

PM greets Kuwaiti Amir  
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has extended profound felicitations to the Amir of Kuwait Sheikh Nawaf Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah and people of the State on their National Day. In a tweet the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday, he said we Pakistanis are keen to further build on our excellent bilateral relations.

@thefrontierpost

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

Torkham border reopens

LANDI KOTAL (INP): Torkham border crossing between Pakistan and Afghanistan has been reopened for business activities, sources said on Saturday. As per details, the official sources said that loaded vehicles from both the sides arrived at the Torkham border. The Pakistan custom officials have also confirmed the opening of business activities at the Pak-Afghan border.

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIX

No. 41

Regd. No. 241

SHABAAN 05 1444 -- SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 26 2023

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

Price. 20



BERLIN: People taking part in a protest against the delivery of weapons to Ukraine and in support of peace negotiations between Russia and Ukraine, amid Russia's invasion of Ukraine, in Germany.

ECP turns  
down govt's  
request

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Saturday turned down Punjab interim government's request for delaying by-election in the NA-193 Rajanpur, slated to be held on Sunday.

In a statement, the ECP stated that a control room had been established at the ECP secretariat to monitor the election. "The control room will be responsible for addressing the complaints regarding the polling", the ECP added. Punjab's home department had approached the ECP to postpone Rajanpur by-poll citing security reasons.

The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) had nominated Mohsin Leghari for contesting by-polls on Rajanpur's NA-193 after the PTI chief Imran withdrew his nomination papers on account of fears of disqualification in the Tyrian White case.

Imran caught  
'red handed':  
Maryam Nawaz

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) Chief Organiser Maryam Nawaz on Saturday said that PTI Chairman Imran Khan was the first ever prime minister who was caught red-handed stealing over Rs 58 billion as his "chor Dako" narrative has fallen flat.

In a series of tweets, she alleged that former first lady Bushra Bibi used to demand bribe up to five-carat diamond and jewellery for signing a file. Imran had proved himself guilty of all forms of corruption, she said. "Oh, how the mighty have fallen! Your squeals are not amiss as you have been the king of conspiracies, thriving [and] surviving on them with the help of your Godfather Faiz and his ves-

tiges," she wrote on Twitter.

Maryam challenged Khan to "watch the spoilt brat checkmate you so Godsons [and] pawns like you are relegated to irrelevance". Accusing Khan of avoiding courts and "begging for adjournments", she said that this was a "glaring admission of you being guilty".

"Plastered leg will no more save you. Man up [and] face the law," she said challenging the former prime minister to face the judiciary. She said her tweets had made them (PTI) speechless but their own deeds that defied their rhetoric. "First ever time they are on their own & unable to grapple with the changed realities. They & their masters are done & dusted Insha'Allah," Maryam Nawaz said.

Bilawal  
announces  
25% hike in  
BISP payments  
F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) chairman and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has announced a 25% increase in the payments to the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) beneficiaries.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, while addressing the inauguration event of BISP's Dynamic Registry, said that the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) is a revolutionary project and a program will also be launched for assisting small farmers. Pakistan People's Party (PPP) chairman and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, while addressing an event related to the Benazir Income Support Programme, said that he is proud of the BISP. "PPP has given the Constitution to the country. Benazir Bhutto had decided to launch a programme to provide relief to the poor segment."

"Pakistan People's Party (PPP) provided relief to all segments of society. Many people opposed the BISP, especially the PPP opponents strongly opposed the programme but we took a concrete stance to give the due right to the poor at any cost."

"We faced criticism for the programme that it will also be hit by corruption. We have made Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) the most transparent programme. The global institutions are also admitting that it is the most transparent programme and they are ready to provide assistance."

Election date suo motu  
Ruling alliance  
files plea seeking  
formation of full court

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The ruling parties — Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) — Saturday demanded the formation of Supreme Court's full court bench to hear the suo motu notice taken over the apparent delay in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa general elections.

The plea — moved through Farooq H Naek, Kamran Murtaza, and Masoor Usman Awan — also sought the exclusion of Justice Ijazul Ahsan and Justice Sayyed Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi.

The bench began hearing the case on Thursday afternoon. According to the chief justice's statement, the bench is to assess who is eligible to issue the date for polls, the constitutional responsibility of the federation and provinces, and who will fulfil the constitutional responsibility of conducting elections and when.

Meanwhile, the ruling coalition — including Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif — has shared their reservations regarding the two judges in the bench. In a meeting presided by PM Shehbaz, the PML-N noted that it does not expect justice from the two SC judges and that they should recuse themselves from the benches hearing their cases. The petition — submitted on Saturday — mentioned the violation of Article 10A right of the parties involved, while also noting that Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail stated that referring the matter to the chief justice for taking suo motu under Article 184(3) was inappropriate, who deemed the action "not justified".

The top court's judge also raised significant constitutional questions about the way the suo motu powers are to be exercised under the aforementioned article, the petition mentioned. The petition stated that relevant stakeholders, who received notices from the top court, appeared before the court a day earlier through their counsels and requested the "recusal" of Justice Naqvi and Justice Ahsan via a joint statement from "hearing any matter involving PML (N), PPP and JUI (Pakistan) and their leadership and in-spe-

cific SMC No. 1 of 2023 and CPs No.1 of 2023 and 2 of 2023." It added that the circumstances — as recorded in the chief justice's note — have raised several questions of immense legal, constitutional and public importance.

Therefore, the parties have requested a reconstitution of the bench to hear the titled petitions and have mentioned doing so in the best interest of justice and fairness, and to strengthen the public confidence in the country's Supreme Court. Meanwhile, the Sindh High Court Bar Association (SHCBA) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council (KPBC) have demanded the formation of a full-court bench for hearing the issue regarding polls. They have also expressed concerns over the exclusion of Senior Puisne Judge Justice Qazi Faez Isa and senior judge, Justice Sardar Tariq Masood, from the nine-member bench. "This association believes that power of roster fixation and case should not be rested exclusively with the Chief Justice of Pakistan," a statement issued by SHCBA read.

Both the bar association and bar council have asked Justice Naqvi and Justice Ahsan to recuse themselves from the bench. "They should not remain part of the bench for hearing of this important matter," the Sindh bar's statement said, while KPBC stated that "serious objections were raised against them from different quarters including the observations made by some of the sitting SC judges".

The SHBCA also called upon the country's top judge to "take appropriate steps so that the adverse impression especially in political cases may be redressed". On the other hand, the KPBC said that the Supreme Court was giving "protection to undemocratic forces" and even gave the "martial law regime" the right to make amendments to the Constitution. "That regarding important constitutional cases, the constitution of particular benches for particular cases be avoided to restore the trust and confidence of masses on the courts," the KP bar council's statement read.

Zahir Shah  
appointed  
acting NAB  
chairman

ISLAMABAD (INP): The federal government on Saturday appointed Zahir Shah as acting National Accountability Bureau (NAB) chairman. According to a notification issued from the body, Shah will serve as the head of the NAB until the next chairman is appointed.

"In pursuance of the proviso[n] to Section 6(b)(v) of amended NAO 1999, Mr Zahir Shah, shall act as Chairman, National

Accountability Bureau, with effect from 22-02-2023 and till the appointment of new chairman, under the ordinance," said the notification. NAB issued notification regarding the appointment of Zahir Shah as acting NAB chief.

In October 2021, Zahir Shah was appointed deputy chairman of the NAB who oversees the organisation's administration. On February 22, Aftab Sultan resigned as the National Accountability Bureau (NAB) chairman citing personal reasons. Sultan had presented his resignation to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

"The prime minister appreciated the services of Aftab Sultan and lauded his honesty and uprightness. Upon his insistence, the prime minister reluctantly accepted the resignation of Sultan," said the PM Office. Sources revealed that Aftab Sultan resigned from his office after "he was asked to do certain things which were not acceptable to him." Sources further disclosed that Sultan had some reservations over National Accountability (Amendment) Act, 2022 which has limited the anti-corruption watchdog's powers.



GOVERNMENT OF SINDH

Abiding The Law, Everyone's Responsibility

The Government of Sindh is working hard day and night to protect the people of the Sindh. In this regard, Sindh Government has taken some important steps, and the people are advised to follow these rules to protect themselves and their loved ones.



Vehicles without number plates, fancy number plates, applied for registration (AFR) and vehicles driven on open letter will be impounded.



Avoid using tinted glasses in vehicles as they are illegal.



Under the law, it is a crime to display a weapon. Anyone found with a weapon will be arrested.



Only Police, Rangers and other armed forces in uniform will be allowed to carry arms.



Report any suspicious person or activity in your area immediately to 15



If you rent out any property, be sure to register the information at the nearest police station

Government of Sindh will strictly apply the rules and no one will be spared.

Your Protection - Our Responsibility

INF/KRY/7/2/2023





# Punjab CM calls for inclusive plan to adopt austerity measures

LAHORE (PPI): Punjab chief minister Mohsin Naqvi has ordered to make a comprehensive plan to adopt austerity measures in the province.

He was presiding over the 7th Provincial Cabinet meeting held here at the CM office on Saturday.

The cabinet appreciated Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's austerity policy for the financial year 2022-23.

The cabinet approved that the austerity committee will ensure the implementation of measures at all levels in the province.

The austerity committee will present practicable

suggestions to CM Mohsin for saving and the austerity of government resources.

It was decided in the meeting that the caretaker chief minister and provincial ministers will lead the front and set an example in terms of frugality and saving. The cabinet also decided to donate one to three days' salaries of the officers to quake-hit brethren of Turkey and Syria.

According to the cabinet decision, BS-22 officers will donate three days, BS-21 and 20 officers two days, and BS-19 and 18 officers will donate one day's salary to the Prime

Minister's Relief Fund.

The cabinet also proposed to fix the minimum support price of wheat at Rs 3900. The meeting gave its nod in principle or setting up of Foreign Funded Project Committee to ensure speedy completion of the projects.

During the meeting, it was agreed to lease the government land on a single source basis for corporate agriculture farming. The leased land can only be used for agricultural purposes

only. The meeting gave its approval to a supplementary grant of Rs 400 million for the police martyrs.

The meeting allowed the entering into a contract with Recep Tayyip Erdogan Hospital Trust for building regional blood centers in Multan, Bahawalpur, and Faisalabad. A new emergency block will be built in Allied Hospital Faisalabad with the support of Friends of Allied Hospital. The meeting presided over by the Chief Minister gave go

head for the construction of a new emergency block in Allied Hospital Faisalabad.

The cabinet also approved changing the name of the Tourism Department to the Tourism, Archeology, and Museum Department. Provincial Ministers, Chief Secretary, Inspector General of Police, Secretaries, and concerned officials attended the meeting. Provincial Ministers SM Tanveer and Dr. Jamal Nasir participated in the meeting through a video link.



KOHAT: Dr. Shehzad Zareen (Lecturer in Zoology, KUST) receiving his Ph.D Degree from Governor Khyberpakhthunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali. Dr. Shahzad Zareen is also accompanied by his supervisor Prof. Dr. Shahid Niaz Khan. —FP Photo

## ACE Punjab in action against Elahi and Buzdar

LAHORE (NNI): The Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) Punjab has sought the records of the development projects initiated during the tenures of Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi and Usman Buzdar.

The newly appointed AEC Punjab Director General Sohail Zafar Chatta seems in full action as he called all commissioners to appear before the establishment with records relating to the development projects in Ch Pervaiz's era.

Apart from this, the details of the development projects of the PTI era are also sought from them.

According to the sources, in the first phase, the senior officers of the government departments who served in the Punjab government during the PTI and Parvez Elahi governments from 2018 to 2023 were called in the inquiry along with the records.

The ACE also issued a warning that any senior officer who does not cooperate with the anti-corruption records will be arrested.

According to the sources, ACE Punjab has also reopened an inquiry against Awami Muslim League chief Sheikh Rasheed. The department also reopened an inquiry into the Rawalpindi ring road scandal.

In the second phase, former PTI and Ch Parvez Elahi cabinet ministers will be called for an inquiry, the sources added. They said that inquiries and arrests are likely started next week. The sources said that the establishment ordered to arrest of corrupt officers and ex-ministers till March 15.

All the cases registered against Farrah Gogi in the anti-corruption department have also been reopened. ACE Punjab decided to

postpone the LDA cases which are in the courts.

The sources said that the records of the departments of former minister Mian Mehmood-ul-Rashid, Cha Munis Elahi, Raja Basharat, Murad Ras, Dr Yasmin Rashid, and other ministers have been sought.

ACE Punjab officer Anwar Shah, who turned over the files, those who did not give his home address were suspended.

Anwar Shah is an anti-corruption department officer who disappeared files from the department and is absconding.

The anti-corruption establishment has also sought records of all housing societies across Punjab. The department intends to determine how many housing societies were given relief by former Chief Minister Usman Buzdar and Parvez Elahi in their eras.

## Imran responsible for prevailing economic conditions: Shazia

SANGHAR (INP): Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Shazia Marri has blamed former Prime Minister and Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan for the prevailing economic conditions, saying the incumbent government has tried to save the country from default.

Talking to the media at District Headquarters Hospital in Sanghar on Saturday, Marri said Khan used to tell lies to the people when he was the PM and that his same politics of lies continued at present.

Marri, who is also

Chairperson Benazir Income Support Program (BISP), recalled that when the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) formed the federal government in 2008 the world was witnessing an economic meltdown. However, she added, through initiatives like BISP, the PPP's government ensured that the marginalized class of the country received the government's financial support.

She told that after the flood in 2022, an amount of over Rs.70 billion was released on the instructions of PM Shahbaz Sharif to help the flood-affected people. "In order to deal with the prevailing challenges, all political parties including Khan's PTI, will have to sit together to mutually find out agreed solutions," she observed.

The minister lamented that despite offering sacrifices of 80,000 lives of the common citizens, the security forces Pakistan still had to face the menace of terrorism. Thanks to the flawed policies of the Khan government, she added.

Commenting on the ongoing protest movement of the PTI, Marri said the court arrest protests were another drama of that party. "On one hand they are giving voluntary arrests and on another, the same people are seeking bail from the courts," she exclaimed, adding that the people had understood the political demagoguery of Khan.

The minister said that the BISP was helping the poor people in a transparent way through its programs which had won global recognition.

## Seven TTP militants arrested from Lahore, other cities

LAHORE (NNI): In a major action, the Punjab Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) on Saturday force has detained seven terrorists from different cities including Lahore during Intelligence Based Operations (IBOs) in the province.

The spokesperson for the CTD told media on Saturday that upon receiving a tip-off about terrorists' presence, the department launched operation in parts of Lahore and other cities and arrested seven terrorists with suicide vests, explosives and weapons had been recovered from their possession.

The CTD official said that the terrorist belonged to the outlawed Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The militants have been identified as: Ahmad Ullah, Usama, Nazeer, Hammad, Abdul Rehman, and Aman Ullah.

The CTD recovered material used in making suicide jackets, explosives and arms from the possession of the militants, he added.

The spokesperson informed that the terrorists wanted to target the sensitive installations. The CTD has arrested 80 suspects during

423 combing operations conducted this week. Following the arrest, seven cases had been lodged against the terrorists with an investigation underway. The CTD Punjab is on the forefront in the fight against terrorism, he concluded.

## Punjab announces schedule for matric exams

LAHORE (NNI): Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) across Punjab have announced matriculation examination schedule.

As per the schedule, the part-II matriculation exams will begin from April 1 across the province. The first paper will be of Civics and Arabic, while the last paper of Pak Studies will be held on 17th April.

The 9th class examinations will start on April 18. The first paper will be of Home Economics.

The 9th class examinations will continue till 10th May.

### GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

No.EE/CCD-II/W-5/321

Dated: 22/02/2023

### CANCELLATION OF TENDER NOTICES

The Tenders called by this office as detail given below, already published in multiple Newspapers on different dates is hereby cancelled with immediate effect.

S.No	Tender No. and Date	No. of Schemes	Name of District	PID (P) No.
1.	CCDP-II/W-5/145 Dated: 31/01/2023	05 Nos	Charsadda	039/23
2.	CCDP-II/W-5/154 Dated: 02/02/2023	10 Nos	Buner	041/23
3.	CCDP-II/W-5/182 Dated: 06/02/2023	06 Nos	Mohmand	046/23
4.	CCDP-II/W-5/204 Dated: 08/02/2023	05 Nos	Torghar	055/23
5.	CCDP-II/W-5/203 Dated: 08/02/2023	05 Nos	Charsadda	056/23
6.	CCDP-II/W-5/309 Dated: 20/02/2023	Not published but Uploaded on PPRA		

**(Executive Engineer)  
Central Civil Division-II  
Pak-PWD, Peshawar**

PID (P) 072/23



### SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION OF PAKISTAN (SECP)

### CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

SECP, the apex regulator of Capital markets and corporate sector of Pakistan requires the services of qualified, result oriented, energetic and enthusiastic professional having impeccable integrity and exceptional analytical skills for the following position on regular basis:

Assistant Director - (02 Positions)	
<b>Qualification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masters/ Bachelor's degree (equivalent to 16 years of education) in Business Administration, Finance, Accounting or any other related disciplines from HEC recognized reputable University.</li> <li>or CA/CMA/ ACCA</li> </ul>
<b>Experience</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimum 03 years of post-qualification experience.</li> <li>Note: In case of qualified chartered accountant, CA Article ship will be considered as part of requisite experience for the above-mentioned position.</li> </ul>
<b>Age</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum 35 years on the last date of submission of application. (candidates who have at least 3 years' experience working with a regulator, will be given age relaxation of 5 years)</li> </ul>

The complete job description can be viewed at <https://www.secp.gov.pk> Applicants meeting the job requirements may apply online by clicking on <https://recruitment.secp.gov.pk> within 15 days of publication of this advertisement.

We are an equal opportunity employer, women, minorities, people with special needs and candidates from Balochistan, FATA, Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) are encouraged to apply.

In case of any queries, please feel free to contact us.

**Assistant Director - HRD**

**051-919444**

**PID(I) 5269/22**



### PAKISTAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY (PCAA)

### OPPORTUNITY TO BECOME A PART OF PCAA'S PROFESSIONAL TEAM SITUATION VACANT NOTICE NO. 03/2023

Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority requires services of qualified individuals to fill the following vacant posts on **contract basis for three (03) years (extendable)** where selection will be made purely on suitability and merit:-

Post	No. of Seats	Prescribed Qualification	Quota & Pay Scale	Age Limit
Deputy Director MET (Inspector) (EG-03)	One (01)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Masters or equivalent degree in Meteorology</li> <li>WMO recognized</li> <li>Basic Instruction Package for Meteorologists (BIP-M)</li> <li>Five (05) years of progressively responsible and demonstrated experience in Aviation MET forecasting at the Meteorological Watch Office (MWO).</li> <li>Familiarity with QMS and SMS is preferable.</li> <li>Must have excellent knowledge of WMO / ICAO documents and technical regulations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Merit</li> <li>Lump Sum Monthly Pay: Rs.192,245/- with 05% annual increment (Negotiable)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Maximum 57 years (including all age relaxations)</li> </ul>

#### Application Procedure:

- Interested candidates are required to fill & submit Online Job Application Form available at [www.caapakistan.com.pk](http://www.caapakistan.com.pk) within fifteen days from the date of this advertisement.
- Candidates will be required to upload scanned copies of certificate / degree of the required qualification only of the concerned post as mentioned above and CNIC while applying for the job.
- In case a candidate does not upload the above documents with the online application form, his/her application will be rejected.
- All the interested candidates must read the Terms of Reference (TOR) mentioned in the detailed notice available at [www.caapakistan.com.pk](http://www.caapakistan.com.pk) before applying for the post.

**ADDITIONAL DIRECTOR HR (TM)  
HEADQUARTERS PAKISTAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY,  
TERMINAL-I, JINNAH INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT, KARACHI TEL: 021-99072068 - 67**

**PID(K)#2477/22**

**[www.caapakistan.com.pk](http://www.caapakistan.com.pk)**

### WAPDA Decade of Dams JOB OPPORTUNITIES

WAPDA is currently looking for competent, dedicated, dynamic and self-motivated personnel having domicile of Swabi or Haripur for the following positions on probation likely to become permanent on completion of one year probation on satisfactory performance as per Rules/Policy :-

Sr. No.	Nomenclature of the post	BPS	No of Vacancies	Minimum Qualification	Age Limit	Local/Regional Provincial quota
1	Bus Conductor	3	1	Matric	18-30 years	Local Domiciled (Distt. Swabi & Haripur)
2	Cleaner	2	4	Middle	18-30 years	Local Domiciled (Distt. Swabi & Haripur)
3	Sanitary Worker	1	1	Literate (who can read newspaper and write simple letter in any language)	18-30 years	Local Domiciled (Distt. Swabi & Haripur)

#### INSTRUCTIONS AND GENERAL CONDITIONS

• Applicant must be citizen of Pakistan having domicile of District Swabi and Haripur who are advised to read the following instructions carefully before filling the relevant prescribed application form available on WAPDA website ([www.wapda.gov.pk](http://www.wapda.gov.pk)) & submit application to undersigned within 15 days after publication in newspaper

• No application will be accepted after due date.

• All candidates will be selected on merit.

• Serving candidates should apply Through Proper Channel, advance copy of application, however, may be forwarded without obtaining N.O.C. The candidate will not be allowed to appear in interview, if he/she fails to produce N.O.C. from concerned department.

• Only short listed candidates will be called for Skill test / interview.

• Skill Test will be conducted for Technical posts as per WAPDA Rules.

• No TA/DA will be admissible to candidates for skill test / interview.

• Government /WAPDA employees who have completed 02 years continuous service on the closing date of receipt of applications shall be admissible 10 years' age relaxation, up to the age of 55 years.

• General Age Relaxation has already been included in the age mentioned against each category. No further age relaxation will be allowed in the prescribed age limit except 03 years of age relaxation to the candidates belonging to Scheduled castes, Buddhist Community, 10 years for disable person and 05 years age relaxation will be applicable to the children of WAPDA employees (died during service and), applying against WAPDA employee Children Quota posts.

