost 11 months ago. The Ukrainian army retreated from the salt-mining town of Soledar to "preserve the lives of the personnel," Serhii Cherevatyi, a spokesperson for Ukraine's forces in the east, told The Associated Press.

The soldiers pulled back to previously prepared defensive positions, he said. Moscow has portrayed the battle for Soledar, which lies near the city of Bakhmut, as key to capturing the entire Donbas. The accomplishment takes the Russian forces a step closer to Bakhmut, but military analysts say capturing Soledar is more symbolic than strategic.

Ukraine's military, which has held out in Soledar against a months-long onslaught of superior Russian forces, has said its fierce defense of the eastern stronghold helped tie up Russian forces. Russia claimed almost two weeks ago that it had taken Soledar, but Ukraine denied it. Many of Russia's troops around Soledar belong to the private Russian military contractor Wagner Group, and the fighting reportedly has been bloody.

Since its invasion of Ukraine, Moscow has prioritized taking full control of the Donbas — a region made up of the Donetsk and Luhansk provinces, where it has backed a separatist insurgency since 2014. Russia has seized most of Luhansk, but about half of Donetsk remains under Ukraine's control. Taking control of the town would potentially allow Russian forces to cut supply lines to Ukrainian forces in Bakhmut, though the strength of Ukraine's new defensive positions was not known. The Institute for the Study of War, a think tank in Washington, said earlier this month that the fall of Soledar wouldn't mark "an operational-



ly significant development and is unlikely to presage an imminent Russian encirclement of Bakhmut."

The institute said Russian information operations have "overexaggerated the importance of Soledar," which is a small settlement. It also argued that the long and difficult battle has contributed to the exhaustion of Russian forces. Perhaps more worrying for Moscow, Western military help for Ukraine is now being stepped up with the delivery of tanks. Elsewhere, Russian forces have continued to pummel Ukrainian areas, especially in the south and east.

Russian strikes wounded 10 civilians in the eastern Donetsk province, Pavlo Kyrylenko, the provincial governor, said. Five were wounded when Russian shells slammed into apartment blocks, he said. The General Staff of the Armed Forces of Ukraine said that over the previous 24 hours Russian forces had launched four missile strikes, 26 airstrikes and more than 100 attacks from rocket salvo systems.

Russian forces are concentrating their efforts on establishing control over Donetsk province, conducting offensive operations around the embattled cities of Bakhmut, Lyman and Avdiivka, and the village of Novopavlivka, according to spokesperson Oleksandr Shupun. In addition to Donetsk, the Russian attacks struck settlements in the country's northeastern Kharkiv and Sumy, northern Chernihiv, easternmost Luhansk, southeastern Zaporizhzhia, and southern Kherson provinces.

Meanwhile, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, the Ukraine president who has gone from professional comedian to an internationally recognized wartime leader, turned 45. His wife, first lady Olena Zelenska, said that though he is the same person as when they met at 17, "Something has changed: You smile much less now." "I wish you to have more reasons for smiling. And you know what it takes. We all do," she wrote in a tweet.

## EU wants to send more migrants away

STOCKHOLM (Reuters): European Union ministers on Thursday sought ways to curb irregular immigration and send more people away as arrivals rose from pandemic lows, reviving controversial ideas for border fences and asylum centres outside of Europe. EU border agency Frontex reported some 330,000 unauthorised arrivals last year, the highest since 2016, with a sharp increase on the Western Balkans route.

"We have a huge increase of irregular arrivals of migrants," Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva Johansson said at talks among the 27 EU migration ministers. "We have a very low return rate and I can see we can make significant progress here." Denmark, the Netherlands and Latvia were among those to call for more pressure through visas and development aid towards the roughly 20 countries - including Iraq and Senegal - that the EU deems fail to cooperate on taking back their nationals who have no right to stay in Europe.

Only about a fifth of such people were sent back last year, with insufficient

resources and coordination on the EU side being another hurdle, according to the bloc's executive. The ministerial talks come ahead of a Feb. 9-10 summit of EU leaders - the highest political body in the bloc - who are also due to seek more returns, according to a draft of their joint statement seen by Reuters. Immigration is a highly politically sensitive topic in the bloc, where member countries are bitterly divided over how to share the task of caring for those who win asylum in Europe.

The topic has become toxic since more than a million people crossed the Mediterranean in 2015 in chaotic and deadly scenes that caught the bloc off guard, overwhelmed its reception and security capacities and fanned anti-immigration sentiment. With people on the move again following the global COVID pandemic, the debate is returning to the fore, as are some proposals dismissed in the past as inadmissible. Denmark has been in talks with Rwanda to handle asylum applicants in East Africa, while others in the EU have sought funds for a border fence between EU member

Bulgaria and Turkey - both ideas so far seen as taboo.

"We are still working to make that happen, preferably with other European countries but, as a last resort, we'll do it only in cooperation between Denmark and, for example Rwanda," Immigration Minister Kaare Dybvad said on Thursday. Dutch minister Eric van der Burg said he was open to EU financing for border barriers.

Johansson sought to strike the idea down, saying: "If we spend money on walls and fences, there will be no money for other things." While some EU countries protest against irregular immigration from the Middle East and North Africa, often comprising people who are Muslim, Germany is seeking to open its job market to much-needed workers from outside the bloc.

"We want to conclude migration agreements with countries, particularly with North African countries, that would allow a legal route to Germany but would also include functioning returns," Interior Minister Nancy Faeser said in Stockholm.

## Beirut port blast justice postponed

BEIRUT (Reuters): Lebanon's top public prosecutor charged the judge investigating the Beirut port blast and ordered the release of those detained in connection with the explosion, derailing an attempt to resume the probe into the devastating event.

The moves by Ghassan Oweidat signal escalating opposition by Lebanon's ruling establishment to efforts by Judge Tarek Bitar to reopen the probe into the Aug. 4, 2020, blast that killed more than 220 people. Bitar told Reuters that Oweidat "had no right" to file the charge or release detainees because Oweidat himself was charged over the explosion. A judicial source said Bitar had been charged with mishandling the probe.

"I will continue my probe until I issue an indictment," he said. Oweidat told Reuters he had summoned Bitar for questioning but did not say whether he had charged him. Oweidat also issued a travel ban against Bitar and a decision saying the judge did not have the authority to resume his investigation. Both documents were seen by Reuters. A parliamentarian from powerful armed group Hezbollah said Oweidat's decisions were "a step in the

right direction." Hezbollah has campaigned against Bitar as he sought to question its allies in connection with the probe. Its head Hassan Nasrallah said in 2021 that Bitar should be removed. In 2022, the probe was suspended following high-level political interference and legal complaints against the judge.

Bitar unexpectedly resumed his investigation into the explosion based on a legal opinion, and charged top current and former officials - including Oweidat. Oweidat had earlier recused himself from any involvement in the blast probe as Bitar had issued an arrest warrant for his brother-in-law, former public works minister Ghazi Zeaiter. Western nations and the United Nations have called for accountability over the blast.

US State Department spokesperson Ned Price reiterated a call for a "swift and transparent" investigation. "The victims of this August 2020 explosion deserve justice and we believe those responsible must be held to account," Price said at a news briefing. Developments set up a tug-of-war in Lebanon's judiciary, which is prone to political influence with many

appointments determined by politicians.

"Instead of me appearing before him, he'll be appearing before me," Oweidat told Reuters by text message. Bitar said he had been informed of Oweidat's charges verbally and, without a written summons, would not attend an interrogation session on Thursday. "Oweidat wants to see me? I want to see him too," he shot back in comments to Reuters.

The explosion, one of the largest non-nuclear blasts on record, was caused by hundreds of tonnes of ammonium nitrate unloaded at the port in 2013. To many Lebanese, the disaster symbolised the wider corruption and mismanagement of a ruling elite that had also steered Lebanon into a devastating financial collapse. In turn, they see in Bitar a flicker of hope that justice may one day be served in a country where impunity has long been the norm.

He met with French investigators visiting Beirut last week as part of a French probe into the explosion, whose victims included two French nationals. He was unable to share documents with them at the time because the investigation was frozen.

## \$4.3 billion required for Yemen: UN

CAIRO (AP): The United Nations said it needs \$4.3 billion to fund its humanitarian activities in war-torn Yemen this year. The UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs said the funds are required to help 17.3 million most vulnerable people in Yemen.

The agency said it plans to deliver "urgent life-saving" assistance to 14 million people in 2023. In total, 21.6 million — two thirds of the country's population — would need humanitarian assistance and protection services this year, down from 23.4 million people in 2022, OCHA estimated. Last year, the UN humanitarian plan cost \$4.27 billion to assist 17.9 million people. Yemen has been convulsed by civil war since 2014 when Iran-backed Houthi rebels seized the capital of Sanaa, forcing the internationally recognized government to flee to the south, then to Saudi Arabia. A Saudi-led coalition entered the war in March 2015 to try to restore the government to power.

## Ex-VP to become new Taiwan premier

TAIPEI (Reuters): Former vice president Chen Chien-jen will be Taiwan's new premier, the presidential office said, as part of a cabinet reshuffle following heavy losses for the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) at local elections last year. Premier Su Tseng-chang submitted his resignation last week along with that of his cabinet ahead of the widely expected government reorganisation.

Su's move followed the DPP's trouncing at local polls in November, and comes as Taiwan gears up for presidential and parliamentary elections in early 2024. President Tsai Ing-wen is expected to hold a news conference on Friday morning to formally make the announcement, her office said in a short statement, but without giving details of which other positions would get new ministers. Chen, 71, is a devout Catholic who served as vice president during Tsai's first term in office, from 2016-2020, and Taiwanese media had named him as the person most likely to be the new premier. He will have to oversee several tricky issues, including navigating the export-oriented island's slowing economy and plans to extend military conscription to one year in the face of a rising military threat from China, though the DPP has a large majority in parliament meaning its proposals do get passed.

## Africa needs to learn to feed itself, says Senegal president

DAKAR (Reuters): Africa must produce more food instead of relying on imports and aid, Senegalese President Macky Sall told leaders gathered in the West African nation's capital for a summit. The continent is facing its worst food crisis ever, with more than one in five Africans — a record 278 million people — facing hunger, according to United Nations estimates.

Heavy debt burdens from the COVID-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine which raised prices of fuel, grain and edible oils and diverted aid have added to long-term causes of food insecurity such as climate change and conflict, experts say. "Africa needs to learn to feed itself and contribute to feeding the world," said Sall, who is also chairman of the African Union.

"We have the potential, with around 60% of arable land here that is not exploited," he said. "It is

paradoxical that we still need to import the essentials of what we need." Over the next three days of the summit, leaders will present their national priorities on food security to development banks and other international partners including the United States, the European Union and Britain. The meeting is meant to mobilize political commitment, development partner support and private sector investment to increase food production in Africa, said the African Development Bank, which is backing the summit.

"It is time for Africa to feed Africa," said Akinwumi Adesina, President of the African Development Bank, who said African countries spend around \$70 billion annually on food imports. The bank will commit \$10 billion over the next five years to support development in food and agriculture, he said. Sall urged countries to adhere to the

2003 Maputo declaration on agriculture, which calls on African states to allocate 10% of their national budgets to agricultural development.

While Senegal allocates around 12%, some countries are yet to meet the target, he said. He also said African countries must support smallholder farmers who make up the bulk of producers on the continent. Women and youth in particular need more access to finance and land, said Sall. The United States has made food security a priority as it reasserts its presence on the continent, seeking to counter the influence of Russia and China.

The US and the African Union last month signed a strategic food security initiative at Biden's African Leaders Summit. Among other things it will help African countries access fertilizer, which is becoming scarcer and more expensive.



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## Untransparent recruitment a key issue

**A** divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) ordered Secretary along with the Director of General Health and Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to initiate actions against District Health Officer and Medical Superintendent (MS) Nowshera for illegal recruitment. According to the detail, the court was hearing a case of illegal recruitment by District Health Authorities in Nowshera while the bureaucrats argued that the government had ordered to recruit staff directly without advertisement because the province is facing a financial crisis.

The state of Pakistan has witnessed an extreme level of corruption, nepotism, and cronyism in the past years that turned each and every institution into a white elephant for the nation due to its decoys, and nonproductiveness. Over the years, Pakistani state institutions faced political interference in their operation and policy affairs as well as administrative and recruitment affairs by the ruling elite that not only marred their efficiency but also led to their institutional depletion and malfunctioning.

According to critics, the cancer of corruption and cronyism starts from the top and travels downward and it exists in all civilian and military institutions and no department has an exemption from it. Similarly, all institutions claim to have some kind of departmental regressive monitoring and accountability mechanisms, however, all those are spongy measures that only work for the lower class and have no reach to the top brass. Thus, misuse of authority, no implementation of the law, and theft of government resources are common in all government departments while influential do not fear any censure, accountability, or reprimand for their condemnable actions.

In fact, there is a dire need for a fearless and independent justice system that works mechanically for the implementation of the law and empowers to prosecute each and every public office holder involve in corrupt practices, so the law, merit, and transparency can be ensured in the country, otherwise, all reformers, adjudicators, and public saviours demand strict accountability for others and special amenities for themselves and their colleagues.

## Ukraine corruption scam

**A**CCORDING to the media, several senior Ukrainian officials, including front-line governors, lost their jobs due to their alleged involvement in a corruption scandal plaguing President Volodymyr Zelenskyy's government amid the ongoing months-long war. According to the details, the immediate deputy of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, four deputy ministers including the Deputy Defense Minister, and five governors of front-line provinces had left their posts due to their complicity in the scandal.

Ukraine, a former Soviet republic and East European democracy has been battling the worst hostility of the Russian Federation over the past eleven months. Being the worst opponent and victim of Putin's hegemonic and aggressive policies, Kiyv enjoyed the status of pro-west democracy and flag-bearer of Western Civilization in the face of Russian aggression. Historically, the Russian invasion of Ukraine has been considered an attack against Western interests and a serious hazard to western democracy, while the European Union and America unleashed unbelievable economic and monetary assistance to Ukraine to compete with the common adversary. However, recent reports suggest that top Ukrainian officials had been involved in financial embezzlement, fraud, and misuse of economic assistance meant for the Ukrainian military and people residing in front-line states and facing unprecedented and brutal hostility from the Russian Federation. As said, there had been numerous cases of bribes for the allocation of government contracts, and corruption in funds for the provision of utilities including heating, drinking water, and electricity that were damaged through Russian missile strikes as well as theft of food supplies for Ukrainian troops on the battlefield.

