

ISLAMABAD (INP): Federal government has decided to transfer Inspector General Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Moazzam Jah Ansari. Sources said the federal government has sought names from establishment division for new IGP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Inspector General GB, Saeed Wazir who has already served on key positions in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is likely to be appointed as new IG KPK.

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# Massive quakes kill 2,600 in Turkey, Syria

ISTANBUL (Agencies): A huge earthquake killed more than 2,600 people and injured thousands more on Monday in Turkey and northwest Syria, flattening apartment blocks and heaping more destruction on Syrian cities already devastated by years of war.

The magnitude 7.8 quake, which hit before sunrise in bitter winter weather, was the worst to strike Turkey this century. It was followed in the early afternoon by another large quake of magnitude 7.7. It was not immediately clear how much damage had been done by the second quake, which like the first was felt across the region and endangered rescuers struggling to pull casualties from the rubble.

"We were shaken like a cradle. There were nine of us at home. Two sons of mine are still in the rubble, I'm waiting for them," said a woman with a broken arm and injuries to her face, speaking in an ambulance near the wreckage of a seven-storey block where she had lived in Diyarbakir in southeast Turkey.

In Turkey, the death toll stood at 1,498, the disaster agency said. At least 716 people were killed in Syria, according to figures from the Damascus government and the United Nations. Poor internet connections and damaged roads between some of the worst-hit cities in Turkey's south, homes to millions of people, hindered efforts to assess and address the impact.

Temperatures in some areas were expected to fall to near freezing overnight, worsening conditions for people trapped under rubble or left homeless. Rain was falling on Monday after snowstorms swept the country at the weekend. It is already the highest death toll from an earthquake in Turkey since 1999, when a tremor of similar magnitude devastated the heavily populated eastern Marmara Sea region near Istanbul, killing more than 17,000.

Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan, who is preparing for a tough election in May, called it a historic disaster and the worst earthquake to hit Turkey since 1939, but said authorities were doing all they could. "Everyone is putting their heart and soul into efforts although the winter

season, cold weather and the earthquake happening during the night makes things more difficult," he said. Turkish state broadcaster TRT showed a building collapse in the southern province of Adana after the second quake. It was not immediately clear if it was evacuated.

In Syria, already wrecked by more than 11 years of civil war, the health ministry said 461 people had been killed and more than 1,326 injured. In the Syrian rebel-held northwest, a United Nations spokesperson said 255 people had died. The Norwegian Refugee Council said the earthquake would only add to the suffering of millions of Syrians already enduring a humanitarian crisis due to the civil war.

In the Turkish city of Diyarbakir, Reuters journalists saw dozens of rescue workers searching through a mound of debris, all that was left of a big building, and hauling off bits of wreckage as they looked for survivors. Occasionally they raised their hands and called for quiet, listening for sounds of life. Men carried a girl wrapped in blankets from a collapsed building in the city. In Izmir, drone footage showed rescue workers stood atop a hill of rubble where a building once stood, working to lift slabs of masonry.

Footage circulated on Twitter showed two neighbouring buildings collapsing one after the other in Syria's Aleppo, filling the street with billowing dust. Two residents of the city, which has been heavily damaged in the war, said the buildings had fallen in the hours after the quake, which was also felt in Cyprus and Lebanon. In the Syrian rebel-held town of Jandar in Aleppo province, a mound of concrete, steel rods and bundles of clothes lay where a multi-storey building once stood.

"There were 12 families under there. Not a single one came out. Not one," said a thin young man, his eyes wide open in shock and his hand bandaged. Raed Fares of the Syrian White Helmets, a rescue service in the rebel-held territory known for pulling people from the ruins of buildings destroyed by air strikes, said they were in "a race against time to save the lives of those under the rubble".



ISTANBUL: Rescue workers and volunteers busy in search and rescue operations in the rubble of a collapsed building, in Diyarbakir City of Turkey.

Abdul Salam al Mahmoud, a Syrian in the town of Atareb, said it felt "like the apocalypse". Syrian state television showed footage of rescue teams searching for survivors in heavy rain and sleet. President Bashar al-Assad held an emergency cabinet meeting to review the damage and discuss the next steps, his office said.

People in Damascus and in the Lebanese cities of Beirut and Tripoli ran into the street and took to their cars to get away from their buildings in fear of collapses, witnesses said. Footage on broadcaster CNNTurk showed the historic Gaziantep Castle was severely damaged.

In the Turkish city of Malatya, a rescue worker crawled into a collapsed building, trying to identify a survivor trapped under the wreckage, in footage released by Turkey's Disaster and Emergency Management Authority (AFAD). "What colour are you wearing? Are you wearing pink? Please take care of yourself for the moment, I cannot see anything else," the rescue worker could be heard saying. Erdogan said 45 countries had offered to help with

the search and rescue efforts.

The United States was "profoundly concerned" about the quake and was monitoring events closely, White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said on Twitter. "We stand ready to provide any and all needed assistance," he said. The US Geological Survey said the quake struck at a depth of 17.9 kilometres. It reported a series of earthquakes, one of 6.7 magnitude. The region straddles seismic fault lines.

"The combination of large magnitude and shallow depth made this earthquake extremely destructive," Mohammad Kashani, Associate Professor of Structural and Earthquake Engineering at the University of Southampton, said. It was Turkey's most severe quake since 1999, when one of similar magnitude devastated Izmit and the heavily populated eastern Marmara Sea region near Istanbul, killing more than 17,000. Tremors were felt in the Turkish capital of Ankara, 460km northwest of the epicentre, and in Cyprus, where police reported no damage.

Meanwhile, when Kasem al-

Abrash felt the ground shaking beneath his feet, his mind immediately went back to his hometown of Idlib

(Continued on Back Page)

KARACHI (Agencies): The mortal remains of former president General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf have reached the metropolis' airport from UAE — after several delays in the flight. The body was given Ghul in Sonapur, Dubai. The mortal remains of the ex-army chief departed from Al Maktoum International Airport in Dubai and landed at Karachi's Jinnah International Airport at around 9:51 pm.

## Humanitarian assistance sent to Turkey on PM's order

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: On the instructions of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif a special plane carrying humanitarian assistance left for Turkey on Monday night. A C-130 plane which was carrying the search and rescue team of the army left the Chaklala airbase for the earthquake-affected areas in Turkey.

While on February 7, a Pakistan International Airlines plane carrying 50 people and 15 tonnes of assistance would leave for Turkey. The team will include personnel of Rescue 1122. On the same day, a C-130 flight will take 15 tonnes of humanitarian aid from Lahore to Istanbul, Turkey. The assistance will include winter tents, blankets, and other essential items.

From February 8, every day on a PIA flight 15 tonnes of humanitarian assistance will be sent from Islamabad and Lahore to Turkey and Syria. Teams from the Ministry of Health and army medical corps will also depart for the two earthquakes devastated countries.

## PM phones Turkish president

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday telephoned Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and conveyed condolences over the casualties and destruction caused by the earthquake which jolted Turkey as well as Syria. Expressing deep grief over the loss of life and property, the prime minister sympathised with the grieved families. "The people of Pakistan are with their brotherly country of Turkey and its people. Pakistan will extend its maximum support to the Turkish government and the people to help them cope with the quake-caused destruction," the prime minister said. He said the adverse impacts of climate change were deteriorating. "The natural calamities and climate change know no boundaries, region, or ethnicity," he remarked. The prime minister prayed to Allah Almighty for peace of the departed souls, patience to the bereaved families, and early recovery of the injured. President Erdogan thanked the prime minister for the consolatory call and for offering support. Erdogan said he valued the sentiments of the prime minister as well as the Pakistani people.

Foreign Office Spokesperson also reiterated that Pakistan stood in complete solidarity with the brotherly people of Turkey in the wake of unprecedented natural calamity. "Beyond the immediate relief effort, we will continue to work with Turkey in the post-disaster rehabilitation and reconstruction phases," the spokesperson said in a press release. On the instructions of the prime minister, the NDMA was mobilizing all available resources including winterized tents, blankets and other critical life-saving supplies, it was added.

## PM: Reforms to be undertaken in National Energy Efficiency Authority

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday decided to carry out restructuring and capacity building of National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (NEECA). He was chairing a review meeting here for promoting energy conservation in the country.

The prime minister formed an inter-ministerial committee under the leadership of former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi for important reforms in the energy efficiency authority. He directed that the inter-ministerial committee should take steps for immediate revival of the authority. He voiced concern over the wastage of resources and closure of different institutions in the country.

The PM expressed his displeasure over the shortcomings in the performance and capacity of NEECA. The number of personnel in the authority should be increased and transparency should be ensured in the institution, he stressed. The experts in NEECA should devise a strategy for energy



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing a meeting to review implementation of Energy Conservation Plan.

savings in the sectors of construction, industry, communications, power and agriculture.

The prime minister was briefed in detail about the performance and mandate of the authority. It was informed that in the past no considerable steps were taken for the capacity building of NEECA. The PM instructed that a timeframe should be set for immediate comprehensive planning and reforms in NEECA. He was told that draft of

the National Energy Efficiency and Conservation Policy would be presented for approval before the cabinet soon.

Former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi, federal ministers Ishaq Dar, Khurram Dastgir Khan, Advisor to PM Ahad Cheema, State Minister for Petroleum Dr Musadqi Malik, Special Assistants to PM Jehanzeb Khan, Syed Fahd Hussain and officials concerned attended the meeting.

## LHC declares FCA in electricity bills illegal

LAHORE (Agencies): In a big relief for the electricity consumers, the Lahore High Court has declared the collection of fuel charges adjustment (FCA) and other surcharges in electricity bills illegal.

The court accepted the petitions filed against the fuel adjustment charges in the electricity bills. Justice Ali Baqir Najfi delivered a reserved decision on 3659 applications of various natures. The court reserved the verdict on October 10, 2022.

The court declared fuel adjustment in electricity bills of agricultural and domestic consumers illegal. Fuel Charge Adjustments (FCA) are decided by NEPRA to account for the variation in fuel prices and generation mix. According to NEPRA, the actual increase or decrease in fuel cost prices has to be adjusted in customers monthly bills in the form of Fuel Charge Adjustments (FCA).

**Protective bail to Gill extended:** The Lahore High Court (LHC) has expressed its displeasure over incomplete details of a report submitted on behalf of the federal interior ministry about a record of first information reports (FIR), registered anywhere, against Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) leader Shahbaz Gill.

LHC Justice Tariq Saleem Sheikh presided over the hearing of protective bail filed by Gill after federal special public prosecutor Raja Rizwan Abbasi confirmed the registration of the FIR. It is pertinent to note that in previous proceedings, the interior secretary was directed to submit a report about case details by February 6.

As the proceedings commenced, an official representing the interior ministry submitted the report before the court, revealing the registration of two FIRs in Quetta, four in Sindh and two in Balochistan. Petitioner's counsel Rana Abdul Shakoor Khan argued that complete details of the FIRs are not being shared despite court orders.

## Economy nosedived during PTI regime: Maryam

F.P. Report

MULTAN: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Chief Organizer Maryam Nawaz Monday said former prime minister Nawaz Sharif had left the national economy on a strong footing in 2018 but it nosedived during the Imran-Khan-led PTI government.

In a matter of a few years, the previous PML-N government's achievements were squandered opening floodgates of inflation and leaving the commoners at the receiving end, she said talking to the media before meeting with the PML-N parliamentarians, ticket holders, and social media team here. Maryam Nawaz, who is also Senior Vice President of the PML-N, said the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government had inherited a Pakistan with a

high economic growth rate of 5.8 percent, but it drastically cut down the development trajectory.

Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Mariyum Aurangzaib, Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, senior party leaders Pervaiz Rashid, Tehmina Daultana, Talal Chaudhry, and Senator Saud Majeed were also present. Maryam Nawaz said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was working round the clock to steer the economy out of trouble and control price hikes, which had resulted due to the wrong policies of the PTI regime.

It would take time to rectify the ills the country had to suffer during the few years of the PTI's "misrule", she added. Maryam recalled that Nawaz Sharif had finalized a programme with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in

2016 but its burden was not shifted to the people and as a result, the country was economically strong when the general elections were held in 2018.

On the other hand, the IMF programme signed by the Imran-led government worsened the economic conditions and triggered the worst-ever inflation, she added. Maryam said the last PML-N government had kept the prices of essential commodities stable such as wheat flour was available at Rs 35/kg, sugar Rs 55/kg and edible oil Rs 140 per liter. She said the agreement signed by the PTI regime with the IMF not only caused inflation and an economic downturn but its violation further worsened the situation as well leaving no choice for the incumbent government except to accept the tough conditions being imposed by the international lender.

## Senate passes resolution to strengthen FSC

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Senate of Pakistan has unanimously passed a resolution for the strengthening of the Federal Shariat Court (FSC) and filling the vacant posts to make it more vibrant.

The resolution moved by Mushtaq Ahmed, drew the attention of the government towards Article 227 of the Constitution, which states that all existing laws shall be brought in conformity with the Injunctions of Islam as laid down in the Holy Quran and Sunnah and no law shall be enacted which is repugnant to such Injunctions.

The house also drew the attention of the government to Articles 203 C and 203 F of the Constitution. The house expressed deep concerns over the vacant positions of Judges including Ulama Judges in the Federal Shariat Court and infrequent meetings of the Shariat Appellate Bench in the Supreme Court causing heavy pendency of important cases. The house demanded that, as per the obligatory constitutional strength, the government should make the Federal Shariat Court and Shariat Appellate Bench in the Supreme Court of Pakistan functional by appointing all judges."

## IHC suspends FIRs against Sheikh Rashid

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has suspended the First Information Reports (FIRs) registered against Sheikh Rashid Ahmed head of Awami Muslim League (AML) in Mochko and Lasbela.

IHC Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri heard Rashid's petition to stop his transfer to Karachi and to hold contempt of court against the police. Sheikh's lawyer argued that although the court had restrained further action on the summons of the Aabpara police station, the police registered a case and made an arrest on the same application.

The lawyer said another FIR against Sheikh Rashid was registered in Mochko, Karachi. The court inquired how the case was registered in the port city when the statement was given in Islamabad's Polyclinic Hospital. The court restrained the police from acting on the cases registered against Sheikh Rashid in Mochko, Karachi and Lasbela, Balochistan. Further, the IHC issued notices to the attorney general, advocate general and

bar councils suspending the FIRs registered against the ex-minister in Mochko and Lasbela. During the hearing, the court questioned how there can be FIRs registered in different cities on the same incident. The lawyer said that a third FIR was also registered in Murree. When asked whether an arrest has been made in these three cases, the lawyer said that Sheikh Rashid was arrested in one case.

Justice Jahangiri remarked that according to the law when an arrest is made on one case, it is also made on the rest. The lawyer also told the court that under physical remand, Rashid had been tied to a chair at an unknown location where he was kept for six hours. During this time, the AML chief's counsel said that Rashid was asked political questions and subjected to violence. The judge questioned that where "this series will stop" and reminded the counsel that "you had filed terrorism cases against the information secretary and the PTV MD and now the same thing is happening against

you". He added, "Imagine what would have happened if the police had arrested the female information secretary."

## PTI moves LHC against reshuffle in Punjab bureaucracy

LAHORE (Agencies): The PTI has moved Lahore High Court (LHC) to halt the caretaker government of Punjab from transfers and postings in the province.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders Shah Mahmood Qureshi, Fawad Chaudhry, Hamad Azhar have been among 13 from the party ranks who have filed a petition in the high court challenging reshuffle in the Punjab bureaucracy.

The petitioners have made the federal government, the election commission, caretaker government and principal secretary to the Governor as respondents in the case. "Caretaker government has been installed for delimitations and holding general elections," according to the petition.



# Punjab, KP stress unity among political leadership

LAHORE (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Haji Ghulam Ali met Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman and discussed matters of mutual interest and law and order situation at the Governor's House here on Monday.Both the counterparts also expressed concern over the growing spate of terrorism. Speaking on the occasion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said the whole nation was saddened by the tragedy that happened in Police Lines Masjid Peshawar in the recent past. He said that it was a matter of grave concern that terrorism was on the rise again. He said: "Our

nation, security forces and Pakistan Army have rendered unprecedented sacrifices in the war against terrorism, adding there was need to forge unity in our ranks to eliminate terrorism."

The Punjab Governor also informed his counterpart about the steps taken for the improvement of quality of higher education in universities.

Governor KP Haji Ghulam Ali said the country was currently facing many problems including economic challenges and terrorism. It was need of the hour to forget all mutual differences and unite to serve the country, he added.



LAHORE: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Haji Ghulam Ali calls on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman and discussed matters of mutual interest and law and order situation at the Governor's House


# Sindh cabinet decides to start wheat procurement from Feb 15

KARACHI (APP): The provincial cabinet of Sindh has decided to start wheat procurement from March 15 at a rate of Rs. 4,000 per 40 kg, approved Rs 58.7 billion for relief work, enhanced the scope of the Rapid Response Force and created Crowd management unit to respond during violent public disorder.

The cabinet was held under the chairmanship of Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah here at CM House and was attended by provincial ministers, advisors, special assistants, Chief Secretary Sohail Rajput, Chairman P&D Hassan Naqvi, PSCM Fayaz Jatoi, and other officers concerned. CM


Advisor on Law Murtaza Wahab briefed the media about the cabinet decisions. At the outset, the cabinet condemned the terrorist attack in Peshawar that claimed over 82 innocent lives and vowed to "eradicate terrorists and their facilitators from our ranks" and also expressed solidarity with the people of Türkiye where southern areas have been hit by a deadly earthquake. The cabinet appreciated the chief minister's visit to Peshawar where he visited the blast site and the hospital to give consolation to the injured. The cabinet also endorsed the CM's announcement of Rs one million compensation each for the families of the martyrs in the blast and Rs. 500,000 for the injured. The cabinet also decided to dispatch 100,000 blankets to Türkiye for quake-hit people. The general administration department told the cabinet that during the floods and unprecedented rains, Rs 58.7 billion were released, including Rs27,648.452 million for relief and rehabilitation, Rs8,390 million for a subsidy to farmers on Rabi Crop 2022-23, Rs1000 million for provision of fodder, Rs14,150.3 million for the repair of Irrigation works, Rs3,628.63 million for the survey or damages and related works, Rs3925.952 million for KMC and DMCs to repair bus routes and other works and Rs985.405 million for medicines purchase. The chief minister directed the Advisor Agriculture to coordinate with the federal government that has been provided Rs8.39 billion for a subsidy to farmers on rabi crops for timely distribution through BISP. The cabinet approved the amount of Rs25.036 billion released/to be released onward for relief and rehabilitation. The cabinet took up the issue of recent recruitments in the police department wherein there were some

complaints of fake domicile. Shah said that the recruitment was made purely on merit only for locals. The chief minister directed the chief secretary to get all the domiciles of newly recruited in the police department verified so that genuine candidates could be hired. The cabinet was told that the Inspector General Police has sent a summary for the expansion of the Rapid Response Force (RRF) and the establishment of the Crowd Management Unit (CMU). The Rapid Response Force (RRF) is an anti-terrorist and anti-dacoits force operating throughout Sindh, established in 2009. The RRF, in addition to core responsibilities, provides security to vital Installations such as Oil Refineries, the Supreme Court & High Court at Karachi, the CM House, the Assembly Building, Security of VVIPs & Cricket Teams, important Religious, political, or Social gatherings. The CM was informed that the entire province will enable district police or other LEAs to respond quickly in case of an emergency.




PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT (PMU) KITE C&W DEPARTMENT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING



PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT (PMU), COMMUNICATION & WORKS DEPARTMENT PESHAWAR

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) REPORT OF REHABILITATION AND REMODELING OF THANDIANI ROAD, DISTRICT ABBOTTABAD



All stakeholders, interested / affected persons & the General Public are notified that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has admitted the application for the grant of approval for the "Rehabilitation and Remodeling of Thandiani Road, District Abbottabad"


All stakeholders, interested / Affected Persons & the General Public are invited to submit their written comments in favor or against the grant of Environmental approval of the said project, to Director General, EPA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar within a period of fifteen (15) days from the date of this publication / advertisement.

The detailed documents of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Report of the project are available at the following locations for view of Stakeholders and General Public.

- Office of the Director General, EPA, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 3rd Floor, SDU Building, Khyber Road, Peshawar Cantt.
- At EPA Regional Directorate, Abbottabad.
- Office of the Project Director, KITE PMU-C&W Department, Peshawar, House No. 08 BC, Park Road, University Town, Peshawar.
- At KITE Infrastructure Engineer Office, FF School, Thandiani Chowk Abbottabad.
- Website of C&W Department ([website: www.cwd.gkp.pk](http://www.cwd.gkp.pk))

A public hearing will be conducted at Contractor's Camp Office at start of Thandiani Road Abbottabad at 11:00 a.m. on 28 February 2023. All stakeholders, interested / affected persons & the General Public are invited to attend the hearing.