• Original documents must be presented by the candidates at the time of interview. The candidates who have been dismissed or debarred for future employment are not eligible to apply.

• The application / documents submitted by the candidates will be at the risk & cost of the applicant. Any documents found bogus at any stage, during induction or later in service will result in termination.

• WAPDA reserves the right to withhold/cancel the entire recruitment process at any stage.

• The number of posts advertised can be increased / decreased at any stage by the competent authority.

• Eligibility of candidate shall be determined on the basis of academic record.

• Only children's of WAPDA employees are eligible to apply against WAPDA employees children quota posts. Employees of DISCOs, GENCOs, NTDC, etc. are not entitled to apply against quota reserved for WAPDA employee's children. The candidates applying against employees children quota are required to submit fresh certificate from the last attending office of his father / mother that none of his / her son / daughter has been appointed in WAPDA against employees children quota.

• Candidates shall submit application forms duly filled in alongwith copy of academic record, domicile, CNIC and two recent passport size photographs to the office within due date.

• The candidate's applying against disable quota must provide disability certificate alongwith application from concerned Government Department.

• Incomplete applications / carrying incorrect information shall be summarily rejected.

**CHIEF ENGINEER (POWER) WAPDA  
TD, TARBELA**

PID(L)2510

Website: [www.wapda.gov.pk](http://www.wapda.gov.pk)

PRD(L)WAPDA/245/2022-23)

**DONATE FOR DIAMER BASHA & MOHMAND DAMS**





PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali addressing 13th convocation ceremony of Kohat University of Science and Technology.

## KP Governor attends 13th convocation at KUST

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Saturday conferred 75 gold medals and 248 degrees to students in the 13th convocation of Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST). Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Sardar Khan, Caretaker Minister for Education Rehmat Salam Khattak, Caretaker Minister for Planning and Development Hamid Shah, Mayor, DC Kohat, parents of students and others were present on this occasion. Addressing the ceremony, Governor Ghulam Ali said that knowledge is power and ornament of future but unfortunately we increased the number of universities and did not increase the ratio of higher education from 11 percent. He said that teachers are the builders of the nation, and along with education

teachers should also pay special attention to build the charter of students to bring change in human attitudes. While congratulating the successful students, Governor Ghulam Ali said that the youth who have completed their education have to take over the country and should work for the development and prosperity of the country in future. The Governor said that in practical life, the youth have to face challenges in their respective fields, but they will have to struggle continuously to face these challenges. Besides, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali also visited Kohat Small Industrial Estate and participated in Kohat Chamber of Commerce and Industry function as a special guest. On arrival at the Industrial Estate, Kohat

Chamber of Commerce President Arshad Hayat and former President Syed Faiq Shah, founder of Kohat Chamber Rashid Paracha welcomed the Governor and thanked for visiting the Industrial Estate. The President of the Trade Action Committee Haji Abid Khan, the Chairman of the Central Association of Trade Unions, Azmat Bangash and a number of representatives of the business community of Kohat also participated in the event. Addressing the ceremony, the Governor said that not only the country's economy is being driven by the industry tax, but the country's industries are also providing the most employment to the people. He said that the development of the industry is very important for the country's economic development. The provision of all facilities

ties to the country's industry is the need of the hour. The founder of Kohat Chamber, Rashid Pracha, asked about loadshedding, temporary relief in taxes and some other issues. The Governor asked the representatives of the Industrialist Association and Kohat Chamber to inform him in writing about their complaints related to the departments so that these complaints can be addressed in a joint meeting with the heads of these departments and the Industrialist Association and Kohat Chamber next week. The Governor inaugurated a police check post in Industrial Estate Kohat by fulfilling the demand made by the business community.

### Police bust two gangs of criminals

PESHAWAR (APP): Pahariyura police on Saturday bust two gangs involved in street crimes and recovered six motorcycles from their possession. Talking to newsmen, ASP Faqirabad Syed Talal Ahmed Shah said that police team conducted raids in two separate locations and arrested five persons allegedly involved in bike snatching, dacoities and theft crimes. Police have arrested the accused identified as Sajid, Adnan, Irfan, Musa and Munir. Cases have been registered against them and further investigation is underway.

### Partly cloudy weather predicted

PESHAWAR (APP): The provincial meteorological department here Saturday predicted partly cloudy to cloudy weather is most of the districts and cold in hilly areas of the province during next 24 hours. According to met office, scattered rain-thunderstorm is expected in Chitral, Upper and Lower Dir, Malakand, Buner, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Torghar and Kurram districts. Isolated light rain and thunderstorm is expected in Peshawar, Khyber, Orakzai, Bajaur, Mardan, Swabi, Charsadda and Haripur districts during the same period.

## PTI 24 MNAs approached PHC to stop by-polls on their constituencies

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: As many as 24 Members National Assembly (MNAs) of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) approached Peshawar High Court (PHC) to seeking to suspend two notifications issued on 17th and 20th January and restrain Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) from holding by-polls on their respective constituencies. However, in both petitions the same respondents including Speaker National Assembly, Secretary National Commission of Pakistan and Federation of Pakistan while early hearing is expected on the petitions. PTI's members took same pleas in both petitions by stating that the petitioners acted on the directions of party and for the political objective only of arriving at

Muhammad Iqbal Khan. Another writ was filed by PTI eight former MNAs including Imran Khattak, Murad Saeed, Omar Ayub, Asad Qaiser, Pervaiz Khat-tak, Shehryar Afridi, Ali Amin Khan and Noor-ul-Haq Qadri seeking to stop holding of by-polls on their respective constituencies. The resignation was subject to all the 123 MNAs belonging to PTI resigning and being de-seated jointly and as a whole, the petition argued. On 10th June 2022 Speaker National Assembly in violation of the law and on his own started to accept some of resignations. First of all, on 27th July 2022 Speaker accepted resignation of 11 MNAs without following in due enquiry under Article 64, the petitions informed. The writ argued that resignations were accepted

an agreement with the opposition parties for holding fresh elections so that a new government may be formed with the real mandate of the people of Pakistan. The resignation was subject to all the 123 MNAs belonging to PTI resigning and being de-seated jointly and as a whole, the petition argued. On 10th June 2022 Speaker National Assembly in violation of the law and on his own started to accept some of resignations. First of all, on 27th July 2022 Speaker accepted resignation of 11 MNAs without following in due enquiry under Article 64, the petitions informed. The writ argued that resignations were accepted

following PTI's announcement that their MNAs are joining National Assembly and would demand the 'Office of Opposition Leader' and Public Account Committee. Just to encounter PTI from obtaining Leader of Opposition and Public Account Committee, Speaker National Assembly on 17th and 20th January accepted resignation of further 35 MNAs on each day unlawfully and without verification. PTI 24 MNAs seeking to suspend notifications issued on 17th and 20th January 2023 respectively and restrain ECP from holding by-polls on their respective constituencies till final disposal of the writ petitions.

## 'Imran trying to make institutions controversial under conspiracy'

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs Engineer Amir Muqam on Saturday said that PTI chief Imran Khan was trying to make national institutions controversial under a conspiracy.

He stated this while talking to the media after offering condolence with PML-N Youth Wing's divisional president Roshan Zamir Laghari over the demise of his mother. Amir Muqam, who is also the Provincial President of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, termed the PTI's 'Jail Bhao Tehreek' as 'Jaib Bhao Tehreek'. He said the nation especially the youth have realized that PML-N Supremo Nawaz Sharif was the leader who can steer the country out of current crisis. He said the general elections in the country will be held on its time, adding that the coalition government of



PDM was taking steps to steer the country out of economic crisis. Amir Muqam said that the politics of Imran Khan was based on lies, adding that the PTI chairman tried to mislead the people over the name of cipher and brought them out to the streets. He said that Imran Khan was speaking against the national institutions under a conspiracy. On this occasion, PML-N leader Dr. Abdullah Zafri, PML-N Tank, President Samiullah Khan Barki, Provincial Vice President Naeem Khan Wazir, Provincial Vice President Muhammad Akbar Khan alias Noni Khan Gandapur, Sheikh Arif, Allah Nawaz

Kharal, Yameen Jan, M. Fawad, Zeeshan Raj and others were present. Earlier, Amir Muqam also went to Miyakhel House where he condoled over the death of former Member of National Assembly Sardar Umar Farooq Khan Miyakhel (late). Speaking on this occasion, the Advisor said Sardar Umar Farooq Khan Miyankhil has always served the area and a vacuum has been created after his death. He prayed to Allah Almighty to grant the deceased a place in Jannatul-Firdous. Meanwhile, Muqam on Saturday visited the residence of Pakistan Muslim

League Nawaz Vice President in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dawar Khan Kundi in Tank and condoled over the demise of his father and former provincial minister Sardar Amanullah Khan Kundi. Amir Muqam, who is also PML-N's President in KP, offered Fateha for the departed soul and prayed that may the Allah Almighty rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this loss with fortitude.

### Power shutdown notified

PESHAWAR (APP): Pesco authorities have notified power suspension in areas of Mingora, Manshera and Peshawar due to maintenance work. Power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Sakhi Chasma Grid Station on 27th February from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM, resultantly consumer of 11 KV Barikot feeders will face inconvenience. Power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Mansehra Grid Station on 27 and 28 February from 9:00:00 AM to 3:00 PM, resultantly consumers of 11 KV Ihsan Shaheed, City 1,2,3, Qalandarabad, Attar shesha, Shaheen Shaheed, Merpur, Khaki feeders will face inconvenience. Power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Swat Grid Station on 27 February from 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM, resultantly consumers of 11 KV Mingora 3,4, Bara Bandhai, Sinor Hospital, Marghuzar and Dardyal feeders will face inconvenience. Power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Saidul Sharif Grid Station on 26 February from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM, resultantly consumers of 11 KV Chakasar, Thakot, Besham 2, Alizai feeders will face inconvenience.



PESHAWAR: Daily wages labours sit on wheelbarrow along roadside while waiting for some work in Shoba Bazaar.

## City Police continue tight security hold-up

PESHAWAR (APP): A tight security hold-up is continued in all four divisions of the City Capital Police to ensure a peaceful environment in the provincial capital. According to a press release on Saturday, on the special directives of the police high-ups the process of tight security checking is continued at all entries and exits of the city. The capital city police is carrying out a special crackdown against unregistered motorcycles and tinted-glass vehicles. Station House Officers (SHOs) personnel of local police, Ababeel Squad and City Patrolling are also per-

forming duties at the especially established checkpoints and checking suspects and travelling documents of Afghan refugees. The documents of the vehicles are also being checked at these checkpoints through VVS System while suspects are also verified at their local level. Police recover stolen money from bandit In a swift operation, the Capital City Police have arrested an armed and dangerous bandit who had stolen money from a cloth merchant. The businessman, Muhammad Naeem from Faisalabad, was targeted by the

bandit when he was returning after collecting money from shopkeepers. The police were able to recover the stolen money and a loaded 30-bore pistol with cartridges from the arrested bandit, Syed son of Gul Akbar, a resident of district Orakzai and was presently living in Peshawar. During the operation, the bandits opened fire on the police team, narrowly missing them, and injuring a passerby, Jamshed who was shifted to hospital for treatment. The affected businessman has expressed his gratitude to the police for their timely action and recovery of the stolen money.

## Faisal Kundi, Governor Sindh visit Police Lines

PESHAWAR (APP): State Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi on Saturday visited Police Lines along with Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori and expressed their deep grief and sorrow over the loss of precious lives in the suicide blast. They were flanked by

Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali. They offered Fatihah for the departed souls of the Police Lines suicide blast victims and extended sympathies to the injured and bereaved family members of the blast martyrs. Speaking on the occasion, Faisal Karim Kundi said that it was a tragic inci-

dent. He said that they will fight till the elimination of the last terrorist. Meanwhile, a separate meeting was held with Governor Sindh Kamran Tessori during his visit to Peshawar. Matters of mutual interest and the overall political situation of the country were discussed in the meeting.



PESHAWAR: Chairman Grand Health Alliance Dr. Amir Taj addressing a press conference. — F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

## Poverty fuels child labour in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Ishaq Khan

PESHAWAR: Asif Jan, an 11-year-old boy who dropped out of school, can be seen working with dirty hands in the automobile workshop in Shoba bazaar area of Peshawar city. Asif Jan son of Bacha Jan, a resident of Tehkal area of provincial capital, started work as a labour in a workshop after his family was unable to complete the education expenses. "I was studying in fourth class when I had to end my education because of poverty and joined the workshop as Shagird (student)", Asif Jan said. While answering to a question regarding the

school fellows, "It is not my personal or family choice but the poverty compelled him to work in the automobile workshop instead of joining my friends in the schools", little Asif Jan said this with a weird smile. "The initial months of working in a workshop were very hard for me to adjust to in the environment as all my friends were going to school but now I am enjoying it and one day I will have my own workshop and lots of Shagird (students) will be working under my authority", he laughed. While contacting the Asif Jan's father, Bacha Jan said that he is working as a

daily wage worker with a contractor, in the past two three years he was struggling to fulfill the family needs, the situation forced him to pull out his children from school as he was even not been able to provide them the daily bread. "Every parent wishes to send their children to schools with the aim to pursue a better and respectable career but unfortunately sometimes we have to take hard decisions for our survival", Bacha Jan lamented. Imran Takkar, a Child Rights Activist said that it is a hard reality that every time a world or family is facing a worse situation, the children will be the most affected part of the society.

Takkar claimed population growth, unemployment, poverty and lack of education facilities are some of the factors behind increase in child labour. Around 3.3 million children are involved in child labour in Pakistan as per survey conducted by the Federal Bureau of Statistics, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour, Manpower and Overseas Pakistanis and the ILO in 1996, but since then at no survey was conducted regarding child labour in Pakistan, Takkar said. Takkar informed that in 2017 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa took initiative regarding child labour survey and despite allocation of fund-

ing but unfortunately the survey is still in pending. He said that as per neutral sources and non-governmental data at least 20.5 million children are out of school including 10 million children are in labour. He further shared that 1.1 million children were working as labour in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the 1996 survey however only registered firms and factories were included wherein street boys and agriculture sectors were not included. "In 2017, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Education department conducted a survey in which they mention that 1.8 million children are out of school but the merged areas children were not included

in it, if those children were included then the tally will reach 2.5 million" Imran told The Frontier Post. Takkar informed that the state is responsible to provide the basic rights to the children as per the constitution of the country regarding the rights of the children in the constitution, he shared. Article 11(3): No child below the age of 14 years shall be engaged in any factory or mine or any other hazardous employment. Article 25(A): The state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as determined by law. Ijaz Muhammad Khan, Deputy Director KP Child

Protection and Welfare Commission said that the commission closely monitors the rights of children in the province and for this purpose the "Child Protection Units" was established in all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. During the year 2022, "Child Protection Units" had registered 402 cases in the province and took prompt action against it to provide relief to victims' children, Ijaz claimed. He said that they registered 71 cases of sexual abuse, physical abuse, corporal punishment, missing, domestic labour and others in provincial capital followed by Mardan with 52 cases and Battagram with third with 48 cases. Kohat

had 41 cases, Abbottabad 39, Charsadda 34, Swat 33, Chitral 22, Swabi 21, Dir 20, Buner 9 and Bannu 12 cases, adding that total 286 boys cases and 116 girls cases were reported in the province. He added that the commission is responsible for protecting the children's welfare and protection, adding that anyone can register complaints on 1121 and the commission will take strict action according to the law. Everyone including (stakeholders, parents, and social societies) needs to play their role in safeguarding the children's rights in the better interest of their future, he said.





## In brief

### Dacoit loots wedding guests

**SARGODHA (INP):** A dacoit in Sargodha after looting some wedding guests on a road also took one of the female guests with him and raped her on Saturday. Reportedly, after attending a marriage party, Arif and others were going back to their home in a rickshaw when they were intercepted by an armed dacoit. The dacoit first snatched money and jewellery from them. Then he took one of the female guests with him at gun point. After going a few kilometers away, he raped the woman and then fled away. Police have failed to trace the dacoit so far.

### 50 cops obtains first aid training

**F.P. Report**

**HANGU:** Pakistan Red Crescent Society (PRCS) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has arranged four days first aid training for policemen concluded at police lines, on Saturday. According to details, as many as 50 police personnel obtained first aid training to improve skills among them. PRCS health and medical experts trained police personnel to ensure capacity building. The concluding session was attended by Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) headquarters Falak Nawaz Bangash and Station House Officer (SHO) Jamsheed Bangash while distributed certificates among the participants. DSP argued that first aid training is necessary for policemen to ensure their capacity building measure while paid thanks to PRCS for arranging the training.

### Preparations reviewed

**SARGODHA (APP):** Assistant Commissioner Noor Purr Thall Aleeza Rehan on Saturday paid a surprise visits to various institutions and markets to review the performance of institutions and to observe price control situation. She visited Tehsil Headquarter Hospital Noor Purr and checked the cleanliness situation in the hospital and provision of health facilities in the hospital. She met under-treatment patients in the hospital and inquired about the service delivery of the hospital. She gave directives to medical superintendent concerned for the provision of best medical facilities to patients. Meanwhile, she reviewed preparations for upcoming census after paying her visit to Tehsil Municipal Corporation, which will be started from 1st of March 2023 to 1st of April 2023, where she was briefed by the tehsil municipal officer about the preparations. The TMO said that Noor Purr Tehsil had been divided into 261 blocks, while 22 supervisors would be deployed along with the required supporting staff.

### Anti-polio drive from March 11

**SIALKOT (APP):** Deputy Commissioner Sialkot Adnan Mehmood Awan has said that the second three-day anti-polio campaign of this year will be launched in Sialkot district from March 11-15 and follow-up campaign will be held from March 16 to 17. He said that 7,72,712 children under five years of age would be given polio vaccine. He expressed these views while addressing the meeting of the District Anti-polio Campaign. CEO Health Dr. Ahmed Nasir and District Heads of various departments were also present on this occasion. Deputy Commissioner Adnan Mahmood Awan said that 2676 mobile teams and a total of 6288 members of 133 fixed and 69 transit teams would perform their duties during anti-polio campaign while 129 UCMOs would be deployed.



**MINGORA:** KP Caretaker Minister for Communication Muhammad Ali Shah inspecting the construction work of Swat Darul Amaan.

## Citizens demand actions against adulterated milk

**Hafiz Aziz-ur-Rehman**

**HAFIZABAD:** In Hafizabad city and its surroundings, the sale of adulterated milk and curd continues, citizens are suffering from various diseases. The DG Punjab Food Authority is requested to take notice.

According to the details, the sale of unhealthy and adulterated milk and curd has reached its peak throughout the district. The milk vendors prepare synthetic milk by using chemicals and fertilizers and other substandard materials and then easily sell it to different shops in the city from where this milk and yogurt are sold in hotels and houses. A large number of citizens especially kids are suffering from various diseases due to the use of the above-mentioned harmful and unhygienic milk.

Citizens strongly condemn and demanded the authorities through media that the officials of the Food Authority who never felt the need to check the hawkers and supply of unhygienic and substandard milk is continued. They are making the citizens sick by selling unhealthy milk throughout the city and including suburbs.

On the other hand, adulterated red chili powder, fake tea leaves, spices, pulses and other edible items are made from substandard unhealthy ingredients, nimko, paparr, chips, toffees, tamarind, chewing gum, biscuits, choran, juices, tatar and other food items manufactured in local illegal small factories have started to be sold publicly in the streets and grocery stores. Expired food items are also being sold in shops across the district, due to which children as well as adults are suffering from various diseases.

The citizens have demanded the Deputy Commissioner and District Food Authority to take strict action against the mini-factories and shopkeepers selling fake and unhealthy food items in the urban areas, so that the citizens and children be protected from diseases.

**Rs10.29 million released for 671 cases:** In the meeting of the District Welfare Fund Board, it was approved to release funds of Rs. 10.29 million for 671 cases of education scholarships, marriage grants, burials, monthly grants for the chil-

dren of government employees. The meeting was presided over by Deputy Commissioner Hafizabad Umar Farooq Warraich while Secretary Benevolent Fund Board and Additional Deputy Commissioner General Ashfaq Ahmed, District Education Officer Secondary Mian Abdul Majeed, In-charge BF Branch Tariq Khan, Deputy DHO Health Dr. Zaheer Ahmad, Rai Hussain Ali, Muhammad Imran and Tanveer Abbas and other members of the committee attended.

In the meeting, approval was given to release funds of 94 lakh 26 thousand for fourteen cases of monthly grant, 55 lakh 85 thousand for 115 cases of marriage grant, 29 lakh 61 lakh for 87 cases of burial and 31 lakh 82 thousand for 455 cases of education scholarships of government employees. It was informed in the meeting that all the cases of monthly grant, marriage grant and burial, submitted to the Deputy Commissioner's office till February 15, 2023 have been approved, while all the educational scholarships for the year 2022 have also been approved.

The Deputy Commissioner said that the rights of government employees will be taken care of in every forum and through Benevolent Fund Board, educational scholarships and other grants for their children will be released to the present and retired employees on priority basis.

**Family made hostage to loot:** A major incident of robbery occurred in the neighboring village of Channi Karim Dad, the armed dacoits took the family hostage and fled with millions of rupees in cash, gold, jewelry, mobile phones and licensed gun.

According to details, 6 armed robbers forced their way into the house of local land owner Muhammad Akbar and locked the family in a room at gunpoint and robbed 2,60,000/- cash, gold ornaments worth 2 lakh, 7 mobile phones worth 3 lakh and 1 license gun from the house and escaped. Meanwhile, unidentified thieves stole more than one and a half lakh cash from a house in Mohallah Rahmatnabad of Hafizabad. Atiq-ur-Rahman son of Muhammad Asghar has built a cafe on Alipur Road where unidentified thieves stole 1,61,000/- rupees and sped away. The police are investigating.

## Police launches public engagement campaign

**F.P. Report**

**CHITRAL:** Police has conducted community meetings in various areas this week to promote public engagement campaign and community policing.

As per direction of Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur and special orders of RPO Malakand Lt retired Nasir Mehmood Sathi, DPO Lower Chitral Ikram Ullah Khan has set up a special public engagement plan in Lower Chitral. Also, village-to-village meetings are being held.

