

**Police mobile attacked**  
**F.P. Report**  
CHARSADDA: Armed extremists attacked a police mobile during snap checking. One accused was killed and another held with hand grenades and arms. The Parang Police signaled to stop two suspects riding a motorcycle in Shabra area of Charsadda. However, the culprits instead of stopping started firing at police mobile. The police van was damaged but the cops narrowly escaped in the firing.

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

**Fawad acquitted**  
LAHORE (INP): An accountability court Thursday acquitted Fawad Hasan Fawad, former principal secretary to ousted prime minister Nawaz Sharif, in 2018 assets beyond means case. In its verdict, the Lahore Accountability Court ruled that charges against Fawad Hasan Fawad in assets beyond means charges could not be proved. The court accepted his acquittal plea on basis of insufficient evidence.

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KARACHI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif unveiling the plaque of Unit 3 of Karachi Nuclear Power Plant.

## KP IGP discloses bomber was in police uniform

Police chief says won't allow anybody to play with province's peace

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Inspector-General Moazzam Jah Ansari has made it clear that nobody will be allowed to play with the peace and security of the province. He was addressing press conference on Thursday about the status of the investigation into the horrific January 30 Peshawar suicide bomb blast at a mosque inside a highly sensitive police headquarters which claimed over 100 lives.

The attack took place during afternoon worship. An entire wall and some of its roof was blown out. Bloodied survivors emerged limping from the wreckage, while bodies were ferried away in ambulances.

Responding a question related investigation, he Ansari said that the police was closing in on the terror network behind the suicide attack on a mosque in the Peshawar Police Lines area, disclosed that the bomber was clad in a police uniform. The police headquarters in Peshawar is in one of the most tightly controlled areas of the city, housing intelligence and counter-terrorism bureaus, and is next door to the regional secretariat. He stated that police had found ball bearings from the blast site. "We found ball bearings used in a suicide jacket from underneath the rubble of the mosque.

"This was a suicide bomber and we have traced him we have obtained the CCTV footage of his movement from Khyber Road to the Police Lines then how he parked his motorcycle on a side he was in a police uniform and was wearing a mask and a helmet," the officer revealed. "At 12:37pm, he (the attacker) entered the main gate on a motorcycle, came inside, talked to a constable and asked him where the mosque was. This means that the

attacker was not aware of the area he was given a target and there is an entire network behind him he was not a lone wolf," Ansari said. He went on to say that the police have traced the attacker's motorcycle as well. "Investigation is a process that will require time, we are doing it diligently but it will require some patience." Ansari revealed that 10-12kg of TNT, a high explosive, was used in the blast. The combination of the explosive and the ageing building contributed to high death toll. He added that the police could have cleaned up the debris within two hours with heavy machinery but they didn't do so. "This is why there are people who are still breathing in the hospital today." The IG also said that the total death toll of martyrs was being reviewed by the police because of duplicated lists. "We will give you the exact number of martyrs after eliminating all duplication and it will be done in a scientific way." "Both I and my police team are in immense grief right now people believe that we wear uniforms, but we are also humans who have children and families we are all in grief," he said.

Responding another question, Ansari stated that the police had raised voices against the attack to take revenge for each and every martyr, adding that the sacrifices of the policemen would not go in vain. The police chief also said that conspiracy theories were being made to "incite my children (policemen), lead them astray and bring them to the streets".

Talking about the protest in his media talk today, the KP IG said: "We were still burying our dead when another storm brewed. My children were led astray and they started demanding protection." Ansari said that if the officers, who had been trained to fight back, started talking about protection then "who would protect the country".

## 17 died in Kohat mishap

Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: As many as 17 persons were died and three other injured including women and three children in a traffic incident near Kohat tunnel, said Rescue 1122 on Thursday.

A speedy trawler hit a passenger van when it was on the way to Peshawar from Lakki Marwat. Rescue 1122 spokesman informed that initially 17 persons were died on the spot while three persons received critical injuries.

Seven ambulances of Rescue 1122 reached to the spot and shifted the bodies and injured to nearby hospital. The deceased were identified as Noor Rahmat, Suleiman, Akhtar Ali Khan, Ashraf, Hazrat Ali, Irfan Khan, Hameed, Ijaz, Sardar Ali Khan along with woman and three children.

## Maryam to meet Khaqan

BAHAWALPUR (Agencies): As her promotion to the party's high rank is well in debate, PML-N Senior Vice-President Maryam Nawaz said Thursday that she would meet Shahid Khaqan Abbasi following his resignation from the party's office upon Maryam's elevation.

"Abbasi is our senior. He is my elder brother and a long-standing aide of [PML-N supremo] Nawaz Sharif. I will move forward under the leadership of party seniors," Maryam said in a press conference in Bahawalpur after chairing a party meeting.

# PM inaugurates 1,100 MW K-3 nuclear power plant

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday inaugurated K-3, the third unit of Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (KANUP), which will produce 1,100 mega watt of electricity. The project has been completed with the assistance from China.

Addressing on the occasion, the prime minister said K-3 was a step forward in cooperation with Pakistan's trusted friend China. He congratulated the scientists and workers of Pakistan and China who strove for completion of the project. He said the staff of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, who contributed to the project, would be invited to the Prime Minister's Office for public recognition.

The prime minister said in view of \$27 billion energy import bill, Pakistan required alternative and inexpensive sources of energy including solar, wind, hydel and nuclear. He said Pakistan was blessed with enormous resources, had the potential of producing 60,000 mega watts through hydel power, and regretted that the power generation stood merely at 10,000 megawatt.

He recalled that the project of KANUP was finalized during the tenure of then prime minister Nawaz Sharif and expressed gratitude to the Government of China for extending cooperation in this regard. Shehbaz Sharif mentioned that the electricity projects under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor were greatly contributing to the country's energy demands through the production of thousands of megawatts. Director General International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Rafael Mariano Grossi, in a video message, emphasized the importance of safe use of

## Shehbaz invites Imran to all-parties conference amid daunting challenges

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Thursday invited Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan to an all-parties conference (APC) aimed at finding solutions to surmount the daunting economic and political crises. The prime minister seeks to bring heads of all political parties on the table so they can join heads and figure ways out of the ongoing situation. Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said in a statement. The conference is set to take place in Islamabad on February 7. In this regard, she said, Federal Minister Ayaz Sadiq has begun contacting top PTI leaders — including former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser and ex-defence minister Perviz Khattak — and asked them to participate in the upcoming moot. The invitation is a major development as the PDM-led government and the PTI have always been at loggerheads over almost all national issues, not only since Khan's ouster from the PM Office, but even when the tables were turned.

nuclear energy as Pakistan faced challenges of climate change. Chairman Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission Raja Ali Raza Anwar said National Electric Power Regulatory Authority had declared KANUP as a high power producing facility with its 27.15 percent production.

**Pakistan to keep extending unwavering support to Kashmiris:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said that Pakistan would keep extending its unwavering support to the people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir who had been cornered through the Indian illegal actions of August 2019.

The prime minister, chairing a meeting to review the preparations for the observance of Kashmir Solidarity Day on February 5, said the people of Pakistan would not sit idle till the just resolution of Kashmir dispute. He instructed all the relevant departments to work in cohesion regarding the preparations for Kashmir Solidarity Day.

The representatives of the federal ministries, governments of the provinces as well as Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir briefed the prime minister about their respective preparations. They told the meeting that rallies, walks, photo exhibitions, debate contests and other events would be held across the country.

Addressing the participants, the prime minister said that for the last 75 years, India had illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir and the violence had increased in recent days. He reiterated the resolve that the voice of the Kashmiri people would be conveyed to the whole world and that the people of Pakistan would keep up their support for the oppressed Kashmiris. Federal ministers Khawaja Saad Rafiq, Marriyum Aurangzeb, Maulana Asad Mahmood, Rana Tanveer Hussain and Aminul Haq, Advisor to PM Qamar Zaman Kaira, Special Assistant to PM Tariq Fatemi and senior officers attended the meeting.

## We want polls in peaceful environment: KP Governor

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Ghulam Ali on Thursday reiterated that he wanted to hold elections in the province in 70 to 90-day but emphasised on conducive and peaceful environment for the polls.

Addressing a joint press conference here at the Governor House along with caretaker Chief Minister Azam Khan, he said, "we are ready to hold elections in 70 to 90 days, but an all-party conference should be convened immediately to decide election day in consultation with the relevant institutions."

The governor said that he had written a letter to the Election Commission and its interpretation was totally different. "I

want to hold a peaceful election, when the assembly was dissolved, the situation was not like this. It would be appropriate to announce the date of the election after consultation with all stakeholders."

He said that during a meeting with the tribal elders he came to know the situation in the tribal districts was not up to the mark but a single party was not understanding the gravity of the situation. The Governor deplored that despite the Peshawar Police Line blast the PTI leadership was insisting on an election date, adding that nobody from PTI attended the funerals of the martyrs.

He said that Imran Khan was blaming him for delaying the elections and

clarified that he asked the Election Commission to hold elections and suggested that consultations should be done, as the police could possibly refuse to do election duty in prevailing circumstances.

Ghulam Ali said that from 2018 to 2022, there were 465 terrorist attacks, the districts in which these attacks took place included Peshawar, Mardan, DI Khan and Bannu but Maulana Fazlur Rahman didn't do politics on the issue like Imran Khan. He criticised Imran Khan over his politics and said that when he and his party members resigned from the assembly then how could they now protest against approval of the resignation.

## Two-day physical remand of Sh Rashid granted

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): A local court in Islamabad has granted police two-day physical remand of Awami Muslim League (AML) leader and PTI ally Sheikh Rashid Ahmed, hours after the politician was arrested in connection with remarks he made against former president Asif Ali Zardari.

Ahmed was arrested on a police complaint filed by Raja Inayatullah Rehman, the vice president of PPP Rawalpindi Division, where in he said that the AML chief, in a television interview on Jan 27, alleged that Zardari got the assistance of some terrorists to plan Imran's murder.

During the hearing presided over by Judicial Magistrate Omar Shabbir, the police requested Ahmed's eight-day physical remand while the prosecution also requested the politician's physical remand. The court announced the reserved verdict, granting the police 2-day physical remand of the AML chief.

At the outset of the hearing, the prosecutor presented the case record in the court and the police requested the court for Ahmed's eight-day remand. The AML chief asked, "First, open my handcuffs." He lamented, "I have been a minister 16 times. Why isn't the handcuff being opened? They've put it on for the whole night." Accepting his demand, the

police opened the handcuffs. Upon Prosecutor Adnan reading out the case registered against Ahmed, the judge asked, "Show me that sentence in the case where Section 120 is applicable." The prosecutor asserted, "Sheikh Rashid is creating danger for Asif Zardari's family. According to the sections, Sheikh Rashid can be sentenced to seven years in jail and be fined."

He argued, "Sheikh Rashid gave the statement that Asif Ali Zardari has conspired to kill Imran Khan. In Pakistan, people can be ready to slit throats at the smallest things. Imran Khan has been attacked previously as well. There has been an attempt to create incitement between the parties of Imran Khan and Asif Zardari. Asif Zardari and his family's life is at risk." The prosecutor then requested a physical remand of the AML chief.

The judge then asked, "Has Asif Zardari told you that he's in danger?" The prosecutor responded that Ahmed has given the statement himself. Prosecutor Adnan then closed his arguments by asserting that Ahmed's voice-matching test needs to be conducted by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) and a photogrammetric test is needed as well, emphasising that they were "incredibly important" during the trial.



## Attention International Travellers

Under the latest SBP's Foreign Exchange Regulations & FBR's notification, **International travellers are required to declare foreign currency while departing or arriving in Pakistan**

It is illegal to carry foreign currency exceeding the prescribed limits

AGE LIMIT	CURRENCY LIMIT PER VISIT	CURRENCY LIMIT (ANNUAL)
Adults (18 years and older)	\$ 5000 or equivalent other foreign currency	\$ 30,000 or equivalent other foreign currency
Children (under 18 years of age)	\$ 2500 or equivalent other foreign currency	\$ 15,000 or equivalent other foreign currency

Currency limits for travelling to Afghanistan

CURRENCY LIMIT PER VISIT	CURRENCY LIMIT (ANNUAL)
\$ 1000 or equivalent other foreign currency	\$ 6,000 or equivalent other foreign currency



You can now declare foreign currency through mobile app:

- Download PassTrack mobile app
- Register by entering the required information and submit



Limit for Pakistani currency is Rs 10,000 per visit.

COMPLY WITH LAW-BE SAFE

In case you need any assistance for the declaration of foreign currency, feel free to contact Pakistan Customs staff at the airport.

PID(U)4802-D/22

helpline@fbr.gov.pk

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051 111 772 772

www.fbr.gov.pk



### Two traffic wardens tortured by 8 culprits in Lahore

LAHORE (INP): Two traffic wardens were brutally tortured by eight armed culprits riding motorcycles here in the metropolis on Thursday. Reports said that patrolling officers Afzal and Fazl-ur-Rehman intercepted four armed culprits in Shadman Chowk of Lahore. The culprits held the two traffic wardens, severely tortured them and opened fire at them but they remained unharmed in the gunfire. The accused fled the scene after beating the patrolling officers.

Chief Traffic Office (CTO) Lahore Captain (retd) Mustansar Feroze took notice of the incident and said that accused involved in the incident will have to face dire consequences. The CTO along with SP Sohail Fazal also visited the Shadman Chowk. Meanwhile, police have registered a case against unknown armed persons under serious provisions including attempted murder and started efforts for their arrest.

### RUDA marks World Wetlands Day

LAHORE (APP): Commemorating the World's Wetlands Day, the Chief Executive Officer Ravi Urban Development Authority (RUDA) Imran Ameen visited the Ravi site here on Thursday and reviewed the river front.

On the occasion, Imran Ameen said that the Hydrology and Environment Department of RUDA were working on the conservation and rehabilitation by planting native flora, creating habitats for wildlife particularly the turtles that were once the yardstick of Ravi's beauty along with participating on citizen environment projects and initiatives.

Mr Imran said, "We have to be conscious of our choices, reducing pollution conservation of water as wetland wildlife is adept at using water especially fish fauna which used to be main aspect and source of livelihood for many people since ages.

Similarly, bird ecology including 12 bird species that were recorded from the river, has faced habitat degradation over time, now if we fail to protect nature in this span of time, the Ravi will be nothing than a drain carrier," he added.

The CEO appreciated Engineering Department for working tirelessly on wildlife ecology restoration study and ways to bring back life into the river, additionally he instructed the teams to beef up surveillance for the conservation of land along with aquatic life.

Later, he visited the RUDA's industrial site and instructed the team to work on ways to reduce industrial wastes and have impeccable industrial hygiene and espouse a culture of ongoing, steady remediation, which will surely contribute in reducing pollution and improve the environment.

It is pertinent to note that RUDA commemorated the World Wetlands Day and released an inspirational video; "RUDA, where life thrives".

## Governor directs caretaker CM for recruitment

LAHORE (INP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rahman has directed the Caretaker Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi to start the recruitment process on public universities.

He said that vacant seats of Vice Chancellors, Pro Vice Chancellors, Deans, Registrars, Treasurer and Controller Examination in public universities should be filled within the next 6 months.

In order to do this, the Higher Education Department and the administrative

departments of the universities wrote a letter to instruct them.

The Governor Secretariat sent the list of vacant seats of Vice-Chancellors and those vacant in the near future to the Chief Minister's Secretariat.

Muhammad Balighur Rahman drew the attention of the Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab to the fact that non-timely appointment to important posts affects the administrative affairs and academic activities in the universities.

## Auqaf minister visits Darbar Hazrat Bibi Pak Daman

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Minister of Auqaf Barrister Azfar Ali along with his son Syed Babar Ali Nasir visited Darbar Hazrat Bibi Pak Daman here on Thursday.

On this occasion, Secretary Auqaf Syed Tahir Raza Bukhari and other officers welcomed the minister.

The Auqaf minister was briefed by other officers

about the development works at the Darbar. Caretaker Auqaf Minister Barrister Azfar Ali Nasir said in his address that Darbar Hazrat Bibi Pak Daman had an important place all over the world. Pilgrims and devotees from all over the world attend this Astana in droves. He directed the officers of the department and said that the construction

of the Durbar should be completed as soon as possible. The security should be further tightened. Secretary Auqaf Tahir Raza Bukhari said on the occasion that the upgrading and construction work of Darbar Hazrat Bibi Pak Daman is going on rapidly. He said that Darbar Bibi Pak Daman had been expanded with the modern style construction.

## ‘Round the clock facility of primary angioplasty being provided to common man’

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Health Minister Dr Javed Akram on Thursday said that the facility of primary angioplasty to the common man was being provided 24/7 in the government hospitals on the direction of Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi.

During his visit to the Services Institute of Medical Sciences (SIMS) here, he said that earlier, the facility of primary angioplasty in public hospitals was only available to the elite class.

He said that the SIMS was one of the good institutions for producing doctors. He said that the Punjab Cabinet, under the supervision of the Chief Minister was working hard to facilitate the citizens. So far, 119 patients had been given the facility of primary angioplasty in Cardiology

Hospitals of Punjab, he said. Dr. Javed said that the government hospitals were being made paperless with the help of PITB and a dashboard was being designed for the government hospitals.

The minister said that quacks were spreading Hepatitis B and C, adding that the outlets of these quacks would be shut down indiscriminately. He informed that the Health Information Management System (HIMS) was running successfully in 7 wards of the Jinnah Hospital. The HIMS system would improve the working of the government hospitals, he added. "We are taking initiatives to improve the emergency services of government hospitals in Punjab," he said.

He said that better treatment of patients in govern-

ment hospitals was the first priority of the government. He said that satisfaction of the people regarding the health facilities was important. The minister said that a ward professor was responsible for providing good facilities to all the patients. He said that in the past, a model pharmacy was built in the Jinnah Hospital and this idea was still successful and the government would work on it to eliminate the mafia involved in the local procurement of medicines.

The caretaker minister directed the public hospitals to make a work plan and medical schools to pay special attention to research. On the occasion, SIMS Principal Professor Farooq Afzal said that according to the vision of caretaker provincial Health minister, the SIMS administration would serve the patients.

## PU organises ‘Job Fair’ for its graduates

LAHORE (APP): Punjab University's faculty of Computing & Information Technology (FCIT) organised its 12th Job Fair on Thursday, in which around 60 leading IT companies from software industry set up their stalls to hire the graduates of FCIT.

These products and services based IT companies, are contributing USD 4 billion annually to the economy of Pakistan. Students at the Job Fair were also enlightened about scholarships and entrepreneurship. Stalls were also set up by CCPC (Career Counseling and Placement Centre, PU), SDC (Skill Development Centre, PU) and BIC (Business Incubation Centre, PU).

FCIT Dean Prof Dr Shahzad Sarwar said that FCIT was committed to imparting quality education and enhancing Pakistan's share in the global market of software industry. He said that FCIT was the leading public sector institution of Pakistan which was producing skilled

graduates, who were working on key positions in multi-national and national IT companies. He said that the purpose of the Job Fair was to facilitate FCIT graduates in matching their skills and abilities with the available career opportunities through interaction with recruitment executives and team leads of various software houses. He said that participant companies had conducted interviews and preliminary recruitment tests, collected CVs, presented technological trends and shared job descriptions/specifications of the available opportunities with the students.

He thanked the FCIT faculty members for their contribution towards achieving goal of quality education.

Further, on behalf of the faculty members, Prof Shahzad Sarwar expressed profound gratitude to the Vice Chancellor Prof Dr Niaz Ahmad Akhtar for his continued support to ensure growth of the FCIT in every possible way.



KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif planting a tree after the inauguration of unit 3 of Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (K-3).

## CM Sindh lauds MALC, health dept in controlling Leprosy

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that the Leprosy Control Program started in the 1960s as a joint venture between the Sindh Health department and Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre (MALC) and within 55 years they successfully controlled Leprosy in 1996 making Pakistan the first country in EMRO (Eastern Mediterranean Region Office) region where Leprosy was controlled well ahead of WHO target of the year 2000.

He congratulated MALC and the Health Department for their incredible accomplishment in creating such an exemplary model of long association and collaborative efforts toward Leprosy Control in Pakistan.

This he said while speaking at the 70th World Leprosy Day organized by Marie Adelaide Leprosy Centre (MALC) at a local hotel on Thursday.

The program was attended by CEO MALC Mr. Mervyn Lobo, German Ambassador Mr. Alfred

Grannas, German Consul General Dr. Rüdiger Lotz, Parliamentary Secretary Health Qasim Soomro, Special Assistant to CM Sadiq Memon, Secretary Health Zulfiqar Shah and various others.

Syed Murad Ali Shah said that World Leprosy Day gave us an opportunity to acknowledge people who have experienced leprosy, raise awareness of the disease, call for an end to the stigma attached to it, and at the same time express gratitude for the commitment of millions of workers, professionals, and donors, including WHO in fighting the battle against leprosy. He added that since Sindh was a highly leprosy-burdened area, it would be the prime time to 'act now and end Leprosy,' which was the theme for this year.

Recalling Dr. Ruth Pfau, the CM Sindh said that she was a true inspiration to everyone who knew her, she devoted her whole life to our country, especially for the poor people affected by Leprosy.

"Her tremendous efforts cannot be put into words - her demise is a great loss not only for Pakistan but for the whole world as she was a symbol of humanity and harmony between people of different religions," he said and added that to keep her legacy alive her team was working with high spirits, venturing into different disciplines such as Tuberculosis, Community Based Inclusive Development, Eye and Mother and Child Health Care.

The CM thanked the people of Germany for their generous support of a humanitarian cause for over 60 years. He added that it was true that Germany and Pakistan shared deep ties and rich history. He also thanked Dr. Saunderson and Dr. Fastinau for coming to Pakistan to support our national program to keep up with international standards. Syed Murad Ali Shah said that his Government was continuously engaged in developing and strengthening the health-care structure in the country.



LAHORE: A view of roads construction work on underway at Kalma Chowk underpass during development projects in Provincial Capital.

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Phone/Fax: 091-9211471, 091-9211471

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INVITATION OF BIDS

(Single Stage Two Envelopes)

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

S #	Title of Work	NIT Amount	Earnest Money	Tender Cost
	<b>DISTRICT CHARSADDA</b>			
1	Construction of PCC Street, Drain & Retaining Wall at UC Rajar-I & II District Charsadda	Rs. 39,764,524/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
2	Construction of PCC Street, Drain & Retaining Wall at UC Dheri Zardad & Nissata and VC Faqir Abad District Charsadda	Rs. 43,688,348/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
3	Construction of PCC Street, Drain & Retaining Wall at UC Dosehra & Dargai District Charsadda	Rs. 39,764,524/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
4	Construction of PCC Street, Drain & Retaining Wall at UC Ghunda Karkana & Sheikho District Charsadda	Rs. 33,920,066/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
5	Construction of PCC Street, Drain & Retaining Wall at UC Muhammad Nari & Khanmai District Charsadda	Rs. 39,764,524/-	4% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-

Terms and Condition for Bidding

01.

The constructors/firms/companies who will receive bidding documents are required to submit their bid in two separate sealed envelopes, i.e., one envelop containing technical information/data and documents of the contractor/firm required for post qualification, clearly marked as "Technical Bid", while the second envelop containing bid price clearly marked as 'Financial Bid'.

02.

The application must be accompanied with bid security in shape of CDR/deposit at call from any Scheduled Bank of Pakistan, in favour of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak.PWD, Peshawar, clearly mentioning the name of firm, whereas the difference of the tendered amount must be accompanied with Financial Bid with its sealed envelop.