In fact, the revelation of corruption stories and money-making was a bit strange and unbelievable amid a months-long war in Ukraine with a staunch enemy when the entire nation was grappled with casualties and grief, and destruction ruining everywhere across the country. Historically, Ukraine had been a hub for its institutional corruption over the past decades while Transparency International (TI), in its worldwide report on corruption, ranked Ukraine 136th out of 180 Countries in the world. Interestingly, President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and his team had been vocal campaigners against corruption and establishment and received huge mandates during the 2019 general election due to their anti-graft agenda. However, after coming to power several close aides of the populist leader left their core point of the electoral manifesto and turned to malpractices, bribes, and corruption. The recent corruption scandal has caused serious challenges for the Zelenskyy regime at the global level, not for its credibility and transparent use of foreign aid but also because the corruption scandal badly tarnished the public perception of the ruling party at the domestic level.

Currently, several countries, including the United States, the UK, and Germany had demanded more accountability for foreign aid, and a reprimand of involved officials because those nations have channeled billions of dollars in assistance to Kiyv while Zelenskyy's regime has only taken some cosmetic steps including taking resignations from its officials and removing their party memberships and no criminal proceedings had been started against the culprits so far.

Apparently, criticism of opponents, idealist sloganeering, and preaching of daydreams had always been easy jobs for popular leaders across the world. However, implementing philosophies on the ground, prosecuting corrupt buddies practically, and refusing a free glass of whisky is a bit difficult. Earlier, multiple wrongdoings of Zelenskyy's regime have been covered up in the war, now several government leaders have committed treason amid the war. Thus, the true nationalism of the revolutionary leader would be evident in his legacy in this regard.

### Quote of the day

*The goal of the future is full unemployment, so we can play. That's why we have to destroy the present politico-economic system.*

— Arthur Clarke, British Sci-Fi writer.

# Why not try to create a common currency for the BRICS countries?

Petr Akopov

**T**HE Americans offered to send Russian military equipment in service with the Colombian army to Ukraine, President Gustavo Petro confirmed in Buenos Aires at the summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC):

"We do not take sides. We are on the side of peace. Therefore, not a single unit of Russian equipment, in whatever condition it may be on our territory, will be used in this conflict. <...> Latin America, instead of placing bets Which bloc will remain - NATO or Russia, must demand peace."

In world geopolitics, Latin America is remembered last of all, including in the era of global transformation of everything and everything. Of all the regions of the world, it turns out to be the most unimportant - it cannot be compared not only with Europe, the Middle East, Southeast Asia, India or China, but even with Africa, for which there is a fierce struggle of all key players. And Latin America is some kind of outsider of no particular interest to

anyone, which does not really affect anything: it seems to be no longer the "backyard" of the United States, but a huge number of internal problems in each of the countries of the region do not allow them to cooperate and become a full-fledged player in the world arena. But a multipolar world is already being built - and both the largest world powers and regional associations (not only the EU, but also such as ASEAN) are participating in this. Moreover, the role of the latter will only increase - and latecomers run the risk of remaining the object of manipulation.

At the same time, we are talking about a considerable part of humanity: Latin America is two-thirds of a billion people (comparable to Europe), living in 34 states. An entire continent, except for the USA and Canada. It is clear that the United States has historically considered it their own, and now their power - financial, economic, military and ideological - greatly exceeds the combined capabilities of all Latin Americans. But the Latin Americans do not want to integrate around and under

the United States, because in this case they will not even be a junior partner, but simply a servant. It is obvious that the United States already has a huge impact on Latin America: the economy of the same Mexico-one of the two largest countries in the region - is almost completely tied to the States. But this does not negate the desire of the Latin American states to build their own integration project, based on their own strength, and not on dependence on the Americans. This moment in history offers Latin Americans a unique opportunity to begin real integration. Not because the attention of the States is diverted to the European and Pacific areas, but because right now the rules of the future world order are being formed.

Therefore, it is not surprising that, although Joe Biden was invited to the SELAC forum as a guest (but he did not come), Chinese leader Xi Jinping addressed the summit participants (albeit not in person, but with a video message), declaring full sup-

port for the integration processes in SELAC. China has long been the most important trading partner for many countries in the region, and the volume of loans is growing every year. But, in addition to American opposition, the Chinese are hindered by internal instability in the countries of the region and their dependence on international (that is, Western) financial institutions. That is why the idea of creating a common currency (sura - "south" in Spanish), expressed by the President of Brazil who returned to powerLula, is not only of regional importance. And Lula himself said this:

"If everything depended on me, we would always trade with other countries in national currencies so as not to depend on the dollar. Why not try to create a common currency for the MERCOSUR countries or for the BRICS countries?"

Although MERCOSUR brings together only four countries in the region - although among them the two largest countries in South America (Brazil and Argentina ), an agreement

on the use of a single currency in trade would be a powerful step towards moving towards a common market and gaining true financial independence. It is clear that the creation of a common (not replacing national in the countries themselves) currency, even for MERCOSUR, will take many years, and the main obstacle is the terrible financial situation of Argentina, which has survived several defaults, but without financial independence, it cannot get out of the crisis. For the first time, people started talking about a common currency in Latin America back in the late 80s, but now the global situation is different, and the understanding of the need for real action is much clearer.

Lula's words about BRICS are not accidental: the Russian-Chinese-Indian alliance is the assembly center of the entire non-Western world, including in building a new financial system. And if now only Brazil is included in the BRICS among Latin American countries, then soon Argentina (which has already applied) may also join it - and then the issue

of a common currency for Latin Americans will become even more relevant. Not only for trade with Russia and China, but in general for their trade with the whole world. Because otherwise, one can not even dream of any independent role of Latin America in the new world, and Brazil, which claims to be the leader of the region and the engine of integration, will not be easy to maintain its dominant position.

In our country, Latin America is most often remembered in connection with the global confrontation with the United States and at the same time they talk about the three countries of the region closest to us - in fact allies - Cuba, Venezuela and Nicaragua. But even taking into account the importance of bilateral relations with them (including purely military ones), the support of Latin American integration and the participation of the region in de-dollarization, building an alternative to the Western world order, is of greater importance to us. Because this is what brings the onset of a new, post-Atlantic world order closer.

## Well, now back to the promised squiggles

Sergey Savchuk

nomenon is called "Dutch disease". A decade later, Saudi Arabia, Nigeria and Mexico went through a similar temptation to rapid wealth, where they discovered huge reserves of oil, the new blood of the world economy.

Newton's third law of classical mechanics states that for every action there is an equal and opposite reaction. The history of Groningen fully confirmed the correctness of the brilliant English physicist. Giving away their wealth, the pool was preparing to take a return payment. Already in the early 1980s, residents of the region began to complain that the ground under their feet was increasingly shaking, that is, earthquakes began to flow in a previously completely seismically calm area. The same Financial Times writes that over the next ten years, the number of individual underground strikes began to average about a hundred per year. It should be added that not only their number grew, but also their magnitude. According to the latest data, the average strength of the earthquake in the Groningen region fluctuates around the mark of four points on the Richter scale. It seems like a little, but when this happens on average every three days, then any infrastructure will start to get tired. According to official statistics, local residents have filed more than one hundred and fifty thousand claims for damages to personal property against ExxonMobile and Shell at the moment.

For this reason, in 2013 it was decided to start a systematic decline in production. In January, then Economics Minister Henk Kamp issued a statement promising to cut production and guaranteeing that the national economy would not be affected in any way. What was everyone's surprise when, at the end of the year, it turned out that production not only did not fall, but, on the contrary, grew by ten percent and amounted to 54 billion cubic meters. Such are the funny squiggles that we observe today, but more on that below.

Having finally fueled up well with money, the Dutch government nevertheless forced mining companies to reduce production, lowering the limit to 39 in 2014, and to 30 billion cubic meters in 2015. In 2017, the new Minister of Economics and Climate Policy, Eric Vives, officially promised that production at Groningen would drop to three billion cubic meters by 2021, and by the fall of 2022 it would be completely phased out. Like his predecessor, Mr. Vives slightly missed, because in reality, production fell only to 4.5 billion, and in 2022, after the start of the NWO, it completely shot up.

To understand the completeness of the picture, several important points need to be made.

Own gas consumption in the Netherlands is steadily falling. In 2010, the country consumed 46.8 billion cubic meters, and by 2021, consumption has dipped to 35 billion. This happened

largely due to the shaking Groningen, as well as the economic crisis that covered the local real sector. Given the decline in domestic production in full growth, the question arose of substitution through imports. A number of agreements were signed, among which, for example, were the supply of Russian gas through the Nord Stream- 1". From it, gas entered the NEL gas pipeline, went west and ended up in the Land of Tulips. Since this happened at a time when the construction of the second "stream" had already begun, around which a real informational and sanctions inferno unfolded, the Dutch took care of backup channels. In particular, two regasification terminals were leased, which stood at the quay walls of the ports of Rotterdam and Emshafen. The capacity of each of them is eight billion cubic meters per year, however, not the Netherlands themselves are responsible for their work, but in the first case, the French company Engie, and in the second tandem British Shell and their colleagues from the Czech Republic.

It should also be added that the Netherlands has historically preferred to sell its reserves, receiving foreign exchange earnings and providing a high standard of living for citizens, and consumed mainly imported gas, including Russian. The peculiarity is that Groningen's own gas consists of 81 percent methane and another 14 percent nitrogen, that is, it loses much in terms of calorific characteristics to Russian

gas, which has a methane figure of around ninety-five. That is, the Dutch are great: they sold what was worse, and what was better they took for themselves.

In the new European reality, where there is almost no Russian gas, and American LNG with similar characteristics is being transported in its place, all consumers will have to reconfigure receiving, distributing and processing capacities for a different gas composition. This is not fatal, but it takes time and expense.

Well, now back to the promised squiggles.

Officially, the Netherlands produced eight billion cubic meters of gas in 2020, and three billion in 2021. A limit of 2.8 billion was set for 2022, but for some reason the Dutch are carefully hiding the results. Perhaps due to the fact that, according to the results of last year, after Russia was removed from the top step of the export podium, Norway climbed to the top, and the Netherlands suddenly took the second place. Which, in their best years, supplied five times less blue fuel to the European Union than Gazprom.

However, there is no miracle here. Last year, 2022, was the year of a deep energy crisis in the EU, a frantic search for new suppliers and peak energy prices. If buyers are practically fighting for your gas, offering any, even completely insane price, why not revive three hundred Groningen wells. The profit-it will not receive itself, but the residents will suffer - they are familiar.

## ChatGPT becomes ubiquitous

John O. McGinnis

**C**HATGPT has become ubiquitous. My first faculty meeting this semester considered the problem of law students using the technology to provide answers to exam questions or writing papers. Two law professors have published an article showing that ChatGPT could already pass two parts of the bar exam (the torts and evidence sections). A company last week offered a million dollars for an attorney to wear a headset and repeat the Chat's answers to questions at an oral argument at the Supreme Court. The last development is, to be sure, a marketing gimmick. No attorney would do so, even if it were legal, and ChatGPT is not yet ready for Supreme Court primetime. Nevertheless, the company with the gimmick is offering services in traffic court next month.

And these are just a few of the developments in the single field of law. Because ChatGPT is being offered now as a free service, millions of people have already used it for both work and pleasure—far more than Google and Facebook in their initial periods. One enjoyable parlor game is to ask it to write in a favorite author's style, like Hemingway, or explain matters under different constraints, like writing a sonnet in iambic pentameter explicating the deterrence

theory of Thomas Schelling. The latter result was not bad, particularly considering its instantaneous formulation.

**Strengths, Limitations, and Future Advances**

ChatGPT (more formally Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer) is an advanced chatbot. It is trained on a vast amount of text, using the latest progress in the computational field of neural nets. Neural nets are a silicon version of the neurons in the brain, and like our brain, they may take on positive or negative weights to help with predicting future states of the world. Chat uses these neural nets to keep predicting what words and phrases should come next, given the prompt that the user gives, such as “write a five-hundred-word defense of Citizens United v. FEC.” It is a far more powerful version of what Outlook does when it suggests completions to our sentences on e-mail. The Chat can also meld two different nets to make a third when its prompt is “write a defense of Citizens United in the style of Henry James.”

The system's capabilities are striking—it has an extremely rapid and grammatically impeccable fluency on any subject. There remain some glitches and weaknesses, however. It makes mistakes: When I gave it the Citizens United prompt, four of its five

defenses were excellent and probably the same four with which I would have led, but it also wrongly stated that the case required campaign contributions to be publicized. Instead, the majority stated only that legislatures could require such publicity. And sometimes it completely hallucinates or fabricates. When a colleague asked it to write a scholarly article about a legal subject, it inserted support from articles that have never been written, even though the authors of these phantom pieces are indeed experts in the field!

And theoretically, there is a limitation: ChatGPT is just connected to the words people have written about the world, not to the world itself. It floats on the vast sea of verbiage we have created and is not connected directly to the actual sea or anything else about the world outside of our representations of it.

But GPT models will get better in all sorts of ways. First, as computer hardware becomes more powerful, following Moore's law, the models will become more capable. Second, they will become more specialized by melding general language training with training that emphasizes and gives more weight to specific kinds of texts. Open AI, the producer of ChatGPT, already is contemplating its legal extension with specif-

ic training in law texts. Assuming this innovation then proves more successful at generating legal texts than the general language model, this development is of jurisprudential significance, showing that law has specialized language that cannot be reduced to ordinary language. Students in law school are learning to talk like a lawyer in a more than metaphorical sense.

Third, ChatGPT will expand its scope, evaluating other texts, not just writing its own. For instance, it will be able to highlight non-standard provisions in a contract and, when cross-referenced with other computational capabilities, tell us how those various provisions fared in court.

Fourth, it will improve as humans interact with it, correcting it in their chatbot conversations. That is why ChatGPT is free for the moment; the millions of interactions every day improve its accuracy and are therefore worth more than selling its services immediately. That will change in time, and ChatGPT will be big business on its own and in conjunction with other programs. Fifth, and only slightly more speculatively, ChatGPT will be combined with other kinds of computational programs that will perform fact- and logic-checking functions, cutting down on errors. As a result

of such advances, ChatGPT, like other intelligent machines, will not have a one-off effect on society, but a continually transformative one.