In this regard, special

meetings were held with local people under the supervision of SDPOs and SHOs of respective police stations this week. Police officials comprising of probational Assistant Sub Inspectors (ASIs) are actively engaged for this task.

The bodies were attended by a large number of local elders and youth. The police officers briefed the local people on the importance of public-friendly policing and bridging the gap between the police and the public, and urged cooperation with each other to tackle crime.

Cooperation between the

police and the public is very important in keeping Lower Chitral free from the scourge of drugs and other social crimes. The local elders vowed to fully cooperate with the police to eradicate drugs and other social crimes.

By reducing the distance between the public and the police and public-friendly policing, not only crime can be solved from the society, but it will also help in identifying drug dealers and other people involved in crimes and bringing them to justice. The cooperation of the people is indispensable in maintaining the atmosphere of law and order.

## Seawater invades villages after protective dyke breach

**THATTA (INP):** Seawater flooded three villages near coastal town of Ketu Bandar after breach in a protective embankment along the sea on Saturday. Three villages, Hashim Jat, Ali Bux Jat and Khuda Bux Jat near Ketu Bandar, submerged after a 30 feet wide breach developed in the sea. Tidal waves disrupted the land link of the villages with other areas.

According to local residents, the seawater rapidly entering in coastal settlements. The district and local administrations have been absent from the scene, as people in need of help, facing the situation themselves and moving towards safer places on their own, local residents complained.

Last year in June, around a dozen villages along the Gharo Creek had been flooded by tidal waves, forcing hundreds of villagers to escape from their homes. The villages in Kharo Chhan and Ketu Bandar talukas, were submerged in water after breach in the protective dyke of Gharo Creek owing to ferocious tidal waves. Football and cricket grounds of Gharo town and a graveyard had also been drowned under the seawater. The rampaging seawater entered in local villages owing to ferocious winds and flooding fuelled by strong tidal waves.

## Women University removes age restriction

**F.P. Report**

**SWABI:** Women University Swabi has waived the age limit for enrollment of women students and now there will be no age related restrictions on women seeking admission in the concerned university. The decision has been taken in terms of drop out cases of women after marriage leaving their education incomplete or due to some other reasons.

The decision was taken in 25th meeting of the Academic Council of the University held here on Saturday with Vice Chancellor, Shahana Arooj in the chair, said a press release issued here on Saturday. The meeting took various crucial decisions relating to the academic affairs of the university. All heads of the departments and administrative officers also attended the meeting.

In wake of the landmark decision of opening doors of the university for age women students will enable them to seek admission on open merit. The meeting also approved the minutes of the first Board of Studies of the Language & Literature at the Department of English at the university as well as minutes of the 24th, 4th, 5th and 6th Advanced Studies & Research Board and also increased the admission fee for M.Phil and Ph.D students at the rate of Rs.65000/- for Science subjects and Rs.55000/- for humanities respectively.

# PTI workers set up registration camp for court arrest

**F.P. Report**

**LOWER DIR:** The Pakistan Tehreek Insaf former lawmakers from Lower Dir along with party workers presented their names for court arrest. The Insaf Youth Wing in this regard set up a registration camp outside the Timergara press club wherein the former lawmakers including Syed Mahboob Shah and Malik Shafiullah Khan registered their names for court arrest. According to the party sources more than one thousand workers got themselves registered at the camp.

The PTI former district president Ghulam Hussain, former general secretary Ali Shah Mishwani, youth wing district president Mian Sajjad, general secretary Rahat Farooqi, Timergara tehsil president Ijaz Khatir, general secretary Asif Iqbal, Malik Fawad, Kashif Kamal and others got registered for court arrest.

Talking to local journalists, the PTI former MNA Syed Mahboob Shah and MPA Malik Shafiullah alleged the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government had ruined the country during the last eight months. They said the country was near to default due to the inability of the government's finance team. They said the PTI sacrificed its two governments in the provinces for the sake of the country and nation. They said the 'court arrest' movement was meant to get rid of this 'corrupt' government. The PTI

leaders said the party workers were voluntarily registering their names for court arrest. The former lawmakers expressed anger at police raids on their houses and condemned it. They said that they did not hesitate to go to jail but they were waiting for the directives from the party high command.

**Body found:** A seven-year old child identified as Ayan Khan, a resident of Sar Dargai who went missing on Feb 22, was found dead at a hill in the jurisdiction of Lal Qila police station here. Someone informed the SHO Salim Shah about the presence of a dead body at the hill which was later on identified as Ayan Khan. According to police the body had multiple torture signs. The dead body was sent to the district headquarter hospital Timergara for an autopsy report. The Lal Qila police registered a case against unknown accused and started further investigation.

**HIV Aids patients:** A social activist Reehanullah told local journalists at Timergara here that the registered number of HIV aid patients was more than 400 in the Lower Dir district, which was alarming. He said the patients also included women and children. The activist said that the majority of patients had returned from abroad and the deadliest virus had been transmitted from there. He said that the majority of the patients and their doctors kept the disease a secret due

to social values and norms. He said that a medical center for such patients had been set up at Bathkela Malakand wherein free of cost facilities were being provided to the patients. The activist said that a social awareness campaign could prevent more people from being affected.

**Winter plantation kicks off:** The district and session judge Ms Phool Bibi asked citizens and government officials to take active part in this year plantation drive for the best interest of the country and nation. She kicked off the drive with planting a deodar tree in the district court during a function.

District Forest Officer Shah Khalid, Senior Civil Judges Asif Kamal, Farmanullah District Bar Timergara President Tariq Khan, General Secretary Asad Khan and other lawyers were present on this occasion.

Addressing the event, Ms. Phool Bibi asked the forest department to discourage and take action against those who cut down trees and take measures to encourage new tree planters to combat the alarming global warming. She said that due to the lack of trees, there was an increase in the greenhouse gases that badly affected living thing. She said that due to the lack of oxygen gas and rains, the risks of water scarcity and floods were increasing. She said that all had to play a role to combat such situations to maintain natural beauty.

# Al-Khidmat Foundation to hold donor conference

**F.P. Report**

**TIMERGARA** Al-Khidmat Foundation Pakistan has sent 50 crores of aid to the earthquake victims of Turkey and Syria, while Lower Dir chapter has announced to hold a donor conference on March 18, with a target of 50 crore rupees to be collected.

In this regard, Al-Khidmat Foundation Central Vice President Fazal Mehmood, Lower Dir President Hafeezullah Khaksar, District General Secretary Sultan Zeb Jamaat-e-Islami Tehsil Timergara President Malik Sher Bahadur Khan, Al-Khidmat Foundation Vice President Haji Majeedullah President of Al-Khidmat Tehsil

Timergara, Fahimullah, Atiqullah Jan Wadigar while addressing a press conference at Timergara Press Club, President of Al-Khidmat Foundation Lower Dir Hafeezullah Khaksar said that Al-Khidmat Foundation is trying to serve the suffering humanity in Lower Dir.

Al-Khidmat Foundation has established an Aghosh center for orphans in Lower Dir, in which 90 orphans are being provided with

education and upbringing facilities, which costs crores of rupees annually.

Water supply While buying a modern ambulance equipped with all facilities at a cost of two crore rupees in Lower Dir, Al Khidmat Foundation will establish a food bank in Lower Dir during Ramadan and will provide food packages to five thousand people, while in Lower Dir After registering 5,000 voluntary cars, Fazl Mahmood, the central vice president of Al-Khidmat Foundation, said that a 47-member team led by the central leader of Al-Khidmat, Abdul Shakur, visited Turkey and participated fully in the relief work with the Turkish authorities.

He said that more than 50,000 people were martyred and millions of people were injured due to the catastrophic earthquake in Turkey, and many cities were turned into piles of rubble. There is an orderly and tolerant nation that has shown extreme discipline and patience even in this difficult situation including Punjab and Gilgit-Baltistan 15 training centers are being established in the country.

**JUI-F to contest by-**

**poll:** Maulana Nabi Shah, the district leader of JUI Lower Dir, decided to contest the by-election in the provincial assembly constituency pk 15 and submitted the application with the district Ameer of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Maulana Sirajuddin.

Talking to the media on this occasion, he said that JUI participated in the provincial by-elections in a vigorous manner and inshallah JUI will win. He said that Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam has become a strong force in Lower dir and inshallah JUI will clean sweep from Lower Dir.

Maulana Nabi Shah further said that the former incompetent government of PTI is responsible for the recent crises in the country, who deviated from the government by accepting loans of billions of dollars from the IMF. He said that the PTI of Lower Dir Due to the incompetence of the former members of the Assembly, no development work has been done in the past period. He said that despite not being in power, he has dedicated his life to serve the people of Lower Dir, he will continue to serve the public after being elected.

# CG: Iran mulls to increase trade volume with Pakistan

**QUETTA (APP):** Iranian Consul General Hasan Golivand Darvesh said Iran would increase the annual trade volume with Pakistan from 1.5 billion Dollars to 5 billion dollars. He expressed these views while talking to Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) Director General Mujibur Rahman Qambrani during his visit to Gwadar on Saturday.

GDA DG informed Iranian Consul General about the implementation of the Gwadar Smart Port City Master Plan and the under-progress development projects. The DG said the supply of 100 MW of additional electricity by Iran was a reflection of the strong friendship between the neighboring Islamic brother countries.

He said the GDA had provided all basic facilities in Gwadar, including water, education, health, roads, sports fields, parks, and international airport. He said under the master plan, they were establishing a central business district

consisting of 25,00 acres of land i.e downtown and an industrial zone consisting of 20,000 acres. "With the completion of which, Gwadar will become an international economic and tourist city at the global level, which not only will guarantee the prosperity of the country but also the region." Appreciating the development of Gwadar and the projects in the master plan, the Consul General said the development and prosperity of Gwadar were in the interest of both countries.

Iran was interested in projects to generate energy from natural sources, in which a plan to generate 300 megawatts of electricity from solar energy was under consideration, he added. In the meeting, it was agreed to exchange delegations to highlight business, tourism, and cultural links between Chabahar and Gwadar.

**GDA employees cooperative housing society delegation meets Chairman GDA:** The

allottees of Gwadar Development Authority (GDA) Employees Cooperative Housing Society Gwadar met the Director General of Gwadar Development Authority Mujibur Rehman Qambrani on Saturday in his office and requested the handover of the allotted plots in the said scheme.

The delegation included Gulzargachki, Dr. Norbalauch, Dr. Aslam Dostin, Dr. Hafeez Baloch, Kambara Nsar, Dr. Tariq Sakhi and others. Allottee Association told the Director General that the GDA's ECHS housing scheme was started in 2009 but despite the passage of 14 years, the plots are not being handed over to the allottees, which is causing serious concern among the allottees.

"GDA has issued NOCs of over 100 schemes but its own launched scheme has been stalled for a long time," the delegation said and requested the DG to resolve the matter on priority basis.





# Philippines marks 1986 revolt with dictator’s son as leader

MANILA (AP): Pro-democracy protesters in the Philippines marked the anniversary on Saturday of the 1986 army-backed “people power” revolt with the son of the dictator, who was ousted in that uprising, now leading the country.

About 1,400 demonstrators, some waving Philippine flags and holding placards that read “Never forget,” gathered at a democracy shrine along the main EDSA highway in metropolitan Manila. Left-wing activists, carrying an effigy that depicted President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. as a pest, protested separately at a nearby pro-democracy monument. Faced with the awkward situation of issuing a statement to mark the revolt that toppled his namesake father, Marcos Jr. called for reconciliation without citing the event as a democratic milestone, as his predecessors had done.

“I once again offer my hand of reconciliation to those with different political persuasions to come together as one in forging a better society — one that will pursue progress and peace and a better life for all Filipinos,” he said in a two-paragraph statement he posted on Facebook. Renato Reyes of the left-wing alliance Bayan said the president’s offer was a “good sound bite but lacks sincerity and substance” given Marcos Jr.’s refusal to acknowledge abuses under his father’s rule.

Millions of Filipinos converged in February 1986 at the highway to shield top military and defense officials who defected from Marcos’ administration. The ailing president, who imposed martial rule from 1972 to 1981, was driven with his family and cronies into US exile. The uprising became a harbinger of change in authoritarian regimes. But in the nearly four decades since then, poverty, stark inequality between the rich and poor and a failure to address past wrongdoings have remained deeply entrenched, fanning political and social divisions.

The Marcoses returned to the



Philippines in 1991 and gradually regained political power despite the plunder and widespread human rights atrocities four decades ago. In May last year, Marcos Jr. won the presidential race in a landslide victory in one of history’s most dramatic reversal of fortunes. “It’s mind-blowing in one sense, isn’t it? How did this happen? You remember those who sacrificed their lives and you feel so sad for those who were tortured, those who lost loved ones,” Judy Taguiwalo, a longtime former political detainee and torture survivor, told The Associated Press.

Now 73 and ailing, Taguiwalo said her generation of activists who fought the dictatorship was slowly fading, but she remained defiant. “There’s a new generation of fighters,” she said. “Tyranny can return but there’s no forever in tyranny so long as we don’t stop resisting even if it’s an uphill battle or we get sidetracked by disinformation.” Marcos Jr.’s supporters called his massive victory a political vindication. Opponents said he clinched the top post through well-funded social media campaign that whitewashed the family history in a country regarded as one of the top users of Facebook and TikTok.

The president has steadfastly

rejected calls for him to apologize for the atrocities and plunder during his father’s rule and said in a TV interview last year that labeling the elder Marcos a dictator was wrong. The ousted leader died in exile in Hawaii three years after being overthrown without admitting any wrongdoing, including accusations that he and his family amassed an estimated \$5 billion to \$10 billion while he was in power.

A Hawaii court found him liable for human rights violations and awarded \$2 billion from his estate to compensate more than 9,000 Filipinos who filed a lawsuit against him for torture, incarceration, extrajudicial killings and disappearances. Butch Abad, a prominent activist who joined the 1986 uprising, said the army-backed revolution fortunately did not degenerate into a full-blown civil strife but peacefully restored democracy. He said it should have been used to introduce structural reforms aimed at eliminating poverty, social inequities and other volatile issues that helped ignite the revolt against the dictatorship in the first place. “Unfortunately, we stopped at ousting a dictator and did not pursue a deepening of democracy,” Abad said.

## Immigrant death highlights crossing spike

LONDON (AP): The death of a Mexican man who had just entered the United States from Canada illegally is highlighting the spike in illegal crossings along the border between Quebec and parts of New England, officials say. The number of illegal border crossers is tiny compared with those entering the country illegally from Mexico, but the death of the man who entered Vermont from Quebec marked the area’s first death in recent memory of someone who crossed into the US illegally. His entry took place in an area near Derby Line about 50 miles (80 kilometers) southeast of Montreal.

There have been fatalities of people seeking to cross on the Canadian side of the border. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police, which is responsible for border security in Canada, report their agents have mounted a number of search and rescue operations this winter in the region of people intending to cross into the United States from Canada. Border officials on both sides of the line have been warning about the dangers to the crossers and those who could be sent to rescue them.

Last year, a family of four Indian nationals died of exposure in Manitoba near its border with Minnesota and North Dakota. In December, a 44-year-old Haitian citizen who had been trying to enter the United States illegally from Canada was found dead in a wooded area near St-Bernard-de-Lacolle, Quebec, not far from Champlain, New York, about 35 miles (56 kilometers) south of Montreal. In April 2019, a Dominican man also died in Canada not far from Champlain. “As we progress deeper into winter and continue to address the ongoing pace of illicit cross-border traffic, the level of concern for the lives and welfare of our Border Patrol Agents and those we are encountering — particularly vulnerable populations — continues to climb,” the Border Patrol’s Sector Chief Patrol Agent Robert Garcia said in a news release this month before the death of the immigrant in Vermont. RCMP spokeswoman Cpl. Tasha Adams said agents were involved in at least three search and rescue operations in January, including one the weekend of Jan. 28, when the family of a person seeking to cross into the United States called Canadian authorities from the US to report they had lost contact with him in an area just north of the border. Rescuers later found the man in the Mansonville, Quebec, a short distance west of Derby Line, after tracking him for about 90 minutes through deep snow. He was conscious but suffering from hypothermia and frostbite.

“These are situations that place our officers at risk because of the weather and terrain they trek through to locate these individuals in distress,” Adams said in an email. Statistics from US Customs and Border Protection show that agents in the sector that includes New Hampshire, Vermont and parts of upstate New York apprehended 1,513 illegal border crossers between Oct. 1, 2022 through Jan. 31, 2023, up from 160 in the same period the year before.

# Ukraine sees some merit in Chinese peace plan

BEIJING (Reuters): China called for a comprehensive ceasefire in Ukraine and President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said he was open to considering parts of a 12-point peace plan put forward by Beijing. On the first anniversary of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, Moscow’s ally China urged both sides to agree to a gradual de-escalation, warned against the use of nuclear weapons and said conflict benefited no one.

The plan, set out in a foreign ministry paper, was largely a reiteration of China’s line since Russia launched what it calls its “special military operation” on Feb. 24 last year. China has refrained from condemning its ally Russia or referring to Moscow’s intervention in its neighbour as an “invasion”. It has also criticised Western sanctions on Russia. “All parties must stay rational and exercise restraint, avoid fanning the flames and aggravating tensions, and prevent the crisis from deteriorating further or even spiralling out of control,” the ministry said in its paper.

The initial reaction from Kyiv was dismissive, with a senior adviser to President Zelenskyy saying any plan to end the war must involve the withdrawal of Russian troops to borders in place when the Soviet Union collapsed in 1991. However, Zelenskyy himself struck a more receptive tone in a news conference to mark the first anniversary of the conflict.

Russia said it appreciated China’s plan

and that it was open to achieving its goals through political and diplomatic means. The proposals however cut little ice with NATO. “China doesn’t have much credibility because they have not been able to condemn the illegal invasion of Ukraine,” NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told reporters in Tallinn. Russian President Vladimir Putin has signalled he will double down on the conflict, despite major battlefield defeats in the past year, and has raised the spectre of nuclear weapons.

China said nuclear weapons must be avoided. “Nuclear weapons must not be used and nuclear wars must not be fought,” the foreign ministry said. “We oppose development, use of biological and chemical weapons by any country under any circumstances.” Since the war began weeks after Beijing and Moscow announced a “no limits” partnership, President Xi Jinping has spoken regularly with Putin but not once with his Ukrainian counterpart Zelenskyy. China’s top diplomat Wang Yi visited Moscow for talks this week. Brazil’s new President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva stressed the need for a peace deal brokered by outsiders.

“It is urgent that a group of countries not involved in the conflict assume the responsibility of leading negotiations to reestablish peace,” Lula said on Twitter. There had been speculation that President Xi would deliver a “peace speech” but that did not occur.

# N Korea food shortage worsens amid COVID

SEOUL (AP): There’s little doubt that North Korea’s chronic food shortages worsened due to the COVID-19 pandemic, and speculation about the country’s chronic food insecurity has flared as its top leaders prepare to discuss the “very important and urgent task” of formulating a correct agricultural policy.

Unconfirmed reports say an unspecified number of North Koreans have been dying of hunger. But experts say there is no sign of mass deaths or famine. They say the upcoming ruling Workers’ Party meeting is likely intended to shore up support for North Korean leader Kim Jong Un as he pushes ahead with his nuclear weapons program in defiance of intense US-led pressure and sanctions. “Kim Jong Un can’t advance his nuclear program stably if he fails to resolve the food problem fundamentally because public support would be shaken,” said Lim Eul-chul, a professor at Kyungnam University’s Institute for Far Eastern Studies in Seoul. “The meeting is being convened to solidify internal unity while pulling together ideas to address the food shortage.”

An enlarged plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Workers’ Party is slated for late February. Its specific agenda is unknown, but the party’s powerful Politburo earlier said that a “turning point is needed to dynamically promote radical change in agricultural development.” The meeting will be the party’s first plenary session convened just to discuss agricultural issues, though they often are a key topic at broader conferences in North Korea. Raising grain output was one of 12 economic priorities the party adopted during a plenary meeting in December.

It is difficult to know the

exact situation in the North, which kept its borders virtually closed during the pandemic. Food shortages and economic hardships have persisted since a famine killed an estimated hundreds of thousands of people in the mid-1990s. In his first public speech after taking over from his father as leader in late 2011, Kim vowed that North Koreans would “never have to tighten their belts again.” During the first several years of his rule, the economy achieved modest growth as Kim tolerated some market-oriented activities and increased exports of coal and other minerals to China, the North’s main ally and biggest trading partner. More recently, however, tougher international sanctions over Kim’s nuclear program, draconian pandemic-related restrictions and outright mismanagement have taken a severe economic toll. South Korea estimates put North Korea’s grain production last year at about 4.5 million tons, a 3.8% decrease from a year earlier. Annual grain output has plateaued at about 4.4 million tons to 4.8 million tons in the past decade.

North Korea needs about 5.5 million tons of grain to feed its 25 million people, so it’s usually short about 1 million tons each year. About half of the gap is typically offset by unofficial grain purchases from China. The rest is an unresolved shortfall, said Kwon Tae-jin, a senior economist at the private GS&J Institute in South Korea. Kwon says curbs on cross-border trade due to the pandemic have likely hindered unofficial rice purchases from China. Efforts by North Korean authorities to tighten controls and restrict market activities have also worsened the situation, he said.

“I believe this year North Korea is facing its worst food

situation since Kim Jong Un took power,” Kwon said. Koo Byoungsam, a spokesperson at the South Korean Unification Ministry, said that an unknown number of North Koreans have died of hunger, but said the problem is not as serious as the mid-1990s famine, which stemmed from natural disasters, the loss of Soviet assistance and mismanagement.

The current food problem is more an issue of distribution than of an absolute shortage of grain since much of the grain harvested last year has not yet been eaten, ministry officials said. Food insecurity has worsened as authorities tightened controls over private grain sales in markets, instead trying to confine the grain trade to state-run facilities. Severe steps taken by the Kim government to contain the pandemic provided effective tools for imposing a tighter grip on the kinds of market activity that earlier helped foster stronger economic growth but might eventually erode the government’s authoritarian rule, analysts say.

