

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): A local court in Islamabad has extended the interim bail of PTI Chairman Imran Khan till March 9 while granting exemption from personal appearance in the case of threatening a lady judge. The court rejected the request of the prosecutor to issue an arrest warrant for Imran Khan. A district and sessions court in Islamabad rejected a plea to issue an arrest warrant of Imran Khan.

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Fawad Chaudhry has appeared before the court of Magistrate Waqas Ahmad Raja in Islamabad. However, the investigation officer (IO) has not submitted challan of the case in the court so far. A case was registered against PTI leader Fawad Chaudhry for inciting people against state institutions. Fawad appeared before judge along with his lawyers.

Pakistan stands with people of Turkiye: PM

Shehbaz asks provinces to submit strategy on subsidized essential items during Ramazan

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday assured Turkish Ambassador Mehmet Paçacı that in the testing times, the government and the people of Pakistan stood in strong solidarity with the people of Turkiye.

He made the remarks during his visit to the Turkish Embassy here to express condolences over the loss of life and property in the devastating earthquake in Turkiye. The prime minister was accompanied by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Minister for Economic Affairs Sardar Ayyaz Sadiq, Minister for Law Azam Nazeer Tarrar, and Special Assistants to the Prime Minister Attaullah Tarrar and Tariq Fatemi.

He conveyed his condolences to the Turkish ambassador and prayed for the victims of the earthquake. He reiterated that Pakistan would continue its rescue and relief efforts for Turkish brothers and sisters until the last affected person was rehabilitated. The prime minister also highlighted the relief efforts of Pakistan for the earthquake victims of Turkiye. He said Pakistan sent winter tents, blankets, warm clothes and other essential items for the people of Turkiye.

The PM said brothers in Turkey were sent assistance by air, sea and road, while the government was also considering to send aid through trains. He said assistance was being provided on the basis of daily reports from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Pakistan's ambassador to Turkey.

The government of Turkey fully helped Pakistan during the earthquake of 2005, floods in 2010 and in the recent floods, he noted. He asked the Turkish ambassador to inform him about the needs of the people of

Turkey so that Pakistan could arrange assistance accordingly. The ministers, who accompanied the prime minister, also offered their condolences. They said Pakistan's public and private sectors were ready to extend assistance to the people of Turkiye.

PM Shehbaz also recorded his remarks in the condolence book. Thanking the prime minister and the people of Pakistan, the Turkish ambassador said they were touched by the outpouring of sympathy and support from the entire Pakistani nation.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif asked the provinces and administrative units to submit a comprehensive strategy to the federal government on the provision of food items at subsidized rates during the holy month of Ramazan.

Chairing a meeting on the availability of essential commodities and food items, he stressed using technology to control the rates in Ramazan bazars. He also emphasized putting in place effective measures for security. The prime minister directed to increase the number of Ramazan bazars in big cities to accommodate the maximum population.

He said ensuring the supply of essential items to citizens was the basic responsibility of the federal and provincial governments. In this regard, he called for improving liaison between centre and provinces and directed strict action against the hoarders. He stressed removing hurdles in import of necessary items on a priority basis. He said special committees would be set up to improve the supply chain of commodities and maintain their prices.

The meeting was told that necessary steps were being taken to ensure the supply of commodities including wheat, pulses and edible oil, and

Nation disappointed with Imran's 'somersaults': PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said the politics of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief Imran Khan was based on lies and his 'somersaults' had disappointed the nation. "Imran Niazi's antics and somersaults continue to disappoint the nation," he said in a tweet, in reference to the U-turns of the PTI leader on his own previous stance.

Imran Khan in an interview and a televised address on Sunday stated that the United States was not behind the conspiracy of ousting him from the government. Imran's statement was in stark contrast to his earlier stance of blaming the U.S., where he had called the country a main culprit behind the 'regime change'. The prime minister said, "The only constant is his desperation to get back into power even if it involves plunging the country into a protracted period of instability." He said the politics of Imran Niazi was based on lies, which were getting exposed by the day.

other items. It was highlighted that the federal government was supplying the required wheat to the provinces. Some provinces are using mobile phone applications to reach out to the citizens for the supply of essential items at reduced rates.

The meeting was attended by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Minister for National Food Protection and Research Tariq Bashir Cheema, Planning Minister Ahsan Iqbal, the chief secretaries of four provinces, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Kashmir, the chief commission of Islamabad, and senior officials.

KP govt to extend relief to Turkiye quake victims

T.M. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan has decided in principles to extend assistance to the earthquake victims of Turkiye and has directed the Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to chalk out an action plan to this effect.

In a statement issued to this effect here on Monday, the Chief Minister has further directed to coordinate with NDMA and other relevant federal entities to get exact information about the relief goods needed by the earthquake affectees so that arrangements could be made to send the relief items which exactly needed by the affectees.

The Chief Minister has further directed the Chief Secretary to come up with proposals to contribute to the Prime Minister's relief fund further directing to reach out to the educational institutions, welfare organizations, government employees and other segments of society in this regard. Muhammad Azam Khan has said that in these difficult hours, the people and government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa stood by their Turkish brothers and sisters adding that the people and government of the province are committed to extend all possible help to their Turkish brothers and sisters. He made an appeal to the well-off segments of society, welfare organizations, government employees and other segments of society to generously contribute to help the earthquake affectees of Turkiye in their difficult hours of life.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif recording his remarks in condolence book at Embassy of Turkiye.

SC rejects JIT report in Arshad Sharif case

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Supreme Court of Pakistan has rejected the report of the Special Joint Investigation Team (JIT) formed to probe the murder of senior journalist Arshad Sharif.

The JIT report was submitted to the CJP's Chamber earlier in the day. The report contains details of the investigation carried out in Kenya and the UAE. The team returned to Pakistan, last week after completing its inquiry in Kenya and the

United Arab Emirates. A five-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan, Justice Umar Ata Bandial rejected the report submitted by the special JIT and termed it as a story of 'failures' only. During the hearing, CJP asked that why Kenya stopped 'cooperating' with Pakistan in the Arshad Sharif murder case. "Foreign Office should investigate the matter and brief the state on the matter," CJP Bandial remarked.

CJP Justice Umar Ata

Bandial said there are two important aspects in the Arshad Sharif murder case one is domestic and the other is foreign. The top judge also asked the JIT head and the additional attorney general to find out who leaked the fact-finding report of the case. The JIT head informed the SC bench, the Kenyan authorities have not handed over Arshad Sharif's iPhone and iPad to them and went on to say the JIT did not find any evidence to reach any conclusion in the case.

Turkiye requests Pakistan help

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Turkish government requested Pakistan to send surgical equipment, tents, blankets, and dry fruits for the quake victims, sources said.

The government of Pakistan National Emergency Operation Center (NEOC) is in contact with the Turkish government through their ambassador in Pakistan. Turkiye has appealed to Pakistan not to send medical teams and medicines at present.

Medical teams from all over the world are arriving with medicines, so currently the victims need family tents, blankets and dry food due to the severe cold. The Turkish government has appealed to Pakistan to send surgical equipments and medical devices.

Earthquake victims need major and minor surgeries. As the number of surgeries increases, there is a shortage of surgical equipment and medical devices. Sources say that Pakistan has agreed to send surgical equipments and medical devices to Turkiye and the first batch of the equipment will be sent this week via air.

FIA books Shaukat Tarin in sedition case

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Federal Investigation Agency on Monday booked former finance minister and PTI leader Shaukat Tarin in a sedition case under the PECA Act after completing investigations into an alleged video leak.

The FIA Cyber Wing filed the case under the Pakistan Electronic Crimes Act after getting a nod from the government. A day earlier, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah allowed the FIA to arrest the former finance minister after the agency sought the interior ministry's nod to detain him.

Tarin has been accused of sabotaging government's deal with the International Monetary Fund as has been revealed in a purported audio. Besides Tarin, Tamur Saleem Jhagra and Mohsin Leghari have also been nominated in the case. The case was registered under sections 124 and 505 on the complaint of Arshad Mehmood, s/o Ghulam Sarwar.

Bilawal calls for consensus to confront challenges

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Monday urged the country's leadership and other stakeholders to develop a 'national consensus' to confront challenges posed by the economy and others.

Speaking in the inauguration ceremony of golden jubilee celebrations of the Constitution of 1973 at Parliament House, he said the Central Executive Committee (CEC) of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) had decided to constitute a committee and assigned it task to evolve consensus among stake holders on devising code of conduct for resolving all issues of the country and moving forward with the aim to resolving issues of the countrymen.

The foreign minister said the PPP committee would approach all political parties for devising rules of the game to contest polls and smooth functioning of the country. Political parties should come on one page to overcome

crises being confronted the country, he added. Bilawal said the stubborn attitude of Imran Khan and his non cooperation was damaging the interests of masses.

He said for smooth running of the country, rules of the games must be devised and all stake holders must agree on it for smooth functioning of the country. He urged peoples representatives to evolve consensus on a code of conduct and implement it.

Lamenting the behavior of PTI Chairman Imran Khan, the foreign minister observed the PTI Chairman was ready to hold negotiations with anti state elements but allergic to sit with fellow politicians. He said the constitution guaranteed the rights to people, journalists and others, adding the 1973 constitution had provided freedom of expression and right to vote to the ordinary people.

He said before that only rich and mighty was given the right to vote. The constitution of 1973 forced the powerful elites to approach the common man to beg for

Senate adjourns proceedings

ISLAMABAD (INP): Two bills were laid before the Senate on Monday. These included: the Constitution Amendment Bill, 2023 and the Personal Data Protection Bill, 2023.

The chair referred the bills to the standing committees concerned. On a point of order, Leader of Opposition Shehzad Waseem voiced concerns over reports that the government has allowed FIA to arrest former Finance Minister Shaukat Tarin on charges of sedition. Responding to him, Minister of State for Law Shahadat Awan said FIA is an independent institution and it has completed its inquiry as per the law.

Turkiye-Syria quake toll rises above 35,000

ISTANBUL (Agencies): The toll from last week's earthquake in Turkiye and Syria rose above 35,000 on Monday, as rescue teams started to wind down the search for survivors and the aid effort shifted to hundreds of thousands of people made homeless. Eight days after the 7.8-magnitude tremor, Turkish media reported a handful of people were still being pulled from the rubble as excavators dug through ruined cities.

The confirmed death toll rose to 35,224 as officials and medics said 31,643 people had died in Turkiye and 3,581 in Syria after the February 6 earthquake, the fifth deadliest since the start of the 21st century. The United Nations has decried the failure to ship desperately needed aid to war-torn regions of Syria and warned that the toll is set to rise even higher as experts caution that hopes for finding people alive dim with each

passing day. "Send any stuff you can because there are millions of people here and they all need to be fed," Turkish Interior Minister Suleyman Soyulu appealed to Turks late Sunday.

In Kahramanmaraş, close to the epicentre, 30,000 tents have been installed, 48,000 people are sheltering in schools and another 11,500 in sports halls, he said. While hundreds of rescue teams were still working, efforts had ended in seven parts of the province, he added. The quake has left a trail of destruction that could cost Ankara up to \$84.1 billion, a business group said, while a government official put the figure at more than \$50bn.

A report published at the weekend by the Turkish Enterprise and Business Confederation put the cost of the damage at \$84.1bn — \$70.8bn from the repair of thousands of homes,

\$10.4bn from loss of national income and \$2.9bn from loss of working days. It said the main costs would be rebuilding housing, transmission lines and infrastructure, and meeting the short, medium and long-term shelter needs of the hundreds of thousands left homeless.

In Antakya, clean-up teams started to evacuate rubble and erect basic toilets as the telephone network started to come back in parts of the town, an AFP reporter said. The city was patrolled by a strong police and military presence which authorities deployed to prevent looting following several incidents over the weekend. Turkish Vice President Fuat Oktay late Sunday said 108,000 buildings were damaged across the quake-hit zone with 1.2 million people being housed in student accommodation and 400,000 people evacuated from the affected region.




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Zia Mohyeddin is no more, a great loss to Art & Culture

F.P. Report

KARACHI: It is with profound sadness that the Board of Directors National Academy of Performing Arts (NAPA) announces the passing of the President Emeritus of NAPA Zia Mohyeddin, an icon, a trailblazer & a thespian par excellence.

A brilliant teacher who mentored and trained numerous students of the theatre, he was a committed professional and set the highest standards of academic excellence and integrity. His loss will be deeply felt by his students, colleagues, admirers and friends across the globe.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Chief Executive Officer and the entire NAPA fraternity, I extend deepest condolences to his wife Azra and his children Minos, Risha, Hassan and Aaliya.

IPO DG visits UVAS

LAHORE (APP): Director General Intellectual Property Organization (IPO) of Pakistan Shazia Adnan with Deputy Director Moeed and Assistant Controller of Patents Shakra Khurshid paid a visit to the University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences (UVAS) Lahore and met Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Nasim Ahmad on Monday.

Speaking on the occasion, Shazia Adnan acknowledged the UVAS quality of education and research work of the faculty members for benefit of the community. She spoke about digitalization, online hearing of queries, procedures and time duration for attaining of intellectual property rights/patent filing for the assistance of applicants. She said patent was necessary for the commercialization of research.

Prof Dr Nasim Ahmad briefed on the UVAS academic, research, extension, advisory services and training programmes.

DG LDA reviews one window cell performance

LAHORE (APP): Director General Lahore Development Authority (LDA) Aamir Ahmed Khan on Monday said that special measures had been taken in one window cell for senior citizens, women and overseas Pakistanis.

Presiding over a performance review meeting on working of one window cell, he said that one window cell should be made state of the art in all respects. He said that the working and progress of one window cell would be reviewed regularly. Amir Ahmed Khan reviewed the applications received from citizens and the actions taken on them during last month. It was briefed that out of 5167 applications, 4650 were disposed of on the one window cell during current year, while remaining applications were in final stages of processing.

The DG LDA said that unnecessary delay on the applications of the citizens would not be tolerated at all. Additional DG Headquarters Farqueel Mir, Additional DG Housing Safiullah Gondal, Director DG Headquarters Sardar Akbar Nakai.

Parvez asks ECP, governors to stop delaying polls date

LAHORE (NNI): Punjab former chief minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi asked the Election Commission of Pakistan and governors to avoid derailing the date of the election.

He said there was no excuse for delaying tactics in the election date as the judicial decision made it clear while mentioning the court stood with the supremacy of the constitution. Mr Elahi said this while meeting with the defence minister Parvez Khattak in which both discussed the country's political situa-

tion, especially the forthcoming elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The former CM said the ECP should fulfill its constitutional role and release the schedule of the elections and the violation of the constitution would not be tolerated.

Parvez Khattak said the rulers were facing pressure due to the popularity of Imran Khan while adding the cases and revengeful activities could not stop Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf from success.

Governor Sindh to inaugurate Flower Show on Feb 14

KARACHI (APP): Administrator DMC East, Syed Shakeel Ahmed on Monday said Governor of Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori will inaugurate the flower show on February 14, at Bagh-e-Rizwan, Gulshan-e-Iqbal.

He made this announcement while inspecting the arrangements for the flower show held at Bagh-e-Rizwan Gulshan-e-Iqbal, is being organized by the DMC East. He said the exhibition will play an important role in healthy recreational activities in the metropolis.

Syed Shakeel said it was the need of the hour to do more work for tree plantation to

promote greenery in the city. **Outgoing Korean CG calls on Governor:** The outgoing Korean Consul General (CG) Kim Haksung called on the Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House here on Monday. They discussed bilateral relations, trade, investment opportunities among other important matters.

The Governor Kamran Tessori said that Pakistan and Korea had a long history of friendly relations.

The Consul General Kim Haksung said that the Korean investors were interested in investment in the Sindh province.

Admin foils 18 bids to smuggle 11,358 flour bags

RAWALPINDI (APP): Naseerabad, Saddar Wah and Mandra police in Potohar Division conducted raids and rounded up accused namely Umar Akhtar, Arshad, Ismail, Nazir, Syed Zain, Syed Rahat, Muhammad Nabi, Ajmal Khan and others on recovery of 11,358 wheat flour, 200 fine flour and 200 'chokar atta' bags. He informed that the

authorities of the food department along with

accused were trying to illegally ship wheat flour and wheat out of the Rawalpindi division.

The spokesman said the Food Department Rawalpindi and district police on the directives of the authorities concerned were strictly monitoring all the exit points of Rawalpindi district to foil wheat and flour smuggling bids.

IGP Islamabad directs to ensure foolproof security of citizens and foreigners

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, hold a high-level meeting at the Central Police Office to discuss the foolproof security arrangements for foreign nationals and the law and order situation in the federal capital.

All the divisional Capital Police Officers, SSPs, and other senior police officers attended the meeting. During the meeting, it was decided to install an entry and exit system at the entrance of the National Assembly Secretariat, and a complete database of all employees working in the National Assembly and Secretariat will be kept.

Special cards will also be issued to employees in this regard. During January, the Islamabad Capital Police made foolproof security arrangements for 24 presidential programs, 12 programs of the Prime Minister's office, one program of a foreign VVIP delegation, 116 foreign VIP programs, 138 national VIPs, 260 government programs, seven Senate sessions, and three National Assembly sessions.

The Islamabad Capital Police has taken stern legal action against 999 suspects, 16,470 suspicious motorcycles, and 5,658 black-tinted vehicles through the Safe City cameras.

Black-tinted vehicles and those with non-standard license plates will not be allowed to enter the red zone, and prompt action will also be taken against

violators.

IGP Islamabad also directed the police officers to ensure foolproof security for foreigners. Police teams should visit the residences of foreign nationals, ensure the installation of security cameras, and connect these cameras with the centralized system of Safe City Islamabad, he added.

The Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan further stated that trained staff should be deployed for their security and their data should be compiled and scrutinized.

The registration of all foreign nationals should be completed on time.

The Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan directed the officers to make the security arrangements in the federal capital of Islamabad more stringent and effective in light of recent security concerns. Checking should be intensified at the entry and exit points of the city.

Instructions should be issued to the officials on duty at the checkpoints to make security more effective and keep a close watch on suspicious vehicles and individuals, and ensure foolproof security for all important places and red zones.

Protection of the life and property of the citizens is among the top priorities of the Islamabad Capital Police, he maintained.

Relief to people being ensured: Minister

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Punjab Minister for Local Government and Community Development (LGCD) Ibrahim Hasan Murad said on Monday that caretaker government was trying its best to provide maximum relief to the people.

Having meetings with various delegations here in his office, he added the government ensured the supply of cheap flour and also

increased its sale points. "Besides improving basic facilities for people under the LGCD, I am monitoring the ongoing development works," he mentioned.

Ibrahim Hasan Murad said that proposed Task Management System in the LGCD would increase the efficiency of officers and improve good governance in the province.

Caretaker Punjab Minister for

Local Government and Community Development (LGCD) Ibrahim Hasan Murad said, "I will visit Bahawalpur this week to review performance of various departments there."

The provincial minister said that a complaint cell was being established in the LGCD to redress the complaints of the citizens in an efficient manner on a daily basis.

SAPM offers condolences to Turkish ambassador over quake loss

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister Jawad Sohrab Malik on Monday met with Turkish Ambassador to Pakistan Mehmet Pacaci, here, and signed the condolence book.

The SAPM expressed solidarity with the brothers and sisters of Türkiye in the wake of widespread damage and loss of

lives caused by calamitous earthquakes. He also reiterated the resolve of PM Shehbaz Sharif for the people of Türkiye that "not to spare any effort to reach to our brothers in their hour of need".

Penning down his remarks in the Condolence Book, the SAPM said: "The catastrophic earthquakes have not only jolted the Southern Türkiye, but the

hearts of the 220 million people of Pakistan also and filled them with such a pain that would never go away. With mourning heart we as a nation pray Allah Almighty for granting eternal peace to the souls of martyrs of these earthquakes, bestow consolation, comfort and strength upon the families forever changed by grief and loss and shower.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Senegal, Ms. Saima Sayed, called on President Dr. Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

No immediate plan to expand Punjab cabinet: says CM

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Monday said that there was no immediate plan to expand the provincial cabinet and he wanted to keep it as small as possible.

Responding to queries during a meeting with journalists at the Chief Minister's Secretariat here, he said he did not find it necessary to add to the current size of the provincial cabinet while appointment of a minority representative may be considered if more people were inducted in future.

The Caretaker Chief Minister had invited journalists to listen to their advice and know about the problems faced by them.

On neutrality and clash of interest, the media magnate said he had taken oath of neutrality and would conduct elections in the province within 15 days once the Election Commission announced the schedule.

He further clarified he had disassociated himself from his media houses before he took oath of the office, adding, he had instructed the Directorate General Public Relations (DGPR) Punjab to stop government advertisements to Channel C 42 before he took oath of

the office. He said all arrears of the media houses had been paid by the caretaker Punjab government.

On development projects, Mohsin Naqvi said the caretaker government could not start any new development projects, adding that only near completion development projects of the previous governments would be completed without discrimination.

On Afghan citizens, the Caretaker Chief Minister dispelled the impression that Punjab had offered to accommodate Afghan citizens, adding that the government was looking for the Afghan nationals who had been staying in the country despite visa expiry.

On protest call by the flour mills, he said basic task of his government was to avert any flour crisis in the province and apprehend the black marketers. The government supplied wheat to the flour mills at 64 rupees per kilogram while it was being sold at 135 rupees in the market, the Chief Minister said, adding, the government wanted to ensure its sale at 64 rupees per kg. On law-breakers, the Chief Minister said the law would take its course against anyone who violated law.

About the elections in Punjab, the

Caretaker Chief Minister reassured that he would conduct the elections as per the schedule announced by the ECP and there would be no delay.

When asked about health facilities, the CM said his caretaker set-up had taken special measures to ensure timely treatment to cardiac patients while efforts were underway to provide immediate care to the brain haemorrhage patients in the province.

To a query, the Chief Minister stressed the need for a code of conduct by the social media journalists, adding that they must not forget how much loss an authentic news-item may cause to a person's reputation. Chief Minister Punjab Syed Mohsin Naqvi, to different queries by the journalists, said that the government would do its best to fulfill demands of the journalists regarding Journalists Housing Society Phase II in Lahore and other provinces.

The Chief Minister also listened to the suggestions of the journalists regarding better administration and public service.

Caretaker Information Minister Amir Mir and Provincial Secretary Information Ali Nawaz Awan were also present on the occasion.

Masses will not spare PDM regime, says Musarrat Cheema

LAHORE (NNI): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior leader Musarrat Jamshed Cheema said on Monday that the masses would not spare the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). Speaking to media, Ms Cheema lambasted the incumbent government, say-

ing, "The country's youth have no trust in this country." She continued to scold the government over the shortage of flour, saying, "The people were forced to sacrifice their lives for the sake of flour." "Today the county is witnessing the closure of industries. The PDM gov-

ernment came into power believing that it would take the country out of the quagmire. Recounting the popularity of the former premier, Ms. Cheema said, "Despite the government is resorting to wicked tactics, Imran Khan continues to bag immense popularity."

LWMC CEO for ensuring strict monitoring of cleanliness operation

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Waste Management Company (LWMC) Chief Executive Officer Babar Sahib Din on Monday directed the authorities to ensure strict monitoring of daily cleanliness operation.

According to LWMC sources here, all relevant departments had been sensitized to take all necessary measures to ensure extraordinary cleanliness arrangements across the city. Lahore Waste Management Company (LWMC) Chief Executive Officer Babar Sahib Din said that monitoring team should keep a close eye on the timings of the vehicles going to the field.

Babar Sahib Din said that immediate action should be taken if mechanical sweepers were not on route or monitored over speeding.