**Educating for Value-Add**

While initial discussions in educational institutions, including at my own school, have focused on the problem of cheating on tests and papers, the implications for education, particularly professional education, are far more profound. Students will be preparing to work in a world of ever more intelligent machines. They will not be paid for what ChatGPT and its successors can do but only for the value that they will add to the work of those machines.

Thus, professional education must integrate intelligent machines into its program. First, students must learn how to use the machines most efficiently to complement their own skills. Using the machines remains an art, not just a science. For instance, ChatGPT gives better answers when it's given a better prompt, and the prompt is the professional's responsibility—at least for now.

But in creating a lesson plan for students, a professional school must project what computers cannot do, not only now, but in the next decade—for the machines will continuously gain ground. Only through

such prediction can we determine the specialties and skills that our legal professionals (and those in other disciplines) should cultivate that machines are not likely to usurp.

In law, it is possible to make a few generalizations about the successful lawyer of tomorrow. First, machines will find it easier to colonize areas of law that are very stable, like trust and estate, than those that are changing quickly like banking law or other law that has rapidly adjusted to technological advances or political turnover. A lawyer should specialize in the more mutating law, as should law schools. Technology law, like that surrounding cryptocurrency, also will have fewer templates for machines. A lawyer today is wise to keep abreast of the latest technologically driven legal change. Highly conceptual skills, such as drawing analogies between legal areas that have previously seemed disparate, may also be relatively impervious to machines. That suggests that professional education should be even more conceptual and less information-oriented than it is now. Legal rules will be easily known.

But while the law, in general, may be easily known, developing the specific facts of each case is a unique endeavor, for which

(Continued on Page 7)



# ‘Yes, when crabs learn to whistle’

**ZEALOUS advocates of Western support for the total defeat of Russia in Ukraine — including, if necessary, direct Western intervention and NATO-Russia war — base their case is set on a disparate set of arguments, almost every one of which turns out on examination to be either exaggerated or wholly mistaken.**

The most extreme is that the defense of “civilization” demands the complete defeat of Russia, ideally leading in turn to Nuremberg-style trials of the top officials of the Russian government and (for some commentators) the break-up of the Russian Federation itself. This call is linked to the allegation that the Russian invasion has been not merely brutal, but has amounted to “genocide.”

This charge forms — at least subliminally — a serious intellectual and moral barrier to any eventual peace settlement. For the implied association of the Russian regime with Nazism suggests not just that no compromise with this regime is morally possible, but that morality and peace demand that the regime — and the state system over which it presides — be totally destroyed.

If one were to accept and follow through on this analogy, it would also lead to the conclusion that to defeat such evil, almost any means and any alliances are legitimate. For after all, the Nazis were not defeated by limited and humane war. They were defeated in total war by the Red Army, which (together with Polish and Czech militias) killed hundreds of thousands of eastern German civilians, and ethnically cleansed more than a million more — and with the help of a British and American bombing campaign that deliberately killed hundreds

of thousands of German civilians and destroyed their cities.

We should recall the words of C. Vann Woodward in opposition to the U.S. war in Vietnam:

“The irony of the moralistic approach, when exploited by [American] nationalism, is that the high motive to end justice and immorality actually results in making war more amoral and horrible than ever and in shattering the foundations of the political and moral order upon which peace has to be built.”

Above all, any reputable historian should be able to recognize that even an extremely brutal military campaign in which numerous civilians are killed is not the same as the Nazi Holocaust or the Rwandan genocide. If it were, then every Western state that has waged a major war over the past century would have been guilty of this — a judgment which would make the term “genocide” meaningless and incidentally insult the victims of the true genocides.

The Putin regime has sought hegemony over Ukraine and has suggested that Russians and Ukrainians are to some extent “one people” (of course, with the Russians as “elder brothers”), but while quite illegitimate, that is almost the direct opposite of the exterminatory ideology of the Nazis or the Hutu genocidaires, who most certainly did not portray Germans and Jews, or Hutus and Tutsis, as “one people.”

Advocates of the total defeat of Russia who think of themselves as “internationalists” should also ask themselves why attitudes to these questions are so very different elsewhere in the world — even among progressive intellectuals and journalists in democracies like India and South Africa. The answer of course is that

Anatol Lieven

while they condemn the Russian invasion, people in these countries see far less difference between Russian behavior, and Russian imperialism, and that of some Western countries, including in the recent past.

A further argument is that the total defeat of Russia is necessary because, if not, Russia will either attack Ukraine again in the future, or be emboldened to invade NATO, or both. The first suggestion is illogical; the second — for the foreseeable future at least — verges on the fantastical. By far the most likely cause of a permanent Russian desire for a war of revenge would be the same disastrous obsession that centered French diplomatic and military strategy from 1871 to 1918 on the goal of recovering Alsace-Lorraine.

In the case of Russia, for deeply-rooted and permanent historical, cultural, and ethnic reasons, this applies above all to Crimea, which the great majority of Russians (and, by all accounts, Crimeans) regard as part of Russia and which was in fact part of Russia until it was transferred to Ukraine by Soviet decree in 1954.

To prevent Russia from ever trying to recover Crimea would mean the permanent crippling or outright destruction of the Russian state. The first — analogous to the treatment of Germany after 1918 — would, to have a chance of success, require the united economic, military and political resources of the West to be permanently directed to this end, with all other issues and threats in the world downgraded accordingly, and non-Western countries pressured to join in. This point flatly contradicts another argument of the pro-war camp, which is that the total

defeat of Russia is necessary to deter China. Nothing could better serve Chinese interests and goals.

As to the supposed threat to invade NATO: If the Russian army cannot take Kharkiv, 20 miles from the Russian border, when only the Ukrainian army is defending it, can the Kremlin really realistically dream of capturing Warsaw or Riga, and fighting a full-scale war with NATO? Elsewhere in the world, we need to recognize that, while Russia’s presence is sometimes hostile to U.S. interests, in other cases we are still objectively speaking on the same side, such as when it comes to fighting against Islamist extremism, containing the Taliban’s influence in Central Asia, and defending Armenia against what would otherwise very likely be its destruction.

A more cogent and legitimate argument is that the defeat of Russia is necessary to preserve the international legal order and punish the crime of aggression. However, the United States has always in practice adopted a flexible approach to international law when it comes to ending wars. Moreover, when it comes to the need to punish Russia, in terms not just of its initial objectives in this war but of Russian hegemony over Ukraine for more than 300 years, Russia has already suffered a crushing defeat and Ukraine, with Western help, has won a great victory. Tens of thousands of the best Russian soldiers are dead, Russia’s military reputation has been shredded, and its international prestige severely damaged.

This conflict is no longer a “war to the death” for Ukraine. Whatever happens, by far the greater part of Ukraine will be independent and aligned with the West against Russia. It is about limited amounts of

territory in the east and south of the country. And when it comes to territorial compromises, Washington has been willing to accept them in other places — de facto, if not de jure — without bringing the international legal order down in ruins. The Turkish occupation of northern Cyprus is one example; Kashmir is another. Neither situation corresponds to international law. On pragmatic grounds and to avoid the prolongation of disastrous conflict, both have in practice become generally accepted.

Both of these cases, like others, including Northern Ireland, Sri Lanka, and numerous civil conflicts in Africa and the Middle East, resemble Ukraine in that they stem from the nature and collapse of colonial rule. In this too, the war in Ukraine is far less of an outlier than the supporters of total Russian defeat believe.

Finally, there is the argument that the total defeat of Russia is necessary in order to bring democracy to Russia itself. This is pure speculation, which ignores among other things both the underlying power of Russian nationalism and the example of increased repression and intense ethnic nationalism in Ukraine as a result of the war. It is also very curious that the commentators who make this argument should also refer to Nazism. For is it not generally agreed that one key factor in the rise of Nazism was the Allied treatment of Germany after World War I?

Or do advocates of total defeat of Russia somehow believe that they can imitate the Soviet and U.S. victory in 1945, invade and occupy Russia and install their own governments — all this without ending the world in the process? As a Russian saying has it, “Yes, when crabs learn to whistle.”



## US could lose much of its international influence if policymakers don’t change their approach

Connor Echols

**WHEN South Africa announced earlier this week that it would hold military drills with Russia, the Biden administration wasted no time in condemning the decision.**

“The United States has concerns about any country ... exercising with Russia as Russia wages a brutal war against Ukraine,” said Karine Jean-Pierre, the White House press secretary.

Pretoria did not take kindly to the admonishment. South Africa’s foreign minister, Naledi Pandor, argued that criticisms of her country reveal a double standard whereby powerful countries say “what I do is OK for me, but you cannot do it because you are a developing country.”

“All countries conduct military exercises with friends worldwide,” Pandor said in a joint press conference with Russia’s foreign minister. “It’s the natural course of relations.”

The sharp back-and-forth emphasized a growing tension in world politics. For decades, the United States has treated Global South states as secondary actors who must pick a side in a Manichaean world. But many experts argue that this approach has started to backfire.

“[T]he current U.S. strategy is inadvertently pushing the Global South toward Beijing and Moscow,” argued Sarang Shidore, the director of studies at the Quincy Institute, in a recent policy brief on the Global South. “This is an unforgotten error Washington can ill afford.”

To better understand what went wrong in U.S. ties with the Global South — and how to fix it — I spoke with Aude Darnal, a nonresident fellow at the Stimson Center. A native of Martinique, a French-controlled island in the Caribbean, Darnal is intimately familiar with the fault lines between the West and the Global South.

After spending years working on conflict resolution throughout Africa, Darnal is now launching a new project entitled “The Global South in the World Order,” which she hopes will act as a bridge between Washington and thinkers from outside the Global North.

The following conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

RS: What inspired you to start your new program?

Darnal: The past two or three years, I realized that there was this spotlight on the Global South with the major events that occurred and that particularly affected them. Whether it’s the pandemic, COP 27, and now the war in Ukraine, again, those countries bear the brunt of the consequences economically [when compared to the West].

We have also seen a change of dynamics between the Global South and the West. Leaders from the Global South are now really vocal about protecting their interests and their policy independence. While we were talking about this very sporadically in policy circles, it would have been interesting to have a platform where we can actually discuss those questions in a more systematic way.

I wanted to have this platform not to conflate all these different countries into one label, but really to

look at the similarities between them as well as how to reach consensus on some issues.

RS: One throughline in your work that I find really interesting is this big idea that the world order has started to undergo a fundamental change, and American policymakers have been slow to catch up. Can you tell me a little bit more about what that change is? And how should the U.S. change its approach?

Darnal: U.S. foreign policy has been quite linked to the idea of U.S. hegemony and the idea that the American model is one that countries should try to replicate. In that sense, there have been some forms of moral superiority when it comes to dealing with our counterparts around the world. Washington has used countries from the Global South as pawns to achieve U.S. interests, rather than treating them like equal partners.

The Biden administration has tried to change the narrative around this with its U.S. Africa strategy that came out in August, and also with the African Leaders Summit in December. But we need to be careful and really monitor how that translates into action.

African states are valuable partners in themselves, but the U.S. has neglected them. We’ve seen it with the war in Ukraine, for instance, with the different votes at the United Nations, where the U.S. and its Western allies had expectations that they would have a global coalition behind them. In March, more than half of African states abstained from or voted against a UN resolution condemning Russia. That was a moment of reckoning. Western countries are losing influence over countries in the Global South.

We are really seeing countries from the Global South speaking quite clearly about their interests. We have many African states saying ‘we do not want to sign on with one power or the other, we want to be able to have partnerships with the different countries involved.’

RS: What does the U.S. lose with its current approach to the Global South?

Darnal: The U.S. is not only losing on potential opportunities for diplomacy, cooperation, and coalition-building in times of crisis, but it’s also losing its relevance. When it comes to investment and trade, we’ve seen the influence of China in the Caribbean, in Africa, and in Asia. Little by little, other countries are stepping up as a preferred partner.

Now, the United States still remains a relevant and important partner, but if it doesn’t change the track of its foreign policy, that may well not be the case in the next few decades.

RS: You mentioned the fact that Russian and Chinese diplomats and companies have had some more success getting a foothold throughout a lot of the Global South in recent years, and I’m kind of curious to get your perspective on how the US should look at that and how they should approach that. It feels like the kind of thing that could lead to a new cold war, with dueling economic blocs.

Darnal: On the cold war

thing, that’s definitely not what these countries want to happen. They do not want to be the ground for a cold war between powerful states.

I think it is very important to listen to our partners. Today, what we hear across Africa is that the majority of these leaders want to have a choice. They want to be able to partner with whatever states they judge as being an important partner to advance their interests.

In many cases, the U.S. has not been present. When it is present, it pursues poor policies that are quite often counterproductive, especially when it comes to security sector assistance, which we know does not enable the positive effects that it is supposed to provide. There is also this hypocrisy when it comes to partnering with non-democratic leaders, while at the same time promoting democracy across the world just to advance short-term security interests.

The ‘great power competition’ framing, to me, is an issue because again we’re looking at those countries as just pawns and not as fully fledged actors that can make their own decisions. It also puts aside any opportunities for cooperation. Could we imagine some way for the US and China to cooperate on some issues when it comes to investments or partnering or assistance? Unfortunately, the great power competition framework doesn’t enable that kind of discussion.

RS: What changes should the U.S. make in order to improve its relations with states in the Global South?

Darnal: I think that the United States actually has a big role to play in the region if it reckons with the fact that things are changing. First, I think that the United States needs to do away with its old misconceptions and old assumptions about these countries. They need to really understand that there will be different and sometimes contradicting interests between them and those countries, and that’s their right.

The U.S. is fortunate to have embassies around the world. Those embassies are generally underfunded, they are understaffed, they don’t have enough resources to conduct the work. But those are an opportunity to actually build a bridge between those countries and the U.S.

The next step, to me, is to reform multilateral institutions. President Biden supported the expansion of the UN Security Council, and now the question is, where do we go from here? These discussions actually need to happen. It can’t just be doing lip service in times of crisis to garner diplomatic support.

We are witnessing protests around the world, and we are in the middle of a climate crisis. Those are global issues that need global responses, and the United States has a role in supporting reform and supporting leaders in the Global South who are taking a stand on these issues.

It is time to move away from these relationships where the U.S. considers countries in the Global South to be secondary players. These countries are critical to the entire world older, and it’s time to actually recognize that.