Project Director  
PMU-C&W Department, Peshawar,  
House No. 08 BC, Park Road,  
University Town, Peshawar.  
Tel: + 92(91) 9224344 - 9224345



THANDIYANI TOP  
ABBOTTABAD

NAWANSHEHR  
ABBOTTABAD

INF (P) 518/23

<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Ihsan Ullah with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Rahman Ullah citizen number 1540214228859 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Kalsoom Bibi (Daughter) 2.Seema Bibi (Daughter) 3.Uzma Gilani (Daughter) 4.Shaheen Begum (Spouse) 5.Ihsan Ullah (Son) 6.Aad Ullah (Son) 7.Inam Ullah (Son) 8.Irfan Ullah (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MALAKAND-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Amin with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Ms. Nasreen Begum citizen number 1540268030382 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Zofa Kanwal (Daughter) 2.Muhammad Amin (Spouse) 3.Altiaz Ull Amin (Son) 4.Aizaz Ull Amin (Son) 5.Awasi Ull Amin (Son) 6.Inzimam Ull Amin (Son) 7.Ihtisham Ull Amin (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MALAKAND-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Niaz Muhammad with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Ms. Shehla Jilil citizen number 1730151908978 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Tariq Jilil Younsazai (Brother) 2.Khalid Jilil (Brother) 3.Zuhra Jilil (Mother) 4.Niaz Muhammad (Spouse)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA RING ROAD-DSFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Alla Bibi with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Khan Zali citizen number 17301557414649 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Zeenat Bibi (Daughter) 2.Fazilat Bib (Daughter) 3.Alla Bibi (Daughter) 4.Hazrat Ali (Son) 5.Wasid Ali (Son) 6.Hamid Ali (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA RING ROAD-DSFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muneer Ahmad with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Saghir Ahmad citizen number 1730114405473 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Aminah Khatoln (Daughter) 2.Mumtaz Begum (Spouse) 3.Muneer Ahmad (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA RING ROAD-DSFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Waheed with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Ms. Nasreen Bano citizen number 173012306644 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Muhammad Anis (Brother) 2.Muhammad Hafeez (Brother) 3.Muhammad Waheed (Brother) 4.Muhammad Jahanzeb (Brother) 5.Shahida Khan (Sister) 6.Shahida Irfan (Sister)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Adeel Ahmed with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Dilbar Khan citizen number 1310161170959 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Sumaira Dilbar (Daughter) 2.Shakeel Bibi (Daughter) 3.Tazeem Akhtar (Spouse) 4.Waqas Ahmed (Son) 5.Muhammad Khan (Son) 6.Muhammad Anees (Son) 7.Adeel Ahmed (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Ziafat Gul with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Ibrahim citizen number 1310108327703 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Muhammad Ziafat Gul (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU</p>	
<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Hidayat Ullah Khan with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Ms. Zainab Hidayat Ullah citizen number 1730153769904 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Hidayat Ullah Khan (Father)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Bibi Fozia Gul with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Fazal Hussain citizen number 1730115555319 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Hena Gul (Daughter) 2.Bibi Fozia Gul (Daughter) 3.Fazla Gul (Daughter) 4.Dilshad Begum (Spouse)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Asim with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Zafar Siraj citizen number 1730115485889 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Anila Rizwan (Daughter) 2.Muhammad Asim (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Anwarul Hossain with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Zahid Khan (Daughter) 2.Maryam Ali (Daughter) 3.Muhammad Ali (Son) 4.Muhammad Akbar Khan (Son) 5.Muhammad Zarak Khan (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Rehana Rahim with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Ms. Hamida Rahim citizen number 173012543056 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Farhana Rahim Khan (Daughter) 2.Rehana Rahim Khan (Daughter) 3.Aliya Rahim Khan (Daughter) 4.Awasi Rahim (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Ateeq Ur Rehman with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Tayyab Ur Rehman citizen number 133028426171 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Maria Bibi (Daughter) 2.Naheeda Bibi (Daughter) 3.Abdul Jabbar (Daughter) 4.Niamat Jan (Spouse) 5.Matti Ur Rehman (Son) 6.Ateeq Ur Rehman (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA HARIPUR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Shaukat Begum with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Haris Ullah Khan citizen number 1570160102645 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Shaukat Begum (Mother) 2.Inam Ullah Khan (Father)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA DIR UPPER-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Sajid with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Ibrahim citizen number 1610222766757 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Safia (Daughter) 2.Muhammad Nazir (Son) 3.Muhammad Nazir (Son) 4.Asad Khan (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MARDAN-SFU</p>	
<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Masood with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Ameer Azal Khan citizen number 1330222922841 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Tasleem Jan (Daughter) 2.Banaras Khan (Son) 3.Muhammad Safdar (Son) 4.Muhammad Younis (Son) 5.Muhammad Younis (Son) 6.Muhammad Younis (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA HARIPUR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Zakia Parveen with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Riaz Ur Rehman citizen number 1330204503743 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Zakira Parveen (Spouse)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA HARIPUR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Dilshad with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Younis Ur Rehman citizen number 1330205019867 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Dilshad (Son) 2.Riasat Khan (Son) 3.Waqas Younas (Son) 4.Naeem Younas (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA HARIPUR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Shahbaz Mehmood with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Zahid Khan (Daughter) 2.Maryam Ali (Daughter) 3.Muhammad Ali (Son) 4.Muhammad Akbar Khan (Son) 5.Muhammad Zarak Khan (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA HARIPUR-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Irum Sami with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Ms. Hamida citizen number 1430130836976 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Irum Sami (Daughter)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA KOHAT-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Sher Bano with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Fazal Mabood citizen number 1560205010873 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Sher Bano (Spouse)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA SWAT-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Zeehan Sultan with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Ms. Naheeda citizen number 1210109682631 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Sheeva Mehreen (Daughter) 2.Saleha Tehreem (Daughter) 3.Hadia Tehreem (Daughter) 4.Tehseen Gul (Spouse) 5.Saud Ahmad Muneeb (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA DI KHAN-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Zeehan Sultan with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Ms. Naheeda citizen number 1210109682631 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Asia Gul (Daughter) 2.Sumaira Gul (Daughter) 3.Zeehan Sultan (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA NOWSHERA-SFU</p>	<p><b>PUBLIC NOTICE</b></p> <p>Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Zeehan Sultan with regards to moveable &amp; immovable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Riaz citizen number 1310109062373 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.</p> <p>1.Rubina Shaheen (Daughter) 2.Samina Shaheen (Daughter) 3.Shumaila Bibi (Daughter) 4.Nasreen (Spouse) 5.Muhammad Waqas (Son) 6.Muhammad Fiaz (Son)</p> <p>On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.</p> <p>INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU</p>





## Police line mosque blast: DNA of head, body and hairs of suicide bomber matched

PESHAWAR (APP): In a latest update in police line mosque blast here, the DNA of head, body and hairs found in the helmet used by the suicide bomber matched said Inspector General of Police Mauzzam Jah Ansari on Monday.

He further said that TNT explosive was used in the blast which reportedly occurred in old hall of the mosque built on bricks without erecting any pillar or steel rods, adding that due to severity of the blast the brick walls could not remain intact and ultimately the roof collapsed and caused huge casualties.

The police chief claimed that during the recent investigation a banned outfit had been identified as the perpetrator of police line blast, while the facilitators had also been identified and were also involved in recent acts of terrorism.

He said soon the network of terrorists would be busted and culprits brought to justice.

**Entry with helmets, bullet proof jackets banned in Police Lines**

In the wake of deadly suicide attack on Police Lines' mosque which claimed the lives of at least 84 people, mostly police

officials, the security requirements for entry into Police Lines has further been tightened.

Police sources said that people, including policemen carrying arms and wearing helmets will not be allowed to enter the Police Lines. The entry of police officials wearing bullet-proof jackets will also remain banned in the Police Lines.

The sources further said that people entering the mosque of Police Lines for prayer will be thoroughly body-searched, adding that no relaxation would be given to anyone in this regard.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker provincial minister Irshad Qaisar presiding over a meeting. — F.P. photo

## Activity to strengthen resilience capacity of females held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: In order to help preventing conflicts and pave the way for community level development in merged districts, a project under the Community Resilience Activity-North (CRA-North) has been initiated in this regard.

It has been initiated in the newly merged districts of Khyber, Kurram, North Waziristan and Orakzai. The project focuses on promoting community resilience, increased social cohesion and economic reintegration of for TDPs, enabling them to cope with the rising tides of extremism and militancy in the area.

To achieve its objectives, CRA-North focuses on engaging all segments of society including men,

women as well as the male and female youth of NMDs and builds their capacity through different training workshops, awareness session and technical trainings.

In this connection, CRA-N in collaboration with Peace & Conflict Studies University of Peshawar organized a five-day workshop at the University of Peshawar. In this workshop, 24 female students of Khyber, Orakzai, Kurram & North Waziristan participated.

The workshop mainly focused on female-centric resilience and social cohesion programming with culturally acceptable. The students were trained on women as agent of change, resilience activities identification, development and implementation along with documentation of resilience activities with focused on

media.

This training is expected to equip the students with the resilience programming skills to develop and design Social Action Projects, implement and document these SAP in their districts.

As these students will also implement community level social action projects in their respective areas for creating awareness among the local communities, in a session on documentary production skills including audio and video editing, the students were also guided on how to capture, document and report their field level activities.

Expressing their views about the training, the students highly appreciated such interventions of CRA-North and demanded that such activities should be organized in future as well.



PESHAWAR: District Election Commissioner, Khyber, Shahid Ali taking oath from Returning Officer for bye-election NA-43 Khyber-1 Shahab Siddiq.

## KPBC condoles with bereaved family of Musharraf

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council (KPBC) vice chairman Zardshah Khan along with chairman Executive Committee Syed Mubashir Shah expressed their condolence for bereaved family, on passing of General (Rtd) Pervaiz Musharraf, on Monday.

However, they expressed their serious concern upon provision of extraordinary protocol for repatriation of body of Pervaiz Musharraf to Pakistan by sending aeroplane to United Arab Emirates on the expenditure of tax payers of the country.

KPBC press statement, General Pervaiz Musharraf has abrogated Constitution of Pakistan by imposing martial law on 12th October 1999 and then become President till 2008 while guilty of high treason under the article 6 of the Constitution.

General (retired) Pervaiz Musharraf imposed emergency on 3rd November 2007 and suspended Constitution of 1973 for the second in a row after seven. They added that special court has convicted General (Rtd) Pervaiz Musharraf for death sentence in high treason case.

They added that KPBC and legal fraternity has always resisted against unconstitutional steps usurpers and the lawyer community committed as usual, to strive for protecting the constitution, the independence of judiciary and rule of law in the country.

## 23 shopkeepers arrested

PESHAWAR (APP): The District administration Peshawar during a crack-down against profiteers has arrested 23 shopkeepers from various localities of the district on Monday.

The officers of district administration carried out raids in bazaars on Warsak Road, Bara Road, Kohat Road, Dalzak Road, interior city and other localities and arrested 23 shopkeepers for profiteering, lack of official price-list, selling under-weight roti and unhygienic conditions.

The arrested shopkeepers included fruit & vegetable vendors, bakers (nanbais), butchers, milkmen, grocers and others.

Deputy Commissioner has directed the officers of district administration for consecutive surprise visits to bazaars across the district to take stern action against profiteers and implement the official price-list in letter and spirit.



PESHAWAR: Newly posted Chief Secretary Imdadullah Bosal meeting with Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan.

## KP to be cradle of peace, harmony: Manzoor Afridi

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Labor, Excise and Taxation Haji Manzoor Khan Afridi has said that his government will not only make fool-proof arrangements for conducting free, transparent and fair elections, but for this purpose, congenial and favorable atmosphere based on peace and harmony will be ensured according to mandate of his caretaker government so that the people are enabled to elect their representatives as per their choice and desire in a calm and free environment, he added.

This he said while talking with dignitaries and media representatives during his first visit to his native Khyber district after assuming the portfolio of his ministry.

During the visit, former Member of National

Assembly Alhaj Shah Ji Gul and other tribal leaders gave him a warm welcome while his uncle and former Senator Haji Muhammad Shah Khan and Caretaker Provincial Minister for Relief, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Taj Muhammad Afridi were also present on the occasion.

During the visit, Haji Manzoor Afridi also visited Tut Dand, Jhansi, Spin Qabr, Sepah, Bar

Qamberkhel, Sur kas, Alam Godar and Bara Bazar areas of Tehsil Bara.

Addressing the public gatherings on this occasion, he assured the people that not only Tehsil Bara and Khyber District but the entire province including all the merged districts will be made the cradle of peace.

He reiterated his determination that good governance will be ensured in the province.

Qamberkhel, Sur kas, Alam Godar and Bara Bazar areas of Tehsil Bara.

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He reiterated his determination that good governance will be ensured in the province.

## Filing nomination papers for by-election begins

PESHAWAR (APP): Filing of nomination papers for 8 vacant National Assembly constituencies scheduled on March 16, 2023 began here on Monday.

The process that began today would continue till February 8, 2023 and the initial list of all candidates would be published on February 09, 2023 and their

scrutiny would continue till February 13, 2023.

Appeals against the acceptance or rejection of nomination papers by the Returning Officers (ROs) could be filed with the concerned Appellate Tribunal till February 16, 2023, which would decide these appeals till February 23, 2023.

Revised list of candidates would be issued on February 21 and nomination papers could be returned till February 22, 2023.

The final list of candidates would be issued on February 23, 2023 and electoral symbols would be given to them while polling would be held on March 16, 2023.



PESHAWAR: Central Amir Jamaat-e-Islami Siraj ul Haq addressing a press conference. — F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

## Woman gives birth to twins inside Rescue 1122 ambulance

PESHAWAR (APP): A woman gave birth to twins inside the ambulance of Rescue 1122 here on Monday. Spokesman of Rescue 1122 informed that an expecting woman from Ashab Baba area was being shifted to the hospital by the rescue staff in an ambulance. Owing to the critical state of the women, the lady emergency medical technician, Mehrun Nisa of Rescue 1122 expertly handled the situation with the consent of the family of the woman. The professional skills of the lady medical technician paid off as the woman gave birth to twins inside the Rescue 1122 ambulance.

## Power suspension notified

PESHAWAR (APP): The Peshawar Electric Supply Company on Monday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Shahi Bagh Grid Station on 7th, 11th and 13th of February from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. due to which consumers of 11 KV Chardadda Road, Nishat, feeders will face inconvenience.

It said the power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar Industrial Grid Station on 7th, 9th and 13th

February from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Kakshal, Dheri, Abasin feeders will face inconvenience. The power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar Fort Grid Station on 7th, 9th and 13th February from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Dabghi and Shoba feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will also remain suspended from 132 KV Sakhi Chashma Grid Station on 7th, 9th and 13th February from

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Maqsood Abad, Opazai, Pirbala, 2, Industrial, Chaghar Matti, Pajagai, Benazir Women University, Muslim Abad, Khazana feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will also remain suspended from 66 KV Dir Grid Station on 7th of February from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. resultantly consumers of 11 KV Wari, Sheringal, Barwal feeders will face inconvenience.

## The legendary Pakhtoon who was known for his hospitality and bravery

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: I have never come across a courageous, brave and at the same time very generous and kind hearted man in my life as was late Haji Misal Khan.

He was unwavering, steadfast and always remained in forefront to rescue the oppressed section of his clan. Before performing Hajj he was popularly known as "Naik" amongst all his companion and colleague owing to his generosity. The word Naik is used for a person who takes responsibility of solving the issues of his community. Haji sahib was a public figure and his 84 years of eventful life was full of many ups and downs.

He led from the front in all fields due to his God gifted qualities. During his life he faced every demanding situation in a spirited and resilient way. In early age he served for a short period in the Frontier Corps but quickly deserted it as he wanted to lead life free of taboos according to his will. He was third amongst five brothers but his family was known by him. Making friendship and extending hospitality to everyone was his hall mark which kept him aloof in the society.

He generously opened his Dasterkhwan and won hearts and

mind of the people through his hospitality and sincerity. He did not believe in retreat. Once he supported any one then he took upon himself all the responsibility and worked till the end with missionary zeal and spirit. Everybody trusted his integrity and capability of fulfilling commitment made with him.

He was also flag bearer of promoting Pakhtoon values, culture and traditions in every circumstance through practical steps and never compromised on it. "I have no other desire but only want to live till death with rich Pakhtoon values," was uttered by him on many occasions. Such was his nature that he never showed retreat from his adopted stand on any issue even if the whole village was on the opposite side of the issue.

He sacrificed his near and dear ones for upholding Pashtoon norms and traditions against all temptations and odds. At the time he seemed at the receiving end but in the long run his stance proved absolutely correct and thus became torch bearer and established good example for others to be followed. He helped his aged ailing father in official Depot matters. He established flour machine as well as started bus service for villagers on their demands.

As a token of good will gesture the

bus on several occasion used to carry villagers to Pir Baba Mazar - spiritual place - Buner without fares. The bus service enabled especially the villagers to travel to Tehsil Katlang and District Mardan for their daily routine working which at that time was the only source of transportation for the entire village. Very soon he became very popular amongst transporters and they elected him as their president of Nowshera Transport Association.

He took active part in local politics and had a major vote bank in the area. He was straightforward in politics and openly supported candidate of his choice. He even took upon himself the responsibility of winning seat for his choice of candidate.

After winning the election if he find out the successful candidate is betraying promises made during election campaign then he would instantly parted ways with him. He never ever took benefits from the politicians but rather spent money from his own pocket and sacrificed his nears and dears while sticking hard to his principled political stance which is very rare in Pakistan.

He was very fond of Yusufzai Tribe century's old local game ARCHARY and reinvigorated it in its true essence. He himself was a star

player of Archary and was the captain of his team. Infact he infused new life in this centuries old cultural local game with his charismatic personality and good relations.

He arranged several tournaments of this game in nearby villages which with the passage of time became annual feature of the area. With his great interest and sheer hard work he also arranged tournaments with Swabi and Buner districts teams. He used his own bus to carry players for the tournament to Swabi. Owing to these tournaments the people of the said three districts comes closer together despite non-availability of means of communication and they started participation in each other functions of marriages and deaths ceremonies.

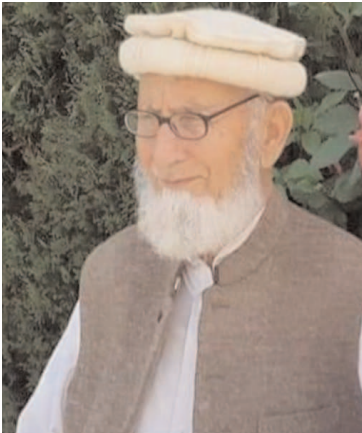
The people of these districts won hearts of each others with harmony and brotherhood prevailed among them due to frequent visits. On his meritorious services he was Awarded Life time achievements Mukha Amn Award, a rare distinction. He also helped the poorest of the village to the best within his resources and capability.

In young age he stood like stumbling rock against usurers and notorious men of the area and compelled them to take back their unlawful and

unjustified demands. In several instances he went at the door of the notorious men and challenged them and ultimately the latter showed retreat from their demands.

He was also a great social worker and tried his best to serve the community people to the best of his capabilities. He took active part in establishing a religious Darul Uloom - Madrasa Siddiq tul Hassanat - in the village. He also went to Karachi, Peshawar, Bara and other parts of the country along with Moultvi Sher Muhammad to collect donation for constructing the Darul Uloom. He used his personal relations and acquired land for construction of mosque in the mohalla. He also collected charity to dig well for the poor and needy deaf person of the village. He religiously followed basic principles of Islam.

He also devoted time to preach Tableegh and went for several Sheroza, Tableeghi terminology used for three days. He was a linchpin member of Village Jirga system and performed crucial role in resolving issues via this system. Such was his charisma that he also successfully acted as a one man Jirga and single handedly resolved the confronting issues to the entire satisfaction of both parties.



It is only the good memories that we leave behind that will keep us in the consciousness of generations to come. Luckily he was my beloved father and what I am today it is due to his parenthood that enabled me to complete my higher education which was very rare at that time. He breathed his last on Friday 7th February 2020. I feel myself insecure and incomplete without him but life never stop for any one and it is the beauty of life that "it goes on in any circumstances", whether one likes it or not.

Always loved and forever missed. May his soul rest in peace, Ameen.





## In brief

### Winter package distributed F.P. Report

KHAR: Bajaur Youth Organization in collaboration of Pak Army has distributed winter package deprived segments of society at rehabilitation center in district headquarters Khar, on Monday. During distribution ceremony, civil society, journalist, political and social activists were present while appreciated the initiative. They added that it would bring hope among marginalized that state and civil society are taking their responsibility. The winter package consisted of blanket along with other gadgets. The disable persons and deprive people paid thank to Pak Army for providing assistance during cold weather.

### Minor girls dead, 11 injured F.P. Report

MALAKAND: A minor girl died and 11 other commuters injured in a road mishap at Pul Choki, Malakand, said Rescue 1122 sources on Monday morning. According to Rescue 1122 the accident with a passenger coaster occurred due to over-speeding. On receiving information of the accident, medical teams of Station 11 of Rescue 1122 rushed to the spot. Medical teams of Rescue 1122 provided first aid to the injured and further treatment shifted them to District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital at Bathkela.

### Two killed in mishap

RAHIM YAR KHAN (INP): At least two people were killed when an over speeding car rammmed into a road protection barrier due to bursting of tyre here on Monday. According to details, the accident took place near Zahir Pir Interchange on Motorway M-5 in Rahim Yar Khan where driver of a car lost control over the steering due to bursting of its tyre. The car smashed into the road protection barrier due to which the vehicle were adversely damaged resulting in death of both car riders. The bodies were retrieved by cutting the body of car and shifted to Sheikh Zayed Hospital.

### Two killed in road mishap

MUZAFARGARH (INP): Two persons were killed and one injured as a result of a collision between a motorcycle and a tractor-trolley on Karachi Road here on Monday. According to the details, the accident occurred due to over-speeding, as a result of which Akmal (50), and Jeewan Mai (40) died on the spot and their teenage son was seriously injured. The rescue team reached the spot and shifted the bodies and injure to DHQ hospital for medical treatment. The Police took the tractor-trolley into custody and started investigation.

### Two dacoits, villager killed

SUKKUR (INP): Two dacoits were killed in a shootout with police and villagers in a suburban village of Sukkur. A villager also died and two others sustained injuries in the shootout, police said on Monday. According to Sukkur Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Sanghar Ali Malik, a band of dacoits entered Varayu Mehara village in the limits of Tamachani police station with the intention of carrying out a robbery. The villagers informed the police. On information, a heavy police contingent reached the spot and surrounded the robbers with the help of the villagers.