Video Wall team should submit report of actions taken against irregularities on daily basis to the CEO office. As per the direction of Babar Sahib Din, Zero Waste Operation was continuing in Shalimar Town.

Search Missing

Sardar Maqsood Ur Rehman s/o sardar Gohar Rehman who died is the allottee of Plot No F-350 in Abbottabad Township, his original allotment letter has been lost, if anyone finds it please inform us of the following content number/Sardar Junaid s/o sardar Maqsood Ur Rehman/Content No. 0336-5155565



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Senior Data Analyst I/Engineer / Senior Data Analyst II/Engineer	KHI
Senior Data Analyst III/Engineer	KHI
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Data Scientist	KHI
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Irani Consul General calls on KP Governor

— expresses condolences on police lines' mosque blast

PESHAWAR (APP): Acting Iranian Consul General here Monday called on the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali at Governor House where he expressed his deep condolences as well as on behalf of people of Iran over the police lines' mosque blast.

He said the function about the anniversary of Iranian Revolution was also cancelled due to police line tragic blast because people of both countries were standing with each other on occasions of joys and sorrow.

The governor KP while thanking the Iranian consul general and people of Iran said that Iran was our brotherly neighbour country and people of both the countries have enormous love and affection for each other.

The Governor said he had visited Iran on several occasions on the invitation

of the brotherly country and was impressed with its overall development especially of modern technology.

The Governor proposed exchange of trade delegations and Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran exhibition that was welcomed by the Iranian consul general.



PESHAWAR: Acting Iranian Consul General meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali at Governor's House.

PHC stops appoint of KPOGDCL CEO

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) has stopped appointment of Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (KP OGDCL) while issued notices to respondents, on Monday.

The petition was filed by Dr. Amir Jadoon while stated that petitioner was recommended as CEO while offer letter was issued by KP OGDCL in favor of applicant and the company was directed for

appointment.

The counsel Nauman Kakakhel argued that the company has withdrawn offer letter after one week which has abrogated the selection processes of CEO Khyber Pakhtunkhwa OGDCL while the Dr. Amir Jadoon was impacted from the decision as applicant.

The counsel further added that offer letter was also withdrawn on the ground of ingenuine information while argued that neither notice was served to petitioner nor applicant has provided facility in favor of

his defense. Without any reason the offer letter shouldn't be withdrawn, the lawyer added.

The counsel Nauman Kakakhel Advocate requested to stop provincial government and KP OGDCL from recruitment of new CEO of the company.

The divisional bench of PHC comprising of Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Shakeel Ahmad has stopped appointment of new CEO's KP OGDCL and issued notice to provincial government while adjourned further hearing.

PHC partially allows IPS writ F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) partially allowed writ petition of Institute of Professional Studies (IPS) to extend that enrolled students should complete their respective degree.

In this regard PHC has announced decision stating that writ is partially allowed and disposed of in the manner that the already admitted students of the petitioner-institute be allowed to complete their degrees and appear in the upcoming examination MBA.

Moreover, the judgment stated that the prayer regarding setting aside of the decision of HEC taken in its meeting held on 07 September 2022 is declined and it is held that decision of the HEC shall have prospective effect accordingly.

PHC has partially allowed writ in favor of Institute of Professional Studies in which Higher Education Commission, Vice Chancellor University of Peshawar (UOP), Registrar, Assistant Registrar Affiliation, Controller Examination, Director and Assistant Registrar Admission UOP were made respondents.

Manzoor calls on Punjab Caretaker Minister

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Labour, Excise and Narcotics Control Haji Manzoor Khan Afridi called on Punjab Caretaker Minister for Excise, Taxation, Communications and Works departments Bilal Afzal during his short visit to Lahore.

In the meeting held at the Directorate General of Provincial Infrastructure Development Authority at Lahore, various matters of mutual interest were discussed between the two ministers. It was also agreed to remove the doubling in collections of registration and token taxes of

vehicles between the provinces besides other difficulties and complications.

The Punjab Excise Minister assured to arrange a meeting at the level of secretaries to keep the provincial governments and departments more abreast with the collection of token tax from the vehicles of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Lahore and other cities of Punjab as well as to clarify each other's position and to solve the problems for good. He assured that progress will be made soon in this regard.

Haji Manzoor Afridi expressed his satisfaction on this and clarified, that it will promote good will

feelings at the level of the governments and the people on both sides.

He also mentioned the problems faced by the law enforcement agencies and special squads of the KP provincial government in Punjab in going through the stages of investigation and prosecution upon which the provincial minister of Punjab assured that this matter will be also taken up at the appropriate level.

Haji Manzoor Afridi further said that in view of the spreading menace of ice addition among the youth of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he has started Jihad against this social scourge and in this regard, anti-narcotics campaigns are being

launched especially in the educational institutions of the province on emergency basis. A plan has been chalked out for this purpose he added.

Bilal Afzal hailed this initiative of Haji Manzoor Afridi and assured proper cooperation from the Punjab government side and agreed with his argument that the use of ice in our young generation has become a bigger threat than atomic bomb due to its fatal implications.

He said his provincial government is fully aware of its sensitivity too.

Haji Manzoor Afridi thanked Bilal Afzal and the Punjab government for showing goodwill.



PESHAWAR: Candidates submitting nomination papers for NA-28 and NA-30 by-elections with ARO Shoaib. — F.P. photo

Qasuria directs re-activation of cooperative bank, or alternate system

PESHAWAR (APP): KP Caretaker Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, Fisheries & Cooperative Department, Abdul Haleem Khan Qasuria has directed the authorities of the department for either re-activation of the cooperative bank or framing a comprehensive strategy for an alternative system to provide soft loans to farming community to enable them to play role in meeting the food requirements of the province.

He issued these directives while presiding over a meeting of the Cooperative Department here on

Monday. Besides, Secretary Agriculture Dr Mohammad Israr Khan, Secretary Livestock, Fisheries & Cooperative Department, Mukhtiar Ahmad and other authorities and district level officers attended the meeting at large.

The Caretaker Minister was told that the Cooperative Department has been established to provide assistance to forest farmers, vocational centres to impart skills to women, beekeeping and other socio-welfare oriented initiatives.

The cooperative bank has also provided loans to

farming communities on soft terms and conditions, whose recovery rate is 92%.

The meeting was told that currently 333 people were linked with societies of 8 different sectors while housing societies have also been formed under the auspices of the Cooperative Department.

Speaking on the occasion, Abdul Haleem Khan Qasuria stressed the need to work for the progress and development of deprived and downtrodden classes of society and initiating steps for the welfare of marginalized classes.

ECP appoints Appellate Tribunals for by-polls

PESHAWAR (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has appointed Appellate Tribunals for disposal of appeals against the decision of the Returning Officers (ROs), regarding rejection or acceptance of the nomination papers of candidates for by-elections on 8 National Assembly constituencies.

The Appellate Tribunals have been established in pursuance of sub-section (1) of Section 63 of the Election Act, 2017 (Act No. XXXIII of 2017), said a notification issued by the ECP on Monday.

According to the notification, Mr. Justice Ijaz Anwar (Principal Seat of Peshawar High Court) has been appointed as Appellate Tribunal for National Assembly constituencies NA-18 Swabi-I, NA-25 Nowshera-I, NA-26 Nowshera-II, NA-32 Kohat and NA-43 Khyber-I.

Similarly, Mr Justice Mohammad Naeem Anwar (Swat Bench of Peshawar High Court) and Mr Justice Wiqar Ahmad (Abbottabad Bench of Peshawar High Court) have been appointed as Appellate Tribunals for NA-04 Swat-III and NA.17 Haripur-I respectively.

Furthermore, Mr Justice Mohammad Faheem Wali of D.I. Khan Bench of Peshawar High Court has been appointed as Appellate Tribunal for NA-38, D.I. Khan.

Five illegal godowns sealed, owners arrested

PESHAWAR (APP): District administration Peshawar sealed five illegal godowns in residential areas of the city and arrested their owner here on Monday.

Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar, Shafiqullah Khan had received complaints about the operation of commercial activities in residential area of Kohati Gate, due to which the residents were facing severe hardships.

Taking notice of the situ-

ation, the Deputy Commissioner directed the Assistant Commissioner Rao Hasham, who along with the Additional Assistant Commissioner, Junaid Shah conducted raid on the area wherein godowns were set up inside the houses and trading activities were going on there.

The officers of district administration expressed anguish over the situation and after sealing five godowns also arrested their owners to initiate further

legal proceedings against them.

Deputy Commissioner, Peshawar Shafiqullah Khan has directed the officers of district administration to keep a strict check on commercial activities in residential areas and take action against them.

He has also appealed to the general public to register their complaints regarding trading activities in residential areas with the Control Room on telephone No. 091-9211338.



PESHAWAR: Railway Workers Union's Junaid Awan, Tahir Butti, Rahm Taj Shinwari, Riaz Kashmiri and Naem Bakhsh with Qadir Khan Mando Khalil.

Schools holidays extended

PESHAWAR (APP): The Elementary and Secondary Education Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Monday extended winter vacations till February 28th for winter zones of the province.

According to a notification issued here said that in view of the abrupt and unusual change in the weather condition in winter zones, the department has decided to extend the holidays, with immediate effect.

It is worth mentioning here that the schools were reopening from February 15 in winter zones.

Security tightened in city to prevent street crimes

PESHAWAR (APP): Capital City Police, Peshawar has tightened security measures and carried out special checking of vehicles and suspects to prevent street crimes and maintain law and order, said a press release issued here on Monday.

It said that on the special directives of the SSP (Operations), Kashif Aftab Abbasi, the city police has further tightened security at check posts and strict action is being taken against tinted-glass suspected vehicles and pillion

riding at all exits and entry points to the city.

Special checkpoints have been established under the supervision of the Sub-Divisional Police Officers (SDPOs) while concerned Station House Officers (SHOs) also present along with the personnel of local police, Abbabeel Squad, and City Patrolling.

The documents of suspects and illegally staying Afghan refugees have also been checked at the specially established check points and a special camera mobile also remained on

duty at such spots.

The SSP (Operations) Peshawar, Kashif Aftab Abbasi has said that the purpose of establishing of checkpoints is to ensure peaceful environment in the provincial capital. He said that the checking of vehicles is also continuing through VVSP system.

He said that indiscriminate crackdown is continuing against the violators of law and action is also being taken against the installation of illegal search lights and tinted glasses on vehicles.



PESHAWAR: Station Director Radio Pakistan Peshawar Syeda Ifat Jabbar, Director General PID Ashfaq Khan Khalil with others during a function to celebrate 'World Radio Day'.

Radio provides adequate coverage to diverse cultures

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister of Local Government, Elections and Rural Development, Sawal Nazeer Khan has said that Radio Pakistan is our precious asset and presented fair and balanced flow of information including contrasting views without advocating any opinion or ideology of its own.

He expressed these views as a special guest at a ceremony held in connection with 'World Radio Day' held here on Monday at Radio Pakistan Peshawar.

Station Director Radio Pakistan Peshawar Syeda Ifat Jabbar, Director General PID Ashfaq Khan Khalil, Psychologist Dr. Khalid Mufti and other relevant officers were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion of World Radio Day, the minister said that still around 65 percent of people in Pakistan listen to radio to keep themselves informed

about education, agriculture, rural development, environment, health and family welfare as well as science and technology.

The Local Government Minister congratulated Radio Pakistan on International Day and appreciated the services of Radio Peshawar that provided adequate coverage to the diverse cultures and languages of all the regions of the country by broadcasting appropriate programs.

He said that the radio is a powerful medium for providing information and education to the masses.

He said that the radio is a powerful medium for providing information and education to the masses.

Woman hurt

PESHAWAR (APP): A woman was injured in a traffic accident at Shobra Square, district Nowshera on Monday. The woman identified Bibi, 28, resident of Armour Colony was crossing the road, when she was hit by a Suzuki Carry and received injuries.

On receiving the report of the accident, a medical team of the Rescue 1122 Nowshera, Station 77 arrived at the spot and rushed her for provision of first-aid to Qazi Hussain Ahmad Medical Complex.

Imran to be remembered as worst ruler: Mohammad Ali Bacha

PESHAWAR (APP): Acting provincial president PPP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Minister of State, Mohammad Ali Shah Bacha has said that Imran Khan would be remembered as the worst ruler in the political history of the country.

In a statement issued here on Monday, the PPP stalwart said that the PTI government had used accountability as shield was

most corrupt government in the history of the country, saying its leader Imran Khan will find no place in history.

The Minister of State said that the top leadership of PTI has not learnt political management so far and except hallow slogans Imran Khan has nothing to deliver.

He said that Imran Khan and his cabinet members were even not ready to

accept the constitutional right of opposition.

He said that Imran Khan and his government have left behind mega scandals to the tune of billions of rupees in sugar, wheat and medicines and asked him to present himself for accountability for his record corruption in Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), Malam Jabba and Billion Tree Tsunami Projects scams. He said that the

present government is the victim of the flop economic and administrative policies and incompetency.

Mohammad Ali Shah Bacha also accused Imran Khan of following an anti-state foreign agenda whose each and every step is harmful for the nation and country.

He further accused the PTI chief of misleading the youth and doing politics of the narrative of lying.



In brief

Candidate submit papers
F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: Former member District Council Dir Lower Syed Alam Shah alias Thany Khan has submitted his nomination papers as an independent candidate for National Assembly by-election Constituency NA-6, on Monday. According to details, National Assembly by-election for Constituency NA-6 Shujaat Ullah submitted their nomination papers for the by-election as an independent. I am fighting and seeing the enthusiasm of the workers, the victory will also be ours. The assembly members did not do anything for the construction and development of Dir and did not say a single word about the problems and problems of the people of Dir in the assembly.

Two arrested,
1,410 kites seized

SARGODHA (INP): Police on Monday arrested two kite sellers and recovered 1,410 kites, string rolls and other items. A police team conducted raids at Block No 29 and arrested Jhangir and Haroon. Police also seized 1,410 kites and material used for kite flying. Cases had been registered against the accused.

Policemen
appreciated
F.P. Report

LOWER CHITRAL: Policemen take the lead in the maintenance of the road leading to Arkari area under community service and engagement. The road leading to Arakari area has been closed for all kinds of travel due to avalanches at Pech Och Momi, due to which the local people are facing a lot of problems. DPO Lower Chitral Nasir Mahmood (PSP) continued to implement the Community Service and Public Engagement Plan and gave special instructions to the SDPO Circle Latkoh that in view of the problems of the people, the road maintenance should be ensured. SDPO Nazir Shah has formed a team of policemen from Latkoh, Shoghore and Arkari police stations and are engaged in removing the avalanche. Lower Chitral police are actively participating in community service and engagement activities along with the prevention of social crimes, wherever the people need the police, we will lead the local people.

Enhancement
of jail security
F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Local deputy commissioner Fazal Akbar has asked the relevant authorities to enhance security of the district jail and ensure provision of all sorts of facilities to the inmates, on Monday. DC issued these directions during a visit to the jail in Lakki Marwat city on Monday. He checked the available facilities for prisoners at the jail. He also inspected barracks, kitchen, ration store and dispensary. Fazal met jail inmates and heard their problems. He checked deployment of cops and other security arrangements and directed the authorities concerned to enhance security measures and ensure functionality of CCTV cameras. He also directed the jail authorities to improve hygiene conditions and resolve problems faced by the inmates.

Culprits held
F.P. Report

TAKHTBHAI: Police has arrested 23 alleged culprits including four proclaimed offenders, three facilitators while recovered arms and drugs from their possession.

Shaheed leader always strived to help poor: Sherpao

F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Chairman Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao on Monday while paying tributes to late Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hayat Mohammad Khan Sherpao, said the Shaheed leader always strived to help the poor get their due rights.

Addressing a well-attended gathering at Sherpao village in Charsadda in connection with the 48th death anniversary of Shaheed Hayat Mohammad Khan Sherpao, he said, "We are following in the footsteps of Shaheed Hayat Mohammad Khan Sherpao and will carry forward his mission."

A large number of QWP activists from all over the province participated in the gathering. Wearing the tri-colour caps, they were holding party flags and chanting slogans in favour of the party leadership. Aftab Sherpao said that Hayat Sherpao was the first political martyr from the KP, who laid down his life while striving for the rights of the people from the down-trodden segments of the society.

The QWP leader said this year the gathering to mark the death anniversary of Hayat Sherpao was dedicated to all the victims of terrorism particularly the cops who were martyred in the police lines blast in Peshawar and elsewhere in the country. The QWP leader said his party would continue raising its voice for the rights of the oppressed and the poor.

Commenting on the poor law and order and the recent wave of terrorism, he said the Pakhtuns had suffered the most due to acts of terrorism, therefore the state should take steps to stop their bloodshed. He vowed his party would continue striving for the rights of the Pakhtuns. Coming down hard on former Prime Minister Imran Khan, he said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader was playing politics on the issue of terrorism and was least bothered about the sufferings of the people.

He held the previous PTI government responsible for the prevailing security situation in KP. Aftab Sherpao said the Imran Khan-led party ruled the province for nine straight years, but failed to execute a single mega project and instead buried the

province under huge loan. He said KP's debt soared from Rs97 billion to 979 billion during the rule of the PTI. He said the PTI provincial government had received Rs417 billion from the centre for the rehabilitation of the destroyed infrastructure due to terrorism. "The nation asks the PTI leadership, where was the money spent?" he asked.

The QWP leader said Imran Khan was now creating anarchy in the country to pave the way for his return to power. However, he said Imran Khan failed to deliver when he was in power and pushed the country to the brink of bankruptcy. "Imran Khan lacks the ability to deliver as he is totally incompetent," he remarked. He said the Imran Khan government was imposed on the country under a conspiracy.

He said Imran Khan was trying to divert the attention of the nation from his poor performance by building a so-called narrative of regime change. He added Imran Khan kept changing his stance on every issue and took U-turns. Aftab Sherpao said the previous PTI government strained Pakistan's relations with China, Saudi Arabia and the US.

"Imran Khan is bent upon making the country go bankrupt for his political interests," he said, adding that the ones, who had brought him to power, also regretted helping him. He said Imran Khan deceived the nation by claiming that he was establishing a state on the model of Riyasat-e-Madina. He said Imran Khan had no vision and was a pawn in a conspiracy.

He recalled the previous PTI provincial government did not raise voice for the rights of KP when Imran Khan was the prime minister. He said the corruption scandals of the PTI rulers had started emerging. Though the PTI leaders had claimed to fight corruption, they were involved in corrupt practices so they should be held accountable for it.

Aftab Sherpao asked the Pakistan Democratic Movement-led government to provide relief to the people in the face of skyrocketing inflation. He said the government should inform the nation about the outcome of the talks it had been holding with the International Monetary Fund.

PML-N: Dialogue key to address problems

F.P. Report

ATTOCK: Pakistan Muslim League's Central Spokesperson and Information Secretary Ghulam Mustafa Malik has said on Monday that all political parties should come on the same page for the sake of political stability and strong economy in the country.

Political dialogue is the solution to the problems. He expressed these views while discussing at the resi-

dence of Malik Faisal newly elected Tehsil General Secretary of Pakistan People's Party. He said that due to the current economic situation, people are very worried. If this is the state of the economy, the coming time will be very difficult for the people. Political parties have to leave aside their differences and think about the economy for the survival of the country.

congratulated Faisal Malik on being nominated as Secretary General of People's Party Tehsil Pindi Gheb. He added that the nomination of real workers by political parties is a source of encouragement and praise for them, the country cannot afford protest politics. To solve the problems, one has to leave personal ego, obstinacy, stubbornness and think about the declining economy he added.

PPP worker's convention held in Pabbi



F.P. Report

PABBI: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Khattak Nama area of Pabbi arranged workers conventions in which large number of party activists along with civil society participated to mobilize public for upcoming elections, on Monday.

PPP proposed candidate

for NA-26 by-election Abdullah Ishaq Khattak, Pabbi president Muhammad Ilyas, former chairman district Haji Muhammad Ishaq, Naveed, Abdul Hameed, Faiq Zaman, Fazal Amin and Aftab along with other party leadership addressed workers convention. They argued party's activists should propagate PPP's nar-

rative among masses to ensure maximum representation from Nowshera district especially in by-election for NA-26.

The speakers stressed that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf led government has faced national economy with disaster and laid burden of unprecedented loan on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Solar-powered water facility installed

Rafullah Mandokhail

ZHOB: Gone are the days, when the minor girls were seen walking home carrying water in yellow buckets from the river bank in a remote village. The poor and unfortunate villagers had no other option but to consume the brackish river water. The children and women of the village would walk to fill their buckets and pots with enough water to drink and cook with.

Although the Hussainzai village is on the river bank, ironically there is not a drop of water for them to drink. The dug-up wells have been dried up because of depletion of water table as the area has been witnessing a dry spell for a long time. Human Development Foundation (HDF) has recently installed a solar-powered

water facility, providing water to the community in this remote part of the district.

According to the Team Leader HDF Naeem Gul Mandokhail, the solar-powered water facility has been donated by the Human Development Foundation North America (HDFNA). Thirty out of the 75 households will benefit from the facility. The facility has been installed successfully. Thirty households of the poverty-stricken village have been connected through a pipeline with the main water tank, so they could get clean water at their doorstep, he expressed hope.

Dad Muhammad - a resident of the village says, the villagers had no option but to drink brackish water and the main reason behind the prevailing diseases was the consumption of river water. Round the year whether in chilly winter or sizzling summer, the women, young girls and children used to fetch water from the river which was not fit for drinking. Now we have clean drinking water available at our homes and our children will be safe from water-borne diseases.

"Solar-powered water facility can help overcome all our odds. Thanks to HDF for its generous contribution," he adds. The dusty Hussainzai - a garlic-growing village is nestled on the left bank of the historic Zhob River some 22 kilometers in the north of Zhob town. The river flows from Muslim Bagh and falls in Gomal River. The Hussainzai village comprises dozens mud-and-stone houses with around 1000 population.

Two killed in Jamrud Bazaar

Amjad Ali Afridi

JAMRUD: At least two persons were killed in Jamrud bazaar, said police on Monday. Unknown assailants opened fire in front of the account office and killed Muhammad Abid and Imran Khan.

The rescue teams rushed to the place and shifted them to nearby hospital. Reason behind the incident was stated old enmity and the deceased were real brothers. The police registered the case and started investigation.

Woman hurt in traffic accident

F.P. Report

NEWSHERA: A woman was injured in a traffic accident at Shobra Square, district Nowshera on Monday.

The woman identified Bibi, 28, resident of Armour Colony was crossing the road, when she was hit by a Suzuki Carry and received injuries. On receiving the report of the accident, a medical team of the Rescue 1122 Nowshera, Station 77 arrived at the spot and rushed her for provision of first-aid to Qazi Hussain Ahmad Medical Complex (QHAMC).

Officials visit Mohmand Dam's site

F.P. Report

GHALANAI: Deputy Commissioner (DC) along District Police Officer Mohmand visited under construction dam site and ensured provision of every facility and necessity assure completion of project in the stipulated time, on Monday.

During the visit deputy commissioner Arif Awan was briefed regarding the works and security for sites as well as for foreigner workers. DC directed to take concrete steps for security of construction as well as for professional workers in the projects.

DC Mohmand ordered to ensure proper monitoring through Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Cameras to avoid any mishap on the project and security. He claimed that negligence and security lapses cannot be tolerated and stern actions should be initiated against responsible.