## Who is behind the provocation

**ANKARA, which for a long time hampered the applications of Sweden and Finland to join NATO, raised the stakes again. After the provocation in Stockholm, the Turks do not want to give the Swedes the green light at all. But the last word has not yet been said - the parties have taken a time-out. RIA Novosti figured out how everything could end.**

**Who is behind the provocation**

In January, a wave of disparate anti-Turkish protests swept across Sweden. Ankara was particularly indignant at the action in Stockholm in support of the Kurdistan Workers’ Party, recognized as terrorist in Turkey and a number of other countries. After an emotional rally, the head of the far-right organization Stram Kurs (“Hard Course”), Danish lawyer Rasmus Paludan defiantly burned the Holy Quran.

He had done this before, in Denmark. Having received a stone on the head from a Syrian emigrant, he moved to Sweden. Now he has Swedish citizenship.

The rally in Stockholm was approved by the authorities. Turkish presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin said it “encourages hate crimes and Islamophobia.” As a result,

the Dane’s trick turned into another Turkish-Swedish aggravation.

**Forced pause**

“The heinous act committed in Sweden is an insult to all who respect basic human rights, including the rights of Muslims,” Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said. According to him, now Stockholm will not receive from Ankara “any support regarding NATO membership.”

The visit of Swedish Defense Minister Paul Jonsson scheduled for January 27 has been cancelled. There is nothing to talk about with Stockholm now, the situation is “going backwards,” Ankara noted.

Finland, which applied to NATO together with its neighbors, tried to defuse the situation. Foreign Minister Pekki Haavisto announced on January 23 that he continued contacts with his Turkish counterpart Mevlut Cavusoglu. But it takes time for “passions to subside.” “I think the negotiations in a trilateral format with Turkey will be suspended for a couple of weeks,” the diplomat suggested.

Asked if Finland is ready to move into NATO without Sweden, Haavisto replied that he would prefer a “paired” option. However, Helsinki is also ready for a change in strategy. Ankara

Renat Abdullin

and Stockholm are very far from compromise. “The Turks want what we can’t or don’t want to give them,” Swedish Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson admitted earlier.

**Waiting for the elections**

There is another important circumstance. Erdogan officially confirmed that the presidential elections in Turkey will be held on May 14 (before that it was about June).

For him, opposition to the dictates of NATO, the PKK and Sweden that supports it is part of the election program. Last year’s polls showed that the president’s rating was falling mainly due to claims of “bending” under the US and the EU. Therefore, Erdogan does not need any concessions until May.

America and Europe are also waiting for the Turkish elections and, obviously, they hope for a change of power. However, Erdogan’s defeat is not visible yet.

It is clear that in any case, they will continue to put pressure on Ankara, seeking to unblock the Swedish and Finnish applications. In addition, the United States has several trump cards up its sleeve.

**American lever**

Washington is discussing the possibility of

selling F-16 fighter jets to Ankara. The deal was frozen in 2020.

According to The Wall Street Journal sources, Congress will approve this if Ankara allows Finland and Sweden to join NATO.

It is assumed that the Turks will receive 40 fighters, missiles and other ammunition. The amount of the contract is 20 billion dollars.

In the meantime, the White House is coaxing Ankara diplomatically. Secretary of State Anthony Blinken and Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu met in Washington. The American praised the partners for mediating the grain deal and pointed to the immutability of the allied relations between the two countries.

“This does not mean that there are no disagreements, however, when they arise, we overcome them in a partnership spirit,” Blinken added.

Cavusoglu, in his response, did not mention Finland and Sweden, but noted the importance of the F-16 contract: “As we have said, this applies not only to Turkey - both NATO and the United States. This is in our common strategic interests.”

The joint communiqué states that the parties “discussed the strengthening of the defense partnership,

including the modernization of the Turkish F-16 fleet”, “underlined the mutual commitment to expand the alliance with qualified candidates”, reaffirmed the desire to “strengthen NATO coordination and solidarity in the face of current threats and challenges”.

**Raising rates**

In addition, the Turks are striving to return to the F-35 fifth-generation fighter development and supply program, from which they were excluded for purchasing Russian S-400 anti-aircraft systems. Here, too, there are shifts.

This was discussed in Washington in January by representatives of the US and Turkish defense ministries. A year ago, there was no talk of Ankara’s return to the program at all. “Six F-35s are already in the hangar for us,” the head of the military department, Hulusi Akar, assured journalists from the Turkish Millet newspaper.

The next NATO summit will take place in six months. And there, the alliance would like to appear before the world together with Sweden and Finland - to demonstrate the publicized “open door policy”. The question is whether the Americans will have time to pay Turkey an acceptable price for Ankara in order to avoid reputational losses.

(Continued from Page 6)

the past is an imperfect guide. That is an area where humans can likely add value. Some legal matters, like negotiation and persuading juries, require emotion as well as logic, and oral as well as written communication. These are also likely to be a last redoubt of lawyers. Softer skills may become more in demand than the proverbial steel trap mind, and law schools should program accordingly.

The need to reorient legal education necessarily requires changing the part of the curriculum that focuses on developing independent legal skills. Students have to master them to provide good prompts and add value in the most cutting-edge cases. But to be practice-ready, they need to integrate advances in machine intelligence. And what is true for law is true of the rest of professional education as well.

**The Politics of Added Value**

Already, pundits are worrying about the effect of ChatGTP in making it easi-

er to lobby legislatures and influence administrative agencies with a flood of computer-generated comments. But so-called “astroturf lobbying”—the simulation of public support by a flood of fabricated communications—is already an advanced art. The far more disquieting prospect is the way ChatGPT and other AI tools empowered by the continuing exponential increase in computation can destabilize our politics by continually changing the value our citizens add to work.

It has been plausibly and empirically argued that free trade (with China in particular) had a destabilizing effect because some domestic workers no longer could add any value once their jobs were offshored. But these effects were limited to particular industries and to particular locations. The change brought by AI will be far wider in scope.

To be sure, many blue-collar workers have the least to fear. AI isn’t going to replace plumbers any time soon. One of the happy effects of the rise of AI may be the restoration of respect for manual labor,

because for now, that is part of the added value of being human. But the West is now a predominantly white-collar economy and intelligent machines will be replacing much of what white-collar workers have done. That does not mean that white-collar jobs will disappear. Humans can still complement the machines, but the jobs will change fast and in some cases very substantially.

Thus, AI will generate political problems as well as fluent text. How can a society arise where workers need continual education and redeployment to add value to the latest wave of intelligent machines? How can unemployment insurance and other elements of the social safety net be reframed to sustain workers without creating dependency and encouraging idleness? Calls for a guaranteed income will grow with the rise of intelligent machines, but guaranteed income programs discourage the work that gives meaning to almost all lives.

**Meaning for Man**

Beyond its alteration of work, the new intelligent machines are likely to chal-

lenge man’s self-image in more profound ways. That’s nothing new: science and technology have been transforming it for the last five hundred years. The triumph of heliocentrism dethroned man from the center of the universe. Evolution raised questions that undermined his image as a select creature in touch with the divine rather than just one of many intelligent apes. But still, the human brain that devised such scientific theories continued to set us apart. While Chat GPS itself is not making these discoveries, it will summarize them better than almost any of us can, and other advances in AI may soon be responsible for actual scientific discoveries.

But in one area, man does retain an advantage—morality. Machines have not replaced our conscience and do not appear to be on the verge of doing so. For instance, ChatGPT did not blush when it wrote up an article with entirely false cites. A commitment to truth is part of our conscience.

To be sure, intelligent machines can make a list of the costs and benefits of

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# Global growth to slow to 1.9% in 2023, warn UN economists

UNITED NATIONS (APP): Senior UN economists warned Wednesday that intersecting crises are likely to add further damage to the global economy, with growth set to slow from three per cent this year to 1.9 per cent in 2023, and that prospects for Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka were "more challenging" than other South Asian countries. This will be one of the lowest growth rates in recent decades, apart from during the 2007-8 financial crisis and the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, according to the UN World Economic Situation and Prospects Report, released on Wednesday.

"In most countries we expect that private consumption and investment will weaken due to incomes and higher income rates", said Ingo Pitterle, Senior Economist at the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA). "Several countries will see a mild recession before growth is forecast to pick up in the second half of this year and into 2024".

The findings come amid the backdrop of the pandemic, the war in Ukraine and resulting food and energy crises, surging inflation, debt tightening, as well as the climate emergency. In the near term, the economic outlook is gloomy and uncertain with global growth forecast to moderately pick up to 2.7 per cent in 2024.

However, this is highly dependent on the pace and sequence of further monetary tightening – rising interest rates – the consequences of the war in Ukraine, and the possibility of further supply-chain disruptions. In South Asia, the report said that the economic outlook has significantly deteriorated due to high food and energy prices, monetary tightening and fiscal vulnerabilities, with average GDP growth is projected to moderate from 5.6 per cent in 2022 to 4.8 per cent in 2023.

"Growth in India is expected to remain strong at 5.8 per cent, albeit slightly lower than the estimated 6.4

per cent in 2022, as higher interest rates and a global slowdown weigh on investment and exports, the report said, adding that "The prospects are more challenging for other economies in the region. Bangladesh, Pakistan and Sri Lanka sought financial assistance from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 2022." The report warns that the findings also threaten the achievement of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

"This is not the time for short-term thinking or knee-jerk fiscal austerity that exacerbates inequality, increases suffering and could put the SDGs farther out of reach. These unprecedented times demand unprecedented action," UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said. "This action includes a transformative SDG stimulus package, generated through the collective and concerted efforts of all stakeholders," he added.

Slow growth, high inflation and mounting debt bur-

dens are threatening hard-won gains in achieving the Global development goals. Both developed and developing countries are threatened with the prospects of recession during this year, according to the report. Growth momentum significantly weakened in the United States, the European Union and other developed economies in 2022. This adversely impacted the rest of the global economy in multiple ways.

Tightening global financial conditions coupled with a strong dollar, exacerbated fiscal and debt vulnerabilities in developing countries. The analysis found that over 85 per cent of central banks worldwide tightened monetary policy and raised interest rates in quick succession since late 2021, to tame inflationary pressures and avoid a recession. Global inflation which reached a multi-decade high of about 9 per cent in 2022, is projected to ease but remain elevated at 6.5 per cent in 2023.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor selling snacks and dry fruits at sitara market.

## Pakistan earns \$391.740m by exporting transport services

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan earned US \$391.740 million by providing different transport services in various countries during the first five months of the current fiscal year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

This shows a growth of 31.93 per cent as compared to \$296.940 million earned through the provision of services during the corresponding period of the fiscal year (2021-22), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

During the months under review, the exports of sea transport services

witnessed an increase of 211.84 per cent, going up from \$35.630 million last year to \$111.110 million during the months under review.

Among the sea transport services, the exports of freight services increased by 255.27 per cent from \$24.100 million last year to \$85.620 million whereas the exports of other sea transport services also increase by 121.08 per cent from \$11.530 million to \$25.490 million current year, the PBS data revealed.

The exports of air transport rose by 6.63 per cent going up from

\$254.790 million last year to \$271.670 million during July-November (2022-23).

Among the air transport services, the exports of passenger services increased by 4.90 per cent, from \$169.680 million to \$177.990 million, whereas the exports of freight services surged by 31.74 per cent, from \$11.500 million to \$15.150 million, in addition, the export of other air transport services also increased by 6.68 per cent from \$ 73.610 million to \$78.530 million.

Meanwhile, the exports of road transport services during the months under

review witnessed a growth of 50 per cent by going up from \$3.680 million to \$5.520 million during this year, it added.

Among the road transport services, the exports of freight services increased by 62.18 per cent, from \$1.190 million to \$1.930 million during the fiscal year under review, while other road services also surge by 44.18 per cent to \$ 3.590 million from \$2.490 million.

The export of postal and courier services also increased by 21.13 per cent, from \$2.840 million to \$3.440 million, the data revealed.

## PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 1,061 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on the fourth consecutive day on Thursday, gaining 1,061.63 points, a positive change of 2.67 per cent, closing at 40,846.53 against 39,784.90 points the previous day.

A total of 364,131,735 shares were traded during the day as compared to 269,493,715 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs. 14.480 billion

against Rs.10.574 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 356 companies transacted their shares in the stock market, 257 of them recorded gains and 77 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 22 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Cnergyco PK with 44,728,565 shares at Rs 4.02 per share, TPL Properties with 20,045,406 shares at Rs 16.39 per share, and WorldCall Telecom with

14,285,841 shares at Rs. 1.20 per share.

Pak Services witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 158.50 per share price, closing at Rs 2,276.00, whereas the runner-up was Bata (Pak) with a Rs 115.75 rise in its share price to Rs.1,711.76.

Sapphire Fiber witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 92.57 per share closing at Rs 1,147.00, followed by Bhanero Tex with Rs. 89.99 declines to close at Rs. 1,110.00.

## IMARAT Awards 2022: The Group Presents the Grandest Annual Event



### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Once again, the IMARAT Group organised the grandest Annual Dinner of the year whereby the esteemed and dedicated team members of the prestigious organisation were honoured for their remarkable contributions towards the attainment of the company's milestones.

The occasion was graced by the presence of Chairman IMARAT Group Mr. Shafiq Akbar, President Advisory Board Lt. Gen. (R) Muhammad Haroon Aslam, Director Agency21 International

Sharjeel A. Ehmer, Group Director Graana.com & Hospitality Farhan Javed, Group Director Arslan Javed, Director PropSure Taimoor-ul-Haq Abbasi & other notable dignitaries. "Our team is the driving force behind our success, and we are thrilled to have the opportunity to celebrate their consistent hard work and dedication," said Chairman IMARAT Group Shafiq Akbar, in statements made at the occasion.

Emphasizing on the importance of hardwork, he added: "To achieve the highest levels of success, respect, recognition, and success,

we must first conquer ourselves. We must set a vision for ourselves and thrive to reach our utmost potential." While addressing the audience, Chairman IMARAT Group also discussed his Vision 2047 and how the organisation was trying to transform Pakistan into a nation that embodied the ideals of its founding fathers. The renowned organisation showed how much it valued their team's persistent dedication by awarding each individual shields and certificates. For their contributions to the organisation's success, each person was awarded and appreciated.

The event featured delightful performances and enjoyable activities including a drum circle and a concert. The event concluded with a delectable dinner that was thoroughly appreciated by all attendees.