KARAK: Teachers of Khushal Khan Khattak University holding a banner to observe Kashmir Solidarity Day. - F.P. photo

## Dead bodies of mother & daughter recovered

F.P. Report

BUNER: Two dead bodies of mother and daughter recovered following identification of alleged murderers including her daughter along with paramour in the premises of Daggar police station.

The deceased identified as mother Shaheen aged 50 years along with her daughter identified as Hafsa age 28 years residents of Torwarsak area of district. The dead bodies were recovered from basement in Daggar and handed over to relatives after autopsy at DHQ Daggar. The dead bodies were recovered by digging cemented floor in the basement of Rehman

Steel Works Hanif-ur-Rehman residence com workshop in Daggar night. The owner of the house identified Hanif-ur-Rehman with another daughter of the deceased widow namely Aisha had already left the country from Lahore airport to Malaysia on January 8, 2023.

The Torwarsak police post in charge had received a cell phone call from an unidentified person who identified the place where the bodies were hide, police confirmed. The deceased widow Shaheen with her daughters deceased Hafsa and another daughter Aisha who escaped with paramour Hanif were left home

on January 7, 2023 saying they want medical checkup at a private clinic in Pir Baba but could not returned. Nadar Khan brother of the deceased ladies report to police on January 13, 2023.

The Daggar police have registered case in ASI Police Post Torwarsak against the owner of the house Hanif-ur-Rehman and deceased widow daughter Aisha who allegedly eloped with Hanif to Malaysia after allegedly committing this brutal crime occurrence. The incident has sent a wave of sadness among whole the district and public demanded from police to bring the accused back from abroad.

## Kashmiris right to be protected: VC F.P. Report

KARAK: Vice Chancellor Khushal Khan Khattak University, Karak Prof. Dr. Johar Ali has said that world should express sodality with the Kashmiri people for ensuring their right of self-determination.

This he said while addressing the concluding ceremony held here in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day. The ceremony included essay writing competition and declamation contest on the issue of Kashmir. Prof Dr. Johar Ali remarked that India was suppressing the due rights of Kashmiris and killing innocent people is a daily routine for subduing their freedom struggle.

VC expressed sympathies with the families of martyrs in the Indian held Kashmir who sacrificed their lives for the sake of getting freedom. He called upon the world community to raise hands for stopping atrocities of Indian forces on innocent people in occupied Kashmir.

Later, the Vice Chancellor gave away prizes and certificates to the successful students of declamation contest and essay writing competition. Meanwhile, the University students, Faculty, Officers and staff stage a rally in support of struggle of Kashmiri people. The participants were holding placards inscribed with slogans in support of Kashmiri people.

## US Consul General visits Lodhran

Saqiab Mushtaq

LODHAN: United States America Consul General William K. Makaneole visited Lodhran as part of U.S. Consulate Lahore's efforts to strengthen people-to-people ties between the United States and Pakistan across all 41 districts of Punjab.

To highlight local environmental initiatives in South Punjab, Mr. Makaneole visited the Miyawaki forest and met with the transgender community engaged in honey-bee farming. He also visited the Lodhran Pilot Project which includes a bio-sand filtration plant that provides clean water for local villages. Consul General Makaneole appreciated efforts of the locals and shared that the U.S.-Pakistan Green Alliance is a framework to address shared challenges relating to agriculture, energy, water, and other environmental issues. The Green Alliance strengthens climate resilience and fosters inclusive economic growth.

While talking with the local business community,



Consul General Makaneole emphasized that the United States is Pakistan's largest bilateral export destination. He said that "In 2022, bilateral trade hit a record \$9.9 billion, with Pakistani exports to the United States reaching \$6.8 billion. These are not small numbers. I believe there is room for further growth, particularly in the fields of climate resilience and energy security."

Consul General Makaneole concluded his one-day tour of Lodhran playing a cricket match with students from Lodhran Public School and Tareen Education Foundation at

the Tareen Cricket Academy.

While talking to the press, Consul General Makaneole expressed great enthusiasm for the sport, adding that sports teach life skills such as leadership and clear communication. He added that "The U.S. Mission has funded youth cricket camps and continues to work on projects to empower women through sports." While in Lodhran Consul General Makaneole also met with Assistant Deputy Commissioner and thanked her for his hospitality and facilitating a wonderful tour of the district.

## Balochistan to form body to probe Hub bus tragedy

QUETTA (PPI): Balochistan Home Minister Mir Ziaullah Langau Monday decided to constitute an investigation committee to probe into Hub bus tragedy that claimed over 40 lives including women and children.

After the Hub bus tragedy, the Balochistan government decided to constitute an investigation committee to ascertain the facts. Ziaullah Langau said that the responsible will be

brought to justice after a thorough probe. He said that the purpose of forming the probe committee is ascertaining the motives behind of horrific accident. Langau added that the authorities will not tolerate any negligence in the probe.

The home minister said that they cannot see their citizens burning alive in the bus accidents every day. Ziaullah Langau assured the aggrieved families of the deceased passengers of justice.

On January 29, the ill-fated passenger coach was coming to Karachi from Quetta when it allegedly lost its control due to over-speeding and fell into a gorge and caught fire. At least 40 passengers lost their lives in the horrific accident. All the burnt bodies of Lasbela passenger bus tragedy had been identified after DNA tests. The bodies were handed over to the heirs from the Edhi morgue.

## Medical staff blame MS for corruption: GHA

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Chairman Grand Health Alliance (GHA) Dr Awais has said that all health staff have executed their duties with honesty in District Headquarter hospital (DHQ), Landi Kotal beside meager facilities are available for the staff and patients.

Addressing to a press conference at DHQ hospital last day GHA chairman Dr Awais, President Muejeb ur Rehman Afridi flanked their other office bearers

said that with joint efforts upgradation of the DHQ to category "A", was won and it was expected that efficiency of the health center and facilities would enhance equal to the teaching hospital.

However, they added the hospital due lack of basic services functioned more poorly than a category "D" health center and efforts were made to smooth the way for the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) scheme in the hospital. GHA cabinet members argued that

digital x-ray and other essential operettas beside lifesaving drugs lacked emergency (causality) and therefore the visiting patients and their attendants misbehaved with the on-duty doctors.

Instead of encouraging the specialist doctors the Medical Superintendent (MS) teased them for one or another reason and that was why more than a dozen of medical experts sought their transfer orders to down towns' hospitals, they blamed.

## Delayed justice in NMD's forced people towards old Jirga system

Murad Khan

GHALANAI: After FATA merger in 2018, on one side the people of tribal districts got the basic right of vote, access to appeal and they are now free from FCR (Frontier Crimes Regulation) which was known by the name of black law by majority segments of society, but on the other side majority People are of the view that due to Extension of judiciary and police to tribal districts the routine activities got complicated, so instead of giving ease to the general public, they are facing complexity in many forms.

They are of the view that although due to FATA merger we got many facilities like services of Rescue 1122 and so around 30 other departments at their doorstep, but on the other hand, the process got complicated, because before FATA merger the Jirga system was dissolving our routine matters in days, but now in the presence of police system and extension of judiciary, to solve a problem, we have to wait for months.

A 27 years old Siraj Khan belonging to Halimzai Tehsil of Mohmand District (who is disabled/special person and a shop-keeper by profession) narrated his story about the judiciary and jirga system "My Father's name and D.O.B (Bate of Birth) was written wrong in my Matric DMC(Detail Marks Certificate), this was a clerical mistake by BISE (Board of intermediate and Secondary Education) Peshawar, to correct this mistake I have filed a case in BISE Peshawar before FATA Merger, 4 to 5 times I have been heard by a Jirga in board (A kind of special Jirga, which has been made for the solution of all the matters of peoples belonging to Tribal districts, as there were no extension of court in those districts). But after the FATA merger in 2018, that special Jirga of BISE told me that you have to do a court

degree, as now the courts have been set up in tribal districts. When I applied for a court degree, it took eleven months. The court hearings were very much pathetic for me, my family and for my teachers as well, because so many times they have to appear in court before the judge." Mr. Siraj said that in my opinion the court system is very good because there is no discrimination of the poor and rich, as happened in the Jirga system, but on the other hand it takes very much time.

A 56 years old politician Malik Nisar Khan belongs to KozGandahar area of Tehsil Halimzai in Mohmand Tribal District says "I am not happy with the police and Judiciary system in Mohmand Tribal District and I will prefer the old Jirga system for eradication of crimes, as the crime rate has been increased with this system." In Olden days there was a Jirga system, which took huge fines from criminals and even they decided to take away a criminal from his territory (Kashonda), so an example was made for the other people, as they did not commit crimes due to the huge fines and hard obligations, but now the criminals either gain bail from the court, or they use money in the police station, that's why the crime rate has been increased. I think this is not failure of police system, basically this is failure of our constitution, which ultimately gives freedom to the criminals." Citing an example of a drug dealer he said that a drug dealer was caught by police with drug (Afeen or ????? in urdu and ????? in Pashto), but he was released by the court saying that the evidences were not sufficient against him and there were video proofs against him. I think there should be exemplary punishment and penalties against these kinds of criminals in our constitution, so this is the only way to get rid of our society from these

crimes." He added.

A 46 years old Gul Khan Kaka, (who is a radio broadcaster) said that there is a huge difference in policing in Mohmand and in settled districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, because in Mohmand, the people are not familiar with the new police system, they are acting in the old manner like they are still in Black Law of FCR (Frontier Crimes Regulation). The police of this area also have some shortcomings, as they are visiting the main cities and villages, as police do in other districts.

Gul Khan kaka basically belongs to Swabi District, but he has lived here in Mohmand for the last thirty years. Sharing his both experiences he said that I have seen all the three eras of Khasadar, Levies and police in Mohmand, in other districts the police persons have frequent visits (Gasht in local Language) for minimizing different crimes like ban on riding pillion, raid against criminals and drugs, but here in Mohmand District I don't see any kind of such activities, even in district headquarter Ghallani Bazar there is limited traffic police, so how can a man think what will be the situation of other Far-flung areas of the district. In other settled districts a responsible traffic official is always present on every crossing (chowk) and round-about, but in Mohmand District there are traffic problems on under construction main Mohmand-Bajure road and in main bazaars also.

He added that there is limited police stations and the people of the area are not aware of the new policing, they don't know, how to use these police stations for securing their rights, they don't know the laws, that's why majority of them are of the view that the old FCR system was good for them, because all of their problems were solved under one umbrella of the political system. "Personally I feel that a

change should be introduced in the thinking of opinions of the general public, as they think that the old Jirga system was better for them, as there were hard laws for criminals and would impose huge fines over criminals, so they criminals could not think of doing the criminal activities again." He added.

Gul Khan Kaka said that the police system is passing from a transition period in Mohmand, so the majority of the police officials have no knowledge about the laws and discipline, some of them sub-judies their powers, some of them are not fully aware about their discipline and authority. He added that I see the majority of police officers in uniform in bazaars and other places, although they are not authorized to use weapons and uniform in public places.

A 45 years old, Sajad Ahmad Sahibzada (Ex-District Police Officer Mohmand) says "policing in Tribal District is a challenging task, as these people have spent more than 70 years in the black law of FCR (Frontier Crimes Regulations). The FCR was termed black law due to its collective punishment nature and dispossessing of people from their basic human rights, vote and doing appeal for their rights in courts. He said that they don't know the rules, regulations and even they are not fully aware of their rights, they don't know how to use their own right."

DPO Mohmand said that there were many challenges to the Police system here, the transition of Khasadar and Levies into Police and their training were major issues, as they were not properly trained, so first of all, we trained almost all the police officials according to their ranks in the different Police centers of the province, some of the training was conducted in the supervisors of Army and other LEA (Law enforcement Agencies), we gave them proper police training, now

they know how to file an FIR? what is Roznamcha? And how can they maintain the records in police stations? "We have been assigned different duties, we make sub departments of police like Traffic squads, special investigation teams, Operation, Investigation, CTD, special branch, DSB, BDS, ladies police, crime scene squads etc." He added.

In an exclusive interview, Mr. Sahibzada said that we have the best investigation team and SSP Investigation, Mr. Rohan Zeb has been appointed by our special request. In his supervision all the team is working very well, they are using the best investigation tools, due to which the criminals are raided and are taken into custody, which resulted in a very much decrease in crime rates.

About challenges to the policing in Mohmand, Sahibzada said that the people of Mohmand District are free from FCR and have the right of vote and appeal and the people are not aware of their rights, they don't know how to use a police station for their rights? Beside this, majority of the people do not know the police's rules and regulations, that's why they are feeling difficulties in the process and filing FIR. He also appeals to the public and media for their social, moral and ethical support of the new police system. He also appeals to the media for their positive rule and highlighting the positive image of police and pointing out the crimes for the possible solution.

A 36 years old Mr. Rasool Khan, who is an advocate by profession said that Jirga system had big flaws. In that system, the signatures will be taken on a white page, from both the parties and they were bound to admit the Jirga's decision forcefully, if any party disobeyed the decision, so a huge fine will be taken from that party and usually the decision would come in favor of the

rich party, who gave more money to the Jirga persons (Usually Malik and elders of that society).

Mr. Rasool Khan explained that in Jirga system there was no right of appeal to any party, but in judiciary system a rich man can't do injustice with poor one, because a poor man can also file an FIR for his right with the help of a lawyer. Advocate and member of Mohmand Bar Association said that the judiciary system is new here, although it takes some time and the reason is that the Judge needs proof in order that no one can do injustice with anyone.

Some segments of the society think that, the New Police and Judiciary system is passing from an evolutionary period in all Tribal Districts including Mohmand, it will take time for general public to use this system for their welfare, but on the other hand some people are of the view that the old Jirga system was effective and the general public issues were solved very quickly in the Political Agent's one Umbrella office system. But now with the presence of more than thirty departments, the routine matters got complicated, the people don't know where their issue will be solved, and that's why a single man visits so many departments for the solution of a single issue, but in olden days all the matters were solved in one umbrella system.

If proper awareness campaign is launched by all the govt. NGO's and other services provider institutions with the help of general public in local media, in native language, on the local stage of Hujra, masjid and cultural stage, all the tribal people will be able to know about their basic rights and will be able to know, how to use the new Judiciary and Police system for their benefits.

The writer is Radio Producer and freelance Environmental Journalist, who tweets on @Muradonline123





## ‘Mission completed’ Ukraine minister says warplanes on the way



KYIV (Agencies): Ukraine’s allies will agree to provide fighter aircraft to battle Russian forces, the defence minister said, despite recent comments by Western leaders that warplanes would not be forthcoming. Defence Minister Oleksii Reznikov also told a news conference that Russia will launch a major offensive in the coming weeks, but Ukraine has the soldiers and resources to repel such an attack.

Ukraine’s military will halt the operation despite tanks and other weapon systems from the West not arriving in time, he said. "There will be planes, too," Reznikov predicted. "The question is just what kind exactly ... Consider that this mission is already completed." So far Ukraine has won support from Baltic nations and Poland in its quest to obtain Western fighter jets. But several Western leaders have expressed concern that providing warplanes could provoke the Kremlin and draw their countries deeper into the conflict, which has cost tens of thousands of lives and wreaked massive destruction. Kyiv says such jets are essential to challenging Russia’s air superiority and ensuring success in a Russian offensive that Reznikov predicted could begin around the war’s one-year anniversary, February 24.

"Not all Western weapons will arrive by then, but we have the resources and reserves to help stabilise and sustain the offensive," Reznikov told reporters. Since the war began, Western officials have balked at some of Ukraine’s requests, such as for longer-range missiles and tanks, only to agree later. The warplanes are the latest example. Ukraine will not use longer-range weapons pledged by the United States to hit Russian territory and will only target Russian units in occupied Ukrainian territory, Reznikov said.

The US confirmed that a new rocket doubling Ukraine’s strike range was included in a \$2.2bn US military aid package to help Kyiv fight back Russian forces. "We always tell our partners officially that we will not use weapons supplied by foreign partners to fire on Russian territory. We only fire on Russian units on temporarily occupied Ukrainian territory," he said. German-made tanks are on the way to Ukraine. Reznikov said his forces

would begin training on Leopard 2 tanks in Europe on Monday, before their delivery to Ukraine. So far, Canada, Poland, Germany, Britain and the United States have announced they will supply tanks to Ukraine.

The Kremlin has said Western countries’ supply of increasingly sophisticated weapons will only prolong the conflict, and it has characterised NATO as a direct participant in the war. Reznikov, commenting on the supply of Western weapons and the state of the Ukrainian army, took the rhetoric further, telling reporters: "I absolutely boldly claim that we have become a de facto NATO country. We only have a de jure part left." Ukraine has applied to join NATO, as have two of Russia’s other neighbours, Finland and Sweden. Fighting is raging in eastern Ukraine’s Donetsk region as Russia intensifies pressure before the first anniversary of its invasion of Ukraine, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy said. "Things are very difficult in Donetsk region - fierce battles," Zelenskyy said in his nightly video address. "But however difficult it is and however much pressure there is, we must endure ... We have no alternative to defending ourselves and winning."

Russia, he said, was applying increased pressure to "make up for its defeats last year. We see that on various sectors of the front and also pressure in terms of information." Donetsk Governor Pavlo Kyrylenko said five civilians were wounded in rocket attacks in the city of Druzhkivka and the town of Avdiivka and its outskirts were also fired on. Heavy fighting was ongoing in Bahmut. The head of Russia’s mercenary Wagner Group, Yevgeny Prigozhin, said the Ukrainian army was not retreating and fighting raged on in northern parts of the eastern city. "Fierce battles are going on for every street, every house, every stairwell," Prigozhin said in a statement. "The Ukrainian armed forces are fighting to the last." Kharkiv regional Governor Oleh Syniehubov said four people were injured when a Russian S-300 missile fell near an apartment block in Kharkiv city, and another was hurt when a missile hit a university building.

## Mali junta expels UN mission’s HRs chief

MALE (AFP): Mali’s ruling junta said that it was expelling the head of the human rights division of MINUSMA, the United Nations mission there, giving him 48 hours to leave the country. The decision comes after a Malian rights activist last month denounced the security situation in the country in a speech to a UN gathering, and accused the regime’s new Russian military partners of serious rights violations.

The foreign ministry had declared Guillaume Ngefa Atonodok Andali, head of MINUSMA’s human rights section, persona non grata, said a statement issued by government spokesman Colonel Abdoulaye Maiga. "This measure comes after the destabilising and subversive actions of Monsieur Andali," added the statement, which was also read out on national television news. Andali had taken it upon himself to decide who were the representatives of civil society, ignoring the authorities and national institutions, the statement

added. "Andali’s bias was even more evident during the last review of the United Nations Security Council on Mali", the statement added. On January 27, rights activist Aminata Cheick Dicko criticised the regime at a special UN Security Council briefing on Mali. Then on January 31, UN rights experts in Geneva called for an independent probe into abuses and possible war crimes in Mali carried out by government forces and Russia’s Wagner group, which has been operating alongside them. MINUSMA was set up in 2013 to try to stabilise Mali in the face of the growing threat from jihadist fighters. Its mission also included the protection of civilians, contributing to peace efforts and defending human rights.

Although its mandate was renewed in 2019, the deteriorating security situation has raised questions in Mali and abroad about the continuing usefulness of the UN mission. Some of the countries that once con-

tributed to it have either already pulled out or are planning to. They include France and Ivory Coast, both of which have had major diplomatic breaks with Mali’s military regime. Other countries including Egypt, Germany and Sweden have either pulled out of the mission or announced that they are going to do so. Germany’s defence ministry said last Monday its soldiers would be pulling out by May 2024 because it made no sense to stay on when the troops could not fulfill their mission.

Tensions between the Malian authorities and the UN mission have increased with the arrival of the military junta, which seized power two years ago, promising to tackle the jihadist threat. But the security situation has continued to deteriorate in the west African country. The military regime has repeatedly blocked MINUSMA’s attempts to investigate reports of human rights abuses carried out by the armed forces.

## Iraqis protest over killing of YouTube star by her father

BAGHDAD (Agencies): Iraqis are protesting to demand a law against domestic violence, days after a YouTuber was strangled by her father in a killing that sparked outrage. Tiba al-Ali, 22, was killed by her father on January 31 in the southern province of Diwaniyah. Interior Ministry spokesman Saad Maan said, adding there had been an attempt to mediate between the young woman and her relatives to resolve a "family dispute".

The father later surrendered to the police and confessed to murdering his

daughter. Security forces prevented dozens of people from demonstrating outside the country’s Supreme Judicial Council, and they gathered instead at a road leading to the building. Some held placards saying "Stop killing women" and "Tiba’s killer must be held to account". "We demand laws to protect women, especially laws against domestic violence," protester Rose Hamid, 22, said. "We came here to protest against Tiba’s murder and against all others. Who will be the next victim?" Another demonstrator,

Lina Ali, said: "We will keep mobilising because of rising domestic violence and killings of women." Protester Israa al-Salman, who wanted al-Ali’s father executed for the crime, said, "Anyone who wants to get rid of a woman accuses her of disgracing her dignity and kills her." To date, no law in Iraq criminalises domestic violence. A draft domestic violence law was first introduced to parliament in 2014, but progress has stalled amid widespread political opposition from legislators who believe it would "erode Iraq’s social fabric".

## Austria avalanches kill at least eight people

AUSTRIA (Agencies): Austrian police say five people were killed in avalanches in the west of the country after three deaths were earlier reported despite pleas for caution on the ski slopes. The eight deaths came as resorts are filled during the February school holidays, with the avalanche alert level at four on a scale of five after several days of intense snowfall and wind.