Kwon said current food shortages are unlikely to cause mass deaths because food is still available in markets, though at high prices. During the famine in the mid-1990s, grain was hard to come by, he said. North Korea monitoring groups have reported increases in the prices of rice and corn — the two most important staples — though the price of corn has stabilized recently in some regions. “If North Korea indeed sees people dying of hunger and faces a chaos, it won’t publicly say things like ‘a very important and urgent task’ for an agricultural policy,” said Ahn Kyung-su, head of DPRKHEALTH.ORG, a website focusing on health issues in North Korea.

# Hungary PM says more talks needed on Finland, Sweden NATO bids

BUDAPEST (Reuters): Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban said that more parliamentary group talks were needed before lawmakers vote on the ratification of Finland and Sweden’s NATO membership bids which they will begin debating on Wednesday.

Sweden and Finland applied last year to join the trans-Atlantic defence pact after Russia invaded Ukraine, but Sweden faced unexpected objections from Turkey for harbouring what Ankara considers to be members of terrorist groups. Speaking on public radio, Orban said he had asked lawmakers of his nationalist Fidesz party to support the NATO bids, adding however that some deputies were “not very enthusiastic” about the expansion and sought further discussion.

Press officials for Fidesz did not respond to emailed questions about the possible timing and composition of any bilateral meetings to discuss the ruling party’s concerns, which surfaced for the first time this week after the ratification process had become stranded in parliament in July. The Swedish Foreign Office did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Orban, in power since 2010, has used his sweeping majority to overhaul major Hungarian laws with no resistance from his own lawmakers, hardly any of whom have publicly questioned or stood up against the party line over the past 13 years.

The parliaments of all 30 members of NATO have to ratify any

membership bids for the alliance. Hungary’s lawmakers are scheduled to vote on the matter on March 6, according to the parliament’s agenda published online. Orban added that in the end, it should be made clear that Hungary supports Finland and Sweden’s NATO membership, but said Turkey’s concerns regarding Sweden’s entry should also be heard, otherwise the expansion effort could fail. “Regarding Turkey, they are also our allies, and therefore we need to hear their voice,” Orban said.

Turkey recently indicated it would approve only Finland for NATO membership, while Hungary says it has been delayed by a flurry of legislation required to unlock EU funds. “We need to pay attention to Turkey as in the end, the entire process will stall. Unless there is a solution to Turkey’s problem, then the expansion could fail.”

German Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock last week called on Turkey and Hungary to allow Finland and Sweden to join NATO, stating she expects all NATO members to ratify their bids “without further delay”. Orban said some ruling party lawmakers were concerned over NATO’s shared border with Russia extending by over 1,000 km (620 miles), pointing to potential geopolitical risks arising from Finland’s entry. Other lawmakers took issue with what Orban described as Finland and Sweden spreading “outright lies” about the health of democracy and the rule of

law in Hungary.

Mujtaba Rahman, Europe Managing Director at Eurasia Group, said Orban’s manoeuvres were likely aimed at enhancing his optics for various stakeholders, including Russia, Hungary’s key energy supplier, Turkey and his own electorate. “It makes PM Orban look to be supportive of Ukraine,” he said, adding that the moves could be used as a possible means to delay ratification. “...He and the party machine have been working for the last 12 months to undermine support for the EU, NATO and Ukraine and brainwash the Hungarian public into supporting Russia,” he said. “In short, it’s a political charade.”

Orban reiterated on Saturday that being a NATO member was “vital” for Hungary, but said his government would not send arms to Ukraine or sever its economic ties with Moscow, with Hungary lobbying hard against any EU sanctions on nuclear energy. Orban said Hungary, dominated by Moscow for decades before the collapse of communism, had a “moral obligation” to support the bid of the Nordic countries. “I fall into the camp of those urging calm,” Orban said in describing the debate on NATO expansion among his lawmakers. “I understand, moreover, I agree with the view of the parliamentary group that not all is well... It should be clear that in principle we support Sweden and Finland’s NATO entry. However, some serious discussions will be needed beforehand.”

# Syrian refugees in Turkey face return to quake-stricken areas

DAMASCUS (Agencies): After earthquakes destroyed her home, Raghad fled Antakya in southern Turkey, a city she had called home for the past three years. The 26-year-old Syrian refugee lived there with her four younger sisters, mother and four-year-old nephew after her father disappeared during the Syrian civil war. When the quakes hit on February 6, she took it upon herself to deliver her family to safety.

Wearing nothing but her pyjamas, Raghad guided her family through the cold night until she persuaded a bus driver to take 2,000 lira (\$106) to drive them to Istanbul, the only place where they have extended family. After a 17-hour journey on snow-covered, damaged roads, they are now living in accommodation provided by a volunteer in Istanbul, and are being supported by Raghad’s uncle and Syrian fiancé — both of whom live in Istanbul. But due to a government directive issued immediately after the earthquakes, Raghad faces the possibility of being forced to return to Antakya within two months. “We have nowhere to go,” Raghad told Al Jazeera. “Our home’s been levelled to the ground. If we go back, we’ll be on the streets or in a tent.” Raghad said everything she and her family owned was lost in a matter of seconds during the quakes. Gone was the inheritance money from her

grandfather, her education certificates, passport and what she considered her most valuable possession — the white dress she planned to wear for her wedding in March. “I’d only received it the night before,” she said. “I saw it hanging on the closet door as the walls started to crumble around us.”

According to government estimates, more than 1.7 million Syrian refugees lived in the 10 southern Turkish provinces devastated by this month’s earthquakes. Like Raghad’s family, most rely on temporary or international protection status, which confines them to the provinces where they are registered residents. Until the earthquakes hit, they could not travel to other provinces without authorisation. The day after the earthquakes, Turkish authorities issued a directive allowing refugees in the 10 provinces to travel to other cities or provinces, except Istanbul, for up to 90 days if they could secure their own accommodation.

But after many refugees fled to Istanbul in the first days following the quakes, the Directorate General of Migration Management revised its decision on a case-by-case basis, allowing families who had already arrived in the metropolis to stay for up to 60 days. On February 13, the Ministry of Interior issued a second directive, giving people under inter-

national or temporary protection living in any of the five worst-hit provinces — Kahramanmaraş, Hatay, Gaziantep, Adiyaman and Malatya — a 60-day exemption to travel to other provinces without seeking permission.

Upon arriving in another province, they are expected to apply at the Directorate General of Migration Management for a 60-day permit to stay there. Those in the other five quake-stricken provinces — Adana, Osmaniye, Sanliurfa, Kilis and Diyarbakir — must seek a travel permit before leaving. It remains to be seen if the second directive overrides the first, and multiple attempts by Al Jazeera to seek clarification from authorities went unanswered.

Paul Nesse, secretary general of the Norwegian Organisation of Asylum Seekers, said that when a person has been granted refugee status in a European country, “they should be able to move freely inside that country.” “Turkey has some shortcomings in their legal systems as compared to other countries that have ratified the refugee convention without reservation,” he said. “Turkey’s interpretation of the refugee convention has placed limits based on geography — only Europeans in Turkey have the full right to seek asylum, but Turkey made an exception for Syrians, allowing them to become

refugees once they are registered.” He added that Turkey’s decision on the movement restrictions was possibly related to the economic difficulties facing the country. “It may have been a way to limit the number of refugees drifting to Istanbul and other big cities,” he said.

Syrian activists and human rights organisations have denounced the government directives as “inhumane” and “unrealistic”, saying refugee families would be unable to rebuild their lives in southern Turkey in such a short time. “This 60- to 90-day respite is not realistic because no long-term solutions will be in place by then,” said Emma Sinclair-Webb, Turkey director at Human Rights Watch. “These [decisions] are temporary stopgaps to a massive internal displacement,” she said. “There is currently no safe housing, a lack of infrastructure and greatly reduced employment in the quake-stricken provinces.”

Sinclair-Webb called on the Turkish government to devise a “more sustainable, long-term policy that respects people’s rights to establish stable living situations with access to education and employment to sustain and rebuild their lives”. Taha Elgazi, a Syrian activist working on refugee rights in Turkey, called the decision “arbitrary and inhumane”. “What are Syrian refugees

going to return to? Piles of rubble?” he asked.

According to Enas Al-Najjar, a Syrian member and director of communications for the Syrian-Turkish Joint Committee, the directives were an initial response taken to help Syrian refugees affected by the quakes move and travel. The committee, which was created in 2019 on behalf of the Turkish interior ministry and the opposition Syrian National Coalition, includes the Turkish deputy interior minister and head of the Directorate General of Migration Management, Al-Najjar said. “These criticisms are a surprise to me,” she said. “We [members of the committee] requested this permit. The idea was to ensure that no one is left on the streets — a means to facilitate people’s travel to areas where they had families.”

She said they called for the decision after Syrian refugees reached out to the committee on the first night of the earthquakes, complaining that they were unable to leave through airports and bus stations. She added that the decisions were only “an initial plan” to respond to an overwhelming situation and a huge demand for accommodation after the quakes. “We were trying to find quick solutions,” Al-Najjar said. “We are yet to see what will happen after three months, especially that reconstruction will take a year. These directives

might be renewed.”

In addition to calling for an extension to the 60- or 90-day exemption period to at least a year, Elgazi also raised the alarm on a government-imposed quota limiting foreign residence permits to 25 percent of the population in specific neighbourhoods. When this law rolled out in July, the interior ministry effectively shut off at least 1,200 neighbourhoods across the country to foreigners wanting to move there, Elgazi said. “This [the quota] is the biggest immediate challenge facing Syrian refugees displaced from southern Turkey,” Elgazi said. “If they end up in neighbourhoods closed off to foreigners because their families are there, they won’t be able to get residency permits,” he said. “This will, in turn, cut off their access to social and public services, including education and healthcare.”

Al-Najjar said the quota has been put on temporary hold, allowing people affected by the quakes to live wherever they have family. “However, they can’t transfer their residency to those neighbourhoods, so the worry is after three months, what will they do,” she told Al Jazeera. Al Jazeera phoned and emailed questions to officials at the Directorate General of Migration Management and the Ministry of Interior for comment but has not received a response.



The Frontier Post

JALIL AFRIDI  
Managing Editor

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

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

E-mail: [fp@peshawar.com](mailto:fp@peshawar.com)  
[fp@peshawar.com](mailto:fp@peshawar.com)

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: [fp@lahore.com](mailto:fp@lahore.com)  
[fp@lahore.com](mailto:fp@lahore.com)

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: [mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com](mailto:mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com)

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: [fp@karachi.com](mailto:fp@karachi.com)  
[fp@karachi.com](mailto:fp@karachi.com)

“USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747”

# Pak-Uzbek ties, a shared priority

**PAKISTAN and Uzbekistan signed a \$1 billion trade agreement during the recent meeting of the Pak-Uzbek Inter-governmental Commission (IGC) in Tashkent on Friday. According to the details, the latest trade deal would encourage the exchange of goods and services and will also bring ease to the trade and investment between the two nations.**

Pakistan and Uzbekistan are brotherly Muslim countries that enjoyed cordial diplomatic, trade, economic, and cultural relations over the past four decades after Uzbekistan marked independence in 1991. Both nations have tremendous opportunities to build a common prosperous feature for their coming generations through cooperation in selective fields including trade and investment, energy supply, and enhanced connectivity between their countries. Historically, Pakistan sees landlocked Uzbekistan as its important trade partner and always remained eager to build a multipurpose strategic partnership with Tashkent to fully grasp the potential of regional trade and development through mutual work and cooperation. Similarly, Uzbekistan's pivot toward South Asia has deepened over the past years as Tashkent intends to reach Pakistani deep sea ports in Karachi and Gawadar to boost its trade with the Middle East and the rest of the world. Regional connectivity is a major avenue for bilateral cooperation between the two nations that can help facilitate each other trade and transportation of goods, promotion of tourism, and energy cooperation in the region. Presently, Pakistan and Uzbekistan along with Afghanistan are actively working on multiple trilateral connectivity and energy projects to establish a trade corridor to facilitate transit of the Central Asian goods to foreign destinations through Pakistani Seaports in the Arabian sea.

Pakistan and Uzbekistan are agricultural economies and their bilateral trade statistics were not encouraging in the past. The recent meeting of the Pakistan-Uzbekistan Inter-governmental Commission (IGC) mainly focused on bilateral economic cooperation in various fields including commerce and trade, banking, industries and production, investment, energy, oil expoliration and mining, transportation and communication, agriculture, tourism, and cultural development. There had been persistent efforts by both countries to encourage closer ties, as this cooperation is a need of both nations. Pakistan intends to boost its relations with CARs to maximize the dividends of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) while for Tashkent Pakistan's extensive road infrastructure and seaports significantly reduce the transportation costs and time of its trade meant to or from Europe and other destination nearly 50 percent as compared to Iran and Russian trade routes.

Previously, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Uzbekistan had signed a pact to construct a 783 kilometers long Trans Afghan Raillink worth \$8 billion that will connect Peshawar with Termez via Mazar-e-Sharif and Kabal in the future. The feasibility study and preparatory work on the project have been completed and trio nations are in talks with the world bank group for the financing of the project to comprehend this lonhstanding dream of the regional countries. In fact, the rail link project is crucial for regional mobility, and the promotion of trade and tourism among the participating nations. Meanwhile Tajikistan, Kazakhstan an other states also support this regional connectivity initiative. Although, there has been a strong will for broader economic cooperation between Pakistan and Uzbekistan that ever stalled by the increasing] conflict in Afghanistan. Presently, situations are highly fertile and concerned nations must implement their plans into reality, to ensure a better future for their people.

# What would China have done?

**CHINA has accused the United States of "an obvious over-reaction" and "seriously violating international practice" after US military jets on Saturday shot down its suspected spy balloon off the coast of South Carolina. This after it had loitered over the US, including sensitive national security sites, for more than four days last week. My reaction to this indignation? Poppycock! (China has claimed the balloon was for "civilian use" and to monitor weather, and that it only entered US airspace by accident.)**

The history of China's responses to US assets operating in international waters and airspace near mainland China strongly suggests, if the tables were turned, its reaction to a similar scenario would have been precipitous, crude and escalatory. Let's review just a few examples: In late 2016, the Chinese seized an unmanned US Navy underwater vehicle in international waters in the South China Sea, just 50 nautical miles from Subic Bay in the Philippines, and hundreds of miles from China. (Subic Bay was home to the largest US naval base in Asia until disagreements over leasing costs led to a withdrawal in 1992; ironically, US sailors might soon return to the base following Manila's recent decision to allow a greater, albeit rotational, US military presence in the Philippines as a counter to Chinese aggression.) The incident was widely believed to have been a message to President-elect Donald Trump, just two weeks before his inauguration and several weeks after he angered Beijing by taking a congratulatory call from Taiwan's president. Beijing agreed to return the craft three days later, but never apologized and accused the US of spying.

Though still describing

them as "infrequent actions," the US Navy reported an uptick in unsafe intercepts by Chinese fighter jets last summer; in December 2022, a Chinese fighter jet flew just 20 feet in front of the nose of a US Air Force RC-135 surveillance plane carrying 30 crew over international waters in the South China Sea, forcing it to swerve to avoid a collision. This was just five weeks after the meeting between President Biden and President Xi in Bali during a G20 Summit - a meeting in which they pledged new mechanisms

ment, the Chinese insisted the EP-3 be dismantled and transported by a third party at the US's expense. Beijing also tried to charge the Bush Administration \$1 million for costs associated with the incident, including expenses for detaining the plane's crew. Washington countered with an offer of some \$34,000 it said was a "fair figure" - money China refused - and never apologized. With these incidents over international waters in mind, it is not hard to imagine the Chinese military

Beth Sanner

the outrageousness of the US shutdown of a spy balloon flying over our sovereign territory seem a little rich, to put it mildly. One thing is clear: China has itself been "violating international standards" by aggressively asserting claims over international waters and airspace. China has violated international standards by setting up covert police stations in the US and other countries to monitor and harass Chinese immigrants. China has violated international stan-

intelligence community's knowledge - and the gaps in our understanding - and providing a measured, clear-headed assessment. In meetings probably held in the White House Situation Room multiple times over the past week, a senior intelligence official would have joined the US military, level-setting the discussion in this vein. So I'm inclined to buy the risk-benefit calculus that drove the decision to wait to shoot the balloon down until it was flying over shallow US waters where the risk posed by a large debris field was

Congress to articulate and implement a clear strategic framework to advance our broader global interests, including boosting current efforts to explain the Chinese threat to a skeptical global South. Another Chinese balloon traversing Costa Rica and Colombia in recent days provides a strong optic.

Without such a framework by which to measure and calibrate our actions toward China, we risk going overboard - inflicting significant harm to US interests, including undermining relationships with key allies and hamstringing benign US business activity with China. I understand why Americans were alarmed by the balloon, but there are much bigger threats posed by China. We should address the shortcomings this incident exposed - including what appears to be gaps in our air defense and detection systems that would have allowed us to shoot such a balloon down before it ever reached US landfall - but political one-upmanship on such a fraught and grave matter as relations with China is dangerous. If you listen closely, you can already hear the war drums beating, and I'm waiting for the hyperbole to reach new heights as we move closer to the 2024 election: who will be the toughest on China of them all? But let's not let China-bashing become a new brand of McCarthyism, particularly when considering the already-dangerous rise in anti-Asian rhetoric and violence reported in the US in recent years.

Instead, let's come up with a more strategic, measured plan to hold China accountable, but also allow room for needed dialogue. If we follow Beijing's lead it will surely be a race to the bottom, making it harder to avoid what we all wish to avoid - military conflict with China.

**One collided with the EP-3 and crashed. The EP-3's pilot managed to regain control of his heavily-damaged plane and made an unauthorized emergency landing on China's Hainan Island. The 24 US crew members were held for 11 days, and some were repeatedly interrogated before US officials negotiated their release. Then-Chinese President Jiang Zemin laid blame for the collision on the US. Nearly two months elapsed before the two sides reached agreement for the return of the aircraft.**

to stabilize the bilateral relationship. The most memorable and instructive example dates back to the presidency of George W. Bush. On April 1, 2001, two Chinese fighter jets harassed a US Navy EP-3 surveillance plane over international waters near China. One collided with the EP-3 and crashed. The EP-3's pilot managed to regain control of his heavily-damaged plane and made an unauthorized emergency landing on China's Hainan Island. The 24 US crew members were held for 11 days, and some were repeatedly interrogated before US officials negotiated their release.

Then-Chinese President Jiang Zemin laid blame for the collision on the US. Nearly two months elapsed before the two sides reached agreement for the return of the aircraft. Having removed and refused to return the plane's hardware, software and communications equip-

ment, the Chinese insisted the EP-3 be dismantled and transported by a third party at the US's expense. Beijing also tried to charge the Bush Administration \$1 million for costs associated with the incident, including expenses for detaining the plane's crew. Washington countered with an offer of some \$34,000 it said was a "fair figure" - money China refused - and never apologized. With these incidents over international waters in mind, it is not hard to imagine the Chinese military

Had any damage or loss of life resulted when China downed the unmanned US craft, Chinese authorities would have quickly placed both blame and liability on the US. Protests would have erupted in front of the US Embassy and China's Ambassador to the US swiftly withdrawn. So China's protestations about

dards in its systematic mistreatment of its Muslim minority. Do I need to go on?

But let's take a moment to breathe and put the balloon incident in perspective. I'm not suggesting the US should turn the other cheek, not by any stretch. However, we all need to begin to better differentiate threats posed by various Chinese actions; US officials must calmly evaluate the situation at hand (or in the sky) and respond based on both the immediate risk and US strategic interests. I fear the current mood in Washington dictates that every Chinese activity is equally threatening. My first reaction to the Chinese balloon when it was identified floating over Montana was probably the same as yours: "Shoot it down, already!" But in my decades as a senior intelligence official, my role in such circumstances was to focus on the facts, not the outrage, highlighting the

minimal.

Stepping back a bit, however, the uncomfortable fact is that the Biden Administration's effort to set "guardrails" on its relationship with China is not working that well. This is mostly because China not only has failed to stop spying, stealing, and exploiting vulnerabilities in the US democratic and open-market system, but is becoming more aggressive than ever. But it is also partly because actions undertaken by the administration to hold China accountable for this behavior have threatened core Chinese interests. As the Brookings Institution's China expert, Ryan Hass, recently put it during an interview on the German Marshall Fund's "China Global" podcast, "establishing guardrails" is neither strategy nor policy... and is lacking in ambition." Clear boundaries need to be set with China; this is an opportunity for the Biden administration to work with

# To combat gun violence, the US must overhaul its social safety net

Jens Ludwig & Chico Tillmon

**GUN violence, at its highest level in the US since the early 1990s, has become one of the top concerns for many American voters. As a result, the country has debated reforms to policing, bail, sentencing and other aspects of our criminal justice system. But we've been ignoring an even more fundamental challenge: the gaping holes in our nation's social safety net for the group at greatest risk of gun violence - young men.**

If members of Congress truly want to address gun crime, they shouldn't demand to cut spending and reduce the safety net, they should expand it. Gun violence in America is a problem driven by, and primarily affecting, working-age young men. According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation's 2021 homicide data report, two-thirds of homicides were committed by a man and two-thirds of victims were male. Most of those involved in homicides are in their 20s and 30s.

To understand these patterns, imagine growing up a young man on Chicago's West Side, in the predominantly Black community of Austin - as one of us did. (In Chicago, the median

homicide victim is between the ages of 24 and 28.) Austin is a neighborhood swept up in the trend towards de-industrialization. Unemployment and poverty are rife. While it still has some of the most beautiful houses in the city, empty lots and boarded-up stores are increasingly common.

The rate of drug overdoses is among the highest in the city - particularly near the Eisenhower Expressway, connecting Chicago's downtown to the suburbs, which is otherwise known as the "heroin highway." Now imagine being in this environment - and cut off from most of the federal social safety net. As this safety net developed in the 1930s and expanded in the 1960s with programs like Social Security, disability benefits and food stamps, it rested on a crucial assumption: that working-age, able-bodied people would be employed and bringing in income for themselves and their families. In other words, the safety net worked on the principle that working-age men wouldn't need one.