To-date the IMARAT Group has exceeded expectations by completing 5 projects in 5 years, setting the stage for its ambitious Vision 2047. Their successful delivery of projects in 2022 showcases their ability to deliver the best results within their set timelines.

The Group's notable achievements and accomplishments during this time have solidified them as the fastest growing brand in Pakistan. Without a question, 2022 was a breakthrough year for the esteemed Group, making it the ultimate year of transformation.

## PBF calls for documentation of economy

PESHAWAR (APP): Senior Vice President, Pakistan Business Forum (PBF), Riaz Khattak on Thursday called for the documentation of economy to bridge the fiscal deficit. In a statement issued here, he urged the KP chambers of commerce to form a high-powered Budget Advisory Council to suggest budgetary measures – both on revenue and expenditure sides and share with us. Riaz Khattak urged the government to bring undocumented and informal sectors in documentation to evaluate actual size of the economy and amount of revenue which is out of the tax net.

Similarly, PBF Provincial Executive Committee of KP has also identified the most serious challenges that need to be tackled in the upcoming budget that was the undocumented or informal sector of the economy; which was the main cause of structural weaknesses; and a resistant to any policy-induced reforms. The Vice Chairman PBF KP chapter Malik Fareed highlighted the widening trade deficit; which has increased significantly; and it was required to take strong and out-of-the-box measures to shrink the gap which was continuously putting pressure on foreign reserves. He suggested industrialization and import substitution as the solution to overcome trade deficit and pointed out that IT industry has the potential to bring foreign exchange; but, the sector was still not fully tapped.

### F.P. Report

KARACHI: Following the meeting of the Board of Directors, Lucky Core Industries Limited announced its financial results for the quarter and six months ended December 31, 2022.

Financial Highlights "During the period under review, the Company entered into a Share Purchase Agreement with Morinaga Milk Industry Co. Ltd Japan (Morinaga Milk), for a partial divestment of approximately 26.5% of the issued and paid up capital of Nutrico Morinaga Private Limited (NMPL). Accordingly, as per IFRS 5 - Non-current Assets Held for Sale and Discontinued Operations, the same has been classified as discontinued operations in the financial statements for the half year ended December 31, 2022.

"On a consolidated basis (including the results of the Company's subsidiaries: Lucky Core PowerGen Limited (PowerGen) (formerly ICI Pakistan PowerGen Limited), Net Turnover for the six months period from continuing operations under review rose by 6% to PKR 49,582 million compared to the same period last year (SPLY).

"Operating Result from continuing operations for the six month period under review is 21% lower at PKR 5,359 million in comparison to the SPLY. "Including the impact of discontinued operations, Net Turnover for the six months would have been 22% above the SPLY whereas the Operating Result would have been lower by 3% from the SPLY.

"Profit after Tax (PAT) for the six months period under review for both continuing and discontinued operations at PKR 3,274 million is 46% lower than the SPLY. EPS attributable to the owners of the holding company for both continuing and discontinued operations at PKR 32.76 is 48% lower than the SPLY. The decline is due to a one-off net positive impact of PKR 1,847 million recorded in the SPLY as a consequence of the remeasurement of the previously held equity interest of NutriCo Pakistan (Private) Limited on the acquisition of an additional 11% shareholding along with the reduced profitability of the Company on a standalone basis. "On a standalone basis, PAT and EPS for the six months period under review at PKR 3,009 million and PKR 32.58 respectively, are 16% lower than the SPLY.

"The decline in prof-

itability was primarily attributable to macroeconomic challenges, including demand contraction in downstream markets, cost push due to the impact of higher oil prices, exchange losses due to devaluation of the Pak Rupee against the US Dollar, business specific import restrictions, tax regime changes and volatility in global commodity prices. Additionally, a significant increase in financial charges due to higher interest rate by 625 basis points against the SPLY, negatively impacted the profitability.

The Board has approved an interim cash dividend in respect of the financial year ending June 30, 2023, at the rate of 100% i.e. PKR 10/- per share of PKR 10/- each to be payable to the shareholders. Following the announcement of results for the half-year, Lucky Core Industries Limited's Chief Executive Mr Asif Joona said "Against the backdrop of a challenging global and domestic economic scenario, Lucky Core Industries Limited remains focused on exploring organic and inorganic growth opportunities that will further our commitment to Delivering Enduring Value whilst Cultivating Growth for ourselves and our stakeholders."

## Highest ever branches opened by The Bank of Punjab in 2022

### F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Bank of Punjab celebrated opening of its 780th branch in Lahore on 25th January 2023, making a total of 116 branches opened during 2022 only.

Mr. Zafar Masud (President & CEO - BOP) along with key officials of the bank attended this occasion. Speaking at the event, Mr. Zafar Masud (President & CEO - BOP) appreciated the efforts of the team in achieving the milestone of highest ever branch opening in a single year by the Bank of Punjab. He added that by opening 116 branches in 2022, Bank has taken a lead in the industry which by any standards is a remarkable achievement. In his address to the team, he shared his vision of expanding the Bank of Punjab's total branch network to 1000 branches by the year 2025 which will give the bank adequate coverage throughout the country. He also emphasized on the growing



need of Islamic banking and advised the team to further enhance their focus on Islamic branches expansion. Mr. Masud mentioned that as part of a pilot, bank is planning to convert a few conventional branches from our Public sector department to Islamic Banking which will support and help the

Government in executing its Islamic Banking initiatives.

Recognition certificates were also distributed among the officials who played a pivotal role in the opening of highest number of branches in a single year taking the total branches network size to 780 (Conventional and

Islamic). The Bank of Punjab plans to open another 110 branches in the year 2023 with major focus on Islamic Banking. This expansion will cover and improve the Bank's presence in major parts of the country and help in securing low-cost private sector deposits.

## Amnesty only solution for economic revival: Dr Hussain Mohiuddin

LAHORE (APP): Minhaj University's Board of Governors Deputy Chairman Prof Dr Hussain Mohiuddin Qadri said on Thursday that amnesty scheme was the only solution for revival of economy in the country. He was speaking at an awareness session on "Islamic economic and prevailing challenges to Pakistan" here at Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) where LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Chaudhry Zafar Mahmood and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt also spoke on the occasion.

Hussain Mohiuddin Qadri said that in the next three years, Pakistan would have to repay US \$ 75 billion which seemed to be a Herculean task. He said that there were two types of poverty ratio including lower middle income poverty ratio and middle income poverty ratio in Pakistan.

He said that currently 39.3 per cent of the people were included in the lower middle income ratio who earned 3 USD on a daily basis. He said that people in the upper middle

income poverty were earning 5 USD per day. He said that if lower middle income and upper middle income people were combined, then about 78 per cent of the population was earning less than Rs. 40,000 per month while 22 per cent segments earn more than Rs. 40,000.

He said that according to the September 2021 report of the government, 22 per cent of the people earning 13 USD a month in Pakistan. The devastation caused by the recent floods had further increased this ratio. He said that India had lifted 415 million people out of poverty between the year 2006 to 2021. He said that according to Bangladesh's National Poverty figures of 2016 and 2017, only 24 per cent of people in the entire country were below the poverty line. He added that every poor country was on the path of improvement and working to pull its population above the poverty line except Pakistan where people were getting poorer every year. He said that in the last three years, unemployment was

continuously increasing and according to national public debt, Pakistan owed Rs 54 trillion till March 2022. He feared that public debt of Pakistan will reach 138 billion dollars by the end of 2023. He said that according to the Network Readiness Report, which compared technology; people, policy impact and other such factors, had analyzed 131 countries and ranked Pakistan 89th.

He said that until ten years ago, the economic data of Pakistan was included in the list of South Asian countries. Whereas today Pakistan's economic data was included in the list of poorest countries in Africa and so on. "This is the progress we have made in the last several decades," he remarked. He said that international surveys suggest that Pakistan's general physical growth would be negative in the near future, while general inflation would increase by 23 per cent.

Prof. Dr. Hussain Mohiuddin Qadri said that exports had been declining in the past several years, except for 2021.





In brief

Pakistan Sports Festival 2023

BAJAUR (APP): The Pakistan Sports Festival 2023 will start here from February 1 with the support and collaboration with Frontier Corps North Administration and Bajaur Sports Associations. The festival will cover all tehsil of Bajaur district and feature different sports events, including cricket, football, volleyball, athletics, basketball, badminton, and weightlifting. According to the administration, the festival will begin from February 1 with a colourful ceremony at the Bajaur Sports Complex, in which famous Pashto singers will participate. In the opening ceremony, players from all the tehsil of Bajaur will participate in exhibition games. The Pakistan Sports Festival will conclude on March 23.

Army to face Navy in Basketball opener

ISLAMABAD (APP): Defending champion Pakistan Army will compete against Pakistan Navy in the opening match of the Inter-Departmental National Basketball Championship starting tomorrow (Friday), here at Liaquat Gymnasium, Pakistan Sports Complex. Pakistan Basketball Federation (PBBF) Associate Secretary Ouj-e-Zahoor informed APP that seven teams, including defending champion Pakistan Army, Pakistan Ordnance Factories (POF), Pakistan Railways, Pakistan Navy, Pakistan Air Force, Wapda, and Police teams would participate in the tournament. He said that the semifinals would be played on January 30 and the finals on January 31. As per the schedule, three matches would be played on the opening day. POF will face Railways in the second match, and Wapda will take Police in the third game.

Coaching Camp concludes

LAHORE (APP): Badminton World Federation (BWF) Activity Support Programme Junior Training and Coaching Camp (Boys & Girls) concluded at Nishtar Park Sports Complex Gymnasium Hall here on Thursday. Director General Sports Punjab Muhammad Tariq Qureshi was the chief guest at the grand closing ceremony of BWF Activity Support Programme Junior Training and Coaching Camp organized by Punjab Badminton Association with the collaboration of Sports Board Punjab. Director Sports Chand Perveen, Deputy Director Tariq Wattoo, Secretary Punjab Badminton Association Tayyab Sohail, Assistant Directors Shaista Qaiser and Zareena Waqar, Administrator NPSC Gymnasium Hall Mustafa Shah, Chief Sports Consultant Hafeez Bhatti, senior badminton coach Sajid Hussain and other officials were also present on this occasion. As many as 25 boys and girls from across the province participated in BWF Activity Support Programme Junior Training and Coaching Camp held from January 14 to 26, 2023. Muhammad Tariq Qureshi also witnessed thrilling matches and later distributed certificates and medals among the prominent performers of the event. Speaking on this occasion, DG SBP said that Sports Board Punjab is providing all possible facilities for the holding of different sports events and coaching camps in all parts of the province. "We will organize more sports events to trace fresh sports talent of different games.

## Djokovic wary of semi-final underdog in quest for 22nd Slam title



MELBOURNE (AFP/APP): Novak Djokovic has won all nine of his Australian Open semi-finals and is not ready to let Tommy Paul ruin his unblemished record on Friday as he closes in on a 22nd Grand Slam crown. The Serb, who won his first Slam at Melbourne Park in 2008, struggled physically in the early rounds this year with a hamstring injury. But straight-sets thrashings of Alex de Minaur and Andrey Rublev for the loss of just 12 games ominously signalled that the favourite is back to his best for the semi-finals. Should he beat the unseeded American Paul on

Rod Laver Arena, he will face either third seed Stefanos Tsitsipas or Russian 18th seed Karen Khachanov as a final roadblock to a 10th Australian Open title on Sunday. Djokovic has extra motivation to go all the way and equal Rafael Nadal's 22nd Grand Slam crowns after missing last year's event when he was deported over his Covid vaccination stance. In his absence the Spanish great won. "I always try to give my best, particularly in Grand Slams, because at this stage of my career those are the tournaments that count the most," said the 35-year-old. "But you could say that there is something extra

this year. You could say because, yeah, the injury, what happened last year, I just wanted to really do well. "So far I have a perfect score in Australian hard courts, in Adelaide (which he won) and here. I've been playing better and better. I couldn't ask for a better situation to be in at the moment." With Djokovic on a 26-match win streak at the Australian Open -- equalling Andre Agassi's Open-era record at the first Grand Slam of the year -- the 35th-ranked Paul is a heavy underdog. The 25-year-old is a surprise semifinalist, making this far at a major for the first time on the 14th attempt.

## 3rd Allama Iqbal Polo Tournament SQ Seagold, FG/Din Polo record victories

LAHORE (APP): SQ Seagold and FG/Din Polo registered thrilling victories in the in the 3rd Allama Iqbal Polo Tournament sponsored by Lahore Smart City (LSC) here at the Pakistan Park Cavalry Ground on Thursday. The first match of the day proved a thrilling encounter, where SQ Seagold Polo Team defeating BN Polo Team 6-5½. From the winning team, Raja Jalal Arsalan emerged as hero of the day as he pumped in three tremendous goals while Mir Huzaifa Ahmed banged in a brace and Omer Asjad Malhi struck one. Haider Naseem thrashed in two goals while Babar Naseem and Raja Samiullah converted one each for BN Polo Team, which also had one-and-a-half goal handicap advantage. BN Polo started the match well by converting a 60-yard penalty to take 1-0

lead, which couldn't last long and SQ Seagold Polo hammered an equalizer to level the score at 1-1. The second chukker was then dominated by SQ Seagold Polo, who thrashed in three back-to-back goals to gain a 4-1 lead. The third chukker was evenly poised as both the teams converted one goal each with SQ Seagold still enjoying 5-2 lead. The fourth and last chukker was dominated by BN Polo as they slammed in two goals against one by SQ Seagold, which won the match by 6-5½ as BN Polo had one-and-a-half goal handicap advantage. FG/Din Polo Team defeated Inara Polo/Black Horse Paints by 7-6 in a nail-biting second match of the day. Mian Abbas Mukhtar cracked a convincing quartet while Saqib Khan Khakwani hammered a hat-trick of goals for FG/Din Polo. Nico

Roberts, who replaced Hissam Ali Hyder, fired in four goals while Abdul Rehman Monnoo and Daniyal Shaikh scored one goal each for Inara Polo/Black Horse Paints. Both the teams started well and scored one goal each to make it 1-1. Inara/Black Horse Paints played better polo in the second chukker and converted three goals against two by FG/Din Polo to take a slight 4-3 lead. FG/Din Polo then made their presence felt and banged in a brace against one by their opponents to equalize the score at 5-5. The fourth and decisive chukker saw FG/Din Polo converting two goals against one by Inara/Black Horse to win the thrilling encounter by a narrow margin of 7-6. Two matches will be played tomorrow (Friday) here at Jinnah Polo Fields at 2:30 PM and 3:30 PM respectively.