Authorities recovered the body of a 59-year-old man buried while using his tractor to help with the snow removal, police in Austria’s western Tyrol region said. Two skiers, aged 29 and 33, and a guide were found dead in Saint Anton am Arlberg. And a 62-year-old man, who had not returned after cross-country skiing around the summit of Hohe Afner, was recovered by rescuers and could not be revived. A 17-year-old New Zealander, a German man in his 50s, and a 32-year-old Chinese man were found dead.

Over the past two days, heavy snowfall and wind have increased the avalanche danger, with officials warning winter sports enthusiasts to exercise caution. Thirty avalanches were reported in Tyrol alone, 11 of which involved missing people, with rescue operations hampered by poor visibility and bad weather conditions. Avalanches have killed about 20 people annually in recent years in Austria, a top winter sports destination.

## Lowa school shooting won’t deter him

WASHINGTON (AP): The founder of an educational program for at-risk youth in Des Moines says he will remain "all in" on helping kids that are not reachable in so many peoples’ eyes" after he was wounded in last month’s shooting that killed two students. Will Keeps, 49, a former Chicago gang member who moved to Iowa in his 20s and later founded the Starts Right Here program, made his first public comments about the shooting this weekend in a video the police department posted online.

"We went all in on helping kids that are not reachable in so many peoples’ eyes," he said. "Our youth is looking to us to not run. If they constantly keep seeing us say, 'Oh, we can’t, we’re done,' what do you think they’re going to do? They going to be done. So become a beast. We need you to fight, become a warrior. And we need to do it together." Keeps, a rapper whose given name is Will Homes, had his right arm in a cast held up by a blue sling in the video and kept a walker sitting next to his chair. He was just released from the hospital last week. Students Giannoni Dameron, 18, and Rashad Carr, 16, were killed in the Jan. 23 shooting at the program, which provides help to students under a contract with Des Moines Public Schools. Two other teens have been charged with murder in the shooting. Police have said all four teens were involved with gangs, although the families of the victims denied that.

Keeps said he continues to encounter the kind of violence he experienced as a youth in Chicago when he saw rival gang members kill his friend and he was himself severely beaten. "I’ve lived it and I’ve seen it every day of my life. I’m not going to sit up here and ignore the fact that we’re killing each other. And we’re killing each other as easy as seeing a fly on the wall and swatting it or seeing an ant on the ground and stomping on it," he said. "Our youth is in trouble, and we constantly kept doing the same thing over and over and over and over again, and it ain’t working." Police have charged Preston Walls, 18, and Bravon Michael Tukes, 19, both of Des Moines, with two counts of first-degree murder, one count of attempted murder and one count of criminal gang participation. Bail was set at \$2.5 million for each.

## UN peacekeeper killed in attack on helicopter in Congo

DR CONGO (AFP): A United Nations peacekeeper from South Africa was killed and another wounded in an attack on their helicopter in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo, the organisation said. The aircraft came under fire at around 3:00 pm (1200 GMT) during a flight to Goma, the provincial capital of Nord-Kivu province, where it was able to land, a spokesman told AFP.

The source of the fire that struck the helicopter was not yet known and its precise location had yet to be determined, said Amadou Ba, a spokesman for the UN mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). South Africa’s military also confirmed the incident. "An Oryx helicopter came under fire in Goma, the Democratic Republic of the Congo," the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) said in a statement.

"A crew member was fatally shot, another suffered injuries but managed to continue flying the chop-

per and landed safely at Goma Airport. "The SANDF is in the process of informing family members of the soldiers who were involved in this unfortunate incident." MONUSCO chief Bintou Keita said she "strongly condemns this cowardly attack on an aircraft bearing the UN emblem", adding that "attacks against peacekeepers can constitute a war crime". UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres called on Congolese authorities "to investigate this heinous attack and swiftly bring those responsible to justice", said his spokesman Stephane Dujarric in a statement.

On March 29, 2022, eight UN peacekeepers -- six Pakistanis, one Russian and one Serb -- were killed when their helicopter crashed over a combat zone between the Congolese army and M23 rebels. Militias have plagued the mineral-rich eastern DRC for decades, many of them a legacy of regional wars that flared during the 1990s and the early 2000s. Since

November 2021, the M23 rebel group has seized chunks of territory and come within miles of the east’s main commercial hub Goma.

East African leaders called for an immediate ceasefire in eastern DRC, at an extraordinary summit called to find ways of calming the raging conflict. The talks were hosted in Burundi by the seven-nation East African Community (EAC), which is leading mediation efforts to end the fighting in the vast central African nation. The resurgent M23 has taken control of swathes of land in the mineral-rich east and fighting is continuing despite a peace roadmap hammered out in Angola last July, and the deployment of an East African Community force in November. The DRC is awash with minerals and precious stones, but the decades of war and chronic mismanagement mean that little of the vast wealth trickles down to the population of some 100 million.

## Trial of HK 47 gets under way amid tight security

HONG KONG (Agencies): The national security trial of dozens of people - from former pro-democracy legislators to activists and legal scholars - has begun in Hong Kong more than two years after they were arrested in pre-dawn police raids across the territory. The defendants are accused of "subversion" for organising an unofficial primary to choose their candidates for the 2020 Legislative Council election that the government later postponed blaming the coronavirus pandemic.

There was a heavy police presence, including officers with dogs, outside the West Kowloon Magistrates’ Courts building ahead of the proceedings. Some people began lining up overnight for a seat in the public gallery, with the queue snaking around the building by the morning. "There’s certainly huge sympathy for the people who are standing trial," said Al Jazeera’s Richard Kimber, reporting from Hong Kong. "There’s certainly a lot of frustration that it’s taken this long to get to this stage and that those who’ve been detained have not been able to speak out since they were arrested." Those charged include prominent activists Leung

Kwok-hung, known as "Long Hair", and Gordon Ng Ching-hang, who faces potential life imprisonment as one of five people accused of being a "major organiser" of the primary.

"There’s no crime to answer. It is not a crime to act against a totalitarian regime," defendant and former legislator Leung told the court. Judge Andrew Chan responded that the hearing was a "solemn occasion" and asked for respect from the defendants and members of the public. Those who have pleaded guilty include internationally-known activists like Joshua Wong, Claudia Mo, a former journalist turned legislator, and law expert and former academic Benny Tai. Together, the 47 accused account for much of what remains of Hong Kong’s pro-democracy leadership after mass protests calling for political reform in 2019 came to an inconclusive end with the COVID-19 pandemic, and the national security law pushed many into exile.

Prosecutors have described the primary - held so the democrats could put forward their strongest candidates for the Hong Kong Legislative Council (Legco) election - as a "vicious plot" to subvert the government

and wreak "mutual destruction" on it by taking control of the city’s legislature. "Running for the Legco election is what kind of illegal means, what kind of violent threat?" Chan Po-ying, chairman of the League of Social Democrats and Leung’s wife, said outside the court. The trial is expected to continue for 90 days.

Sentencing of all the defendants will take place after it has concluded. Under the security law, which took effect on June 30, 2020, the defendants face up to three years in prison for conspiracy to commit subversive activities, between three and 10 years imprisonment for "active participation" in the conspiracy, and between 10 years and life imprisonment if they are deemed "principal offenders". Hong Kong was returned to China in 1997 under a "one country, two systems" formula meant to guarantee its freedoms and an independent legal system for at least 50 years. Beijing imposed the broadly-worded security law on the city after months of protests that began as mass marches against plans to allow extradition to the mainland, and evolved into a campaign for democracy that sometimes turned violent.

## What is the ‘Arctic blast’ deep-freezing US, Canada?

WASHINGTON (Agencies): A dangerous combination of record-setting cold temperatures and powerful winds buffeted the northeastern United States and Canada over the weekend, creating life-threatening conditions and windchills from the Arctic blast. New Hampshire’s Mount Washington overnight recorded a wind-chill - a measure of how the combined effect of air and wind feels to the skin - of minus 78 Celsius (-108 degrees Fahrenheit), which appeared to be the lowest ever in the United States.

The air temperature at the peak reached -44C (-47F) with winds gusting near 160 kilometres per hour (100 miles per hour), according to the Mount Washington Observatory. The bitter weather all started farther north as frigid air collected over the snow-covered ground in the Arctic. Then the jet stream - wobbling air currents in the middle and upper parts of the atmosphere - began pushing this cold pool down into Canada and the US. An Arctic blast is defined by the US National Weather Service as when "very cold air masses that typically originate in the Siberian Region of Asia, cross over the North Pole into Canada and push south and east into the lower United States".

As this Arctic air is pushed into the warmer, moister air ahead of it, the system can quickly develop

into serious weather - including what’s known as a "bomb cyclone" - a fast-developing storm in which atmospheric pressure falls quickly over 24 hours. These severe weather events usually form over bodies of water, which have lots of warmth and moisture to feed the storm. The Arctic air reached the region just as a rapid cyclogenesis developed over Labrador and Newfoundland, churning up powerful winds. A cyclogenesis refers to an intensification of a cyclone or low-pressure storm system. Wind and extreme cold warnings were in place across large sections of Atlantic Canada - including Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador - and the major cities of Montreal and Toronto were also under extreme cold advisories, according to Environment Canada.

The Arctic blast flowing into the US from eastern Canada brought record lows to Albany, New York; Augusta, Maine; Rochester, New York; and Worcester, Massachusetts, among other places. In Caribou, Maine, there were reports of "frostquakes" - tremors that feel like earthquakes but are caused by the soil cracking suddenly in the cold - as well as trees splitting open, likely caused by sap freezing inside the trunks. In Boston, where officials closed down the public

school system, the low temperature hit -23C (-10F), shattering the day’s record set more than a century ago. In Providence, Rhode Island, the mercury dropped to -23C (-9F), well below the previous all-time low of -19C (-2F), set in 1918. Several cities took emergency measures to aid residents, including opening warming centres and conducting outreach to ensure homeless people were sheltered from the brutal cold.

In Boston, Pine Street Inn, the largest provider of homeless services in New England, doubled the number of vans canvassing the city’s streets, said Barbara Trevisan, a spokeswoman. "They started going out early this week to warn people that the weather was going to be very extreme," she said. "The goal last night was just to keep people alive and safe." Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey ordered South Station, the city’s main rail terminal, to remain open overnight to serve as an emergency shelter. About 50 to 60 homeless people stayed in the station overnight, Trevisan estimated. Among them was Paul Butler, 45, who has been homeless since he was evicted in December 2021. "This is the coldest I ever, ever remember, and I worked the door at a bunch of clubs for 15 years," said the former US Marine, who carried two bags with extra clothes and blankets.

## Pakistani community demands representation in city council



### F.P. Report

CHICAGO: The contesting candidate for Chicago mayor-ship Brenden Johnson promised seat for Pakistani community at city council along with provision of free residential facilities for marginalized segments of the society in case of securing the slot.

This he announced while addressing Pakistani community during dinner arranged by the community in his honor. He added that uplift of marginalized segments especially Pakistanis should be prioritize in the policies. On the occasion, Pakistani community’s chief Dr. Sartaj Ali Khan and patron-in-chief Syed Umar Khan briefed the contesting candidate Brenden Johnson about issues and throw light on its redressal. They added that Pakistani community would support Brenden Johnson in upcoming election for slot of city council mayor-ship.

Dr. Sartaj Ali Khan informed that Pakistani community deprive from representation at city council along with low income families didn’t facilitated with free residence. The contesting candidate claimed that he believes in collective working to uplift public irrespective creed and race. He added that after securing the slot a seat for Pakistani community at city council should allotted as well as free residential facilities will be provided to the income members of the community.

## Canada deploys mily aircraft over Haiti to disrupt gangs

OTTAWA (Reuters): The Canadian government said it deployed a military aircraft over Haiti to address what it called a "dire security situation" and to support efforts to disrupt the activities of Haitian gangs. Canada said in a statement that it supports the Haitian National Police and deployed a Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF) CP-140 Aurora long-range patrol aircraft in response to Haiti’s request for support as violence continues to escalate in the country.

Haitian gangs have expanded their territory since the 2021 assassination of then-President Jovenel Moise. The resulting violence has left much of the country off-limits to the government and led to routine gun battles with police. Haiti is expected to be on the agenda when US President Joe Biden visits Canada next month. The Canadian patrol aircraft will provide intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capability to bolster efforts to establish and maintain peace and will remain in the region "for a number of days," the Canadian government said.

In October, the United Nations suggested a "rapid action force" be sent to Haiti to combat escalating violence from armed gangs whose turf battles have left hundreds dead and thousands displaced. But many have expressed skepticism, citing abuses from past missions and questioning a force backing the administration of Prime Minister Ariel Henry, which has been without democratically elected representatives since early January.

Most countries have been wary of sending troops, though nearby Jamaica has said it would be willing to participate and El Salvador has offered "technical assistance". Around seven in 10 people in Haiti back proposed creation of an international force to help the national police fight violence from armed gangs, according to a survey carried out in January.



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# Iran’s calibration on public revolt

ACCORDING to the media, Iran’s supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has pardoned tens of thousands of prisoners, including many linked to recent anti-government protests in the country. According to the details, the pardons come on the eve of the anniversary of the Islamic revolution after the head of the Iranian judiciary recommended remission to those detainees who had been led astray by foreign propaganda and expressed remorse over the action against the state. As said, the people charged with serious crimes including spying for foreign agents, murder, destruction of government property, and sedition as well as dual nationals involved in protests are not entitled to mercy and would receive punishment for their crimes.

The Islamic Republic of Iran has witnessed unprecedented political violence across the country following the death of a Kurdish girl in the custody of Iran’s morality police in September last year. Iranian government used brutal force to suppress the public unrest continuous crackdown of multiple law enforcement institutions including the elite Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) failed to put a pause on simmering political agitation against the government. According to the reports, more than 500 demonstrators have been killed, thousands got injuries and around 20,000 have been arrested including four executions. The protests which started to get justice for 22 years old Masha Amni were turned into a popular regime change movement that shattered the foundation of Iran’s revolutionary government in a few months.

The anti-government protests attracted worldwide support while the United Nations, foreign governments, human rights groups, and social activists across the globe urged the Raisi government to observe restraint, engage the demonstrators, preserve the basic rights of its citizens, and resolve the issue peacefully, however, Cleric regime perceived the public uprising a sole phenomenon crafted by the foreign Intelligence and used lethal force to crush public sentiments.

Interestingly, the anti-Iran western bloc including Israel jubilated triumph over the outbreak of anti-regime protests in Iran and offered all possible support to anti-state elements including consistent provocations and propaganda in a bid to overthrow Raisi’s government in Tehran. However, the public uprising got slowed after multiple hangings and dozens of convictions over charges of treason, conspiracy, and working on behalf of enemy agents.

Realistically, the Iranian regime has introduced strict civil and religious laws and put a cap on freedom of expression that created an environment of fear and distrust between the government and the public. The enemy forces always tried to exploit this gap and the same had been done during the current anarchy in Iran. Although, there had been multiple calls within the Iranian administration and scholarly circles that sensitized the regime to probe its weaknesses and rectify its economic and social justice systems so Iran’s adversaries could not seize this opportunity.

The recent decision of Iran’s Supreme leader regarding pardons of protesters is the right step toward an amicable settlement of the issue. In fact, human beings are not mummies or robots that stand alone or work on digital commands, written codes, or eyeball signaling. The free souls have some ambitions, spiritual as well as social needs that require association and expression, hence the clerics should give some space and a tension-free environment to their populaces, so they neither fell prey to the enemy propaganda nor face the high-handedness of leaders, thus both rulers and masses enjoy their rule and living side by side.

## The true prospect of CPEC

RECENTLY, a group of Parliamentarians visited the CPEC projects in Sindh, and termed Thar as a ‘bulwark of Pakistan’s future Energy Security’. According to the details, after visiting multiple avenues relating to development and energy-generating facilities, the Parliamentarians declared that the CPEC was a magnificent endeavor that guarantees a better tomorrow for Pakistan and China is a trusted friend who helped Pakistan to make this miracle.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is a joint venture of all-weather Pak-China friendship that not only enhanced regional connectivity but also provides equal opportunities for economic and social development to both participating nations along with offering the same opportunities to other nations in the region. If global rivalry pauses for a movement, there would be no other lucrative business and trade activity in the world than China Pakistan Economic Corridor which connects Industrial giant to busy global trade routes in the Arabian Sea and also offers the same to Afghanistan, and the Central Asian States through Gawadar and Karachi ports. Besides providing state-of-the-art road and rail links, the CPEC scheme includes various energy projects, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), and Pak-China Knowledge Corridor through educational scholarships, scholarly exchanges, and entrepreneurs’ collaboration in business and industry.

Apparently, the CPEC has brought about significant development and social change along with business and employment opportunities which really have a pleasant effect on the national economy, however, so far this endeavor could not realize its true potential because of the prevailing regional geopolitical environment, global anti-CPEC campaign and delay in the completion of CPEC route in Sindh and Balochistan. The CPEC projects have not yet been fully implemented on the ground but the billions of dollars in Chinese investment are now due for repayment while depleting Pakistan’s economy is not in a position to make this commitment and the country faces severe challenges in the repayment of the CPEC along with other payments to global lenders. Therefore, the government needs to complete CPEC road projects at the earliest and move to the next phase, which commences with the trans-shipment of Chinese goods to the Middle East and the rest of the world through Karachi and Gwadar ports. So, Pakistan could able to generate revenue from the CPEC to repay its dues in a dignified manner.

PALESTINE is at boiling point. It is only early February but Israeli gunfire has already killed 35 Palestinians this year, nine of them in a single incursion into Jenin, including a 61-year-old woman. Seven Israelis were killed in violent incidents in East Jerusalem. As tensions soar, attacks by settlers against local Palestinians have multiplied.

Amid this violence, security minister Itamar Ben-Gvir led a baying mob chanting "death to the terrorists," in scenes reminiscent of 1930s Nazi Germany. Ben-Gvir is also lobbying to accelerate the collective-punishment policy of demolishing the family homes of Palestinians implicated in violent attacks, including a 13-year-old accused of injuring two people in Jerusalem. There have been 75 home demolitions since 2014. Expect this number to increase rapidly. But there is a fundamental asymmetry in global reactions - noisy outrage whenever Jews are victims of Palestinian "terrorism," compared with lethargic responses as the Palestinian death toll mounts. This double standard has created a climate of impunity on the Israeli side, where increasingly extremist administrations believe they can get away with anything.

Prime Minister

Benjamin Netanyahu expresses the deluded belief that he can go "around" the Palestinians to make peace, as if there can be any definitive settlement without them. He boasts of deals with various Arab states. But Israel has never been at war with Sudan, or Bahrain, or the UAE, and has never stolen an inch of their territory - so how do these deals represent meaningful steps toward peace? America bribing Morocco and Sudan into "normalization" deals with concessions on Western Sahara and debt forgiveness is hardly the basis for a meaningful and far-reaching thawing of relations. Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan recently emphasised the fundamental necessity of a just peace with the Palestinians as Israel's first step to real peace with the Arab world: "True normalization and true stability will only come through giving the Palestinians hope - through giving the Palestinians dignity," he said.

Israel's artificial peace deals with Egypt and Jordan demonstrate that actual peace is achieved not between leaders, but between peoples. Egyptian and Jordanian citizens are no more reconciled toward Israel than they were in the 1980s. Without justice for Palestinians there is no appetite from any peace-loving peoples for joint

ventures, cultural exchange, or tourism. Netanyahu doesn't have an "Arab" problem, he has a "civilization" problem. The civilized world doesn't passively accept apartheid, brutality and ethnic cleansing. The US Congress and media were once rubber stamps for legitimizing Israel, but this has not been the case for some time. Netanyahu's lengthy tenures as prime minister mark Israel's decisive transition to pariah-state status.

Moreover, Netanyahu's vision for the Palestinians looks remarkably benevolent when compared with that of his swivel-eyed, extreme-right Cabinet allies, who see the entirety of Palestine as granted to them by God, and therefore it should be entirely emptied of Palestinians by any means necessary. Netanyahu's assault on democracy is most conspicuous in his ambitions for gutting Israel's judiciary. For Palestinians, Israel's courts have never offered a level playing field, but they at least represented a glimmer of hope that the most egregious violations - home demolitions, evictions, land theft, and wrongful arrest - could be delayed or overturned. By giving politicians the right to flood the judiciary with their appointees, and allowing Knesset deputies to overturn any court rul-

Baria Alamuddin

ing, Netanyahu and his allies aim to turn the judiciary into a mere appendage of Israel's germyrandered, quasi-fascist political elites.

Indeed, they want to go further - exploiting these judicial powers to ban Arab political parties from standing in elections, shutting down civil society organizations, narrowing the definition of who enjoys citizenship rights, and green-lighting ever more brutal pogroms against Palestinian cities. Mass protests throughout Israel have justifiably denounced these measures as a threat to world peace. A Tel Aviv academic argued in a Financial Times article that Israel as an "illiberal, non-democratic, religious state is a danger to the Western world." Standing beside Netanyahu last week, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken - himself the stepson of a Holocaust survivor - was uncharacteristically blunt, stressing "our support for core democratic principles and institutions, including respect for human rights, the equal administration of justice for all, the equal rights of minority groups, the rule of law, free press, a robust civil society."

With a two-state solution all but dead, the question becomes what sort of one-state solution can emerge. A single state in

which all citizens enjoy equal rights and freedoms could set a global example as a model of reconciliation and peaceful coexistence. Unfortunately, we look set to acquire its polar opposite: an apartheid state where Arabs and minorities become non-citizens whose every expression of discontent is met with murderous force. Across the entirety of Palestine, Arabs likely now slightly outnumber Jews, and the Palestinian population is increasing at a faster rate. As Netanyahu's regime accelerates away from any pretence of democratic values, naked force becomes the only means for a minority to impose itself on an oppressed majority. As Arab Israelis trend toward being a quarter of Israel's population, if they are to be divested of their democratic and legal rights, the prospects for Israel's civil stability look dim.