We can see the implications of that assumption in the eligibility criteria today for the largest federal social programs. In 12 states, able-

bodied, working-age men and adults without children are not even eligible for one of the most widely-available safety net programs, Medicaid. And in every state, able-bodied, working-age-but-not-working single men (especially those who don't have children in their household) get almost no help at all from many other significant social safety net programs: the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP, i.e. food stamps), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and Housing Choice Vouchers. We can also see the implications in the degree to which different population groups are lifted out of poverty by the federal safety net. Social Security cuts senior citizen poverty rates by 75%. Single-parent families benefit from reductions in poverty of 38% through programs that support them. But the percentage of working-age men lifted out of poverty by the safety net is remarkably modest.

Perhaps there was a time when the assumption that able-bodied young men

would always be in the workforce made sense. But it's not clear this is the case anymore. When we look at European countries like Greece and Italy and see that over one quarter of young people are neither in school nor working, we ask ourselves: What is structurally wrong with the labor market in those countries that would lead to so many people being disconnected from employment?

Similarly, when we look at modern-day American cities like Chicago - where the Chicago Sun-Times reports that 45% of Black men ages 18-24 are neither working nor in school - we must ask what sort of structural issues are causing problems here as well? For an answer, look at the disappearance of so much of Chicago's manufacturing industry, which used to provide a middle-class wage for people of all schooling levels. In the 1950s, Chicago produced as much steel as the whole of Great Britain. Today, the city's steel mills sit mostly silent and abandoned.

Then, look at the subsequent failure of the city's public schools to prepare students - especially young Black men - for the jobs of

the future. In the 1980s, then-US Secretary of Education Bill Bennett famously called Chicago's schools "the worst in the country," due in part to consistent underfunding by the state of Illinois. Our schools have gotten better in terms of graduation rates, but only around one in five students, and only one in ten Black male students, reaches proficiency in reading and math by 11th grade. And many are still grim places.

Austin's Douglass Academy High School, for instance, has some of the lowest test scores in the US. (It was originally built to serve 1,200 students; today it serves 60. It feels like a ghost town.) Still, Douglass' alumni are thrown into the competition for professional and service-sector jobs that now dominate the economy - without the skills needed to compete. These holes in the safety net have dire consequences for public safety: they are hampering attempts by the growing number of cities turning to community violence intervention (CVI) programs to help address gun violence, as they move away from enforcement-only approaches.

CVI programs, among

other things, try to connect people at elevated risk for gun violence involvement (most often, young men) to a variety of programs - like employment and social support - that a growing body of evidence shows might help substantially reduce the number of shootings in our cities. CVI programs are one of the few places young, able-bodied, out-of-work men can come to receive support. But cities already have enormous difficulty bearing the costs of supportive CVI services on their own. In the 1930s, President Franklin D. Roosevelt launched an ambitious jobs program to deal with the impact of the Great Depression. Some 90 years later, we may need a similar commitment from the federal government to recognize the broader set of supports needed in cities across the US to address today's challenges. The limitations of our current social safety net are a relic of outdated assumptions about who needs help, and why - and it's having a real-world impact on our streets. With the surge in gun violence devastating communities all across the country, isn't it time to revisit some of these assumptions from the past?

# Race for Republican nomination heats up

**ALTHOUGH the next US presidential election will not be held until November 2024, members of the Republican Party have already begun to work hard in an effort to regain control of the White House. Former US President Donald Trump, in an attempt to seize the momentum of being the front-runner, launched his 2024 presidential campaign in November 2022 under the slogan "Take America Back." However, he did not stay alone in the race for long. Former UN ambassador and South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley last week became the first Republican to challenge the most controversial president in American history.**

Haley's international popularity may outweigh her chances of success at home due to being Trump's ambassador, which voters would not ignore. Despite

being a woman, born in the US to Indian immigrant parents, and a public servant for more than a decade, her campaign strategy will not go down well with the country's deeply divided voters. Haley presented herself to the American people as a moderate candidate, but she would not criticize her old boss or the politics of "Make America Great Again," which will make her path to victory rough and challenging. This approach will not make her an alternative candidate to Trump. Trump's supporters will not give her their votes over the former president, since she chose to challenge their idol, while moderate conservatives are concerned about her political views.

Holding the stick in the middle is not a savvy or successful strategy, given the complicated status of the Republican Party following the storming of the US Capitol on Jan. 6, 2022.

As soon as the former US ambassador decided to stand against the MAGA creator, Trump's supporters did not spare any time when it came to attacking and attempting to discredit her. Ann Coulter, a conservative media pundit, columnist and lawyer, launched a racist and personal attack against Haley, describing her as a "preposterous creature." In a radio interview, Coulter shamelessly advised Haley to "go back to your own country."

It is highly likely that MAGA supporters will not give Haley a chance unless she appears on a presidential ticket as Trump's running mate. That would likely be her only option to make it to the White House. Several other potential Republican candidates would have a better chance of challenging the former president and taking the party's nomination away from him. Former Vice

President Mike Pence disagreed significantly with his boss when he certified the 2020 presidential election results, putting his life at risk. When they stormed the Capitol, Trump's supporters were looking for Pence in the rooms and hallways, intending to physically harm him for doing his constitutional duty. He would get the support of the more moderate Republicans. However, most independent voters would not vote for a committed evangelical.

Former Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has a long resume in public service. Prior to his job in the Trump administration, he was the director of the CIA after serving three terms in Congress. In a video interview with The Hill last week, Pompeo, who is considering whether to run, promised a substantive campaign. "We'd go make arguments. It's not

about tweets. It's not about noise. It's not about 'owning the libs.' It's about presenting a rational argument about how to get our government to function," he stated.

Could Pompeo distance himself from his former boss to rally the support of his fellow "Never Trump" Republicans? That is yet to be seen. Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis, if or when he decides to run, would be by far the biggest threat to Trump. His success in managing his state during COVID-19, fighting the far-left progressive agenda and his strong stance against President Joe Biden's border policies, not to mention his young age, provide him with a unique superiority over his potential rivals and place him at the front even before announcing his candidacy. DeSantis is expected to launch his campaign in late May or early June.

Other sitting governors are also thinking of taking a

shot at the presidential race, such as Texas' Greg Abbott, Virginia's Glenn Youngkin and South Dakota's Kristi Noem. Last but not least is Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, who was the runner-up to Trump in 2016. It is speculated that he would like a second chance to beat his former rival eight years on. However, he is facing reelection to the Senate in 2024, complicating his path to the party's nomination. He would have to choose between the two.

The Grand Old Party is eager to win the election and end the spread of the hard-line leftist agenda that is targeting the core of America's values and identity. The 2024 election will either mark the end of Trumpism or hammer the final nail into the coffin of the GOP. Trump's eagerness and stubbornness to return to the White House make him officially the most significant liability to his fellow Republicans.

Arab News



# US foreign policy reduced to an afterthought

Marwan Bishara

US President Joe Biden's State of the Union address on Tuesday night was quite upbeat. It was long on domestic affairs and short on foreign policy. It skimmed through the challenges posed by Russia and China and skipped the rest of the world altogether. It is a first for a US president to reduce the United States' global role to an afterthought, no less a president who considers himself an authority on foreign policy, or for a commander-in-chief, who has spent so much time, effort and political capital confronting Russia in Ukraine and containing China in Asia. This, therefore, begs the question: Why has Biden chosen to ignore entire continents and countless hot spots where America is directly involved?

According to one theory, Americans are not terribly interested in the rest of the world and foreign policy is an unaffordable luxury at a time of economic hardships and culture wars. Even the elites with greater overseas interests realise that costly investment in foreign policy is becoming a hard sell for the public in the absence of direct national security threats. Biden understands that, which is why when he first took office, he vowed to end the "forever wars" and promised a "foreign policy for the middle class" - one that serves Americans at large.

But that has proven easier said than done, as Washington has channelled billions of dollars to Ukraine to fight a war that may last years amid warnings from populist Republicans about high inflation, the high cost of living, and high national debt. Hence the president, who seems keen on pursuing a second term, dialled down the costly global bravado in his speech and instead focused on "made in America" growth and prosperity. His call on Congress to tax billionaires and big corporations and lower the costs of drugs - aligning him with the "progressive left" led

by Senator Bernie Sanders - may prove more popular among working and middle-class families than, say, restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity.

According to another theory, however, there is not much to celebrate in US foreign policy, which is why the president decided to skip

where the US has failed miserably. And disgracefully.

The president rejects Sanders's stance on the Israeli occupation and the racism of its prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu. Worse, he embraces the populist right-wing premier as his best friend, and continues to support his gov-

drawal from Afghanistan in favour of the Taliban a success, after 20 years of horrific war.

Truth be told, the Biden administration has helped reach cease-fires or maintain stalemates and status quos from Sudan to Syria, through Iraq, Libya, Palestine and Yemen. But that's hardly a good thing; in fact, it's a terrible normalisation of a dreadful situation. Biden, who promised to put human rights at the centre of his foreign policy, has ignored US clients' human rights violations and has been supporting strongmen who rule with an iron fist, while the region teeters under violent sectarian and authoritarian regimes. Washington cannot in good conscience claim to confront Russia and China in the name of democracy, human rights and the preservation of sovereignty, while appealing colonialism and dictatorship in the Middle East or elsewhere.

It is hypocritical and it is counterproductive. Half a century after young Senator Biden first visited the Middle East in 1973, the older President Biden seems to view the region through the same prisms he did back then: Israel, oil, and the Cold War with Moscow. But as one exhausted 19th-century saying goes: history repeats itself, the first time as tragedy, the second time as farce.

It is indeed laughable that despite 50 years of costly strategic, diplomatic and military interventions, the US is back to square one, appealing misbehaving regional clients in the name of a global democracy crusade and getting rejected and humiliated in the process. Biden began and ended his State of the Union speech with the lofty idea that America is the land of possibilities. It is a nice and catchy slogan, one that allowed the country to dream big and to reach the moon, literally. America is indeed a mighty nation, but it is not almighty. It must stop its evangelical approach to world affairs as if it is ordained to shape it, police it, and lead it. It is not.

*Hence the president, who seems keen on pursuing a second term, dialled down the costly global bravado in his speech and instead focused on "made in America" growth and prosperity. His call on Congress to tax billionaires and big corporations and lower the costs of drugs - aligning him with the "progressive left" led by Senator Bernie Sanders - may prove more popular among working and middle-class families than, say, restoring Ukraine's territorial integrity. According to another theory, however, there is not much to celebrate in US foreign policy, which is why the president decided to skip the subject altogether. The two theories are not mutually exclusive. Biden may have embraced Senator Sanders' prescriptions on the economic malaise, but do not expect him to take his approach on foreign policy, no less in the Middle East, where the US has failed miserably.*

the subject altogether. The two theories are not mutually exclusive. Biden may have embraced Senator Sanders' prescriptions on the economic malaise, but do not expect him to take his approach on foreign policy, no less in the Middle East,

ernment of fascists and fanatics. But Israel is only one of several failures. There has not been a single foreign policy accomplishment anywhere in the greater Middle East, unless one considers the humiliating and disastrous with-



## Turkiye tries to salvage what it can

Yasar Yakis

ON Monday last week, the southern provinces of Turkiye suffered a major earthquake, the most devastating this century and one of the largest in Turkiye's recorded history. The latest death toll from the earthquakes that hit Turkey and Syria is well over 20,000, but this figure is likely to increase as the rubble is removed.

Bearing in mind that about 40,000 dwellings must have collapsed and that an average household population will be about five persons per house in this region of Turkiye, we have to presume that a small portion of them were able to escape the catastrophe. The remainder must still be under the rubble. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has announced a three-month state of emergency in the country with a view to carrying out rescue work.

The exact time of the earthquake was 04.17 Eastern European time (01.17 GMT), when almost everyone was sleeping, which contributed to the high death toll. Bad weather conditions exacerbated the problems. Sub-zero temperatures, rain and snow made the rescue work more difficult. Many victims may have frozen to death. Cohesion is very strong in Turkish society. This proved to be true on this occasion as well. Every organization, banks, football clubs and others, raced to contribute to the alleviation of the suffering. Every district of Turkiye was mobilized to bring whatever contribution it could to alleviate the victims' suffering. This is likely to continue.

The international community has also demonstrated strong solidarity with Turkiye. It is generously helping with the rescue work. Countries that have political

conflicts with Turkiye have put them aside and shown a willingness to help. A seven-day period of mourning has been announced by the government.

Frank Hoogerbeets, a Dutch researcher from the Solar System Geometry Survey, tweeted three days before the earthquake that "sooner or later there will be a 7.5 magnitude earthquake in this region (south-central Turkiye, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon)." It is difficult to tell whether this was a coincidence. Seven earthquakes of more than 7 magnitude on the Richter scale have taken place in Turkiye over the past 25 years. Despite this, little improvement in building standards has been achieved in practice. Some contractors added new floors to buildings that were originally designed for a limited number of floors, or they cut a supporting column of the building to make room for more space. Some reports by geologists' associations in Turkiye were shelved because administrative procedures were not observed in submitting the reports.

On the day of the earthquake, one of the buildings publicized as compliant with "all earthquake norms" collapsed, demonstrating the reality of the situation. In another example, a recently adopted law pardoned irregularities committed in the construction of new buildings. Turning to the future, public opinion will look for more serious and concrete measures. Several attempts have been made in the past to improve the standards, but to little avail. In a country riddled with earthquake fault lines, the size of the task is gigantic, but the authorities shy away from assuming the responsibility. The challenge

has two aspects. One is scientific. The government does not like to listen to scientists who insist that danger is around the corner. It considers them as defeatists. Therefore, it listens to the ones that are more moderate.

Second is the administrative aspect. Especially in the ruling Justice and Development Party era, a controversy emerged between the central authority and the municipal authorities. Because Erdogan began his political career as a mayor, he was once a strong supporter of devolving as much power as possible to the municipalities. However, after he became president, there was a sea change in his attitude. Now he wants to accumulate power in the hands of the central authorities. This was more visible in the case of big metropolitan municipalities. Therefore, a competition has developed between them and the central authorities in the area of construction and urban planning. Erdogan demonstrated his attitude by refraining from calling for condolences from the mayors of the municipalities held by the opposition parties. The mayor of Antakya - one of the areas worst-affected by the present earthquake - was complaining one day after the earthquake that he had warned of the danger but did not even receive an acknowledgement of his report.

Now, there is a bigger risk for Istanbul. There are all sorts of gloomy forecasts due to the size of the population in this metropolitan agglomeration. There are more sub-standard buildings than compliant ones. Successive Turkish governments have failed to answer the question of why skyscrapers in Japan do not collapse during an earthquake of more than 7 magnitude while in Turkiye they do.

## Why I chose to help Ukrainian refugees in Russia

Marusya Poliakov

Frustrated by the fact that our protests against the invasion of Ukraine had been unable to change anything, a group of friends and I decided that we could at least do some good by using our skills as teachers, artists and psychologists to help those affected by the war.

In March last year, we traveled to a refugee center for Ukrainians to organize a children's creative program and mental health support. I normally work as an educator organizing theater projects in schools in Russia, as well as running art and performance workshops for adults and teenagers. Many of my colleagues hold similar humanitarian views, and we invited them to join us.

The visit was challenging for a group of people opposed to the war. We were shocked to find the center was a closed institution policed by FSB officers in civilian clothing, where most of the refugees spent their time watching state television and feeling grateful to Russia for having "liberated them."

Some even supported the war. For some of us, this posed a moral dilemma. Some of my colleagues have relatives in Ukraine and are fully aware of the terrible things going on there. We found ourselves feeling helpless, angry, miserable, and ashamed, despite the fact that our team was there to help anyone who needed it, irrespective of their views of the war. To prepare ourselves, we had arranged sessions with specialist psychologists with experience in conflict zones, including one who had worked in Beslan following the 2004 school siege.

The residents of the refugee centers we worked at, one in a former Soviet children's summer camp and one in a suburban hotel, were mainly women, children, and

pensioners, one family per room. Both centers felt like huge communal apartments with little or no personal space - children would do their homework or play games while the adults would sit around watching state television reports on the war or talk shows fronted by Kremlin propagandists. The better-connected and more resourceful refugees tended not to stay for long, but those unable to adapt to new circumstances easily tended to stay put in the hope of waiting out the war and then returning home. Just a handful of those we invited to join our group therapy sessions actually did so. Most of them were preoccupied with the constant stream of bureaucracy familiar to any refugee or were busy rifling through piles of humanitarian aid, trying to find paid work or caring for their children.

Our moral qualms at working with people who felt a sense of gratitude to the Russian state soon dissipated. Neither these people nor their children chose this war and we quickly realized that we all had to deal with the terrible circumstances in which we found ourselves. The mental health support services we offered at the centers aimed to help people deal with their problems sufficiently to adapt and be able to make some decisions. Focus was given to child welfare in particular, as in many cases parents were dealing with loss and the trauma of displacement and weren't always able to devote sufficient time to their children. By playing games, being creative, and ensuring each child got plenty of attention, we helped them make new friends and to keep up at school. Some of the older teenagers I worked with confided in me the things they

had witnessed during eight years of war, recounted the details of their evacuation from eastern Ukraine, and spoke very personally about subjects including first loves, sexuality, their relationships with their parents, and loneliness. It was clearly important for them to have someone listen sympathetically. While it's dangerous to do lots of things in today's Russia, at least some people can continue to do their jobs without fear of persecution.

People who do not support the war in Russia feel like hostages in their own country, never knowing when the state propaganda machine will get to them. There are no longer any illusions that individuals have any influence on government policy - so most people simply focus on their own personal affairs, avoiding anything either public or controversial. Feeling a connection to the people who have left Russia and with the outside world is very important, however. It lessens the animosity felt on both sides and reduces the distance between the Russians who stayed and those who went abroad when the war started. Whenever possible, I try not to judge, understanding that each person's story is unique, and by avoiding generalizations I believe people can support each other more than ever before. The reasons to stay in Russia or to leave are always personal and therefore different for everyone, even within the activist sector. Those with the option of leaving the country and returning to it are in fact privileged, as there are many on both sides of the border who have no choice but to stay put. Someday I hope people will want to return to Russia - and that they will be able to do so. The enormous task of rebuilding a country lies ahead.

The Moscow Times

### 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.

## Has Europe reached a tipping point in the refugee crisis?

Jon Van Housen & Mariella Radaelli

AS European leaders gathered for a summit in Brussels late last week, it was clear that sentiment has increasingly hardened against welcoming new migrants. Some 330,000 illegal border crossings were detected last year by Frontex, the European Border and Coast Guard Agency, the highest level since 2016. That's up 64 per cent from 2021.

But conflict in Ukraine and a devastating earthquake spanning the Turkey-Syria border will no doubt drive further waves of aspiring refugees. Can Europe - which is itself struggling with a range of severe challenges - continue to offer assistance to them? The answer is a resounding 'no' from Italy's Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni. Her recently installed far-right government made illegal migration, especially over the waters of the Mediterranean Sea, a signature issue in its rise to power.

And Italy is far from alone. Austria's Chancellor Karl Nehammer has called on the bloc for a unified response - perhaps building a wall to keep migrants out - while even Germany agrees that stricter enforcement is needed. Nehammer said his counterpart Giorgia Meloni and he have much in common here, albeit with different preconditions. What the two of them have in common, he explained, is that they want to take joint and united action against illegal migration and it is high time for

a European solution.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz says it is important that EU members work together on migration, whether [it is] "about controls at the external borders, improving infrastructure, or cooperation with countries of origin and transit". Following the one-day summit that stretched into the early morning hours, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen said EU leaders have agreed tougher measures to tackle "irregular migration". "We will act to strengthen our external borders," von der Leyen said.

EU leaders are striking a headline tone, threatening to use visa permits, trade flows and development aid as leverage to slow illegal border crossings while speeding up the return of those denied permission to stay. Italy recently adopted a mandatory code of conduct for rescue ships and is pushing to have similar rules at the EU level, but the issue remains divisive. Meloni told reporters that "we asked and obtained that the European Council's conclusions be focused on the external dimension and therefore on the protection of the EU's external borders, taking into account the difference that exists between (national) borders, and particularly the specificity of maritime borders". All of this can be found in the conclusions, she added.

But as the death toll from the

Turkey-Syria earthquake continues to mount, border control officials are no doubt preparing for yet another surge in displaced people. Syria was already the source of a large number of those seeking asylum in Europe. Destroyed homes and an economy in tatters even before the quake leave many with no choice but to attempt an arduous overland trek in search of a better life. As many as 5.3 million people in Syria may have been affected by the earthquake, according to the UNCR, the main UN agency for refugees, which just released an update describing how its own staff is battling brutal conditions on the ground as it attempts to deliver emergency aid.

"For Syria, this is a crisis within a crisis. We've had economic shocks, Covid and are now in the depths of winter with blizzards raging in the affected areas," Sivanka Dhanapala, UNHCR Representative in Syria, said in a video link to Geneva, Switzerland, from the ravaged country. "Roads have been damaged and that hampers us trying to reach people. It's been very, very difficult. There are 6.8 million people already internally displaced in the country. And this was before the earthquake." Yet as heart-rending as the situation is, a large number of Europeans are wondering how many more refugees can be absorbed - if indeed they were truly

integrated before. In his own on-the-ground report, Marco Scherf, district administrator for Miltenberg in the German state of Bavaria, said in the past year about 500 refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and North Africa came to the largely rural district along with around 1,500 from Ukraine.

"There's no more housing, not enough teachers, not enough doctors, no daycare spots free," the Green Party politician told the German press. "We have reached the limits of our capacity. We now don't even have enough resources here to take care of our own local residents." For years, EU member states have been debating solutions that range from sending people back to tackling root causes, which means better support for economies of origin countries. The bloc might be edging toward more of a consensus on how to deal with what can only be termed a crisis, but for now it appears humanitarianism an exhaustion has set in. Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas told reporters in Brussels there should be a "clear message that it's not so easy to come to Europe and stay here. You can only come if you have the right to come". Yet for those affected, it is more about the right or instinct to survive. With the situation so dire, it's time for the entire global community to further step up efforts. Europe alone has likely reached the saturation point.