## Ludhiana Gymkhana beat Model Town Club

LAHORE (APP): Ludhiana Gymkhana Cricket Club qualified for the 20-K Cup 2023 T20 Cricket Tournament after trouncing Model Town Club by 38 runs in the first semifinal played here at the Model Town Greens ground on Thursday. Ludhiana Gymkhana started the match well and succeeded in piling up a total of 183-9 in the allotted 20 overs. Muhammad Waqas emerged as top scorer with 49 runs off 42 balls

while Kashif Siddique played a swashbuckling knock of 43 runs of just 16 balls and Asim Ali Nasir played 32 balls to gather 41 runs. From Model Town Club, Umaid Asif clinched 4 wickets for 36 while Afiaz Khan and Mohsin Irshad bagged 2 wickets apiece. Model Town Club couldn't bat well against the impressive bowling by Ludhiana Gymkhana bowlers and were all out for 145 runs in 18.1 overs. Only Haider and Saleem

batted well and scored 42 and 43 runs respectively. Tanveer Aslam and Intasar Ali bowled well and grabbed 2 wickets each while Kashif Saddique got one wicket. For his all-round performance, Kashif Saddique emerged as player of the match. Model Town Greens will take on Cricket Center Cricket Club in the second semifinal of the prestigious tournament here tomorrow, Friday at the Model Town Greens ground at 11:00 am.

## Australia use nine bowlers and take T20 series with thumping win

CANBERRA (Cricinfo): Australia wrapped up a T20 series victory over Pakistan on the back of a clinical bowling effort and clean strikes from Beth Mooney. The hosts used nine bowlers on Thursday night at Hobart's Blundstone Arena, restricting Pakistan to 96 for 7 and chasing down the target in 12.4 overs with eight wickets in hand. Mooney returned to the top of the order after not batting in the first game of the series because of soreness, and hit 46 from 29 balls. She shared a 60-run opening partnership with skipper Meg Lanning to iron out most of the total. The win clinches the three-game series for

Australia, following their eight-wicket win in game one, with the final match to be played in Canberra on Sunday. Lanning shared the ball around in Australia's final series ahead of the T20 World Cup in South Africa beginning in February. Spinner Alana King came on in the middle to late stages with great effect, picking up 2 for 10 from two overs. King dropped Ayesha Naseem in the 13th over, but made up for it in the 14th when she trapped her plumb lbw for 5. Darcie Brown, Ashleigh Gardner, Jessica Jonassen, Grace Harris and Annabel Sutherland all chipped in with a wicket each. Star allrounder Gardner,

who earlier this week expressed her discomfort with playing on Australia Day, was one of just two players to bowl four overs. Gardner, a proud Muruwari woman, said January 26 was a day of hurt and mourning for Indigenous people. Australia's squad attended a smoking ceremony and completed a walking tour of kunanyi/Mt Wellington in Hobart, and wore an Indigenous jersey, socks and wristbands for the match. Megan Schutt, who took 5 for 15 in the first game, conceded 10 runs from her one over. Pakistan opener Muneeba Ali top-scored with 33 from 43 balls, but was one of only three in her side to reach double figures.

# Babar wins ICC Cricketer of the Year

LONDON (Cricinfo): Ben Stokes has been named ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year, after leading England's stunning revival in the format. Babar Azam collected the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy awarded to the ICC's Men's Cricketer of the Year, while Nat Sciver won the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy as Women's Cricketer of the Year. Stokes, who scored 870 Test runs and took 26 wickets in 2022, was also selected as captain of the Test Team of the Year. He led England to nine wins out of ten after taking charge of the team following defeat in the Caribbean in March. "I'd like to thank the ICC, the panel and the fans for voting for me as the ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year," Stokes said. "This is down to the England players and management for what has been such a positive year in Test cricket. We have played some incredible cricket with series wins against New Zealand, South Africa, a significant performance against India and a historic victory in Pakistan. "We are enjoying our cricket and love having fun wherever we play. The way in which we approach Test cricket is to excite the fans and making it a spectacle for everyone to get behind and enjoy regardless of the result for England. Babar Azam wins the double Babar was also named Men's ODI Player of the Year, and is the second consecutive Pakistani winner of the Sobers Trophy after Shaheen Shah Afridi took home the award for 2021. Babar was the only

batter to pass 2000 international runs across the three formats, averaging 54.12 with eight hundreds, and also led Pakistan to the finals of the Asia Cup and T20 World Cup. "I feel humbled to have been voted as winner of the Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy and join the ranks of some of the most iconic and respected names who have previously won the biggest and most prestigious individual award in our great sport," he said. "I continue to look up to these players as well as champions of the past for inspiration, motivation and improvement. "As cricket is a team sport, this recognition and achievement would not have been possible without the overwhelming support of my family, team, fans and the institution, to all of whom I am greatly indebted and thankful." Nat Sciver also bags two awards Sciver was also a two-time winner, picking up the Women's ODI Player of the Year award in addition to the Heyhoe Flint Trophy, having scored 1346 runs and taken 22 wickets for England across formats - including an astonishing innings 148 not out from 121 balls in the ODI World Cup final. "It's lovely to have been awarded the Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year, especially as Rachael was such a legend of the women's game in England and Wales," Sciver said. "It's always a privilege to be given individual honours but no personal achievements are possible

without the hard work and togetherness of the whole team. Picking up a trophy or a medal is all the more special when you do it alongside your teammates so hopefully that's what 2023 has in store." Other award winners included Richard Illingworth as Umpire of the Year, and Nepal wicketkeeper Aasif Sheikh, who claimed the ICC Spirit of Cricket Award for his refusal to run out Ireland's Andy McBrine after a collision with the bowler. India batter Suryakumar Yadav was unveiled on Wednesday as the ICC's T20I Cricketer of the Year. ICC awards winners for 2022 Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy: Babar Azam Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy: Nat Sciver Men's Test Cricketer of the Year: Ben Stokes Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year: Babar Azam Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year: Nat Sciver Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year: Suryakumar Yadav Women's T20I Cricketer of the Year: Tahlia McGrath Men's Emerging Cricketer of the Year: Marco Jansen Women's Emerging Cricketer of the Year: Renuka Singh Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year: Gerhard Erasmus Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year: Esha Oza David Shepherd Trophy: Richard Illingworth Spirit of Cricket Award: Aasif Sheikh

# Bugti Stadium enclosures to be named after modern-day stars, PCB

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Cricket Board announced on Thursday that country's most celebrated woman cricketer, Sana Mir, most successful Test captain, Misbah-ul-Haq, leading Test batter, Yousif Khan, and an all-format star, Shahid Afridi, are amongst 10 former international cricketers who will be honoured by having the Bugti Stadium enclosures in their names. The other six cricketers are: Kiran Baluch, Muhammad Yousuf, Saeed Ajmal, Saqlain Mushtaq, Shoaib Khan and Shoaib Malik. The enclosures were named after these cricketers in recognition of their contributions and services to Pakistan cricket, which also aligns with the PCB's plans and drive to improve, uplift and enhance spectator and playing facilities at the Bugti Stadium in preparation of the venue being made to host future high-profile matches. Chair of the PCB Management Committee, Najam Sethi said : "The contributions of these 10 cricketers are meritorious and it is important that we recognise their achievements and accomplishments by naming Bugti Stadium stands in their names. This will be PCB's small token of appreciation to these players, which will also help in creating awareness about Pakistan stars and game development in the Balochistan province. These 10 cricketers are household names and, admired and followed by all generations of cricket lovers. "The inclusion of Kiran Baluch and Sana Mir reflects the PCB's vision and endeavours for women's empowerment and attracting young girls to take up this great game and represent their country at the international stage. I am sure we will get to see more girls taking up this sport in Balochistan and the PCB will leave no stone unturned to develop the women's game in this region." Sana Mir said : "I am honoured that a stand will be named after me in the Bugti Stadium. May this gesture from the PCB and the example of Nahida Khan, who has been one of the shining stars from Quetta, inspire

more young women to become cricketers. We need more girls playing the game of cricket and demonstrate that we believe in equal opportunities for women and men." Shahid Afridi said : "I am thankful to the PCB for bestowing me with this honour. I always felt privileged, motivated and determined to play my best cricket at venues that had the names of some of the biggest stars in our sport. I sincerely hope the next generation of Quetta cricketers will find the same motivation when playing at the Bugti Stadium that, in turn, will enhance their appetite to break into the national framework." PCB's five other international venues, including the Gaddafi Stadium (Lahore), Iqbal Stadium (Faisalabad), Multan Cricket Stadium (Multan), National Bank Cricket Arena (Karachi) and Pindi Cricket Stadium (Rawalpindi) already have enclosure named after former international cricketers. About the 10 international cricketers: Kiran Baluch – Kiran played three Tests and 40 ODIs from 1997 to 2004. She scored 242 against the West Indies women at the National Stadium in March 2004, which is still a world record Misbah-ul-Haq – Misbah captained Pakistan in most Tests (56) and won 26, more than any other Pakistan Test captain, 87 ODIs and eight T20Is. He led Pakistan to the number-one spot in the ICC Test Championship in 2016 and was a member of the squad that won the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2009. Muhammad Yousuf – Yousuf is a world-record holder for most Test runs in a calendar year (1,788 runs in 11 Tests with nine centuries), which earned him the ICC Test Cricketer of the Year award for 2007. In a 90-Test and 288-ODI career from 1998 to 2010, the elegant right-handed batter scored 7,530 and 9,720 runs, respectively Saeed Ajmal – In 212 international matches, the off-spinner took 447 wickets, including 178 in Tests, 184 in ODIs and 85 in T20Is. He was a member of the squad that won the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2009.

Sana Mir – In a 15-year career, she played 226 internationals, including 137 as captain from 2009 to 2017. In October 2018, she peaked to number-one on ICC Women's Rankings for ODI Bowlers and was named as captain of Wisden's Women's Team of the Decade. She is a member of the ICC Women's Committee Saqlain Mushtaq – The inventor of doosra, Saqlain took 208 Test and 288 ODI wickets in 49 Tests and 169 ODIs, respectively. He was one of Wisden Cricketers of the Year for 2000. Shahid Afridi – Shahid Afridi stroked the then fast ODI century off 37 balls in his second match, took a five-fer on his Test debut and followed up with a century against India in Chennai. In 524 international matches, he scored 11,196 runs and took 541 wickets. He was a member of the squad that won the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2009. Shoaib Khan – Born in Bostan, a town outside Quetta, Shoaib is the only men's cricketer from the Balochistan province to represent Pakistan. He featured in four T20Is in Canada in 2008. He played 65 first-class and 22 T20 matches, scoring 3,695 runs and 533 runs, respectively Shoaib Malik – The all-rounder played 35 Tests, 287 ODIs and 124 T20Is, accumulating 11,867 runs and taking 218 wickets. He was Pakistan captain in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2007 where his side reached the final and was at the crease with Shahid Afridi when Pakistan achieved the 139-run victory target to win the 2009 final at Lord's Yousif Khan – Yousif Khan is a PCB Hall of Famer, who featured in third most Tests for Pakistan (118) in which he accumulated most Test runs for Pakistan (10,099) and scored most Test centuries (34). He played in four ICC Men's Cricket World Cups from 2003-2015 and finished his 265-match ODI career with 7,249 runs with seven centuries. He captained Pakistan to their first world title in 17 years when he lifted the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2009 trophy at Lord's



HYDERABAD: Girls students running in long race during different games during county school & collage Sports gala at public school ground.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 43,600 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 43,600 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 41,700 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1495.32 feet and was 97.32 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 17,400 cusecs while outflow as 25,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1127.15 feet, which was 77.15 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 5,800 cusecs and 100 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded 35,000, 41,200, 19,700 and 9,400 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 11,300 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 7,200 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### ANF recovers over five kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan during four counter-narcotics operations seized over five kg narcotics, 71 heroin-filled capsules, 55 intoxicated tablets and 824 liters of prohibited chemical and arrested five accused, said an ANF spokesman here on Thursday. He informed ANF North in an operation at Islamabad International Airport recovered 71 heroin-filled capsules from the possession of a Bahrain-bound passenger resident of Narowal going on flight no GF-771. In another operation near Burhan Interchange, ANF recovered 4.8 kg charas from secret cavities of a car and rounded up three drug smugglers. In the third operation conducted in the Quetta area, ANF seized 55 intoxicated tablets and netted an accused resident of Quetta. He informed that in the fourth operation, ANF recovered 824 liters of prohibited chemical from Chaman. The spokesman said that separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.

### Power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Thursday issued a power suspension programme for Saturday for various areas of its region due to the transfer of power lines/installation of a new tower on Bhara Kahu flyover. According to an IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended from 132 KV grid stations Murree, Minhasa, Desto, Sambli Barmal from 08:00 AM to 04:00 PM. Due to this Pindi Point, Barian, Public Health, Gharial, PAF, Upper Topa, Lohra, Patriata, Company Bagh, Cecil Roster, Lohra-2, MCM, TDCP, Kahota, Sunny Bank, Kuldana, PC, Deerkot, Chaman Kot, Rangla, Dana Express, Daila, Sohawa Minhasa, Nambal, Dirkot-2, Desto, PAECE, Shah Dara feeders.

### Cold weather likely in GB

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast cold and dry weather for most parts of the country. Very cold weather is likely in upper parts, north Balochistan, Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan during the period.



ISLAMABAD: SAPM Faisal Karim Kundi along with Federal Minister and Chairperson BISP Shazia Marri addressing a Press Conference at PID Media Centre.

## Digital literacy to revolutionise Pakistan's economy: Shazia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), Shazia Marri Thursday said the women empowerment and education through Digital literacy would revolutionise Pakistan's economy and GDP at an unprecedented level.

The federal minister was speaking, as a chief guest, at the closing ceremony of national workshop to disseminate the results of 'Internet Dost' and 'Internet Zabardast' projects supported by google.org the philanthropic arm of Google, arranged by the National Rural Support Programme (NRSP). Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Finance, Mr. Tariq Bajwa, CEO, NRSP Dr. Rashid Bajwa, and Chairman NRSP, Shoaib Sultan Khan were also present on the occasion. Addressing the

ceremony, the minister said this is definitely a revolution that Pakistan needs through digital literacy and training on internet's positive and constructive usage.