One could argue that Israel is at a turning point. However, Netanyahu's neo-fascist coalition has already resolutely slammed its foot down on the accelerator and is speeding inexorably toward the point of no return. For the Palestinians, this makes matters remarkably simple: There is no partner for peace. There is no two-state solution on the table. They can regain their lands and rights only through civil uprising.

However, as Netanyahu

and his cronies take a sledgehammer to Israel's democratic pretensions, Palestinians should make their own land grab for the moral high ground. The prolonged conflict has fueled a dehumanizing disregard for life on both sides. Ben-Gvir's extreme-right settler movement has created a climate in which Palestinians can be brutalized and killed, which in turn has cultivated hatred and the desire for vengeance and a new intifada among Palestinians. The absence of capable leaders on the Palestinian side facilitates a moral leadership vacuum. If Palestine's Arabs capitalize on their demographic strength to embark on a far-reaching campaign of peaceful civil disobedience - as in Iran - this would compel Netanyahu's regime to display its ugly, brutal face ever more clearly, permanently delegitimizing Israel's far-right consensus before the eyes of the world.

Enough of double standards, regarding Arabs as somehow less human than Jews, and the world's feeble non-position toward the Palestine issue. If it's a choice between Netanyahu's vision for apartheid autocracy, or the Palestinians' 75-year quest for justice, it becomes increasingly clear which cause is most deserving of global support and solidarity.

Arab News

# Why Ilhan Omar was expelled from key committee role

Dalia Al-Aqidi

cannot be erased.

The strong presence of political Islamism in the US and its success in monopolizing the moderate and secular Muslim voices paved the path for radical ideology groups such as the Muslim Brotherhood to be pushed into the US political system.

The American people are kind and loving and frequently admire immigrants who follow the American dream. When they saw a Muslim woman wearing a hijab, claiming to be a refugee, oppressed and a victim, many sympathized with her and continue to do so.

Electing a person based on a certain identity made voters feel good about themselves. They wanted to prove they were not racist, bigots or Islamophobic, which is the way the far left described it. That is precisely what happened in Minnesota's 5th District, which sent

Omar to Washington. Unfortunately, Omar only succeeded in playing the victim every time she needed an escape from an embarrassing situation. Her positions on specific foreign policies or government concerns have raised concerns and adverse reactions in Washington. She ignored all the sacrifices of the US men and women in military uniform by expressing anger at the 2020 assassination of an Iranian commander. Qassem Soleimani commanded the Quds Force - a dangerous branch of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps and a brutal foreign terrorist responsible for hundreds of American deaths and thousands of other victims in the Middle East region. "We are outraged that the president would assassinate a foreign official, possibly setting off another war without congressional authorization, and has zero plan to deal with the con-

sequences," Omar posted on Twitter. The congresswoman did not want to hurt anyone's feelings in Tehran.

This so-called Muslim freedom fighter was not appalled by the hostilities of the Iranian regime against its own people. The kidnappings, torture, rapes and murders of Iranian women apparently do not deserve her outrage or a firm stance. Not an expert in foreign affairs, Omar was fond of the Turkish president, who also had sympathies for the Muslim Brotherhood. Her admiration or loyalty explained her decision to vote against a 2019 congressional resolution condemning the US decision to stop intervening in Türkiye's military operations against Kurdish forces in Syria. However, Congress still passed the resolution.

Despite all the historical evidence, the far-left lawmaker also declined to vote for a resolution recognizing the mass killing of Armenians committed by

the Ottoman Turks as genocide.

These critical issues exemplify the reasons behind her expulsion from the Foreign Affairs Committee. Meanwhile, her Minnesota constituents were kept in the dark, with no idea of what she was doing in Washington or whose interests she was protecting. A controversial lawmaker with questionable agendas should not be allowed to meddle in the internal political affairs of foreign countries or make ill-informed remarks on a global level.

A large percentage of the US population from different backgrounds and political affiliations did not shed a tear over her removal. They had the lyrics of the famous Ray Charles song "Hit the Road Jack" on the tip of their tongue. The bipartisan House Foreign Affairs Committee has always been and will always be capable of making rational decisions without the presence of Omar.

# The ‘Twitter Files’ are a distraction

Michael Kwet

BILLIONAIRE Elon Musk's purchase of Twitter was one of the top stories across the news media in 2022. The takeover has been an unmitigated disaster, leading to the firing of over half its workforce, massive cuts to its content moderation teams, increased employee exploitation, unprecedented surges in hate speech, censorship of dissidents and journalists, and technical glitches, among other ills. In a whirlwind of chaos, harm, and dysfunction, a distraction was needed.

Enter the "Twitter Files". In November, Musk announced that information was going to be released regarding "free speech suppression" at Twitter before his takeover. In December, several journalists and writers started publishing Twitter threads and articles based on files they were given access to, exposing pressure from governments and corporations to suppress certain stories or opinions. While the revelations do point to some disturbing practices, the way they have been handled and released is quite problematic. Worse still, they serve the agenda of a "digital dictator" who has no interest in upending the profit-driven digital colonial model that allows governments and corporations to arbitrarily restrict freedom of speech on social media platforms.

To date, the "Twitter Files" releases predominantly support right-wing grievances about how con-

tent moderation allegedly targets conservatives. These include the Hunter Biden laptop fiasco, "visibility filtering" (i.e. suppression) of several conservative voices, the de-platforming of Donald Trump, liberal and Democratic Party pressure over Russiagate, and the alleged "rigging" of the COVID-19 debate on Twitter. They also revealed that Big Pharma pressured Twitter to censor activists pushing to abolish intellectual property for COVID-19 vaccines and that the company's content moderation team white-listed fake Arab-language accounts pushing US interests in the Middle East.

While using leaked material in journalistic reports is standard practice, the way the "Twitter Files" have been handled is fundamentally flawed for a number of reasons. First, the public has not been given access to the files, the way they were by platforms like Wikileaks. Instead, Musk has kept them hidden behind closed doors as company property. The writers are only able to search the database through Twitter's lawyers.

The Intercept's Lee Fang, who was one of the people working on the project, has made clear: "The searches were carried out by a Twitter attorney, so what I saw could be limited." Former Rolling Stones journalist Mark Taibbi, one of the main writers of the project, has also explained that Twitter's lawyers have to be careful not to release

any documents that can get the company sued. However, there is no transparency behind the filtration process. If Musk is withholding search results that clash with his interests or ideology, we will never know.

Second, there have been certain conditions for gaining access to the files. Musk has required that all "Twitter Files" reporters publish their findings first on the social media network. According to Bari Weiss, one of the writers given access, this was Musk's only requirement. But Taibbi has stated that he had to agree to "certain conditions", which he says he cannot disclose to the public. Those conditions could be problematic.

Third, it is also difficult not to notice that the majority of the main writers who were given access to the files are American and hold predominantly conservative or anti-liberal leanings. This has been reflected in the stories published so far many of which have focused on issues championed by the American right.

These stories can heavily skew public perceptions of Twitter's pre-Musk content moderation practices and appear to confirm allegations that the "liberal establishment", Big Tech companies and the "liberal media" dominate society and suppress conservative voices. Yet, there is quite a lot of evidence of Twitter

censorship of left-wing, Antifa, and anti-colonial voices. For example, human rights organisations have documented how Twitter has repeatedly censored Palestinian writers and activists, including at the behest of the Israeli government. "Twitter Files" writers are yet to dig into these incidents, and even if they do, can we trust Team Musk to give us the full story?

Finally, the project conveniently excludes access to documents from Musk's disastrous reign over the company. It would be nice to know, for example, what transpired when he censored journalists on Twitter or terminated the jobs of content moderators in the Global South. But that archive will not be made part of the "Twitter Files" because it does not serve Musk's personal and ideological interests. And while he is trying to present himself as an anti-establishment, it is impossible to see him this way. The world's second-richest man is as establishment as you get.

While the "Twitter Files" provide for an interesting read, the general story they reveal was already known. Governments, powerful interest groups and corporations have sought to censor and shape the flow of content on social media networks for years now. And unlike what Musk would have you believe, he is not part of the solution. He is no benevolent dicta-

tor "worried about the future of civilization" and he will not justly uphold our "freedom of speech".

Under his rule, Twitter's moderation practices will not improve and the overarching problem of allowing governments and corporations to interfere in the platform will not go away. That is because the ownership and business model of Twitter, like other big social media platforms, are an expression of digital capitalism and colonialism. Factually speaking, big social media is an American Empire project: TikTok aside, US transnational corporations own and control almost all the world's top social media platforms operating outside of Russia and mainland China.

The failure to challenge US corporate ownership of social media - as if it's an insignificant phenomenon not worth mentioning - is an expression of American supremacy. Taibbi, Weiss, et al - as individuals concerned with the politics of the media - have done nothing to challenge US ownership and the capitalist mode of social networking. In fact, they are very much part of its beneficiaries - amassing an enormous following on Twitter, which likely has helped them attract paid subscribers on the publishing platforms they use. One important story that the "Twitter Files" helped distract from was the outflow of Twitter users to the open-source social media platform Mastodon, prompted by

Musk's takeover.

Musk himself mocked Mastodon in a tweet, and he briefly blocked the promotion of alternative social media accounts among Twitter users. Meanwhile, hundreds of thousands of users created Mastodon accounts and listed their Mastodon handles on Twitter. Actions like these are the key to overthrowing the current model of corporate-owned networks. The fediverse, an open-source collection of social networks that can talk to each other, which Mastodon is part of, decentralises social media and places ownership into the hands of users and their administrators, who can maintain the networks themselves. Mastodon itself does not serve ads. Its developers reject funding from private investors to protect its non-profit status.

As a functioning prototype, it proves that a publicly owned and controlled socialist alternative to big social media networks like Twitter is possible. The "Twitter Files" divert our attention away from these radical solutions already in place. Mastodon is a step in the right direction: transforming social media into a digital commons. Socialising the networks is the most democratic, egalitarian solution - and the biggest threat to Elon Musk, the US government, and the capitalist ruling class. Indeed, only system change will bring this nightmare of a media ecosystem to a close.

Aljazeera



# Why the Chinese balloon crisis could be a defining moment in the new Cold War

Stephen Collinson

**THE Chinese balloon saga threatens to be a watershed moment in the world's dangerous new super-power rivalry: For the first time, Americans experienced a tangible symbol of the national security challenge from Beijing. The craft, described by US intelligence as a surveillance balloon, presented a comparatively low-tech, modest security threat compared to the multi-layered espionage, economic, cyber, military and geopolitical rivalry escalating every day.**

But as it wafted through US skies before being shot down Saturday off of the Carolinas, the balloon created a sudden moment when the idea of a threat by China to the US homeland was neither distant, theoretical, unseen, or years in the future. And it underscored how in today's polarized America, Washington's first reaction in the face of a threat is to point fingers rather than unify. It was not the first time that Chinese balloons have crossed into US airspace during this administration or the last one - and military officials told CNN this one was not seen as a particularly grave intelligence or national security threat. But its mocking days-long sashay from Montana to the eastern seaboard sparked a media frenzy and a Washington uproar.

In what was simultaneously a moment of geopolitical high stakes and high farce, the White House struggled to explain why it hadn't immediately burst the balloon as officials in South Carolina warned people not to take pot shots at the high-flying Chinese intruder with their rifles. This all left President Joe Biden in a deeply vulnerable position as his Republican critics pounced. The balloon could not simply be ignored - especially as Secretary of State Antony Blinken was about to head on a trip to Beijing that was quickly canceled as the political storm erupted.

"We should not have let the People's Republic of China make a mockery of our airspace," Senate Republican leader Mitch McConnell said in a statement Sunday. While Beijing expressed unusual regret for the incursion of what it claimed was a weather monitoring airship, its critics see the incident as the latest example of a brazen willingness to flex its power outside its region, to trample established rules between nations and as more evidence of an aggressive attempt to expand its influence and intelligence operations around the globe, which have targeted businesses, universities and Chinese Americans as well as traditional targets.

"The US has made clear that this is an unacceptable intrusion into American sovereignty," Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said on CNN's "State of the Union" on Sunday. While China has scores of spy satellites trained on the US - just as Washington does on its rival - the visible audacity of the balloon flight has triggered fury in Washington. This, in turn, threatens to unleash political, military and diplomatic forces in both nations that, while manageable in the short-term, show how hard it will be to stop this growing rivalry from hitting a boiling point and causing war in one of the defining threats of the 21st century. Until the balloon crossed into US airspace, there was a small window between Chinese President Xi Jinping's securing of a norm-busting third term last year and the next

US presidential election when cooler politics in Washington and Beijing could have facilitated an easing of diplomatic tensions. That opportunity may now have been squandered.

The aftermath of the crisis poses tough questions for Biden and is an unwelcome distraction from a State of the Union address on Tuesday that is a reelection campaign launch in all but name. Republicans quickly branded Biden as feckless, easily intimidated by China and slow to defend US territory. While such criticism is easy for critics with a megaphone but no responsibility, the political tumult will make a treacherous environment for future US policy-making designed to head off a clash with China.

The US military must explain why the balloon was not shot down before traversing the continental US, and the incident threatens to open up tensions between the Pentagon and an under-fire White House over the handling of the incident, as well as debate over what to do next time. The balloon's ignominious end - burst by a missile fired by a US jet - also plays into volatile Chinese politics. It represents fresh embarrassment for Xi, whose cementing of a third term has been overshadowed by a badly botched effort to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, unprecedented anti-lockdown protests and now a major crisis with the United States. It begs the question of whether the flight was a deliberate act to provoke the US or was a mistake. Or were hawkish Chinese armed forces seeking to embarrass the top leadership, or to derail attempts to ease the temperature with the US ahead of Blinken's visit?

The episode is a reminder that while the ruling Chinese Communist Party is ruthless and repressive, high-stakes power politics is as treacherous in Beijing as Washington. Like in the US, the fraught politics of US-China relations can lead to decisions that cause escalation. Biden's decision not to shoot down the balloon until it was over the Atlantic coast offered an easy opening to Republicans keen to label him as weak before his expected reelection bid.

"As usual when it comes to national defense and foreign policy, the Biden administration reacted at first too indecisively and then too late," McConnell said. Florida Sen. Marco Rubio cast the incident as a blatant challenge to American power, and suggested Biden's temperate action raised questions over whether he would stand up to worse Chinese threats, for instance over democratic Taiwan. "The message embedded in this to the world is, we can fly a balloon over airspace of the United States of America, and you won't be able to do anything about it to stop us," Rubio, the vice chair of the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, said on CNN's "State of the Union."

Other Republicans, including ex-president Donald Trump, pounced when the balloon was not immediately shot down, despite warnings that its vast size could cause damage or deaths on the ground. Arkansas Sen. Tom Cotton said, for instance, on Fox that "what began as a spy balloon has become a trial balloon testing President Biden's strength and resolve, and unfortunately, the president failed that test." Republicans failed to note that officials said several balloon flights

over the US occurred during the Trump administration, although the transiting of those suspected Chinese spy balloons during the previous administration was only discovered after Biden took office, a senior administration official told CNN's Natasha Bertrand on Sunday. Republicans have long seen hawkishness as a political weapon. But many Democrats also see China as a rising threat, which is likely to trigger headline policies that will deepen America's estrangement with its rival. While the Biden administration has faced criticism for not publicizing the balloon earlier in the week, the idea that the president is in China's pocket is belied by a policy toward the communist giant that has cranked up a confrontational stance adopted by Trump. (The ex-president had initially cozied up to Xi and agreed to a failed trade deal before turning on Beijing when a pandemic that originated in China threatened his reelection bid).

Biden has deepened US ties with Asian allies designed to counter China - securing expanded access to bases in the Philippines, for instance, and reaching agreement with Japan on the offensive capacity of US Marines there in recent weeks. He has also sought to bolster Western access and manufacturing of semi-conductors in a blow to China. If any foreign auto-crats see Biden as a soft touch, all they have to do is look at the multi-billion dollar effective proxy war he's fighting against Russia in Ukraine in the biggest mobilization of the Western alliance since the Soviet Union fell. Still, the political fallout will still likely impede Biden, even if it's hard to imagine voters making his handling of China - absent a future major crisis - the decisive factor in 2024. The balloon flap is the latest unexpected event, including the controversy over classified vice presidential documents found in his Delaware home and a former office, to frustrate Biden's attempt to focus on strong job growth and the extremism of the new House Republican majority ahead of his expected run for a second term. The House will seek to rain on his parade further this week with a possible resolution condemning his handling of the surveillance balloon, which could pass before the State of the Union address, CNN's Melanie Zanona reported.

The political storm could create conditions in the US that will complicate efforts to avert the dangerous plunge in Sino-US relations - the original purpose of Blinken's mission. If Biden further escalates US reaction to the incident, after shooting down the balloon, he could create a furious counter-reaction in Beijing that will make the tensions even worse. There were signs in the run-up to Blinken's visit that Xi's government, beset with problems at home, wanted to tone down the heat of the relationship at least, building on the Chinese leader's meeting with Biden in Bali last year. There had even been speculation that the trip could lead to an announcement of another summit between the leaders this year.

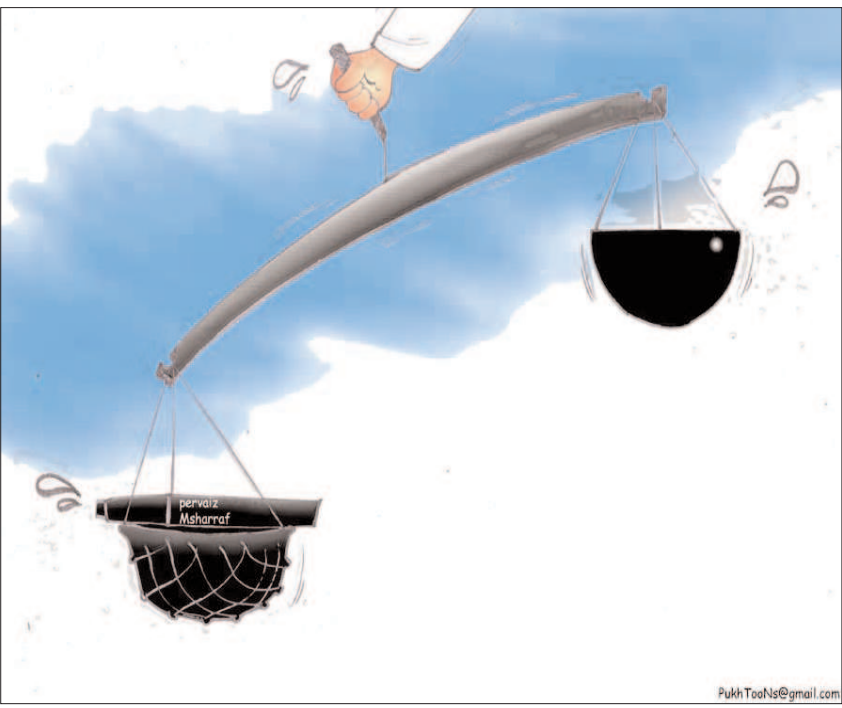
But if the balloon incident turns US public opinion further against China, the president will have even less latitude for diplomacy aimed at slowing the pace toward confrontation. Another complication is a possible visit to Taiwan by House Speaker Kevin McCarthy to follow the one by Democratic predecessor

Nancy Pelosi last year, which took place despite White House discomfort. China reacted furiously over that trip by initiating massive naval exercises close to the democratic island. It has already warned that such a visit would violate the bedrock "One China" principle that governs relations between Washington and Beijing - a position the US does not accept. Given political uproar in Washington, McCarthy, who just set up a bipartisan committee to probe what he says is the threat from Communist China, has even greater incentives to travel to Taipei now despite the current extreme tensions. "I don't think China can tell me to go, any time, at any place," McCarthy said after meeting Biden last week. Another risk is that the balloon crisis could exacerbate already tense situations where US and Chinese forces come into close contact, including on and over the South China Sea and around Taiwan. A miscommunication between ships' captains, for instance, that boils over into a military clash could set off a far wider escalation. This is why experts counseling a restoration of calm were dismayed by a leaked memo written by US Air Force Gen. Michael Minihi that warned that his "gut" tells him that America needs to be ready for war with China within two years. The memo does not match US assessments of Beijing's capabilities or assessments about its designs on Taiwan. But it deepened the sense that a conflict is brewing and may be inevitable.

There are plenty of precedents for disastrous moments in US-China relations being defused - testimony to the extreme economic and humanitarian price both sides, and the rest of the world, would pay in the event of a wider conflict. During the Kosovo war in 1999, for instance, US bombs crashed into the Chinese embassy in Belgrade in what NATO said was an accident but that caused an eruption of fury in China. In 2001, just after President George W. Bush took office, a US surveillance plane and a Chinese jet collided over the South China Sea. The Chinese pilot was killed and intense diplomacy was needed to free the US crew, who made an emergency landing on a Chinese island, 11 days later. These incidents, however, happened in a different age, when US policy was designed to usher China into the world economy, as a competitor but not an adversary. That process failed after China took a nationalist turn under Xi and as its power and ambitions grew at an astonishing rate.

Two decades on, Beijing's aims are increasingly seen in Washington as incompatible with US hopes of promoting democracy, a rules-based international system and its own power in the Pacific. But when the US talks about putting guardrails around its relationship with China and protecting the Western-backed rule of law, Beijing believes America wants to thwart its own great power destiny. As Chinese Foreign Affairs Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning put it on January 31, "We are against defining the entire China-US relations with competition alone and using competition as an excuse to contain and suppress others." This is why many observers in both countries see the US and China now on inevitably clashing courses - a doom-laden possibility that seems only more likely after the seemingly innocuous flight of one balloon across the US.