03.

Bidders may purchase the Bidding Documents from the office of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD Peshawar at cost of Rs. 5,000/- (Non refundable upto 23/02/2023) during office hours.

04.

Envelopes of Technical Bid & Financial Bid shall be submitted in the office of the Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD Shami Road Peshawar on 24/02/2023 by 12.30 PM. The envelope containing Technical Bid shall be opened on same day at 01.00 P.M in the presence of Bidders representatives who opt to be present, Bids received after the prescribed date and time shall not be accepted.

05.

Bidders will be Technically Qualified on the basis of information provided with the Bids as per the criteria prescribed in the Bidding Documents. Once a Technical Bid received and opened in this office, no addition/subtraction/alteration of any sort of document will be acceptable.

06.

Pay Order/Demand draft will not be acceptable.

07.

All CDR once received will be credit into the Government Account and will be re-funded through Government Cheque.

08.

No tender will be entertained without bid security @ 4% of the bid amount if not found will be declared as non responsive.

09.

Every firm/contractor must provide the affidavit on stamp paper regarding the non litigation with the department.

10.

Under Rule 33(1) of PPRA Rules 2004, the under signed reserves the right to accept/reject any or all bids/ proposals at any time prior to acceptance of a bid or proposal.

11.

The documents provided by the bidders will be verified and in case found ambiguous/fake one, the firm will face immediate/appropriate penal action as per rules and law.

12.

METHOD OF PROCUREMENT

>

As per PPRA rule 36(b), open competitive Bidding with "Single Stage Two Envelop" Procedure- One envelop containing Technical Proposal and the other Financial Proposal and both sealed in separate envelopes.

>

After conducting evaluation of Technical Bids, qualified firms shall be informed accordingly for opening of their Financial Bids whereas bids of unqualified firms shall be returned unopened.

>

Non-compliance of Instructions to bidders in the Tender Documents will lead to disqualification / non-responsiveness of the bid/firm.

Nazir Ahmad, Executive Engineer

PID(P) 039/2023

Central Civil Division No-II, Pakistan Public Works Department

Shami Road Peshawar





PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali alongwith care-taker Chief Minister and provincial cabinet members addressing a joint press conference at Governor’ House.

### Huge quantity of expired items seized

PESHAWAR (APP): District administration Peshawar has recovered a huge quantity of expired items during a raid on a godown at Duranpur here on Thursday.

On the directives of the Deputy Commissioner Peshawar, Shafiullah Khan, Assistant Commissioner Dr Eza Arshad conducted a raid on a godown at Duranpur wherein the expiry dates on products of renowned brands were being changed fraudulently.

The products included various kinds of chocolate, children’s milk formula, chips, bubble gums, coffee and others.

Members of the group were used to collect expired goods from various localities of the district and then fixed fake expiry dates on them at the godown for further supply to markets.

Thousands of stickers, stamps and other packing material have been taken into possession from the godown.

The ringleader of the gang has been arrested and sealed the godown.

Deputy Commissioner Peshawar, Shafiullah Khan has directed officers of the district administration to inspect bazaars of their jurisdiction and take action against the violation of any hygienic principle.

### Cold, cloudy weather predicted

PESHAWAR (INP): The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Thursday predicted cold and partly cloudy to cloudy weather over most districts of the province, while very cold in upper districts and hilly areas.

During the last 24 hours, cold and partly cloudy weather occurred over most districts of the province, while very cold in upper districts and hilly areas.

The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar City 22/07, Chitral 09/-1, Timergara 18/05, Dir 14/-2, Mirkhani 09/-3, Kalam 09/-09, Droshe 08/00, Saidu Sharif 16/02, Pattan 18/10, Malam Jabba 06/-3, Takht Bhai 21/04, Kakul 15/00, Balakot 18/02, Parachinar 09/-7, Bannu 24/05, Cherat 12/01, D.I. Khan 25/08.

## QWP urges to control POL prices

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Leader of Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Syed Fayyaz Ali Shah on Thursday urged the federal government to control prices of petroleum products and electricity as the common man could be afford any further increase in the wake prevailing law and order situation and economic recession.

Addressing the party meeting in PK-81, he also demanded pragmatic steps by the federal and provincial governments to maintain security in the province and control rising inflation.

Special prayers were offered for the recovery of the martyrs, the recovery of

the injured, and sympathy was expressed with the bereaved families.

In the meeting, arrangements were also made for the participation of a large number of workers from PK 81 in the 48th anniversary rally of Hayat Muhammad Khan Sherpao on February 13.

Syed Fayaz Ali Shah further

said PTI brought the country’s economy at this critical juncture and made the life difficult for the common man.

He said that people were suffering from insecurity and depression and if the government would not provide them relief and security the situation would further worsen in the country.



PESHAWAR: Police officials offering Nazm-e-Janaza of martyred policeman.

## Siraj appeals people to ensure participation in peace march on 8th

PESHAWAR (INP): Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Sirajul Haq has said that the JI will hold peace march in Peshawar on February 8, and he appealed the people of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to ensure their participation in it.

Addressing a press conference here on Thursday, he said that the ruler have failed to protect the life and property of innocent people as the bomb blast in a sensitive and high security zone of Peshawar raised serious questions in their capability to tackle the threat of terror.

“I will lead the march in which thousands of people will participate,” he said, demanding the rulers accept their incompetence and resign. He said that if such incident had happened in any European country, the

president and the prime minister would have resigned but the provincial and federal governments were not willing to admit their failure except from issuing the routine statements.

He said the PDM and the PPP coalition government was the continuation of the PTI. Their policies, he added, led to the collapse of economy and created serious security problem in the country. The PTI’s 10 years rule in KP, he said, was an episode of bad-governance and corruption. The former ruling party, he said, had not taken any step for the development and peace in the province.

The JI chief said the frustration of the people had reached to the peak and they were no longer ready to listen to the hollow claims and

lies of the ruling elite of three parties (the PPP, the PML-N and the PTI). People, he said, wanted real change and only the JI had the capacity to give it to them. He said the JI would bring change by introducing Quran and Sunnah based system in the country.

Siraj announced the JI would also hold three-day march against inflation from February 10. The march, he added, would start from Lahore and concluded in Islamabad where he would announce the next strategy. He said the JI would resist the anti-poor conditions of the IMF and would not allow the government giving them legal cover. He said the government made full surrender before the global lender, damaging the rights of the poor masses.

## Adnan allotted portfolio of Industries, Technical Education, Revenue

PESHAWAR (APP): Adnan Jalil has been allotted the portfolio of Industries, Technical Education and Revenue in the caretaker cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said an official notification issued here on Thursday.

Adnan Jalil, a former Edwardian has his Masters and Post-Graduation in International Business Administration from London. He is the son of

late veteran politician Haji Mohammad Adeel.

After completion of education, he joined the banking sector and had worked for five years on the commercial and consumer side and also remained associated with PC Peshawar.

Since, last 20 years running his own business with the name of Al-Jabran Enterprise.

He has also remained Vice President of the

Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce & Industry and President of Peshawar Chamber of Small Traders and Industries and had headed various committees of the apex trade body as convener.

He has remained as a member of the Board of Directors of KP Economic Zones Development & Management Company (KP-EZDMC), KP-BoIT and SME Bank.

### ‘Collective efforts to beat militancy needed’

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to Prime Minister on Political Affairs, Ameer Muqam Thursday said that collective and sincere efforts were needed to subdue and eliminate militancy.

Talking to media, he said that militancy has resurfaced again which is not restricted to any particular area. He said that nation should remain steadfast and show resilience to over the scourge of militancy.

He said that at this critical juncture of time we should refrain from targeting state institutions to show unity. He also accused previous government for not taking effective steps to combat and eradicate terrorism.

He said that past government failed to take timely steps for the revival of economy and not PMLN government was clearing the mess created by previous rulers.

### PHC Clerk Association demands action F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court Lawyer’s Clerk Association (PHCLCA) president Muhammad Islam argued that competent authorities especially provincial government to take stern actions against dacoits and incidents robbery, on Thursday.

PHCLCA president argued competent authorities to take stern actions against robbers and dacoits in Nowshera especially in the premises of Akbarpura because on daily basis such incidents are reported.

This he demanded while talking with media personnel at Peshawar High court and added that Regional Police Officer Mardan along with District Police Officer Nowshera were requested via written application but to no veil.

PHCLCA president claimed that his cattle was stolen by unknown thieves while the culprits are still roaming freely because police has failed to arrest them.

He added that a petition should be file before Peshawar High Court in this regard for identification of culprits involved in robberies and other offenses. FIR has been lodged against unknown thieves at Akbarpura police station in this regard.

### Govt failed to arrest ‘inflation’ F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Amun Taraqqi Party (ATP) chairman Muhammad Faiq Shah severely criticised the incumbent coalition government over failure to arrest the rising inflation, bringing price stability and another hike in power tariff.

According to reports, Shah observed that inflation has sharply risen up during the last five decades while the 47 years record of price-hike has also broken.

He criticized the incumbent government for failure to arrest inflation and economic slide while inability to achieve economic growth and bringing price stability.

On the other hand, he said the power tariff has been increased by R3per unit and it will be raised to Rs6 per unit in the first month of the financial year whereas the tough condition of IMF has made it hard to arrest the rising inflation in the country.

## KPEZDMC’s CEO extension: PHC issued notices to respondents

**Humayun Khan**

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Shakeel Ahmad has issued notices to respondents for granting extension to Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zone Development and Management Company (KPEZDMC), on Thursday.

The writ was filed by Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Trans Peshawar Safdar Shabbir Awan while counsel for petitioner Sangeen Khan Advocate informed PHC that KPEZDC CEO Javid Iqbal Khattak was appointed for three years in 2020 by Board of Governor and now granting extension till 2026 while processes is initiated in this regard.

The counsel argued that

this act is against Company Act 2017, Public Sector Companies 2013 Rules and guidelines while requested PHC to suspend Human Resource Committee notification for granting extension KPEZDC CEO.

The counsel requested PHC to suspend illegal extension to CEO Javid Iqbal Khattak till disposal of this writ petition while the divisional bench has issued notices to respondents.

## FC North holds special seminar in Balahisar Fort



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Frontier Corps North has organizes a special seminar in Fort Balahisar, Peshawar. The aim of the seminar was to highlight the discovery of minerals in the three tribal districts, its benefits, promotion of economic activities in the area and to provide a suitable platform for increasing cooperation between all stakeholders.

The seminar was attended by the senior officials of Mines & Minerals Department, Pakistan Mineral Development Corporation, National Center of Excellence Peshawar, Sarhad Chamber of Commerce, District Chamber of Commerce Security Forces,

District Administration, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Culture & Tourism Authority, local elders and a large number of investors.

In the seminar, the participants highlighted the importance of mineral resources in the tribal districts of Bajaur, Mohmand & Khyber and said that through the right measures, the discovery of mineral resources will usher a new era of development and prosperity in these districts. Along with this, people will also get wide employment opportunities.

On this occasion, the speakers emphasized on the solution of the technical and local problems in the discovery of mineral resources in these three districts and suggested various steps so that the discovery of minerals can be continued keeping in view the requirements of the modern age.

The participants expressed that such forums should be continued in future as well so that mining and mineral exploration can be promoted in these districts with joint efforts of all stakeholders.

The participants thanked the senior officials of Frontier Corps North for organizing the successful seminar and said that industries in these areas will be promoted through various initiatives and these areas will play an important role in the economic development of Pakistan.

## 85 death bodies received by forensic lab KMC

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In a recent tragic incident that hits the KP Police line brutally, Khyber Medical College’s forensic department received 85 dead bodies for autopsy & 6 body parts for DNA including 3 parts of a suspected suicide bomber’s face/skull and two legs whose DNA is reported in just two days & the remaining body parts are successfully matched and handed over.

sexual assault, bomb blasts, identification in mass disasters, detection of serious crimes, missing person investigation, and DNA profiling for database generation.

Forensic Lab has preceded about 650 cases comprising 10,000 plus

samples from 2018 till now. Muhammad Jamil, incharge DNA, Prof. Dr. Hakim Afridi, Chairman of Forensic Lab KMC is running the forensic lab efficiently under the supervision of Dean KMC Prof. Dr. Mahmud Aurangzeb.

### AG Pakhtunkhwa appointed F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Amir Javeed has been appointed as Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, here on Thursday.

In this regard, Secretary Law and parliamentary affairs Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has issued notification.

The notification stated that Amir Javeed is appointed as Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with immediate effect.

It is worthy to note that Amir Javeed has already served federation as Additional Attorney General of Pakistan.

## VP ICS Masoom Khan services praised



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Vice Principal of Islamia Collegiate School (ICS) Masoom Khan has been retired after serving the historical institution.

ICS Teaching Association President Dr. Inayat-ur-Rehman, general secretary Kafeel Ahmad, Sikandar Khan, Hayat Khan, Khan Badshah,

Rooh Ullah and Abdul Nasir paid tribute to services of outgoing vice principal ICS.

Principal ICS Dur-e-Zaiba appreciated Masoom Khan services for educating the nation at the historical century old institution. She also appreciated ICS teaching association officers for their services for schools and faculty members.

## Economic development should be initiated in tribal areas

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Shah Faisal Afridi, Chairman of Tribal Rights Movement and leader of Jamaat-e-Islami, said that for the establishment of law and order in the merged tribal districts, the annual giving of 100 billion announced by the Sartaj Aziz Committee, 3 percent contribution towards the NFC award, national Other demands including restoration of 12 seats in the assembly, rejecting the committee to spend the money announced by the tribal districts on the faith of the bureaucracy, increasing

the provincial assembly from 16 to 24, declaring the tribal districts as tax-free zones for 20 years. If it is not done, all the tribals will be taken into confidence and a decisive protest movement will be conducted, in which meetings, processions, rallies, seminars and sit-ins will be held from the district level to the central level while giving a counter view

Shah Faisal Afridi presented the demands of the Tribal Rights Movement and said that practical measures should be taken without discrimination to establish peace and order in

the merged tribal districts. The backwardness of the tribal districts should be removed and developed like other districts of Pakistan.

The government is running away from the recommendations of the Sir Taj Aziz Committee on FATA reforms using different pretexts, which is a violation of the rights of the tribals. The government should immediately implement the recommendations of the committee. 100 billion annually and 1000 billion rupees in 10 years to fulfill the promise, the bureaucracy and governments are

obstacles in this money, they also reject the federal committee.

He said Tribal districts have as much right to national resources as other provinces. Therefore, the announced 3 percent share of the NFC award should be provided soon, while respecting the voting rights of the tribals, 12 seats of the National Assembly should be restored and 16 to 24 seats of the provincial assembly should be restored. Accept instead of doing. For the economic stability of the tribal districts, it is imperative that the “lease” procedure be

simplified. Interest-free loans should be given to the unemployed youth of the tribal districts to provide them with better employment opportunities. Considering the sacrifices of the tribals for the sake of the country, they should be given the right to be respected citizens of the country. Immediate payment of compensation for the demolished houses in the tribal districts. Be sure. At least 20,000 local people should be recruited in Levies for tribal districts. Plans for economic development in tribal districts should be finalized and

political leadership should be taken into confidence. Negative activities should be crushed by bringing educational revolution in tribal districts. Therefore, it is inevitable that universities, colleges and schools should be built in every district and the damaged infrastructure should be restored. Tribals also have the right to have health facilities at their doorstep like other Pakistanis, but it is a sad fact that there is no medical college and big hospital in the 20 thousand square mile areas, so practical steps should be taken to provide immediate health facilities.





## In brief

### Three killed in Bannu incidents F.P. Report

BANNU: At least three people including a woman were killed in separate incidents of firing and suicide in Bannu district on Thursday. Police said a man identified as Rehmat Ullah, resident of Shobarkhel, Bakakhel was killed when the accused identified as Mantali, Allah Jan and Naseeb fired at him in Ladikhel area. Two pedestrians including Eida Khan of Customs, Bakakhel and Manza Pir of Ghorakhel also sustained bullet injuries in the firing. In the second incident, Sayyed Muhammad Sajjad, resident of Peshin was killed by accidental fire when his friends were loading a gun in Adil Kot area of Saddar police station. The third incident occurred in the limits of Cantt police station where the wife of Sabeel shot herself dead with a pistol over some domestic issues. Police have registered cases of all three incidents and started investigation.

### Police arrests drug dealers F.P. Report

CHITRAL: Police has arrested alleged drug-dealer and recovered hashish from his possession in the premises of Darosh police station, on Thursday. According to details, on the special orders of District Police Officer (DPO) Lower Chitral Nasir Mehmood during the ongoing crackdown against drug dealers headed by SDPO Circle Drosh Iqbal Karim, SHO Drosh Police Station SI Abrar Ahmed recovered 1032 grams of hashish from the possession of notorious drug dealer Shaukat Khan resident of Wardhap. DPO argued public to cooperate with the police in making Lower Chitral drug free. You can inform about drug dealers in your areas by sending a text message or WhatsApp to DPO Lower Chitral personal number 03225333397). Police is determined for drug free Chitral.

### Ex-PML-N MPA joins PTI

JARANWALA (INP): Former Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) member of provincial assembly (MPA) Rai Haider Ali Khan along with his supporters has joined Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). According to media reports, Rai Haider Ali Khan was elected Punjab Assembly MPA from PP-101 Jaranwala. The former PML-N MPA vowed to follow Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's political agenda and expressed his confidence in the leadership of Imran Khan. He also criticised the PDM government for 'ruining' the country's economy after the removal of Imran Khan as prime minister. Meanwhile, former prime minister Imran Khan has welcomed former PML-N MPA Rai Haider and his supporters on joining PTI. Earlier, PML-N leader Mian Asif Manzoor announced joining PTI after his meeting with PTI leader Qan Abbas Bappi. The PML-N leader has announced joining PTI along with his supporters.

### Three die in car-bus collision

MUZAFFARGARH (INP): At least three people were killed and one injured in a car-bus collision at Multan Road, near Sanki Bund on Thursday. The occupants of the car, Syed Sajjad Ali Shah (35), Mian Imran (57) and Allah Bakhsh (40) died on the spot. While another passenger, Sajjad Hussain (30) received severe injuries. Rescuers shifted the bodies and injured to DHQ hospital for medico-legal formalities.



**GHALANAI:** Police officials checking vehicles at Prang Ghar area as security tightened in Mohmand District. - F.P. photo

## Tribesmen threaten to discontinue power supply to grade station

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Political, religious, social and other elements of the tribal society threatened that if power was not resumed as per previous policy to them they will suspend power supply to the local grid station and originate protest sit-in in front of it.

Addressing to an emergency press conference held here in Landi Kotal press club on Thursday under the head of City Mayor Haji Shah Khalid, Awami National Party (ANP) local leader Fazal Rehman Afridi, Murad Hussain Afridi of Jamiat e Islami (JI), chief of Landi Kotal Bazar union Haji Jafer, Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazal (JUI-F) Qari Nazeem Gul, General Secretary Khyber Sports Club Kaleem Ullah Shinwari, social workers Ilyas Shinwari along with dozens of political, religious and tribal elites categorically condemned the WAPDA decision to withdrawing the favor to provide supply of power to the tribesmen five hours daily following the government took back subsidy, granted to the tribal.

It is obligatory on the State to guarantee all basic rights to the masses but ironically the tribesmen have been



deprived of facilities for the last seven decades, they added and said in the 12th century we beg for provision of electricity, water and health facilities in Landi Kotal. They maintained that a 20 members committee had been formulated to discuss the issue with the officials and elders of district Khyber would be taken into confidence to collectively raise voice against the injustice.

They urged the concerned authorities to resume electricity to subdivision Landi Kotal as per old scheme

(five hours daily) and let them recommence daily activities. The participants threatened that if their misery was not addressed within two days then they would organize a protest sit-in front of the grid station and would utilize all options to convince the high-up for considering their problems on priority basis. It is to be stated here that according to the new policy the tribesmen will have a two hours supply of electricity round the clock that annoyed the citizens of the merged districts.

## Commissioner reviews facilities in hospitals

F.P. Report

MINGORA: Commissioner Malakand Saqib Raza Aslam presided over a crucial virtual meeting to review facilities in different hospitals of the division. District Health Officers from the districts of Malakand Division participated in the meeting through a video link.

In the meeting, facilities, and duties in the hospitals of Divisional Headquarters Saidu Sharif and District

Headquarters were reviewed. In the meeting, the issues related to the facilities and staff presence in the hospitals at the tehsil level were also discussed. The meeting was told that the hospitals like Saidu Group of Teaching Hospitals and Civil Hospital Saidu Sharif as well as other hospitals in the districts have the necessary medical staff and facilities to provide emergency services.

While presiding over the

meeting, Commissioner Saqib Raza Aslam said that all-time availability of staff should be ensured in the hospitals, and if there is any shortage in the facilities, immediate steps should be taken to fill them. He said that people should not face any kind of difficulties in getting emergency and other services in hospitals and this is possible only when doctors and technical staff are present all the time and the facilities in the hospital are fully functional.

## Steps for elimination of terrorists reviewed

Saqib Mushtaq

BAHAWALPUR: Police are making foolproof security measures to fight against terrorists and criminals, to review the arrangements Additional Inspector General of Police South Punjab Maqsood ul Hassan visited Dera Ghazi Khan, he along with RPO Captain (R) Sajjad Hasan Khan held a meeting with the district police officers.

DPO DG Khan Muhammad Akmal, DPO Muzaaffargarh Ahmad Nawaz Shah, DPO Kot Adu Tanveer Ahmad Malik, DPO Layyah Muhammad Nasir Sial attended the meeting and were directed to arrange the necessary measures to deal with the terrorist elements. RPO Captain (R) Sajjad Hasan Khan briefed about the security arrangements on law and order situations and the district police chiefs briefed about sensitive places, police arrangements to deal with the dread of terrorist and crime situation of their district.

In view of the current situation and incidents of terrorism, IGP South Punjab directed strict security measures must be ensured at sensitive places, foreigners, religious places of worship, public places, police and other important government offices and



check posts. he added that additional personnel should be deployed at important and sensitive places, the officers and personnel posted on security should be alerted at all times, conduct occasional security checks and mock exercises to deal with any emergency situations.

Search, sweeping and combing operations should be conducted on a daily basis along with intelligence and other law enforcement agencies. inter-provincial and inter-district check posts make ensured that strict checking should be done on exit and entrance routes, all citizens and vehicles should be allowed to leave after identification and clearance.

Additional IGP encourages the police employees

and said that to sacrifice their lives in cause of peace in society and safety of peoples is prides of police officers.

He also reviewed the crime situation in all the districts and ordered to take essential steps to reduce the incidents of theft and robbery, he added that merit and compassion are the characteristics of an exemplary officer. Honesty and diligence in performing duties can establish the dignity of the police and improve the positive image of the police in the view of public. Violation of the law is an impeachable act to maintain law and order. Actions will be taken against the officers and employees who are negligent in their duties and misuse their powers.

### Police constable suspended F.P. Report

MALAKAND: On the directives of the Regional Police Officer (RPO) Malakand, Sajjad Khan, the District Police Officer (DPO) Swat has ordered the suspension of Constable Shabir Ahmad for misbehaving with a medical student at Babe Swat Check Post, Swat, said an official order of Swat Police on Thursday.

Besides, suspension of the personnel has also been closed to JIS Police Lines Swat with immediate effect. Furthermore, Incharge Babe Swat (Landakay) Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) Taj Mohammad has been issued a show-cause notice. DPO Swat, Shafiullah Gandapur has issued standing directives to police personnel for showing good behavior with the general public and zero tolerance for misbehaving with the general public.