Ambulance for RHC demanded

Hafiz Aziz-ur-Rehman

HAFIZABAD: President Anjum Shahriyan Sukheki Mandi Rauf Ahmad Mughal, President Anjum Tahafuz Haqqooq-i-Shahriyan Sukheki Mandi Haji Bilal Akbar and President Markzi Anjum Tajran Sukheki Mandi Sheikh Tariq Mehmood have demanded the Chief Minister of the Punjab, The Commissioner Gujrat and Deputy Commissioner Hafizabad Umar Farooq Warraich to provide at least one ambulance at Rural Health Centre Sukheki Mandi for timely shifting of injured and other patients to hospitals.

They said that some year before, two ambulances were available at the RHC Sukheki Mandi but the district administration was handover the ambulances to Rescue 1122 Emergency Service. The Rescue 1122 was shifted the both ambulances to its station at Pindi Bhattian.

In case of road accidents or other emergency situation, ambulance take more than 30 minutes to reach Sukheki Mandi and sometime Rescue 1122 unable to provide ambulance well in time, as a result of which, precious lives of people go waste, they said.

Good governance assured in land & revenue record: In order to ensure punctuality in government entities and to improve services delivery in the district, Deputy Commissioner Hafizabad Umar Farooq Warraich visited Land Record Centre and Basic Health Unit Chak Chathah. ADCR Intiaz Ali and AC Munawar Hussain were also accompanied by him.



GHALANAI: Resident of Mohmand District holding a protest against electricity load shedding on Peshawar-Bajaur Highway. - F.P. photo

Residents donate Rs1.2m cash for quake victims

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Al-Khidmat Foundation (AKF), a welfare organization, has set up donation camps in all small and big cities of the district for the earthquake victims of Turkey and Syria. The AKF district president Hafeezullah Khaksar while talking to this reporter at Timergara on said that during the last three days a total of Rs 1.2 million donations in cash had been collected in the district.

He said that over a dozen such camps had been set up in parts of the district at Kumbhar, Munda, Samarbagh, Mayar, Timergara, Talash, Khall and Chakdara. He appealed to the people of Pakistan to extend their financial support to the victims of the earthquake in Turkey and Syria. Mr Khaksar said the donation camps would last for a week. He said the AKF would honestly provide those donations to the governments in Turkey and Syria. The AKF district president said that

The JI Munda tehsil chief Humayun Khan told local journalists at a donation camp that the local residents were donating them in cash. He said that thousands of people had been killed and homeless due to the devastating earthquake in Turkey and Syria. He said the AKF medical and emergency teams had reached Turkey and were busy in relief and rescue activities.

Meanwhile the AKF central deputy general secretary Fazal Mehmood while talking to this reporter on phone from the Adiyaman city in the southeast of Turkey said that a 47-member AKF team had reached the city and was engaged in the rescue and relief operation. He said that the Foundation also had handed over two trucks of essential items to the local authorities in the Adiyaman city. Mr Mehmood who belongs to Ouch in Lower Dir said that so far the AKF team had so far rescued two injured from the debris.

He said that many victims were still lying under the debris. He said that it would take at least ten more days to remove the debris. He said the AKF volunteers would also take part in the rehabilitation activities once the rescue and relief stage was over. He appealed to the people of Pakistan to remember their Muslim brothers in Turkey in this time of disaster as it had always helped and supported Pakistan on such occasions.

Madrasahs, Ulama ideological custodian of Pakistan: Jamiat Ulema Islam Fazl (JUI-F) former Member National Assembly (MNA) and prominent religious scholar Maulana Muhammad Qasim has said the religious seminaries and its students were the ideological custodians of Pakistan.

This he said while addressing a 'khatam e Bukhari Sharif' function at Dar ul Uloom Mazharul Islam at Ouch as chief guest here the other day. The JUI-F former senator Abdur Rashid, seminary's head

DPO addresses 34 public complaints on the spot

Saqib Mushtaq

BAHAWALPUR: District Police Officer (DPO) Bahawalpur addressed complaints of 34 citizens while issued orders to the concerned officers on the spot. The legitimate problems of the citizens of Bahawalpur will be solved in every way.

According to the details, taking into account the orders of IG Punjab, DPO Bahawalpur Syed Muhammad Abbas has continued the series of open court for the citizens of Bahawalpur on a daily basis. Yesterday, 34 citizens approached the DPO office for solving their problems and submitted applications to the DPO for solving their problems. The DPO personally heard all the respected citizens on the spot and issued orders to the concerned officers to resolve their police related issues.

Speaking to the citizens on this occasion, the DPO said that the citizens of Bahawalpur are VIPs for me and listening to them respectfully and solving the problems is my first responsibility. Anyone can come to me with their issue without hesitation. The police continue to check suspicious persons and vehicles through smart policing, checking 26371 suspicious persons in the first 10 days of February. At least 25 criminals were arrested, 04 absconders were arrested, 11004 suspicious vehicles were also checked. A crime-free society is our commitment, DPO Syed Muhammad Abbas



According to the details, under the direction of DPO Bahawalpur Syed Muhammad Abbas, the crackdown on criminals continues. In the first 10 days of February, Bahawalpur Police has continued checking through smart policing, using modern technology. Bringing suspicious persons, checking of suspicious vehicles is in progress, during checking, 26371 suspicious people were checked, in the context of which the criminals were carrying out actions against the advertisement and 25 and 04 absconders were also arrested. While a total of 11004 suspicious vehicles were checked, 18 vehicles were traced. On this occasion, District Police Officer Syed Muhammad Abbas issued instructions to the police officers to intensify such operations on a daily basis. It is clear that any officer who excels in crime control and crime prevention is my favorite officer and any officer who passes time has no right to be in a responsible seat.

Balochistan govt to send relief goods to Syria

QUETTA (INP): The Balochistan government has decided to send relief goods and a medical team to the earthquake victims of Syria, Press Secretary of the Chief Minister said on Monday.

In this connection, Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Qudus Bizenjo directed the Health Department and PDMA to take necessary steps for sending relief goods and the medical team to the earthquake victims of Syria. On the instructions of the Chief Minister, Principal Secretary to CM, Imran Gichki conveyed the goodwill message of the Chief Minister to the Syrian Ambassador.



China ship hits Filipino crew with laser light: Philippines

MANILA (AP): A Chinese coast guard ship twice hit a Philippine coast guard vessel with a "military-grade laser light" that caused temporarily blinded some of its Filipino crew in the disputed South China Sea, the Philippine coast guard said Monday, calling the act a "blatant" violation of Manila's sovereign rights. The Chinese coast guard ship also maneuvered dangerously close, about 150 yards (137 meters), to block the Philippine coast guard's BRP Malapascua patrol vessel from approaching the Philippine-occupied Second Thomas Shoal on Feb. 6, the Philippine coast guard said in a statement.

The Philippines has filed nearly 200 diplomatic protests against China's aggressive actions in the disputed waters in 2022 alone. Although the Chinese coast guard had tried to block Philippine coast guard ships in the disputed waters before, this was the first time it used a laser light and caused physical suffering among Filipino coast guard personnel, Philippine coast guard spokesperson Commodore Armand Balilo told The Associated Press.

There was no immediate comment from the Chinese Embassy in Manila. "The Chinese ship illuminated the green laser light twice toward the BRP Malapascua, causing temporary blindness to her crew at the bridge," the Philippine coast guard said. "The Chinese vessel also made dangerous maneuvers by approaching about 150 yards from the vessel's starboard quarter." The Chinese coast guard's aggressive actions forced the BRP Malapascua to veer away from the offshore area, where it was escorting a Philippine supply vessel that was delivering food and Filipino sailors to a Philippine navy sentry ship, the BRP Sierra Madre, which has long been marooned on Second Thomas shoal, the coast guard said.

"The deliberate blocking of the Philippine government ships to deliver food and supplies to our military personnel on board the BRP Sierra Madre is a blatant disregard for, and a clear violation of, Philippine sovereign rights in this part of the West Philippine Sea," the coast guard said, using the name the Philippines has adopted for the stretch of

waters close to its western coast. It was not immediately clear if the Philippine resupply mission pushed through despite the incident. The coast guard has reported the incident to an inter-agency body monitoring the South China Sea and the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila, Balilo said. China's increasingly assertive actions in the strategic waterway, which it claims virtually in its entirety, has continued despite friendly overtures by former President Rodrigo Duterte - whose term ended in June - and his successor, Ferdinand Marcos Jr., who met Chinese President Xi Jinping in January on a visit to Beijing.

The Chinese coast guard also blocked Philippine coast guard vessels escorting a Philippine supply vessel from approaching the Second Thomas Shoal in August, the coast guard said. One of two Chinese coast guard ships that were joined by two Chinese militia vessels removed the cover of its 70mm armament during the blockade, the coast guard said, adding it would not be deterred by China's aggression in protecting Philippine sovereignty and sovereign rights in the disputed sea. "The Philippine coast guard will continue to exercise due diligence in protecting the country's territorial integrity against foreign aggression," coast guard Adm. Artemio Abu said.

Aside from China and the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei also have overlapping claims in the resource-rich and busy waterway, where a bulk of the world's commerce and oil transits. The United States lays no claims to the disputed sea but has deployed its Navy ships, aircraft carriers and Air Force jets to patrol the waters to promote freedom of navigation and overflight - moves that have angered Beijing, which has warned Washington to stop meddling in what it says is a purely Asian dispute. The US Navy and Marine Corps held joint exercises in the South China Sea over the weekend at a time of heightened tensions with Beijing over the shooting down of a suspected Chinese spy balloon. The US has been taking steps to rebuild its military might in the Philippines more than 30 years after the closure of its large bases in the country and reinforcing an arc of military alliances in Asia.

Abbas urges world support for Palestinians

TEHRAN (AFP): Palestinian president Mahmud Abbas accused Israel of having "crossed all red lines" in the occupied West Bank and east Jerusalem, and urged world leaders to put an end to its actions. The international community must "protect" the Palestinian people and "put a stop to Israeli aggression... (and) unilateral actions", the head of the Palestinian Authority told an Arab League meeting in Cairo.

"Israeli intransigence and practices have crossed all red lines", he said at the gathering attended by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi and Jordan's King Abdullah II. Last year was the deadliest year in the West Bank since the United Nations started tracking casualties in the territory in 2005. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has seen at least 43 Palestinians -- including attackers, militants and civilians -- killed this year, according to AFP figures.

Nine Israeli civilians including three children, and one Ukrainian have been killed over the same period, according to an AFP tally based on official statements. In a video address, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres affirmed the international body's "clear position against unilateral actions," citing "illegal settlements in east Jerusalem" in particular. Sisi -- whose country retains its traditional role as a Middle East mediator -- vowed to "continue to work with the two sides of the conflict to revive the political process and restore calm in the West Bank and Gaza". Abdullah, whose country acts as custodian of Muslim and Christian holy sites in Jerusalem, said Arab leaders "must galvanise efforts to support the resilience of our brothers" in the Palestinian territories.

US President Joe Biden told Abdullah last week that Washington supports a "two-state solution" in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. "Mr. Biden tells me he supports a two-state solution, but then does nothing at all," Abbas added. A two-state solution would mean the dismantling of Israeli settlements in the occupied West Bank, as well as the partition of Jerusalem, which Israel refuses as it considers the city its undivided capital. The Arab League is itself split on relations with Israel since 2020 when the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain and Morocco normalised ties with the Jewish state under the US-brokered Abraham Accords, years after Egypt and Jordan had forged relations.

Ancient 'elite' residences discovered

PISTE, MEXICO (Reuters): Archaeologists have revealed a group of structures discovered at the famed Mayan Chichen Itza archaeological site in Mexico's Yucatan peninsula, believed to have been part of a housing complex inhabited by the elite of the sacred city founded in the 5th Century AD. Archaeologist Francisco Perez Ruiz said there were no known residential groups in Chichen Itza, meaning the housing complex would represent "the first residential group where a ruler lived with his entire family."

The area, known as Chichen Viejo, is expected to be integrated in the near future into the visitor area of the Chichen Itza archaeological site, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. The newly discovered complex includes the entrance arch, the House of the Snails, the House of the Moon, and the so-called Palace of the Phalluses. Researchers from the National Institute of Anthropology and History (INAH) hope that this area and those yet to be uncovered can provide information on what life was like for the people who inhabited the city.

"There must be more residential groups that have not been explored yet. The study of these peripheral groups, around the central part, could tell us about other families, other groups that made up this great city," said archaeologist Jose Osorio Leon.

After quake, war-hit Syrians struggle to get aid, rebuild

ATAREB, Syria (AP): After years of war, residents of areas in northwest Syria struck by a massive earthquake are grappling with their new and worsening reality. Almost one week after the devastating 7.8 magnitude earthquake struck northern Syria and neighboring Turkey, the United Nations has acknowledged an international failure to help Syrian quake victims.

In Atareb, a town that Syrian rebels still hold after years of fighting government troops, survivors dug through the debris of their homes, picking up the remnants of their shattered lives and looking for ways to heal after the latest in a series of humanitarian disasters to hit the war-battered area. Excavators lifted rubble and residents with shovels and picks destroyed columns to even out a demolished building. Dozens of newly displaced families gathered for hot meals from local volunteers and the local opposition-run government. A private citizen went tent to tent to give out wads of cash in a makeshift shelter - the equivalent of about \$18 to each family.

Syrians were doing what they have honed over years of crises: relying on themselves to pick up the pieces and move on. "We are licking our own wounds," said Hekmat Hamoud, who has been displaced twice by Syria's ongoing conflict before finding himself trapped for hours beneath rubble. Syria's northwestern rebel-held enclave, where over 4 million people for years have struggled to cope with ruthless airstrikes and rampant poverty, was hit hard by the Feb. 6 quake. Many in the area were already displaced from the ongoing conflict and live in crowded tent settlements or buildings weakened by past bombings. The quake killed over 2,000 people in the enclave, and displaced many more for a second time, forcing some to sleep under olive groves in the frigid winter weather. "I lost everything," said father of two Fares Ahmed Abdo, 25, who survived the quake. But his new home and body shop where he fixed motorcycles for a living were destroyed. Once again with barely any shelter and no power nor toilets, he, his wife, two boys and ill mother are crammed in a small tent. "I am waiting for any help," he said.

Visiting the Turkish-Syrian border, UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs Martin Griffiths acknowledged in a statement that Syrians have been left "looking for international help that hasn't arrived." "We have so far failed the people in north-west Syria. They rightly feel abandoned," he said. "My duty and our obligation is to correct this failure as fast as we can." Northwest Syria



relies almost entirely on aid for survival, but post-quake international assistance has been slow to reach the area. The first UN convoy to reach the area from Turkey was - three days after the earthquake.

Before that, the only cargo coming across the Bab al-Hawa crossing on the Turkey-Syria border was a steady stream of bodies of earthquake victims coming home for burial - Syrian refugees who had fled the war in their country and settled in Turkey but perished in the quake. The UN aid sent from Turkey to Syria is only authorized to enter via the Bab al-Hawa crossing, and logistics were complicated by pressure on the roads, many of them destroyed by the quake. While technically, international aid can also be sent from Syrian government-held areas to rebel-held areas in the northwest, that route brings its own set of hurdles and was at best a trickle. Critics of the government of President Bashar Assad say aid funneled through government-held areas in Syria faces bureaucracy and the risk that authorities will misappropriate or divert the aid to support people close to the government.

A convoy carrying UN aid that was scheduled to cross into rebel-held Idlib from the government area was canceled after its entry was blocked by the Qaida-affiliated rebel group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham, which dominates the area. An administrative arm of the group said in a statement declined to receive assistance from government areas. Strips of northern Syria are held by a patchwork of sometimes-conflicting groups, further hindering aid deliveries. Turkish-backed rebels have blocked aid convoys from reaching earthquake victims that were sent by rival US-backed Kurdish groups in neighboring areas. "We are trying to tell everyone, put politics aside. This is the time to unite behind the common effort to support the Syrian people,"

said Geir Pedersen, the UN special envoy for Syria who landed in Damascus.

At the United Nations, UN envoy Linda Thomas-Greenfield called for an urgent US Security Council vote to authorize the opening of additional cross-border passages into northwestern Syria. "People in the affected areas are counting on us," she said in a statement. "They are appealing to our common humanity to help in their moment of need. We cannot let them down." While aid has been slow to reach the northwest, a number of countries that had cut ties with Damascus during Syria's civil war have sent help to government areas. Arab countries including Egypt and the United Arab Emirates have stepped in. UAE's foreign minister visited Damascus and met with Assad. Raed al-Saleh, the head of the White Helmets, a civil defense group operating in the rebel-held northwest, said Griffiths' visit was "too little, too late." He said calls for international assistance by local rescue teams went unheeded for days "and during this time, countless lives have been needlessly lost."

Al-Saleh met with Griffiths to demand the opening of additional cross-border routes for aid to enter without waiting for authorization from the UN Security Council. Abdel-Haseeb Abdel-Raheem sifted through the rubble of his aunt's destroyed four-story building in the town of Atareb in opposition-run northern Aleppo. He had pulled the bodies of his aunt and her husband from beneath the rubble hours after the quake. Now he went back to find any valuables, using his hands and dipping his body inside the skeleton of the destroyed building to pull out blankets and pillows, as well as some clothes. The 34-year-old said he had no illusion that humanitarian assistance will solve his problems. "We have no hope anymore," he said.

Ex-FM wins Cyprus presidential vote

CYPRUS (Agencies): Cyprus voters have elected the former Foreign Minister Nikos Christodoulides as the next president of the small European Union member state, with his rival conceding defeat and congratulating him. Christodoulides, 49, defeated fellow diplomat Andreas Mavroyiannis with 51.9 percent of the vote compared to 48.1 percent on the divided Mediterranean island.

Mavroyiannis, 66, told reporters: "Tonight a journey has ended, a great journey that I shared with thousands of people. I regret we couldn't achieve the change that Cyprus needed." Christodoulides, who defected from the conservative ruling DISY party to run as an independent, scored 32 percent a week ago against 29.6 percent for Mavroyiannis, who also ran as an independent backed by the communist AKEL party. Widely tapped as the election favourite during the campaign, Christodoulides is seen likely to take a hard line on moribund United Nations-backed talks on ending the island's decades-old division.

Former top diplomat Christodoulides earlier

voiced confidence about a win when he told reporters: "The Cypriot people know and understand what is at stake ... I have complete confidence in their judgement." Voter turnout was 72.4 percent with more than 405,000 citizens casting a ballot, a fraction higher than in the first round.

Top concerns for many voters are the cost of living crisis, irregular immigration, and the island's almost half-century of division between the Greek-speaking south and a Turkish-occupied breakaway statelet in the north that is recognised only by Ankara. But many disaffected voters simply looked for "the least worse candidate - a characteristic in most elections, but more so in this one", said Andreas Theophanous of the Cyprus Center for European and International Affairs. Cyprus has been divided since 1974, when Turkish forces occupied its northern third in response to a Greek-sponsored coup, but voters appeared split over whether the division was a priority in the election.

Retiree Dora Petsa, 75, said she expects the new president "to settle the

Cypriot question". But Louis Loizides, 51, said the country has "too many internal problems" from the economy to immigration, having taken in large numbers of asylum seekers, including many who cross the UN-patrolled Green Line. The ruling DISY had been knocked out of the presidential race for the first time in its history, and the conservative party's decision to back neither candidate threw the runoff wide open. Pre-poll favourite Christodoulides last week squeezed out DISY leader Averof Neofytou, 61, who came third with 26.11 percent in the first round, despite the incumbent's endorsement.

Mavroyiannis surprised observers by beating Neofytou and closing the gap with Christodoulides last week. The new government will be under pressure to root out corruption and address higher energy bills, labour disputes and the struggling economy.

Vasso Pelekanou, a 47-year-old woman, said the new president should help the middle class, which she believes was abandoned by the last government. "The rich have become even richer," she said.

Tunisian police detain prominent politicians

TUNIS (Agencies): Tunisian police have arrested influential businessman Kamel Eltaief, once a confidant of former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, as well as two key political activists, lawyers say. Eltaief, 68, was arrested from his home in the capital, Tunis, on Saturday, lawyer Nizar Ayed said without providing further details. For many Tunisians - especially supporters of the Ennahdha party, fierce rivals of President Kais Saied - Eltaief was seen as a symbol of past corruption in the North African nation.

The influential power broker was involved in the 1987 coup that forced former President Habib Bourguiba from power on medical grounds, and was long considered a crony of Bourguiba's successor Ben Ali. Eltaief fell out of grace with Ben Ali in 1992 after a feud with his wife Leila Trabelsi. After the

fall of Ben Ali in 2011, the businessman moved closer to the opposition. In 2012, he was investigated for "conspiracy against state security", but no charges were brought against him and the case was closed in 2014. Police also arrested Abdelhamid Jelassi, a former senior leader of the Ennahdha, as well as political activist Khayam Turki.

Seven police officers on Saturday evening searched Jelassi's home and confiscated his mobile phone before arresting him, the party said without providing further details. According to Tunisian media, Jelassi was arrested on "suspicion of a plot against state security". Ennahdha, the biggest party in the opposition, said the arrest of Turki was aimed at intimidating the president's opponents. The Salvation Front, the main opposition coalition against Saied, condemned his arrest, saying police

had questioned him several times for meeting opposition figures at his home. Turki's lawyer Abdelaziz Essid, who said his client was not known to be wanted by the authorities, said he was arrested in an early morning police raid.

"He was taken to an unknown destination," said Essid, adding Turki had not been "facing any legal proceedings" to justify his arrest. No further details were immediately available. Rights groups have voiced increasing concern over the lack of political freedoms in Tunisia since Saied's seizure of most powers in 2021 and his moves to assume ultimate authority over the judiciary. Since Saied's takeover, Tunisia has seen a spike in the arrest and prosecution of politicians, journalists and others. His opponents have accused him of authoritarianism in the birthplace of the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings.

Canadian search teams hunt for 'unidentified object' wreckage

TORONTO (Agencies): Canadian investigators are hunting for the wreckage of a mysterious flying object shot down by a US fighter jet over the northwest Yukon territory. "Recovery teams are on the ground, looking to find and analyse the object," Prime Minister Justin Trudeau told reporters. He gave no hint as to what it was, but said it "represented a reasonable threat to the security of civilian flight".

"The security of citizens is our top priority and that's why I made the decision to have that unidentified object shot down," he said. North America has been on high alert for aerial intrusions following the appearance of a white Chinese airship over the skies earlier this month.

The 60-metre-high (200-foot) balloon - which Americans have accused Beijing of using to spy on the United States - caused an international incident,

leading US Secretary of State Antony Blinken to call off a planned trip to China only hours before he was set to depart. China denies the original balloon was used for surveillance, saying it was a civilian research craft, and condemned the US for shooting it down off the coast of South Carolina. With military and intelligence officials newly focused on airborne threats, at least two other flying objects were shot down over North America over the weekend.

Canadian searchers trying to piece together what was shot down over the Yukon may have their own challenges. The territory is a sparsely populated region in Canada's far northwest, which borders Alaska. It can be brutally cold in the winter, but temperatures are unusually mild for this time of year, which could ease the recovery effort. In Whitehorse, the Yukon's capital, the forecast is for a

high of minus 2° Celsius (28° Fahrenheit). Twice in 24 hours, US officials closed airspace - only to reopen it swiftly. The Federal Aviation Administration briefly closed space above Lake Michigan. On Saturday, the US military scrambled fighter jets in Montana to investigate a radar anomaly there.

North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD) later said the pilots did not identify anything corresponding to the radar hits. US Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer told US broadcaster ABC that US officials think the flying objects - the first of which was brought down over the sea ice near, and the second of which was destroyed over the Yukon on Saturday - were both balloons. "They believe they were [balloons], yes, but much smaller than the first one," Schumer said.