CNN



## Have we been visited by Aliens? Depends on whom you ask

**LOGISTICS manager Nicholas Rehak was visiting his parents' home in Baltimore County, Maryland, several years ago. He was standing on the back deck one night when he noticed a bluish white light. "It was shaped in a damn near perfect oval and it started to rise," Rehak told VOA. "I'm talking straight up vertical, no deviation. It sat there for nearly 30 seconds and then suddenly it vanished - like a lamp when someone pulls the plug. Just sudden darkness."**

Perhaps it was a drone. Rehak said that was his first thought. "But I've never seen a drone take off perfectly vertical like that, from ground to sky without so much as a wobble," he continued. "It was far too low to the ground to be a larger aircraft. So what was it? If I close my eyes, I can still see the light plain as

Matt Haines

physicist Neil deGrasse Tyson. "If there's something in your night sky and you don't know what it is, maybe it's harmful, right?" Tyson said, speaking with VOA. "Well, investigating that potential harm is the entire mission statement of the military." "It's nothing deeper than that," he continued, "other than there are many people out there who wish it was something deeper despite having a lack of evidence to prove it." While there is a wide variety of opinions on whether extraterrestrial life has visited Earth, there appears to be a consensus that life likely exists beyond Earth.

According to a survey conducted by the Pew Research Center in June 2021, 65% of Americans say they believe intelligent life exists on other planets. "Each time we build a big-

Others agree.

"I think we don't want to be alone," Nicholas Rehak said. "It gives me goosebumps to dream of what might be out there," said Carl Fink, a software developer in New Orleans, "and contemplating the cosmos helps me consider the possibility of things I couldn't previously imagine." Tyson said imagining life in other parts of the universe is part of a longer trend in human history. "We used to think our planet was the center of the cosmos, but then through the help of Galileo and others we learned we orbit a sun," the astrophysicist explained. "But at least everything in the universe orbited our sun ... until we learned it didn't. We'd go on to learn that other stars in the galaxy have their own planets, and that, in fact, there are hundreds of billions of other galaxies in our universe and we're not at the center of anything."

**"But I think it's a valuable experience," Ogilvie added. "I learned how quickly the human mind can be convinced of something that it wants to believe is true. I want to believe it because I think it would make more sense out of our seemingly meaningless existence if we could put it into the perspective of the universe as a whole." Others agree. "I think we don't want to be alone," Nicholas Rehak said. "It gives me goosebumps to dream of what might be out there," said Carl Fink, a software developer in New Orleans, "and contemplating the cosmos helps me consider the possibility of things I couldn't previously imagine." Tyson said imagining life in other parts of the universe is part of a longer trend in human history.**

day." For decades, Americans have reported sighting unidentified flying objects - commonly referred to as UFOs - zipping, zagging and hovering in the sky. Many were ridiculed for their assertions. Now, however, the US government is tracking and studying reports of what they refer to as unidentified aerial phenomena (UAP). More than 350 new cases have been reported to the government since March 2021, according to an unclassified document released last month by the Office of the Director of National Intelligence. That number far exceeds what was reported over the 17 years prior, suggesting either a dramatic increase in sightings or a greater willingness to report them.

"It's no longer embarrassing to talk about," said Steve Mort, a New Orleans, Louisiana, resident. "I've always known true extraterrestrial UAPs exist - they're likely our ancestors checking back in on us. The only thing I'm shocked by is that the government is officially confirming this." The January report, however, cautions against making such conclusions. While approximately half of the 366 reported UAP sightings remain unexplained, the ODN wrote its "initial characterization does not mean positively resolved or unidentified." In other words, the US government says it does not know what many of the mysterious objects are. And while the Department of Defense and NASA are taking steps to investigate UAPs, an impatient and imaginative American public is debating the mystery on its own.

Many in the scientific community say there is nothing particularly unusual about the steps the government is taking. This includes American astro-

ger telescope, we discover more and more galaxies in our ever-expanding universe," said Robert Sheaffer, an author and investigator of UAPs. "Our universe is so unimaginably vast, it would be foolish to claim there are no other planets with life, or with intelligent civilizations." Americans as a whole appear divided on whether UAPs are extraterrestrial spacecraft visiting our planet. But the percentage who do believe in alien visitation has grown. A YouGov survey last September found 34% of Americans believe UFOs are alien ships or alien life forms. An equal percentage said they didn't know what accounts for UFOs while 32% believed they had a natural scientific explanation. In a similar survey by Newsweek/Princeton in 1996, only 20% of Americans believed UFOs were evidence of extraterrestrial life while 51% said they could be explained by natural science.

Tyler Ogilvie, a musician from Syracuse, New York, said he recently spotted a mysterious spacecraft zooming overhead. "I was legitimately convinced I was seeing something mystical or otherworldly," he told VOA. "It was incredible ... until a sobering Google search proved otherwise. It turned out I was looking at Elon Musk's Starlink [a series of satellites launched by SpaceX to provide broader internet access]." "But I think it's a valuable experience," Ogilvie added. "I learned how quickly the human mind can be convinced of something that it wants to believe is true. I want to believe it because I think it would make more sense out of our seemingly meaningless existence if we could put it into the perspective of the universe as a whole."

VOA

## Saudi Arabia in the spotlight for its climate change focus

Dr. Bashayer Al-Majed

**THE UN Environment Program has released a job advertisement for a chief editor for an environmental report to be completed on Saudi Arabia before the end of the year. Meanwhile, the scientific journal Sustainability has put out a call for papers for a special edition on "Vision 2030 in Saudi Arabia," requesting "multidisciplinary solutions" to help reach the nation's targets, with a deadline for papers in August. And Saudi Arabia established new environmental legislation in 2021, so, with all this focus on the Kingdom, its sustainability and its future, how is it coming along?**

Let us begin with the context. The 2015 Paris Agreement set a series of mutually agreed global targets, including limiting the world's temperature rise to a 2 degrees Celsius (and preferably 1.5 C) increase from pre-industrial levels by the century's end. In 2021, the UN Environment Program launched the report, "The Heat Is On," demonstrating that interventions had slowed the increase, but not by enough, and it forecast a 2.7 C increase by the end of the year 2099. However, if nations' net-zero carbon emissions pledges were actioned, the value would decrease to 2.2 C. It continued that the 17 G20 countries that had pledged a net-zero target emitted 70 percent of emissions. However, last year's Emissions Gap Report stated that, due to current emissions, we are way off target.

The UN Environment Program report on Saudi Arabia will of

course be completed as part of a larger whole, including reports for many other countries, but, as can be seen from the focus of Sustainability, the results will be considered impactful. Neighboring countries with similar vision strategies and primary industries will look to Saudi Arabia to assess the success of its implementations.

A special edition such as Sustainability has planned is a great way to pool the minds of scientists, engineers and innovators from across the world and across disciplines to address these targets in the most effective way, making use of their research and insights for the cost of a journal copy or at least bringing the nation's leaders into contact with the right people. So, while here we are focusing on Saudi Arabia, it is a symbol for all Gulf nations and oil producers.

Saudi Arabia is important because it is responsible for about 13 percent of the world's oil exports and emits 1.52 percent of global carbon dioxide due to its high domestic oil use. Since 1990, its emissions have increased 227 percent, although this is small compared to China and India. So, Saudi Arabia could inspire all nations, either with its successes or lessons of where improvements could be made.

It is worth considering that smaller carbon dioxide emitters have a part to play. The UK has one of the smallest emissions increases since 1990 levels at about 40 percent, but this is in part because it

has moved much of its manufacturing abroad. Also, the rise of buying and disposing of cheap items, thanks to huge logistics outfits like Amazon, has led to a large increase in cheap manufacturing in China and India, where the low costs do not leave much margin for good environmental practices. Emissions in these countries have skyrocketed.

Here, we can all have an impact by considering what we are buying, from where and the conditions under which it is manufactured. In 2020, the UN Environment Program jointly launched with many other stakeholders the Oil and Gas Methane Partnership 2.0 to provide measurement-based reports to improve accuracy and transparency in emissions reporting. It states that methane, a byproduct of the oil and gas industry, is the second-largest contributor to global warming and provides the largest opportunity for reduction. This seems like an excellent place to start, with some simple solutions such as fixing leaky equipment and capturing the methane to sell on.

Saudi Arabia introduced the Vision 2030 strategy as an action plan for financial and environmental sustainability, including targets for reducing carbon emissions. It also includes improvements on environmental factors, education, infrastructure and gender equality, among others.

Global warming is not the only environmental impact of the oil and gas industry. For example, there is

also damage to coastal habitats and marine life due to shipping, salt waste from production, temperature changes and oil leaks. Aramco and others have worked toward improving their equipment and monitoring processes, and Saudi Arabia is becoming one of the world's largest investors in renewable energy, such as green hydrogen.

In response to a lack of improvement in its carbon dioxide emissions, Saudi Arabia updated its Environmental Law in January 2021, raising penalties for violations, coupled with better monitoring and restricting and licensing activities with a high environmental impact, particularly in marine environments. While ecotourism will be encouraged as part of the diversification away from gas and oil, access to delicate environmental areas will be limited. These are positive steps and, if the Kingdom is to improve its infrastructure, building into the desert for renewable energy sites and developing coastal regions for tourism, they are vitally important to preserve the environment, for both wildlife and people.

However, more needs to be done globally to reduce greenhouse gas emissions if we hope to reduce the effects that we are already experiencing. The annual UN Environment Program reports are an excellent way to monitor success, hold nations to account and see where they can be helped. Sustainability's special edition will also be worthy of examination when published, not just for Saudi Arabia, but for global application.

### Important Notice

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## FPCCI, Iranian Consulate agree to form panel of business community

PESHAWAR (APP): Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and Iranian Consulate have agreed to review matters relating to trade relations and formation of a joint representative committee of the business community and inclusion of women in it.

These matters were discussed during a meeting here in the Regional Office of FPCCI here on Monday wherein the Commercial Attaché of the Iranian Consulate Hussain Maliki attended as special representatives of the Consul

General (CG) of Iran. FPCCI was represented by Regional Coordinator, Sartaj Ahmad Khan.

Talking to FPCCI officials, the Iranian Commercial Attaché said that the newly posted Iranian Consul General is appreciating meaningful and consultative meetings and their proposals for promotion of bilateral trade and strengthening of relations between both neighbouring countries.

The Iranian Consul General, he said, has said that now practical steps would be taken for eco-

nomie progress and development of both countries, so the business community including traders and investors could also utilize those proposals and pass on the fruits of those efforts to the people of both countries.

On this occasion, the Regional Coordinator Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Sartaj Ahmad Khan assured Hussain Maliki that practical steps would be taken soon to follow that roadmap.

He said that Pakistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have

huge potentials in hydel, mines & minerals, agriculture and tourism sectors and wherein various projects of economic uplift could be initiated.

He said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa offers huge investment opportunities including the establishment of industrial units by Iranian investors and added that legal barriers in this regard would be removed with joint efforts.

He said that beside trade, both countries also have potential for joint initiatives in sports, culture and education sectors.

## PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 722 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 722.47 points, a positive change of 1.79 percent, closing at 41,193.63 against 40,471.16 points the previous day.

A total of 176,726,529 shares were traded during the day as compared to 105,053,350 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 8.794 billion against Rs 4.181 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 332 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 198 of them recorded gains and 107 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 27 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Pak Petroleum with 21,833,048 shares at Rs.80.15 per

share, Sui North Gas with 13,436,966 shares at Rs 43.47 per share, and Oil and Gas Dev. with 10,552,549 shares at Rs.92.38 per share.

Rafhan Maize witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.299.00 per share price, closing at Rs.8,299.00 whereas the runner-up was Sapphire Tex with a Rs.76.50 rise in its per share price to Rs.1,096.50.

Unilever Foods witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs.353.93 per share closing at Rs.23,646.07 followed by Nestle Pakistan with Rs 64.01 decline to close at Rs.5,29.99.

**Rupee gains Rs 1.28 against US dollar**

The exchange rate of the Pakistani rupee eased by Rs 1.28 against the US dollar in the interbank trading on Monday and closed at Rs 275.29 against the previous day's closing of Rs 276.57.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs 275.25 and Rs 278.00 respectively.

The price of the euro also depreciated by Rs 4.32 and closed at Rs 296.96 against the previous day's closing of Rs 301.28, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese yen decreased by 05 paisa to close at Rs 2.14, whereas an increase of Rs 5.30 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British pound, which was traded at Rs 332.06 as compared to its last closing of Rs 337.36.

The exchange rates of the Emirates dirham and Saudi riyal decreased by 34 paisa each to close at Rs 74.95 75.29 and Rs 73.36 respectively.

**Gold prices plummet**

**by Rs.200, being traded at Rs. 204,300 per tola**

The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs 200 on Monday and was traded at Rs.204,300 against the sale of Rs. 204,500 on the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs 172, to Rs 175,154 from Rs 175,326, whereas that of 10 grams of 22 karat declined to Rs.160,558 from Rs. 160,715, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of one tola and ten-gram silver remained constant at Rs.2,250 and Rs.1,929 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by US\$5 to US\$ 1,870 as compared to its sale at US\$1,865 on the last trading day, the association reported.



**SIALKOT: Ambassador of Azerbaijan Khazar Farhadov discusses common business matters with president SCCI Abdul Ghafor Malik.**

### Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI (APP): Two ships namely, CMA CGM Rabelais and CL Dayang He carrying Containers and Soyabeen berthed at Qasim International Containers Terminal and Grain & Fertilizer Terminal respectively on Sunday.

Meanwhile, a gas carrier 'Al-Maha' carrying LPG also arrived at the outer anchorage of the port during the last 24 hour.

A total of 07 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them 05 ships, CMA CGM Rabelais, MilahaRas Lafan, T-Sirius, At Middle Bridge and Wanxing left the Port on Monday, morning.

Cargo volume of 102,226 tonnes, comprising 67,463 tonnes of imports cargo and 34,763 tonnes of export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 2,734 Containers (1,030 TEUs Imports and 1,704 TEUs export) was handled at the port during the last 24 hours.

There are 10 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them, 03 ships, Corona, White Purl, and Al-Maha& 02 more ships, MSC Noa and Lana carrying Palm oil, Chemicals, LPG, and Containers are expected to take berths at LCT, EVTL, SSGC, and QICT on Monday.

## Azerbaijan keen to promote trade ties with Pakistan

SIALKOT (APP): Azerbaijan Ambassador to Pakistan Khazar Farhadov on Monday urged the Sialkot exporters to come forward and explore international trade markets of Azerbaijan as it would help promote bilateral trade ties.

Addressing the exporters at Surgical Instruments Manufacturers Association Pakistan (SIMAP) here, he pledged full support and technical assistance to ensure easy access of Pakistan business community to international trade markets of Azerbaijan.

He said that Azerbaijan was keen to establish stronger business-to-business contacts between the two countries, adding that bilateral trade relations could further be promoted

with the exchange of trade delegations.

The Ambassador said that time had come to further strengthen mutual trade ties between the two countries.

He also agreed with the SIMAP proposal regarding the regular exchange of updated trade information and mutual trade delegations to enhance trade between the two countries.

SIMAP Group Leader Jahangir Babar Bajwa said that Pakistan exports to Azerbaijan dropped considerably in 2021-22 as compared to 2020-21 which was not commendable when there was a great scope of collaboration in variety of fields to enhance bilateral trade.

He said, "We are the

only major producers of surgical/dental instruments." All the major hospitals of the world were using Pakistan made surgical instruments produced directly or through mediators, he informed.

He said that exports of surgical/dental instruments to Azerbaijan in 2021 were just US\$ 243,000, whereas, Azerbaijan imports were US\$ 46.58 million and our share was less than one percent.

Azerbaijan was buying Pakistan made surgical instruments from other countries at higher price, he added.

SIMAP Senior Vice Chairman Chaudhry Faisal Ikram and business community were also present on the occasion.

## Establishment of industrial estate: ICCI to support Chakwal CCI, says Ahsan Zafar

ISLAMABAD (APP): President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that Chakwal is a very suitable place for the establishment of an industrial zone as it is located on the Motorway and provides easy access to Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

He said that the ICCI will fully support the Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry in the efforts to establish an industrial zone in the Chakwal region, said a press release issued here on Monday.

### Tokyo stocks close higher

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo stocks ended higher Monday after a report about the Bank of Japan's next governor fuelled speculation that the institution would stick to its ultra-loose monetary policies.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index climbed 0.67 percent, or 184.19 points, to end at 27,693.65, while the broader Topix index added 0.45 percent, or 8.96 points, to 1,979.22.

The dollar stood at 131.76 yen, against 132.00 yen in New York on Friday. Tokyo traders were emboldened in part by the yen's weakening, after strong US jobs data caused a rethink of expectations that the Federal Reserve will soon suspend its rate hikes.

Investors were also digesting a report in the Nikkei business daily that said the government has approached deputy BoJ governor Masayoshi Amamiya as a possible successor to central bank chief Haruhiko Kuroda.

This "strengthened the view that the bank will maintain its monetary easing policy", IwaiCosmo Securities said.

SoftBank Group was up 0.06 percent at 6,332 yen, Toyota added 1.16 percent to 1,913.5 yen and Uniqlo operator Fast Retailing jumped 2.95 percent to 82,990 yen.

Meanwhile, falling US tech shares spooked some investors, with Tokyo Electron trimming 1.95 percent to 46,570 yen and Sony Group declining 1.51 percent to 12,015 yen.

He said that the completion of this important project will promote industrial activities and investment in the area and start a new era of development and prosperity for the region.

He said this while addressing a luncheon reception hosted by Former President, Chakwal CCI, Khawaja Arif Yusuf, and its Coordinator in honor of newly elected President ICCI Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, newly elected President of Chakwal Chamber of Commerce and Industry Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari and Senior Vice President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry Hamza Sarosh.

Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari, former president RCCT Dr. Hasan Sarosh, former provincial minister Sardar Yasir Sarfraz, FPCCI vice president Qazi Muhammad Akbar, former presidents

Chakwal CCI Khurram Kamran, Nazir Sultan, Shahzad Sadat, Malik Ghulam Murtaza, Sheikh Haroon and Noor Sultan, prominent political and business personalities of Chakwal attended the luncheon reception.

Waqar Zafar Bakhtawari said that it is the dream of his father Zafar Bakhtawari to establish an industrial zone in Chakwal so that industrial and commercial activities in Chakwal can flourish in the area and youth of Chakwal should not have to go abroad or away from home in search of employment.

He said that a delegation of Chakwal Chamber of Commerce will soon meet with Punjab Governor Balighur Rehman and Provincial Industries Minister S.M. Tanveer to discuss the establishment of an industrial zone in Chakwal.

## Experts for 70% tax increased

ISLAMABAD (APP): Experts at webinar titled "Tobacco Taxation: Nostrum to the Ailing Economy" on Monday called upon the government to increase tax on tobacco products by 70 percent of their retail price which was crucial to increase revenues in the face of an ailing economy.

The webinar was organized by Sustainable Development Policy Institute as Director Resilient Development Program Dr Shafiqat Munir said Pakistan ranked as the tenth highest tobacco-consuming country, which needed immediate attention from the government.

Upholding the idea of 70 percent increase in tax on tobacco products, he urged the government to revisit the fast-track progressive taxation regime on tobacco to support the economy and reduce the incidence of tobacco-related diseases.

Managing Director of SPDC Asif Iqbal suggested for adopting the medium-term tax policy to reduce speculation and data manipulation in the tobacco industry and ensure fair taxation for all.

According to current

estimates, up to a 70% increase in tax can generate over Rs 65 billion in revenues, he added.

Joint Executive Director SDPI Dr Waqar Ahmed suggested that the brand registration fee structure should be increased and the registration must be renewed annually and the tax collection should be imposed in advance, which would not only guarantee higher revenue generation but help to discourage consumption.

He further suggested that tobacco cultivation should be taxed to bring tobacco farmers in the tax net and discourage farming.

Senior Research Associate SDPI Wasif Ali Naqvi said that 170,000 annual deaths were caused by tobacco along with cardiovascular and respiratory diseases, and cancers.

Against the global decline in tobacco consumption, Pakistan had 24 percent consumption rate and 10.7 percent of youth ageing between 13-15 indulge in smoking.

He said that underreporting by the tobacco industry from 2015-18 cost the country \$143 to \$448 million each year.

## Bank of Punjab Partners with PSL Champions Lahore Qalandars



### F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Bank of Punjab has signed a partnership agreement with Lahore Qalandars (LQ) ahead of the eighth season of the Pakistan Super League (PSL). The agreement was signed by Mr. Zafar Masud (President & CEO - BOP) and Mr. Atif Naeem Rana & (CEO - Lahore Qalandars) at a ceremony held at Bagh-e-Jinnah, Lahore. Top players Shaheen Shah Afridi, and Fakhar Zaman along with other players of Lahore Qalandars team and senior management from both organizations were also present at the ceremony.

BOP and Lahore Qalandars have a long-

standing collaborative relationship; BOP is the Qalandars' exclusive banking partner; last year we co-launched the first of its kind BOP Lahore Qalandars Debit Card - a sports affinity debit card powered by Mastercard.

More recently, both organizations joined hands to work towards supporting the growth of women's cricket, through the Lahore Qalandars and Sports Board Punjab's Player Development Program. Supporting women's cricket at the grassroots level is an extension of BOP's organizational ethos with regard to Banking on Equality, and inclusion.