### Mechanism sought

QUETTA (PPI): Special Secretary, Health Department, has said reformative mechanism was essential to be adopted for preparing Schedule for New Expenditure (SNE) for the department.

These views were expressed by him while chairing a meeting held in his office at Balochistan Civil Secretariat in connection with preparing SNE for the new fiscal year 2023-24. Meeting was attended by Director, Malaria Programme, Dr. Mir Yousaf Khan, Director Public Health, Dr. Khalid Qambrani, Director HRD, Dr. Taj Muhammad Khosa, Manager, Balochistan TB Control Programme, Dr. Asif Shahwani, Deputy Manager, Dr. Aba Bakr Baloch, Project Coordinator, Preventive Health, Dr. Aamir Raisani, Project Coordinator, National Project, Dr. Samiullah kakar, Senior Planning Officer, Dr. Shikoh Mengal, Private Secretary, Special Secretary, Health Department, Zeeshan Ahmed and others attended the meeting.

## Medicines warn to shutdown business in Malakand

Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: As many as two hundred medicine distributors in Malakand Division intimidated to shut their business due to lack of legislation and economic depression, more than 5000 thousand people are feared to be unemployed. The Malakand Division Pharma Distributors Council has demanded the Drug Regulatory Authority of Pakistan (DRAP) and the Ministry of Health to legislate for pharma distributors to bring them out of economic instability.

Despite inflation, our discount has been reduced while we are being forced to keep three months of stock instead of one month. The pharmaceutical companies should be forced to withdraw the expired medicines, if our demands are not accepted in one month, we will be forced to close our business.

Malakand Division Pharma Distributors

Council President Jahan Alam Siddiqui, Swat President Sajid Aman, General Secretary Abbas Khan, Batkhila General Secretary Waqar Ahmed and Haji Bakht Mand while addressing a crowded press conference at Swat Press Club said that more than 200 pharma distributors in Swat, Dir lower and upper Chitral, Batkhila, Buner, Alpuri and Bajaur have invested billions of rupees and are not only supplying medicines to the market but also playing their role in the country's economy.

They said that unfortunately there is a regulation for every business in our country, but no law has been made for pharma distributors, due to which the distributors are forced before the pharmaceutical companies and despite the investment, we are being exploited economically. We have currently invested more than 12 billion dollars in Pakistan but DRAP does not recognize our significance and is not ready to

legislate for us.

They said that the pharma companies have established their monopoly by ignoring the DRAP laws and are not taking back the expired medicines despite the instructions while we are being forced to keep three months of inventory by receiving advance money, for which we are not ready anymore. They said that thousands of people are employed in hundreds of distributions in Malakand division, but due to the economic crisis, it has become impossible for us to keep them anymore.

They added that we supply only legally approved therapeutics in the market and we have nothing to do with spurious medicines. They demanded from DRAP that rules should be made practically for distributors like pharmaceutical and chemists so that no more problems are created for us otherwise we will be forced to protest by closing our businesses within a month.

## Redressal of WCC's demands assured

F.P. Report

WANA: A delegation of Waziristan Chamber of Commerce (WCC) met Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Custom Collector Ashfaq while he assured to resolve legitimate issues of Pak-Afghan border Angoor Ada on priority basis, on Thursday.

WCC demanded that Pak-Afghan Border Angoor Ada Custom authorities and the government should work together to promote trade and business activities in the area. Lower South Waziristan is a region where people have faced extreme hardships due to war for the past several decades.

The patriotism of the people here has not changed even a bit and by being on the defense line, they have stood side by side with the army and security

forces and are still standing. Some elements are trying to stop the commercial activities at the Angoor Ada border so that the trade with Afghanistan is shifted to other border points. If the commercial activities at Angoor Ada Gate are stagnant, there is a danger of weakening the power of the people here, which will deprive them of the fruits of relief and the war on terror.

The local business community and political leaders of Wana said that propaganda is being done against the ongoing commercial activities on Angoor Ada which are harming the interests of the people here. The government should not listen to the words of the elements who sabotage commercial activities and work on a formula to provide facilities and relief to the people in increasing commercial activities.

In this regard, a delegation led by the President of Waziristan Chamber of Commerce Muqarab Khan Wazir and Taj Wazir had a meeting with Custom Collector Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ashfaq. In the meeting, bilateral trade with Afghanistan on the Pak-Afghan border Angoor Ada, poor condition of roads and other important business issues were discussed.

Custom Collector Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ashfaq assured to solve all these problems, and also promised to increase business at Pak-Afghan border Angoor Ada and solve all problems on priority basis. On which the President of Waziristan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Muqarab Khan invited him to come to Pak-Afghan border Angoor Ada and thanked him.

## Rescue 1122 held training sessions for students

F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: Rescue 1122 Dir Lower provided first aid training to the public at public and private institutions, schools, colleges, universities and local community levels in Dir Lower district.

According to details, the series of fire prevention training continues. By continuing the awareness campaign regarding the provision of international style free facilities of Rescue 1122 to the public, an awareness campaign and first aid training was organized at The Knowledge School and College Khal. Training Wing Team Incharge Muhammad Yusuf and Instructor Tariq Khan during the session to provide first aid to the victims in any emergency, stop the bleeding of the patient,

restore the functions of the heart and lungs in case of cardiac arrest, advanced methods of professional airway removal and evacuation will be taught.

During the training, the students were taught different methods of how to provide immediate first aid to the sick or injured in case of any type of emergency and how to control or reduce the fire in case of fire so that human lives and property are not lost. The damage is minimal. The training wing in charge of Rescue 1122 further said that in case of any emergency where there is a road traffic accident, fire emergency, building collapse or any medical emergency, the toll free number of Rescue 1122 (1122) can call absolutely free. Rescue personnel are ready day and night to deal with all kinds

of emergencies and reach the suffering humanity in moments. He said that the main purpose of awareness is to provide basic information about the service to the public.

The public should call Emergency Rescue 1122 This series will continue in the future as well. Day or night, wind or storm Rescue 1122 Dir Lower are at your service 24 hours a day to help any person in trouble or to save and protect him from trouble. Preparing for is the best practice in both cases and continuing the same process, at the end of the program, the director and principal of the school paid tribute to the Director General Rescue 1122 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dr. Khateer Ahmed, District Emergency Officer Abrar Ali and the rescue personnel.

## All bodies of Lasbela bus tragedy identified

LASBELA (INP): All the burnt bodies of Lasbela passenger bus tragedy have been identified after DNA tests. On January 29, the ill-fated passenger coach was coming to Karachi from Quetta when it lost its control due to overspeeding and fell into a gorge and caught fire.

According to media

reports, 38 bodies were identified in the DNA test reports. The bodies were handed over to the heirs from the Edhi morgue. The owners of the ill-fated passenger coach had been booked at Lasbela police station.

A case has been registered against the owners and the driver of the bus in

the Lasbela tragedy on the complaint of SHO. The FIR had been registered under sections of attempt to kill, negligence, and irresponsible driving. The FIR further said that the owners of the passenger coach allowed the vehicle to leave for Karachi from Quetta despite technical faults.

## 7th death anniversary Ex-CJP Naseem Hassan Shah to be observed today

FAISALABAD (INP): The 7th death anniversary of former Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Naseem Hassan Shah will be observed on Friday.

Ceremonies to mark the day would be organized at his native city Faisalabad and other cities across the country by his fans. Ex CJP Naseem Hassan Shah

was born on April 15, 1929 at Lahore.

During his judicial career, he created a new history by giving historical decisions. CJ Naseem Hassan Shah gave historic decision that President Ghulam Ishaq Khan's dismissal of the Nawaz Sharif government and dissolution of the National

Assembly were "illegal and unconstitutional" and ordered both the government and the legislative branch "restored and entitled to function immediately." Naseem Hassan served as 21st Chief Justice of Pakistan from April 26, 1993 to April 14, 1994. He passed away on February 03, 2015.





## US winter storm causes 3rd day of dangerous, icy conditions

OKLAHOMA CITY (AP): A deadly storm system lashed a large swath of the southern US with bands of sleet and snow for a third day, grounding an additional 2,300 flights, leaving hundreds of thousands without power, forcing school closures and making already treacherous driving conditions worse.

Watches and warnings about wintry conditions were issued for an area stretching West Texas' border with Mexico through Oklahoma, Arkansas and Louisiana, and into western Tennessee and northern Mississippi. Several rounds of mixed precipitation, including freezing rain and sleet, were in store for many areas throughout the day, meaning some places could get hit multiple times, forecasters said.

"It actually looks like it's going to be getting worse again across Texas, it is already a pretty big area of freezing rain across western and south-western Texas," said Bob Oravec, a lead National Weather Service fore-caster based in Camp Springs, Maryland. Oravec said the icy weather is expected to move northeastward across parts of Oklahoma and Arkansas into western Tennessee and northern Mississippi before it starts to dissipate. "By later in the day on Thursday it should be pretty much done, and all the ... precipitation will be well downstream across parts of the South and where it will be mostly heavy rain," Oravec said. At least 2,300 US flights had been canceled, including three-quarters of the flights at Dallas-Fort Worth International Airport and more than two-thirds at Dallas Love Field, according to the flight tracking service FlightAware.com. Dallas-Forth Worth International is American Airlines' biggest hub, and Love Field is a major base for Southwest Airlines.

Many flights were also canceled at other airports, including in San Antonio, the Texas capital of Austin, and Nashville, Tennessee, com-pounding frustrations caused by the nearly 2,000 cancellations and rough-ly 1,100. Because of the storm, the Detroit Pistons were unable to fly home following their game against the Dallas Mavericks, and the NBA postponed the Pistons' home game against the Washington Wizards.



Many schools throughout Arkansas have announced they would be closed on Thursday. School sys-tems in Dallas; Austin, Texas; and Memphis, Tennessee, also canceled classes for Thursday. In Texas, more than 350,000 customers were without power as trees - heavy with ice - buckled onto power lines, according to PowerOutage, a website that tracks utility reports. More than half of those outages were in Austin, where the city's utility warned residents who had been without electricity for 10 hours or longer that lights and heat may not come back on until Thursday. Overnight low tempera-tures were expected to fall to 33 degrees in Austin, with more chances for freezing rain, according to the National Weather Service. Austin Energy asked customers to prepare emergency plans and relocate before dusk if needed. Pablo Vegas, who heads the Electric Reliability Council of Texas, vowed that the state's elec-trical grid and natural gas supply would be reliable and that there wouldn't be a repeat of the February 2021 blackouts, when the grid was on the brink of total failure.

As the ice and sleet enveloped Memphis, Tennessee, Memphis-Shelby County Schools announced it would cancel classes due to freezing rain and hazardous road conditions. The school system serves about 100,000 students. The National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis also closed due to the weather. Also in

Memphis, the icy weather delayed the funeral service for Tyre Nichols, who died following a brutal beating by police during a traffic stop. But more icy weather was moving in from the southwest just ahead of the funeral, which was pushed back.

"The third and FINAL round of freezing rain and/or sleet will start this afternoon," the National Weather Service's Memphis office posted on social media. The leading edge of a wintry mix of precipitation was about 25 miles (40 kilometers) south of Memphis, radar showed. The Dallas school district, which serves about 145,000 students, also canceled classes.

Emergency responders rushed to hundreds of auto collisions across Texas and Republican Gov. Greg Abbott urged people not to drive. At least six people have died on slick Texas roads since Monday, including a triple fatality crash near Brownfield, about 40 miles (64 kilo-meters) southwest of Lubbock. Two Texas law officers, including a state trooper who was struck by a vehicle while investigating a crash on Interstate 45 southeast of Dallas, were seriously injured, authorities said. In Arkansas, Republican Gov. Sarah Huckabee Sanders declared a state of emergency because of icy conditions. Her declaration cited the "likelihood of numerous downed power lines" and said road conditions have created a backlog of deliveries by commercial drivers.

## Hospital fire in Cairo kills 3, injures 32

CAIRO (AP): A fire broke out at a hospital in the Egyptian capital of Cairo, killing at least three people and injuring at least 32 others, health authorities said. The Health Ministry said the fire took place at the Noor Mohammadi hospital in eastern Cairo's Matariya neighborhood. The facility is run by a charity.

The ministry said in a statement that flames broke out at the hospital's radiology department without elaborating on what caused it. Provincial authorities said firefighters were able to put out the blaze. Health Minister Khaled Abdel Ghaffar said the injured patients suffered from burns, fractures and smoke inhalation. They were transferred to other hospi-tals in Cairo. He said the causality tally was a pre-liminary one, suggesting it could increase.

Safety standards and fire regulations are poorly enforced in Egypt and have been linked to many deaths. A 2020 fire at an intensive care unit at a pri-vate hospital in Cairo killed seven coronavirus patients.

## Russian journalist sentenced

MOSCOW (AP): A court in Moscow sentenced a Russian journalist in absentia to eight years in prison on charges of disparaging the military, the latest move in the authorities' relentless crackdown on dissent.

Alexander Nevzorov, a television journalist and former lawmaker, was convicted on charges of spreading false information about the military under a law that was adopted soon after Russian President Vladimir Putin sent troops into Ukraine. The law effectively exposes anyone critical of the Russian mili-tary action in Ukraine to fines and prison sentences of up to 10 years. Nevzorov was accused of posting "false information" on social media about the Russian shelling of a maternity hospital in the Sea of Azov port of Mariupol. Moscow has fiercely denied its involve-ment.

Nevzorov, who moved abroad after the start of the Ukrainian conflict, didn't have an immediate com-ment on the verdict. Prominent opposition politician Ilya Yashin was sentenced in December to 8½ years in prison under the same law. Another lead-ing opposition figure, Vladimir Kara-Murza, has been in custody facing the same charges.

## Rockets hit Turkish base in northern Iraq

IRBIL (AP): A cluster of rockets targeted a Turkish military base in northern Iraq, officials from north-ern Iraq's semiautonomous Kurdish region said. An Iranian-backed militia promptly claimed responsi-bility for the attack.

A Turkish defense min-istry official said there was no damage or injury at the base but did not provide further details. The official spoke on condition of anonymity in line with reg-ulations. According to a statement from the Iraqi Kurdish region's anti-ter-rorism department, at least eight rockets were fired at Turkey's Zilkân military base in Iraq's northern Nineveh province, with two hitting the base itself.

Turkish Defense Minister Hulusi Akar dis-missed the incident, saying the base comes under attack "from time to time," prompting retaliatory fire. He said the Turkish soldiers were "fighting there with increased resolve and determination." Turkey has long been conducting mili-tary operations in northern Iraq, with both ground and air forces, to battle the banned Kurdistan Workers' Party, or PKK, which has been waging a decadeslong insurgency against Ankara.

The PKK maintains sanctuaries in the Kurdish region of Iraq and Turkish forces have frequently launched airstrikes target-ing the PKK. Separately from its operations against the PKK, Turkey was also part of the war against the Islamic State group - which seized control of much of the area in 2014 - and an ally in the US-led anti-IS campaign.

## Stalingrad anniversary marked in shadow of Ukraine conflict

MOSCOW (AFP): President Vladimir Putin is set to preside Thursday over commemorations to mark the 80th anniversary of the Soviet victory at the Battle of Stalingrad, one of the bloodiest in World War II. The high-profile cele-brations in the southern city of Volgograd come as the Kremlin is drumming up support for its offensive in Ukraine, launched nearly a year ago to "de-Nazify" Ukraine, whose soldiers fought alongside Russia against Nazi Germany.

Putin is expected to travel to Volgograd, formerly known as Stalingrad, to take part in a wreath-laying ceremony at a war memorial and speak at a concert, the Kremlin said. The battle of Stalingrad lasted more than six months, ending with the surrender of German troops on February 2, 1943, after more than a million people were killed.

The Red Army's victory marked a turning point not only for the Soviet Union, which had suffered several heavy defeats, but also for the Allied forces. The 80th anniversary of the victory comes as Russia seeks to step up its offensive in Ukraine, bolstered by tens of thousands of reservists mobilised last autumn.

Russia has claimed recent gains near the hotspot town of Bakhmut in

the eastern Donetsk region of Ukraine. Moscow also recently announced the capture of the eastern town of Soledar as it seeks to wrest control of the entirety of the region of Donetsk.

Although the signifi-cance of capturing the salt-mining town is disputed, Soledar was the first major victory for Russia's forces following a series of set-backs on the ground. A bust of dictator Joseph Stalin was unveiled in Volgograd. Since Putin took power in Russia in 2000, there has been a growing chorus of Russians who take a posi-tive view of the despot's role in history, and histori-ans have pointed to the creeping rehabilitation of Stalin in the country.

Nostalgic for the super-power status of the USSR, many Russian officials have been promoting Stalin as a tough leader who led the Soviet Union to victory in World War II and presided over the country's industrialisation. The Soviet Union lost 20 mil-lion people in World War II and the legacy of what is known in the country as the Great Patriotic War is venerated.

Putin has frequently drawn parallels between what he calls his "special military operation" in Ukraine and the war against Nazi Germany. Speaking

on Holocaust Remembrance Day last week, Putin accused "neo-Nazis in Ukraine" of com-mitting crimes against civilians. "Forgetting the lessons of history leads to the repetition of terrible tragedies," Putin said.

"This is evidenced by the crimes against civilians, ethnic cleansing and punitive actions organised by neo-Nazis in Ukraine," he added. "It is against that evil that our soldiers are bravely fighting." Officials said they declared and Thursday pub-lic holidays in Volgograd following a request from war veterans. Flowers and wreaths will be laid at the city's main landmark, Mamayev Kurgan, a strate-gic hill overlooking the city that was the scene of heavy fighting in World War II. It is now marked by a tower-ing sculpture of a woman holding up a sword, named "The Motherland Calls".

The city on the banks of the Volga River was rebuilt after the war left it in ruins. It was renamed Volgograd in 1961, eight years after the death of Stalin. Since 2013, the city is temporari-ly renamed Stalingrad several times a year, including on February 2 and on May 9, when Russia holds nationwide celebrations on the anniversary of the Soviet victory in the Great Patriotic War.

## Khmer leader moved to Cambodian state prison

PHNOM PENH (AP): Khieu Samphan, who was convicted by a UN-backed tribunal of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes for his role as a leader of the commu-nist Khmer Rouge when they ruled Cambodia in 1975-1979, has been trans-ferred from the tribunal's jail to serve his life sen-tence at a state prison.

The tribunal, called the Extraordinary Chambers in the Courts of Cambodia, said in a statement that Khieu Samphan was moved from its custom-built deten-tion facility to serve the remainder of his sentence in the provincial prison in Kandal, which adjoins the capital, Phnom Penh. Khieu Samphan, 91, is the last surviving top leader of the Khmer Rouge, whose radi-cal policies are blamed for the deaths of an estimated 1.7 million people when they held power.

His transfer came as the tribunal winds down its activities after its last court session in September, when it rejected Khieu Samphan's final appeal. The tribunal, whose work

was carried out by joint teams of Cambodian and international jurists, spent \$337 million and 16 years to obtain three convictions. Since Dec. 26, it has hand-oved its complex of buildings, including the detention facility, to Cambodia's Defense Ministry, the original own-ers of the site, said tribunal spokesperson Neth Pheakra. The tribunal will continue working for three years after the trials' end on archiving documents and public education, with its remaining staff moved to a new building in the center of the capital. Khieu Samphan was the Khmer Rouge's nominal head of state, but at his trial he denied having real deci-sion-making power when the group carried out a reign of terror to try to establish a utopian agrarian society, but instead caused widespread deaths from execution, starvation and inadequate medical care. The Khmer Rouge were ousted from power in 1979 by an invasion by neighbor-ing Communist Vietnam.

Khieu Samphan was convicted in 2018 and sen-tenced to life in prison. He was already serving another life sentence following his 2014 conviction for crimes against humanity connected with forced transfers and disappearances of masses of people. The Khmer Rouge's real chief, Pol Pot, escaped justice. He died in a jungle in 1998 at age 72 while the remnants of his movement were fighting their last battles in the guer-rilla war they launched after losing power. Be Tealeng, deputy director-general of the Interior Ministry's Prison Department, confirmed that Khieu Samphan is now detained at Kandal provin-cial prison and is being held in a cell separate from other prisoners for the sake of his security and health.

Khieu Ratana, Khieu Samphan's daughter, said her father, who was visited by his family, was in good health and had no com-plaints about his transfer. Kandal prison is roughly the same traveling time from central Phnom Penh as the tribunal's facilities were.

## NK warns of 'overwhelming nuclear force' to counter US

SEOUL (AP): North Korea said Thursday it's prepared to counter US military moves with the "most over-whelming nuclear force" as it warned that the expansion of the United States' com-bined military exercises with rival South Korea is pushing tensions to an "extreme red line."

The statement by Pyongyang's Foreign Ministry came in response to comments by US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin, who said in Seoul that the United States would increase its deployment of advanced military assets to the Korean Peninsula, including fighter jets and aircraft carriers, as it strengthens joint training and operational planning with South Korea. South Korea's security jitters have risen since North Korea test-fired dozens of missiles in 2022, including potentially nuclear-capable ones designed to strike targets in South Korea and the US mainland.

In a statement attributed to an unidentified spokesperson of its Foreign Ministry, North Korea said the expansion of the allies' drills is threatening to turn the Korean Peninsula into a "huge war arsenal and a more critical war zone." The statement said the North is prepared to counter any short- or long-term military challenge by the allies with the "most overwhelming nuclear force." "The mili-

tary and political situation on the Korean Peninsula and in the region has reached an extreme red line due to the reckless military confrontational maneuvers and hostile acts of the US and its vassal forces," the spokesperson said.

North Korea for decades has described the United States' combined military exercises with South Korea as rehearsals for a potential invasion, although the allies have described those drills as defensive. South Korea's Defense Ministry said the United States flew B-1B bombers and F-22 and F-35 fighter jets in an exercise with South Korean fighters above South Korea's western waters. The United States and South Korea are also planning to hold a sim-ulation exercise this month aimed at sharpening their response if North Korea uses nuclear weapons. North Korea ramped up its own weapons demonstrations in 2022 as the allies resumed their large-scale training. North Korea's actions included a slew of missile and artillery launches that it described as simulated nuclear attacks on South Korean and US targets.

"DPRK will take the toughest reaction to any mili-tary attempt of the US on the principle of 'nuke for nuke and an all-out con-frontation for an all-out con-frontation!'" the North Korean spokesperson said, invoking the country's for-

mal name, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. "If the US continues to introduce strategic assets into the Korean Peninsula and its surrounding area, the DPRK will make clearer its deterring activities without fail according to their nature," the spokesperson said. Jeon Ha Gyu, spokesperson of South Korea's Defense Ministry, said the ministry had no immediate comment in response to the North Korean statement. He said the allies' latest aerial drills were aimed at demonstrat-ing the credibility of the US "extended deterrence," referring to a commitment to use the full range of its military capabilities, includ-ing nuclear ones, to defend South Korea. He declined to reveal the exact number of US and South Korean air-craft involved in the exer-cise.

In a news conference fol-lowing their meeting, Austin said he and South Korean Defense Minister Lee Jong-Sup agreed to further expand their combined mil-itary exercises, including more live-fire demonstra-tions. They pledged to con-tinue a "timely and coordi-nated" deployment of US strategic assets to the region. They said that their coun-tries' resumption of large-scale military drills last year effectively demonstrated their combined capabilities to deter North Korean aggression.

## France seizes Iran assault rifles, missiles heading to Yemen

DUBAI (AP): French naval forces seized thousands of assault rifles, machine guns and anti-tank missiles earli-er this month in the Gulf of Oman coming from Iran heading to Yemen's Houthi rebels, officials said Thursday, the latest such interdiction amid the Mideast nation's long-run-ning war.