The White House said only the recently downed

objects "did not closely resemble" the Chinese balloon, echoing Schumer's description of them as "much smaller". Schumer said he was confident US investigators scouring the ocean off South Carolina to recover debris and electronic gadgetry from the original balloon would get to the bottom of what it was being used for. "We're going to probably be able to piece together this whole, whole surveillance balloon and know exactly what's going on," he said.

Republican lawmaker Mike Turner, who serves on the US House Armed Services Committee, suggested President Joe Biden's administration might be overcompensating for what he described as its previously lax monitoring of US airspace. "They do appear somewhat trigger-happy," Turner told CNN. "I would prefer them to be trigger-happy than to be permissive."

Amid cholera outbreak, health fears grow in quake-hit Syria

DAMASCUS (Agencies): Aid groups and public health experts warn that a series of devastating earthquakes could exacerbate a cholera outbreak in Syria first detected last year. The warnings come as rescue operations ceased in both opposition and government-held portions of Syria - and hope diminished amid remaining searches in Turkey - six days after a series of quakes hit the region. The death toll topped 35,000 in the two countries, with at least 4,500 dead in Syria.

Across war-torn Syria, where the UN has estimated that 5.3 million people have been left homeless by the disaster, "there was a perfect storm brewing before the earthquake - of increasing food insecurity, collapsing healthcare systems, the lack of access to safe water and poor sanitation", said Eva Hines, chief of communications for the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in the Syrian capital, Damascus. "More than half of people in Syria depend on unsafe alternative water sources when it comes to their water needs. And that, of course, increases vulnerability to fast-spreading waterborne diseases such as cholera," Hines told Al Jazeera.

In September last year, the Syrian government declared an outbreak of cholera - a diarrhoeal infection caused by ingesting food or water contaminated by the Vibrio cholerae bacteria. The disease can prove deadly, particularly for children. The outbreak was largely attributed to the country's war-ravaged water infrastructure, which forced residents to drink and irrigate

fields with contaminated water from the Euphrates river in the country's northeast. The disease quickly took hold of largely opposition-held swaths of northwestern Syria, where at least 1.7 million people displaced by the country's decade-long civil war live in crowded camps, and about four million were reliant on humanitarian aid prior to the disaster.

As of January 18, nearly half of the suspected 77,500 cases of cholera in the country were in the northwest region, according to the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), with 18 percent detected in camps for the internally displaced. Meanwhile, more than 2.1 million people in northwest Syria live in "the most at-risk subdistricts for developing a cholera outbreak",

according to OCHA. Marc Schakal, programme director for Syria and Turkey for Doctors Without Borders (Medecins Sans Frontieres, or MSF), which operates in opposition-held areas, told Al Jazeera: "There were very serious difficulties and concerns about the general infrastructure of [the internally displaced camps], and now it's even more because of the damage in terms of urban and other areas."

He said the increased risk of cholera is among an array of compounding public health risks in areas controlled by armed opposition groups, where 37 health facilities were damaged in the quake and 20 were forced to suspend part or all of their operations. Schakal added that the disaster has also upended the treatment of chronic-disease patients and has increased mental health concerns.

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A new description of regime change

PAKISTAN Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former Prime Minister Imran Khan said that ex-Army Chief Gen retired Qamar Javed Bajwa confessed that he had toppled the PTI government. According to him, Gen Bajwa was a super king who decided everything during his tenure, whereas he had to face criticism for Bajwa's decisions. Khan further accused the Ex. Army Chief of the current poor economic plight of the country and demanded an inquiry into the incident.

After the 9th months, that his rule was wrapped up by the opposition parties, the PTI Chairman and former Prime Minister Imran Khan has told the world that the so-called regime change conspiracy that led to the removal of his government was not hatched by the United States through the previously mentioned cipher scam but that plan was conceived and implemented by the former Army Chief General Retired Qamar Javed Bajwa. This was the latest twist in the regime change story of the former Prime Minister, who earlier accused the United States of hatching a plan to topple his government because his government planned to buy cheaper oil from Russia, denied military basing to the US, and remained neutral over the Ukrainian dispute. Later, the former Prime Minister leveled allegations against various personalities for playing role in toppling his government including the PDM alliance, caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, and recently pointed finger at his most favored and praised former Army Chief, who always rescued his government from hot waters and helped survive for nearly four years.

Historically, one-time Pakistani high-ups, former Prime Minister Imran Khan and his top military advisor, General Qamar Javed Bajwa had enjoyed close association and unconditional backing for each other until Khan left Prime Minister office on April 24 last year. Ex. Prime Minister Imran Khan authorized General Bajwa an additional 3 years term as Army Chief whereas, while Khan further insisted Bajwa carry forward in his current role through another extension in a bid to smoothly complete his five years term. Countless times, Khan praised his working relationship and mutual understanding with Army Chief and called him the most pro-democracy general, and sober military leader who always remains ready to support the civil government even in parliamentary affairs and legislation.

Surprisingly, after his ouster from power, Imran Khan relentlessly named and blamed General Bajwa to cajole him to use his influence for reinstating his government into power, but Army Chief and his spokesmen told Khan that the military is purely focusing on its constitutional role regarding national defense and external security. Presently, PTI Chief took a big U-Turn and completely changed his narrative of US-sponsored conspiracy against his government, while expressing a desire for a constructive partnership with the US along with ramped-up bombardment against the former Army Chief, once the dearest guy to him.

In fact, military Generals and civil bureaucrats were bound by their oaths, to obey and support the ruling government according to the Constitution until it enjoys the confidence of the public and its elected representatives. But Politicians and Political Parties demand a lifetime affiliation and above-the-law allegiance of the government servants which is usually not possible. Khan's government had been ousted through a constitutional process, thus the populist leader must strengthen his belief in the constitution and democracy which could lead him to regain his lost throne, otherwise unreal verbosity will damage his politics and weaken national institutions in the long run.

Economic frailty and Shylock's Credo

THE Federal Cabinet has approved a plan to increase electricity prices and wrap up subsidies in the power sector. According to the details, the government presented a plan to the IMF to jack up electricity prices by Rs. 7.91 per unit in four quarterly adjustments from February through November. Meanwhile, the government also approved slashing the electricity subsidy of Rs. 65 billion given to the exporters, and the reversal of Rs. 14 billion support previously offered to farmers under the Kisan Package with effect from March 2023.

Pakistan has been marred by persistent economic volatility and fiscal mismanagement of its administrators over the past decades which is continuing in the shape of politically motivated policies and a recurrent evasion of harsh measures that could reset the economy but shattered the politics of the rulers. Thus, successive Pakistani governments could not abide by the commitments they owed to the global lender while striking loan deals with them. Similarly, the current economic crisis is also another manifestation of this so-called pro-public behavior which promotes leaders' politics for the time being but hurt the masses and the national economy forever.

Realistically, the coalition government delayed the talks for the ninth review for several months as it offered significant subsidies and other incentives to exporting industries and farmers to promote agri-growth and increase exports to consolidate financial gains but those endeavors were not in line with the Pak-IMF deal. After multiple failed attempts to get some assistance from friendly nations to sail through the crucial period, the government was now determined to undertake all the steps set by the IMF as a prerequisite for the continuation of the loan program. In fact, the current fiscal reforms recommended by the IMF are actually the withdrawal of government subsidies or a reorientation of the past deal abandoned by the government. Although leaders desire to provide some relief to the masses but the national exchequer can't afford those relaxations and the global lender doesn't agree to such favors, so the nation must prepare to battle some hard times in the hope of a prosperous future.

Can EU-Russia relations be repaired post-Putin?

Dimitar Bechev

A year after Russia launched a full-scale invasion of Ukraine, the debate about whether this is President Vladimir Putin's war or not continues. Anti-war Russians, many of whom have sought refuge outside the country, blame the Russian president. For them, his delusions and paranoia have caused a turn to neo-totalitarianism at home and military aggression abroad.

The Russian opposition in exile and in prison insists that if Putin is to fall from power, the situation would reverse. Leonid Volkov, the number two of imprisoned opposition leader Alexey Navalny, has even suggested that following the end of the war, the West should offer "a Marshall Plan" not only for Ukraine, in dire need of reconstruction, but also for Russia. In other words, opposition-minded Russians hope that Moscow will rebuild bridges with Europe and the US once Putin is no longer on the throne.

Understandably, the notion of "Putin's war" has next to no purchase in Ukraine itself. By and large, Ukrainians fault Russia as a country and as

a society, whether it is the jingoistic cheerleaders for Moscow's "special military operation" or the silent majority who choose to simply ignore it and get on with their daily lives. Why should Russia be trusted to behave differently one day, they ask, given that Putin speaks for a nation with an imperialist mindset?

Besides, a successor to the 70-year-old leader is unlikely to come from the pro-Western opposition or be any different from the current occupant of the Kremlin. Some of the names pundits speculate about - say the head of Russia's Security Council, Nikolay Patrushev - are at least as hawkish as Putin. So for Ukrainians, Russia has to be defeated, no matter who runs the show in Moscow. But what about the European Union? Has the war moved its relations with Russia - cultivated so carefully for so long - past a point of no return?

For Poland and the Baltic States that is very much the case. For a year now, they have had their "told you so" moment. Even before the Russian invasion last year and the occupation of Crimea in 2014, they made the case that Russian revanchism poses a fundamental threat to the post-Cold War

order in Europe. To the west, France and Germany, however, have been much more ambiguous in their approach to relations with Russia. From the moment he first assumed office in 2017, French President Emmanuel Macron has been making a case that Europe should think about the long term and engage the Russians. Macron stuck to this line pretty much until the invasion and kept calling Putin in the hope of working out a diplomatic solution of some sort. And as recently as last December, the French president spoke of "security guarantees" to Russia that should be part of a settlement.

Germany has elicited even more frustration and ire among Eastern European friends of Ukraine. Long years of cosying up to the Russians and business cum political ventures, such as the Nord Stream gas pipeline, have tainted its record. The German political class has long seen Russia as a friend and some, like former Chancellor Gerhard Schröder, landed lucrative gigs with Moscow's state-run energy companies. In the past year, there has

been some change in action and rhetoric. In the wake of the invasion, Chancellor Olaf Scholz declared the so-called Zeitenwende (historic turning point), the idea that Berlin will finally take European defence seriously and put its weight behind it both financially and politically. His position has found support among the German public, the majority of which is pro-Ukraine, too.

However, the German bias towards hugging closely Russia, in the expectation that denser ties yield greater security and predictability, has not been relegated to the past. With Scholz dragging his feet on providing military aid to Ukraine, notably on the Leopard tanks, he is signalling that the German leadership has not given up on Moscow altogether. In Germany's logic, Russia will always be there, whether we like it or not, and we cannot simply shut it down, build a fence around it or ignore it. Of course, a more charitable interpretation of the tank tussle is that Scholz's gambit aimed at committing the US to European security, with the 2024 US presidential elections looming on

the horizon. But even so, it is safe to assume the Germans will not be in the avant garde of the "stop Russia" coalition going forward.

So then does the lack of full alignment on Russia mean that the EU is leaving the door open for normalisation of relations in the long term? Not exactly. The war may and probably will last years. So long as there is fighting, it is hard to envisage any form of productive diplomatic engagement, let alone rekindling political and economic links. Certainly, until Putin is in office relations will be confrontational.

In case of de-escalation, a new line will be drawn across Eastern Europe leaving Ukraine and possibly Moldova and Georgia on the "Western side", Belarus on Russia's, and Armenia and Azerbaijan in no-man's land. A Cold War-like scenario will materialise, with the pro-Western countries drawn into EU and NATO's orbit and Russia entrenching itself in whatever parts of Ukraine it might succeed to keep. This also means that Cold War-style diplomacy will be deployed. The EU - and its ally, the US - will engage with Russia only in

order to preserve stability and avoid a full-frontal collision. The essence of Western policy will be containment, not integration as was the case in the 1990s and 2000s.

The war has taken a heavy toll on economic links between Russia and the EU and Putin's policy choices have accelerated forces that any future leader might struggle to reverse. Moscow used to be one of the main energy suppliers to the union; it is no more and is unlikely to recover its position. The Russian share of the European gas imports has gone down from 50 percent in 2021 to a meagre 12.9 percent at present. The European sanctions have forced Russia to gravitate towards China and to some extent, the Global South. This will be one of the war's lasting legacies.

Anti-Putin Russians hope that their country may eventually find its way back to the West. European leaders are right to think long and hard about what comes after the fighting stops - as sooner or later it will. Yet, as history shows, wars are transformative events. For better or worse, the clock will not turn back to February 23, 2022.

Aljazeera

Putin's war has reinvigorated the west's defence of liberty. That unity must not crack now

Andrew Rawnsley

It was an easy mistake for a tyrant to make. When Vladimir Putin launched his savage assault on Ukraine in February last year, he did not just misjudge its valiant people and their determination to fight for freedom. He also misread the western democracies.

You can see why. As Russia's military was beginning what was intended to be a lightning blitz to crush its neighbour, the UK's clown car government was being consumed by Partygate. France's president, Emmanuel Macron, had previously despaired that Nato was in the throes of "brain death". Germany, with its dangerous dependence on Russian hydrocarbons, had a newly elected chancellor in Olaf Scholz, presiding over an untested three-party coalition. America had rattled confidence in its leadership with the ignominious scuttle from Afghanistan. It wasn't just Putin, it was a growing number of people in the free world who thought the democracies had become too debilitated, decadent and divided to defend their values. The Kremlin's dictator is not the only one who underestimated the resistance of the Ukrainians and the staying power of their supporters in the west.

The messy, squabbling democracies got their act together to respond with an impressive unity and resolve. Even more remarkably, it has been sustained for 12 months. Western leaders have imposed unprecedentedly tough sanctions on Russia, even when it has meant hurting their own voters. Billions

of dollars in military support and economic aid has been funnelled to Ukraine. Finland and Sweden have applied to join a reinvigorated Nato.

This reaction was one part empathy with Ukraine, one part terror of what a victorious Putin would do next, one part guilt about how feebly the west had dealt with his earlier aggressions and one part an epiphany that democracy has to be defended if it is to endure.

The alliance has been strained by tensions between its bet-hedgers and its all-inners and quarrels about the quantity and heft of the arms supplied to Ukraine. The current one is about fighter jets. The previous one was about main battle tanks. This shouldn't obscure the big point. The democracies have confounded the calculations of Putin by being much more steadfast than he or they anticipated.

In the UK, a government otherwise convulsed by splits and psychodramas has displayed clarity and consistency of purpose about the conflict. Volodymyr Zelenskyy's visit to Britain last week was tribute to the early role of the UK played in galvanising the western response and not unconnected with the fact that we are the second largest donor of military equipment and munitions after the US. That support has been delivered, at a time of domestic austerity, with a lot of public approval and no cavilling from the opposition or the Tory backbenches. Supporters of Boris Johnson tried to save his

premiership by arguing that we couldn't change prime minister without fatally undermining the war effort. Two prime ministers on, we know that not to be true.

There is a broad and deep consensus about supporting Ukraine. It was to be seen in the outpouring of bipartisan warmth and admiration for President Zelenskyy when, clad in his trademark khaki, he made his speech to an enraptured crowd of 2,000 in Westminster Hall. He is an inspirational advocate for his country who knows how to punch the buttons of an audience. When he later visited the European parliament, he spoke about "our Europe" and "taking care of the European way of life". In front of MPs and peers, he gave them references to Winston Churchill, British "grit and character" and "delicious English tea". The coup de theatre was pitching his case for fighter jets by presenting the Speaker of the Commons with a pilot's helmet inscribed with the words: "We have freedom, give us the wings to protect it." I could see thought-bubbles floating out of the heads of many of the British politicians present: why can't we find a leader like this?

That occasion was preceded by a highly untypical session of prime minister's questions in which Sir Keir Starmer and Rishi Sunak eschewed the usual name-calling to celebrate British unity in support of Ukraine. Sir Keir called for Putin "and all his cronies" to be brought to The Hague to answer for their war

crimes. The prime minister replied that he hoped indictments were coming soon. Almost everyone would like to see Putin on trial, but won't get to unless Russia's despot is toppled, arrested and extradited. There is something a bit performative about such exchanges between the party leaders, but it is in a good cause. Given the devastation that has been inflicted on Ukraine, some may say it is in poor taste to assess how the war has reshaped our politics, but this can't be ignored because the long-term impacts will be significant. One big consequence is for the concept of non-interventionism, which gained popularity after the grim experience of Iraq. Whether of the leftwing pacifist variety or the rightwing isolationist tendency, washing your hands of the world is a less fashionable position now.

It has become much harder to make their case for those who want to spend less on defence and much easier for those who think we must strengthen our depleted armed forces. At a time when money is already tight, the military has become yet another claimant of extra spending. That is an additional pressure on the government that will shortly give its answer by publishing a strategic review. If Sir Keir is the next prime minister, defence spending will become Labour's challenge. The Labour leader has reaped a domestic political dividend because the war presented him with

an opportunity to demonstrate how he has changed his party. "God knows where we would have landed with Corbyn," a Labour MP remarked to me recently. From the beginning and throughout, Sir Keir has been unequivocal in his denunciations of the Kremlin's "jackboot of tyranny" and repeatedly restated his commitment to Nato to show that his Labour party knows which side to be on when a despotism attempts to devour a democracy. He has also set his face against any notion that the UK should give up its nuclear weapons.

The war has been very negative for the cause of nuclear disarmament. That's an argument that falls on much stonier soil when there have been repeated Russian threats to use nukes. Politicians and analysts debate whether that's a serious menace or bombastic bluffing. Either way, it makes it much harder to sell the idea that the UK should get rid of its deterrent. Throughout the conflict, there has been anxiety in western capitals, and expectation in the Kremlin, that support for Ukraine would become compromised by "war fatigue". There's not much sign of that yet. Opinion in most western nations remains firm. One explanation is revulsion at the barbarism of the Russian onslaught. Another is that throttling European gas supplies has not been as potent a weapon as Putin expected. A warmer than usual winter has helped, as have large energy bill subsidies from western govern-

ments to their citizens. Pollsters report that majorities continue to favour applying sanctions on Russia and supplying arms to Ukraine. More than half still say that higher energy costs are a sacrifice worth making to defend a sovereign country against attack.

Sustaining that solidarity will be vital as the war enters its second year. Russia still occupies a sixth of Ukrainian territory, including Crimea, the peninsula annexed in 2014. Predictions about the course of this conflict have rarely proved to be correct, but it is worth noting that only ultra-optimists think it will be over by the end of 2023. General Mark Milley, chairman of America's joint chiefs of staff, recently warned: "For this year it would be very difficult to eject the Russian forces from every inch of Russian-occupied Ukraine. That doesn't mean it can't happen, doesn't mean it won't happen, but it will be very, very difficult." It is a concern that a substantial minority - an average of 42% across 28 democracies surveyed by one pollster - agree with the statement: "The problems of Ukraine are none of our business and we should not interfere." Western leaders can never rest from making the argument that the defence of liberty is very much our business and continuing intervention in the cause of freedom is imperative. At the beginning, the democracies surprised the Russian dictator with their unity and resolve. They must carry on shocking him to the end.

Earthquake toll in Syria underscores urgency of peace efforts

Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheh

THE earthquake in Turkey and Syria last Monday has had catastrophic effects in both countries that have been compounded by the failure to end Syria's civil war. Health and emergency services, already under severe strain before the disaster because of the influx of millions of Syrian refugees in Turkey, almost collapsed near the epicenter. Similarly, the internally displaced in Syria have been among the most affected by the war and now the earthquake, but among the least likely to receive aid.

Six days after the earthquake, relief focus has switched from the search for survivors to retrieving bodies and caring for the living. The catastrophic toll is a grim reminder of the need to end the civil war so that refugees and IDPs can return home and recovery can begin. As we care for the victims, the UN needs to double its efforts to find a solution for this most devastating civil war, which will enter its 13th year next month. It is estimated that the earthquake has claimed more than 24,000 lives.

Many more are missing, injured or made homeless in bitterly frigid weather. Experts believe that this is the most powerful earthquake Turkey has experienced in many decades, dwarfing the last major quake in Izmit, near Istanbul, in 1999.

The World Health Organization and others expect the casualty figures to climb dramatically once all the missing have been accounted for. In addition, as in other earthquakes, there will be many more victims later as disease spreads, and health and sanitation infrastructures take time to repair. These facts are especially true in rebel-held areas in northern Syria, where the central government does not account for the quake's victims and health services are already at breaking point.

Turkey has received aid from more than a hundred countries and relief organizations, according to Turkish officials. Syria by contrast has received much less, because its government has been ostracized by the international community. Those countries and aid agencies still willing to provide assistance

have had to deal with Syrian government restrictions on aid delivery, especially to areas under rebel control, which have been the most affected in the country by the earthquake.

For years, those areas have been blockaded by government forces, supported by Russia and Iran. Aid delivery from outside Syria is hampered by the fact that the Syrian government has allowed outside access only through only one border crossing, Bab Al-Hawa, between Turkey and Syria. It is kept temporarily open under a UN Security Council mandate, which has to be renewed every six months. UNSC Resolution 2672 adopted last month renewed it until July 2023.

Because of those conditions, aid has been slow to reach rebel areas. The first aid convoy made it through on Thursday, 72 hours after the earthquake, when six trucks crossed the precarious Bab Al-Hawa. Long lines of additional trucks awaited clearance from Syria to cross, prompting UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres to call on the Syrian gov-

ernment to open more passageways for aid.

In the rest of northern Syria, where damage has been extensive, but less severe, serious problems have surfaced in emergency preparedness and crisis management. The inadequate response to this catastrophe has exposed the fragility of Syrian infrastructure after 12 years of war, which has cost the lives of hundreds of thousands of Syrians and left half the population homeless. UN mediation and that of several countries have failed to move the government to negotiate in good faith to end the conflict.

The number of people confirmed dead in the earthquakes in Syria has exceeded 3,000, while about 300,000 were forced to leave their homes, according to Syria's official media, but the real numbers are likely to be much higher because the government does not account for victims in rebel-held areas. UN efforts to resolve the Syrian crisis have been flailing after it failed to bridge the gap between the government and the oppo-

sition.

The UNSC Resolution 2254 represents the international community's consensus, including Russia, a close ally of the Syrian government. It remains the only viable solution to the conflict. There is widespread and firm global commitment to the implementation of all aspects of UNSC Resolution 2254, including a nationwide ceasefire, the release of any arbitrarily detained persons, free and fair elections, and the need to build conditions for the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of refugees and internally displaced persons, consistent with UN standards. UN Special Envoy Geir Pedersen became the UN's latest special envoy in 2018, but Syria does not appear to be closer to a political solution than when he started more than four years ago. He has diligently tried to get the parties to agree to a reciprocal step-for-step process, but so far without success.

Notwithstanding the international consensus around UNSC Resolution 2254, a political solution remains elusive, despite the tremendous cost of the

Syrian conflict. The main reason for the impasse is the refusal of the Syrian government to go along, supported by Iran and Russia. After the Ukraine war broke out, Russia redeployed some of its forces in Syria to the Ukraine front. While that was a welcome move in the context of Syria, it has increased its instability, as Russian forces were quickly replaced by Iran-affiliated sectarian militias and other unruly elements, increasing the potential for escalation.

Similarly, Iran's preoccupation with internal strife may provide another opening, especially in light of its engagement with GCC countries aimed at de-escalation. The UN should take advantage of this shift in Russia and Iran's focus, and intensify its efforts to find a durable solution. Now is not the time for a letup or a pause in the intensity of its efforts because of the earthquake and its aftermath. Just the opposite, because positive movement on the UN-mediated talks could help relief work, recovery and rebuilding of affected areas in Syria.