## I want justice for my brothers who Israel killed

Ru'a Rimawi

IN the early hours of November 29, heavily armed Israeli soldiers raided yet again the village of Kafr Ein in the occupied West Bank, just a few kilometres from where we live, in Beit Rima village. They started shooting tear gas, rubber bullets and live ammunition at the local people. My brothers Thafer and Jawad joined other youth in defending the community, throwing stones at the soldiers. This cost them their lives.

The Israeli soldiers first shot my little brother, Thafer. Then, when Jawad ran to help him, Israeli soldiers hit him with an explosive bullet, too. At 5am, my mother woke me up screaming that Israeli soldiers had injured Jawad and Thafer, and that they had been taken to the hospital in the nearby town of Salfit. Jawad was rushed into surgery, with arteries and intestines destroyed. Thafer needed to be transferred to a different hospital in Ramallah where there was a thoracic surgeon able to operate on him. My mother stayed with Jawad while I went in the ambulance with Thafer. My brother was bleeding to death in front of my eyes and while our priority was to keep him alive, everyone in the vehicle was fixated on finding a route without military checkpoints. If we were to encounter a checkpoint, we would be stopped by Israeli soldiers for questioning and

risked my brother dying as we waited to be let through.

As we arrived at the hospital 20 minutes later, my mother called me to tell me that Jawad had been pronounced dead. Thafer was without a pulse and doctors performed CPR on his lifeless body, but despite their efforts, he tragically died, too. I remember my mom telling me over the phone, "Jawad is gone. Jawad died. He is no longer alive. Please tell me that Thafer is okay. I can't take losing them both," she begged. That's when it hit me that Thafer would never wake up, either. How could he? He never left Jawad's side. We had lost them both. My brothers will never come home.

For the foreign media this was yet another episode of "clashes" in the West Bank, the victims being nameless, faceless Palestinians. But these clashes are in reality asymmetrical confrontations in which young men and children, with rocks and slingshots, face off with one of the strongest armies in the world. Many, like my brothers, pay with their lives. Some outsiders ask why Palestinians throw stones when they know they may be killed for it. Instead, the question should be: What else would you do if you were born under a brutal occupation and suffered its violence all your life?

Israel's military brutality makes up my earliest memories. I remember killings by Israeli soldiers. I remember our family fearing that our house would be bombed, I remember hearing gunshots and explosions at night, I remember walking past Israeli snipers positioned on rooftops or under the barrel of an Israeli soldier's gun. When I was three years old, the Israeli army raided our village with tanks and helicopters; five people were killed and several houses demolished. When I was five years old, Israeli soldiers burst into our house, arresting and blindfolding my father in front of us. Jawad, who was four at the time, hid behind my back and cried. Those moments of dread never left me or my brothers. All Palestinians living under the longest military occupation in modern history have experienced them.

When you witness injustice, the loss of loved ones, and wars, what choice do you have other than to try to defend yourself because you know that no one else will? To say I lost my brothers on November 29 is not enough. I lost my closest friends, my favourite humans, two amazing boys with kind, sincere souls, beautiful in every way. Now my family and I will wake up every day for the rest of our lives without them.



# Qamar, USTR holds dialogue on wide spectrum of trade, investment

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar and United States of Trade Representative (USTR) have held a full-some and comprehensive dialogue focusing on wide spectrum of trade and investment issues of mutual interest including agriculture, textiles, digital trade, enhancing market access, cooperation on good regulatory practices including intellectual property and labor rights, and women's economic empowerment and entrepreneurship.

The federal minister led the Pakistani delegation comprising Secretary Commerce Muhammad Sualeh Farruqi, Secretary

BOI Asad Rehman Gilani and senior officials of Ministries of Commerce and National Food Security to participate in the 9th Pakistan-US Trade and Investment Framework Agreement Council Ministerial meeting, said a press release issued here Saturday.

The US side was led by United State of Trade Representative (USTR) Ambassador Katherine Tai.

Key issues discussed by our side included enhancing exports of Pakistani mangoes and dates to the US, increased market access for our textiles, increasing US investments in Pakistan's agriculture sector especially, in development of hybrid, climate

resilient seeds and supporting Pakistan's IT and tech industry.

The two sides agreed to have regular follow-up engagements during 2023 to ensure progress on all issues and achieving tangible results.

They also agreed to convene the next TIFA Council Ministerial meeting in Islamabad in early 2024.

Two Joint Statements, one on the TIFA Council Ministerial meeting itself and the other on US-Pakistan Efforts in Promoting Women's Economic Empowerment were issued after yesterday's meeting.

The last TIFA Council meeting was held in 2016. The convening of this

meeting after seven years makes it an important milestone for robust bilateral engagement process this year, which has seen dialogues on a number of issues and still more dialogues are scheduled in coming weeks, including on energy and climate change.

The TIFA Council Ministerial meeting reflects mutual understanding and commitment on both sides to pursue a broad based agenda and making mutually beneficial trade and investment ties an important pillar of the bilateral relationship.

This is a momentous opening that will have positive impact on other dialogue process.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chairing a meeting on developments projects of Capital Development Authority at Finance Division.

## Pakistan taking steps to facilitate business community: Qamar

UNITED NATIONS (APP): The Pakistan's Commerce Minister Syed Naveed Qamar Friday had a meeting with the leadership of American Apparel & Footwear Association and representatives of Pakistani leading businesses here during which they were briefed about the steps being taken to facilitate the business community and addressed their issues.

The delegation included Stephen Lamar, President & CEO American Apparel & Footwear Association; Nate Harmen, Senior Vice President (Policy); Beth Hughes, Vice President (Trade & Customs Policy); Ms. Hun Quach, Director of Policy and Advocacy; Levi Strauss & Co. and Greg Snipes, CFO & COO, Royce Too LLC. Other participants included Shelley Rider (Interloop); Steve Pianowski (Nishat Chunian); Irfan Hassan (Al-Karam); Ahmed

Fraz (Gul Ahmed); Mubasher Butt (Prigma); Muneeb Tariq (PHMA); and Kamran Arshad (APTMA).

Commerce Secretary Muhammad Sualeh Ahmed Faruqi gave a comprehensive briefing to the participants, at which Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States, Masood Khan, was also present.

The meeting discussed in detail matters relating to bilateral trade in cotton and textiles with a special focus on strengthening of Pak-US trade relations, the institutionalization of mutual linkages, standardization, traceability and visibility of products and facilitation of the business community, according to a press release issued by the Pakistani embassy.

In his remarks, the commerce minister said that while Pakistan was keen to strengthen its economic ties with the United States, the

private sector and the business community had a key role in realizing that objective. The minister said that the government was committed not only to provide every possible facilitation to the business community but also to put in place policies that could fulfill the requirements of the business community and the global market.

The minister said that the private sector should come up with innovative ideas and solutions to overcome existing challenges and secure greater market penetration. He said that diversification of the products while ensuring quality, affordability and competitiveness would help getting better market share to Pakistani products.

The meeting was informed that the government is setting up National Compliance Centre to address issues of compli-

ance of Pakistani products to international standards. The Centre would be operational by 30 June 2023.

The Minister also encouraged US entrepreneurs to actively participate in TEXPO exhibition to be held at end of May this year.

### Weekly inflation surges to 41.54%

ISLAMABAD (INP): The weekly inflation, measured by Sensitive price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 2.78 per cent to jump to 41.54pc on a year-on-year basis for the week ended on Feb 23, rising from 38.42pc in the previous week.

The week-on-week inflation eased to 2.78pc from 2.89pc a week ago. Of the 51 items tracked, the prices of 33 items increased, six items decreased, whereas those of 12 items remained stable.

During the week under review, the items whose prices increased the most compared to the same week a year ago were onions 372pc, cigarettes 164.7pc, gas 108.38pc, chicken 85.7pc, diesel 81.36pc, eggs 75.81pc, Irri 6/9 rice 75.41pc, broken basmati rice 74.16pc, bananas 72.22pc, washed moong pulse 70.39pc, and petrol 69.87pc.

However, it also noted a decrease in the prices of tomatoes (67.93 percent), chili powder (7.42 percent) and electricity charges for Q1 (6.64 percent).

The upward trend of inflation continues as Islamabad was taking measures to get the \$1.1 billion IMF tranche under the Extended Fund Facility.

The federal government had also approved 'mini-budget', imposing additional Rs170 billion taxes to boost revenue generation in line with the preconditions of the IMF.

Sources have revealed that the staff-level agreement between the fund and the government is expected next week.

Earlier this week, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif warned that inflation would further trigger after the approval of the IMF programme.

## Qatari businesswoman sparkles among jewellery giants at Doha show

DOHA (APP): A Qatari businesswoman has turned heads at the Doha Jewellery and Watches Exhibition, pitting herself against giants of the industry while also bucking trends in the conservative country.

Noora al-Ansari -- a Qatari woman running her own company and dealing with customers herself -- is a rarity in the wealthy Gulf state, where a growing number of women work but few have made their name in business.

Since opening her first Papillon store in the capital Doha, she said customers have been curious about her nationality.

"When women saw me standing in Papillon, they were wondering whether I was Qatari or not," she told AFP, her exhibition stand flanked by household names of the jewellery world.

"They were not used to seeing a Qatari woman standing in her shop" and dealing with the business

and customers, she said.

"When they found out they said, 'we are so proud of you. You have beautiful pieces'. And that encourages me."

The week-long exhibition ending on Saturday reflects the opulence of Qatar, whose massive gas reserves have made it one of the world's wealthiest countries but where women's rights have caused controversy.

Ansari said she calls the annual show, which has drawn more than 30,000 visitors, "the big Qatari wedding" because it is highly anticipated among Doha society.

A steady flow of luxury cars could be seen pulling up outside the exhibition, where Louis Vuitton, Bulgari and other global names were showcasing their designs.

One Cartier necklace was on sale for \$21 million.

A former education and oil industry executive, Ansari designed her first solitaire ring in 2008 and launched her business three years later.

In 2022, she moved her

store into one of Doha's most expensive malls alongside the international names she is competing with at the show.

"I am very proud as a woman to be a jeweller because all the names that you hear about in Doha, all the jewellery stores here, are owned by men," she said.

She added that her customers appreciated her efforts to explain the "four Cs" of diamonds -- cut, clarity, colour and carat.

"When I visited jewellery stores, no one was telling us what is a diamond, why it is valuable, why we should have it and enjoy it. We just keep hearing that a diamond is a girl's best friend," she told AFP.

When she started out, there were only one or two Qatari designers while now there are at least 10 at the Doha show, according to Ansari.

"As a local brand, to be among the big names in the world is an honour, of course. It means that our jewellery is presenting our local tastes and high standards," she said.

**Court Notice**

In the Court of honorable federal ombudsman for harassment against women Islamabad Munazzah Qureshi vs (1) National Developers having it's office at 49 raja bazaar Rawalpindi bookings office Aries tower dd 237 shamsabad Murree road Rawalpindi (2)Al-Janat homes hosing society having it's office located at lehartrar road opposite sultana foundation Islamabad (3)Mr. Nazeer Hussain chohan resident house no 224 street 41 G-9/3 Islamabad (4)Mr.Hannan resident office at al- janat homes Bilal market G-9/3 Islamabad (5) Liaquat kiani (6) Mr. Hannan defendant, cannot be served ordinary way, it is proclaimed that if defendant Will/shall not appear personally or by pleader in court on 27-23 proceeding will be taken ex-parte given under my hands and seal of this court.

**Court Notice**

In the court of Mr. Kaleem Ullah Civil Judge-II/Elaga Qazi Malakad at Batkhela, Case No 119/1 of 2022. Next date: 03/03/2023, Mr. Aslam Khan, Versus Mr. Bacha Khan and others, Proclamation Against Legal heirs: (11/3) Shah Hussain S/O Khan Islam (20/4) Mehboob S/O Lal Zado Resident of Matkani Wand Said Khail Tehsil Batkhela District Malakand. In the above title case the service of you above named defendants is not possible with ordinary means, hence you are hereby informed through this proclamation to attend this court on 03/03/2023 at 08:30am in person or through appointed agent/attorney or through counsel, otherwise you shall be place and proceed against ex-parte.

**Court Notice**

In the Court of Qaisar Khan Afridi Additional District Judge II/Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar. Appeal No.78/13. Institution 15/8/2022 date of hearing 24/3/2023. Iqbal Said VS Ahmed Said etc. Notice to no.1.Ahmed Said s/o Qasim Said. 9/6.Sajid Said s/o Akrm Said resident of Mangalthana tehseel Khadukhel district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants cannot 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 24/3/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

**Court Notice**

In the Court of Qaisar Khan Afridi Additional District Judge II/Azafi Zila Qazi Buner at Daggar. Appeal No.76/13. Institution 15/8/2022 Date of hearing 25/3/2023. Adash Khan VS Hayat Khan etc. Notice to no.5.Tahir Mohammad Khan s/o Sultanat Khan resident of Chinglai tehseel Khadukhel district 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 25/3/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

### Ministry of Finance rejects rumours over stoppage of pay, pensions

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Finance on Saturday issued a rebuttal maintaining that rumours about the government's instructions to stop pays and pensions etc, were completely false.

"This is completely false as no such instructions have been given by the Finance Division, which is the concerned federal ministry. AGPR has confirmed that pay and pension have already been processed and will be paid on time. Further, other payments are being processed as per routine," a press release of the finance division said.

There were certain rumours doing rounds that the government had instructed to stop such payments.

In the meanwhile, Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar, on his Twitter handle, termed it as 'fake news' and said that spreading the same caused harm to the national economic interests.

"Kindly refrain from circulating such reports/news without verifying same from the concerned ministry," he further posted.

## Tanveer, Dar discuss financial matters

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Prime Minister Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) Sardar Tanveer Ilyas and Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar discussed important financial matters related to AJK and the pace of public welfare schemes and projects.

They discussed this in a called-on meeting here on Saturday, said a press release.

Prime Minister AJK apprised the finance minister of the initiatives of AJK government to enhance its revenue generation and

sought the support of the federal government in this regard.

The meeting also discussed the ongoing and future development projects in AJK. Finance Minister Senator Ishaq Dar welcomed Sardar Tanveer Ilyas and expressed the federal government's commitment to the development and progress of AJK.

He further added that the welfare and development of the people of Kashmir were among the top priorities of the government and no stone would be left unturned for its develop-

ment. He offered the full assistance of Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to the AJK government in its quest to increase its own receipts.

Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar highlighted the economic outlook of the country and said that despite the challenging situation, the government was determined to set the economy on stability and growth trajectory.

AJK PM Sardar Tanveer Ilyas thanked the finance minister for extending support for the progress of the people of Kashmir.

## Minister directs CDA

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar directed the Capital Development Authority (CDA) to ensure fast-track and early execution of housing projects for overseas Pakistanis by maintaining international standards and transparency through online system.

He gave these directions while chairing a meeting on development projects of the CDA, said a press release issued here.

Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on

Finance Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Revenue Tariq Pasha, Secretary Finance, Member (Planning & Design) CDA, Member (Estate) CDA, DG (Land) CDA and senior officers from Finance Division attended the meeting.

The meeting reviewed the progress on the development projects carried out by the Capital Development Authority (CDA), especially related to housing projects for overseas Pakistanis.

The meeting was apprised that Capital Development Authority

(CDA) has initiated a number of short-term and medium-term housing projects for overseas Pakistanis.

It was informed that one of these housing projects is in the completion phase and has been launched for registration.

Finance Minister while emphasising the importance of overseas Pakistanis in the economic and financial development of the country, further directed the authorities to extend maximum facilities in these projects to attract overseas Pakistan's investment in the country.

## ICCI for focusing on IT industry to increase its exports up to \$10b

ISLAMABAD (APP): The rapid adoption of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is very important for better socio-economic development and for promoting Pakistan as a digital economy, therefore, the government should focus on this industry to increase its annual exports to at least \$10 billion per annum.

This was expressed by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) during a visit to the 22nd ITCN Asia 2023 being organized by the Ecommerce Gateway Pakistan Pvt. Limited at Pakistan-China Friendship Centre. ICCI is one of the strategic partners in this event, said a press release issued here.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that Pakistan has a huge pool of young talent and by providing them with training and education in the IT

field, the country can make rapid increase in its IT exports.

He said that Pakistan's neighbors are earning billions of dollars from IT exports, but our IT exports are still far behind our actual potential as Pakistan's exports of ICT services, including telecommunication, computer and information services, reached \$2.6 billion in FY 2022.

He stressed that the government should make

more conducive policies for the IT industry to bring a new revolution in this high potential sector.

The 3-days action-packed has provided an excellent platform to the IT industry players to showcase the solutions for all important issues of the economy related to the government, cloud, data centre, cyber security, ERP, education, banking and finance, health & pharma, ecommerce, artificial intelligence, and

robotics.

The series of conferences were also organized on the sidelines of the event to provide a learning environment for the like-minded people to share knowledge & experiences.

The event also provided a good opportunity for the entire tech ecosystem of Pakistan along with the leaders from the public and private sectors to gather under one roof and witness the biggest tech festival of the country.

### Court Notice

In the court of Rehama Ahsan Civil Judge-III/Elaga Qazi Malakad at Batkhela, Case No 57/1 of 2022, Next date: 02/03/2023, Mr. Fazal Khaliq, Versus Mr. Sher Malik and others, Proclamation Against Legal heirs:(4) Muhammad Hanif S/O Fateh Khan Urf Said Malik (Late) Resident of Zalam Kot District Malakand. In the above title case the service of you above named defendants is not possible with ordinary means, hence you are hereby informed through this proclamation to attend this court on 02/03/2023 at 08:30am in person or through appointed agent/attorney or through counsel, otherwise you shall be place and proceed against ex-parte.

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): Global stocks mostly fell after the latest US inflation data added to worries that the Federal Reserve will enact more aggressive interest rate hikes.

Meanwhile, the dollar pushed higher against major currencies including the yen, which tumbled as the incoming head of Japan's central bank showed no intention of altering the policy of avoiding interest rate rises.

The Federal Reserve's preferred gauge of inflation, the personal consumption expenditures price index, rose 5.4 percent last month from January 2022.

The report is the latest indicator to suggest the US central bank still faces significant challenges in addressing sticky pricing pressure.

"It's hard to suggest that this data is not concerning," said Tom Cahill of Ventura Wealth Management, who questioned whether the Fed's actions will "drive the

economy into recession."

The broad-based S&P 500 shed just over one percent, bringing its losses for the week to nearly three percent.

The dollar was broadly higher as markets bet on more Fed rate hikes.

"Inflation accelerated more than expected," said Joseph Manimbo, senior analyst at Convera.

A strong consumer, coupled with "inflation's jump in the wrong direction, adds credence to the view of the Fed having to raise rates beyond the first half of the year," he added.

European stock indices were also pulled lower by the US inflation data, while Tokyo equities rose solidly as the Bank of Japan's incoming governor Kazuo Ueda said its longstanding monetary easing policies were "appropriate."

Under current boss Haruhiko Kuroda, the bank has unleashed a raft of extraordinary ultra-loose policies -- from a negative interest rate to

spending vast sums on government bonds -- in a bid to boost the sluggish economy.

The comments by Ueda, who takes the helm in April, followed data showing Japanese inflation at a four-decade high of 4.2 percent.

The figure was fueled in part by higher energy bills, while the contrast between Fed tightening and the BoJ's easing has generally driven the yen down against the dollar, making foreign goods more expensive in Japan.

The BoJ has so far declined to join other central banks in hiking borrowing costs to counter rapidly rising prices of goods and services.

Among individual companies, Boeing slumped nearly five percent after it suspended deliveries of the 787 Dreamliner again.

The latest pause is a disappointment for the aerospace giant after it resumed deliveries of the jet in August, following a halt of more than a year.





## In brief

## Ramiz Raja advises Akhtar

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Former Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman Ramiz Raja has criticised former pacer Shoaib Akhtar for his comments about Pakistan captain Babar Azam and Kamran Akmal. Rawalpindi Express Shoaib Akhtar had criticised Babar for his communication skills. He had said the captain of the Pakistan team should have the best communication skills. He said the captain should become as big a brand as Virat Kohli, Indian batsman. Akhtar had also made fun of Kamran Akmal's pronunciation of the word 'screen' in a live TV programme. Raja advised Akhtar to restrain from such unnecessary statements regarding former and current players. He called the speedster a delusional superstar, adding that it was more important to become a human first than a brand. Answering a question about Akhtar's aspiration of becoming the PCB chairman, Raja advised him to complete his graduation first. He was talking in a TV show.

## Gracia starts reign in style

LEEDS (Agencies): Junior Firpo scored the only goal as new manager Javi Gracia launched his Leeds reign in style with a win over fellow struggler Southampton in the English Premier League on Saturday. The Elland Road club's first win since Dec. 26 enabled the team to climb out of the bottom three and left Southampton rooted to last place. Scoring chances were few and far between until Firpo provided the breakthrough in the 77th minute when he shot low under Southampton goalkeeper Gavin Bazunu to claim his first league goal. Leeds midfielders Tyler Adams, Weston McKennie and Brenden Aaronson became the first trio of Americans to start together for a club in the league since Fulham goalkeeper Kasey Keller, midfielder Clint Dempsey and striker Brian McBride at Portsmouth in May 2008. They were the first outfield players to do it since Dempsey, McBride and defender Carlos Bocanegra for Fulham at Middlesbrough in May 2007.

## Women's WC downhill canceled after fog delays

CRANS-MONTANA (AP): A downhill race in the women's World Cup was canceled Saturday after initially being delayed for two hours because of fog over the course. The downhill is now set for Sunday, taking the place of a super-G which was scheduled. The cancellation was due to the "dangerous situation on the slope and for safety reasons," the International Ski and Snowboard Federation said. The decision provoked whistles and jeers in the finish area from some spectators among a sold-out crowd of about 10,000. After several delays from the scheduled 11 a.m. start, the race was due to begin at 1 p.m. on the mostly sun-bathed Mont Lachaix course. A forerunner testing the course then crashed on his run. Spring-like soft snow conditions were reported by racers in the official training run Friday when World Cup downhill leader Sofia Goggia crashed into course-side safety fences. The south-facing slope at Crans-Montana warms quickly in the sunshine and a race with 49 expected starters Saturday could have continued close to 3 p.m.