While Iran did not immediately acknowledge the seizure, images of the weapons released by the US military's Central Command showed them to be similar to others cap-tured by American forces in other shipments tied back to Tehran. The announcement comes as Iran faces increasing Western pressure over its shipment of drones to arm Russia during its war on Ukraine, as well as for its violent monthslong crack-down targeting protesters. Regional tensions also have heightened after a suspected Israeli drone attack on a military work-shop in the central Iranian city of Isfahan. Previous cycles of violence since the collapse of Iran's nuclear deal with world powers

have seen the Islamic Republic launch retaliatory attacks at sea.

The seizure occurred Jan. 15 in the Gulf of Oman, a body of water that stretches from the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf, through to the Arabian Sea and onto the Indian Ocean. US Central Command described the interdiction as happening "along routes historically used to traffic weapons unlawfully from Iran to Yemen." A United Nations resolution bans arms transfers to Yemen's Iranian-backed Houthi rebels, who took the coun-try's capital in late 2014 and have been at war with a Saudi-led coalition backing the country's internation-ally recognized government since March 2015.

The Wall Street Journal first reported on the seizure, identifying the forces involved as elite French special forces. A regional official with knowledge of the interdic-tion, who spoke to The Associated Press on condi-tion of anonymity due to not having permission to speak publicly on the oper-

ation's details, similarly identified the French as carry-ing out the seizure. The French military did not respond to requests for comment about capturing the weapons. US Central Command did not immedi-ately respond to questions about the seizure, nor did Iran's mission to the United Nations. While France maintains a naval base in Abu Dhabi, it typically takes a quieter approach in the region while maintain-ing a diplomatic presence in Iran.

Iran long has denied arming the Houthis, though Western nations, UN experts and others have traced weaponry ranging from night-vision scopes, rifles and missiles back to Tehran. In November, the US Navy said it found 70 tons of a missile fuel com-ponent hidden among bags of fertilizer aboard a ship bound to Yemen from Iran. Houthi ballistic missile fire has targeted Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates in the past. Images taken by US Central Command, ana-lyzed by the AP, showed a variety of weapons on

board an unidentified ship apparently docked at a port. The weapons appeared to include Chinese-made Type 56 rifles, Russian-made Molot AKS20Us and PKM-pattern machine guns. All have appeared in other seizures of weapons attrib-uted to Iran.

Central Command said the seizure included more than 3,000 rifles and 578,000 rounds of ammuni-tion. The released images also showed 23 container-launched anti-tank missiles, which also have turned up in other shipments tied to Iran. The war in Yemen has deteriorated largely into a stalemate and spawned one of the world's worst human-itarian crises. However, Saudi-led airstrikes haven't been recorded in Yemen since the kingdom began a cease-fire at the end of March 2022, according to the Yemen Data Project.

That cease-fire expired in October despite diplo-matic efforts to renew it. That's led to fears the war could again escalate. More than 150,000 people have been killed in Yemen dur-ing the fighting, including over 14,500 civilians.

## Jamaica ready to send soldiers, police to quell Haiti chaos

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP): Jamaica's prime min-ister said his government is willing to send soldiers and police officers to Haiti as part of a proposed multina-tional security assistance deployment.

The announcement comes a week after UN spe-cial envoy for Haiti Helen La Lime said she hoped that the UN Security Council would deal "positively" with the pending request from Haiti's government for inter-national armed forces despite the US and Canada showing no interest. Jamaica Prime Minister Andrew Holness told the island's House of Representatives that he wants to help Haiti and "sup-port a return to a reasonable level of stability and peace, which would be necessary for any inclusive, democrac-ic process to take root."

The announcement appears to mark the first time that a nation in the Western Hemisphere pub-licly offers boots on the ground after Haiti's prime minister and other top offi-

cials requested the immedi-ate deployment of foreign troops in early October amid a crippling fuel siege blamed on the country's most powerful gang. UN Secretary-General António Guterres and La Lime have backed Haiti's plea to no avail.

The UN Security Council has mulled the request but taken no action, opting instead to issue sanctions on people including Jimmy Chérizier, a dominant gang leader and former police officer blamed for master-minding multiple mas-sacres. "It is our impression that the international com-munity has not yet taken stock of the urgency of the situation that the Haitian people are facing," Léon Charles, former chief of Haiti's National Police, said during an Organization of American States meeting. "My country is experiencing one of the most difficult moments in its history," said Charles, who is Haiti's per-mament representative to the OAS.

He likened the aid that

Haiti has received so far from the international com-munity to buckets of water to help put out a raging fire when what the country needs is firetrucks equipped with heavy-duty hoses. Meanwhile, Holness said Jamaica is ready to offer bilateral support if needed. "It is our real hope that Haiti will soon overcome her challenges and embark on a path toward restoration of stability, long-lasting peace and sustainable develop-ment for her land and people with the full backing of the international community," he said.

Vanessa Frazier, Malta's ambassador at the United Nations who is the current president of the Security Council, said at a council meeting that they welcomed Jamaica's declaration and added that it had yet to receive notifications from other countries. "Hopefully we will, because we understand that this ... multina-tional security force is very important and is required on the ground in order to stabi-lize the situation in Haiti,"

she said. Jamaica is a member of a regional trade bloc known as Caricom, which last week issued a statement urging "all stakeholders to come together in their search for a consensus agreement" to resolve what it called a protracted politi-cal stalemate in Haiti, adding that it was prepared to hold a meeting in the Caribbean to talk about the issue.

Haiti was stripped of all democratically elected insti-tutions when the terms of the remaining 10 senators expired in early January. Prime Minister Ariel Henry has promised to hold gener-al elections for more than a year, but a provisional elec-toral council has yet to be chosen, which some critics say has led to a de-facto dictatorship. Haiti also has been struggling with levels of violence not seen in decades ever since the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse at his private home, w ith gangs now believed to con-trol 60% of the capital of Port-au-Prince.



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# Violent extremism and national strategem

**P**RESIDENT Dr. Arif Alvi called upon the Ulema and Mashaikh of the country to play their role in bringing positive social change, and discouraging extremism, terrorism, and sectarianism in the society. During a meeting with a delegation of the Ulema and Mashaikh, the President urged the religious scholars for an active role in inculcating ethical and moral values in society, promoting the conservation of resources, national solidarity, religious tolerance, and inter-faith harmony and peace in the country.

Presently, the state of Pakistan faces an ever-widening internal disunity, religious extremism, and resurgent terrorism, coupled with persistent political disagreement, that poses the worst challenge to national unity and territorial integrity of the country. Over the years, the giant of extremism and a sense of piousness and superiority had spread across society while religious clerics had been distributing certificates of disloyalty and infidelity over a mere disagreement and personal bias without any remorse, fear of censure, and accountability, thus lawlessness and hate prevail everywhere and a new racket of violence and religious abuse occur another day.

Pakistan is a Muslim nation with less than four per cent religious minorities including Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, Ahmadis, Parsis, and others. Unfortunately, there had been a sense of insecurity, suspicion, and doubt among different sects of Muslims and about minorities in the country. Children attract those sentiments at home and gradually develop such beliefs at Schools and religious seminaries which finally culminates in the shape of ethnic and religious radicalization, sectarianism, and hate against other sects, religions, and nationalities at the community level. Due to reason, our society witnesses acts of intolerance and harassment, mob lynching, violent protests, and demonstrations as well as political violence and online intimidation in the public on regular basis. Unfortunately, our media and civil society had been vigorously sensitizing successive governments about the seriousness of the issues undermining national unity and religious harmony in the country but the government and political leadership failed to address such grave problems despite achieving a nationwide consensus in the aftermath of the APS massacre about 8 years ago.

Islam is a religion of peace and tranquility and had always taught respect for all religions and reverence for all prophets, divine books, and their followers. While the constitution and the state of Pakistan guaranteed equal rights for all its citizens irrespective of their religion, caste, and creed. Unfortunately, certain political parties, leaders, and religious clerics had used ethnic bias, and sectarian and religious bigotry for boosting their politics and consolidating their grip over their tribes, henchmen, and political group. Realistically, the 19-point National Action Plan (NAP) categorically encompasses all measures to address the menace of extremism, hate speech, and terrorism but our leaders left that magnificent documents unimplemented and the problem not only persist rather became worst over the past years.

In fact, multiple inter-faith dialogues had been conducted and numerous inter-parties committees were constituted in the past, however, the giant of religious intolerance and extremism could be dealt with effectively so far. Apparently, sagacious tips and gracious appeals are less likely to produce desired results thus the government must initiate strict application of relevant laws and service of impartial justice to bring the perpetrators to their ultimate conclusion. So, this cancer could be treated once and for all.

# Humanitarian work and influential ego

**T**HE Afghan Acting Minister for Refugees and Repatriation had urged the international community not to link political issues with humanitarian work in a crisis-hit nation. According to the details, the Vice President of the International Rescue Committee (IRC) visited Kabul and discussed the ongoing charity work of his organization with the Afghan authorities. As said the Afghan leader told the foreign missionary that the Afghan government was ready to cooperate with NGOs in the distribution of aid, but the aid delivery should not be subject to conditions, whereas religious issues, culture, and traditions of the people should be respected.

The people of Afghanistan have been suffering from a lack of livelihood and resources, famine, and multiple health issues amid freezing weather conditions over the past months. The United Nations and International Nongovernmental Organizations (INGOs) had been engaged in humanitarian work to help reduce the miseries of the Afghan nation that had increased after the Taliban's takeover of the country. Recently, various foreign charity organizations announced a pause in their operations in Afghanistan after the interim government imposed a ban on girls' higher education and women's employment in multiple sectors including media and INGOs while declaring it in-Islamic and inconsistent with Afghan culture and traditions.

The ongoing dispute between Afghan rulers and foreign charity organizations has increased economic woes for the Afghans, so far Afghan authorities are stressing the INGOs to understand the sensitivities attach to tribal culture and traditions while humanitarian workers are of the view that women play an important part in the accomplishment of their charity work in the role of a lady doctor, teachers, nutrition experts, team leaders, community health workers, vaccinators, nurses, doctors, and have access to populations that male employees cannot reach. The INGOs are actively advocating that women's participation in aid delivery is unavoidable and nonnegotiable because the absence of female staff can seriously undermine the social and humanitarian activities of certain organizations. To date, both sides strictly withheld their positions as the ego is more important to the influential, however, poor Afghans would be the great sufferers of this disagreement.

# Blinken’s uphill struggle amid Israeli provocations

**U**S Secretary of State Antony Blinken met with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Monday, when he emphasized America's commitment to the two-state solution for peace - a solution that Netanyahu's coalition government partners do not support.

Blinken must have known that the term "two-state solution" might draw the ire of Netanyahu's right-wing partners, as Israel steps up its military assaults in the West Bank, having killed more than 30 Palestinians in the past 30 days. The Israeli violence has provoked protests from Palestinians, including some violence targeting Israeli Jews. Israel's propaganda arm is so fierce it had no shame in distorting one attack that occurred at a bus stop near a synagogue that took seven Jewish lives by falsely claiming it took place "in" the synagogue - a lie augmented by the biased pro-Israel Western news media.

That was what Blinken was up against when he left for the Middle East to first meet with Egyptian officials before tackling the tougher audiences, including Netanyahu and Palestine's weak president, Mahmoud Abbas. You knew that Blinken was concerned about what he would say when meeting Netanyahu because, that same morning, the State Department published a fact sheet online titled "US Relations with Israel." The document detailed America's "strong and historic ties" to Israel and the "security assistance and cooperation" it receives from Washington.

However, there was no need to publish a reminder about the US' "commitment" to the Palestinians, mainly because it has been

inconsistent at best, with it being particularly disrupted during the presidency of Donald Trump. Palestinians should be lucky, apparently, with what they get from the US, which describes itself

as "Israel's strongest ally," as is reiterated in the frequent statements issued by members of the US Congress, including just before they solicit and receive funds from pro-Israel political action committees and supporters. Such statements, like the one published in 2021 by Oklahoma Rep. Tom Cole, heap huge praise on Israel, while slamming Arab countries and singling out the Palestinians' "senseless terror."

**Blinken has a tough job. He knows it is not easy to challenge Israeli policies, let alone criticize them. But the fact that Blinken asserted the need for a two-state solution, which Netanyahu's far-right coalition partners find abhorrent, shows his courage to pursue justice and a sensible peace accord. He also called Israel's illegal settlements an obstacle to peace. But it will take more than strong assertions to end this deadly conflict. Israel continues to increase its assaults and restrictions on Palestinians and those acts provoke more protests, which Israel's propaganda falsely asserts are acts of terror. In Memphis, five Black police officers brutalized and ended up killing an African American civilian, causing outroar across the US. Do not forget that Memphis police, like police departments around**

Western media treats it like an everyday occurrence - not really news because it happens so often. It is only when Israeli Jews are killed that the media, members of Congress and activists scream for justice. The data shows that Israeli soldiers and armed settlers kill far more Palestinians than Palestinians kill Israelis. In addition to the killings, which number in the thousands, Israel has also evicted thousands of Palestinians from their homes, and then destroyed those homes. Many of the Palestinians killed are targeted by Israeli snipers,

including American journalist Shireen Abu Akleh. No one has been held accountable for her murder last May because Israel refuses to take responsibility. A two-

state solution is the only way to get Israelis and Palestinians out of this endless cycle of violence. Blinken should be praised for his courage in not backing down in the face of an overwhelming onslaught of propaganda from Israel about the violence it intentionally provokes. Of course, he can do more, but he needs support from the Palestinians and from the Arab world, which he is not really getting. The Palestinian political establishment is dysfunctional and Abbas, though a good, well-intentioned person, is ineffective. The Palestinians need a new

leader, someone who can be both a diplomat and a fierce champion of justice. Israelis assert that the absence of Palestinian elections is a cause of that dysfunction, but the truth is that a people under occupation can never have a legitimate election because of the interference and influence of the occupier. Despite such restrictions, Palestinians and the Arab world need to do more.

Although the quickly rising number of Palestinian killings is shocking, it represents only a small percentage of the population in Israel and the Occupied Territories. This means that these deaths can only fuel more anger and violence, while doing nothing to achieve the Israeli extremists' goal of getting non-Jews out. If you do not believe that is the goal, ask yourself this question: How come Israel never establishes illegal settlements for non-Jews? All of the illegal settlements are exclusively for Jews, who are armed and mostly extremist.

The importance of what Blinken is doing in this horrible, deadly environment should not be underestimated. Also, last November's appointment of Hady Amr as special representative for Palestinian affairs was a major step toward conveying the Biden administration's concern for the suffering of the Palestinians. Amr has an important agenda, including helping to reopen the US consulate for Palestinians and creating a forum where Palestinian grievances can be lodged. Blinken's efforts are only a small part of the impact the US has on the Israel-Palestine conflict. But they should not be taken lightly and respected for what they are.

Arab News

# Sunak thinks he is following Thatcher’s union-busting playbook. But he has fatally misread it

**T**HE biggest walkout by workers in a decade; schools shut and train stations empty in the closest thing to a general strike still allowed by the law; and passport desks at airports manned by soldiers. History is being made before our eyes. To understand what lies ahead, we have to look back to the start. Or rather, to the woman who started it. The giant shadow looming over both workers and politicians sports hair as unyielding as a helmet, shoulder pads like ramparts and a handbag that doubles as an offensive weapon. If any single person is responsible for the way Britons work today, it is Margaret Thatcher. In the greatest political battle of this winter, she has lessons for both sides - and they are not what Rishi Sunak is expecting.

Let us consult her memoirs, in which the Iron Lady explains how she won the historic electoral landslide of 1983. Her story is most revealing in what it leaves out. The Labour party is barely mentioned and its leader, Michael Foot, gets an absent-minded pat on the head: "If I did not think it would offend him, I would say he was a gentleman." Her real political enemy is the trade unions. How she

loathes them! "Overbearing" unions are stuffed with "communists and militants" whose only work is "callous strikes", she says, blaming them for both high unemployment and low exports. Even while the economy tanked and 3 million Britons were unemployed, Thatcher drove through two anti-union laws within two years during her first term.

By the 1983 election bosses could sack strikers, and companies that forbade trade unions could bid for government contracts, even while workers faced far greater limits on their right to walk out. All this at a time when Special Branch police officers were spying so closely on union activists that the employment secretary, Norman Tebbit, knew where they went on holiday. It was an onslaught on organised labour not seen since the General Strike of 1926. It also became a cornerstone of modern Tory politics. Sunak was only two when that second Employment Act passed, while Grant Shapps, somehow cast as the Tebbit de nos jours, was a teenager. They are the last generation of Conservatives that we might call Thatcher's children. All both politicians have ever known is that when a Tory leader is in trouble, they copy Thatcher

and pass laws to repress unions. Flailing John Major did it twice, while David Cameron clamped down on the austerity backlash with strike laws that made even Tebbit wince.

In finance Sunak traded derivatives; in politics he just is a derivative - an unimaginative but curiously neat copier of the textbooks and focus groups and social-media stratagems plonked on his wooden desk. This week he, too, is trying his hand at Bash a Union Baron, refusing to budge on pay for teachers and nurses, mocking Keir Starmer's "paymasters" and pushing through yet another parliamentary attack on the right to strike. Except he has not paid enough attention to his Thatcher. Despite the cliches of a deep-blue ideologue, the longest-serving prime minister of the 20th century obsessed over building public support for her policies. Through the early 1980s, she was sure the electorate, including rank-and-file union members, backed her against the union leaders. "Far from proving a political incubus it was one of our strongest appeals to the voters," she writes in her memoirs. Forty years ago, her cabinet considered a version of the same law Sunak is ramming

through right now - in her case, a ban on strikes in essential services - but "the practical difficulties ... were immense" and great pains were taken to present her as wholly sensible. You would never have caught her on camera without a seatbelt.

Scroll forward to today, to a prime minister with no such nous and no direct mandate from either electorate or his own party. Sunak heads a government drained of interest in governing, and tries to marshal backbenchers busy lining up their next jobs. Still he stumbles on, into the very trap Thatcher saw would snap its metal teeth right into her foot. His strike law faces the same fate as Suella Braverman's one-way tickets to Rwanda: costly challenges in the courts from the TUC and others, and Starmer's team putting on their best concerned expressions at the government's loss of control. And, should the judges allow it through, Sunak might want to ask his rightwing counterparts in Spain what happens when workers are picked out as too essential for walkouts: volleys of lawyers' letters so fierce they would fox an umpire on Centre Court.

After four decades, Sunak's enemy bears no

resemblance to the one faced by Thatcher. She kickstarted the process by which the UK ended up with some of the most repressive union laws of any major rich country and with feeble protections on such essentials as sick pay. Put atop an economic model that has been wrecked since 2008, plus more than a decade of austerity, and what do you get? The average British worker stuck in the longest wage freeze for 200 years. That is the reality of today's workforce: not a platoon of mini-Arthur Scargills, but men and women who have spent years holding together failing public services, sacrificing a day's pay and pension contributions on picket lines - merely to stop sinking further into economic misery. My late mother was a primary school teacher who took me on rallies during the Thatcher years. I wonder how she would have reacted to the stories told me this week by an assistant head working the same patch, east London: of full-time teachers doing weekend shifts on the checkout at Tesco, and of others giving up their post and their dreams of homeownership to move in with their parents. I think she would have struggled to believe such a decline was possible for the profession

in which she spent decades. She might have asked how little we loved our children, to entrust them to such an ill-treated and disrespected workforce.

Meanwhile, government ministers admit the rail strike has cost more than it would have done just to give the workers what they wanted. Royal Mail reveals that just 18 days of strikes has wiped £200m off its bottom line. Poll after poll shows outright public support for nurses and teachers and postal workers, and at least a willingness to listen to the other sectors. Union officials and activists report their members feeling emboldened after seeing the leader of the RMT union, Mick Lynch, on telly or other workers sticking up for themselves. How long this sentiment holds up is anyone's guess, but there is at least potential for a sea change in the public argument. In any case, it's not the strikers who look dogmatic and uncaring in this historic week - and Thatcher could have told Sunak what happens when the public and your party finally decide you're in the wrong. You end up in a ministerial car heading the wrong way out of Downing Street, the world peering curiously through the windows at someone who all can agree is finished.

# Myanmar’s brutal civil war must not be ignored

**T**HE viciousness of the civil war in Myanmar is strong enough to take the breath away - if only the world would pay attention. Recent reporting from The Times describes a hellish conflict, in which the soldiers of the military government patrol rebellious areas of the country from helicopters, shooting down at helpless children.

This is part of the landscape of a conflict that has become savage and cruel, largely out of sight of the international community. Since the coup against the mixed-democratic and army government in 2021, Myanmar's military has been back in control. It has fought a multifaceted civil war ever since: Against ethnic groups on which it has perpetrated genocide in the past, along with remnants of the old democratic opposition, which has reor-

ganized on armed lines, behind a national unity government and its armed forces, the People's Defense Force.

International media is severely restricted within Myanmar. For such a large country, the outside world is badly connected to what happens there and to its people. Major reporting, in the line of The Times investigation, is significant news. That investigation described an attack on a school in Tabayin, within Sagaing, a region in Myanmar's northwest. It began with military helicopters firing their rockets at the building and accompanying monastery, in whose grounds the school lay. This was followed by a ground attack: Two transport helicopters, filled with 80 men, touched down. The men piled out of their transport and stormed inside the buildings, shooting at the children and

monks, who attempted to hide. "By the time the raid was complete," The Times reported, "between six and 11 children, plus several adults, were dead, according to witnesses, while many survivors suffered terrible injuries."

This is only a small microcosm of a terrible and under-heeded war. The newspaper describes a strategy in which the military seeks to use its technological advantages - including Russian-produced aircraft - to overwhelm both guerrilla fighters and the civilian populations they live among. This is a conscious strategy that is notably cruel.

"The generals increasingly favor attacks from above, predominantly with weaponry bought from Russia, the regime's most enthusiastic backer. Nearly 140 such attacks have been

reported and the number of strikes has increased steadily since September, passing more than one a day last month," The Times noted, quoting a report from Myanmar Witness, an advocacy group. Other attacks on civilians in the Sagaing region have taken their toll and strikes have included an attack on a concert that left dozens dead. The report from Myanmar Witness counted 135 airstrikes taking place over the past six months.

This is an asymmetric way of waging war; one that prioritizes the soldiers making the attack over the civilians they are likely to kill. This is no problem for the junta, given that many of the civilians are not from the Burman ethnic majority and are instead Kachin and from other ethnic groups, against which the military has pursued

decades-long campaigns of marginalization and violence, ever since the foundation of the state. The conduct of this war is not something widely discussed internationally. Many within Asia consider the war a question for Myanmar, to be worked out by the factions there, and not worth major campaigning or even paying attention to.

But the conduct of this war has effects even beyond the suffering it creates. Violent civil conflicts tend to spill over into other areas. They proliferate weapons and military training. If armed groups fighting in Myanmar are forced from the country, they will carry on their struggles from elsewhere. And if Myanmar's ethnic minorities believe they are being subjected to genocide within Myanmar, they will not stop fighting the regime there, no matter

how limited their supplies of arms or international support.

One option - not a solution, but a necessary precondition for a solution - is open to the international community: The continued investigation of the junta's past conduct, notably regarding the Rohingya minority, which has been subjected to genocide for the past decade. The treatment of the Rohingya in many ways preceding the civil conflict we now see. Investigating it will teach the world lessons, and the search for justice there will lead to the bringing to justice of military figures who have committed or will commit other crimes. If nothing else, the world must learn to pay attention to this most violent of civil conflicts. Or else crimes will be committed in silence and nothing will be done to bring the criminals to a just end.