How the war in Ukraine obscured an uncomfortable truth

Michael Bociurkiw

WHAT a difference a year - and a war - makes. Around this time last year - with Russia on the brink of launching its full-scale invasion - Ukrainians' confidence in their president to handle the military threat massing on their doorstep was low. Former comedian Volodymyr Zelensky's popularity ratings were tanking as he battled allegations of unmet campaign promises to tackle endemic corruption. At the time, one of the major complaints against Zelensky was that he'd let pledges to reform the judicial system slide - a delay that threatened to derail Ukraine's aspirations of joining the European Union. For Ukrainians, it was an emotive issue. It is worth recalling that becoming part of the bloc was the main motivation of thousands of protesters taking to the streets in freezing temperatures during the 2013-2014 Revolution of Dignity - also known as the Maidan.

Then on February 24, Russia's total invasion blasted these concerns into the background. Almost overnight, that dark cloud over Zelensky vanished as he defied critics, and miraculously pivoted into the role of heroic wartime president and global symbol of defender of the free world. His popularity ratings surged - and have stayed high ever since - currently hovering at around 84%. But even a war, it seems, cannot galvanize a nation to the point where the most greedy cease their dirty deeds. Since the start of February, serious allegations have surfaced of senior officials either profiting off the war or conducting themselves with gross incompetence.

In one case, defense ministry officials reportedly allowed foodstuffs for the military to be purchased at heavily inflated

prices (a well-known ploy to skim off money). In another, a deputy prosecutor general was sacked after being spotted holidaying with his family in Marbella, Spain. He reportedly drove there in a Mercedes owned by a wealthy businessman. The scandals couldn't have come at a worse time for the Zelensky administration, which is reportedly grappling with a monthly budget deficit of \$5 billion. It could also raise eyebrows among skeptical Republican legislators on Capitol Hill who've been questioning the more than \$100 billion in aid pledged to Ukraine's war effort. They are not alone, with recent polling in the US suggesting an increasing percentage of Americans think Washington is providing too much aid to Ukraine. Little wonder then that the Ukrainian government's sweeping crackdown on corruption was swift and harsh. Raids were ordered on a wide range of officials on the national, regional and local levels. It even targeted one of Zelensky's former backers, the once-unouchable billionaire Ihor Kolomoisky, who earlier stood accused of bilking a major Ukrainian bank of billions of dollars. (Kolomoisky, who has previously denied any wrongdoing, has not publicly commented on the recent raid.) But as some Ukrainian commentators have noted, many officials were allowed to gracefully resign rather than face sacking and further punishment. Anastasia Bolshedvor, who has gained a large social media following as an unofficial government watchdog, questioned whether the shakeup - coming almost a year into the war - was a show or a genuine step in the war against corruption.

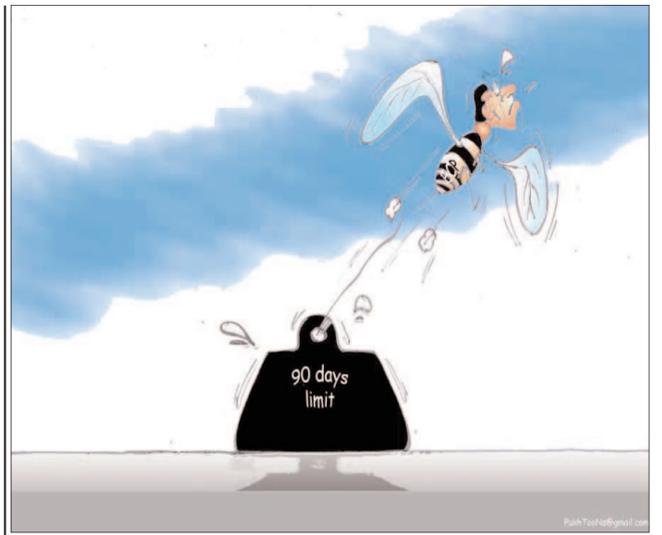
Similarly, Yevhen Hlibovytzky, former political

journalist and founder of the Kyiv-based think tank and consultancy, pro.mova, told me: "Zelensky's fight with corruption would have been more convincing if it was started at his own stables and followed with the institutional changes." That said, he also added that no battle with corruption should be allowed to disrupt the war effort. In the recent crackdown, Zelensky may also be opening himself up to accusations of overreach. When a member of the Zelensky faction in Parliament was discovered sunning himself on a Thai beach while his country is in the midst of a war, the government responded by promptly booting the lawmaker from the ruling party. But it also took the extreme step of banning lawmakers from traveling overseas, and just at a time when they should be seen to be ambassadors for the country, amplifying Zelensky's call for more military aid. Odesa member of parliament, Oleksiy Goncharenko, went so far to call it an illegal move that violated the Ukrainian constitution. "The rights of MPs cannot be limited, even in the time of martial law," he told me. "The decision was made in reaction to some MPs that were found on the beaches of warm countries. They should be the ones to pay the political price." It is a bad decision for the interests of the country. Many of us are doing frontline work and building up support for Ukraine," he said, adding that he just came back from the US where he gave several talks at universities and met with senators and member of Congress, including Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer.

Luckily for Goncharenko, the trip took place before the ban came into effect. Reports of corruption at the highest level of government are nothing new to most Ukrainians. But the new

allegations come at a time when millions of them have fled Ukraine for safe haven abroad - and could act as a deterrent for them coming back anytime soon. Many young Ukrainians I've spoken to agree that the government should not see the war as a pass to suspend the battle against corruption - even with the economy in shambles. "I'm 100% against turning a blind eye against corruption and finding excuses such as the state of the economy or the war. We should continue investigating, prosecuting and fighting corruption." Olga Kearley, a 29-year-old Kyiv-based Ukrainian entrepreneur told me. "I haven't stopped recycling because the war started. It's my fundamental belief and moral standard. As a country, we are fighting the outside demons, but at the same time, we should continue fighting our inner demons - and corruption is one of the big ones," she added. "We have a lot to rebuild. We expect a lot of transformation. It is the rebirth of our nation. It's the Ukraine that my generation wants to see. I do hope that all those young people that left will see that Ukraine is changing. They should come back and be part of it," Kearley said. Expecting Zelensky, especially during a time of war, to launch a full-scale fight against corruption would be naive. But with billions in aid flowing into the country and with millions in exile closely watching events back home, the administration has very little wiggle room cleaning house. At a minimum, Zelensky needs to respond to allegations of wrongdoing with the same determination that Ukrainian servicemen have demonstrated on the battlefield. This is an opportunity to create a nation where corruption is not tolerated, and where oligarchs no longer have a free hand to rape and pillage the economy.

CNN



Kagame's achievements should not blind us to his tyranny

Tafi Mhaka

IN December, New African, a leading Pan-African news magazine, published the 2022 edition of its immensely popular 100 most influential Africans list. Advertising the year-end as the "most authoritative, respected and consulted list on the continent and in the diaspora", the monthly magazine claimed those who appear on this list will "enjoy the adulation that is their due".

I clicked on the link thinking I would get to learn a few names worth knowing and browse through the most recent accomplishments of the continent's best and brightest. I was, however, quickly disappointed. There was a well-known - and in my opinion highly misplaced - name at the very top of the list: Paul Kagame.

Kagame is undoubtedly an important name in African politics. He has been the president of Rwanda since 2000 and does not appear to have any intention of leaving power soon. But it is highly questionable whether he can or should be described as "influential" and included

Republic of the Congo (DRC) and provided support to the M23 rebel group. The years-long conflict between the DRC government and the M23 rebels, which Kagame is reportedly fuelling by providing support to the armed group, has caused widespread hunger and displaced more than two million people. Backed by a long history of authoritarianism and political repression, this poor report card should have categorically prevented Kagame from being included in a list that marks and celebrates African achievement and progress.

However, the editors of New African not only placed Kagame at the top of their "authoritative" list but described him in the accompanying write-up as someone who is helping to "restore African pride and dignity". There are passing mentions of "a general lack of democratic culture" in Rwanda and the conflict in the DRC which may "stain [Kagame's] legacy", but overall, the Rwandan president is praised as a "standard bearer" in African pol-

They did not ostracise him for repeatedly violating our human rights. They did not condemn him for killing us. After his death in 2019, South Africa's former President Thabo Mbeki and former Kenyan President Uhuru Kenyatta rushed to sing his praises.

Back then, Africans refused to see the murderous dictator hiding under the facade of an anti-colonial hero in Zimbabwe. Today, they are making a similar mistake in Rwanda. I can see how someone may fall for Kagame's projected persona. When I hear him condemn the West's neo-colonialism and endless hypocrisy on human rights, I too cannot help but be impressed by his forthrightness. But whenever I find myself in awe of Kagame's principled stance against the West, I always remind myself that Mugabe's fierce critiques of the West were equally as impressive. Eventually, it became obvious that Mugabe hated Africans who criticised his policies as much as - if not more than - the former colonisers of his country. I am afraid time will prove the same about Kagame. It is perhaps easy to ignore

Putin has unleashed private armies on Ukraine - and a man who could become a dangerous rival

Samantha de Bendern

THE rise of Yevgeny Prigozhin, a Russian oligarch, Putin confidant and head of the notorious Wagner private military company, is a sign of the erosion of the rule of law in Russia. It shows that the state is willing to tolerate extreme, unaccountable violence as long as it serves its interests. This could ultimately become a threat to the regime itself.

Prigozhin is a private citizen who was previously a restaurant magnate - known as "Putin's chef" due to the president's patronage of his restaurants and catering firms. But at some point in 2014, he co-founded the Wagner Group along with former Russian military personnel, and has since become a major player in Russia's military campaign in Ukraine.

In the last few months he has taken on prerogatives normally reserved for senior government officials or the president himself. And yet he has no official legal function either in the government or the military - and the Wagner company itself is technically illegal as private military companies are outlawed in Russia.

When Prigozhin began recruiting for soldiers in Russian prisons in the late summer of 2022, offering them a pardon in exchange for six months' service in Ukraine, Russian lawmakers were unable to explain on what legal basis he was operating. Under Russian law, only the president can pardon convicted felons, and freeing them before the end of their term requires a drawn-out legal process.

However, in late January, after the first batch of Wagner convict soldiers were sent back into society as free men, Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov stated that the pardons were completely legal, but that some decrees were kept secret.

Many assume that the Kremlin allows Prigozhin to operate in a legal shadowland so that it can wash its hands of Wagner's actions should they become too extreme. An unofficial army offers the regular army an opportunity to deny responsibility for excessive losses in men or territory, or in an instance where it faces allegations of war crimes in the field. This implies a parallel army, ready to accept its role as a subordinate or scapegoat.

Prigozhin, however, has shown signs that he won't accept a purely subordinate role. He openly criticises and challenges state officials, including top generals. And the ministry of defence and Wagner have openly contradicted each other in claiming responsibility for recent Russian gains in Donbas. Prigozhin recently announced he was no longer recruiting in prisons. Although he claims that this is because he now has enough men, it could be a sign that the defence ministry is trying to clip his wings.

Prigozhin recently asked the Russian parliament to introduce changes to the law to make criticism of his convict soldiers illegal. The Duma speaker responded by asking the parliamentary

security and defence committee to study the question. If the requested changes are made, this could seriously complicate the prosecution of former convict soldiers for any new crimes. By giving such a free rein to Prigozhin, the Kremlin is creating a state-sanctioned culture of criminal violence.

Even before last year's invasion of Ukraine, Wagner had a reputation for summary murders, rape and extreme violence. A dire recent example of this was the filmed sledgehammer killing of a Wagner deserter from Ukraine, who had been returned to Russia in a prisoner exchange. Prigozhin praised the killing and Peskov stated that the murder was not government business. When the state openly accepts that it no longer holds the monopoly of the use of force, it is sending one of two messages: state and criminal violence have blurred into one, or else it is no longer in control.

Other private armies are also on the rise. Defence minister Sergei Shoigu's private army, Patriot, has been operating in Ukraine since 2014, and oligarch Gennady Timchenko's private army, Redut, originally created to protect his company's gas field, is also present in Ukraine. Not to mention the Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov's army. On 7 February the gas giant Gazprom announced it was creating its own private military company.

Wagner is the most prominent, with an estimated 50,000 mem-

bers operating in Ukraine alone, and the only one led by an operator who is behaving more and more like someone seeking real political influence; Prigozhin, indeed, is sometimes touted as a successor to Putin. In one of his latest video appearances, he addresses the Ukrainian president, Volodymyr Zelenskiy, from the cockpit of an Su-24 fighter-bomber, challenging him to a duel in the skies in exchange for territory in Ukraine. This suggests that Prigozhin not only considers himself a peer of Zelenskiy, but has scant regard for diplomatic protocol in international relations, under which only another head of state should address his or her counterpart directly.

I have spoken, off the record, to a former KGB officer and a Russian oligarch, who both maintain that Prigozhin is intentionally hyped up as a bogeyman, to be presented to Russian audiences who fantasise about regime change. The warning is clear: if Putin goes, things could be worse. Whether or not Prigozhin is a puppet whose strings can be cut at Putin's will is ultimately irrelevant. Criminal violence is now tolerated and is becoming institutionalised in Russia. For now, Putin still seems to be in control. But by delegating the use of force to non-state actors, he is giving them a taste of power that could become unmanageable the day the regime shows signs of weakness. The world needs to be prepared for the chaos that will ensue.

The Guardian

North Korea's distant female leadership

Dr. Theodorke Karasik

THE public profile of an almost-10-year-old Kim Ju Ae, daughter of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, at events celebrating the 75th anniversary of the North Korean military, raises interesting questions about the trajectory of the country's future leadership.

Kim's daughter attended a special banquet, and was seated in the center of the lead table between Kim and her mother. It was an unprecedented scene in the presence of dozens of North Korean army generals. In a country where the Kim family and the military are all powerful, the girl's presence at such an important event sends clear signals. The connection between the family and the Korean military is unbreakable. The military serves the Kim dynasty.

The role of women in North Korea's leadership hierarchy came into public view with the rise of Kim Yo Jong, the North Korean leader's sister and youngest child of North Korea's second supreme leader Kim Jong Il. Kim Yo Jong is already well known for her diplomatic presence, verbal barrages, and outright rudeness. North Korea's foreign policy "star" is made all the more powerful by amplification of her support for Russia above all else.

Kim Ju Ae faces an interesting future as the daughter of the head of the Kim dynasty. Unlike other

senior North Korean youth who may study abroad, Kim's daughter faces a public unlike any of her elder relatives in Swiss schools. Her next decade of development under her father's direction will mold this persona, along with her mother, Ri Sol Ju, who wears a SS missile pendant around her neck. Ri Sol Ju gave birth to her first child in 2010 and her second in about early 2013. She is believed to have had a third child in 2017.

Research shows that in the hereditary-ruled Mount Paektu bloodline of North Korea, successors are made public through state media, with Kim's father and predecessor Kim Jong Il first publicly introduced in his late 30s. Kim Jong Un himself made his debut when he was in his 20s. As state media increasingly becomes more sophisticated, so too does the way that the North Korean leadership presents its potential next leader.

Some may make fun of "take your daughter to work day" but the fact is that North Korea is planning its future. The country sees itself as a global player, and is expected to be more assertive in the north-east Asian theater. Between Aunt Kim Yo Jong, and a grown-up niece, Kim Ju Ae, the face of Korea will become increasingly female. How that impacts demographics and economics in North

Korea, as well as where North Korea is in the long term, is an interesting question. Some have argued that North Korean women have acted on their agency deliberately, getting away with what they could while simultaneously skillfully avoiding the dire consequences of being identified as actors who dare to disrupt the status quo in the Kim-ruled country. This is where Aunt Kim Yo Jong comes into the picture. She is paving the way by her increasingly dramatic appearances, taunting South Korea, promising war against the US, and declaring frontline support for Russia in its invasion of Ukraine.

There is an historical, cultural aspect to consider, not discussed much, but of possible value. Throughout history, the Korean Peninsula has faced many tribulations due to its neighbors, China and Japan. Korea is seen as a gateway into China by extension of the empire. With the birth of North Korea, the South remained in its continuing state of "invasion" complex, while the north solidified under "juche," or "self-reliance." There is a mysticism around a "Queen of Korea" that is part of folklore forecasting. Some might call this phenomenon shamanic, which in some sense the predilection is, given the older history of

the Korean Peninsula, circa 13th century, with female figures. But there are current manifestations. The state-foundation myths have been adapted into several South Korean TV series in recent years, drawing the attention of millions. In addition, hundreds of shrines are dotted throughout South Korea, supporting these folkloric tales.

Currently, discussion of such phenomena is found among a particular section of the South Korean population who see reunification in the future. It is possible that as North Korea's possible future leader Kim Ju Ae gets older, the "noise" about the predictions of a Queen of Korea coming true grows. North Korea knows this folklore well, and may be using some of its concepts as part of the future planning in finding sympathizers in the south to the notion of such a female leader.

Overall, a future female North Korean leader can invigorate a drive for southern reunification, forcing a strategic loss for the country's neighbors and supporters. Hypothetically, the "queen" idea is a long-term plan, and, if it turns out true, will show that North Korean leader Kim has foresight on "gender as politics," whether Kim Ju Ae ultimately becomes the country's female leader or not.

Arab News

There were many forced disappearances and suspicious deaths that were not investigated by the authorities. Kagame signed a controversial asylum seeker deal with the United Kingdom that the United Nations refugee agency believes is "contrary to the letter and spirit of the Refugee Convention". In August, a UN group of experts said they obtained "solid evidence" that Rwandan troops attacked soldiers inside the neighbouring Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and provided support to the M23 rebel group.

in a list that presents itself as proof that "Africa rules" and "the world of Wakanda is alive and kicking!" Sure, in many ways, Rwanda is an African success story. Since the civil war and the Rwandan genocide of 1994, the tiny landlocked nation of 13 million made significant progress in key areas, from education and agriculture to healthcare and security. It has a majority-female parliament and is considered a world leader in gender equality. Despite taking a hit from COVID-19 like the rest of the world, its economy is now largely stable. It is hoping to achieve Middle Income Country status by 2035. All this, however, does not mean Rwanda is an African utopia and Kagame a "pioneer" worthy of "adulation".

As detailed in the yearly report published by Human Rights Watch in December, in 2022, Kagame's administration continued "to wage a campaign against real and perceived opponents of the government". It cracked down on political opposition and restricted the people's right to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly. Critics were arbitrarily arrested and some even said they were tortured in state custody. There were many forced disappearances and suspicious deaths that were not investigated by the authorities. Kagame signed a controversial asylum seeker deal with the United Kingdom that the United Nations refugee agency believes is "contrary to the letter and spirit of the Refugee Convention". In August, a UN group of experts said they obtained "solid evidence" that Rwandan troops attacked soldiers inside the neighbouring Democratic

Republic of the Congo (DRC) and provided support to the M23 rebel group. The years-long conflict between the DRC government and the M23 rebels, which Kagame is reportedly fuelling by providing support to the armed group, has caused widespread hunger and displaced more than two million people. Backed by a long history of authoritarianism and political repression, this poor report card should have categorically prevented Kagame from being included in a list that marks and celebrates African achievement and progress.

What gives? As someone from Zimbabwe, I am saddened but not surprised that Africans are turning a blind eye to the democratic shortcomings of Kagame. In the 1980s and 90s, Zimbabwe was regarded as a success story just like Rwanda. At the time, our president was liberation war icon, Robert Mugabe. He was respected across Africa and beyond as a revolutionary who fought for the dignity and pride of his people. He was admired and praised for his commitment to Zimbabwe's socioeconomic development and for his passionate critiques of Western imperialism. Mugabe's many admirable qualities and accomplishments, however, were clouded by his predilection for violence and unrestrained power. In the early 1980s, his administration paved the way for and openly encouraged countless rapes, enforced disappearances, mass beatings and nearly 20,000 civilian deaths collectively known as the "Gukuruhundi" massacres. And after the end of Gukuruhundi, hundreds of opposition party supporters were intimidated, tortured and killed in episodes of electoral violence that Mugabe openly stoked, or refused to take action to stop, for years. Mugabe's violence and political thuggery often played out in the open. His government rarely bothered to hide away the abuse and the oppression. Anyone who dared to resist, oppose or raise the alarm was punished. To the dismay of long-suffering Zimbabweans, however, our African brothers and sisters did not support our struggle. They always gave Mugabe a hero's welcome at continental gatherings.

Kagame's authoritarianism today because his country is still doing relatively well. But Rwanda will not remain a success story if Kagame continues to crush all dissent and ignore all criticism.

Zimbabwe went from being the "breadbasket of Africa" to a socioeconomic and political basket case in a decade. Our vaunted health and education sectors went from world-class to dilapidated in no time. All because Mugabe thought his revolutionary credentials gave him the right to govern with an iron fist and Africans - bedazzled by the liberation icon before them - chose to ignore his crimes against Zimbabweans. I am afraid the same will happen to Rwanda if Africans remain under Kagame's spell. Zimbabwe's recent history is a cautionary tale about how unchecked power and unconditional adulation can transform an imperfect hero into a tyrant and spell disaster for an entire nation. So editors should stop declaring Kagame a "pioneer", calling him "inspirational" and claiming he is a "standard bearer" in African politics. He cannot be considered any of those things until dissenting Rwandans stop being threatened, arbitrarily jailed or forcibly disappeared. Rwanda and Africa deserve much better.

As Africans come to expect more civil liberties from their postcolonial governments, human rights and democracy are at a crossroads in Africa. The continent's self-proclaimed opinion makers must cease their attempts to whitewash liberation icons-turned-tyrants, and instead endeavour to hold them accountable for failing to responsibly fulfil their political mandates.

Important Notice

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



'Foreign investment not possible without local investors' facilitation'

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Board of Investment Chaudhry Salik Hussain said on Monday that no foreign investment could be attracted without facilitation from the local investors.

He was talking to the business community here at the Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry. LCCI President Kashif Anwar and Senior Vice President Chaudhry Zafar Mahmood also spoke.

The federal minister said that before giving priority and protocol to foreign investors, incentives should be given to the local investors first, because if they were happy, only then someone from outside would come to invest here.

He said that situation in Pakistan was that the investors had to go to the public institutions again and again, for one reason or the other. The aim of the institutions should be helping the business community run their businesses and not harassing them. Such an environment should be created here that people could expand their businesses, he suggested.

Chaudhry Salik said that Special Economic Zones (SEZs) were functioning in the same way as Export Processing Zones. The penalties that were being imposed on solar in some societies would be discussed as the whole world were currently investing in renewable energy. He said that chambers should give their opinion on dollar amnesty so that a scheme could be executed to convince those who retained dollars. He said that no political party had an eco-

nomie manifesto. "First we have to ask ourselves that whenever a party comes to power, do they have any economic policy," he added.

About the Afghan transit trade, he said that Afghanistan was a landlocked country and the only way was to supply goods there by land route. "We will have to continue the Afghan transit trade, but the taxes should be revisited. I will continue to raise my voice on issues like refunds, taxes, investment of the business community," he said.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar said, the promotion of foreign investment as well as local investment was need of the hour. According to the Economic Survey of Pakistan, the ratio of total investment in the country was only 15 per cent of GDP, which was quite low. The share of private investment in this was only 10 per cent of GDP, which had become inevitable to increase.

He said, "If we talk about the data of Net Foreign Direct Investment, it was US\$2.6 billion in 2019-20, which decreased to US\$1.82 billion in 2020-21, while in 2021-22, its volume was limited to only US\$1.87 billion, which was also low.

He said that local investment could not increase until the problems of local industries were solved. "For example, our industries have to import a lot of raw materials, essential components and various machinery which are not available in the country, on which they have to pay 100 per cent cash margin, regulatory duty, customs duty

and additional customs duty, which should be eliminated. Apart from this, the issues of pending refunds and multiple audits should also be cleared and rate of withholding tax for businesses be reduced."