## Punjab govt agrees to share 50pc expenses for PSL matches

LAHORE (NNI): What could be termed a big breakthrough in talks between the Punjab government and the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) over holding Pakistan Super League-8 (PSL-8) matches in Lahore and Rawalpindi, the former has agreed to give Rs250 million.

The decision was taken at the meeting of the Punjab cabinet in Lahore on Saturday.

Quoting its sources, a private news channel reported that the cabinet had decided that the PCB should pay the remaining Rs250 million which would be spent on making arrangements for the matches.

The provincial government will again hold talks with the PCB officials today.

Earlier, the Punjab government had asked the PCB to give Rs500 million for the purpose, but the latter gave only Rs50 million, sources concluded. However, after the meeting with the PSL franchises, the PCB has decided to shift the matches to Karachi.

## Arsenal beats Leicester 1-0 to stay top of EPL

LEICESTER (AP): Arsenal maintained its place atop the English Premier League by beating Leicester 1-0 thanks to Gabriel Martinelli's goal early in the second half on Saturday.

Leandro Trossard, who had a first-half goal disallowed, slipped a pass through to Martinelli and the Brazil winger cut in from the left to poke a low finish just inside the far post in the 46th minute.

That ensured Arsenal will end the day where it began — in first place — with second-placed Manchester City behind by five points going into its match at Bournemouth later Saturday.

Arsenal has bounced back well from a three-game run where the team picked up one point to raise doubts about its title pedigree. Last week, the Gunners twice came from behind to beat Aston Villa 4-2 away and has won again in the Midlands.

Arsenal was hardly troubled at King Power Stadium despite being without holding midfielder Thomas Partey again, although the Ghana international did make it off the bench for the final few minutes after a muscle injury.

Trossard, who started up front in place of Eddie Nketiah, thought he gave Arsenal the lead in the 26th when he curled a shot into the top corner from the edge of the area following Leicester goalkeeper Danny Ward's weak punch clear.

The goal was ruled out, however. Replays showed Arsenal defender Ben White was holding onto Ward's right arm at the time of his punch.

Bukayo Saka also had a goal disallowed in the second half, with Martinelli adjudged offside in the buildup.



WELLINGTON: Ollie Pope's one-handed catch sent Daryl Mitchell back.

## England dominates New Zealand in second test

WELLINGTON (AP): For the second day in a row rain came to New Zealand's rescue in the second cricket test, saving it from an even greater mauling by England.

On the first day the rain came after only 65 overs when England already was 315-3. With Harry Brook making 186 and Joe Root an unbeaten 153 in a 302-run partnership, England was able to declare its first innings at 435-8. And when the rain came again on Saturday not long after tea, New Zealand was 138-7, still 297 behind. Tom Blundell was 25 and Tim Southee on 23.

James Anderson with 3-37 and Jack Leach with 3-45 wrecked the New Zealand first innings and sent the home team to the locker room in a light shower, welcoming the

chance of a reprieve.

Brook dominated New Zealand on the first day and was 184 — his highest test score and fourth century in five tests — when the rain came on the first day. Root was 101. Brook faced only seven balls Saturday before he was out for 186 but Root turned his 29th century into the 13th score of his career in excess of 150. From the start of the day, England appeared to be racing towards a declaration and it came this time after 87 overs.

"I certainly felt I found a way to manage the situation throughout this game," Root said. "At the time I did it was great to be able to just calm things down and wrestle a bit of momentum back in our favor. "When you're batting at the other end to Brook at the minute he's making your

life a lot easier. It was quite nice to bounce off him and we restore that calmness in the dressing room. A partnership like that is always going to set things up nicely."

James Anderson once again took apart the New Zealand top order as he or Stuart Broad had done in England's win in the first test at Mount Maunganui. He dismissed Devon Conway (0) with only the fifth ball of the New Zealand innings, then had Kane Williamson (4) and Will Young (2). New Zealand took the second new ball after 80 overs. Brooks' forceful innings came to an end in an ironic manner. He played rare straight-bat defense at a ball from Matt Henry but made such sweet contact that the ball carried back to the bowler who made a juggled catch.

Leach then removed Henry Nicholls (30) and Daryl Mitchell (13) to

reassert England's superiority. Southee and Blundell helped a little to steady New Zealand before the rain came. The New Zealand bowlers also enjoyed a little success early on the second day and with the older ball, though England always was hurrying to a declaration.

That rain which fell lightly throughout the night appeared to have freshened the Basin Reserve pitch and there was movement for the seamers and turn for spinner Michael Bracewell even before New Zealand took the second new ball after 80 overs. Brooks' forceful innings came to an end in an ironic manner. He played rare straight-bat defense at a ball from Matt Henry but made such sweet contact that the ball carried back to the bowler who made a juggled catch.

## Peshawar stun Swat in All Pakistan Veterans Football Cup

PESHAWAR (APP): On the second day of the second All-Pakistan Veteran Football League, the Peshawar Veteran Football Team has qualified for the final by defeating the Swat Veteran Football Team by 4-1 after a sensational match played here at Tehmas Khan Football Stadium on Saturday.

In the second semi-final, Chitral Red defeated Kohat by 3-2 goals and qualified for the final. The final of All-Pakistan Veteran Football Tournament will be played at Tahmas Khan Football Stadium at 3.00 pm on Sunday.

A total of eight football teams from all across Pakistan are taking part. The matches will be played on the basis of the league. DFA Pattern Chief Hussain Ahmed was the special guest on this occasion. Hussain Ahmad, hailing from Chitral and good football promoter said the players of Chitral are associated with the teams of all departments including the Pakistan team and are showing excellent performance.

He said that it is difficult to make any event successful without the support of the government. He also appreciated the support of the Directorate of Sports and Director General Sports KP Khalid Khan and Director Operation Aziz Ullah Jan.

## Kamran advises to boycott wc scheduled in India

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Kamran Akmal, Pakistan's wicketkeeper batsman, advised the Pakistan Cricket Board to not take part in the upcoming world cup scheduled to be played in India.

In his interview, he said Pakistan should not go to play the world cup in India if the Indian team did not come in Pakistan.

He said Pakistan remained the world champion and achieved top position in the ranking and it deserved the international cricket to played in its home.

## Defending champ Alcaraz reaches Rio Open semifinals

RIO DE JANEIRO (Agencies): World number two Carlos Alcaraz clawed back a break in both sets and dominated the tiebreaker to beat Dusan Lajovic 6-4, 7-6 (7/0) on Friday in the ATP Rio Open quarterfinals.

The 19-year-old Spaniard notched his third win in three matches against 32-year-old Lajovic, including a quarterfinal win over the 80th-ranked Serbian in the quarterfinals at the Argentina Open last week.

Alcaraz went on to win that title to cement his return from a four-month injury layoff that saw him miss the Australian Open.

In semifinals Saturday, Alcaraz will face Chilean Qualifier Nicolas Jarry, who toppled sixth-seeded Sebastian Baez of Argentina 6-3, 7-6 (7/3).

Alcaraz is seeking to defend the title that made him the youngest ever winner of an ATP 500 tournament last year. Second-seeded Briton Cameron Norrie booked his semifinal berth with a 4-6, 6-1, 6-4 victory over Bolivian Hugo Dellian.

Norrie, trying to reach his third final of the year, will face Spain's Bernabe Zapata Miralles, who beat compatriot Albert Ramos Vinolas 6-4, 2-6, 6-4.

Alcaraz improved his perfect record in 2023 to 7-0, but he had to figure some things out along the way.

"It was a very complicated match," Alcaraz said. "Dusan has a great forehand, a great backhand, a great serve, very good shots, and today he has shown it, he has given a recital. "But I was solid. In the end, I was very happy to have solved those problems."

Alcaraz trailed 2-4 in both sets, reeling off the last four games of the first before finding himself in another battle in the second. He belted 32 winners to Lajovic's 13 and won 16 of 17 points at the net.

But 25 unforced errors contributed to the difficulties that saw him go down an early break in both sets. In the second, he broke back with a stinging backhand winner to level the set at 4-4.

## PM's Youth Talent Hunt Program: Volleyball trials begin in Mardan

PESHAWAR (APP): The volleyball male trials under the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Youth Talent Hunt Programme got underway at the Mardan Education Board Sports Complex on Saturday.

Organizing Secretary Dr. Noor Zada, Director Distance Education System, former captain and coach of the Pakistan team, National selector Abdur Rahim, Selector Hidayatullah Khan were also present on the occasion.

In connection with the Prime Minister's Talent Youth Hunt Program, 150 players had applied for their registration along with 52 spot registration. The number of entries was more than 150 out of which 17 players were shortlisted while 11 will be selected for the camp in which they will also be given TA and DA and full kit-bag, Director General University of Peshawar Bahre Karam said on the occasion.

Prime Minister's Youth Talent Hunt Program is a step toward the right direction through which opportunities have been given to upcoming players to come forward. He also appreciated Prime Minister Program Head Shaza Fatima, Prime Minister's Adviser Amir Muqam, Higher Education Commission Islamabad Chairman Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed, Arif Rawan, and DG Sports HEC Javed Ali Memon for their efforts.

The PM Youth Talent Hunt Program continues, with 10 Women and 12 male games being held. Before this, male-female trials of weightlifting, wrestling and hockey were organized. Volleyball trials are also being organized successfully, in which Hazara University has been given the responsibility of conducting female trials and the University of Peshawar has been given the responsibility of conducting male trials of volleyball.

He also appreciated the efforts of Vice Chancellor Peshawar University Prof. Dr. Mohammad Idrees and Vice Chancellor Hazara University Prof. Dr. Jameel Ahmed and Pakistan Volleyball Federation. The trials for Hazara region players will be held on March 5 and 6 at Committee Ground, Haripur, while the trials for Bannu players will be held on March 9 and 10 at Bannu Sports Complex, Bannu.



LEICESTER: Leicester's goalkeeper Danny Ward is blocked from punching the ball clear in the lead up to a disallowed goal by Arsenal's Leandro Trossard during the English Premier League soccer match.



LOS ANGELES: Sacramento Kings guard Malik Monk, left, shoots as Los Angeles Clippers center Mason Plumlee defends during the first half of an NBA basketball game.

## Kings outlast Clippers 176-175 in double overtime

LOS ANGELES (AP): There were a couple moments Friday night when Sacramento coach Mike Brown wishes he could have enjoyed being a part of the second-highest scoring game in NBA history.

Brown and his Kings though were able to savor something that is more important in the long run — a hard-fought victory.

Malik Monk scored a career-high 45 points, De'Aaron Fox had the go-ahead basket and finished with 42 and Sacramento outlasted the Los Angeles Clippers 176-175 in double overtime.

It is only the second time in the NBA's 76-year history that both teams have scored at least 170 points. Detroit beat Denver 186-184 in triple overtime on Dec. 13, 1983, in what remains the highest-scoring NBA game.

The Kings are third on the scoring list with the 176 points and the Clippers fourth. A team has scored 170 points in a regular-season game only seven times.

"From a fan's standpoint, I can see how this game would have been a lot of fun to watch," Brown said. "There was

unbelievable shot making and great defense. There was high-level talent that was on display. Kudos to the players.

Sacramento and Los Angeles also combined for 44 3-pointers, tied for the most in a game in NBA history.

Both teams also shot at least 58% from the field and were 80% or better from the foul line.

"I thought was a great game. A lot of momentum shifts," Clippers coach Tyronn Lue said.

The Clippers had a 175-169 advantage with 1:57 remaining before the Kings scored the final seven points, including Fox's jumper with 36.5 seconds remaining. The Clippers had the final shot, but Nico Batum missed a 3-pointer at the buzzer.

The Kings also overcame a 14-points deficit late in the fourth quarter and six-point deficits in both overtime periods.

"We just stuck with it. We got down 12 at one point but just had our heads up. We knew they were going to let us back in," Monk said.

It was the first time in franchise history the Kings have had two players score

at least 40 points in a game. It is the second time it has happened in an NBA game this season after Cleveland's Caris LeVert and Donovan Mitchell did it against Boston.

Fox — who also had 12 assists and five steals — is just the 12th player since 1973-74 with 40 points, 10 assists and five steals in a game. The last to do it was James Harden in 2019.

"We just had to grind this game out. We were on the second night of a back-to-back but it is what it is. We have a younger team than them," Fox said.

Kawhi Leonard scored a season-high 44 points for Los Angeles and Paul George added 34. Leonard had 21 points in the third quarter, which tied his career high for points scored in a quarter.

"I thought he did a great job getting to a spot with the 3-point shots and attacking the basket," Lue said about Leonard.

Russell Westbrook started and made his Clippers debut after he cleared waivers Wednesday. He had 17 points, 14 assists and five rebounds in 39 minutes before fouling out with 1:49 remaining in the second overtime.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 98,500 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 98,500 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 55,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1464.38 feet and was 66.38 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 17,100 cusecs while outflow as 50,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1113.85 feet, which was 63.85 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 16,800 cusecs and 27,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded 52,300, 40,900, 30,400 and 6,300 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 13,800 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 2,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### IESCO issues power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Saturday notified a power suspension programme for Sunday 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, Rawalpindi.III, VIP Feeders, From 09:00 AM to 04:00 PM, Jabi, Sajjad Shaheed, Microwave, Maritime, Khanda, Fateh Jang, Karima, Gul Mohammad Shaheed, T-2, 132/66KV, Bahtar, Murt, Qutbal, Laniwala, Fateh Jang City.II, Gagan, HIT and Facto Cement feeders and surrounding areas.

### Five booked for possessing illegal arms

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested five illegal arms holders and recovered ammunition from their possession during a crackdown here on Saturday, informed police spokesman. Rata Amral police held Hassan Shahzad and recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from his possession. Similarly, the New Town police arrested Faisal and recovered 01 rifle of 12 bores from his custody. While R.A Bazaar police nabbed Rahat and recovered 01 pistol 30 bores from his possession. Following the operation, Gujjar Khan police recovered one revolver 32 bore from Ghulam Abbas. Kallar Syedan police recovered 01 pistol 09 mm from Gul Zareen. Police registered separate cases against the accused and further investigation was in progress. The SSP operations appreciated the performance of police team.

### Crackdown continue against aerial firing

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police crackdown continued against the kite flying and aerial firing without any discrimination. According to a police spokesman, City Police Officer CPO Syed Khalid Mahmood Hamdani, SSP Operations, SP Rawal and senior officers inspected and monitor various areas to prevent kite flying. During the crackdown, 357 kite flyers were arrested, and thousands of kites, strings, and sound systems were recovered whereas 27 were accused of aerial firing and possession of illegal weapons. 02 Kalashnikovs, 20 pistols, 07 rifles and bullets were recovered from their possession.

## Imran's jail-cramming drive only limited to social media: Sherry

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman said on Saturday that the jail-filling drive led by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chief Imran Khan was only active on social media.

Taking to Twitter, she said it was claimed that 200 persons would present themselves for arrest from

every city however, 200 persons had not been arrested yet from the whole country despite the passage of three days.

Ms Rehman said within the three days, the jail-filling drive turned into bail-seeking movement and all those PTI leaders who got themselves were seeking bail now.

She added the people were literate and they would not believe on the fabricated opinions of Imran Khan and would not accept his "every lie".

The minister claimed the lack of trust of people on the PTI leaders demonstrated that the masses were fed up with the divisive politics of PTI.

## Sh Rashid hopes top court will decide polls date case in 10 days

RAWALPINDI (NNI): Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmad hopes that the Supreme Court will decide a case pertaining to elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa within 10 days.

In a series of tweets, the former interior minister said the apex court would determine who had the authority to give a date for elections and who would face prison over violation.

He claimed that pressure was being ramped up on the

judiciary to stop it from performing its constitutional and legal responsibility. Saying the whole nation stood with judiciary, he said PML-N Senior Vice President Maryam Nawaz, Defence Minister Khawaja Asif and Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah were targeting the top court.

Mr Ahmad said the National Apex Committee had made it clear that Pakistan could not afford internal instability but it was staying away from fixing the responsibility for

election date.

Reacting to objections raised by the ruling parties against two judges of the bench hearing the election date case, he said they were demanding full bench but at the same time expressing reservations against two judges.

Taking a dig at the security protocol of Maryam Nawaz, he asked: "Whether uncle's austerity measures are not applicable on his niece". He said the 13-party coalition was running away from elections.

## 'We are not afraid of elections, they will be held at due time', says Daniyal

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz senior leader Barrister Daniyal Chaudhry Saturday said that his party leadership is not afraid of elections and that the general polls across the country would be held in due time.

Talking to a private news channel, he said it is important for the incumbent government to complete its term to stabilize the country unless there was any urgency which currently was not there.

He said that whatever pressure tactics Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership will use against the government, elections will be held at the right time, adding, PTI's narrative was only based on lies and propaganda.

Replying to a query, he criticized that PTI's chief Imran Khan's only aim was to create anarchy as he wants every decision according to his own wishes, adding, his 'jail bharo' campaign is a failed flip show and Niazi would only

be sent to jail who was harming the country's peace.

He said Jail bharo tehrak is based on a particular political objective to create instability in the country.

To another question, he replied that PML-N leadership was fully aware of the current inflation due to which prices of electricity, gas, bread, and other commodities had gone up.

The government would not sit with ease until prevailing issues were not resolved, he assured.

## Capital Police active against those involved in wrong parking

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police has launched a campaign against those involved in parking their vehicles wrongly and creating problems in smooth flow of traffic by occupying footpath areas.

Following the directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad police have launched a campaign and Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad is monitoring this whole campaign by himself.

The CTO Islamabad has directed all Zonal DSPs to ensure implementation of traffic laws and take action against those involved in creating problems for traffic discipline in the city.

The CTO Islamabad said that it is the right of pedestrians to use footpaths and no parking would be allowed there. He said that vehicles should be parked at lots specified at shopping centers while awareness campaigns should be launched to educate citizens.

During the first phase of the campaign, action was taken against showroom and shopping malls' administrators in various areas of the city. Vehicles were removed from footpath areas and they were warned to follow rules otherwise strict legal action would be initiated against them.

During the ongoing month, the Islamabad police also issued 2403

fine tickets to those involved in wrong parking while several vehicles were impounded at various police stations for not vacating footpath areas.

The CTO Islamabad said that it is our top priority to ensure convenience for road users by maintaining traffic discipline and every possible effort would be made for the purpose. He said that squads have been constituted for the purpose of removing illegal parking and vacating footpaths while indiscriminate action would be taken against violators.

He said that this operation would be extended to the other areas of Islamabad and smooth traffic flow to be ensured.



ISLAMABAD: Firefighters are trying to extinguish the fire in a building at Blue Area. —INP Photo

## Wanted members of inter-provincial bike lifter gang held

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad capital police Ramna police team apprehended three wanted members of inter provincial bike lifter gang involved in numerous bike lifting incidents and recovered five stolen motorbikes from their possession, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad capital police had started a crackdown against criminal elements involved in car and bike lifting incidents in order to save the precious lives and property of citizens.

Following these directives, a Ramna police team used the technical and human resources and succeeded in apprehending 03 wanted members of inter-provincial bike lifter gang who were involved in numerous bike lifting incidents.

Police team also recovered five stolen bikes and spare parts from their possession.

The accused was identified as Safdar, Kamran and Sajid. Cases are already registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

During the preliminary investigation the accused confessed to being involved in numerous bike lifting incidents.

CPO Operations Islamabad Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari directed all senior officials for effective crackdown against the accused involved in car and bike lifting incidents.

The performance of police officials in this regard would be reviewed on a continuous basis, he maintained.

He further directed all zonal officers to intensify the crackdown against the criminal elements.

"Safety and security of the citizens is our foremost priority and no laxity will be tolerated in this regard" he added.

## Pervez Ashraf, Durrani express grief over loss of lives in Motorway accident

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf and Deputy Speaker Zahid Akram Durrani on Saturday expressed deep sorrow and grief over the loss of precious human lives in a tragic accident at Rahim Yar Khan Motorway and the death of workers due to the sudden collapse of shutter-

ing of under-construction Bhara Kahu Bypass bridge in Islamabad.

Raja Pervez Ashraf has directed the concerned authorities to provide all possible medical facilities to the injured travellers in the Rahim Yar Khan Motorway accident and to injured workers.

They also directed concerned authorities to

investigate the cause of this collapse to avoid such untoward incidents in the future.

The Speaker and the Deputy Speaker have prayed for the departed souls of the deceased who lost their lives in both tragic accidents.

They also prayed for a grant of solace and peace for bereaved families.

## Private sector to play key role in improving Pak-US ties: Qamar

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar has said private sector and the business community had a key role in realizing the vision of enhanced trade ties between Pakistan and the United States.

Interacting with leadership of American Apparel and Footwear Association and representatives of Pak leading businesses at Embassy of Pakistan in Washington, he said that Pakistan was keen to strengthen its economic ties with the United States.

The Minister said that Government was committed not only to provide all possible facilitation to the business community but also to put in place policies that could fulfil the requirements of business community and the global market.

The Minister said that private sector should come up with innovative ideas and solutions to overcome existing challenges and secure greater market penetration. He said that diversification of the products while ensuring quality, affordability and competitiveness would help getting better market share to Pakistani products.

The Minister also encouraged US entrepreneurs to actively participate in TEXPO exhibition to be held during end of May this year.

The delegation included President & CEO American Apparel & Footwear Association Stephen Lamar, Senior Vice President (Policy) Nate Harmen, Vice President (Trade & Customs Policy) Beth Hughes, Director of Policy and Advocacy, Levi Strauss & Co Ms. Hun Quach and CFO & COO, Royce Too LLC Greg Snipes. Other participants included Shelley Rider (Interloop), Steve Pianowski (Nishat Chunian), Irfan Hassan (Al-Karam), Ahmed Fraz (Gul Ahmed), Mubasher Butt (Prgrmea), Muneeb Tariq (PHMA) and Kamran Arshad (APTMA).