# Climate change: Time running out for world to bridge the energy transition

Afshin Molavi

**A** defining image of our contemporary era might be a middle-class family at an airport in Asia or Africa, their smartphones tucked into their bags, boarding a flight to Dubai or Singapore or London. Such an image will not capture headlines or go viral, but its commonplace nature reflects a dramatic transformation in our world over the last five decades.

Historians may eventually define this period as the "Development Age," when vast swathes of humanity, once mired in crushing poverty and limited opportunity, gradually began to break free from this vicious cycle. Two centuries ago, most of the world was impoverished. As late as 1955, more than half the world still lived below the poverty line. The world looks much different now. Today, about 10 percent of humanity lives in extreme poverty (roughly 700 million people). In 2007, for the first time in history, there were more urban residents than rural residents. Since then, urbanization rates have risen steadily, widening the gap. And, in 2018, we hit another milestone, according to Homi Kharas of the Brookings Institution: More than half the world could be considered middle class.

This is our world today, marked by rapid urbanization, sizable and still growing middle classes, and unprecedented physical and digital connectivity. It is a world that has lifted literally more than a billion people from extreme poverty, but still leaves far too many behind. It is a world of growing aspirations even amid extraordinary challenges. It has been a world of rising income per capita - and rising inequalities everywhere. This is the world that should be understood by policymakers in the run-up to the COP28 climate conference in the UAE later this year. We need to understand recent history to appreciate the present - and to craft a sustainable future.

In a sense, COP28's location

reflects the changes of our world over the past five decades. The "before-and-after" pictures of the UAE - shared on the internet or hung on the walls of government offices - often show dusty streets

Minister of Cabinet Affairs Mohammed Al-Gergawi recently noted: "Government leaders and policymakers must think of themselves as designers of the future." In other words, they must take the

***While the before-and-after pictures of the UAE are stark, few other nations think so actively about what the future should look like. As UAE Minister of Cabinet Affairs Mohammed Al-Gergawi recently noted: "Government leaders and policymakers must think of themselves as designers of the future." In other words, they must take the long view, planning not for the next five years but for the next 50. Policymakers must also be willing to face the truth with honesty. That truth, as UAE climate envoy and COP28 president Sultan Al-Jaber said recently, is that the world is "way off track" in terms of achieving the reduction in global temperatures laid out by the 2015 Paris Agreement.***

with modest development in the 1970s, quickly replaced by Manhattan-style skylines and bustling airports.

Today, the UAE is widely acknowledged as a global trade, tourism and transport hub; a major global investor; a regional leader in future-facing industries; and an important bridge between the emerging world and advanced economies. Few saw the rise of the UAE in these terms when it was a young nation that declared independence in 1971. While the before-and-after pictures of the UAE are stark, few other nations think so actively about what the future should look like. As UAE

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Policymakers must also be willing to face the truth with honesty. That truth, as UAE climate envoy and COP28 president Sultan Al-Jaber said recently, is that the world is "way off track" in terms of achieving the reduction in global temperatures laid out by the 2015 Paris Agreement. "The hard reality is that, in order to achieve this goal, global emissions must fall 43 percent by 2030," he said. Al-Jaber, who is also CEO of the Abu Dhabi National Oil Company and minister of industry and advanced technology, is well positioned to lead COP28. His early energy experi-

ence was forged not in fossil fuels, but as the CEO of Masdar, the global clean energy player with a \$20 billion-plus portfolio of renewable projects in more than 40 countries. The UAE has been one of the most active clean energy investors worldwide.

Given the political and investment attention being paid to the energy transition, it is conceivable that we are headed for scalable breakthroughs in renewable energy. But the world will still need fossil fuels for quite some time, both for sustained development and poverty eradication. With nearly 800 million people still lacking electricity, fossil fuels will be the cheapest and fastest way to bring them that life-altering force. The UAE can serve as an important mediator between industrialized and developing countries. Let's be frank: Our climate is in a mess now mainly because of industrialization in Europe and the US, the world's largest historic emitters. Wealthy nations from the Global North lecturing the Global South on climate change and emissions is rich with irony. As an emerging nation itself, the UAE can help bridge this gap.

There are many multibillion-dollar renewable projects online and in the pipeline in the UAE and Saudi Arabia, two of the world's largest oil producers. Global fossil fuel majors are also investing heavily in renewables. Governments in Europe, like the US, are incentivizing clean energy. Electric vehicle uptake grows every year. The trajectory is clear: We are moving toward broader clean energy use in our systems. When you want to cross a river with no bridge, the adage goes, build one yourself. That will be the task for climate negotiators in Dubai later this year. To ensure that the so-called Development Age is a period of triumph, not tragedy, the world needs a bridge to transition between the fuels of the past and the clean energy of tomorrow. COP28 may be the last opportunity to produce one.



## Tories now face a choice: lose office with honour or burn everything in sight

Rafael Behr

**G**OVERNING parties do not become oppositions overnight. Well, strictly speaking, they do. Come an election, regimes fall between polls closing at 10pm on Thursday and ousted leaders conceding on Friday morning. But there is a more gradual transition to opposition as a state of mind - an exhaustion of the will to govern and a dissolution of discipline into factional rancour. That journey precedes an election defeat but also makes one more likely. MPs lose hope of victory. The leader runs out of inducements to loyalty. Attempts to show strength fail, advertising weakness instead.

Voters smell decay and recoil from the source. Even the government's supporters start to anticipate

that double the time Liz Truss spent there but still short enough for it to feel premature to write him off already. A case for optimism was made at a recent cabinet away day at Chequers by Isaac Levido, Sunak's campaign strategist (who is paid to think of reasons why the cause is not lost), and, over dinner, by William Hague (speaking as a survivor of lost Tory causes).

Hope of a Conservative revival rests on the softness of Labour support - people are not excited by Keir Starmer - and the precedent of 1992, when John Major pulled off a surprise victory over Neil Kinnock. Hague also reminded his audience what happened next: descent into sleaze, perpetual rebellion and landslide defeat. There are plenty of

sounding like a headteacher stepping into a school in special measures - might be the right one, or at least the one that works best within his limited performance range. He has been a big disappointment to those craving socialist evangelism or denunciations of Brexit. Their frustration might depress Labour's vote share, but not in ways that do the Tories much good. A shortage of eager Starmerites will be a weakness in government, when unpopular decisions have to be taken, but it is not an insurmountable obstacle to being a government-in-waiting. Especially not when the governing party is practically begging to be put into opposition.

Starmer's base is not among politics fans who wear their colours with tribal pride. It is the quiet voters in the middle who are

***The scale of Blair's victory was amplified by demoralised Conservative supporters staying at home and Liberal Democrats picking up votes from people who were focused on getting the Tories out. Fewer people voted Labour in 1997 than had voted Tory in 1992 (13.5 million versus 14.1 million). An underappreciated ingredient for Labour success is lack of public horror at the prospect of Starmer entering Downing Street. He doesn't have to make pulses race as long as he doesn't make stomachs turn or skin crawl, which has been a problem with his recent predecessors. In that context, Starmer's style - sounding like a headteacher stepping into a school in special measures - might be the right one, or at least the one that works best within his limited performance range. He has been a big disappointment to those craving socialist evangelism or denunciations of Brexit. Their frustration might depress Labour's vote share, but not in ways that do the Tories much good.***

defeat as a euthanising mercy. How far down that path have Rishi Sunak's Tories travelled? Where is the point of no return? Conservatives comfort themselves that little of the present was foreseen in the past, which suggests that electoral decimation is not fixed in their future. Labour MPs intone the same mantra to ward off complacency.

Years of volatility, the submersion of what used to be "normal" politics by Brexit and the pandemic have bred expectation of the unexpected. But ambitious Tories aren't betting on a fifth term in government. The list of MPs who are quitting parliament at the next election includes rising stars (Dehenna Davison), mid-career ministerial midfielders (Chris Skidmore) and seasoned frontbench veterans (Sajid Javid), among others of all ages and factions. A related trend is high-profile figures branching out into the media. Jacob Rees-Mogg and Nadine Dorries have done deals to host their own chatshows on GB News and Talk TV respectively. They haven't done that to support the prime minister.

Preening populism is a competitive market. Success depends on generating news and stirring controversy, which means making trouble for the government. The box office demands blue-on-blue action. Sunak has been in Downing Street now for 100 days, which is more

scenarios between the polls of 1992 and 1997, and no reason why voters in 2024 should faithfully re-enact battles that were fought on a different political landscape in a bygone century. It is true that the current leader of the opposition lacks Tony Blair's easy magnetism. The spectre of 1992 might not feel current enough to lift Tory spirits but it still spooks the hell out of Labour, and Starmer still looks more like a man creeping up on power than one striding purposefully towards it. Labour MPs privately concede that their poll lead describes flight from the Conservatives more than attraction to an opposition platform that few could articulate in bullet points. But it is easily forgotten how much that was also true in the mid-90s. The scale of Blair's victory was amplified by demoralised Conservative supporters staying at home and Liberal Democrats picking up votes from people who were focused on getting the Tories out. Fewer people voted Labour in 1997 than had voted Tory in 1992 (13.5 million versus 14.1 million).

An underappreciated ingredient for Labour success is lack of public horror at the prospect of Starmer entering Downing Street. He doesn't have to make pulses race as long as he doesn't make stomachs turn or skin crawl, which has been a problem with his recent predecessors. In that context, Starmer's style -

tired of ideological adventures and polarising spectacle. He can satisfy a taste for government that is benignly boring and doesn't induce despair or eye-rolling dismay. Sunak recognises that appetite, which is why on his first day in the job he promised a new era of integrity and professionalism. The subsequent 99 days have shown that his party has other ideas. They can't agree on what good government involves for long enough to put on a display. There is a faction that thinks Liz Truss's economic policy - tax cuts financed by imaginary growth projections - was not a disaster but too much of a good thing that financial markets found hard to digest. There is also a camp that thinks Boris Johnson was blameless in his own downfall, traduced by cowards and traitors.

That makes a significant cohort of MPs who think their leader is an agent of decline and a leader who thinks the blockage to recovery is found on his own backbenches. It is not a unique affliction, but nor is it a syndrome that can be resolved in office. The obstruction is no mere question of policy or direction. It goes deeper, entwined and embedded in the guts of the party. It can't be loosened without electoral intervention. It needs voters to flush the lot of them out of power.

The Guardian

## Migration likely to be a ‘forever problem’

Mohamed Chebaro

**D**O not be pleased you have finally made it safely to Europe, as many migrants have fallen prey to the many adversities they face once they make it to their so-called land of dreams. Stories abound of hostile environments awaiting those crossing countries. So, if they survive the journey, often made on foot or in the back of a truck, the local authorities in lawless countries on the way, like Libya, for example, do not guarantee their safe passage.

If they make it to a boat and survive the treacherous seas, their meager funds might have been depleted. Often they fall prey to people smugglers, who blackmail them to pay back or work in return for what they owe, and that alone opens the door wide to further insecurity, suffering and exposure to the criminal underworld. The person in that situation, whether adult or child, rarely sees a way out of the web of control of unscrupulous people or criminal gangs, who use vulnerable humans to achieve their goals. These are just a few examples of the adversities awaiting most irregular migrants in their search for a new life, whether they are fleeing persecution or simply seeking a better life in a safer country than their native land.

Lately, in the UK, it seems that underage migrants have been vanishing from the places of residence provided for them. Often, these are small, decrepit hotel rooms, with not enough protection or provision

for children to stay safe until the authorities have had the time to process their file and find them the necessary care. The system is plagued by underfunding and shortages, just like the services provided by many states around the world.

A new investigation by The Observer newspaper makes for a harrowing read, with threats of violence, racist abuse and fear of abduction awaiting the unlucky ones. A whistleblower working for a UK Home Office contractor has revealed how dozens of young people have been kidnapped. The UK immigration minister acknowledged in parliament that, of the 4,600 such minors received in the country since July 2021, 440 have disappeared at some point and 200 of them are still unaccounted for.

But from where do you start to try and resolve the issue of youth asylum? Their sheer number in this age of scarcity and economic challenges makes vulnerable child migrants more likely to fall out of the safety net, with governments failing in their legal duty to place them in adequate care and provide legal guardians to look after them. Many are also said to have been groomed, coerced in their home countries and then trafficked to be exploited by the same traffickers or their partners once they arrive at their newly found refuge in the UK or elsewhere.

My years of reporting on asylum

and illegal migration in the UK and beyond have taught me that many factors can throw governments and authorities off track in their dealings with new illegal or irregular migrants. Most of those arriving in Britain destroy the travel documents or papers that could help confirm their age and origins, and many are taught to say they are underage to guarantee a faster settlement status. Others are encouraged to claim they have been persecuted for their ethnicity, religion or sexual orientation. Literally all the tricks in the book have been used, but this is not to defend the failures of the authorities or their lack of preparedness in the face of an increasing trend of weaponized migration for political or criminal ends.

The UN has put the number of refugees and those forcibly displaced worldwide as a result of persecution, armed conflicts, violence or human rights violations at about 100 million. It says this is a new record, with the Ukraine war alone adding more than 10 million displaced in the last year. Wherever you turn, from sub-Saharan Africa to Latin America, the Middle East and beyond, instability, failed states and the search for safety and a better life have led many to try and seek a better existence, ideally in Western countries, where respect for human rights, social security and access to freedom have been the magnets.

The right of passage cannot be

guaranteed to all and double standards exist, as nations in the Global North are grappling to meet the demand and keep their doors open to those who really deserve protection. The US' new asylum application tool has been overwhelmed since going online last month due to the huge volume of applicants, while Europe is searching for measures to offload failed applicants and is considering sanctioning countries if they do not accept returnees. In Latin America, the routes used by refugees have seen a decline in footfall on the way north, but that might not last for long, as enduring conflicts and localized criminal violence continue to drive people away from their homelands. Since the dawn of history, people have moved in search of greener pastures, greater safety and a better existence, yet an age of economic scarcity has dawned all over the world after the COVID-19 pandemic, which has contracted countries' margins and ability to accommodate newcomers. In an increasingly polarized world, where geostrategic calculations, competition and even discord are limiting the powers and actions of multilateral institutions, people everywhere are holding on to any promise of salvation, even when it comes from a less-than-legitimate source. Short of a global approach to ending conflicts and human right abuses, the flow of migrants - heading north especially - is unlikely to be stemmed anytime soon.

## EU bids to fight back in global green race

Andrew Hammond

**E**UROPE has long seen itself as the preeminent global center for the green industrial revolution, through measures such as the EU Emissions Trading System, the Green Deal and RepowerEU. However, there is a growing sense in the continent that its edge in this "race" is being imperiled as the assertive industrial strategies of the US and China recognize the massive upfront costs of the energy transition in a bid to dominate the green economy of the future. While the \$369 billion US Inflation Reduction Act has been in the EU's firing line in recent months, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen spent much more time in her keynote address at the World Economic Forum last month focused on China.

The European Commission accuses Beijing of using "unfair" and "market-distorting" subsidies to gain an advantage in the race to produce clean technologies. Solar is sometimes held up as a warning, given that technology developed in the EU has been used to build a Chinese industry that today accounts for 80 percent to 95 percent of the global supply chain. Yet, it is the Inflation Reduction Act that has sent shockwaves across Europe, with its massive subsidies for US green industries

in areas from renewable power to electric cars. Key EU politicians and firms assert that the legislation discriminates against firms exporting to the US and fear it will lure a critical mass of their businesses, costing jobs and shuttering factories in the green tech sector.

To be sure, the EU is still widely seen to lead the US on rolling out green tech overall. However, the new law means America is now the most attractive investment environment for several key industries. It is in this concerning context of change for the continent that Von der Leyen announced on Wednesday, in a plan leaked earlier in the week, a series of measures, including loosening state aid rules and a new European sovereignty fund. The initiative is intended to preserve the EU's competitive advantage on critical and emerging technologies, including biotechnology and clean tech.

As powerful as the new measures might be, however, the EU is hampered vis-a-vis China and the US in this global green race. That is, in part, because the bloc's industrial policy is fragmented across its 27 countries, with the post-Ukraine energy crisis widening those gaps. Take the example of differences within the bloc over relaxing state aid, which concerns not just fiscal hawks like the Netherlands, but

also the southern and smaller European governments that lack the deep pockets of the EU's most powerful member states, especially France and Germany. According to recent data from the European Commission, Paris and Berlin together accounted for almost 80 percent of all state aid given to companies since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since last March, Germany has had more than 356 billion (\$387 billion) in economic support green-lit by the European Commission - more than half of the overall total - while France got about a quarter, at 160 billion. Italy was third, securing approval for just 7 percent of the total, and Denmark stood in fourth place. The rest of the bloc collectively accounted for less than 12 percent of the remaining state aid approved by Brussels, about 78 billion. While France is therefore, unsurprisingly, at the vanguard of wanting a stronger "Made in Europe" green industrial policy, Italy's government is not alone in calling for this to happen via a joint EU fund to help green tech across the bloc, and that looser state aid rules should not be a free-for-all. Meanwhile, fiscally conservative nations like the Netherlands want Brussels to first divert unspent billions to the green transition from





# Promoting interest-free banking a priority: Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar on Thursday reiterated the government's firm resolve to introduce Shariah-compliant interest-free banking and finance system in the country to achieve sustainable economic growth and social prosperity.

Addressing the National Islamic Forum, he said that the subject of Islamic finance was very close to his heart and he was making all-out efforts to implement Shariah-compliant banking and economic system, besides ending the interest-based financial system.

He said that he had initiated work in this regard during the last tenure of PML-N and had constituted a committee headed by the Deputy Governor State

Bank of Pakistan while several measures were taken to promote the Shariah-compliant Islamic finance and banking system.

He said that a committee was also formed and a special wing was also established in the Ministry of Finance, besides providing tax incentives to the Shariah-compliant companies, which was aimed to encourage and promote Shariah-compliant financial tools, adding that these efforts brought vast dividends in a short time.

The minister said that due to these efforts, there was only one bank that was offering Shariah-compliant financing instruments and was operating with its 100 branches, which now reached to about 1,000 branches.

He said, another bank has also made major

progress during the last year and its balance sheet registered remarkable growth.

Ishaq Dar said that the achievements made during the short-time frame was reflecting that significant progress could be made with more coordinated and sincere efforts to implement the orders of the Federal Shariat Court regarding the implementation of an interest-free economic system in the country.

He said before his arrival, the State Bank of Pakistan and the National Bank had challenged the decision of the Federal Shariat Court, however, added when he arrived it was decided not to challenge the verdict. He said efforts would be made to implement an interest-free economic and finance system.

He lauded the efforts for

organizing the event and said that it would help prepare a strategy for policy formulation as it gathered experts from finance, banking, businesses and experts of Islamic finance and banking for suggesting measures to promote an interest-free economic system.

Bad governance and miss management of the last government damaged the country's economy, which was emerging as a growing economy back in 2016-17 with the lowest inflation ratio and highest foreign exchange reserves, while GDP growth was at 6.1 percent. Due to experiments of the last five years coupled with miss management and bad governance, the economy ranking among the top 20 growing economies reached the 47th position with the highest inflation ratio, he added.

## ICCI appeals Indonesia for restoring exports of palm oil to Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Thursday urged the Indonesian authorities for restoring the normal export of palm oil to Pakistan as it was a major importer of palm oil from Indonesia.

While talking to Adam M. Tugio, Ambassador of Indonesia, who visited the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Faad Waheed, Acting President ICCI said that Indonesia has placed curbs on the export of this commodity, which has created concerns in the cooking oil and ghee manufacturers in Pakistan. He said it would create a shortage of this food item in the country and create problems for the

consumers.

He said that Pakistan and Indonesia are two important countries of the Muslim world and a lot of opportunities are waiting for their private sectors to enhance cooperation in multiple fields.

He said that both countries should facilitate regular exchange of trade delegations and encourage their investors to explore investment opportunities in both countries to achieve mutually advantageous economic benefits.

He highlighted Pakistan's prospective industries for cooperation with Indonesia including information technology, tourism, pharmaceuticals, textiles, cooking oil, and others.

He reaffirmed ICCI's

commitment to strengthen liaison with the Indonesian Embassy in order to improve business linkages between the private sectors of both countries.

Speaking on the occasion, Adam M. Tugio, Ambassador of Indonesia, said that his country is now focusing on biofuels to meet the rising domestic demand, which has prompted the need to reduce the export of palm oil.

He said that Pakistan can export many products to Indonesia including pharmaceuticals, surgical and medical equipment, footballs, and leather products. He said that both countries have good scope to enhance cooperation in the hospitality sector.

He said that Pakistan has

great potential to promote religious tourism. He said that the business community of Pakistan should identify areas of its comparative advantage and he would connect them with Indonesian counterparts to improve bilateral trade.

He said that a private airline in Indonesia would start direct flights with Pakistan that would help improve people-to-people and business-to-business relations.

Engineer Azhar ul Islam Zafar, Vice President of ICCI thanked the Indonesian Ambassador for visiting ICCI and said that close cooperation between ICCI and his mission would help improve business relations between the two countries.

## PSX turns around to bullish trend, gains 113 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) turned around to bullish trend on Thursday, gaining 113.56 points, a positive change of 0.28 percent, closing at 40,733.51 against 40,619.95 points the previous day.

A total of 124,087,701 shares were traded during the day as compared to 130,973,488 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs6,120 billion against Rs5,877 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 328 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 152 of them recorded gains and

146 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 30 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 20,606,814 shares at Rs1.17 per share, Pak Petroleum with 12,289,269 shares at Rs75.35 per share, and Dewan Motors with 6,197,500 shares at Rs14.48 per share.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum increase of Rs94.99 per share price, closing at Rs5,300.00 whereas the runner-up was Mari PetroleumXD with a Rs32.63 rise in its per share price to Rs1,454.35.

Pak Services witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs157.13 per share closing at Rs1,938.00 followed by Siemens Pak with Rs47.64 decline to close at Rs587.58.

**Rupee sheds against dollar**

The exchange rate of the

Pakistani rupee depreciated by Rs2.53 against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Thursday and closed at Rs271.35 against the previous day's closing of Rs268.82.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs269 and Rs270.70 respectively.

The price of the euro appreciated by Rs5.93 and closed at Rs298.57 against the previous day's closing of Rs292.64, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen increased by 04 paisa to close at Rs210, whereas an increase of Rs4.70 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British pound, which was traded at Rs. 335.85 as compared to its last closing of Rs. 331.15.

The exchange rates of the Emirates dirham and

Saudi riyal increased by 66 paisa each to close at Rs73.87 and Rs72.30 respectively.

**Gold price up by Rs2,200 to Rs207,200**

The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs2,200 on Thursday and was traded at Rs207,200 against Rs205,000 the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs1,887 to Rs177,641 against Rs175,754, whereas that of 10 grams of 22 karat went up to Rs162,837 from Rs161,108, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of one tola gold increased by Rs50 and was traded at Rs2,300 whereas that of 10-gram silver went up by Rs42.88 to 1,971.88. The price of gold in the international market increased by US\$31 to US\$ 1,955, the Association reported.

## Sony hikes net profit forecast as weak yen boosts gaming

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Sony upgraded its annual net profit forecast on Thursday, saying it expects strong results in its key gaming sector as the weak yen inflates profits on products sold abroad.

The Japanese electronics and entertainment giant said net profit in the April-December period jumped five percent year-on-year to 809 billion yen (\$6.3 billion).