The LCCI president said that in order to promote local investment, the government had to solve some problems related to taxation on a priority basis, which would also improve the ease of doing business. "Currently, taxpayers have to undergo multiple audits of income tax and sales tax. We appeal that the number of these audits should be reduced. Apart from this, taxpayers have to bear all the audits, penalties, surcharges, bank attachments, inquiries, statements, returns, withholding of registered persons, penalty for late filing of statements/income tax returns and many other problems."

He said that current economic conditions require immediate reduction of penalties and surcharges for taxpayers.

The LCCI president said that it was almost impossible to increase investment without reducing the cost of doing business. The industries were facing problems like policy rate which had reached 17 per cent and high energy cost due to which the cost of production increased, and it had become more difficult for exporters to compete in foreign markets. In this regard, there was also a need to work on an emergency basis.

He said that the Board of Investment was working on increasing investment on a priority basis in some sectors including Food

Processing, Logistics, Textile, Housing & Construction, Automobile, IT and Tourism. He drew the attention of The minister towards hydropower and renewable energy. He said that the Board of Investment also needed to attract private investment to build new dams and reservoirs. "We should also expand the solar energy network as we still get less than five per cent of our energy requirement from it. It will also help in bringing the imports to minimum level," he suggested.

With the help of Special Economic Zones, the process of industrialisation would be strengthened, but if they were considered as Special Export Zones, it would be very easy to invest in them as well as increase the exports.

Kashif Anwar said that Pakistan had been facing inconsistency of economic policies for a long time due to which new investors were discouraged. For this the Board of Investment also needed to play its role. He said that Lahore Chamber had informed the leaders of almost all major political parties of Pakistan by letters in view of the economic situation of the country that they had formulated some important proposals to fix the current economic situation of the country.

"Government should immediately announce the Declaration Scheme so that the Undeclared Foreign Reserves can become part of our economy. I hope you will support our position as it will also make it easier to promote local investment," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Tomoyuki Kimura, ADB's Director General, Strategy, Policy & Partnership Department (SPD) called on Federal Minister for Economic Affairs, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq alongwith his delegation at Economic Affairs Division.

PSX loses 24 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) shed 24.83 points on Monday, a nominal negative change of 0.06 percent, closing at 41,716.95 points against 41,741.78 points the previous day.

A total of 192,412,200 shares were traded during the day as compared to 281,894,248 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs.7.661 billion against Rs.14,709 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 318 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 150 of them recorded gains and 148 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 20 companies remained unchanged. The three top-trading companies were Sui South Gas with 22,253,124 shares at Rs 12.17 per share; WorldCall Telecom with 16,385,161 shares at Rs 1.27 per share, and Oil & Gas Dev with 15,131,425 shares at Rs 98.80 per share.

Sapphire Tex witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.73.37 per share price, closing at Rs.1,099.99, whereas the runner-up was Goodluck Ind. with a Rs. 52.45 rise in its per share price to Rs.850.00.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 17.28 per share closing at Rs.530.04; followed by Systems Limited with Rs 13.19 decline to close at Rs 672.39.

Rupee sheds 16 paise

ISLAMABAD (APP): The exchange rate of the Pakistani rupee weakened by 16 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Monday and closed at Rs 269.44 against the previous day's closing of Rs 269.28.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs. 271 and Rs. 274 respectively.

The price of the euro depreciated by Rs 1.82 and closed at Rs 287.41 against the previous day's closing of Rs 289.23, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen lost three paise to close at Rs 2.03, whereas a decrease of Rs 1.82 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British pound, which was traded at Rs 324.33 as compared to its last closing of Rs 326.15. The exchange rates of the Emirates dirham and Saudi riyal increased by 05 paise each to close at Rs 73.35 and Rs 71.80 respectively.

Gold prices declined

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.800 on Monday and was traded at Rs. 197,600 against sale at Rs.198,400 the last trading day. The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.686 to Rs. 169,410 against Rs.170,096, whereas that of 10 grams of 22 karat went down to Rs. 155,293 from Rs. 155,921. All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of one tola silver decreased by Rs30 to Rs.2,130 whereas that of ten gram silver declined by Rs.25.72 to 1,826.13. The price of gold in the international market declined by \$5 to \$1,860 from US\$1,865, the association reported.

OGRA notifies decline in LNG prices

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (OGRA) on Monday has notified a reduction in prices of liquefied natural gas (LNG) for consumers of two public gas utilities – Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) and Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) – for February 2023.

According to details, the LNG price for SNGPL consumers has been reduced by \$0.61/mmbtu for February while for SSGC consumers the rate has been slashed by \$0.56/mmbtu.

After the reduction, the OGRA has fixed the LNG price at \$13.70/mmbtu for SNGPL consumers and

\$14.31/mmbtu for SSGC consumers.

In January, the LNG price was \$13.95/mmbtu for the SNGPL consumers and \$14.51/mmbtu for the SSGC consumers. Earlier in January, OGRA approved a 74 per cent increase in the prescribed prices of natural gas for the 2022-23 fiscal year.

According to details, the regulator allowed Sui Northern Gas Pipeline Limited (SNGPL) to increase prices by up to 74.42 percent. It also allowed Sui Southern Gas Company (SSGC) to increase gas prices by 67.75 percent for the year 2022-23.

The oil and gas regulator approved increases of Rs406.28 and Rs469.28 per million British thermal units (mmbtu) for SNGPL and SSGC, respectively.

OGRA further said that the average gas price for SNGPL would reach Rs952.17 per unit from the existing rate of Rs545.89 per mmbtu, while that of SSGC would reach Rs1,161 per unit from the current Rs692.63 per mmbtu.

Any revision as advised by the federal government shall be accordingly notified by OGRA. Till such time, the existing category-wise natural gas sale prices shall continue to prevail.

Poultry prices increase by 30 per cent in twin cities

ISLAMABAD (APP): The prices of poultry items have increased by 30 percent in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi during the last one week, which creates huge volatility in the market.

According to the market survey conducted by APP here Monday, during last week in the twin cities, a 40 percent increase was witnessed in the price of chicken in the last couple of months, while as same as 30 percent increase in the price of poultry eggs.

According to the survey, the price of live chicken in the twin cities was between Rs 415 and 420 per kg from the last three days of this month of February. Similarly, chicken meat is sold at Rs 690 to 700 per kg in the market of both cities.

During this time, it was also found that poultry eggs used to be sold at Rs. 282 to Rs. 290 per dozen in the market of both cities. Meanwhile, talking to APP, Chairman Pakistan Poultry Association (PPA), Chaudhry Ashraf said the increase in the current

prices of poultry is due to demand and supply issues. He said that the increase in poultry business inputs and cost of doing business was seen across the country due to which the market was in crisis.

He said that many people related to the chicken business in the country were affected by the current crisis and especially small businesses and poultry farms were closed, adding the poultry business in the four provinces including Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is suffering from the current economic crisis.

Chaudhry Ashraf said that the country's economic conditions are also an important issue and the poultry feed ingredients imported from foreign countries are very expensive, in which soybean is important.

He said that many soybean ships have stopped at Karachi port, which has an inevitable impact on poultry prices.

Pakistan Poultry Association (PPA) has also

called for a further increase in the prices of chicken and there was an increase observed in the prices of poultry items in the twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi.

On this occasion, poultry feed industrialist and Senior Vice President of Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Hamza Sarosh said that soybean is included in the basic ingredients of poultry feed.

He said that at present, the import of soybeans has stopped and several ships of soybeans are stopped at Karachi port and one ship has been released yet.

Hamza said that soybeans for poultry feed were imported from America, Brazil and Argentina.

Speaking to APP, former chairman PPA Khalil Sattar said that chicken feed ingredients were being imported which is increasing the cost of doing business. Due to this demand and supply issue, the prices of poultry have been continuously increasing, he said.

European, US stocks rise on hopes of inflation slowdown

LONDON (AFP/APP): European and US stock markets rose Monday as investors set aside Asian losses and focused on expectations of slowing inflation in Britain and the United States, dealers said.

London and Frankfurt stocks were up 0.5 percent in afternoon trading, while Paris stocks advanced by 0.8 percent.

On Wall Street, the Dow edged up 0.1 percent as trading got underway. "The expectation is inflation will have eased slightly when the US and UK report tomorrow and Wednesday respectively," said AJ Bell investment director Russ Mould.

Patrick O'Hare, analyst at at Briefing.com, said investors "are taking a somewhat guarded stance" before the data release.

The Bank of England, the European Central Bank and the US Federal Reserve ramped up interest rates last year in efforts to tame sky-high inflation.

While US inflation has been trending down for several months, data showing the jobs market

remained very tight in January indicated the world's top economy was still robust.

The employment reading led a number of Federal Reserve officials to insist there was still plenty of work to do before they were happy they had prices under control.

"These comments were particularly noteworthy given that they explicitly pushed back against the narrative of rate cuts by year end, which markets had started to assume would be coming fairly soon," said Michael Hewson at CMC Markets.

In Asia on Monday, equities fell on growing expectations that US interest rates will go much higher and stay there for longer than previously thought.

Sentiment in Europe was also boosted by news that the eurozone economy was forecast to narrowly avoid recession this winter.

The 20-nation area's economy is now expected to expand by 0.9 percent instead of 0.3 percent, as "favourable developments"

helped it weather fallout from Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the European Union's executive arm said.

Inflation in the eurozone is also expected to slow more than previously forecast after the war sent oil and gas prices soaring last year.

Oil prices retreated Monday, having jumped more than two percent Friday in reaction to Russia's decision to slash output by 500,000 barrels per day.

The move came after a Western price cap that was imposed on exports in retaliation for Moscow's war on Ukraine.

"Oil prices are falling as investors focus on near-term demand concerns, overshadowing news on Friday that Russia will cut oil production," said market analyst Fiona Cincotta at City Index.

Workers' remittances down 11 per cent in Jul-Jan FY23

ISLAMABAD (APP): The overseas workers' remittances posted a decline of 11 percent during first seven months (Jul-Jan) of fiscal year 2022-23 as the remittances fell from \$17.98 billion in Jul-Jan of FY22 to \$16.01 billion in the period under review.

On year-on-year basis, the overseas workers' remittances recorded an inflow of US\$1.9 billion in

January 2023, posting a decrease of 13 percent as compared with the same month of previous year's inflow of \$2.18 billion.

On month-on-month basis, the remittances in January 2023 also witnessed a decline of 9.9 percent when compared with the inflow of \$2.1 billion recorded in December 2022.

According to a recent data released by State Bank of Pakistan on Monday, remittances' inflows during January, 2023 were mainly sourced from Saudi Arabia (\$407.6 million), United Arab Emirates (\$269.2 mil-

lion), United Kingdom (\$330.4 million) and United States of America (\$213.9 million).

During the corresponding month, the overseas Pakistanis living in Bahrain sent \$35.7 million, from Kuwait \$59.0 million, from Qatar \$72.7 million whereas \$76.1 million were dispatched from Oman.

Similarly the inflows from Germany, France, The Netherlands, Spain, Italy, Greece, Sweden, Denmark, Belgium, and Ireland were recorded at \$47.6 million, \$35.3 million, \$4.3 million, \$34.3 million, \$65.6 mil-

lion, \$21.9 million, \$6.3 million, \$6.5 million, \$7.7 million and \$10.0 million respectively.

Likewise, from Malaysia, Norway, Switzerland, Australia, Canada, and Japan, the workers dispatched \$6.0 million, \$9.7 million, \$3.3 million, \$47.1 million, \$37.6 million, and \$5.5 million respectively.

Remittances from South Africa during the month under review stood at \$13.8 million while that from South Korea stood at \$8.5 million. Similarly \$58.1 million were received from other countries.

Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI (APP): Two ships, MSC Makalu III and Golden Violet, carrying containers and palm oil, berthed at the Qasim International Container Terminal and Liquid Cargo Terminal respectively the other day.

Meanwhile, two more ships, Maran Gas Asclepius

and MSC Ines with LNG and containers also arrived at the outer anchorage of Port Qasim today.

A total of 06 ships were engaged at PAQ berths during the last 24 hours, out of them, two ships, Chemicals carrier 'Coral Actinia' and container vessel 'MSC Makalu III' left the port on Monday.

The cargo throughput of 68,691 tonnes comprising 40,648 tonnes of imports cargo and 28,043 tonnes of export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 1,551 Containers (36 TEUs Imports and 1,515

TEUs export) was handled at the port during the last 24 hours.

There are 08 ships at the outer anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them, two ships, MSC Ines and Maran Gas Asclepius carrying containers and LNG are expected to take berths at Container Terminal and Elengy Terminal respectively later today, and another container ship 'Maersk Brooklyn' is also due to arrive at Port Qasim today, whereas, three more ships, MSC Lisbon, MSC Aria and Santa Rosa are due to arrive on Tuesday.

Tokyo shares fall on high-tech selling

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo stocks fell on Monday as tech shares came under pressure while investors digested reports about the Bank of Japan's new governor.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index lost 0.88 percent, or 243.66 points, at 27,427.32, while the broader Topix index slipped 0.47 percent, or 9.29 points, to 1,977.67.

The market faced selling pressure as investors awaited the official announcement, slated for Tuesday, of the candidates to replace current Bank of Japan governor Haruhiko Kuroda and his deputies.

Japanese media say the government is set to nominate economics professor Kazuo Ueda as the next central banker, a surprise pick as the market expected sitting deputy governor

Masayoshi Amamiya to be the next BoJ chief.

"The market fell on worries about US inflation as well as speculation that the Bank of Japan (under the next leader) may adjust its policy," Daiwa Securities said.

"Many investors refrained from actively trading (ahead of the Tuesday announcement), and the index drifted lower," the brokerage said.

Falls of US tech shares, driven down by rising US rates, also impacted the Tokyo market, it added. "Caution over the monetary policies of Japan and the US is becoming more and more pronounced," IwaiCosmo Securities said.

The dollar stood at 132.23 yen, against 131.42 yen in New York late Friday.

Court Notice

IN THE COURT OF SAIMA EHSAN CIVIL JUDGE II/ALLAQA QAZI BUNER AT DAGGAR.

Case No.242/1. Institution 14/2/2022. Date of hearing. 25/2/2023.

Fazlullah VS Khan Bahadure etc. Notice n o. 8 / 1 / 1. S h a r i f Zada.8/1/2.Mer Zada.8/1/3.Sahib Zada sons.8/1/4.Bakht Naseba.8/1/5. Rehmania. 8/1/6. Bakh Shania. 8/1/7. Rema. 8/1/8. Kokecha daughters of Sheren Zara resident of Konkoy tehsel Mandanr 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 25/2/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

IN THE COURT OF SAIMA EHSAN CIVIL JUDGE II/ALLAQA QAZI BUNER AT DAGGAR. Case No.12/2. Institution 26/10/2021. Date of hearing. 28/2/2023. Alamger VS Salem.

Notice no.6.Dilshad Alam son of Mah Muner resident of Anghapur tehsel Daggardistrict Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 28/2/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Court Notices

In the court of zeba chaudhry shahiba Additional District & Session Judge/Utility court Islamabad West. Suit for recovery Rs: 2,23,839 title M/S Sui Northern Gas Pipe line vs Rab Nawaz 252-B Street # 5 Sector F-10/3 Islamabad. It is proclaimed if the said defendant does not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in this court on 14-02-23 at 08.00 A.M. ex-parte proceedings will be taken against him/her. *****

In the court of zeba chaudhry shahiba Additional District & Session Judge/Utility court Islamabad West. Suit for recovery Rs: 215,535 title M/S Sui Northern Gas Pipe line vs Taj Muhammad S/O Khushi Muhammad H No. Nil Street No. Nil Sarai Kharbooz, tarnol GT ROAD Savabi Islamabad It is proclaimed if the said defendant does not appear personally or through duly authorized agent or pleader in this court on 14-02-23 at 08.00 A.M. ex-parte proceedings will be taken against him/her. *****

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In brief

Baseball Championship

MULTAN (APP): A five day All Pakistan Inter-Varsity Baseball Championship opened at Emerson University Multan (EUM) here on Monday. Being played among eight varsities, the Championship was inaugurated by EUM VC, Dr Muhammad Ramzan at the Varsity's ground. Teams of Bahauddin Zakariya University, Islamia University, University of Central Punjab, Lahore University, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Emerson University and two other varsities are competing in the Championship. Addressing the opening ceremony, EUM VC, Dr Muhammad Ramzan said that the country should progress at academic and sports levels nationally and internationally. He announced to give fee waiver to sportsman who would play at national or international levels from EUM. He informed that it was high time to engage youth in positive activities like sports which inculcate sportsman spirit, tolerance and sense of completion in them.

Football training camp concludes

KARACHI (APP): A week-long training camp under the supervision of English Coach Alex Pike. A local coach Zubair Ghulam Rasool was selected from Karachi, who along with English coach Alex Pike had left for the Swindon Town Football Club for two weeks training. Commissioner Karachi Mohammed Iqbal Memon attended the concluding ceremony. Around 23 young footballers participated in the camp under the supervision of English Coach Alex Pike. A local coach Zubair Ghulam Rasool was selected from Karachi, who along with English coach Alex Pike had left for the Swindon Town Football Club for two weeks training. Commissioner Karachi Mohammed Iqbal Memon while addressing the closing ceremony of the camp, said that Lyari had the best talent and youth of Lyari were capable to move forward. He said that last year a memorandum of understanding was signed between Swindon Town Football Club and Karachi Football Club to commence trials for Karachi's under-15 footballers with a short listing of 23 footballers.

Harshitha half-century leads Sri Lanka

CAPE TOWN (AFP/APP): Harshitha Samarawickrama made a composed half-century to guide Sri Lanka to a seven-wicket win over Bangladesh at Newlands in Cape Town on Sunday for their second successive victory at the Women's T20 World Cup. Left-handed opening batter Harshitha made 69 not out and shared an unbeaten 105-run partnership with Nilakshi de Silva (41 not out). They enabled Sri Lanka to survive an early scare in pursuit of a modest Bangladesh total of 126 for eight. "I'm very happy about our performance," said Sri Lanka skipper Chamari Athapaththu who made 68 in the opening win over South Africa but fell for 15 on Sunday. "We don't depend on one or batters. We have been working on our batting the last couple of months." Sri Lanka, who beat the hosts on the same Newlands pitch on Friday, were rattled when 18-year-old medium-pace bowler Marufa Akter took three wickets without conceding a run to reduce them to 25 for three in the sixth over. Akter, whose previous five international matches had yielded only three wickets, struck with her third delivery when she had Athapaththu caught at midwicket.



MULTAN: February 13 - A beautiful view of fireworks during the opening ceremony of the Pakistan Super League season 8 (PSL 8) at Multan Cricket Stadium.

Peshawar Zalmi announces The Frontier post as media partner for PSL

E.P. Report
PESHAWAR: Peshawar Zalmi, a popular franchise of the Pakistan Super League (PSL), announced The Frontier Post as its Official Regional Newspaper Partner (English) for the eighth edition of the PSL, on Monday. Pakistan Super League (PSL), launched in 2016, has been a huge success, even though many of the matches in the first five editions had to be played in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) due to security concerns. The Peshawar-based franchise announced the partnership through their official Twitter handle. The team posted, "Proud to continue our partnership with @TheFrontierPost as Peshawar Zalmi's Official Regional Newspaper Partner (English) for #HBLPSL8". The Frontier Post on the



other hand thanked the Peshawar Zalmi for joining hands for Pakistan Super League (PSL) and assured Peshawar Zalmi full support and wished Zalmi best of luck for this year's PSL. Peshawar Zalmi has been making an appearance in the PSL since 2016. The Peshawar-based franchise is one of the successful teams of the tournament after lifting the title once in 2017, defeating Quetta Gladiators by 58 runs in the final.

8th annual Deaf Reach Golf Tournament



E.P. Report
KARACHI: In Support of Deaf Education Deaf Reach hosted their 8th Annual Charity Golf Tournament in support of Deaf Education on Sunday, February 12th, 2023 at DHA Golf & Country Club. The proceeds from the tournament help to sponsor the education and skills training of 1,500 deaf students enrolled in the eight Deaf Reach Schools & Colleges across Sindh and Punjab. Over 130 golfers participated in the 18-hole Texas Scramble tournament. Platinum sponsorship was by KFC, Gold sponsorship by IGI Life, and Silver

sponsors included Jubilee Life Insurance, Habib Metro, Engro Foundation, and HMR Waterfront. Darren Sammy, the famous West Indies cricketer in Karachi for a PSL match, had fun playing 18 holes and learning some sign language from the students along the way. "I'm so impressed with the work being done by Deaf Reach," he said. "They are doing an amazing job, and have my wholehearted support!" To close the event, the players along with friends and supporters of Deaf Reach were hosted at a Luncheon and Award Ceremony. The students of Deaf Reach School opened the ceremony with the

National Anthem, followed by a meaningful drama illustrating the importance of inclusion and working together in unity - all done in sign language! The students then presented trophies and prizes to the winners. Richard Geary thanked the audience and corporate sponsors saying, "This event and the funds raised is the result of many people unselfishly contributing their time and support to make a real difference in the lives of the children whom we serve. Thank you all." Visit www.deafreach.com for more details, and join the cause to make education a reality for deaf children in Pakistan!

PSL 8 officially kicks off with glittering opening ceremony

MULTAN (NNI): The eighth edition of the much-awaited Pakistan Super League (PSL) kicked off Monday at the Multan Cricket Stadium with a glittering and star-studded opening ceremony. The ceremony, which began with a half-hour delay, saw singer Aima Baig - clad in an ethereal white gown - first performing the national anthem. Following the national anthem, music sensation Shae Gill, Asim Azhar and Farish Shafi, who performed this year's PSL anthem Sab Sitarey Humaray, will be performing the anthem live in the ceremony. Besides them, several other artists including the likes of Sahir Bagga will also perform in the opening ceremony. Notably, Multan is hosting the PSL opening ceremony for the first time since the launch of the nation's marquee league. Speaking at the ceremony, Habib Bank Limited (HBL) President and CEO Muhammad Aurangzeb congratulated the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for organising the tournament for the eighth time. "This is a historic first in terms of having the inaugurating match in Multan this evening," he said. "HBL PSL has moved from strength to strength. All the stakeholders have put in a concerted effort to make this a success." "No matter which team wins [...] the real victory is of Pakistan," he added. PCB Management Committee

Chairman Najam Sethi vowed that the board would ensure that PSL matches take place in Peshawar and Quetta next year. "PSL has given several assets to Pakistan. This has become an international brand that we can be proud of. This year [several] foreign and local players are debuting." He noted that the tournament has given several stars to the national side, including Shaheen Shah Afridi, Haris Rauf, and Hasan Ali. "Full congratulations in advance to those who will win. Let the game begin," he added. Sahir Ali Bagga and Baig then took to the stage for their performance, getting the crowd roaring. The performance was followed by Asim Azhar, Faris Shafi and Shae Gill performing this year's official anthem 'Sab Sitarey Humaray'. The ceremony concluded with a large fireworks display. The first match of the tournament will be played between the Multan Sultans and Lahore Qalandars. Led by Pakistan's star wicket-keeper batter Mohammad Rizwan, Multan boast a batting-heavy core of players featuring Australia's Tim David, South African Rilee Rossouw, his compatriot David Miller and West Indies veteran Kieran Pollard. Tickets for Lahore, Rawalpindi HBL PSL 8 matches go on sale on Tuesday: The tickets for the HBL PSL 8 matches in Lahore and Rawalpindi will go on sale from

tomorrow, Tuesday. The fans can buy the tickets online from pcb.bookme.pk and physical tickets will be available at designated venues, which will be announced in due course. The tickets for the 19 March final at the Gaddafi Stadium have been set at PKR7,000 (VIP), PKR4,000 (Premium), PKR2,500 (First class) and PKR1,200 (General). Fans can witness the three Playoffs (Qualifier and two Eliminator) at PKR6,000 (VIP), PKR3,500 (Premium), PKR2,000 (First class) and PKR1,000 (General). Rawalpindi will host 11 HBL PSL 8 matches and a ticket for the first match between Peshawar Zalmi and Karachi Kings on 1 March is priced at PKR3,000 (VIP) and PKR2,000 (Premium). Season passes will also be available for Lahore and Rawalpindi matches so the fans can watch their stars in action at discounted prices. The prices of season passes for Lahore matches are set at PKR18,720 (VIP), PKR10,170 (Premium), PKR7,110 (First class), PKR3,870 (General) and they can be utilised to watch 26 Feb, 27 Feb, 2 March, 4 March and 12 March matches. The prices of the season passes for the Rawalpindi matches are PKR13,230 (VIP), PKR8,730 (Premium) and they will be applicable for matches on 1, 6, 8, 9 and 10 March.