Speaking on the occasion, Mr. Zafar Masud

(President & CEO - BOP) said, "As one of the country's leading financial institutions, BOP prides itself on playing a vital role in promoting wholesome, beneficial, and positive activities pertaining to sports, literature, culture, and arts. We believe in developing our youth by providing them with enriching opportunities for learning, fitness, entertainment, and creativity. Last year, BOP powered the LQ Player Development Program for women's cricket and also sponsored various cricket tournaments for differently-abled persons which is a manifestation of our devotion to inclusivity and social equity."

He further added, "On behalf of the Bank of Punjab, we are immensely honored to support economically and socially important activities like PSL, and are proud to be doing our part for the cricket economy in supporting the PSL 7 Champion team Lahore Qalandars."

On this occasion, Mr. Atif Naeem Rana (CEO - LQ) said, "We are delighted to announce The Bank of Punjab as our official banking partner, the continuation of this partnership is due to the like-mindedness of Lahore Qalandars and BOP, long-lasting and strong partnerships are very important for the franchises because staying together is progress and success."

### Pak-Germany trade witnesses 70% surplus

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's goods and services trade with Germany witnessed a surplus of 70.41 percent during the first half of the current fiscal year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period of last year.

Trade surplus during the period under review was recorded at \$404.357 million against \$237.281 million last year, showing 70.41 percent growth.

The overall exports to Germany were recorded at US \$881.045 million during July-December (2022-23) against exports of US \$864.241 million during July-December (2021-22), showing growth of 1.94 percent, SBP data revealed.

The exports to Germany however decreased 21.87 percent from \$172.980 million in December 2021, against the exports of \$135.137 million in December 2022.

## Stock markets fall on US rate-hike fears

LODON (AFP/APP): Stock markets slid and the dollar firmed Monday after a forecast-busting US jobs report fanned expectations of more Federal Reserve interest rate hikes to cool sky-high inflation.

Adding to the downbeat mood were geopolitical concerns after the United States shot down a suspected Chinese spy balloon that had floated across the country for days.

Equity market rallies enjoyed through January have largely stopped as investors contemplate an extended period of high borrowing costs aimed at bringing inflation down from multi-decade highs.

London's benchmark FTSE 100 index, however, struck an all-time high Friday, with analysts saying bad news, such as expectations of UK recession throughout this year, was priced in.

The British capital's top index has benefitted also

from some strong company earnings, including record profits from energy giant Shell, and renewed investment from abroad amid pound weakness.

But it was down 0.8 percent in afternoon trading on Monday.

"Having hit a new all-time high..., the FTSE 100 opened the new trading week with a hangover," noted Russ Mould, investment director at AJ Bell.

"Throwing cold water over the party were stronger than expected jobs figures in the US, something closely monitored by the Federal Reserve when making interest rate decisions."

Eurozone stock markets were also down, as were leading indices in Asia.

Wall Street opened lower, with the Dow shedding 0.3 percent at the start of trading, as investors continued to reel from Friday's job data.

A softer tone from the

Fed regarding its monetary tightening campaign had allowed market participants to entertain the possibility of a pause to rate hikes, or even a cut, later in the year.

But that optimism was dealt a heavy blow Friday by data showing more than half a million new jobs were created in the United States last month, nearly double the December figure and far more than the 188,000 expected.

Government figures also showed unemployment fell to the lowest level since 1969.

The reading showed the world's biggest economy remained strong despite almost a year of rate hikes and soaring prices, indicating the Fed still had plenty of work to do to rein in inflation.

"We are concerned that on the back of this kind of jobs report, it definitely holds the Fed to a higher-for-longer path," said Lisa Erickson at US Bank

Wealth Management.

Briefing.com analyst Patrick O'Hare noted that more than two-thirds of market participants now expect a third quarter-percentage-point hike in May, compared to one-third last Thursday.

But he said investors are also grappling with the high valuations of many stocks even as earnings are falling. "Market participants know that things are running too hot in the stock market and that many of the stocks that have gone parabolic need to cool down a bit," he said.

In Asia on Monday, Mumbai stocks fell again with embattled tycoon Gautam Adani's troubled empire suffering more big losses.

Flagship Adani Enterprises gained more than 1,000 percent in five years before a rout begun last week on allegations of fraud at India's biggest conglomerate.





## In brief

## West Indies test opening record

**B U L A W A Y O** (Reuters): Captain Kraigg Brathwaite and Tagenarine Chanderpaul set a new West Indies record for the opening partnership in test cricket when they put on 336 on day three of the first test against Zimbabwe at the Harare Sports Ground on Monday. Rain meant just 89 overs were possible on the first two days of the match after West Indies had opted to bat, but the visitors accelerated the scoring on day three. Brathwaite knocked up 182 in the record opening stand with Chanderpaul, who was unbeaten on 207 in the middle session of day three. West Indies were 447-6 after 143 overs. The partnership was broken when Brathwaite was out leg before wicket attempting a sweep against left-arm spinner Wellington Masakadza. It was his 12th test century. It beats the previous record of 298 set by Gordon Greenidge and Desmond Haynes against England at St John's in 1990. Tagenarine, 26, is the son of stalwart former West Indies batsman Shivnarine Chanderpaul and now has a maiden test century in his third match.

## Cholistan Jeep Rally today

**B A H A W A L P U R** (INP): The 18th Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally will start from Derawar Fort in Cholistan (on Monday), the Tourism Development Punjab Corporation (TDCP) officials announced. "All arrangements have been finalized to start the 18th Cholistan Desert Jeep Rally 2023 from the Bahawalpur district," said, Regional Manager, TDCP Bahawalpur chapter, Tariq Rabbani. He highlighted that it would be an international desert jeep rally as racers and drivers from abroad would also participate in the rally. Rabbani said that it would be the "biggest motorsports event of its kind in Pakistan" that would continue till February 12. Entertainment activities would also be part of the sporting event, he added.

## Sri Lanka edge two-run win

**STELLENBOSCH** (Agencies): A dramatic final over saw Sri Lanka edge to a two-run victory over Ireland in their T20 World Cup warm-up game. Harshitha Samarawickrama's half-century helped Sri Lanka to 149-5. Despite Arlene Kelly's impressive 30 off 17 balls, Sri Lanka took two wickets in the last over to bowl Ireland out for 147. Ireland needed four from the final over, but Sugandika Kumari dismissed Cara Murray before running Kelly out on the penultimate ball. Sri Lanka made a strong start before captain Chamari Athapaththu was lbw for 27 in the seventh over, but Ireland were unable to break the 87-run partnership of Samarawickrama and Vishmi Gunaratne. Samarawickrama was forced to retire hurt on 56 at the end of the 16th over and Gunaratne was soon dismissed before Laura Delany took three wickets in the final over to reduce Sri Lanka to 149-5. Gaby Lewis made a strong start for Ireland before being caught by Oshadi Ranasinghe off Inoka Ranaweera for 38 off 24 balls and the Sri Lankan duo continued to excel, taking three wickets each. Ireland were 106 for seven after 15 overs before Kelly fought back with her impressive side needing four from the final over, but they fell just short in that dramatic conclusion.



CAPE TOWN: Nida Dar of Pakistan celebrates the wicket of Murshida Khatun of Bangladesh during a warm-up match between Pakistan and Bangladesh prior to the ICC Women's T20 World Cup South Africa 2023 at Western Province Cricket Club.

## PSL's bowling standard has no match with other leagues: Amir

**LAHORE** (Monitoring Desk): Fast bowler Mohammad Amir has rated Pakistan Super League in high esteem, saying the tournament has no match with other leagues around the world in terms of high bowling standards. Amir, who has been spearheading Karachi Kings' bowling attack since the PSL's inception, looks all set for another unforgettable season representing Kings in the upcoming eighth edition of the PSL, starting from February 13.

The left-arm pacer, who is a well-reputed name in franchise leagues around the world, said people were eagerly waiting, not just in Pakistan but all over the globe, for the PSL as they wanted to see high-quality cricket. "I have just returned from the Bangladesh Premier League and despite the fact that many leagues are taking place right now; people there were waiting for the PSL to begin because of the high quality of cricket," he said in the latest episode of PCB Podcast.

"I travel all over the world to play cricket, and everyone rates the PSL very highly because of the quality of bowling."

He added: No league comes closer in comparison when it comes to the quality of bowling, and now we are producing quality batters too. We have unearthed [Mohammad] Harris and we got Haider [Ali] as well."

Talking about the impact that PSL has had on him, the 30-year-old said it helped him in getting back into the rhythm when he was making his comeback in international cricket.

"When I played the first edition of the PSL, I had just made my international comeback in New Zealand and it provided me the exposure and environment of the international cricket because of the top quality of cricket," he said. It is pertinent to mention here that left-arm quick is the first player to take a hat trick in the PSL and has 54 wickets to his credit to date.

## Kane eyes Premier League history after breaking Spurs goal record

**LONDON** (Agencies): Harry Kane has set his sights on breaking the Premier League's all-time goals record after becoming the leading scorer in Tottenham's history.

Kane's first-half strike in Sunday's 1-0 win against defending champions Manchester City took him past Jimmy Greaves to a record 267 goals for the north London club.

The 29-year-old's predatory finish also made him only the third player to reach 200 goals in the Premier League, behind record holder Alan Shearer (260) and Wayne Rooney (208). Now his place in Tottenham history is secured, Kane admitted he would love to break Shearer's record as well.

"I'm sure you guys will be talking about that," he said. "It's always there in the back of my mind but I just take it game-by-game, season-by-season." "It's definitely there to be broken and I'm feeling good and feeling fit so we'll see what happens."

Kane's remarkable goal feats are all the more incredible given he was regarded

as unlikely to make it at the highest level at the start of his career. After graduating from Tottenham's youth academy, Kane was sent on a series of loan spells in the lower leagues before finally being given his chance to shine in the Premier League.



- 'Amazing journey' -

"It's been an amazing journey," he said. "I've been here since I was 11 years old, it's 18 years of my life, a lot of hard work and dedication. I'm extremely proud to represent this club and score 267 goals for them and 200 Premier League goals for them is something I'll never take

for granted.

"I've just got to keep it going, score as many as I can and see what happens from there." Kane could make further history later this season as he looks to become England's record scorer. The England captain

European Championship qualifiers, with games against Italy and Ukraine scheduled for March.

For now, Kane is basking in the afterglow of his Spurs landmark, with boss Antonio Conte congratulating him by phone after the City game. Conte underwent surgery to remove his gallbladder last week and watched the win on TV while he recovers in Italy.

"He was on the phone there and he just kind of congratulated me for the achievement and just said he was proud of all the boys," Kane said.

"It's not easy when you don't have your coach there. It's obviously been a difficult week. We're all happy the surgery went well and he's recovering well. "We showed we're a unit, a team. I'm sure he was watching, proud. It was the type of performance where we knew what we had to do." Tottenham are just one point behind fourth-placed Newcastle after their win, with second-placed City five points adrift of Premier League leaders Arsenal.

## KP Girls Squash C'ship continues

**PESHAWAR**, (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Girls Junior Age Group Squash Championship got underway here at Qamar Zaman Squash Complex, in which all the players along with the guests also staged a walk to show solidarity with people of Indian illegally occupied Kashmir (IIOJK), facing atrocities, barbarisms by the Indian troops.

The first female Station Director in the long history of Radio Pakistan Syeda Iffat Jabbar was the chief guest on this occasion. Former World Champion Qamar Zaman, Director Blue Tone Squash academy Wazir Gul, Secretary General AIPs and President Pakistan sports Writers Federation Amjad Aziz Malik, former Nazim Nawa Khali Sajjad Khan, KP Sports Writers President Asim Shiraz among other prominent personalities were present.

In the Kashmir Day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Girls Junior Squash Championship held under the auspices of Provincial Squash Association, U13, U17 and U19 competitions were included. On the occasion, Syed Iffat Jabbar said, "Kashmir is the integral part of Pakistan and Kashmir will become Pakistan one day." She also lauded the organizing committee for holding the event in connection with the 'Kashmir Day' to pay homage to those sacrificed their life for freedom.

The Chairman of the Provincial Squash Association, Qamar Zaman, while talking to the media, said, "The chief organizer and chief referee of the competitions is Manoor Zaman. Girls players will get opportunities to show their best skills." He said that we have 24 big tournaments every year along with league matches in the annual Calendar.

to survive," said Javed Miandad.

**QUETTA** (Monitoring Desk): Former Pakistan captain Javed Miandad makes a bold statement regarding India's withdrawal from Asia Cup 2023 scheduled in Pakistan.

Javed Miandad, known as a nightmare of the Indian bowlers, stated during the exhibition match between Peshawar Zalmi and Quetta Gladiators at Bugti stadium, Quetta, that the Pakistan team is playing enough of cricket and don't need India to survive.

"India can go to hell if they don't want to come to Pakistan to play cricket. Pakistan do not need India

to survive," said Javed Miandad.

BCCI secretary Jay Shah, the son of Indian Home Minister Amit Shah, previously made some statements that India will not travel to Pakistan for the Asia Cup 2023. In reply, Chairman PCB Management Committee Najam Sethi also replied with a point mark that Pakistan will also not travel to India for the ICC World Cup 2023 as India always backs off whenever Pakistan gets such opportunities.

The 65-year-old cricketer also takes a dig at the Indian Government and states India is afraid to

play against Pakistan.

"Why is India afraid to play against Pakistan? They know if they lose to Pakistan, the public will not spare them. Narendra Modi will disappear; their public won't leave him," said Javed.

There was no confirmation regarding where the tournament would take place. While Pakistan has the hosting rights of the Asia Cup, the ACC President had earlier stated that India will not be traveling to Pakistan.

Shah, who also Secretary of the BCCI, demanded that Asia Cup be moved to a "neutral venue" last year.

## Man City charged by Premier League over alleged financial rule breaches

**LONDON** (Agencies): The Premier League has referred Manchester City to an independent commission over more than 100 alleged breaches of finance rules since the club were acquired by the Abu Dhabi-based City Football Group.

League rules state that charges such as those faced by City could, if proved, result in a club being expelled from the Premier League in the worst-case scenario. Offending clubs may alternately be deducted points, fined, or reprimanded.

City's alleged breaches stretch from the 2009-10 season to the 2017-18 campaign, the league said on Monday. The club, who were acquired by City Football Group in 2008, are also charged with failing to cooperate with and assist the Premier League in its investigation, which was launched in December 2018.

City are alleged to have breached rules relating to the provision of accurate financial information, "in particular with respect to its revenue

(including sponsorship revenue), its related parties and its operating costs," the league said.

The club, who have won the Premier League title six times since the Abu Dhabi takeover, said they were surprised by the league's "issuing of these alleged breaches".

"The club welcomes the review of this matter by an independent commission, to impartially consider the comprehensive body of irrefutable evidence that exists in support of its position," City added. The charges stem from a Premier League investigation into City's financial dealings launched four years ago, after the release of a tranche of "Football Leaks" documents obtained by the German publication Der Spiegel and reviewed by Reuters.

Subsequent Ban City were subsequently banned from the Champions League by European governing body UEFA for two years, but successfully appealed to the Court of Arbitration for Sport (CAS), which

overturned the ban in 2020. The club were fined 30 million euros (\$32.28 million) by UEFA, which CAS reduced to 10 million euros.

In addition to the charges relating to the club's revenue and operating costs, City are also alleged to have not fully disclosed managerial remuneration from the 2009-10 to 2012-13 seasons, when Roberto Mancini was manager. The club are also charged with failing to comply with Premier League's rules requiring clubs to follow UEFA's financial fair play (FFP) regulations from the 2013-14 to 2017-18 seasons and failing to follow the Premier League's rules on profit and sustainability from the 2015-16 to 2017-18 seasons.

FFP regulations are designed to stop clubs from running up big losses through spending on players. They also ensure sponsorship deals are based on their real market value and are genuine commercial agreements — and not ways for owners to pump cash into a club to get around the rules.

## Dania wins SGA amateur Golf title

**KARACHI** (APP): The final round of SGA Ladies Amateur Golf Championship 2023 was played at the DHA Golf Club, which was won by the Dania Saeed.

A beautiful ending to 5th SGA ladies amateur golf championship was observed in coordination with Sindh Golf Association from February 3-5, according to a communique here on Monday. From day 1st the golf course was full of ladies in action.

The competition included junior, senior and amateur golfers. In category-A first 2 position holders were two sisters; Dania Saeed as first and Abiha Saeed as second, 3rd position achieved by Sania Osama.

In category-B junior under-14 golfers Alina Fawaz Ahmed and Meher Maqbool impressed everyone with their exciting game. According to the event's gross score Alina Fawaz Ahmed won, Meher Maqbool was runner up while Eman Shaikh Ali got 3rd position.

In net scoring Yumna got 1st, Amal Shaikh Ali 2nd and Almeerah Shaikh claimed 3rd position. In senior ladies category Gross score Nida Huq got 1st and Fazlia Karim secured 2nd position.

However, in net scoring Ayesha Hamid got 1st and Maleka Majid achieved 2nd position. In the same category, Nida Huq made longest drive for 231 yards while the main event winner for longest drive Anna James Gill made 304 yards.

Meanwhile, Dr Asma Shami got recognized for Nearest to pin. Chief Guest SGA President Khurram Khan in closing ceremony said that he will soon call international golf coach to Pakistan to coach junior and female golfers. He also appreciated the successful championship event. Director Tournament Humera Khalid, Chief Referee Zahid Iqbal, Dr Isma Shami, a large number of golfers and sponsors for price distribution were also present on the occasion.

## Century 99 Punjab Polo Cup gets underway on Tuesday

**LAHORE** (APP): The Century 99 Punjab Polo Cup will get underway tomorrow Tuesday here at the historic Lahore Polo Club.

The Century 99-sponsored historic Punjab Polo Cup holds the distinction of being the Asia's oldest polo tournament. Lahore Polo Club President Umar Sadiq has expressed his special thanks to Century Ventures Private Limited Directors Ayaz Lakhani, Kamran Afzal, Waseem Mazhar, Nazia Waseem for sponsoring the game of kings and knights.

Tomorrow, Tuesday, the first match will be played between Newage Cables/Master Paints and Master Paints at 2:00 PM while the encounter will be contested between Lone Wolves and Diamond Paints at 3:00 PM. Similarly, the matches will be played throughout the week. The finals of the tournament will be played on Sunday (February 12), Umar Sadiq said.

The LPC president further revealed that this high-goal tournament includes nine teams in which foreign players from Argentina, England, Spain and Iran are also participating along with Pakistani players. Both the field umpires are also foreigners. "The Pool A includes DS Polo, Newage Cables/Master Paints, Master Paints, Lone Wolves and Diamond Paints while Pool B comprises of HN Polo, BN Polo, Remounts and FG Polo," he added.

In Pool A, team Diamond Paints consists of Daniyal Shaikh, Abdul Rehman Monnoo, Javier Guerrero and Bautista Garcia; Newage Cables/Master Paints team includes Adnan Jalil Azam, Raja Temur Nadeem, Juan Cruz Greguol and Simon Prado; Team Master Paints has Sufi Muhammad Amir, Agha Musa Ali Khan, Manuel Carranza and Manuel Crespo, love Wolves team consists of Raja Jalal Arsalan, Mumtaz Abbas Niazi, Bilal Haye and Amirreza Behboudi while Team Diamond Paints has the services of Mir Huzaifa Ahmed, Ahmed Ali Tiwana, Nico Roberts and Chulo Corti.

The Pool B has four teams. Haider Naseem, Raja Samiullah, Hamza Mawaz Khan and Julio Astrada are the part of HN Polo, Babar Naseem, Roberto Iturrioz Arias, Raja Mikael Sami and Juan Maria Ruiz Guinazu in BN Polo, Swr. Naem, Ahmed Zubair Butt, Jota Chavanne and Manuel Sundblad are part of Remounts while Abbas Mukhtar, Saqib Khan Khakwani, Ramiro Zavaleta and Raul Laplacette are members of team FG Polo Team.

## WSF World Junior Squash C'ships in July

**ISLAMABAD** (APP): The 2023 WSF World Junior Squash Championships would be held at Melbourne sports Centres (MSAC) from July 18 to 29. The event would include a junior men's and women's individual tournament, as well as the junior women's team championships, said a press release issued here on Monday.

Squash Australia CEO Robert Donaghue said, "We are extremely excited to be hosting the World Junior Championships right here in our backyard. This event is not only a key step in our 22-26 strategic plan, but it is also the ideal way to kick off a decade of sport leading up to the 2026 Commonwealth Games in Victoria." "Being able to showcase the best junior squash talent from nations all over the world is truly a unique opportunity that not only excites the squash community but also our own junior athletes, many of whom are aiming to compete in the Commonwealth Games," he added.

Australia is considered a traditional powerhouse of the game, winning a total of 13 junior championships across the men's, women's and team events.

WSF President Zena Wooldridge expressed her excitement at the championships returning to Australia. "Bringing these Junior World Championships to Melbourne contributes to the positive momentum we see behind Squash Australia's growth and performance strategies. WSF is delighted to bring a World Championship back to Australia as part of an exciting decade ahead for major events in Australia," Wooldridge said.