The federal minister after listening to the success stories of the two female beneficiaries of Internet Dost project said these two smart and talented women of Pakistan Aqsa Abbasi and Kaneez Fatima told us their success stories achieved through the initiative of Google and NRSP.

"You have changed the lives of your families and communities and I am thankful to you for coming here after facing all odds", she said.

Shazia Marri also presented her example as a woman bringing change in her constituency by winning the National Assembly (NA) by-election through direct vote and brought a revolution against the prevailing old taboos and ill

mindset. "I want to appreciate the world IT giant for its role as it has emerged as a household name in the world," the minister said.

Appreciating the testimonials of the project beneficiaries, she said, "I am proud of the language of women in the testimonials which shows a visible change among them."

She emphasised that the role of a father is crucial for building strong women to change societies. "We know to excel despite problems and challenges as the women in Pakistan face huge challenges and problems." She requested NRSP and Google to have such ceremonies in the rural areas of project sites, so that the local masses could observe and learn from them. Shazia Marri mentioned that the Article 34 of the Constitution says, "The state will have to bring women in all strata of state."

## SAPM pledges zero tolerance against abusing state institutions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Malik Muhammad Ahmed Khan here on Thursday said that the government would observe zero tolerance against individuals abusing or hurling threats to the state institutions and creating hatred among its personnel.

Addressing the media persons, he castigated Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan for instigating political polarization, dividing the society and promoting hatred among the people for his pity political gains.

He said that PTI was the party of only 30 members

and the rest was provided to it by former National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman Javed Iqbal, who himself admitted this as reported by columnist Javed Chaudhary. Javed Iqbal admitted that he was tasked to provide at least 40 (prominent) persons to Imran Khan's PTI.

He said that he was astonished to note that his friend Fawad Chaudhary has hurled such disturbing threats to an institution. Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja was appointed by Imran Khan, he expressed.

He said Imran Khan

accused Donald Lu, General Qamar Javed Bajwa and now he accused Mohsin Raza Naqvi for toppling his government.

He criticized former state minister Farrukh Habib for obstructing police from official duties. Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi was appointed after following a constitutional process, he added.

PTI had started sully campaign against Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) after their refusal to launch Electronic Voting Machine (EVM) and CEC's principal stance on Daska election riggings by Buzdar government.

## PTDC advises tourists to take precautionary measures during visit to hilly areas

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) on Thursday has advised the tourists visiting hilly areas of the country during the current snowy season to take extra precautionary measures to ensure personal and collective safety and avoid any untoward situation in extreme weather conditions.

The PTDC along with other concerned authorities have asked the visitors to dress in layers, wear a warm hat or cap, scarf and gloves or mittens to protect body heat from wind-chill or extreme cold. The tourists were asked to not keep the vehicle engine running continuously and do not switch on heaters for more than 10 minutes in an hour.

The official of PTDC urged the travelers to keep vehicle windows slightly open for fresh air or ventilation and ensure that vehicle's exhaust pipe is not blocked by snow, ice or debris and check once every hour to keep your exhaust cleared in snowy conditions," it said.

The travelers must check for the latest weather or travel advisories issued for your area and take appropriate precautionary measures before going out.

The travelers have been advised to avoid traveling in low visibility conditions and during icy road conditions if possible. Before traveling ensure your vehicle is properly serviced, including heater, brakes, radiator and replacing worn out tyres", it said.

The guideline exhorted to keep essential supplies in your vehicle when travel-

ing for use in emergencies including additional warm clothing, warm blankets, first aid kit, water-proof matches or lighter, windshield ice-scraper, booster cables, basic toolkit, bag of sand or cat litter (to provide traction on ice or snow), wheel chains, spare wheel or repair kit, dry food or fruits and drinking water. The guidelines noted that in-case vehicle stranded or one was forced to pull over due to weather conditions; one should contact the local help lines and control rooms for assistance.

It underlined that special focus must be given to elderly and children. "They must be kept warm through layers of dressing and may even be huddled in case of exposure to extreme temperatures." The guideline issued by the concerned emphasized that the cold-wave-like conditions and extremely low temperatures were being experienced in northern part of the country which could further accentuate in the coming days.

Like every year, a number of local and international tourists have start visiting the hilly areas of the country to enjoy the enhanced picturesque beauty of natural scenes including lush green valleys, beautiful mountains, snow peaks, meadows, lakes and waterfall during snowfall.

Despite biting cold, a great rush of tourists was witnessed at popular tourism destinations including Murree, Malamjaba, Kalam, Naran, Kaghan, Swat, Hunza, Ziarat, Chitral and Kashmir, like every year.

## Commemorative Postal Stamp issues

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Post has issued the first Commemorative Postal Stamp of the year 2023 to mark 40 Years of Wafaqi Mohtasib (Ombudsman) Islamabad (1983-2023).

According to the official source, the size of the commemorative stamp is 60 x30.5 mm and of Rs. 20 denomination which will be available for sale at all important post offices in the country.

For the overseas orders of Stamps, the Manager Philatelic Bureau, Karachi GPO, or Manager National Philatelic Bureau, Islamabad GPO can be addressed while the request should be accompanied by a Bank Draft or Crossed Cheque en-cashable in Pakistan. Pakistan Post issues various commemorative stamps on important national and international occasions, honoring great personalities and their achievements. The institution of the Wafaqi Mohtasib was established in January, 1983 and has continued functioning till date.

The success of this institution in addressing ills of mal-administration is reflected in the fact that not only have Ombudsman's Offices been created on provincial level but also a range of such offices have been created in other sectors like tax, banking, insurance and protection of women against harassment at work pace etc.

As more and more people got aware of the functioning of this easily accessible institution for an expeditious and cost-free resolution of their grievances against government agencies, the number of complaints grew with the consequential increase in the redressal. Over the years, 17 Regional Offices of the WMS have been created which are redressing the grievances of the complainants by using latest information technology tools. Besides, systemic reforms have been undertaken to address the root causes of the complaints and a number of initiatives have been taken for the betterment of the aggrieved citizens. The WMS has also contributed meaningfully for the promotion of Ombudsmanship at the international level and currently Wafaqi Mohtasib is the President of the Asian Ombudsman Association.

## Food Ministry asked for better coordination to avoid wheat shortage

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Price Monitoring Committee (NPMC) on Thursday reviewed the prices of essential commodities and directed the Ministry of National Food Security and provincial governments to ensure inter-provincial coordination to avoid shortage of daily commodities particularly wheat before the holy month of Ramzan.

"The Ministry of Food Security is responsible for inter-provincial coordination in order to avoid any shortage of wheat before Ramzan," said Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal, while chairing the NPMC meeting.

The meeting was attended by the chief economist, Chief Commissioner, Islamabad, representatives from all

provinces, the Federal Board of Revenue FBR, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics PBS and Ministry of Food Security and Industries. The food secretaries of all the provinces were directed to hold a meeting immediately with the Ministry of Food to review the progress of wheat across the country and to ensure its smooth production and supply, said the minister.

During the meeting, the PBS officials gave a presentation on price monitoring and inflation while representatives from Punjab, KP, Sindh and Balochistan apprised the forum about the current production and supply of wheat and sugar. The minister directed the stakeholders concerned to closely monitor the price index and to ensure the forecasting for preventing any disruption in Ramzan.

## PTI's slogans of change nothing but hollow assertions: Irfan Siddiqui

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senator Irfan Siddiqui Thursday lamented that the nearly four years performance of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has proved that their slogan of change was nothing but a hollow assertion as their deeds did not match their acts.

Speaking on a point of order in Senate, he said the entire leadership of PTI swung into action to speak in support of former President Pervez Musharraf immediately after his conviction by the court instead of questioning him about his sources of income and rampant corruption done (by him) during his tenure.

Regretting the treatment

meted out to former Minister for Information and Broadcasting Chaudhary Fawad Hussain, he said he was dejected to watch handcuffed Fawad on TV channels despite having serious differences with him (Fawad).

He said PTI victimized its opponents during nearly four years of rule and this practice should be ended now. Siddiqui said social media was comparing the arrest of Fawad with him which was totally wrong as there was no FIR registered against him and he was arrested late night without any charges. Whereas Fawad was arrested on threatening ECP officials. He was detained in 6\*8

cell in Adiyala jail under the worst conditions, that too with hardened criminals. He said not a single member of PTI had sympathized with him when he was sent to Adiyala jail under the charges that he didn't turn up before police to provide the required information of his tenant, despite the fact that the house in question was owned by his son. PTI Chairman Imran Khan doesn't bother to appear before any court of law or FIA or any other forum despite repeated summonings whereas former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had appeared before the JIT and other courts.

## Green Line Train to start operation today

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways is finally going to start Green Line Passenger Train from Islamabad to Karachi on January 27 (Friday) as a superior service to facilitate the passengers and generate revenues for the department.

"Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif is likely to inaugurate Green Line Train along with Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique and other senior officials of the Ministry," an official in the department told APP. He said the train is comprised of two AC Parlors, five AC Business, six AC Standards, and four to five economy class coaches which will facilitate the passengers on the route.

The official said the decision was taken on the directives of Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique, who wanted the best arrangements for the Green Line passenger Train for travelers.

He said that the minister also directed

the official concerned for reducing the travel time of the Green Line from Lahore to Karachi to less than 20 hours which would restore the confidence of the passengers in the national railways.

"It has also been decided to provide the best travelling facilities in the Green Line Train, including providing high-quality food and keeping the ticket price affordable. Besides, a separate LCD will be installed on each seat of the AC Parlor to let passengers enjoy favourite videos through headphones," he added.

The official said that Green Line is Pakistan's first ever modern train which would cover the Karachi-Islamabad route in 22 hours. He said the train would provide state-of-the-art services to the passengers including comfortable sleepers, WIFI, quality meals, Tea, bottled water, newspapers, standard bedding and air-conditioned rooms.

## CDA demolishes 6,295 illegal structures

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Directorate of Enforcement, Capital Development Authority (CDA) has demolished around 6,295 illegal structures in the markets, roads, green belts and sidewalk tracks in the federal capital during the last year.

"During the operation, around 10,262 items of encroachers have also been confiscated, subsequently these articles are auctioned. Besides, fines worth Rs. 4.082 million has also been recovered from trespassers as a penalty," an official in the CDA told APP.

He said the Directorate of Enforcement has launched as many as 1,142 anti-encroachment operations carried out across the board in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) during the last year.

The official said the Directorate was vigorously undertaking anti-encroachment operations on regular basis throughout Islamabad in order to curb the illegal constructions in the ICT.

He said the continuous operations were being carried out on day to day basis 24/7 for retrieval of state

land from land grabbers and encroachers.

The official said the matter was being dealt by the Directorate of Municipal Administration working under the administrative control of Municipal Corporation, Islamabad (MCI). About the steps taken for the protection of citizens, provision of emergency medical assistance and water facility on hiking tracks, he said the forest guards keep patrolling throughout the day in all the trails and hiking tracks of Margalla Hills, National Park.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Education and professional Training Rana Tanveer Hussain inspects the buses and brief by the staff during his visit on KG Buses at Islamabad Model School For Girls F-7/2.



HERAT (ToloNews): The seventh shipment of Turkish humanitarian aid, consisting of flour, rice, oil, and other foodstuffs as well as clothes, arrived at Towrgondi port in Herat province. This shipment of 500 tons is intended to be delivered to needy people in some provinces. "People who need more are poor, after a transparency process will receive this aid," said Abdul Basir Anakhil, head of the Turkish Humanitarian Aid Foundation office in Herat.

## Second market for women opens in Herat

ernment to provide assistance to the victims, martyrs and disabled of the previous wars. He said: "The then president Hamid Karzai had promised us multiple times to help us but he has never put his promise into practice". Btu Maulavi Najibullah Hanif, the head of information and culture department said, that the government is committed to the assistance of the victims of the previous wars. Hanif said: "We struggle to provide on time assistance to all the victims of the wars and their families and to provide education opportunities to their orphans and other children without guardians".





# Kashmiris observe Black Day on India's 'Republic Day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Kashmiris across the Line of Control and the world over observed Indian Republic Day, on January 26, as Black Day to protest against the continued denial by India of their right to self-determination in accordance with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions.

In Indian Illegally Occupied Kashmir (IIOJK), the day was marked by a complete strike whereas protest rallies and demonstrations were held in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, Pakistan and world-over. The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) had given a call for observing Black Day and was supported by other freedom-loving organizations and leaders.

In IIOJK, the Indian authorities had turned the whole territory into military garrison and had intensified checking and frisking in Srinagar city and other parts of the valley. In Islamabad, the APHC (AJK Chapter) staged a protest in front of the Indian High Commission. The protest was also joined by heads and leaders of various political parties of AJK. Speaking on the occasion, the speakers said India had no right to celebrate its Republic Day in IIOJK, which it

had occupied against Kashmiris' will. APHC-AJK Convener, Mehmood Ahmed Saghar, while speaking on the occasion said India had been using brutal tactics to suppress the Kashmiris' freedom sentiment but miserably failed in its nefarious designs. The protesters were holding black flags and banners and placards with slogans against India and in favour of Kashmir's freedom from Indian occupation.

Protest rallies were also carried out in Muzaffarabad and other cities of Azad Jammu and Kashmir to mark the day as Black Day. The protesters demanded the world community to break the criminal silence and play its role in stopping Indian state terrorism in IIOJK. Meanwhile, the APHC leaders, in their messages on the day, said that India was not a true democratic country as it had usurped the right to self-determination of the Kashmiri people for the past over seven decades, reported Kashmir Media Service (KMS).

APHC leaders, including Ghulam Muhammad Khan Sopori, Rafia Rasool, Dr Musaib and Muhammad Aqib, said that Modi regime had put the entire IIOJK under military siege to celebrate its Republic Day in the

occupied territory. APHC-AJK leaders Shaikh Abdul Mateen and Shamim Shawl in their separate statements in Islamabad said that India had forcibly seized Jammu and Kashmir in 1947 with its military might and since then more than six lakh Kashmiris had been mercilessly killed by the Indian forces.

India and its stooges have let lose a reign of terror and turned the Jammu and Kashmir into a big jail and are pushing the people to wall, the statements added. Former convener APHC (AJK Chapter), Muhammad Farooq Rehmani said that the so-called Republic Day of India is rightly characterised as the dark period of India and the people of Kashmir are castigating it as Black Day.