3rd Jinnah Gold Polo Cup 2023 to get underway

LAHORE (APP): The 3rd Jinnah Gold Polo Cup 2023 sponsored by Al Rehman Developers and Town Planners, the first major high-goal even of this season, is getting under tomorrow (Tuesday) here at the Jinnah Polo Field. There are two foreign players in each team and both the umpires are also foreigners. Pool teams are Mir Huzaifa Ahmed, Ahmed Ali Tiwana, Nico Roberts and Chulo Corti in Diamond Pants while Mir Shoaib Ahmed is reserve player. Danyal Shaikh, Abdul Rehman Monnoo, Javier Guerrero and Bautista Garcia in DS Polo while Lt Col Omer Minhas (R) is reserve player. Master Paints team includes Sufi Muhammad Amir, Agha Musa Ali Khan Pelagio Balazaldi while Sufi Muhammad Haroon and

Manuel Carranza are reserve players. Team Remounts includes Ahmad Zubair Butt, ALD Imran Shahid, Jota Chavanne and Manuel Sundblad, while the reserves include Sawar Naeem and Major Junaid. Among the Group B teams are Roberto Itturioz Arias, Baber Naseem, Hamza Mawaz Khan and Juan Maria Ruiz Guinazu in BN Polo, Farooq Amin Sufi, Raja Temur Nadeem, Juan Cruz Greguol and Simon Prada in Master Paints/Newage Cables. Haider Naseem, Raja Jalal Arsalan, Raja Mekayial Sami and Raja Samiullah in HN Polo, while Abbas Mukhtar, Saqib Khan Khakwani, Ramiro Zavaleta and Raul Laplacette are in the FG Polo team.

Rawalpindi Development Authority Tariq Murtaza was the chief guest at the opening ceremony. Following are the results: Boys Singles 1st Round: M.Huzaifa Khan (PAK) bt Raheem Shahzada(GBR) 6-1,6-2;Bugra Ozkoc (TUR) bt Timur Dautov (RUS)6-2,2-6,6-0;Edward Kruppe (CAN) bt Asad Zaman (PAK) 6-3,6-1;Mahatir Muhammad (PAK) bt Sevastian Tasenkov(RUS) 7-6(1),6-3;Boda Zheng(CHN) bt Muhammad Salar(PAK)6-0,6-2;Kamonpanyakorn Thadpong (THA) bt Ilya Mosolkina (RUS) 6-3,6-2;Bilal Asim (PAK) bt Daniil Chizhuk(RUS)6-

First round fixtures of ITF World Junior Tennis Championships held

ISLAMABAD (APP): The ITF Pakistan S. Dilwar Abbas World Junior Tennis Championships Leg-2 continued at PTF-SDA Tennis Complex Islamabad on Monday with first round fixtures taking place on the second day of the event. A large number of foreign players (boys and girls) from Turkey, Russia, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Thailand, the UK, Malaysia, Romania, Singapore, China, Poland, South Korea, Canada and Pakistan are participating in the championship. President Islamabad Tennis Association/Chairman

0,6-3;Yuan Lu (CHN) bt M.Talha Khan(PAK) 6-4,6-1;Keagan Jonathan (MAS) bt Ahmad Nael Qureshi (PAK) 6-3,6-0; Cem Atlamis(TUR) bt Amir Mazari (PAK)6-0,6-0;Dogan Can Sipahioğlu(TUR) bt Ahtesham Humayun Abdul Rehman (PAK) bt K r i t t a m a e t Thammakun(THA) 7-5,6-1 Girls Singles 1st Round: Anastassiya KIM (KAZ) bt Amna Ali Qayum (PAK) 6-1,6-2.



Wu makes history as first Chinese ATP Tour winner with Dallas victory

LOS ANGELES (AFP/APP): Wu Yibing overcame a ferocious bombardment from John Isner to become the first Chinese man to win an ATP Tour title at the Dallas Open on Sunday. The 23-year-old from Hangzhou saved four match points before claiming a 6-7 (4/7), 7-6 (7/3), 7-6 (14/12) victory in just under three hours to clinch his maiden ATP victory. Wu, who has surged up the global rankings in the past year from 1,869th last March to 97th in the world, collapsed on the court in delight following his victory. It came after a pulsating battle with the big-serving Isner, who had threatened to overwhelm the Chinese player with a barrage of 44 aces during the contest. Isner's eye-popping ace tally was just one short of the all-time record for aces in a three-set ATP Tour match of 45 set by Ivo Karlovic in 2015. "I made history here for my country. I'm very proud of myself," Wu said in on-court remarks following his win. "It was a very tough match today. I'm facing, I don't know, 100 aces." Isner meanwhile paid tribute to Wu's performance after the defeat. "You're gonna be a very, very bright spot for the sport of tennis into the future," Isner said. The 37-year-old Isner was left ruing a golden chance to clinch his 17th title after squandering a match point in the second set when he led 30-40 and 6-5 on Wu's serve. With the court at his mercy, Isner sunk a return into the net and Wu survived before going on to level with victory in the tie-break to set up a decider. After neither player was able to engineer a service break in the opening two sets, the pattern continued in the third with the game going serve to set up another tie-

breaker. Isner had another match-point opportunity after taking a 6/5 lead in the breaker, but again was unable to take advantage. Both players saved match points as the tension mounted, before Wu eventually earned his fifth match point at 13-12 in the tie-breaker on Isner's serve. Wu did well to get pace on his backhanded return of a wide serve by Isner, and the American yanked his forehand high and long to hand Wu victory. The win is another impressive milestone for Wu, who last year became the first player from China to reach the third round of the US Open. Wu's emergence in the professional ranks follows a successful career as a junior, where he was an Australian Open singles semi-finalist in 2017 before going on to win the boys' singles crown at the US Open later that year.



MULTAN: A view of baseball match between University of Lahore and University of Punjab teams during All Pakistan Intersvarsity Baseball Championship.



In brief

IRSA releases 94,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 94,700 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 55,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1482.10 feet and was 84.10 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 16,800 cusecs while outflow as 45,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1126.30 feet, which was 76.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 14,300 cusecs and 25,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded at 53,500, 39,600, 29,500 and 6,500 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 14,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and zero cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

'Elections to be held on time'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister of Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik Monday said irrespective of the deteriorating economic conditions, general elections in the country would be held at their scheduled time according to the Constitution and law. Both the economic and law & order situations were the worst because of the wrong policies of the previous Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf regime, however, the incumbent government led by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz did not want to delay the same unconstitutionally, he said while talking to a private news channel. He viewed that the purpose of elections was to transfer powers to the elected representatives in a transparent way to serve the public and not for political gains. The Election Commission of Pakistan was an independent institution and it should take steps to conduct elections in a transparent and fair manner while keeping in view on the ground situation, he added.

Power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Monday issued a power suspension programme for Tuesday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 09:00 am to 02:00 pm, Islamabad Circle, Melody, Shakraparian, Satara Market, Pandorian, Chhata Bakhtawar, Alipur, E-8 Navy, G-9 Markaz, I-8/3, Old United, G-11/2, Capital Residency, Shahpur, PHED, Dhala, Patriata, Upper Topa, Shahdara, Bhara Kaho, Bhara Kaho-II, NIH, T&T, Golf City, Tarith Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle Kalyal, Bank Road-1, Sir Syed Road, Makkah Chowk, NPF-II, Model Town, MSF, Humayun, Gulistan Fatima, Quaid-e-Azam Colony, Cantt, Sahala College, Sagri, DH Homes, Redco, Nar, Khawaja, Fazal Ahmad, New Chawah, Panjar, Mandra-II, PAECHS, Bengali, Raman, CB Khan-II, Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle Syedpur Road, T&T, Sadiqabad, Shakryal, Khanna Road, Tariq Shaheed, Asghar Mall, Dhok Hakmdad, Committee Chowk, Sarafa Bazar, Jinnah Road, Westridge, Ahsanabad, Major Masood.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf, addressing at the National Convention of Women Parliamentarians for empowering women in leadership at Pakistan National Council of Arts, (PNCA).

Religious minister urges unity among believers of all religions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Mufti Abdul Shakoor on Monday said there was a fierce conflict between religious and secular sections of society in today's era. Talking to a 20-member delegation of Sikh community that called on him here in the ministry, he said believers of all religions should unite at one platform and highlight the virtues of their religions in appropriate manners on the globe.

Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee (PSGPC)

Pardhan Sardar Ameer Singh led the delegation comprising of National Commission for Minorities Member Dr Mimpal Singh and other leaders of Sikh community from Nankana Sahib and Hassan Abdal. Welcoming the delegation, Minister Abdul Shakoor said the worship of the Sikh religion was incomplete without Nankana Sahib.

On this occasion, the delegates endorsed that the Sikh community and their places of worship were safe in Pakistan and it was an exemplary country in terms of the protec-

tion of minorities.

They said after the constitution of PSGPC in 1999, the management of worship places had significantly improved.

The Sikh Yatris coming to Kartarpur from India faced many difficulties, they added.

The delegates also made several suggestions for the welfare of the Pakistani Sikh community in the meeting with the minister.

The minister assured serious consideration and implementation of the recommendations presented by the delegation of the Sikh community.

ANF seize 237 kg hashish, 6020 litres prohibited chemicals

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in operations against the drug peddlers across the counter seized over 237 kilograms of hashish and 6020 litres of prohibited chemicals, said an ANF spokesman.

In a joint operation, ANF and Motorway Police near Sheikhpura Motorway recovered 186 kg of hashish and 14 kg of opium from a vehicle.

In another operation, the force near the Zero Line Torkham border seized 12 kg of hashish from plastic bags. In another operation at the Pak-Afghan border, the ANF and FC in Khyber seized 39 kg of hashish. The force also recovered about 6,020 litres of prohibited chemicals near Chaman in a raid. The cases registered under the Anti-Narcotics Act against the accused.

Women artisans display colorful stalls at F-9 Park

ISLAMABAD (APP): As many as 200 women entrepreneurs display a huge variety of handmade products here at F-9 Park in a mega cultural event "Bahaar Rung - Islamabad Women Gala" that concluded late Sunday.

The event was organized by Lets' Grow Together - a community of entrepreneurs to promote home based women workers and artisans while the two-day event was organized for the third time featuring more than 150 stalls of made in Pakistan home-made products by women entrepreneurs featuring a variety of lifestyle exhibits like fashion products, interior decor products, furniture, resin art, paintings, garments and jewelry etc while some stalls were also given to children to inculcate the spirit of entrepreneurship among the young minds and engage them in healthy activities.

Food court with traditional foods was set up to offer a variety of foods for families and visitors in a cultural environment while some stalls were dedicated to imported products for income generation of women entrepreneurs. A large number of visitors including women and families visited the stalls at the fun filled event encouraging women entrepreneurs across the country for the welfare of local community of women entrepreneurs in Islamabad.

Raja underscores women empowerment key to 'bright, prosperous future'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker of the National Assembly, Raja Pervez Ashraf on Monday said empowering women in leadership roles was not only a matter of fairness and justice, but rather of urgency and necessity. "Women bring unique perspectives and skills to the table, and their full participation in leadership positions is crucial for the progress and development of our country," he said.

The NA speaker was addressing the National Convention of Women Parliamentarians at the Pakistan National Council of Arts. The event was organised by the Women Parliamentary Caucus (WPC) of the National Assembly and was attended by esteemed parliamentarians, government dignitaries, and members of civil society from all over the country.

Pervez underscored that it was "our responsibility to create a more inclusive and equitable society", where women had equal opportunities and the support they needed to succeed in leadership positions.

"Let us continue to work together to make this vision a reality, for the benefit of all our citizens in line with the vision of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who was a true leader of people and the epitome of: women empowerment; hope of the hopeless; and a motivation to continue

moving forward despite all odds and hardships," the Speaker National Assembly said. The Speaker also praised the efforts of Secretary of WPC, Shahida Rehmani who has been dedicated to promoting women rights and highlighting their contributions on national and international forums.

He said, "Ms. Rehmani's tireless efforts to advance the cause of women is an inspiration to us all. Her dedication to ensuring that women's voices are heard and their contributions recognized is truly commendable, and I would like to express my sincere gratitude for her leadership."

Rehmani echoed the sentiment expressed by the Speaker, adding, "Women have long been underrepresented in leadership positions, and it is imperative that we continue our efforts to change that. We must work together to break down the barriers that prevent women from reaching their full potential in all spheres of life, including politics and governance."

The convention provided a platform for discussions and exchanges of ideas on how best to support and empower women in leadership roles, and the Speaker and Rehmani expressed their hope that the outcomes of the event would lead to concrete action towards that end.

HEC to hold Green Digital Photography Competition

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) is holding a nationwide Green Digital Photography Competition to raise awareness about environmental protection and sustainability under the Prime Minister's Green Youth Movement (GYM).

In this connection, HEC has invited entries from Pakistani youth through www.pnyp.gov.pk by February 20, 2023.

The competition is providing an opportunity to the youth (age limit: 15 to 29 years) nationwide to participate and submit idiosyncratic photographs depicting climate change impact

in Pakistan.

The Photography Competition aims to showcase the beauty and diversity of the natural world as well as the impact of human activities on the environment and the perspective of youth on the impacts of climate change on the eco-system of Pakistan under the theme "Impacts of Climate Change on the Eco-System of Pakistan."

Entrants are encouraged to submit their best photographs that capture the theme. The competition is likely to have two categories, category 1: young people aged between 15-22 years and category 2:

young people aged between 23-29 years.

The first, second, and third winners will receive cash prizes of Rs 200,000/-, 150,000/- and 100,000/- respectively in each category and recognition for their efforts. By holding this photographic competition, the Prime Minister's Green Youth Movement and HEC encourage young people to engage in environmental activism and inspire them to take action to protect the planet. The winners will be announced and awarded the winning prize during the Week of Youth to be celebrated by the Prime Minister's Youth Programme from February 20-26.

Radio Pakistan recalls King Faisal's visit on 'World Radio Day'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Radio Pakistan on Monday recalled Saudi King Faisal bin Abdulaziz's visit to Radio Pakistan Karachi made in May 1955 by sharing his pictures on its official social media account Twitter handle on the occasion of World Radio Day.

<https://twitter.com/radiopakistani/status/1624826410283208704?s=48&t=U ZaZ-8b5e1nibYQE3OLGJQ>

Taking to Twitter, Saudi Ambassador to Pakistan Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki also cherished the beautiful memories of King Faisal bin Abdulaziz who paid a historical visit to Radio Pakistan Karachi in the mid-fifties.

https://twitter.com/ambassador-nawaf/status/1625049619271938048?s=48&t=mG4RLt8S_Z7kILxohyWB4Q

World Radio Day is being celebrated across the world including Pakistan and the theme for the 12th edition of World Radio Day, marked on 13th February 2023, is "Radio and Peace".

In reporting and informing the general public, radio stations shape public opinion and frame a narrative that can influence domestic and international situations and decision-making processes.

On World Radio Day 2023, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)

highlighted independent radio as a pillar for conflict prevention and peace-building. That is the reason why support for independent radio has to be viewed as an integral part of peace and stability.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Broadcasting Corporation organized a grand dialogue among FMs, stream channels, and OTT platforms to discuss the emerging new digital broadcasting ecosystem here at Radio Pakistan headquarters in the federal capital.

The dialogue would help shape new opportunities for broadcasters and listeners to cope with the challenging role and scope of the broadcasting industry. As part of this main event, similar events were also held at the provincial headquarters including Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi, Quetta, Muzaffarabad, and Gilgit-Baltistan through Zoom on the same day.

The dialogue was aimed at communication, collaboration, cooperation, and critical thinking for the development and effectiveness of broadcasting media in the country.

It is pertinent to mention here that radio is an important source of mass communication even in the present era, which remains vital during war, peace, catastrophe, and pandemic.

Grant announced for scientists of 'Green Chemistry' research programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan National Commission (PNC) for UNESCO with the collaboration of International Union of Pure and Applied Chemistry (IUPAC) and PhosAgro-the largest producer of phosphate-based fertilizer in Europe, on Monday announced the research grant of US\$30,000 for the young talented scientists under the 'Green Chemistry' research programme.

According to the Pakistan Science Foundation (PSF), the intended young scientists and researchers are required to submit research projects in the field of 'Green Chemistry' to acquire grant.

The programme offers research grant of up to US\$30,000 to each scientists aged 39 or under, for innovative research projects that respect the 12 principles of green chemistry, to assist them in implementing their work. The interested researchers can submit their projects to PNC for UNESCO before end of May, 2023.

The 'Green Chemistry' has become a focus for cutting-edge research into sustainable technologies.

These technologies may reduce or even eliminate the production and use of hazardous substances in mining and in the design, manufacture and application of chemical products, and can be helpful in energy savings, providing a better environment and improved health.

Research in 'Green Chemistry' and associated fields in biochemistry, geochemistry, biotechnology, ecology and healthcare give young scientists ample opportunity to demonstrate their inventiveness and provide important input to sustainable development.

The project was launched in year 2013 by UNESCO's International Basic Sciences Programme (IBSP) and PhosAgro and IUPAC.

Besides harnessing the talents of young scientists and the fruits of their research for the advancement of green chemistry, the programme sets out to raise awareness among decision and policy-makers, industrialists and the people at large about the great opportunities the project is offering to address the multitude of pressing societal needs.

The green chemistry initiative aims at reducing the hazardous impacts of waste, synthetic materials and minimizing the use of auxiliary substances to introduce safer solvents and auxiliaries.

The other objectives include the promotion of renewable raw materials and development of analytical methodologies to reverse the toxic effects of such elements on human health and environment. It is the safest option for the prevention of chemical accidents, including releases, explosions, and fires.

Faiz Ahmad Faiz remembered on his birth anniversary

ISLAMABAD (APP): One of the most celebrated poet, Faiz Ahmad Faiz was remembered on his birth anniversary in the literacy circles on Monday, for his contributions to Urdu language and literature.

Born on 1911 in Sialkot, Punjab, Faiz received his early education from the Church Mission School and later, went to earn his Master's degree in English and Arabic from the Government College in Lahore. Faiz's college years saw him pursue his passion for poetry, and in 1936, he became an English lecturer at M.A.O. College in Amritsar. In 1939, Faiz's first collection of poetry, "Naqsh-e-Faryadi," was published, receiving widespread recognition and acclaim.

During the time, he also served as the editor of the literary magazine "Adab-e-Lateef." In 1940, he took up a lecturer position at the Hailey College of Commerce in Lahore. With the outbreak of World War II,

he joined the army and later worked for the Pakistan Times and the "Imroz" newspaper, where he received recognition for his journalistic abilities.

Faiz was a vocal advocate for the rights of workers and served as VP of the Trade Union Federation. He represented the labor force at the I.L.O. Geneva Conference.

In 1951, he was arrested under the Pakistan Safety Order Act and imprisoned. This period of confinement inspired his second collection of poetry, "Dast-e-Saba." Throughout his career, Faiz blended the themes of love and life in his poetry, resonating with the youth of his time. He is recognized as a renowned poet of both the ghazal and nazm forms and his works have been translated into multiple languages. He got several awards, including the Lenin Peace Prize in 1962. Faiz passed away on November 20, 1984 in Lahore, leaving behind a legacy of timeless poetry.

Railways arrested 3,189 accused over violations in 2022

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways Police claimed to have arrested a total of 3,189 accused due to their involvement in violations of rules and laws and also registered some 3,111 cases against them in eight Railways divisions during the year 2022.

"Around 534 cases were registered in Peshawar Division, 502 in Rawalpindi, 994 in Lahore, 122 in Mughalpur work-shops, 373 in Multan, 186 in Sukkur, 340 in Karachi and 60 in Quetta Division," official sources in the Ministry told APP.

Railways Police Help Desks had been established at all the major railway stations across the country, they said, adding that the performance of Railways Police was quite satisfactory during the year 2022.

The Railways Police has handed over 177 missing boys and 57 girls to their heirs, whereas, 242 boys, 134 girls and 22 women who had run away from home to their parents/siblings and the welfare organizations, they added.



ISLAMABAD: Maulana Abdul Wasay, Federal Minister for Housing and Works chairing a meeting of Board of Directors of Pakistan Housing Authority Foundation (PHAF).

16 drug dealers arrested

KABUL (Agencies): Police arrested 16 people on charges of dealing drugs in four provinces of the country. The counter-narcotics police in Herat, Sar-i-Pul, Bamyan and Paktika provinces of Afghanistan arrested 16 people on charges of dealing drugs. Furthermore, nine people arrested in Herat, four in Sar-i-pul, two in Bamyan and another from Paktika province, the Ministry of Interior of Afghanistan said in a statement on Monday.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Rajab 22, 1444 — Tuesday, February 14, 2023

Weapons recovered

SAMANGAN (Agencies): Local security officials of Samangan said that intelligence forces recovered a number light and heavy weapons and military equipment. The Intelligence department of the province in statement said that their forces recovered the weapons from Dara Suf and Kholem district of to the province. The Department of Intelligence of Samangan not elaborated further in the matter in its statement about the kind of weapons or arrests of anyone with the case.

Fresh \$40m cash aid reaches Kabul, DAB to auction \$17m

KABUL (Khaama Press): Da Afghanistan Bank on Monday announced that a fresh \$40 million humanitarian aid package was shipped to Kabul, as Afghanistan Central Bank plans to auction \$17 million tomorrow to stabilize the value of the local currency.

Afghanistan central bank also known as 'Da Afghanistan Bank' (DAB) on Monday said on Twitter that as part of United Nations cash aid, a fresh \$40 million was transferred to Kabul.

Meanwhile, DAB wants to auction another \$17 million aimed at strengthening the value of Afghani against foreign currencies, United States Dollar in particular.

Afghanistan's central bank had sold \$17 million earlier in the week.

Over the past four days, \$120 USD has been transferred to the country as part of the UN humanitarian aid. The UN cash aid packages transferred to Kabul reaches more than \$1.8 billion since the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021.

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has repeatedly clarified that cash packages shipped to Afghanistan are deposited in UN accounts in private banks, and will be used by UN agencies solely for the purpose of humanitarian aid and other supportive

programs. The money will not be handed over to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, the announcement said.

A central reason the United Nations brings cash into Afghanistan is due to the disruption to international banking transfers and liquidity issues since August 2021.

Despite all the odds, including the financial challenges and the dire economic situation in the country, Afghani's value has not depreciated since the Taliban's takeover. Maintaining a stable value of the local currency is a positive sign to help recover the broken economy of war-torn Afghanistan.