This was partly thanks to strong sales in the game, music and imaging-and-sensors sectors in the third quarter, an important holiday shopping period, the company said.

In the 2022-23 financial year, Sony Group now expects net profits of 870 billion yen, up from the previous estimate of 840 billion yen.

Sony's massive global entertainment business -- from streaming services to blockbuster films and the PlayStation, as well as digital camera components -- has benefited from the fall of the yen over the past year.

The Japanese currency has gained ground against

the greenback in recent months but one dollar still buys around 128 yen, compared to around 114 yen one year ago.

Operating income in the gaming division "is expected to be higher than the November forecast mainly due to the positive impact of foreign exchange rates", Sony said.

Sony sold 12.8 million PlayStation 5 units in the first nine months of the current financial year, already more than the 11.5 million sold in 2021-22, when production was hit by supply chain problems.

Game sales will also have an important bearing on financial results, Hideki Yasuda of Toyo Securities told AFP.

"Sony is expected to aim for higher hardware sales in the coming fiscal year. What is key is whether software sales will also increase to keep up with higher hardware sales," Yasuda said.

The PS5 has some major titles in the pipeline, including the "highly anticipated" game "Final Fantasy XVI", he added.

Sony's gaming rival

Microsoft has sparked an industry battle with its acquisition of "Call of Duty" maker Activision Blizzard -- a huge \$69 billion purchase that has yet to be finalised while it is examined by antitrust authorities.

A year ago, weeks after Microsoft unveiled its acquisition plan, Sony announced it would buy US game studio Bungie, creator of hits like "Halo" and "Destiny".

Sony also announced a reshuffle at the top of the company, with chief financial officer Hiroki Totoki to become president and chief operating officer while remaining CFO.

Current company president Kenichiro Yoshida will become board chairman, and will remain chief executive officer.

Behind the yen's fall is the contrast between the monetary policies of the US and Japanese central banks. The Federal Reserve is hiking interest rates to fight inflation while the Bank of Japan is sticking to its longstanding monetary easing programme, designed to fuel sustainable growth.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance & Revenue Mohammad Ishaq Dar virtually addressing "National Islamic Economic Forum's Conference on Roadmap for Islamization of the Economy."

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Three ships namely, Clemens Schulte, Irenes Ray and Rigel carrying Containers and Palm oil, berthed at Qasim International Containers Terminal and Multi Purpose Terminal, on Wednesday.

Meanwhile a bulk cargo carrier 'Parnassos' scheduled to load 40,935 tonnes of cement also arrived at outer anchorage of the port on the same day.

A total of 10 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them five ships, namely Clemens Schulte, Irenes Ray, Umm Al-Amad, White Purl and Serenity Gas left the Port on Thursday morning, while an oil tanker 'Hafnia Excel' is expected to sail today in the afternoon.

A Cargo volume of 154,032 tonnes, comprising 129,114 tonnes imports cargo and 24,918 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 2,483 Containers (1,116 TEUs Imports and 1,367 TEUs export) was handled at the port during the last 24 hours.

There are 12 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, and 'Express Athens' carrying Containers is due to arrive at Port Qasim on Thursday, three more containers ships, namely, MSC Leandr, Ikaria and CMA CGM Rabelais are due to arrive on Friday.

## IT exports remittance increased

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Information Technology (IT) exports remittance, including telecommunication, computer and information services during the six months (July to December) of the fiscal year 2022-23 recorded is US\$ 1.333 billion growing by 2.38 percent in comparison to US\$ 1.302 billion during the same period last year.

Despite persistent ease of doing business challenges, IT export remittances of US\$ 1.333 billion had been realized by the IT & Information Technology Enabled Service (ITeS) Industry during the period July to December of FY2022-23, an increase of 2.38% in comparison to US\$ 1.302 billion reported for the same period last year, showed the data shared by Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication.

Trade surplus of US\$ 1.166 billion, 87.47% of total Information and Communication Technology (ICT) export remittances, has been realized by the IT & ITeS Industry during the period July to December of FY2022-23 to meet the foreign currency crunch faced by the country. It witnessed an increase of 19.96% as compared to trade surplus of US\$ 972 million for the same period in FY2021-22.

ICT sector exports of US\$ 1.333 billion are the highest among all Services (37.8% of total export of services) with 'Other Business Services' trailing at US\$ 816 million.

ICT services have delivered a phenomenal trade surplus of US\$ 1.166 billion which is the highest among all Services with 'Other Business Services' trailing at US\$ 201 million.

## Domino's becomes official food partner of Quetta Gladiators

**F.P. Report**

KARACHI: Domino's Pakistan has announced its partnership with Quetta Gladiators for PSL Season 8. The renowned pizza brand will now serve as the official food partner for the Gladiators throughout the season.

The partnership was made official during a memorandum signing ceremony that featured top people from either parties, including CEO Domino's Pakistan Faisal Munshi,

COO Saad Khan and CMO Raafay Haider along with Owner Quetta Gladiators Nadeem Omar. He was accompanied by Director Quetta Gladiators Hasan Omar and the skipper of the side Sarfaraz Ahmed.

"We are excited for this partnership and to become a part of Quetta Gladiator's legacy", said Faisal Munshi during the event. "We believe Domino's Pakistan together with Quetta Gladiators will offer unprecedented excitement for the

cricketing fans of Pakistan", he added. The ceremony also marked the launch of an exciting new deal to bring the true cricketing spirit for the cricket fans, especially designed to promote the PSL season. The details of the pizza deal are to be announced soon.

Domino's Pakistan aims to unite pizza with cricket - the two elements of passion that unite the people of Pakistan for this incredible cricket festival in the nation.

## MKP Corporate Group holds MKP Cultural Night

**F.P. Report**

KARACHI: The Chairperson and Sister of the founder of MKP Corporate Group Pakistan, Late Syed Sohail Ahmed Hashmi, Mrs. Sana Arsalan organised "MKP Cultural Night" at HMR Waterfront.

The guest of honour of the program includes; Mr. & Mrs. Farooq Sattar with his family, Brig Tariq Lakhair Director Engro Group, Dr. Muhammad

Ajmal Siddiqui Chairman & CEO Park Lane Hospital, Muhammad Hanif Gohar Chairman Gohar Group of Companies, Muhammad Intesar uddin Founder & CEO of Bulls & Bulls, Muhammad Hussain Pardesi CEO HMR Group, Mr & Mrs. Samad Habib, Mr & Mrs. Rashid Jan Mohammad, Mr. & Mrs. Ammar Moten, Miss Shameen Khan, Zeeshan Altaf Lohya, American Embassy Miss Bushra

Khan, Nadeem R. Malik, Syed Turab Shah, and Musheer Ul Haq Abbasy.

MKP Corporate Group Pakistan Official includes; Patron Anis Yunus, President Saqib Goodluck, President Sindh Chapter Faizan Wahid, President Diplomat Chapter Nudrat, General Secretary Sajid Haneef, CFO Yahya Wasi, Sr. Vice President Razaq Pardesi, and President Women's Chapter Tallat Shan.

## Turkiye keen to boost trade with Pakistan

SIALKOT (APP): Ambassador of the Republic of Türkiye to Pakistan Mehmet Pacaci said on Thursday that his country was keen to boost mutual trade with Pakistan, and pledged to help remove all hurdles in this regard.

He was addressing a meeting of Sialkot exporters at the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) here.

SCCI President Abdul Ghafoor Malik, Senior Vice President Wahub Jahangir, Vice President Amer Majed Sheikh and Sialkot business community representatives were also present.

The ambassador stressed that Türkiye was making all efforts for enhancing and strengthening its economic ties with Pakistan. He said that the two brotherly countries had signed a trade agreement, allowing both countries in principle greater access to each other's markets to increase the volume of trade.

The two sides are committed to increasing bilateral trade volume to \$5 billion over the next few years, he added.

The ambassador high-

lighted the two countries' support for each other during "critical times," as the relationship evolved from a strategic perspective. He said that Türkiye and Pakistan celebrated 75th year of establishment of our diplomatic ties last year. He said promotion of bilateral trade linkages depended on better coordination, interaction, and understanding among business communities of the two countries.

He said that the entrepreneurs of both countries should know each other more and work hard to expand trade and economic relations while he assured that his embassy would fully cooperate in such efforts. He invited the Sialkot exporters to diversify their product line, mentioning that most innovative goods were produced in Sialkot.

Ambassador Mehmet Pacaci said Pakistan and Türkiye are two brotherly countries having centuries old relationship. Turkish people have great love for Pakistani brethren. "We will not leave alone Pakistan in this critical period of time," he promised.

He said he would motivate the Türkiye business community to buy the Sialkot-made products directly from Sialkot instead of purchasing such products indirectly from the other countries on high prices.

The ambassador showed keen interest in SCCI's documentary "Sialkot, the City of Progressive People", which was screened during the meeting.

SCCI President Abdul Ghafoor Malik said that Türkiye and Pakistan are brotherly Islamic countries sharing religious, cultural and sociopolitical heritage. He said that Pakistan and Türkiye have to translate brotherly relations into economic terms as trade remains an untapped area between the two countries. He said the volume of trade between the two countries as per the State Bank of Pakistan was US\$1.13 in FY 2021, with a balance of trade in favour of Türkiye at US\$886 million. He said that there was a huge scope to increase this volume of trade as both sides had a huge unexplored trade potential.

## S&P 500, Nasdaq end solidly higher

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): The S&P 500 and Nasdaq rallied on Wednesday after the Federal Reserve enacted a smaller interest rate hike, pointing to progress in its fight against inflation.

All three major indices finished higher, led by the tech-rich Nasdaq Composite Index, which jumped 2.0 percent to 11,816.32.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose less than 0.1 percent to 34,092.96, while the broad-based S&P 500 advanced 1.1 percent to 4,119.21.

The US central bank announced a quarter-point hike to the benchmark lending rate, taking the rate to a target range of 4.50-4.75 percent and opting for a more traditional hike after a series of larger increases.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell said the central bank will need "substantial more evidence" to be confident that inflation is on a sustained downward path as the central bank signaled more hikes would be needed.

But analysts noted that

the Fed's policy statement acknowledged progress in battling inflation, adding that Powell in his press conference avoided criticizing recent movements in financial markets that anticipate a more dovish posture by the US central bank.

"Powell was expected to adopt a confrontational tone today. He was supposed to scold traders for allowing financial conditions to reflect fewer fed funds hikes and easing later this year," said a note from FHN Financial's Chris Low.





## In brief

## All Pak inter-board sports gala

ISLAMABAD (APP): All Pakistan Inter Board Sports Gala 2022-23 was inaugurated at Pakistan Sports Board on Thursday, which will feature hockey, athletics, table tennis, and basketball matches from February 2 to 9. This year, the responsibility of the inter-board sports gala was given to the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Education (BISE) Karachi. Taking responsibility, Karachi Board inaugurated the Sports Gala in which all the boards across Pakistan are participating. On the occasion, the chief guest, Federal Board Chairman Qaiser Alam, welcomed the BISE Karachi and all the boards participating in the gala. He also congratulated all the children for participating in the gala and urged them to perform well in both curricular and extracurricular activities. Secretary Inter Board Committee of Chairman (IBCC) Dr Ghulam Ali Mallah and Chairman Karachi Board also welcomed the boards and children participating in the gala.

## Mason attempted rape charges dropped

LONDON (BBC): Charges of attempted rape and assault have been dropped against Manchester United footballer Mason Greenwood. The 21-year-old was arrested in January 2022 amid allegations surrounding images and videos. He was later charged with attempted rape, controlling and coercive behaviour and assault occasioning actual bodily harm. The Crown Prosecution Service said the charges were discontinued after key witnesses withdrew their involvement. A spokesman said: "We have a duty to keep cases under continuous review." In this case a combination of the withdrawal of key witnesses and new material that came to light meant there was no longer a realistic prospect of conviction. In these circumstances, we are under a duty to stop the case. "We have explained our decision to all parties. "We would always encourage any potential victims to come forward and report to police and we will prosecute wherever our legal test is met."

## France defender retires

PARIS (BBC): France and Manchester United centre-back Raphael Varane has announced his retirement from international football. The 29-year-old, who won the World Cup in 2018, scored five goals in 93 appearances for his country after making his debut in 2013. The last of his caps was won in the 2022 World Cup final, in which France were beaten by Argentina on penalties. "Representing our great country for a decade has been one of the greatest honours of my life," said Varane. "Every time I wore this very special blue jersey I felt immense pride. The duty to give it all, play my heart out and win every time we put on the field. "I've been contemplating this for several months and deciding it's the right time for me to retire internationally." Varane, who signed for United from Real Madrid in August 2021, is the latest Les Bleus player to retire after the World Cup. In January, Tottenham goalkeeper and captain Hugo Lloris stepped down three weeks after the final. Varane had been expected to take over the French captaincy from Lloris. "As a child, I remember following France 98, this team, these players who made us experience indescribable emotions," said Varane.

# Sports' help empowering girls, says Australian HC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Australian High Commission and Kinnaird College for Women, with the support of the Pakistan Cricket Board, hosted the 4th Girls' Cricket Cup with the objective to promote gender equality and empower girls through sport.

Australia's High Commissioner to Pakistan, Neil Hawkins congratulated the girls and schools on their participation and thanked Kinnaird and Pakistan Cricket Board for their valuable support.

"Sport can help tear down barriers and stereotypes. Every time these girls hit a boundary or take a catch, they're building their confidence and inspiring others," Hawkins said.

To prepare for the tournament, top coaches led the girls on a three-day coach-

ing clinic.

"We are very grateful for the participation of first-class women's cricket coaches and members of the Pakistan National Women's Team, who took time out to build the girls' skills and encourage them to push beyond the boundaries," Hawkins said.

Head of Pakistan Women Cricket, Tania Mallick said that it was great to see young girls coming forward and making this tournament a success.

We have been working for the growth of women's cricket in Pakistan for quite some time. Recently, our talented Pakistani team performed quite well in the inaugural ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup.

We hope tournaments like this will help us explore more talent at the grassroot level", she expressed.

Principal of Kinnaird College for Women, Rukhsana David said, "We are delighted to host this tournament for young girls. Kinnaird aims for gender empowerment through participation in sports. We are excited to have Pakistan's national women cricketers as mentors to the participants. This helps foster confidence, team spirit, and inspiration among the girls. We hope this tournament will go a long way in developing women's cricket in Pakistan."

The 4th Girls' Cricket Cup involved teams from four schools and sports institutes: Government Shuhda-e APS Memorial Girls High School, Government Central Model School, Government Tehzeeb-ul-Binat Model Girls School and Kinnaird Cricket Academy.

## Pakistan Sports Festival kicks off at Bajaur

## F.P. Report

KHAR: Pakistan Sports Festival 2023 officially started in Bajaur district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. More than five hundred teams of cricket, football, volleyball, basketball and other important sports including athletics are participating in Pakistan Sports Festival from all tehseils of Bajaur district.

In this regard, the inauguration ceremony was

held in Bajaur district with great enthusiasm.

The opening ceremony was attended by sportspersons, officials, officials of the district administration and security forces and a large number of youths of the area and other guests belonging to different walks of life.

In the opening ceremony, the teams participating in the sports festival marched past and children from different schools

presented tableaux. While local singers also performed their art.

The spectators who came on this occasion thanked the district administration and Frontier Corps North and said that they are grateful to these organizations for organizing such a healthy festival.

The Pakistan Sports Festival will be jointly held in the tribal districts of Bajaur, Mohmand and Khyber till March 23.

## 'Smoothman' Gill: India's new run machine

NEW DELHI (AFP/APP): Shubman Gill's prowess as an opener was never in doubt, but his first Twenty20 ton has got people talking about him as the next Virat Kohli, an all-format run machine for India.

Gill scored 126 in just 63 balls in a crushing 168-run series-clinching win over a hapless New Zealand on Wednesday. It was just his sixth T20 appearance.

Despite being gifted with all the shots, the 23-year-old has not yet cemented a place for India in all formats, playing no part in last year's T20 World Cup. Gill hit a match-winning Test ton in Bangladesh in December and his maiden ODI double-hundred in January.

That knock gained him the moniker of "Smoothman Gill" -- for his free-flowing shot-making -- from batting great Sunil Gavaskar.

T20 skipper Hardik Pandya praised Gill after the pair put on 103 runs for the fourth wicket in

India's 234-4, which paved the way for the biggest T20 win between two Test teams. "He will achieve greater heights in his career for sure because of not what he did today but because of his work ethic and the honesty towards his game," Pandya told the Indian cricket board's website. Gill's unbeaten knock, laced with 12 fours and seven sixes, was the highest T20 score by an Indian, overtaking Kohli's 122 not out.

Gill also became only the fifth Indian batsman -- including Kohli and current captain Rohit Sharma -- to record centuries across all three formats. "He has come of age," former India opener Wasim Jaffer told ESPNcricinfo. "There was no denying the fact that he had conquered Test (cricket) a little bit, One-Day for sure."

Today's knock proves what a fantastic player India has found," Jaffer added: "He is a three-format player and after Virat

Kohli he is the next big batter that's going to come good."

Gill had put New Zealand's bowling to the sword in the preceding ODIs as well, scoring 360 runs -- the joint-most in a bilateral three-match series, alongside Pakistan skipper Babar Azam. "When you are representing your country, I don't think there is any kind of fatigue," Gill said after his T20 masterclass at the world's biggest cricket ground in Ahmedabad.

"I always wanted to play for India and being fortunate enough to play all the three formats, it is a blessing." Later in a chat with Pandya, the young batsman, who hails from a family of farmers in the northern state of Punjab, said he owed much of his success to his father.

"I think the way I practise and the way my dad made me practise... 90 percent of the credit should go to him because it was his vision," said Gill.

## Malan, Buttler and Archer earn consolation win for England

K I M B E R L E Y (AFP/APP): Dawid Malan and captain Jos Buttler hit centuries to set up a 59-run win for England in the third and final one-day international against South Africa at the Diamond Oval in Kimberley on Wednesday.

Malan made 118 and Buttler scored 131 in an England total of 346 for seven.

South Africa were bowled out for 287 with fast bowler Jofra Archer taking a career-best six for 40. South Africa had already clinched the series by winning the first two matches but England captain Jos Buttler said Wednesday's win was a reward for the hard work his players had put in during the short series.

"There's been some really good stuff. Guys getting hundreds and Jofra Archer was brilliant. We've got a good thing going. We're building nicely,"

said Buttler, who was named player of the match and player of the series.

South African captain Temba Bavuma said the series win was important. "We came in under a lot of pressure. We've done ourselves justice and come closer to automatic qualification for the World Cup."

South Africa need one win in their remaining two matches against the Netherlands to move ahead of West Indies into one of the eight qualifying places in the World Cup Super League, although Sri Lanka could still move ahead of them in a forthcoming series against New Zealand.

The left-handed Malan and his right-handed captain shared a fourth wicket partnership of 232 off 211 balls after coming together with their team in trouble at 14 for three in the sixth over.

A slow start to the part-

nership became a torrent of runs as they took command on a slow pitch.

England scored 217 runs in the last 20 overs of their innings, scoring rapidly even after the two centuries were dismissed.

South Africa opted to go into the match without their two fastest bowlers, Anrich Nortje and Kagiso Rabada, and appeared powerless to keep the scoring in check.

When South Africa batted they were 59 runs ahead on comparative scores after 30 overs. The difference was that England had more strike power in the middle overs, with Archer and leg-spinner Adil Rashid (three for 68) taking crucial wickets.

Archer, in the second match of an international comeback after a long injury-enforced lay-off, bowled consistently at speeds of more than 145km/h (90mph).



HYDERABAD: Youngster cricketers in action during Mirza Qamar Under 13 Championship at Niaz Stadium.

## Babar, Sarfaraz and Shaheen feature in special edition of PCB Podcast

LAHORE (APP): As the eighth edition of the HBL Pakistan Super League continues to grip the imagination of the entire nation, the Pakistan Cricket Board has released a special edition of the PCB Podcast.

The 43rd edition of the PCB Podcast features Peshawar Zalmi's new captain Babar Azam, Quetta Gladiators' skipper Sarfaraz Ahmed and Shaheen Afridi, who led Lahore Qalandars to their maiden title last year. The three champion cricketers reflect on the previous events and preview the tournament that will be held in Karachi, Lahore, Multan and Rawalpindi from 13 February to 19 March. 2021 champions Multan Sultans will host reigning champions Lahore Qalandars in the opening match on 13 February, while Peshawar Zalmi will travel to Karachi where they will take on Karachi Kings on 14 February.

Babar Azam, who has the most runs (2,413) in the tournament's history: "Every HBL PSL edition is super exciting for me because of its competitive nature. There is a different challenge each year as the players with whom you share the Pakistan dressing room all year become your opponents. "A new franchise, and a new season, this HBL PSL edition holds added significance for me and I am looking forward to making a good start in this journey."

"Sharing the dressing room with different players throughout -- one season with Islamabad United and six seasons with Karachi Kings -- has helped me a lot. You learn a great deal when you interact with other players, getting to know about their mindset, training regime and the way they han-

dle different situations.

"It is a dream for me to score a century in the HBL PSL as I already have two T20I centuries and a few more in different leagues. I am positive about achieving the three-figure mark in this HBL PSL, and hoping the right time comes soon for a big score." Sarfaraz, who is the only player to captain his franchise in all the seasons: "The HBL PSL has played a very important role in the development of cricket in Pakistan. It has provided exposure to our players and they have learned how to handle the camera and crowd pressure, which is very important to grow as an international cricketer."

"Since it (HBL PSL) is a big brand, everyone follows it, and top players from all over the world are involved, everyone takes note of those cricketers who perform."

"The winning side of the ICC Champions Trophy 2017 had the players who proved their mettle in the HBL PSL. Whether it was Fakhar Zaman, Hasan Ali, Faheem Ashraf, Shadab Khan or Rumman Raees, these guys were doing well in the domestic cricket and were picked by the PSL franchises. Their impressive performances in the HBL PSL earned them spots in the national side. "So, the league's contribution in the development of cricket in the country is immense."

Lahore Qalandars had a massive change in their fortunes with the change in leadership. Being the only franchise not to have won an HBL PSL title, the Qalandars, under the captaincy of star speedster Shaheen Afridi, bagged their maiden title by defeating Multan Sultans at their

home ground, the Gaddafi Stadium, in front of a jam-packed crowd.

Shaheen, who has 70 wickets (the third most in tournament's history) at 20.77: "As a captain, I don't only think about those in the field but also for those who are sitting on the bench. You have to carry each and every player in the team and treat everyone equally and as a match winner, regardless of his seniority."

"The most important aspect of leadership is handling pressure. I need to handle pressure and be good with my decision-making, because if I let the pressure get better of me, my team would crumble. It is also important to lead from the front and outperform myself every time I take the field as it will motivate my players to do well."

Upcoming HBL PSL media releases: 3 February -- New boys on the block

4 February -- Fakhar, Sharjeel and Haris talk about becoming explosive opener

5 February - Role of fast bowlers

6 February -- Significance of HBL PSL

7 February -- PCB Podcast, featuring Imad Wasim, Mohammad Rizwan and Shadab Khan

Previous HBL PSL media releases: 20 January - HBL PSL 8 schedule announced

24 January - Fans to nominate Hamaray Heroes for HBL PSL 8

25 January - Teams strengthen rosters in HBL PSL 8 replacement draft

31 January - Babar Azam will aim to notch maiden century in HBL PSL

1 February -- Shaheen raring for his comeback in HBL PSL 2023

### 'Third Ganga Choti Winter Sports Festival' to start from Feb 6

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) would organize the colorful seven-day 'Third Ganga Choti Winter Sports Festival' from February 6-12. Talking to APP, an official of the PTDC said that the festival would be attended by a massive crowd including locals, tourists and adventure seekers.