Pak Ambassador to the United States Masood Khan also joined the meeting.

The meeting discussed in detail matters relating to bilateral trade in cotton and textiles with a special focus on strengthening of Pak-US trade relations, institutionalization of mutual linkages, standardization, traceability and visibility of products and facilitation of the business community.

## Supreme Court concludes 24,000 cases in one year

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The Supreme Court of Pakistan had concluded the 24,000 cases in single year to reduce the cases pending before the court.

It was told the new 22,000 cases were registered before the court in one year and the action of the apex court to give timely decision would be a step to clear the backlog in the court.

Earlier, almost 16,000 cases were decided in a single year. The efforts of the judges and the cases management system had proven adequate in the resolution of the cases.

## Court awards death sentence in a murder case

RAWALPINDI (APP): A District and Sessions Court on Saturday awarded a death sentence to an accused in a murder case.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Muhammad Irfan Akram announced the verdict after hearing the arguments from both sides.

The court also imposed a fine of Rs 400,000 on the accused, Adeel Ahmed Butt. According to the prosecution, the convict had stabbed the victim, Adnan Shabir, to death. A case was registered against the convict at the Airport Police Station in 2020.

## 12 outlaws arrested; weapons and drug recovered

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad capital police apprehended 12 outlaws from different areas of the city and recovered drug and weapons with ammunition and iron punch from their possession.

Similarly, the Bhara Kahu police team arrested an accused namely Awais Ikram and recovered 1180 gram hashish from his possession.

Shalimar police team arrested an accused namely Ehsan Ullah and recovered 225 gram heroin from his possession.

Moreover, the Sangani police team arrested two drug peddlers namely Samandar and recovered 1100 gram hashish and 300 gram heroin from their possession.

The Sabzi Mandi police team arrested an accused namely Tariq and recovered one dagger from his possession. Likewise, the Kohsar police team arrested two

accused namely Kamran Manzoor and Karnalis and recovered 20 liters liquor and 610 gram heroin from their possession.

Similarly, the Bhara Kahu police team arrested an accused namely Awais Ikram and recovered 1180 gram hashish from his possession.

Shalimar police team arrested an accused namely Ehsan Ullah and recovered 225 gram heroin from his possession.

sion.

Furthermore, the Nilore police team arrested an accused namely Abdul Rehman and recovered one 12 bore gun from his possession. Sihala police team arrested an accused namely Ajmal Khan and recovered one 30 bore pistol, while police team also arrested two accused namely Hameed Sarwar and Shahab involved in illegally selling petrol and gas refilling.

Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway. CPO Operations Islamabad Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari directed all senior officials for effective crackdown against the accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons.



ISLAMABAD: Traffic Police Officials issue challans to motorcyclists for ride without helmets in the Federal Capital. —APP Photo









WEST BANK: Israeli forces taking positions to hit Palestinians during clash in Al-Khalil area.

## Court adjourns hearing on Imran's bail plea till 28th

ISLAMABAD (INP): In compliance with the high court orders, a banking court in Islamabad has adjourned its hearing on the bail plea filed by former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan in the foreign funding case till Feb 28.

Banking Court Judge Rakhshanda Shaheen conducted the proceedings on the case on Saturday. At the outset of the hearing, an order of the Islamabad High Court barring the banking court from taking any decision on Imran's bail application was submitted to the court.

On Feb 22, the IHC ordered Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan to appear before a banking court of Islamabad on February 28 in a case of pre-arrest bail registered against him under the Foreign Exchange Act. In the light of IHC order, the banking court adjourned the hearing of the case till Feb 28.

It should be noted that the banking court rejected PTI chief's request for attendance through video link. Imran had challenged the decision of the banking court in the IHC. The Federal Investigation Agency had registered a case against the PTI chief and 10 others over accusations of receiving foreign funding. The case had been registered by the FIA Corporate Banking Circle.

The case's First Information Report (FIR) stated that the accused including the former premier violated Foreign Exchange Act and all of the nominated persons were beneficiaries of the private bank account.

## Tik Toker kills father, injures mother

E.P. Report

LOWER DIR: A young Tik Toker identified as Hsainan 18 shot dead his father and injured mother on their refusal to return his smart phone at Gambhir village in the jurisdiction of Mayar police station here on Saturday, relatives and police said. They said the accused's father Sher Baz Khan, a cab driver had held his mobile phone set for the last two days and wanted his son to give up filming his tik tok videos while the son had been demanding its return.

The son, after a brief exchange of harsh words, opened fire on his parents. As a result the father died on the spot while the mother was shifted to the district head-quarter hospital Timergara in a critical condition. The Mayar police led by SHO Fazal Ghafoor raided different locations and arrested the accused within two hours. The police also claimed to have recovered the pistol used during the crime. The deceased was laid to rest at his ancestral graveyard at Gambhir in the jurisdiction of Lal Qila police station here the other day.

Meanwhile, a seven-year old child identified as Ayan Khan, a resident of Sar Dargai who went missing on Feb 22, was found dead at a local hill in the jurisdiction of Lal Qila police station here the other day.

## Three Barkhan victims laid to rest in Quetta

BARKHAN (INP): Three people, who were found murdered in Barkhan, were laid to rest near Eastern Bypass in Quetta on Saturday. The dead bodies were shifted from Fayyaz Sumbal Square to Police Lines and then taken to Khan Muhammad Marri.

The family of Khan Marri including his wife and children had a last look at the dead and then bodies were taken to QDA Graveyard at Eastern Bypass. The dead bodies were buried after funeral prayers. Khan Muhammad Marri was also present on the occasion in presence of heavy contingent of police at QDA Graveyard.

Hundreds of Marri tribesmen, who had been protesting for the last five days in the Quetta's Red Zone along with three bodies found in the Barkhan area, called off the sit-in on Friday evening after the wife of Khan Muhammad Marri reunited with him along with their children at the sit-in camp and authorities accepted their

demands. Moving scenes were witnessed at the camp when Ms Granaz and her children, who are believed to have spent years in a private jail, reunited with Marri after four years.

Two of the dead were sons of Khan Marri while the third one, a woman, is yet to be identified. Jahangir Marri, general secretary of the Marri Ittehad Pakistan, while announcing the end to the protest, said the government had accepted their demands. He said the government had also assured them that an FIR would be registered after recording of the statements of the victim family members who were detained somewhere and recovered by the security forces the other day.

Earlier, Ms Granaz, wife of Khan Marri, and their five children — a 17-year-old daughter and four sons — reached Quetta on Friday morning in a procession amid tight security. The woman and her children burst into tears while meeting Khan Marri after

over four years. Khan Marri remained in hiding all these years somewhere out of Balochistan and returned to Quetta the other day amid tight security. Granaz, who was constantly crying after seeing the coffins in the ambulance, wanted to have a glimpse of her sons, but was not allowed to do so. Later, the police took Ms Granaz and her children into protective custody.

"They would be produced before a magistrate for recording their statements about their captivity," a police officer said, adding that after recording their statements they would be handed over to the family. Khan Marri, who was happy after reuniting with his family, said: "My wife and children have been recovered, so there is no need to continue the sit-in. I am thankful to the Marri tribesmen and people of other communities who supported me and participated in the protest which helped in the recovery of my family and acceptance of our demands."

## Turkey launches probe into 612 people after quakes

ISTANBUL (Agencies): Investigations have been launched against more than 600 people over the buildings that collapsed in Turkey's catastrophic earthquakes earlier this month, according to the country's justice minister. Minister Bekir Bozdag said on Saturday that 184 of the 612 suspects had been jailed pending trial. Those in custody included construction contractors and building owners or managers, he said in televised comments from a coordination centre in Diyarbakir in southeast Turkey.

"The detection of evidence in the buildings continues as a basis for criminal investigation," Bozdag added. The aftermath of the 7.8- and 7.6-magnitude earthquakes on February 6, which led to more than 44,000 deaths in southern Turkey and more than 5,500 deaths in northern Syria, has seen many Turks question the structural integrity of many of the 173,000 buildings that collapsed or were seriously damaged.

Opposition parties have accused President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's administration of failing to enforce building regulations. The mayor of a town close to the epicentre of the earthquake was detained as part of an investigation into collapsed buildings, the local media reported on Saturday.

Okkes Kavak, who heads the district of Nurdagi in Gaziantep province and is a member of Erdogan's Justice and Development Party (AKP), is said to have failed to ensure construction inspections were carried out. AFAD, Turkey's disaster management agency, said that 9,470 aftershocks had hit the region affected by the quake.

"This will continue for a long time ... we expect

these aftershocks to last for at least two years," AFAD General Manager Orhan Tatar said in a media briefing in Ankara. He said a 5.3-magnitude quake that hit Bor, a town approximately about 245km west of the February 6 epicentre, was considered "independent" of earlier earthquakes. Meanwhile, a magnitude 5.3 earthquake has shaken the central Anatolian Turkish province of Nigde, the Kandilli earthquake monitoring centre said, just over two weeks after two devastating earthquakes that killed more than 50,000 people in Turkey and Syria. Saturday's earthquake had a depth of 7km (4.34 miles) and hit the Bor district at 1:27pm (10:27 GMT), the Turkish disaster management agency AFAD said. No casualties have been reported so far.

Vice President Fuat Oktay said response teams are on the ground to assess any damage. "There is no negative situation at the moment. May God protect our country and our nation from all kinds of disasters," he said on Twitter. Bor is located some 350km (218 miles) west of the quake-ravaged Turkish-Syrian border region.

In the earthquakes that hit earlier this month, more than 44,000 people were killed in Turkey, where 11 provinces were affected, while the latest announced death toll in Syria was 5,914. The earthquakes were followed by more than 9,000 aftershocks, and in Turkey, damaged more than 173,000 buildings and left nearly two million residents homeless, according to government data.

Nearly 240,000 rescue workers, including volunteers, continue to work in the 11 quake-hit provinces in Turkey. Some of the areas affected by the quakes were initially difficult to access but recovery

efforts continue and casualty numbers are rising as they progress. There have been no reports of survivors being rescued in recent days. Fears of another major earthquake have been rekindled in highly populated Istanbul, but a prominent Turkish seismologist has reassured the risk "hasn't increased".

"The risk hasn't increased because we are talking about completely different systems," Dogan Kalafat, the director of the Kandilli Observatory's Earthquake-Tsunami Monitoring Center in Istanbul, told AFP.

## 6 PTI leaders shifted from Adiala to Shahpur Jail

SARGODHA (INP): Of total 47 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers and leaders, including party's six ex-MNAs and ex-MPAs, who had been taken to Adiala jail Friday (on the third day of the party's 'Jail Bharo' movement), 41 workers were kept at the jail while the leaders were shifted to Shahpur Jail, Sargodha on Saturday.

Sources that all leaders were shifted to Shahpur jail in a prison van late Friday night. Those who were shifted to Shahpur were Sadaqat Abbasi, Zulfi Bukhari, Fayyaz Hassan Chohan, Latasab Satti, Ijaz Khan Jazi and others. PTI leaders and workers in Rawalpindi surrendered to police as part of the 'Jail Bharo' movement, which party Chairman Imran Khan had announced in a reaction to arrests of party leaders in one case or the other. A prison van remained parked at the city's Committee Chowk waiting for the PTI workers to arrive. But not many showed up.

## 2 labourers killed in Bhara Kahu mishap

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Two labourers were killed and three others got injured Saturday as the shuttering of the under-construction Bhara Kahu bridge collapsed in the capital city.

As per the Islamabad Capital Territory Police's initial report, the shuttering of the pillar fell down after a truck collided with it. According to the police, citizens were informed about the incident and they were advised to avoid using the route, so as to not hinder rescue activities.

The police said that the condition of the injured people, who were shifted to Polyclinic Hospital, was said to be unstable, while a rescue operation at the site of the incident was underway. They said that senior officials of the police and administration — including Islamabad Inspector General (IG) Dr Akbar Nasir and Chief Commissioner Noorul Amin Mengal — were present at the incident site.

The police said that the district administration had ordered bringing a bigger crane to the site, keeping in view the possibility of more labourers being stuck under the rubble. Speaking to the media, Mengal said that two to three huge trailer trucks had passed by the bridge between 2am-3am and had hit the shuttering support of the pillar.

"Safety and traffic protocol was violated," he said, adding that one of the trucks was still stuck under the rubble. Mengal further stated that a committee headed by the Islamabad deputy commissioner has been formed which will review all aspects of the incident.

Meanwhile, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah regretted the unfortunate incident and ordered the quick completion of the rescue operation. He also ordered the Capital Development Authority to determine the elements responsible for the incident. In light of the orders, the Islamabad chief commissioner formed an eight-member investigation committee to probe the matter.

## 'IMF deal likely after hike in policy rate'

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan has agreed to increase its policy rate in order to clinch the crucial IMF deal needed urgently to avert the looming default. According to officials in the finance ministry, the talks between the International Monetary Fund and Pakistan are continued and the global lender is thoroughly looking into every point.

The officials confirmed that Pakistan has agreed to increase its interest rate by 2%. The current policy rate is 17%. The State Bank of Pakistan is expected to raise policy rate by 200 basis points in an off-cycle review this week.

"We support the use of monetary policy to rein in inflation, anchor inflation expectations, and support the exchange rate," said Esther Perez Ruiz, the IMF's resident representative in Pakistan, in an email to Reuters. The IMF official further said "As such, monetary policy has an important role to play in taming inflation and preserving the purchasing power of Pakistanis, first and foremost the poor and most vulnerable." The finance ministry officials further said that issues related to (circular debt in) power sector have also been sorted. "After resolving power sector issues, the staff-level agreement (SLA) with the IMF will be signed," they added.

The officials said that the finance ministry has briefed the IMF about the sources of foreign reserves the country is going to receive till June. They also said that no political issues were discussed during talks with the IMF. The cash-strapped country is undertaking key measures to secure the IMF funding, including raising taxes, removing blanket subsidies, and artificial curbs on the exchange rate. According to reports, the next meeting of the central bank's monetary policy committee is scheduled for March 16. Off-cycle rate reviews are not uncommon in Pakistan, though.

# Asif: It's not politics if one gives priority to personal interests

E.P. Report

SIALKOT: Federal Minister for Defence Khawaja Muhammad Asif has said that in politics when personal interest is given priority over national interest, then politics is no longer politics, it becomes a war of interests. He stated this while addressing the convocation of Standard College for Girls here as the special guest, held at the Heritage Club, Sialkot.

The minister said that Sialkot city had given him respect and recognition. "Wherever I go, people know me as a man from Sialkot," he said in a lighter vein. The federal minister said that during the last 33 years, he and his fellows served the city, and people could see the signs of services of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) it

rendered here.

Kh Asif said that during the four-year rule of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), resources of the province had been looted mercilessly. He said that the biggest project that Nawaz Sharif had given to the city was Sialkot-Lahore Motorway. Kh Asif said that earlier it used to take three-and-a-half hours to reach Lahore from Sialkot, but now one could cover this distance in one-and-a-half hours. The same motorway would now connect GT Road at Kharian and the journey time would shorten further, he added.

The minister said that the city had a women university, called Government College for Women University, so that higher education was available in the city for female students. "I am proud that the daugh-

ters of this city are attending this convocation in large numbers today. They have completed their education and they are starting a new journey towards their new destination," Kh Asif added.

The federal minister said that this year is the election year. "Even in a short period of time, we will try to improve the quality of life for the residents of Sialkot," he promised. He said that all problems that the country was facing at the moment would be solved gradually. Director and Principal of Standard College for Girls Sialkot Mohsin Bilal thanked all the participants including the federal minister, and said that women play an important role in the national development. A total of 120 female students were awarded certificates at the convocation.

## Govt treating PTI workers like terrorists: Imran

LAHORE (INP): Former premier and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan has slammed the 'imported government' for treating political prisoners detained during the Jail Bharo Tehreek as 'criminals and terrorists'.

In a Twitter thread, Imran Khan condemned the government's mistreatment with the PTI volunteers who surrendered before the authorities during the ongoing Jail Bharo Tehreek. He wrote, "Strongly condemn the fascist approach of Imported govt to treat our political prisoners detained during our Jail Bharo (court arrest) movement as criminals & terrorists."

He added that the PTI leadership and workers are protesting against fascism, violation of fundamental rights and crushing nation under spiralling prices while rulers get NRO for Rs1100 billion looted wealth for themselves." Khan said, "Refusing to abide by prison rules for

political detainees reflects a desperate & dictatorial mindset, which makes our people even more determined to stand up for Haqeeqi Azadi."

He said that the country is going through economic, political and democratic crises. He added that PPP is fighting against poverty, unemployment and inflation. Due to the financial crisis, the government decided to make a 25% increase in payments to BISP beneficiaries.

Meanwhile, the former premier and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief Imran Khan has brought a citizen before the media who was allegedly abducted and tortured to give false statements against Usman Dar, ARY News reported on Saturday.

Imran Khan addressed the media via video link today along with PTI leader Usman Dar and a citizen who had been allegedly abducted and tortured. "I want to tell the nation about what is happening in the

country. Attempts are being made to turn Pakistan into a Banana republic. No one is caring about the law and the constitution but the law is in hands of the powerful people."

The PTI chief said that people are being forced to give false statements after the ouster of the PTI government. "Attempts were made to file fake cases, corruption cases and run audiotapes to blackmail us." He said that the affected citizen namely Javed Ali will tell his story by himself. He added that Usman Dar had facilitated Javed Ali to get a watchman's position — a Grade 4 government job.

Javed Ali said that he works as a watchman in the education department and he was summoned via a telephone call. "Four policemen came in and shifted me to an unknown location after covering my face with a cloth. Some unidentified men had also come there."

## EU approves sanctions on Russia over Ukraine war

BRUSSELS (Agencies): The European Union has approved a tenth package of sanctions against Russia on the one-year anniversary of Moscow's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, EU officials said.

The latest round of sanctions provides for additional trade restrictions on Russia, the Swedish EU Council Presidency announced in Brussels, and are designed to make financing the war more difficult as well as starve Russia of tech equipment and spare parts for arms used against Ukraine. The package includes tighter export restrictions regarding dual-use goods as well as measures against entities supporting Russia's war, including spreading propaganda in support of the invasion and delivering drones used by Russia to attack Ukraine.

"Together, the EU member states have imposed the most forceful and far-reaching sanctions ever to help Ukraine win the war," the EU presidency announced on Twitter. "The EU stands united with Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. We will keep supporting Ukraine, for as long as it takes."

The measures are also meant to blacklist more individuals including what the West says are Russian propagandists, those Kyiv holds responsible for deporting Ukrainian children to Russia and those involved in the production of Iranian drones deployed on the front line of the war. The package was also designed to cut off more Russian banks, including the private Alfa-Bank and the online bank Tinkoff, from the global system SWIFT and cut trade between the EU and Russia by more than 10 billion euros (\$10.5bn), according to the bloc's executive.

With just two hours to go to midnight on Friday, negotiators from EU member states made it across the finish line to agree on the sanctions after Poland earlier threw a spanner into the works. Warsaw had said the proposed restrictions on EU imports of Russian rubber included such a big quota of imports exempted, and such long transition periods, that they would have no effect in practice.

Other EU countries were baffled that Warsaw — a leading Russia hawk in the bloc — was risking having no new sanctions announced on the one-year anniversary of Russia's attack against Ukraine over just one element of a broader package. All member states need to approve sanctions for them to be enacted, making negotiations among the 27 often tedious and lengthy.

"This is very bad optics. Poland is giving Ukraine 14 Leopard A2 tanks. Morawiecki also said 60 PT-91 main battle tanks would be provided after they were promised in January. The PT-91 Twardy is a Polish combat vehicle based on the Soviet T-72 tank but further developed and modernised. Earlier, Poland's defence minister Mariusz Blaszczak said Ukrainian soldiers would be trained by Polish, Canadian and Norwegian instructors at the Leopard training centre in western Poland.

What was supposed to be key here is a message of solidarity with Ukraine on this special day," said one diplomat involved in the confidential negotiations between the 27 EU countries in the bloc's hub Brussels. Earlier on Friday, Ukrainian Prime Minister Denys Shmyhal posed in front of four Leopard battle tanks provided by Poland and posted a series of photos of them being handed over as his embattled nation marked a year since the start of the invasion.

Shmyhal stood with Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki for the images posted on Telegram. "A year ago, tanks went to Ukraine to deprive Ukrainians of their freedom," Schmyhal said. "Today, tanks have also entered Ukraine, but to protect freedom."

Poland is giving Ukraine 14 Leopard A2 tanks. Morawiecki also said 60 PT-91 main battle tanks would be provided after they were promised in January. The PT-91 Twardy is a Polish combat vehicle based on the Soviet T-72 tank but further developed and modernised. Earlier, Poland's defence minister Mariusz Blaszczak said Ukrainian soldiers would be trained by Polish, Canadian and Norwegian instructors at the Leopard training centre in western Poland.

However, they said the turmoil could lead to a new coalition being formed. Dahal said he would support Ram Chandra Paudel from the opposition Nepali Congress party in next month's presidential election, instead of the candidate of his coalition partner, the Communist Unified Marxist Leninist (UML) party. He did not give a reason for his decision, though the Nepali Congress party is a former ally of Dahal's Maoist Centre party.

## Nepal's coalition in trouble as deputy PM, ministers resign

KATHMANDU (Agencies): Nepal's deputy prime minister and three other ministers resigned from the ruling coalition after Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal said he planned to support a presidential candidate from an opposition party.

Rajendra Lingden, the deputy premier who was also the minister for energy, water resources and irrigation, resigned on Saturday in protest, along with the ministers for urban development and legal matters,

while a junior minister assisting Lingden also quit.

"The coalition under which we joined the government is no more intact," Lingden told Reuters news agency, adding that it would not be "proper for them to continue in the government". Political analysts said the move did not suggest that the fledgling government of Dahal, a former Maoist rebel who goes by his nom de guerre Prachanda, was in immediate trouble as it still enjoys majority support in parliament.