ARCS gives aid to earthquake victims

KABUL (Agencies): The president of the Afghan Red Crescent Society, Mawlawi Muli-ul-Haq Khalis, delivered 4.5 million Afghani in aid for the families who were affected by a strong earthquake in Turkey to the ambassador of that country in Kabul.

The ARCS president assured the Turkish ambassador of assistance and any kind of cooperation.

He said that the Afghan Red Crescent Society stands by the Turkish people and shares this great sadness with those who suffered the tragedy.

Ambassador Erginay in Kabul, thanked the Afghan Red Crescent Society, and promised to deliver the aid to the earthquake-affected families.

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan earlier also announced 15 million Afghani in assistance to those affected by the earthquake in Turkey and Syria.

Hanafi says society that abandons its values cannot move towards development

KABUL (Agencies): Deputy Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi, speaking at a religious and academic seminar in Kabul University, termed the role of professors in the society and the education of the country's youth important.

During his speech, Mr. Hanafi said that a society that forgets its values cannot take steps towards development. Teachers the only protectors of the society, who guide the children of the nation to the right path and the path of Islam, he added.

Our country has lost most of its educators and educational centers as well as other infrastructures in the decades-long war that imposed on Afghans, Mr. Hanafi said.



Emirate will not hesitate to provide any kind of help and cooperation in order to strengthen the education system of the country to achieve self-sufficiency.

Meanwhile, Acting Higher Education Minister Mawlawi Neda Mohammad

education sector"

He said that the Islamic Emirate is committed to the education of the country's youth in the light of its religious and national values and noted that they will also extend these discussions to the educational institutions in provinces.

The spokesman of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Zabihullah Mujahid, talking about the media's role, said that Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan supports neutral media outlets that shares the problems of the public with officials.

He said that the media also obliged to do their work by maintaining neutrality according to the country's laws and regulations and considering national interests and religious values.

Deputy Foreign Minister meets Turkish envoy



KABUL (Agencies): Deputy Foreign Minister, Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanikzai, met with Cihad Erginay, the Turkish ambassador in Kabul.

Expressing his tribute for the victims of recent earthquake in Turkey, the deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, wish speedy recovery for the injured, according to the Ministry of Foreign statement.

For his part, Ambassador Erginay thanked the Islamic Emirate for the announced aid and sympathy, he said that Turkey's relations with Afghanistan are expanding and Turkey will stand by the Afghan brothers.

Ministry called for elders' help fighting drugs

KABUL (Agencies): The Deputy Minister of Interior for counter-narcotics asked the elders of Helmand during his visits to cooperate with the security forces in eradicating poppy cultivation.

Deputy Interior Minister, Abdul Haq Hamkar, met with local officials and ethnic elders of that province on an official trip to Helmand, according to Interior Ministry.

On his visits he stressed, collecting addicts and treating them, as well as preventing the cultivation of poppy, and asked the relevant authorities to pay attention on the matter well.

According to a statement released by the Ministry the Deputy Minister for counter-narcotics asked the elders of the province to cooperate with security forces in eradicating poppy cultivation.

4.3 magnitude earthquake hit Afghanistan's Fayzabad

KABUL (Khaama Press): An earthquake of 4.3 magnitudes occurred on Monday in Fayzabad, Afghanistan.

On Monday morning, an earthquake with a Richter scale of 4.3 struck Fayzabad, Afghanistan. The earthquake's epicentre was 100 km southeast of the northeastern city of Fayzabad.

The quake was 135 kilometres deep and struck the region at 5:45 am local time, according to India's National Centre for Seismology (NCS).

This is the second earthquake to shake the country within a month. On January 22, a 4.2 magnitude quake occurred at 8:00 local time, 79 km south-southeast of Fayzabad, Afghanistan, said

NCS. Afghanistan is situated in an earthquake-prone region because it is located in the Chaman, Hari Rud, Central Badakhshan, and Darvaz faults. These faults are active seismically with the greatest risk.

Among the regions in Afghanistan, the northeastern region faces a high earthquake risk due to the

'Females to get jobs, education within Islamic framework'

KABUL (TOLOnews): Deputy Foreign Minister Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai said that the Islamic Emirate will provide access to work and education to all citizens particularly women and girls.

Stanekzai praised the activities of the aid organizations in the country. "Currently, the government of the Islamic Emirate wants to create work and even education opportunities for all Afghan sisters and brothers inside the country based on an Islamic format and Afghan tradition and Sharia. The work is underway in this regard, and we hope to fix it soon," he said.

TOLOnews reached out to a professional who is at home now since the Islamic Emirate ordered a nationwide ban on female workers at NGOs.

Giti, who worked for one of the NGOs, said that she is concerned about her future.

"There are some girls who do not have father or a caretaker or brother so they need to work to meet the expenses of their families," she said.

This comes as the Ministry of Economy said that at least 260 organizations are active in the social and economic spheres.

"The Islamic Emirate has provided various facilities for the activities of the organizations, the security discussions and procedures which we created provides them with facilities and they are under our focus in this regard," said Abdul



Latif Nazari, deputy Minister of Economy.

The economists said that there is a need for the continuation of international aid to alleviate the ongoing poverty in the country and that women are necessary for the economic growth of the families.

work that also caused a reduction in GDP affects the property of the families," said Meer Shikib, an economist.

Following the decree of the Ministry of Economy to ban females from working at the NGOs, many organizations halted or reduced their activities.

Restrictions on women's education temporary

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Deputy of Youth in the Ministry of Information and Culture in a gathering in Uruzgan said the restrictions on women's education in the country are temporary.

Mohammad Yunus Rashid said that the Islamic Emirate is trying to provide an education structure based on Sharia for women and girls in the country.

"The Islamic Emirate is making a policy for women's education, the right that Islam gives to them, the Islamic Emirate is committed to that," said Mohammad Yunus Rashid.

"The door of education is closed for our sister how long?" said Jawed Khapalwak, an Uruzgan resident.

Meanwhile, some youth called on the current government to provide work facilities for the young generation to prevent illegal immigration.

"Currently there is one commission in all of the departments that work in Uruzgan, and all previous



government staff were fired from all departments," said Wali Mohammad Pakhla, an Uruzgan resident.

"Why does a commission fire an employee, according to which right, it just happens in Uruzgan, not across the country, why?" said Akbar Khan, an Uruzgan resident.

"I studied at university in this country, have I committed a crime, or have I sinned, if I studied at school and university for sixteen years in the previous government, is this my sin?" said Jumma Gul Hemmat,

an Uruzgan resident. Meanwhile, the deputy of Youth of the Ministry of Information and Culture said that recently they started work on a plan so that, with its implementation, work will be provided to more than three million young people in the country.

Earlier, youth in the country cited unemployment and the appointment of non-specialized people to institutions as the main reason for emigrating from the country.

144 bodies found in past three months

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Kabul municipality said that it has buried 144 bodies, most of whom were unidentified, who were found in Kabul with little or no information about their families or circumstances.

An official of the municipality, Nimatullah Barakzai, said that the corpses were qualified for burial after being examined forensically.

Only 30 corpses were buried on Saturday in 21 PD of Kabul.

"The corpses that are unidentified or have no relatives, we are burying them in the Islamic tradition," Barakzai said.

However, the Kabul municipality denied giving details about the identifications of the bodies.

The Kabul residents called on the Islamic Emirate to prevent the mysterious killings in the city.

"We call on the Islamic Emirate to prevent these mysterious killings. If it does not prevent them, the murdering will increase," said a resident of Kabul.

"When an individual cannot meet his needs in society, it causes him to go out and kill a human," said a resident of Kabul.

The Kabul municipality said that the construction of standard graveyards in various city districts is its priority.

First standard medical waste incinerator opened

TAKHAR (Agencies): Local officials of Takhar said that for the first time a medical waste incinerator with a cost of about one million Afghani was opened in that province.

The provincial head of Environmental department of the province, Dr. Zubeer Ahmad Naimi, said that this medical waste incinerator

was built with the financial cooperation of private clinics in Talqan under the supervision of the Department of Environment and the Department of Public Health in a non-residential location outside the city.

The Waste Incinerator in standard to bury the chemical materials left over from the burial fire and to prevent

the release of harmful particles in the environment and air, he said. Meanwhile, Dr. Abdul Qahar Ahmadi, the head of public health in Takhar, called the construction of this medical waste incinerator extremely beneficial in preventing environmental pollution and diseases caused by the scattering of medical waste.

200 students gain free education

MAIDAN (TOLOnews): Some Afghans who live outside of the country have provided education facilities for free for 200 students in Nirkh district of Maidan Wardak province. Officials of this educational center in Maidan Wardak said that efforts are ongoing to spread this process to other villages in this province.

"Some countrymen who live outside provided education for those who have economic challenges," said Amir Samim, head of this center.

"There are students that don't have the economic ability to buy a pen and notebook, this kind of center is so important for them," said Mohammad Jawed, a teacher in this center.

Some students welcomed the center and called for free classes for girls also. "Some of our countries provided this facility for us for free," said Ahmad Zia.

"The past year, our holidays were very bad due to economic challenges, and we don't have access to educa-

tion," said Shahidullah, a student. Meanwhile, officials of the Education Ministry in Maidan Wardak pledged to support these kinds of steps for education.

"It's good work that the educational center in winter teaches students for free and we welcomed it, we are cooperating with them and talked with UNICEF about these students' supplies," said Gul Wali Mutaqqi, head of the education of Maidan Wardak.

Kabul man imparting free education to hundreds of children

KABUL (Pajhwok): A young man from the Pul-i-Charkhi area of Kabul is providing hundreds of less fortunate children, including girls, free education.

Wais Mohammad Arian, head of the Pul-i-Charkhi Youth Association and owner of an education centre, told Pajhwok Afghan News he launched the programme this winter.

He said about 123 girls and 268 boys were being taught free of cost at his educational centre. "There

are 391 students attending classes at the centre in two shifts."

Despite his fragile financial situation, the young man said he was providing free stationery and books for the students.

Arian informed he had hired eight teachers to impart education to the students.

Some of the students are said to be enrolled in different schools. Others, however, have not yet seen the classroom.

Arian explained the objective behind the winter education programme was to serve society and prevent children from wasting their time.

He asked the government and Afghans abroad for assistance so that he could provide education to more children.

Hikmatullah, a teacher at the centre, also said their main priority was to serve society and educate children.

Abdul Rashid, a student,

told Pajhwok he was pleased having availed the opportunity to read and write.

Tabasum, a girl student, said it had been a month that she was attending the program to learn reading and writing.

Hafizullah, a resident of the area, said there was an urgent need for an education centre here.

He urged the government to support such young men so that they could serve the nation.

Association of defence lawyers now directorate: Acting Minister

KABUL (TOLOnews): The acting Minister of Justice, Abdul Hakim Sharai, said that the association of defence lawyers has turned into a directorate in order to address the complaints and challenges in the country.

An examination was held to license the defense lawyers.

According to Sharai, 580 people participated in the examination. "This association become a directorate, within the format of the Justice Ministry. The move aimed to address the complaints of our

defense lawyers," he said. Sharai said that the defense lawyers will be active independently.

"The defense lawyer will be independent in his work, he has the license and can talk with his client and there is no pressure," Sharai said.

This comes as the participants of the examination called for transparency to be ensured.

"We call for a transparent examination, and those who are qualified, should succeed," said Mohammad Faisal Barialai, an appli-



According to the Ministry of Justice, the

licenses of 1,300 defense lawyers have been renewed.

IHC issues notices in Sheikh's plea seeking bail

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has issued notices to parties in petition filed by Awami Muslim League (AML) president Sheikh Rashid Ahmed seeking post-arrest bail in a case pertaining to murder plot allegations against former president Asif Ali Zardari.

IHC Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani heard the petition while Advocate Salman Akram Raja represented former interior minister in the case. Raja requested the court to fix an early date for next hearing, saying the petitioner "is an old man".

The court issued notices to the Islamabad police and complainant in the case and sought replies till Feb 16 when the bail petition will be taken up again. The petition was moved by Sheikh through his counsel Sardar Abdul Raziq Khan advocate and cited the state as respondent. He prayed to the court that this petition may kindly be allowed and the petitioner be released on post-arrest bail till the final disposal of case on merits. He stated in the petition during the present campaign of political vic-

timization, the petitioner was maliciously issued a notice under section 160 Cr.P.C after having procured a frivolous application from a dummy complainant.

He added that the petitioner sent reply of notice to SHO through his counsel but he refused to receive the same. He further said that the petitioner having observed the malicious intent of police and the Government, filed a petition before the IHC on 01.02.2023 when the same was taken up for hearing on urgent basis and the court was pleased to issue notice to the IG and other police officials to appear before the High Court on 06.02.2023 while in the meanwhile operation of impugned notice was suspended.

The petitioner said that after having learnt about the said order, the police under the orders of political high ups while acting in sheet violation of the order of the IHC had launched a crackdown upon the house of the petitioner without warrant and without associating the local police and forcibly entered into the

house.

He continued that thereafter, a campaign of registration of multiple frivolous cases against the petitioner was initiated in order to politically victimize him. He said that from the contents of FIR neither any cognizable offence is made out nor the offence under section 120B, 1534 and 505 PPC are attracted. Sheikh adopted the stance that the allegations of a conspiracy to assassinate Imran Khan has been repeatedly leveled by Ex. Prime Minister Imran Khan himself and against the said statement only a legal notice for defamation has been issued by Asif Ali Zardari to sue him in civil court of law whereas, the petitioner in his TV interview has referred the statement of Imran Khan regarding the said conspiracy but against him, the instant false case has been illegally got registered. He argued that Asif Ali Zardari against whom the statement has been allegedly made, neither complainant nor witness of the case whereas, a third person having no locus standi or valid authority, has lodged the instant FIR.

President for boosting ties with Senegal

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday underlined the need for enhanced cooperation with Senegal in the areas of trade, economy, and education. The president, talking to Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Senegal, Saima Sayed, who called on him here, said that both countries had great potential to increase bilateral trade and economic relations for the mutual benefits of the two sides.

He said that Pakistan considered Senegal as an important country in the West African region, and asked the ambassador to make concerted efforts towards further expanding the bilateral ties. He urged the ambassador to work on arranging bilateral exchanges at the ministerial level between the two countries.

The president expressed satisfaction over the participation of Pakistani businessmen in Trade Fairs (Dakar International Trade Fair-FIKDAK) in Dakar for many years.. Such exhibitions would help in further promoting trade relations between the two countries. President Alvi asked the ambassador-designate to arrange more trade exhibitions in collaboration with the concerned ministries to boost bilateral trade volume.

He called for increased cooperation between Pakistan and Senegal in the area of education. He said that 8000 foreign students were currently enrolled in different programmes of the Virtual University of Pakistan (VU), and Senegalese students could also benefit from the online and distance education being offered by VU and Allama Iqbal Open University.

Country got real freedom: Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Monday said Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan considered his supporters as "mentally handicapped persons".

The PTI chief was in the habit of blowing hot and cold and insulted his voters by saying such things, she said in a statement while commenting on Imran Khan's address. The minister said abusing someone one day and then forgiving them the next day was Imran Khan's "style of doing politics", whether it were the judiciary, the United States, or national institutions.

She said Imran Khan was brought into power in sheer "violation of the law". There was no "rule of law" during his tenure of government rather it was the "rule of the jungle". Whether Imran Khan himself had acted upon the rule of law while forcing the then National Assembly speaker and deputy speaker, governor (Punjab) and President of Pakistan to violate the Constitution, she asked. She added that the country got real freedom when the "foreign agents, thieves, liars, hypocrites and money launderers" like Imran Khan were thrown out of power.

Justice Faez lashes out at lawyers

ISLAMABAD (INP): Lashing out at lawyers for holding strike on their own will during hearing of a case against MS Punjab Industry Faisalabad, Supreme Court Justice Qazi Faez Isa remarked Monday that lawyers were violating code of conduct they had made themselves.

Two-member bench of the Supreme Court led by Justice Qazi Faez Isa heard the case. The MS Punjab Industry Faisalabad is accused of stealing Rs67.8 million worth gas. Justice Faez Isa raised questions on lawyers strike and remarked that such judges should also be removed who, in their ruling, write that lawyers are on strike. He further remarked that courts are following constitution and law.

"If everybody performs his own duty, country's system will work in a better way." The Supreme Court was apprised of trial court order wherein lawyers' strike was mentioned thrice.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari talking to media persons.

ECC approves gas price revision, debt rescheduling, BISP grant

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet here on Monday approved gas price revision for domestic, commercial and power sectors for six months from January to June, 2023. The Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) tabled a summary on Natural Gas Sale Pricing for FY 2022-23 and presented tariff proposals for all consumer categories in accordance with Review of Estimated Revenue Requirement (RERR) for fiscal year 2022-23, according to press statement issued by the finance ministry.

The cabinet committee also allowed the Ministry of Economic Affairs for signing of debt rescheduling agreement with Russia for debt suspension of Covid related amount US\$ 14.53 million. The approval was given after the ministry presented a summary on G-20 Debt Service Suspension Initiative (DSSI). This debt relief was announced in April

2020 for IDA eligible countries to mitigate the socio-economic impact of Covid-19.

Under this initiative debt relief was extended through the suspension of principle and interest payments. So far, 37 debt rescheduling agreements with 15 creditor countries have been signed. The ECC granted Rs. 40 billion as Technical Supplementary Grant to Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) to meet its budgetary requirements for increase in the unconditional and conditional grants.

The Ministry of Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety presented a summary on enhancement of BISP budget. It briefed the committee on the on-going BISP programmes including Unconditional Cash Transfer (UCT) Programme "Benazir Kafaalat" covering around 9 million families, two Conditional Cash Transfer (CCT) programmes namely Benazir Taleemi Wazaif and Benazir Nashonuma. Besides, this disbursement of cash assistance to affectedes of floods as emergency relief of Rs.

25,000/- was provide per affected family to around 2.7 million families. In Conditional Cash Transfer Programme, there has been accelerated enrolments in Benazir Taleemi Wazaif and it is anticipated that additional 1 million children will be enrolled by the end of June, 2023.

Also BISP has extended CCT Benazir Nashonuma to all the districts of the country. Among others, the meeting was attended by Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar; Federal Minister for Power, Khurram Dastgir Khan; Minister of State for Finance and Revenue, Dr. Aisha Ghous Pasha; MNA/Ex-PM, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi; Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Finance, Tariq Bajwa, Federal Secretaries and other senior officers. Federal Minister for Industries and Production, Syed Murtaza Mahmud, Minister of State for Petroleum, Musadik Masood Malik and Governor State Bank of Pakistan attended the meeting virtually through video link.

AGP says CJP remarks misunderstood

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The attorney general of Pakistan has written a letter to the federal law minister explaining remarks of the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Justice Umer Ata Bandial which he said were misconstrued.

In this regard, AGP Shehzad Ata Elahi wrote a letter to Federal Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar on behalf of Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial. The AGP told the minister that the observation of the chief justice of Pakistan was reported in a wrong way. He explained that the CJP did not utter that only one prime minister was honest in country's history. The social media wrongfully reported his remarks, the AGP added.

He asked the law minister to correct his fellow parliamentarians and apprise them of the facts. The attorney general went on to write that the chief justice never spoke that only Muhammad Khan Junejo

was an honest prime minister. There is no grain of truth in the news regarding CJP's remarks about the honesty of the prime minister.

The AGP said that the senators criticized the remarks of the chief justice. Nevertheless, it was mentioned in the NAB amendment case itself. He said that the chief justice just mentioned the order which did not restore the National Assembly in 1988. Later, former chief justice of Pakistan Naseem Hassan Shah had expressed his regret over the non-restoration order. The attorney general further stated that CJP Bandial just remarked that Junejo was a good and independent prime minister whose government was removed after invoking Clause 58-2B of the Constitution.

On Friday, senators voiced their objection to Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial's remarks made a day ago

highlighting that Parliament was being kept "systematically incomplete". The CJP had said on Thursday that the "solution of all issues of the country is only possible through the people's decision" while hearing PTI Chairman Imran Khan's petition against the August 2022 amendments to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) ordinance.

During the senate meeting, PML-N's Irfan Siddiqui objected to the CJP remarks saying "He (CJP) said the parliament was incomplete. He only called one prime minister honest, which I'm assuming was Muhammad Khan Junejo. Who gave him the privilege to call every prime minister from Liaquat Ali Khan to Imran Khan dishonest? Whatever the judiciary will say, we will follow it. The judiciary has a parameter [but] it has started transgressing [into the legislative]. Our legislations are challenged."

Centre to be approached for release of funds: KP Governor

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali here Monday said that Federal Government would be approached for speedy release of funds to ensure early completion of ongoing development projects in merged districts.

He said clean drinking water projects were people welfare oriented and he along with Provincial Government would approach the federal Government to ensure speedy release of funds for

timely completion of the ongoing projects for merged tribal districts.

The Governor expressed these views while presiding over a highly level meeting of the department of clean drinking projects here at Governor house. The Caretaker Minister Hamid Shah also attended the meeting briefed by its Secretary Idrees Khan.

The Governor was informed that 74 projects for settled and 12 for merged areas were included in the annual development program

while work on three projects in the sector were underway with financial assistance of Korea and Japan. He said that 32 projects could be completed on timely if approved funds were provided.

The Governor was informed that work on another solar based water project was underway at remote Agra, a border area of Bajaur and Malakand costing Rs 2 million that would benefit six million population. The Governor was also informed about progress on the other projects during the meeting.

People's Bus Service in Sukkur from 17th

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sindh Sharjeel Inam Memon has announced to formally launch the People's Bus Service for the people of Sukkur on February 17 and People Pink bus service in Hyderabad from February 18 and new routes of people's Pink Bus Service and increase in number of buses on route- 1 of Pink Bus Service from February 20.

The provincial minister made these announcements in a press conference in his office on Monday after a high-level meeting related to People's Bus Service. Elaborating about the important decisions taken in the meeting regarding People's Bus Service, he said that after Karachi, Hyderabad and Larkana, the people of Sukkur will get the facility of modern and affordable bus service from February 17. The provincial minister said that on February 18, the People's Pink bus service for women will be started in

Hyderabad. While People's Pink Bus Service is being started on two more routes in Karachi on February 20 and more buses will be added to the fleet of Route-1 of People's Pink Bus Service.

He said that pink bus service route- 2 starts from Power Chowrangi North Karachi via Nagan Chowrangi, Shafiq Mor, Gulshan Chowrangi, Johar Mor, COD, Drug Road, Shaara Faisal, Shah Faisal Colony, Sangar Chowrangi, Korangi No. 5 and terminates at Indus Hospital Korangi. Similarly, operations of pink buses will also be lunched on Route No. 10 from Numaisah Chowrangi via MA Jinnah Road, Zeb - u - Nisa Street, Metropole, Teen Talwar, Do Talwar, Abdullah Shah Ghazi, Dolman Mall, McDonald's UpTo Clock Tower at Sea View. He further added that the number of buses will be increased on the existing route 1 of the pink bus service plying between Model colony and Merewethar Tower.

He said that few people has criticised Pink people bus by saying that People's Party could not win the hearts of people by bringing just 10 buses. He said that tremendous response has been received on Pink Bus Service and everyone appreciated the initiative of Sindh government. He said that Pakistan is among few countries where separate bus service for women launched. Sharjeel Inam Memon said that there is a storm of inflation in Pakistan and severe pressure on the country's economy.

In such difficult situation, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, former President Asif Ali Zardari has directed Sindh government to focus on and provide as much relief as possible to the people in every department. He said that public transport is the main problem of Pakistan, Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah who is the captain of our team is personally monitoring such public welfare projects so as to provide relief to the people.



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