"People especially sports lovers are waiting to welcome and celebrate the event in Bagh, Azad Jammu and Kashmir," he added.

He said, "The festival every year in winter welcomes local and international tourists to enjoy colourful activities of A.J.K."

The event also highlights the country's rich and glorious tourism potential offshore."

He said, "The festival includes competitions of ice-hockey, ice-skating and snowboarding to entertain the people through the healthy games."

Traditional food and cultural stalls will also be set up during the event."

"Playing such games in an event is important for physical and mental health as it stimulates certain hormones in the brain which improve a person's mood and positively affect memory and learning, the official said."

He further added that the festival would greatly help in promoting and projecting winter tourism in the country.

## Saudi Arabia to host AFC Asian Cup 2027

MANAMA (Xinhua/APP): The Asian Football Confederation (AFC) Member Associations confirmed the Saudi Arabian Football Federation (SAFF) as the host association for the AFC Asian Cup 2027 on Wednesday during the 33rd AFC Congress in Bahrain.

It marks the first time the tournament will be staged in Saudi Arabia, whose national side

clinched the title on three occasions in 1984, 1988 and 1996. "This will be the first time the tournament will be staged in Saudi Arabia, and we look forward to working closely with the SAFF and the Saudi Arabian government to deliver a memorable AFC Asian Cup for our fans and players in 2027," said AFC president Shaikh Salman bin Ebrahim Al Khalifa.

A series of discussions

and new appointments were made at the Congress, with Shaikh Salman re-elected president of the Asian football governing body to secure a third four-year term until 2027. He took over as the 10th AFC chief in 2013. "I want to thank you all again for your overwhelming support for my candidacy to lead Asian football for another four years," said Shaikh Salman.

### 3rd Allama Iqbal Polo Tournament

## Two Semi finalist teams decided

LAHORE (APP): Platinum Homes/Master Paints and FG/Din Polo qualified for the semifinals of the 3rd Allama Iqbal Polo Tournament sponsored by Lahore Smart City after winning their respective matches played here at the Jinnah Polo Fields on Thursday.

Four teams, which lost from Pool A and B, will compete against each other for the subsidiary final. In the matches played at the Pakistan Park Cavalry Ground on Thursday, Platinum Homes/Master Paints defeated BN Polo 7-4½ to qualify for the semifinal.

Amirreza Behboudi played exceptionally and fired in four goals while Agha Musa Ali Khan banged in a beautiful brace and Qadeer Ashfaq converted one for Platinum Homes/Master Paints. Haider Naseem pumped in

two goals while Babar Naseem and Hamza Ejaz scored one goal each for BN Polo.

Platinum Homes/Master Paints were off to a flying start as they converted four goals against one by BN Polo to take a 4-1 lead by the end of the first chukker. The second and third chukkers were evenly poised as both the sides struck three goals each in both the chukkers, with Platinum Homes/Master Paints still enjoying a healthy 7-4.

No more goals were scored in the fourth and last chukker, as Platinum Homes/Master Paints emerging as winners by 7-4½.

In the second match of the day, FG/Din Polo also qualified for semifinal by beating 4 Corps team 6-3. Abbas Mukhtar hammered three goals, Sheikh Muhammad Raffay scored

two goals and Saqib Khan Khakwani one for FG/Din Polo. For 4 Corps, Lt Col Rab Nawaz Tiwana thrashed in two goals and Ibrahim Khalil struck one.

FG/Din Polo dominated the first and second chukkers fully and hammered two goals each in both the chukkers to gain a good 4-0 lead. The third chukker saw both the teams scoring one goal each with FG/Din Polo still enjoying a 5-1 lead. 4 Corps though played well in the fourth and last chukker by converting a brace against one by FG/Din Polo, but lost the match by 3-6.

Tomorrow Friday (February 3, 2023), both the semifinals will be played at Jinnah Polo Fields. The first semifinal will be played at 2:00 pm, while the second semifinal will be contested at 3:00 pm.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 59,500 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 59,500 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 52,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1492.69 feet and was 94.69 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 16,200 cusecs while outflow was 30,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1130.60 feet, which was 80.60 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 10,700 cusecs and 4,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded 25,600, 40,200, 29,800 and 9,600 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 10,900 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 6,100 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

### Martial Arts Camp concluded

PESHAWAR (APP): The month-long street children martial arts camp, organized by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Judo Association and Rana Federation, concluded here on Thursday. Senior Vice President Olympic Haroon Zafar, President KP Judo Association and Director Media Judo Federation Masood Ahmed, Coach Bushra Afridi, Principal Peshawar Model Nasir Bagh Branch and others were present on this occasion. President of KP Olympic Association Syed Aqil Shah said in the closing ceremony that during the camp, basic training in martial arts was provided to over hundred children. He appreciated the association for holding such camps in which upcoming youngsters turned up and learnt much regarding judo. He said preparation for the forthcoming 34th National Games would also be made and soon camps would be set up for different games. Aqil Shah said that such steps would be taken to promote the game in the province. Later, he distributed certificates among all the participants.

### Light rain, snowfall likely in KP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Light rain with light snowfall is expected at isolated places in Upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan during the next 24 hours, Pakistan Meteorological Department said (PMD). While light rain or drizzle is likely in Potohar region. Cold and dry weather is expected in most parts while cloudy in upper parts of the country. Foggy conditions are likely to occur over south Punjab during the next 24 hours. According to the synoptic situation, a westerly wave was affecting upper parts of the country. During the last 24 hours, cold and dry weather prevailed in most parts of the country. While very cold in upper parts and north Balochistan. However, light rain with light snowfall was recorded in Bagrote and Skardu. The lowest temperatures recorded during the period were Leh -12 C, Kalam -09, Astore, Parachinar -07, Gupis, Skardu-06 and Bagrote -05 C.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Aviation hosted dinner in honor of visiting UAE delegation.

## Senate Standing Committee briefed on Kashmir Solidarity Day preparations

ISLAMABAD (APP): A meeting of the Senate Standing Committee on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan was held here at the Parliament House on Thursday with Senator Prof. Sajid Mir in chair.

The Senate body deliberated on budgetary utilization of AJK and GB during the first six months of the current fiscal year 2022-2023, said a press release.

The officials informed the committee that the total budget of AJK and GB for 2022-23 is around Rs 1142.168 million which includes Rs 186.143 million for Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan, Rs 260 million for Refugees Management Cell, Rs 24.954 million for Directorate of Health Services (AK), Rs 4.432 million for J&K Refugees Rehabilitation Organization and Rs 666.639 million for Gilgit Baltistan Council Secretariat Islamabad.

They said the federal government has released Rs

459.571 million till December 2022 and total expenditure stood around Rs 455.264 million and a shortfall of Rs 151.636 million is expected under the head of Gilgit Baltistan Council, Islamabad.

Discussing the matter of Azad Kashmir properties located in the different parts of the country, the committee decided to form a Sub-Committee to probe the matter and it was decided that these properties should be handed over to Azad Kashmir government to get benefit from them.

The Committee was also briefed about the preparations with respect to Kashmir Solidarity Day on 5th February.

Secretary for Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Zahoor Ahmed, apprised the committee that the government has aimed to disseminate Pakistan message on Kashmir Solidarity Day worldwide and support from Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)

has also been sought in this regard. Among other activities, the ministry has organized three days cultural festival with the collaboration of National Council of Arts to exhibit the culture and traditions of Azad Jammu Kashmir and a walk from Foreign Office to D Chowk will also be held to mark solidarity with the people of Azad Kashmir.

The Chairman Committee congratulated ministry on their efforts in highlighting the Kashmir cause and reiterated that no stone shall left unturned in self-determination struggle of Kashmiris.

The meeting was attended by Senator Shahadat Awan, Senator Shaheen Khalid Butt, Senator Kamran Michael, Advisor to Prime Minister on Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Qamar Zaman Kaira, Additional Secretary for Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit Baltistan Zahoor Ahmed and other senior officers of concerned departments.

## ANF arrests four drug pushers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan seized 163 drug-filled capsules, and 610 grams of narcotics and arrested four drug pushers, said an ANF spokesman.

In two operations at Islamabad International Airport, ANF recovered 80 heroin-filled capsules from the possession of a Dubai-bound passenger, resident of Waziristan, going on flight no PA-210 and 52 hashish and 31 Ice drug-filled capsules from the possession of a Doha-bound passenger, resident of Mardan going on flight no PK-287.

In operation conducted near a university in Islamabad, ANF recovered 510 grams of hashish from the possession of a drug peddler resident of Islamabad allegedly involved in supplying drugs to students.

ANF and ASF recovered 70 grams of hashish from the possession of a Sharjah-bound passenger resident of Swat arrested at Bacha Khan International Airport Peshawar. The arrested accused was going on flight no G-555.

## UNWTO tourism development cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): A Pakistani delegation led by the Managing Director of Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) Aftab-ur-Rehman Rana demanded the UNWTO for enhancing its tourism development cooperation in the region.

The delegation visited the United Nations Headquarters in New York on Thursday under the leadership of MD PTDC, a news release received here said. The delegation also held a fruitful meeting with Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Munir Akram, and discussed measures for promoting the tourism industry at the international level.

It also made discussion with the Special Envoy on enhancing the cooperation of the UN World Tourism Organization (WTO), other UN agencies, and international organizations for the tourism sector's sustainable development in Pakistan. A lunch was also hosted in honor of the delegation.

## NA body for jointly resolving Baluchistan issues

ISLAMABAD (NNI): National Assembly Special Committee on Baluchistan on Thursday highlighted the importance of working in a unified manner to address the long-standing problems faced by the province and ensure the welfare of its people. The meeting chaired by National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf stressed the importance of involving all relevant stakeholders in the decision-making process to ensure that their perspectives and concerns are taken into account. The meeting was aimed at addressing the pressing issues faced by the Baluchistan province and working toward their resolution.

The Committee comprising prominent members from various political parties and government stakeholders decided to frame Terms of Reference (TORs), and prepare a list of the most pressing issues for their fast tracking. Initially, the committee agreed to take up the issues of non-provision of gas to local residents in certain areas of Baluchistan, rehabilitation of flood-affected people, repatriation of Internally Displace Persons (IDPs), illegal occupation of land by oil and gas companies and fixation of job quotas.

Besides that, the Committee members discussed various initiatives and plans to

improve the standard of living, provide basic necessities, and create job opportunities for the residents of Baluchistan.

The speaker expressed his satisfaction with the proceedings of the meeting and emphasized the need for continued cooperation and collaboration among the members to achieve the desired outcomes.

He thanked the members for their participation and commitment to finding solutions to the challenges faced by the province. Besides Speaker, Sardar Ayaz Sadiq (Federal Minister for Economic Affairs), Asad Mehmood (Federal Minister for Communications), Ehsan Ur Rehman Mazari (Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination), Nawabzada Shazain Bugti (Federal Minister for Narcotics Control), Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar (Federal Minister for Law & Justice), Noor Alam Khan (Chairman PAC); MNAs Khalid Hussain Magsi, Usama Qadri, Muhammad Junaid Anwar Chaudhry, Prof. Dr. Shahnaz Baloch, Zia Lango (Home Minister Balochistan), Nawabzada Mir Gohram Khan Bugti (Advisor Labour & Manpower, Govt. Of Balochistan), and government functionaries from the federal and provincial government were also present in the meeting.

## Int'l community urged to stop slow-motion genocide of Kashmiris

ISLAMABAD (APP): The All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) here on Thursday urged upon the international community to stop India from carrying out the slow-motion genocide of Kashmiris through state terrorism.

"Narendra Modi-led fascist Indian government is hell-bent to uproot the Muslims and settle Hindu fanatics in Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir to change the demography of the territory," said a senior leader of All Parties Hurriyat Conference, Ghulam Ahmed Gulzar, in a statement received here.

He said the Modi regime since abrogating the special status of IIOJK on August 05, 2019, was taking one step after another to snatch the identity, culture, and land of Kashmiris and impose its devilish Hindutva ideology on them.

Meanwhile, APHC-AJK chapter leader, Muhammad Sultan Butt in a statement expressed gratitude to Pakistan for its continued support of the Kashmiris' freedom struggle. He hoped that Pakistan will expedite its efforts to highlight the Kashmir dispute at the international level.

Senior APHC leader and Chairman Kashmir Institute of International Relations Altaf Hussain Wani called upon the international community and United Nations to take notice of the unabated atrocities of Indian forces on innocent Kashmiris in the IIOJK and force India to give the right of self-determination to the Kashmiri people as per the resolutions passed by the UN.

He said the Kashmiri people would not budge from their principled demands for the right of self-determination. "Neither the Kashmiris would budge from their demand of right self-determination nor bow down to the illegal tactics of Indian

occupational forces in IIOJK," he told APP. Wani said the UN had already passed resolutions to give the right of self-determination to the Kashmiris people. Unfortunately, despite a lapse of over seven decades, the UN failed to implement its resolutions, he added.

He said the revocation of articles 370 and 35-A was a part of the nefarious Indian designs to change the demography of Kashmir. The illegal steps were taken to transform the Muslim majority into a minority, he said.

He said, "The agenda is clear and that is hegemonic designs to impose long desired Hindutva agenda in IIOJK". Kashmiri people had already rejected the revocation of articles 370 and 35-A, he added.

Another senior Kashmir leader Abdul Mateen said the people of the held valley were forced to live under such a condition that they even could not breathe freely. There was a complete military siege in IIOJK, besides a strict communications blockade, including a ban on newspapers, the internet and social media. Innocent people were being killed and thousands of Kashmiri youth were held under the black law of the Public Safety Act, he added.

He said the Modi regime had imposed countless sanctions and restrictions in the valley under the draconian Public Safety Act. The ugly face of India and its so-called claim of being a secular state had fully been exposed before the world, he said. He was of the view that durable peace could not be ensured in the region till an amicable solution to the Kashmir issue as per the aspiration of the Kashmiri people. He also expressed his deep concern over the gruesome killings and gross human rights violations by Indian troops in the territory.

## Digital transformation key aspect of modern higher education landscape: President IIUI

ISLAMABAD (INP): President International Islamic University Islamabad (IIUI) Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi has said that digital transformation is an important aspect of the modern higher education landscape, and it has the potential to transform the way students learn, the way teachers teach, and the way researchers conduct research.

He was speaking as chief guest of the graduation ceremony of the National

Freelance Training Program (NFTP) held at the new campus of the IIUI on Thursday.

On the occasion, Dr. Hathal Homoud Alotaibi distributed certificates among 301 students who completed their training at IIUI centre. The ceremony was also attended by Mr. Ali Aghar, Senior Joint Secretary Ministry of Information Technology and Telecom, Program manager, PITB, Mr. Muhammad Amjad, members of the PITB, Vice Presidents of IIUI, Deans

DGs and senior faculty members.

Addressing the ceremony, Dr. Hathal said that the self-employment programs for youth are vital for the growth and development of any nation. He added that universities must encourage entrepreneurship and prime focus must be on providing students with an enabling environment of Digi skills and opportunities to pursue freelancing career. It will equip them with the tools they need to succeed.

## Effective awareness sessions on cervical cancer urged

ISLAMABAD (APP): Parliamentary Secretary for the Ministry of National Health Services, Dr. Shazia Aslam Soomro on Thursday said that health institutions and hospitals should start effective awareness campaigns on cervical cancer to educate people about the disease and its treatment aspects.

Addressing the closing ceremony of Maroof International Hospital's (MIH) cervical awareness campaign, she said the government will continue playing its role in educating people about the disease and ensuring treatment services at public hospitals. She said the role of the private sector is crucial and urged them to initiate such drives in collaboration with the government to get set targets.

She applauded the awareness campaigns launched by Maroof Int'l Hospital throughout the month of January and appreciated the spotlight has been put on a lesser-known and rarely talked about disease. CEO Maroof Int'l Hospital Haroon Naseer emphasized the private and public sector should make joint efforts to take all stakeholders on board in order to launch a massive awareness drive about cervical cancer. He said in order to provide health-care facilities to the marginalized commu-

nities, Maroof Int'l Hospital is running a 100-bed free hospital in Bewal village, adding the hospital also opened Urgent Care Center in Top City Islamabad to serve the locals on subsidized rates.

He said the Maroof Int'l Hospital has always been at the forefront of helping people at the time of calamities like floods and COVID-19. He said cervical cancer is the 6th most common cancer in women in the Eastern Mediterranean Region.

In 2020, an estimated 89,800 women were diagnosed with cervical cancer in the region and more than 47,500 women died from the disease. "When diagnosed, cervical cancer is one of the most successfully treatable forms of cancer, as long as it is detected early and managed effectively," said the head of the Gynae Department MIH Prof. Dr. Nabia Tariq. Dr. Gulafshana Hafeez Khan emphasized young women to get informed about the disease and find out the facts besides educating other women for screening. The event was also attended by Dr. Sabina Imran Durrani, Director General Population Ministry of Health, Dr. Samia Rizwan, Health Specialist Maternal Newborn and Child Health at the UNICEF country office in Islamabad and Dr. Mariam.



ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister, Engr. Amir Muqam inaugurating Book Mela at One Day International Conference on Urdu Journalism at NLPD.



### Poppy farm eradicated

FARAH (Agencies): Local officials on Thursday said that the provincial counter-narcotic department officers eradicated poppy farms in the Parchaman district of the province. Provincial police headquarters in a statement said that counter-narcotics officers eradicated poppy farms in the Parchaman district of the province. The counter-narcotic department accelerated their efforts and will not allow anyone to buy and sell the drug, the source concluded.

## The Frontier Post

# AFGHANISTAN

Rajab 11, 1444 — Friday, February 03, 2023

### Don't blame others: Muttaqi

KABUL (Agencies): Acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi has asked neighbor country not to blame others for the mistakes of their own. He said that claims about presence of terrorists in Afghanistan is baseless. Terrorists have no borders so if they were present in Afghanistan they would have definitely affected Afghanistan and our neighbors China, Tajikistan, Iran, Uzbekistan, and Turkmenistan, while all these countries are safe, he said.

## Professor shows support for women kept from studies



KABUL (TOLONews): Ismail Mashal, a university lecturer, distributes thousands of books to the people.

The professor, who transports the books on a homemade pushcart, lamented that female students

will not be able to learn because they are not allowed to go to university.

"I decided to give all of these 21,000 books as a gift to students and other patriots," Mashal said.

The pushcart is decorated as a tree with branches,

the leaves of which are marked with the names of academic fields.

A sign at the top says that in Islam, education is obligatory for both men and women.

Mashal said he has spent years collecting these

books for students and he does not want them to go to waste.

"When the doors of universities and schools are closed, these books will get buried under dust, and their time will pass. I intended to give these books to my people as a present," Mashal said.

Residents of Kabul praised the lecturer and asked the Islamic Emirate to immediately open universities and schools to female students.

"We all want our sisters and mothers to go to school and study while wearing the hijab," said Khalil Ahmad, a resident of Kabul.

"People should take advantage of this chance and read books at home," said, a resident of Kabul.

Earlier, Ismail Mashal ripped up his certificates and diplomas on a live show on TOLONews to protest the ban on women's education in the country.

### Solar power use increased

KABUL (TOLONews): Due to the lack of city-provided electricity, this winter has seen an increase in the harnessing of solar power by Kabul residents.

Residents of Kabul said that the shortage of electricity makes them use solar power to meet their needs. "For the use of solar power, we spend 12,000 afghanis, and use it for brightness at night..." said Zalullah Fayaz, a Kabul resident.

"In Kabul, there are electrical problems, and we have to use solar power, we only charge our mobiles from solar and use it for lighting," said Waqar Shagiwal, a Kabul resident.

Meanwhile, sellers of solar power systems in the capital said that their market has become prosperous compared to the past.

"The solar power market has become better compared to the past, people who have a better economic situation buy a solar power system," said Aqdas a solar seller.

Meantime the Ministry of Energy and Water said that currently six major solar power generation projects exist in Afghanistan.

"The Ministry of Energy and Water will soon submit five solar energy projects in Kabul, Balkh, and Herat provinces for investment," said Farhad Mohammadi, head of energy programs of the Ministry of Energy and Water.

According to the Ministry of Energy and Water, Afghanistan has the capacity to produce 222,000 MW of solar energy, and this ministry is negotiating with Turkish, Chinese, and other countries' companies for investment and construction of solar power projects.

## US imposes new visa restrictions on some IEA authorities

KABUL (Khaama Press): In response to the recent bans on women's rights, Washington has imposed additional visa restrictions on some Taliban (IEA) members, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said.

Mr. Blinken in a statement said that the new visa restrictions on current and former members of the Taliban, and individuals believed to be responsible for, or repressing women and girls in Afghanistan through restrictive policies and violence, including the Taliban's decision to ban women from universities and from working with NGOs.

The visa restrictions may also include the immediate family members of the IEA

authorities. This decision was taken following the IEA officials' disregard for respecting human rights and dignity, particularly the rights of Afghan women and girls.

"So far, the Taliban's actions have forced over one million school-aged Afghan girls and young women out of the classroom, with more women out of universities and countless Afghan women out of the workforce," Blinken said.

Blinken further reiterated the IEA authorities should not expect the respect and support of the international community until they respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all

Afghans, including women and girls.

In response to the visa restrictions, the Taliban's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has condemned Washington's decision and said controversial issues should be solved through diplomacy and positive engagement, not through using pressure.

Meanwhile, some political experts believe that in order to expect the international community partners' support, the IEA officials need to pursue a rather softer policy, acceptable to all sides.

Pushing to implement their strict ideologies will neither help the group gain internal legitimacy nor international recognition.

## Taliban authorities flog 16 people for alleged crimes in Helmand

KABUL (Khaama Press): Taliban Supreme Court has announced that at least 16 people alleged of different crimes have been flogged in public in southern Helmand Province on Thursday.

The alleged individuals accused of different crimes have been lashed in public in the Grishk district of southern Helmand province earlier today, according to the announcement made by the Taliban's supreme court.

The United Nations have described lashing Afghan men and women as a "cruel act", and called on the

Islamic emirate authorities of Afghanistan to respect human rights and values under all circumstances.

Public punishment includes flogging, stoning, and public execution, being widely exercised by Taliban officials across the country in the recent past, drawing massive criticism from the international community.

Taliban Supreme leader Hibatullah Akhundzada issued a series of decrees last November, legitimizing some strict practices which are not in line with the contemporary lifestyle of the

people. Barring Afghan girls from getting secondary and higher education are clear examples, which sparked serious demonstrations in some parts of Afghanistan.

The Islamic Emirate authorities publicly shot an alleged person to death in front of a huge crowd in western Farah province on December 7, where high-ranking Taliban officials had participated to see the shooting.

Following the shooting, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) in

Kabul urged the Taliban authorities to stop the death penalty immediately. Amnesty International also called the Taliban's execution "cruel, inhuman and humiliating". However, the Taliban regime continues practicing the rather harsh version of Islamic Sharia laws by re-introducing public execution in Afghanistan after more than two decades.

## Herat Zonal Hospital faces shortage of female doctors

HERAT CITY (Pajhwok): Some women in western Herat province have complained against the shortage of female doctors and lack of health facilities in the Zonal Hospital and said they faced serious problems.

Samia, one of the visitors, said her relatives were hospitalized in the hospital for sometimes but there was no female doctor and little health facilities that forced them to transfer their patient to a private hospital for better treatment.