Meanwhile, posters were pasted on walls, pillars and electricity poles in Srinagar, calling for observing the Indian Republic Day as Black Day. On the other hand, President People's Democratic Party and former puppet Chief Minister, Mehbooba Mufti tweeted that in order to hoodwink the world community and stage a drama of normalcy on 'Republic Day', Indian authorities were forcing shopkeepers to keep their shops open.



PESHAWAR: Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali administering oath from caretaker provincial cabinet.

## Alvi: No contact with establishment

ISLAMABAD (INP): President Dr Arif Alvi has asserted that he and the government had no contact with the Establishment for over a month, condemning the arrest of former information minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Fawad Chaudhry.

In conversation with senior journalists, the President noted that no progress was made by the incumbent government in negotiations in the past month and a half. "Imran Khan was ready to hold talks with the government," President Alvi maintained, holding the incumbent rules responsible for the lack of negotiations.

President Alvi also stated that he had no contact with the establishment for over a month, adding: "I had told Finance Minister Ishaq Dar that the Establishment had said it did not want to interfere in politics." The president also deplored the manner in which PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry was presented in the Islamabad court, lambasting the officials for covering the former minister's head with a white sheet and also handcuffed him.

He further said that Fawad was arrested for speaking about democracy, adding that institutions shouldn't need police to maintain their respect. "If someone has an issue with me, then I will improve my performance instead of asking the police to take action," he added. President Alvi warned the government against using "minus-one formula" against former premier and PTI Chairman Imran Khan, saying that such tactics had never succeeded in Pakistan.

## Dar's actions yielded nothing: Miftah

KARACHI (INP): PML-N leader and finance czar Miftah Ismail on Thursday once again lashed out federal Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, stating his (Dar) actions yielded nothing but damages to Pakistan.

Talking to a private news channel, the former finance minister said he was incognizant of the facts as to why Mr Dar was brought to Pakistan to spearhead the economic matters. In September last, Mr Ismail resigned as finance minister in line with the party's decision after it picked Ishaq Dar as his replacement. The government had now conceded that there was no way except surrendering to the conditions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for revival of the much-needed loan programme, he highlighted.

## Doing business not state's job: CJP

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Umer Ata Bandia has remarked that it is not the job of the State to do business and all over the world the state institutions do not involve in business in traditional sense.

He further said that the State institutions are in losses because they are overburdened. He said that any department before conducting business should get permission from the parliament or cabinet. However, the Supreme Court of Pakistan conditionally allowed Pakistan Railways to lease its land after getting approval of its rules from the Parliament or the federal cabinet.

A three-member bench of the apex court headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Umar Ata Bandial conducted hearing of review petition of the federal government against the SC lease ban order.

Former Chief Justice in January 2019 had barred Pakistan Railways from leasing its land in Centre and the provinces for five years. However, in June 2021 ex-CJP Gulzar Ahmed, hearing the case

of circular railways at SC Karachi Registry, imposed complete ban and stopped the authorities from selling, transferring and leasing the lands owned by railways.

The Chief Justice said that the status of the land intended to be lease should not be changed, adding no construction be made on the Railways land that have parks. The Railways should get the approval of its rules regarding the lease of land from the parliament or cabinet. Earlier, Additional Attorney General Aamir Rehman submitted the Railways business plan. The bench on January 4, 2023 had sought a detailed report from Pakistan Railways regarding its land and future planning to make the institution profitable.

He informed that presently the Railways total land is 169,000 acres. Out of that 126,000 acres in used for operation purpose, while 16,742 acres is kept for future planning, told Aamir Rehman. The report said that 9,985 acres land is encroached, while 10,750 acres land is on lease. The AAG stated that after the Supreme Court order

Railways' income worth Rs2.5 billion stopped. The chief justice noted that the report did not provide the detail of income and expenditure. Railways Secretary requested the bench to allow the Railways to keep its share after given the land on lease.

Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan noted that it is no solution that the Railways by leasing out its land to overcome its losses. He said if the Railways start doing on the State land then it would affect the public trust, adding the Railways should be careful in its business plan, as it could not ignore market dynamics. He said that for the continuity the Railways should have an effective plan, and reduce its expenses. The Chief Justice said that Railways should grow jungle on its unused 6,000 acres land, adding the best use of agricultural land is to grow jungle. Barrister Zafarullah, appearing on behalf of Railways, said if the court permit then the policy and rules for Railways would be placed before the cabinet. The chief justice said that there should be reasonable justification behind Railways plans.

## PBC to cancel licences of 3 former SC judges

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Pakistan Bar Council (PBC), the apex body of the country's lawyers, has decided to revoke the licences of three Supreme Court judges.

The lawyers body has also resolved to ban law practice by family members of the superior courts' judges at their home stations. The names of the three former judges, including a former chief justice, were restored on the 'Roll of the Advocates of the Supreme Court', following their retirement. As per law, the Supreme Court judges cannot do legal practice but they obtain the license for other legal work – arbitration and consultation.

There were two views in PBC enrolment committee regarding the restoration of the licences. Previously, committee then led by Justice Asif Saeed Khosa, declined former chief justice Anwar Zaheer Jamali's plea for the restoration of his name on the 'Roll of the Advocates'. It is learnt that a recently retired judge had submitted a plea before the PBC enrolment committee, now headed by the senior-

most Judge of the Supreme Court, Justice Qazi Faez Isa, regarding the restoration of his licence.

However, because of the conflicting views on the matter, the enrolment committee referred the plea to the PBC General House. The General House, in a recent meeting, not only dismissed the plea but also decided to issue show-cause notice to three retired judges for revoking their licences, too.

The house took up various agendas items. It also resolved to ban the practice by the family members of the superior courts judges at home station. The house, by a majority vote, elected Haroonur Rasheed as its new vice chairman and Hasan Raza Pasha as new chairman of the Executive Committee.

During the session, Munir Ahmed Khan Kakar raised the objection, saying that the PBC was a symbol of the Federation but since the last three years there was no nomination from Sindh and Balochistan had been made. A statement issued by six members, belonging to the

Professional Lawyers Group, which is known as Hamid Khan Group, stated that they staged walkout from the house against this "discriminatory" treatment.

## Imran challenges ATC's jurisdiction

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Imran Khan Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has challenged the jurisdiction of the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in the PTV, Parliament attack case against him.

Former Prime Minister Imran Khan's legal team filed an application under Section 23A of the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA) in the ATC, in which the jurisdiction of the court has been challenged. The Advocate Naem Haider Panjutha argued before ATC Judge Raja Jawad Abbas Hasan that the case is not of terrorism court, therefore, it should be transferred to the concerned court.

## World not to abandon Afghan women struggling for rights: UN

UNITED NATIONS (APP): UN deputy chief Amina Mohammed said on return from a visit to Afghanistan that during her intense meetings with Taliban authorities she pushed hard to try to reverse their recent actions limiting the rights of women and girls to education and work while highlighting the holy Quran's first word "Iqra" (read) and Islam being a "religion of light", but did not make much progress towards the goal.

Ms. Mohammed, the deputy secretary-general who led a delegation of senior UN officials, told a press conference on Wednesday that one of the biggest challenges in dealing with the Taliban officials, who are loyal to the emir and the emirate, is how to bring them "from the 13th century to the 21st."

But Ms. Mohammed, a former Nigerian cabinet minister, said that the international community will not abandon Afghan females who are deprived of their rights. "It's not when it gets hard that we drop off," she said, adding, "It's when it gets hard that they see more of us, and we are there in solidarity with them." During the 4-day trip across Afghanistan, which included Kandahar, she met four Taliban ministers, including the acting foreign minister and a deputy prime minister, and said they spoke "off one script" during meetings with her delegation last week. The delegation also met former Afghan President Hamid Karzai and former Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah.

She was accompanied by Sima Bahous, the executive director of UN Women, and the Assistant Secretary-General for UN political, peacebuild-

ing and peace operations, Khaled Khiaari. Before arriving in Kabul, the top-level UN delegation visited Indonesia, Turkey, Persian Gulf states and Saudi Arabia, where she said there was wide support against the Taliban actions in relation to women's rights.

She said there is a proposal for the U.N. and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) to host an international conference in mid-March on women in the Muslim world. "It's very important that the Muslim countries come together," the deputy secretary-general said.

"This would bring in the issues of Afghanistan, but also the region," Ms. Mohammed said. "I often say this, when Malala [Yousafzai] was shot, she was shot in Pakistan. So there is a regional problem." The UN deputy chief said that as the Taliban have taken away rights, they assured they would later revisit the issue. She said she pressed officials for a specific timeline and said she was told only "soon."

On their part, the Taliban officials, she said, sought to stress things that they say they have done and did not get recognition for — and what they called their effort to create an environment that protects women. "It was clear they (Taliban) want recognition", Ms. Mohamed said, adding that they pointed to their success in eradicating corruption and eliminating poppy production while extending a general amnesty.

"All of this, we said, was not sufficient in terms of its implementation," Ms. Mohammed said. But she said, "Recognition is one leverage that we

have and we should hold onto." Asked by APP correspondent whether she found any area relating to women's rights in which progress could be made, Ms. Mohammed said it was going to be tough to get the Taliban back into the space needed for the protection and upholding of women and girls' rights, adding, "That's what I want us to do."

"So if there's anything that I would say we got from the Taliban, I think it's very important that they are putting a law in there against gender-based violence," the UN deputy chief said. "That for me is a big plus and I want to leverage it because gender-based violence was increasing, is increasing in Afghanistan. And for anyone that has to be in a position where you are incarcerated in your houses, (as) we were in COVID, but this is now because they're taken out of the workplace and are suffering gender-based violence, and there's a law against this. And I want to hold the Taliban to account for implementing that law."

"The same thing with inheritance: This is also something that, you know, everything was taken away. All your rights taken away in inheritance for women. If this is put back according to Islam, what's mine is mine and what's his is mine. And so we get double. And if we can implement that, I think that's a good thing. That a woman is not being traded off for blood money, it's huge. I mean, we were just... What were we? Nothing. If that was the case. So yes, I saw two or three things; I came back, and I would say... I'd only believe them if I see them implemented."

## Imran playing with country's economy: Javed

LAHORE (INP): Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif has said that PTI Chairman Imran Khan is playing with country's economy and termed it very unfortunate. Addressing a press conference, at 180-H Model Town on Thursday, he said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) wanted that no one asked it about inflation and poor economic condition, which country was facing just due to bad governance of PTI government.

PTI wanted decisions of their choice by putting pressure on institutions, he added. He further said that he was not in favour of illegal arrest of anybody, adding that PML-N had given a lot of sacrifices for ensuring stability in the country.

Mian Javed Latif said, "National parties are formed to give sacrifices in the larger interest of the country."



LONDON: PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif and Senior Vice President, Maryam Nawaz posing a photo with PM Adviser, Amir Muqam.

## US funding helping to improve civilian law enforcement capacity: Blome

ISLAMABAD (APP): US Ambassador to Pakistan Donald Blome on Thursday said that over the past 75 years, the United States has invested more than a billion dollars to strengthen Pakistan's civilian law enforcement capacity and keep Pakistani citizens safe.

He made these remarks during the ceremony organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC) Representative Jeremy Milsom and Balochistan Police Inspector General Abdul Khaliq Sheikh to celebrate the successful completion of a \$4,578,696 Improving Rule of Law Program in Balochistan, funded by the US Embassy and executed by UNODC. The five-year program commenced in February 2017 and concluded in December 2022.

In his remarks, Ambassador Blome

said, "Today we recognize the completion of a six-year effort between the United States, Balochistan, and UNODC. In 2017 the United States was the sole funder for this project, providing \$4.5 million for the Improving Rule of Law in Balochistan project. The United States played a significant role in the training of Pakistan's civilian law enforcement capacity and this has included training for more than 120,000 Pakistani police officers, incorporating international standards for crime response, investigations, and handling of evidence into their courses."

"We contributed to the construction of over 230 border posts along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border. In Balochistan, we have provided over \$20 million to purchase bulletproof vests, helmets, and vehicles to enhance law enforcement operations and keep

officers safe while fighting crime, he added." Ambassador Blome also highlighted US flood assistance, adding "To date, we have committed more than \$200 million in flood-response, disaster resilience, and food security assistance. Our support includes urgently needed food, safe water, sanitation and hygiene improvements, financial help, and shelter assistance. It also includes work with the Balochistan Police, including replacing police stations destroyed in the floods and providing a new wall and drainage system to better protect the Balochistan Police Training College in Quetta. We are doing what friends and partners do in times of hardship – support each other."

In his opening remarks, Jeremy Milsom, Country Representative, UNODC Country Office in Pakistan highlighted UNODC's continued sup-

port towards improving the rule of law sector in Balochistan. He thanked US Embassy's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INL) section for its support and appreciated the Government of Balochistan's collaboration towards strengthening and reforming criminal justice institutions in the province.

The Program aimed to enhance the technical and operational capacity of the Balochistan Police through training sessions on crime scene investigation, forensic examination skills, and the provision of modern equipment. Improved cooperation between police and prosecution for better justice outcome remained a core component of the Program. UNODC under INL funding equipped the Crime Branch of Balochistan Police with 10 Mobile Crime Scene Units, 2,250 First Responders and 250 Crime Scene

Kits, as well as the renovation of Balochistan's Forensic Science Lab. Furthermore, four Forensic Collection Units to transport evidence were also established.

This has been demonstrated by Ms. Joushaida Hanano, Advisor, Rule of Law and Anti-Corruption Program, UNODC during her presentation on program achievements. UNODC also supported the INL Program in the area of policy reforms and provided technical assistance to Balochistan Police Training Branch in needs assessment and analysis for capacity building. Specialized modules were developed, and 5517 officials were trained on multiple policing functions.

Abdul Khaliq Sheikh, Inspector General of Police Balochistan expressed his profound gratitude to the US Embassy's International Narcotics and Law Enforcement

(INL) "Rule of Law" Program in Balochistan. He said, "These wide-reaching initiatives have made a lasting impact in the lives of common citizens. This program was a perfect arrangement where INL and UNODC extended a helping hand in areas not taken care of by government finances and beneficiaries."

I would like to appreciate and appreciate the successful completion of this five-year program in Balochistan. This has set the stage and created an enabling environment where we have further built on it by adding community policing initiative." He also conveyed his appreciation towards INL and UNODC for their invariable support and further stated that he was confident that this assistance and effort will go a long way in making Balochistan Police more responsive.