She said 90pc people referring to the hospital were poor people, adding that the lack of facilities and shortage of female doctors forced them to transfer their patients to private health centers.

She said female patients desperately needed female doctors and there were some points that could not be explained to the male doctor.

Herat Zonal Hospital that provides health facilities to the entire western

zone has 650 beds for men and women.

Torpaikai, one of the patients, told Pajhwok Afghan News she was examined in the hospital but medical tests were conducted outside the hospital.

She said her economic situation were not good, adding that she would never referred to the Zonal Hospital if her economic situation was better.

Dr. Imamuddin Mahmoodi, one of the specialist doctors of the hospital, said the lack of medical facilities inside the country forced many patients to travel to foreign countries for treatment.

Hospital Director Dr. Mohammad Arif Jalali said 30 percent of the total medical staff were female and said the capacity of the hospital would be increased from 650 to 1,000 beds in the near future. He added more posts were considered for female staff members in the hospital.

He said recently a num-



ber of new posts had been announced and examination for these posts had been taken to address the growing issues of patients.

He assured more vacant posts would also be announced soon to complete the human power of the hospital.

He also said the provision of medical facilities and resources for the hospital was his top priority which will be addressed in coordination with relevant authorities.

Herat residents believed the government should immediately address the

shortage of female personnel issue in the hospital.

It is pertinent to mention that the Herat Zonal Hospital is one of the largest medical facilities in the west of the country where patients from Farah, Ghor and Badghis provinces also arrived for treatment.

## 9,145 positive Covid-19 cases registered in past four month in Afghanistan, says Ministry of Public Health

KABUL (Pajhwok): Over 9,140 positive Covid-19 cases have been registered in Afghanistan in the past four months out of which 76 people died and 7,989 recovered, according to the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH). This comes that 12 million people in the country had been vaccinated against Covid-19 and the process was still ongoing.

According to the MoPH over 30,000 suspected Covid-19 incidents registered from September 22 till October 22 last year in which 3,895 were positive. During this period 23 people died while 2,623 patients recovered.

The source said over 24,000 suspected cases registered last year during October 22 – November 22 in which 2,903 were positive. During this period 11 Covid-19 patients died while 3,145 recovered.

During the period of November 22 till December 22, 19,000 suspected cases registered in which 1,504 were positive cases out of which 15 patients died while 1,647 recovered.

The source showed during the period of December, 22, 2022 till January 22, 2023,

96,000 suspected Covid-19 cases had been registered in which 843 positive leaving 38 patients were died while 574 recovered.

According to the MoPH most Covid-19 cases registered in Herat (1137), Nangarhar (718), Ghazni (604) and Maidan Wardak (852) provinces and the least Covid-19 cases registered in Baghlan (54), Samangan (59), Jawzjan (68) and Uruzgan (88) provinces.

In addition 412 cases registered in Kapesa province, 382 in Kunar, 374 in Zabul, 310 in Bamyan, 297 in Daikundi, 297 in Laghman, 297 in Paktika, 295 in Nimroz, 267 in Logar, 259 in Kabul, 243 in Panjshir, 206 in Ghazni, 604 in Farah, 219 in Takhar, 218 in Ghor, 218 in Kandahar, 202 in Kunduz, 194 in Parwan, 176 in Badakhshan, 148 in Sar-i-Pul, 144 in Paktia, 138 in Badghis, 115 in Balkh, 111 in Helmand, 99 in Khost and 94 in Nuristan.

**Public Views on Covid-19 seasonal diseases**

According to reports seasonal diseases such as cold, body pain and others had increased recently but people consider it a new wave of Covid-19.

Abdul Karim, the resident of capital Kabul, said: "It is possible that his seasonal disease is Covid-19 but people don't give importance to it. In the past people afraid of Covid-19 pan-



dem but it doesn't existed." Shafiullah, another resident of capital Kabul, said: "Flue and head pain comes in cold weather and it is possibly it is a Covid-19."

But another resident Suhrah, said: "Covid-19 pandemic had eradicated in the country, there is the threat of flue but not Covid-19."

Public Health Ministry

Spokesperson Dr. Sharafat Zaman told Pajhwok Afghan News the number of positive Covid-19 cases was on the decline in the country over the past four months and the main reason behind this was the vaccination of 12 million people in the country against this virus.

He said some seasonal diseases existed during winter, Covid-19 cases also declined but the pandemic still existed and not over. He asked people to wear mask and implement all necessary measures against Covid-19.

Zaman said 15 special wards where Covid-19 patients are provided treatment were functional in capital Kabul, in addition Covid-19 sections were active in provincial hospitals.

He added individual who already got vaccinated will get supportive doses in the near future to increase their impunity against the virus.

He did not reveal but added that a huge number of Covid-19 vaccines existed in the country.

**76 Covid-19 patients died in past 4 months**

Most fatalities from Covid-19 virus inflicted on people in Faryab, Herat and Nangarhar

provinces while the least fatalities occurred in Parwan, Jawzjan and Paktia provinces.

Deaths from Covid-19 occurred in 23 provinces of the country.

Fifteen people died from Covid-19 in Faryab in the past four months, 11 people in Herat, eight in Nangarhar, six people in Khost, four each in Kunduz, Balkh and Nuristan, three each in Maidan Wardak and Kunar, two each in Ghazni, Laghman, Kabul, Farah and Helmand provinces, and one each in Daikundi, Paktika, Panjshir, Takhar, Kandahar, Parwan, Paktia and Jawzjan provinces.

Incepted in Chinese city of Wuhan City in late 2019, Covid-19 virus spread all over the world.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO) 208,452 Covid-19 positive cases had been registered in Afghanistan so far. The virus claimed 7,876 lives in Afghanistan until now.

Worldwide, 675 million positive Covid-19 cases had been registered so far while 7.6 million people had died from the virus.





ISLAMABAD: Police officials escorting AML Chief Shiekh Rashid after presenting him before Sessions Court.

## FO: Pakistan will continue its support to Palestinians

ISLAMABAD (INP): Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch has stated that Pakistan strongly condemned Israel's brutal attack on the city and camp of Jenin in the State of Palestine, killing several innocent Palestinians. While replying to a question during her weekly news briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, she stated that Pakistan will continue its strong and unwavering support to the legitimate struggle of the Palestinian people for the full realization of their rights including the right to self-determination. "We call for an end to these illegal incursions and actions by the Israeli occupation forces. Human rights violations of the Palestinian people must be stopped" he reiterated.

She stated that Pakistan supports the Palestinian demand for a viable, independent and contiguous Palestinian State, with pre-1967 borders and Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital, in accordance with the relevant United Nations and OIC resolutions.

Responding another question, she viewed that Pakistan expects sincere cooperation from the Afghan interim government to address the challenge of terrorism and hopes that Afghanistan will live up to its commitments made with the international community and Pakistan in this regard. She said terrorism is a common threat to both Pakistan and Afghanistan and we must take a strong stand against such entities that use violence against innocent citizens and law enforcement agencies.

The Spokesperson expressed Pakistan's resolve to root out the evil of terrorism and safeguard the security of every citizen. She said we do not believe in accusations or finger pointing. However, we would reiterate our expectations that no country should allow its territory to be used for perpetrating terrorism against Pakistan. It is time that the commitments made to the world are fulfilled with sincerity and in good faith actions.

Moreover, she stated that special Representative for Afghanistan of the United States Thomas West and the European Union's Special Representative for Afghanistan Tomas Niklasson visited Pakistan this week and held meetings with Special Advisor to the Prime Minister on Afghanistan, Ambassador Muhammad Sadiq and Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan.

During these meetings, the two sides discussed the regional situation including the recent developments in Afghanistan and humanitarian support to the Afghan people. The Pakistan side reaffirmed our commitment to a peaceful, stable and

interconnected region.

Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), Ms. Inger Andersen is on an official visit to Pakistan from 30th January to 3rd February 2023. During this visit, she has engaged with different national stakeholders. Ms. Anderson called on the Prime Minister and held meetings with Minister for Climate Change, Ms. Sherry Rehman and the Foreign Secretary Dr. Asad Majeed Khan, she added.

Responding to another question, the Spokesperson said Pakistan has a foreign policy that prioritizes developing good relations with all countries. She said we have constructive dialogue with all countries, including Russian Federation, the United States, the European Union, and our neighbors. She said bilateral relations with Russia, including economic cooperation, will further deepen in future.

Mumtaz Zahra Baloch informed that Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar will undertake a two-day visit to Sri Lanka from tomorrow. The Spokesperson said that the Minister of State will participate in the 75th Independence Day of Sri Lanka as a Guest of Honour. In addition to attending the Independence Day events, she will call on the Sri Lankan leadership and hold a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Sri Lanka.

The Spokesperson further said Pakistan and Sri Lanka have historic ties that have grown steadily in all aspects of bilateral cooperation. We also have worked closely in multilateral forums including SAARC. The visit of the Minister of State would contribute to enhanced understanding between the two countries and signal Pakistan's support for Sri Lanka in a difficult time.

On Kashmir she said that Kashmir Solidarity Day which will be observed on 5th February 2023. Like every year, the Pakistani nation will express its unwavering solidarity with our Kashmiri brothers and sisters in their just struggle for realization of their Right to Self-determination. The Day will be observed with traditional zeal and fervor by all sections of society in Pakistan and by the Pakistani and Kashmiri Diaspora around the world. "We believe that durable peace, security and development in the region hinges on peaceful resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute. It is imperative that the Kashmiris exercise their right to self-determination through a free and impartial plebiscite under the auspices of the United Nations" she added.

## PHC grants transit bail to PTI Shandana Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) granted transit bail to former Member National Assembly and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shandana Gulzar and ordered to appear before competent forum on 25th February for promoting ethnic fervor on talk show at television, on Thursday.

The counsel Muzzam Butt along with petitioner Shandana Gulzar appeared before Justice Syed Arshad Ali of PHC while the court granted transit bail to former MNA. According to prosecution, former MNA Shandana Gulzar has promoted ethnic fervor on private television talk show while Abdul Hadi has registered First Information Report against her for provoking public.

Former MNA said that are we cannot rising questions which constitutional right of every citizen after falling of 100 martyrs due to suicide attack in the province while talking to media personnel. She claimed that they didn't afraid from court's proceedings while added that Imran Khan demanding to deal everything as per law from last eight months.

Former MNA claimed that Police Lines situated in Red Zone of Peshawar which has raised several questions and added that several personnel were martyred from her constituency. She added that people shall ask questions from her regarding the incident as a public representative.

She claimed that journalists and politicians were pickup illegally while government demanding don't arise questions for their acts and deeds. She added that it is better to close the constitution rather than denying liberty of speech. She added that also government shouldn't tolerate criticism on economic crisis facing by nation from last eight months.

## Barrister Elahi named as new AGP

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Arif Alvi has approved appointment of Barrister Shahzad Ata Elahi, a Supreme Court advocate, as Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP).

Shahzad Ata Elahi was appointed as AGP after Mansoor Usman Awan had declined to accept the post. The President granted the approval of the appointment in accordance with Article 100 of the Constitution and Rules of Business.

Meanwhile, President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif appointed Jaffar Khan Mandokhel as President of PML-N Balochistan. PML-N Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had nominated Jaffar Khan Mandokhel for the office in consultation with the party.

The prime minister congratulated Jaffar Khan Mandokhel, who called on him here, on getting the new responsibility and expressed good wishes for him. He expressed the hope that Jaffar Khan Mandokhel would organize the PML-N well in Balochistan and run the party affairs in a better way. Former prime minister and MNA Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and Minister for Education Rana Tanvir Hussain were also present in the meeting.

# 8 PAF officers promoted to rank of Air Vice Marshals

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Government of Pakistan has promoted 08 PAF Officers to the rank of Air Vice Marshal. The promoted Air Officers include Air Vice Marshal Imran Qadir, Air Vice Marshal Ghazanfar Latif, Air Vice Marshal Shahryar Khan, Air Vice Marshal Nauman Waheed, Air Vice Marshal Mehr Yar Sagib Niazi, Air Vice Marshal Abuzar Khan, Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Asif Aslam and Air Vice Marshal Ghulam Shabbir.

Air Vice Marshal Imran Qadir was commissioned in GD(P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in June, 1992 and received the coveted Sword of Honour. During his career, he has served as Chief Test Pilot of JF-17 program, commanded an Operational Conversion Unit, Support Wing and served as Commandant Combat Support, PAF Airmen Academy Korangi Creek. He has served as Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Training-Officers) and is currently holding the prestigious office of Advisor to Chief of the Air Staff for Operations, Audit and Evaluation Cell at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He holds a Master's degree in War Studies and is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

Air Vice Marshal Ghazanfar Latif was commissioned in GD(P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in May, 1993. During his illustrious career, he has commanded a Fighter Squadron, a Flying Wing and an Operational Air Base. He has served as Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Operations) and Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Safety) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He is a graduate of National Defence University and holds a Master's degree in War Studies. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military) and Sitara-i-Basalat.

Air Vice Marshal Shahryar Khan was commissioned in GD(P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in May, 1993. During his career, he has commanded a Fighter Squadron, a Flying Wing, Military Training Wing and an Operational Air Base. He has also performed his duties as Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Plans) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. The Air Officer has also served as Personal Staff Officer to Chief of the Air Staff and Senior Air Staff Officer at Regional Air Command. He holds a Master's degree in National Security and War Studies. He is also a graduate of Advanced Staff and War College and Royal College of Defence Studies, UK. The Air Officer is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

Air Vice Marshal Nauman Waheed was commissioned in GD(P) Branch of Pakistan Air Force in May, 1993. During his career, he has commanded a Support Wing, a Fighter Squadron and an Operational Air Base. He has served as Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Plans) and Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Operational Research & Analysis) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He holds a Master's degree in Strategic Studies from National Defence University and has also served as Directing Staff at this prestigious institution. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

Air Vice Marshal Mehr Yar Sagib Niazi was commissioned in Engineering Branch of Pakistan Air Force in June, 1992. During his illustrious career, he commanded Engineering Wing of an Operational Base, served as Director Weapon System Management (JF-17), Managing Director (Mirage Rebuild Factory) and Commandant (Tech) at PAF Airmen Academy Korangi Creek. He also rendered services as Advisor to General Security Aviation

Command at Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The Air Officer is a graduate of National Defence University and holds Master's degree in War Studies. He is also recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

Air Vice Marshal Abuzar Khan was commissioned in Engineering Branch of Pakistan Air Force in June, 1992. During his career, he has commanded an Engineering Wing, has served as Director Weapon System Management (Trainer) and Project Director as well as Managing Director at Aircraft Rebuild Factory. He holds Master degrees in Strategic Studies and War Studies. The Air Officer is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

Air Vice Marshal Muhammad Asif Aslam was commissioned in Engineering Branch of Pakistan Air Force in June, 1992. During his career, he has commanded an Air Engineering Depot, has served as Director Weapons (Research and Development) at Air Weapons Complex and Director Missile and Ground Armament at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. The Air Officer has also served as Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Weapons Engineering) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He holds Master degrees in Strategic Studies and War Studies. He is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

Air Vice Marshal Ghulam Shabbir was commissioned in Engineering Branch of Pakistan Air Force in December, 1992. During his career, he commanded School of Aeronautics and an Engineering Wing. He served as Assistant Chief of the Air Staff (Training Airmen & Civilians) at Air Headquarters, Islamabad. He also rendered services as technical advisor in Nigerian Air Force. The Air Officer holds Master's degree in War Studies and is a recipient of Sitara-i-Imtiaz (Military).

## Constitution to stand suspended, if polls not held in 90 days: Fawad

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senior Vice-President Fawad Chaudhry Thursday claimed if Pakistan did not vote within 90 days after the dissolution of assemblies, it would be a violation of the Constitution — which would stand suspended because of this breach.

In his first press conference a day after his release on bail in Islamabad, the former information minister said on Thursday that "if any administration or authority tries to defer the elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa beyond the 90-day period allowed by the Constitution, Article 6 of the Constitution will be applicable on them". As per the law, the "unconstitutional means shall be guilty of high treason".

During the presser, he also addressed the accusation levelled against the previous PTI government of "aiding and abetting terrorism" in the country through lax policies and leniency — the rhetoric set by the leadership of the ruling Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM). Responding to the aforementioned "accusations," Fawad said: "You are trying the heap the blame on PTI, however, we had defeated terrorism. During the years that the PTI was in power, Imran Khan handled matters of Afghanistan and the United States in the appropriate manner."

There was no blast in Pakistan during our time, he insisted. He further clarified that the PTI's policy was to try and curb hatred and said: "Imran

Khan's stance was that political problems cannot be solved by military force." The former federal minister went on to say that the current leadership in Afghanistan respected Imran Khan, insisting, "but the federal government's stance" had destroyed Khan's Afghan policy.

"You cannot solve the TTP issue without the Afghan leadership's backing," Fawad further said. "Using force will make matters more complicated." Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari, he said, made 17 visits to the US but has never visited Afghanistan. Attacking the incumbent government, Fawad also said that "its policy is unclear and that it has no idea of what the situation in Afghanistan actually is".

"Back when we were in power, it was being touted that Pakistan is going from terrorism to tourism, we even revived international cricket in the country. In merely nine months, our efforts have been destroyed." He further said that the institutions should not back "corrupt" people. "Don't carry the burden of [Asif Ali] Zardari, Nawaz Sharif and Fazl Ur Rehman so much that your back doubles over with the brunt of the burden."

The PTI vice-president also said that institutions should try to solve the country's many problems instead of making arrests. "First they arrested Azam Swati, then Shehbaz Gill, then me. Now they have charged Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's daughter Shandana Gulzar with treason." She was

booked in a sedition case filed over her controversial remarks on a TV talk show.

"This is all part of an attempt to destabilise Pakistan," he said, adding, "They [government] are struggling to manage both to country and Imran Khan and failing miserably at both." While pointing his finger at the caretaker government in two provinces, he insisted that "dummy governments" had been set up in Punjab and KP. The governors in the two provinces seemed to be on an unmerited power trip, he added.

"However, if we criticise them, or anyone for that matter, we will be called traitors. By this definition, the entire country is full of traitors." Speaking on the occasion, Hammad Azhar — who served during the PTI regime as the federal minister for economic affairs — criticised the coalition government for its economic policies as a delegation of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is in Pakistan for technical and policy level discussions to revive the \$7 billion Extended Fund Facility stalled for months.

"Economy does not run without stability," Azhar said, adding, "The rupee has decreased from Rs80 to Rs90 in nine months. This will have an adverse impact on the country." He further said that the inflation rate in the country would reach 40%. "Only if general elections are held to bring to power a democratically elected government, then the country's economic woes be assuaged."

## IHC larger bench to hear petition for Khan's disqualification

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has decided to constitute a larger bench to hear a petition seeking PTI Chairman Imran Khan's disqualification for not mentioning "his daughter Tyrian Jade White" in his nomination papers. A day ago, Imran had submitted a response to the IHC requesting the petition against him to be dismissed, arguing it was "not maintainable" on legal grounds.

In his response, the PTI chief had argued he was not a member of the National Assembly anymore, therefore such a petition was "not maintainable and may not be proceeded". Last year, petitioner Sajid Mahmood had approached the IHC claiming that although Imran made arrangements for Tyrian White's upkeep abroad, he did not disclose it in nomination papers and affidavits filed by him for elections.

IHC Chief Justice Amir Farooq presided over the hearing and adjourned the next hearing till February 9. Salman Butt represented the petitioner's side while the counsels included Advocate Salman Akram Raja's assistant and Advocate Salman Abuzar Niazi appeared on behalf of Khan.

Imran's counsel Raja excused himself from attending the hearing citing duties in the Supreme Court. At the outset of the hearing, Raja's assistant clarified that Raja was present in the Supreme Court's bench number one.

The petitioner's lawyer remarked that Raja had submitted a written response. To this, Justice Farooq responded, "In the reply, it has been said that Imran is not a National Assembly member anymore." The lawyer added the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) itself had denotified Imran. The judge said, "It will be appropriate that the new sit-

## IHC rejects PTI petition against ECP's order in prohibited funding case

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has announced its reserved verdict and rejected Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI)'s petition challenging Election Commission of Pakistan's decision in prohibited funding case.

The IHC says that the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) report on the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) prohibited funding case was "correct". The high court declared that the electoral watchdog was correct in issuing a show cause notice to the PTI and rejected party chief Imran Khan's petition. The decision came after the former premier had challenged the ECP order in the prohibited funding case. A larger bench consisting of IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq, Justice Mianqul Hassan Aurangzeb and Justice Babar Sattar heard the PTI chief's petition. The bench had reserved the judgment last month. Referring to the ECP order, Imran had argued in his petition that the commission had declared his party as foreign-aided and had denied his declaration, claiming that the accounts of political parties were handled by chartered accountants.

The former premier contended that the ECP targeted the PTI and made it a case of "pick and choose". IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq had previously remarked that the electoral watchdog's decision in the prohibited funding case was an 'observation' and that if the PTI proved that the funds were not prohibited, the decision would have to be changed.

**IHC reserves decision on Gill's objection on appointment of special prosecutor:** The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has reserved its verdict on the petition against the appointment of a special prosecutor in Shahbaz Gill's sedition case. IHC Chief Justice (CJ) Aamer Farooq conducted the hearing on Shehbaz Gill's petition against the appointment of a special prosecutor in the sedition case. Shahbaz Gill had challenged the appointment of Special Prosecutor Raja Rizwan Abbasi as Special Prosecutor. However, Aleem Abbasi Advocate appeared in the court on behalf of Prosecutor Rizwan Abbasi.

uation regarding Imran Khan is determined. The affidavit that has been referred to in the plea is from 2018."

The assistant lawyer representing Imran insisted, "The ECP de-seated Imran and he also resigned." The IHC chief justice then raised the point that the bench's constitution had also been objected to in the response. The assistant lawyer responded that he was a respectable judge and there is no such thing. "There had been separation from the case due to some reasons. As there is no hurry in this case, you can

give a date in March [for the next hearing]," he added.

Advocate Niazi said, "You are the best judge. We only presented some information." Justice Farooq responded, "In 2018, the recusal from hearing this case was not due to personal reasons. Currently, the petitioner has requested to present the case in front of a specific bench. "However, you raised an objection so let's reconstitute the bench. We will keep the matter in front of a larger bench," he ruled.

## Pakistan needs a new direction to grow: Ahsan

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan's chequered history of political pandemonium and inconsistent policies have been the bleakest aspects which have resulted into our failure at economic front. There is dire need for new direction to bring the country back on track.

Federal Minister for Planning and Development Prof Ahsan Iqbal gave these remarks while talking to the team of HBL digital banking today. He visited HBL's Innovation Center and received briefing from HBL Chief Operating Officer Mr. Sagheer Mufti.

Federal Minister Planning said that political

stability had proved fruitful worldwide in making the nations economically prosperous. Further adding that his party's last two tenures couldn't achieve the desired targets due to political instability in the country. He further said that Pakistan's future laid in achieving growth and stability in exports. The faster growth in exports would ensure speedy recovery of economy, he added.

He further said that five Es formula; entailing exports, energy, e-commerce, environment and equity was the need of an hour. These five Es will also help making Pakistan food secure country, providing better health and

education facilities to people and controlling population explosion in the country.

Prof. Ahsan Iqbal said that Higher Education Commission HEC had been given directives to make sure on establishing IT driven innovation centers at every university in liaison with industries.

He further said that skill and education could mould our youth into a demographic dividend. The planning commission had revised the policy of Young Development Fellows YDF, which was suspended by the previous government. YDF was aimed at empowering youth through skill, he added.