Minister for Tourism, Sport and Major Events, Steve Dimopoulos said, "Victoria is the epicentre of Australian sport, playing host to a roll call of major events that attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to the state." "Hosting another fantastic international event means another boost to local jobs and businesses with hundreds of players, coaches and supporters visiting Melbourne." Squash & Racquetball Victoria President and former world number one Sarah Fitz-Gerald was thrilled to see the event coming to Melbourne, having been the 1987 World Junior Champion.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 70,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 70,200 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 47,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1489.26 feet, 91.26 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow in the dam was recorded as 17,400 cusecs while the outflow as 35,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1129.90 feet, which was 79.90 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded as 10,200 cusecs and 15,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded at 26,200, 38,200, 34,300 and 9,900 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 10,600 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and zero cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

### PNCA stages drama on Kashmir

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) staged a drama and Kashmir song here late Sunday highlighting the issue of Kashmir through the performing arts as part of the Kashmir Solidarity Day. Musical performances and stage play "Jahan Chand Urtarta Hay" included Drama artists Afzal Latifi, Aslam Mughal, Saeed Anwar and others while singers from Kashmir Raja Imran, Mubashara Hafeez and Bano Rehmat performed. PNCA in collaboration with the Ministry of Kashmir Affairs and Gilgit-Baltistan organized a two-day event to mark Kashmir Solidarity Day. The events included special prayers for the martyrs of Kashmir, the success of the freedom struggle and solidarity with the people of Kashmir. Students from across Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Kashmiri leaders and civil society representatives participated in large number while over 300 students from 15 schools participated in various competitions. The participants of the event carried the flags and banners of Pakistan and Kashmir while the children were holding placards depicting the Indian oppression in Occupied Kashmir.

### Power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Monday issued a power suspension programme for Tuesday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 09:00 AM to 02:00 PM. ISLAMABAD CIRCLE, Islamabad Club-1, Filtration Plang, G-6/3, Zia Masjid, Service Road, Kripa, Tramari, New F-9 Park, G-10/3, GOR, I-8/1, Flour Mill-II, Industrial-II, I-9/4, Old Exchange, G-13/2-1, Pir Mehr Ali Shah, Shahpur, PHED, Dhala, Kotli Sattian, Balawara, Buri Imam, Suhadran Road, Tufail Shaheed, Karpa Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Bank Road-II, Adam Gee Road, Jail Park, Swan Garden-1, Model Town, Murree Brewery, Humayun, Defense Road, Moorat, Gulshan Saeed, Cantt, Rawat, Kahota City-II, Doberan, Fazal Ahmed, New Chowah, Nara Mator, Mandra, Industrial, Behar Kalial, Nishan Haider.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker NA Raja Pervez Ashraf along with Deputy Speaker National Assembly Zahid Akram Durrani presenting shield to Mr. Naeem Arshad Security Assistant on his Farewell Ceremony at Parliament.

## Senate unanimously passes resolution for strengthening FSC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Senate on Monday unanimously passed a resolution for strengthening of Federal Shariat Court (FSC) and filling the vacant posts to make it more vibrant.

The resolution moved by Mushtaq Ahmed, drew the attention of the government towards Article 227 of the Constitution, which states that all existing laws shall be brought in conformity with the Injunctions of Islam as laid down in the Holy Quran and Sunnah and no law shall be enacted which is repugnant to such Injunctions. The house also drew the attention of the government towards

Articles 203 C and 203 F of the Constitution.

The house expressed deep concerns over the vacant positions of Judges including Ulema Judges in the Federal Shariat Court and infrequent meetings of the Shariat Appellate Bench in the Supreme Court of Pakistan causing heavy pendency of important cases. The house demanded as per the obligatory constitutional strength, the government should make the Federal Shariat Court and Shariat Appellate Bench in the Supreme Court of Pakistan functional by appointing all judges, including

Ulema Judges in the Federal Shariat Court on an immediate basis."

Meanwhile, the senate rejected another move by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Senator Sania Nishtar with 26 votes against it and 18 in favor of the resolution. The resolution sought to confer scholarships to the students on the basis of the financial position of their parents.

State Minister for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan opposed the resolution saying such scholarships was already being provided to deserving students by the Higher Education Commission (HEC).

### ANF recovers huge quantity of drugs, arrests four drug peddlers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Anti-Narcotic Force (ANF) in crackdowns against smugglers of contraband items countrywide, arrested four drug peddlers and recovered a huge quantity of drugs from their possession. A spokesperson of the ANF said that in a joint operation of ANF and ASF at Islamabad International Airport, the force seized about 796 grams of heroin from an accused who was going to Bahrain from flight number PK 181. The drug was hidden in a laptop. In another operation, the force recovered over 11 kg of ice from carpets booked for New Zealand and Hong Kong through a private courier office located in Islamabad F-11 Markaz. At Bacha Khan International Airport Peshawar, the force seized 4 hashish-filled capsules from the stomach of a suspect who was travelling to Sharjah from Flight No. PA 612. (2) Near Sheikhupura Interchange, the ANF recovered over 16 kg of hashish from a car and arrested one person.

At Multan Airport, the force seized 91 capsules filled with heroin from the stomach of an accused who was going to Saudi Arabia.

### CDA plans to build two hostels for youth in Capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Capital Development Authority (CDA) is planning to build two hostels for young males and females, especially students visiting the federal capital for a short span of time which would help provide subsidised housing facilities. "The basic purpose of the hostels one each for males and females is to facilitate the young people who are coming from the far-flung areas of the country for different purposes," an official in the Authority told APP.

In this regard, the official said Chairman CDA Noorul Amin Mengal had already asked the departments concerned to plan and build these hostels on a priority basis to facilitate the youth. He said that the Planning Wing of CDA was looking for suitable sites to build these hostels and after that, the authority would move towards PC-I of the project and tendering process. The official said that the Planning Wing had also visited and identified different sites for the hostels which would be shared with the Chairman CDA for his approval soon.

## ‘Kashmiris won’t settle for anything except right to self-determination’

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organisation Mushaah Hussain Mullick said that the supremacist Hindutva regime had crossed all limits of state-sponsored terrorism and war crimes to stifle the powerful dissenting voices in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

Mushaah, wife of jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Muhammad Yasin Malik, while inaugurating 'Kashmir Society' in Pir Mehr Ali Shah Arid Agriculture University Rawalpindi (PMAS-AAUR), here on Monday, said that the fascist Narendra Modi government had turned the scenic valley into a slaughter house.

She said that killing, arbitrary arrest, torture have become a norm in IIOJK, as innocent and unarmed Kashmiri people were being brutally killed and tortured for their sole crime to raise voice for their right to self-determination.

The chairperson vowed that people of the occupied valley would not settle for anything less than the right to self-determination and would leave no stone unturned to make it a reality.

She stated that the fascist authorities

could not dampen the courage of the brave Kashmiri people through such brutal and inhuman tactics.

Rehana Hussein Mullick, Co-Chairperson Peace and Culture Organisation, during her address lamented that the Indian government had been committing war crimes in the occupied Kashmir but the world powers and UN bodies were looking like a silent spectator.

Lashing out at the notorious Modi-government for its continued and unabated genocide and ethnic cleansing, she made it clear that Kashmiris would never accept Hindutva regime and would not budge an inch from their stated position.

Rehana Hussein Mullick said that the brutal Indian authorities were bulldozing the houses of Kashmiri Muslim in the valley under its nefarious plan of forced eviction policy but the so-called human right organisations adopted a criminal silence. Vice Chancellor Arid University reminded that the international community should fulfill its obligations to implement the UNSC resolutions regarding the decades-long Kashmir dispute so as Kashmiri people could also able to live life as independent citizens.

## Sri Lankan senior officials arrive in Pakistan for training

ISLAMABAD (APP): A group of 19 senior civil servants from Sri Lanka have arrived in Pakistan for a two-week executive training at the National Defense University (NDU), Islamabad under Pak-Sri Lanka Higher Education Cooperation Programme.

According to HEC, this is the third batch of Sri Lankan officials on training under the programme, being executed by Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan.

HEC has already conducted two other cohorts of such executive training for

senior civil servants of Sri Lanka with the collaboration of National School of Public Policy (NSPP), Lahore. The group comprises senior delegates representing different departments of the Sri Lankan Government, including Public Administration, Provincial Councils, Home Affairs, Local Government, the Sri Lanka Institute of Development Administration (SLIDA), the Police, and the Prime Minister's Office. The delegation comprises Additional Secretaries, Director Generals, CFOs,

Consultants, and Directors.

During their stay in Pakistan, the Sri Lankan officials will be engaged in multiple interactive workshops on International Relations, Geopolitics, Mechanisms for strengthening regional cooperation, Bureaucracy Frameworks, Artificial Intelligence, Planning, and Regional Integration. There will be numerous cultural visits in between the training sessions. Officials from HEC and National Defense University (NDU), Islamabad received the delegation at the airport.

## IG Training & Evaluation Pak Army visits NUST

ISLAMABAD (APP): Lt Gen Muhammad Chiragh Haider, HI (M), Inspector General Training & Evaluation (IGT&E) of Pakistan Army, has visited the main campus of National University of Sciences & Technology (NUST).

Lt Gen (Retd) Engr Javed Mahmood Bukhari, Rector NUST, received the honourable guest, said a press release on Monday. New initiatives, high-impact R&D projects and future plans of NUST came under discussion during the one-on-one meeting.

Afterwards, the IGT&E attended a

comprehensive briefing on the functioning and accelerated transdisciplinary growth of NUST over the years.

He commended NUST for having made monumental strides forward in the realms of tertiary education and cutting-edge research, and undertaking several trailblazing initiatives, such as the National Science & Technology Park (NSTP) to stimulate economic growth through innovative technologies and solutions.

Later, the esteemed guest visited NSTP and the School of Interdisciplinary Engineering & Sciences (SINES).

## Islamabad Police install 50 more cameras to enhance vigilance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad police have installed about 50 more CCTV cameras in different places of the city to enhance vigilance and also connect the cameras of the commercial areas with the safe city project.

A police source said the department has installed more cameras after an assessment of the monitoring and security system in the city. He said that work is underway to install security cameras in

all markets and commercial areas with the safe city project to ensure better monitoring of the business areas.

The installation of new cameras would increase the coverage of key locations and help to improve the law and order situation in the city, he added. He lauded the efforts of the business community for installing cameras in the market with their resources.

He said that this step

would help to improve the security around markets and curb the incidents of thefts, mobile snatching, and other crimes in business areas and the city.

To improve the further security of the Capital, the source said that all the security guards and driver of police are being trained to combat violence and tackle any untoward situation. All these steps, he said, are aimed to put in place a fool-proof security system in the city.

## Railways Ministry intends to write provincial govts to hand over its land

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Railways is planning to write a letter to the provincial governments urging them to hand over its commercial, residential, and agricultural land which would help the Ministry to boost revenue for the department. "Pakistan Railways' major portion of around 9,986 acres of land worth billion of rupees were found under illegal occupation of private, individual and different government departments across the country," an official told APP.

The official said that as many as 3,287 acres were occupied in Punjab, 832 acres under encroachment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 5,180 acres in Sindh, and 687 acres of land were occupied in Balochistan. However, the official said Pakistan Railways had retrieved as many as 955 acres of its land worth Rs 19,603 million during various anti-encroachment operations across the country in the last five years.

"Around 476 acres retrieved in Punjab, 133 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 327 acres in Sindh, and only 19 acres in Balochistan had been retrieved by the Pakistan Railways," he said.

He said about 3,287 acres in Punjab, 832 acres in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 5,180 acres in Sindh, and 687 acres of land in Balochistan encroached.

The official said Pakistan Railways had also decided to accelerate its ongoing anti-encroachment operation against land grabbers across the country to recoup its land from different individuals, groups, and even business organizations that were using it for residential, commercial, and agricultural purposes for decades.

"The encroachment operation will be launched with the assistance of Railway Police and district administrations of the relevant provincial governments," he added. He said the government was taking several steps to retrieve encroached land from the land grabbers, including a detailed survey being carried out to identify the encroached land, occupied by the individuals and under illegal occupation by various government departments. The official said Pakistan Railways owned 167,690 acres of land across the country, of which 90,326-acre was in Punjab, 39,428-acre in Sindh, 28,228-acre in Balochistan, and 9,708-acre in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



ISLAMABAD: A woman along with her daughters on the way to school under cover of umbrellas to protect from rain that experienced the Federal Capital.



### Forces discovered weapons

KABUL (Agencies): A number of weapons and ammunition recovered and seized from Paktika by Ministry of National Defense forces. The weapons and ammunition recovered and seized by the forces of the Ministry from Wrmami district of Paktika, said a statement released by the ministry. The forces of the Ministry of National Defense recovered twelve Kalashnikovs, one Pika, two rifles, a motorbike, and some ammunition, added the statement.

## The Frontier Post

# AFGHANISTAN

Rajab 15, 1444 — Tuesday, February 07, 2023

### Needy families received aid

PAKTIKA (Agencies): Needy families in Yusuf Khel district of Paktika received cash aid from "OCHR" organization, said local officials of the province. The provincial head of Natural Disasters Management, Mawlawi Mutiullah Mansoor, in Paktika, said that in this process, 27,230 Afghani cash distributed to each family. Meanwhile, Food aid distributed to 5,618 needy families in in center of Paktika, with the financial assistance of the World Food Programme.

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

## Finance Ministry reacts to SIGAR report

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Ministry of Finance, in reaction to SIGAR's last report, said that this ministry does not take business licenses and administrative fees from financial assistance institutions, and provides administrative, financial, and security facilities to these institutions.

Before this SIGAR in a report said that the Islamic Emirate Finance Ministry collects taxes from supporting institutions.

"The Ministry of Finance has exempted all the tax from humanitarian

organizations and does not take administrative fees, we just want business licenses in accordance with global principles," said Ahmad Wali Hagmal, spokesman for the Finance Ministry.

Economists said that Afghanistan's people need aid and that necessary facilities should be provided for them. "In the current situation unfortunately, people are faced with serious economic challenges and it's necessary that the intl community continue humanitarian aid for Afghanistan," said Mer Shikab Mer, economist.

"More efforts should be made to provide more opportunities for meeting needs in Afghanistan in a situation where people don't have economic ability and are faced with harsh winters, and the presence of supporting institutions is important," said Shaker Yaqobi, economist.

Earlier, SIGAR in a report said that the current government receives income from the aid provided by the United States, and there is no guarantee that this aid will reach the right people.

## Central Bank to auction \$17 million

KABUL (Khaama Press): Afghanistan Central Bank has announced that it will auction \$17 million on Wednesday as part of the efforts to keep the value of Afghan currency (Afghani) against foreign currencies.

Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) also known as the Central Bank of Afghanistan has asked qualified private banks and exchange companies to participate in the auction, aimed at keeping the value of Afghani stable against foreign currencies, United States Dollar, in Particular.

The winners of the auction are obliged to liquidate their accounts by the end of the day. As per the announcement, partial settlement of transactions is not allowed and the winners of the auction are obliged to transfer the payable amount to the central bank in cash within a certain time.

This is the second time in a week the central bank is auctioning US dollars to keep the value of Afghani against foreign currencies stable. The exchange rate of one USD is announced by 90 Afghanis as of today, February 6, 2023. The central bank sold \$16 million yesterday aimed at stabilizing the value of the local currency against the US dollar.

Since the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021, the value of Afghani has remained more or less stable, which is considered a positive sign for the war-torn country with an economy mostly dependent on foreign aid.

Despite the massive criticisms the ruling regime receives from the people of Afghanistan and the international community regarding gender-based policies, the de facto authorities have been able to manage the economy and keep the value of the local currency stable.

This positive sign highlights that efforts are underway to find solutions to the financial and economic challenges the country is currently faced with.

## MoHIA signed MoU

KABUL (Agencies): Ministry of Haj and Islamic Affairs (MoHIA) has signed a memorandum of understanding with the Turkish IHH or Humanitarian Relief Foundation based on which the NGO would be cooperating with the ministry in repairing mosques and digging wells for drinking water supply.

The ministry in a statement on Monday said that Deputy Hajj and Islamic Affairs Minister Mawlawi Arifullah Arif asked IHH NGO to cooperate with the ministry in building a huge religious studies center.

According to another report, Dr. Mawlawi Noor Mohammad Saqib, acting minister of Haj and Islamic Affairs met with the officials of the Coordination Commission of Hajj Affairs and discussed how to provide better and more services for pilgrims for the upcoming Hajj season this year.

## UNAMA, UNESCO to cooperate with technical and vocational education

KABUL (Agencies): The head of the Technical and Vocational Education and Training Authority (TVETA), Mawlawi Ghulam Haidar Shahmat met with the UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and the Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the director of UNESCO in Kabul.

During the meeting, officials of TVETA participated who attended the meeting discussed the efforts and activities of the authority and said that the services of the institute helped to reduce poverty and improve the domestic economy.

Ms. Roza Otunbayeva, UN Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and head of UNAMA during the meeting assured of the organization's support to TVETA.



On her part, Ms. Patricia McPhillips, director of UNSECO in Kabul talked about the activities of the organization and emphasized signing an agreement and creating a joint working group between the two institutions.

Meanwhile, Mawlawi Ghulam Saad Ehsas, deputy head of TVETA talked about the education and work of women and said that problem in the women's education area would be resolved shortly and hoped that education

would not be affected by politics.

## FM Muttaqi meets Qatar's Special Envoy

KABUL (Agencies): The country's Acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi, met with the Special Envoy of the Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar, Dr. Mutlaq bin Majid Al-Qahtani, and accompanied delegation.

A meeting focused on topics of mutual interest with detailed discussions about political cooperation, strengthening relations and role of Qatar Charity in humanitarian operations, held on Sunday in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, according to a statement.

The Ministry's statement said that both sides stressed that existing opportunities should be managed and utilized well.

## Fuel prices may increased

KABUL (TOLOnews): The union of traders of petroleum and liquefied gas of Hairatan and Aqina ports said there is a reduction of oil reserves in the border ports.

Abdul Momen Ziaye, head of the union, said that if the transportation does not resume from the railway track to Hairatan, the price of fuel will increase.

"There is so much demand, but there is no supply in Hairatan port. Currently gas is scarce and there is also a shortage of diesel and petroleum," said Ziaye.

Meanwhile, the railway authorities said that the Islamic Emirate delegation will go to Uzbekistan this

week and will sign a memorandum of understanding with the authorities of this country to resume the activities of the Hairatan-Uzbekistan railway.

"This week a delegation from the railway authorities of Afghanistan will go to Uzbekistan and will sign a memorandum of understanding with the authorities of this country to resume the activities of the Hairatan-Uzbekistan railway," said Abdulsami Durrani, spokesman of the railway authorities.

The Chamber of Industry and Mines of Afghanistan said that the border port of Hairatan is an important port for devel-

oping the country's economic activities.

"We have enough exports and imports from Hairatan port, and this port is important for transportation of the goods, especially the wheat flour and fuel, and also the exports that we have to Uzbekistan and Central Asian countries," said Sakhi Ahmad Payman, deputy of the Chamber of Industry and Mine in Afghanistan.

According to the information of the Chamber of Commerce and investment of Afghanistan, traders export carpets, dry fruit and vegetables, and import flour, oil, and liquefied gas through Hairatan port.

## Khost fish form owners seek govt support to improve their business

KHOST CITY (Pajhwok): Fish forms owners in south-eastern Khost province complained against the lack of attention from government and foreign organization and said their business was on the verge of collapse.

Syed Anwar, the in-charge of fish form in the Ismaelkhelo Mandozaio district's Shadal area, said he made a pool for fish forming in half acres of area and he received positive outcome.

He added that besides this pool he had 11 others pools for fish forming but the dried up due to the lack of government and foreign organizations support.

He asked the government to provide necessary support to him for fish forming. "Now there is a government, the Agriculture Department is functional if they provide support to us we can provide



fish to the entire Khost from this one pool, if we don't receive support our business will stopped."

Shakirullah, one of the workers of fish form who collect fish in a net and

transfer them to the other side. He said people from different area of Khost arrived in the fish form and purchased fresh fish. Up to 30 kilograms of fish are sold daily and one kilogram

is accounted for 250 afis.

"We are associated with this business from the past four years, it is a good business but if there is opportunity and necessary condition is provided," he said.

## 100 kidnapped persons rescued

KABUL (Pajhwok): Police registered 120 cases of kidnapping across the country last year and rescued 100 kidnapped individuals as a result of 200 operations, the Ministry of Interior said on Monday.

During the period, 10 kidnappers were killed in police encounters and 216 others arrested, MoI spokesman Abdul Nafi Takor told Pajhwok Afghan News.

He said five persons were killed by their abductors during the period.

"About 13 vehicles, 19 weapons, a walkie talkie, 115 mobile phone sets, some military equipment and ammunition were also seized from the kidnappers."

He did not provide information about the fate of the arrested kidnappers.

The figures were revealed a day after Pajhwok reported that 13 businessmen were kidnapped during the past three months in Afghanistan and quoted experts as calling the incidents a conspiracy to trigger capital flight from the country.

## Amid security threats, Saudi Arabia closes its embassy in Kabul

KABUL (Khaama Press): Afghanistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs has said that Saudi Arabia closed its embassy in Kabul on February 2, over threats of possible attack by ISIS on the diplomatic mission.

The Foreign Ministry confirmed to Khaama Press that diplomats and employees of the embassy have been evacuated to Islamabad, and the exact return date is not clear.

ISIS was planning an attack on the Saudi diplomatic mission in Kabul using a car bomb according to an official source from Saudi Arabia's foreign ministry. The threats prompted them to close the embassy and evacuate its employees to Islamabad.

Saudi Arabia's embassy was located in the Shash Darak locality, falling under the so-called green zone, one of the safest and

most secure areas in the capital Kabul.

Saudi Arabia was one of the few countries which reopened its embassy in Kabul in November 2021, three months after the Taliban's takeover of Kabul, and sent its 14 diplomats to Afghanistan.

However, Taliban spokesperson Zabihullah Mujahid stated that Saudi Arabia's diplomatic mission has not been closed in Kabul. "Saudi diplomats have traveled to Riyadh for training and will return to Kabul after a week or so," he said.

Meanwhile, reports emerged on Sunday over the closure of certain embassies in Kabul, including that of Turkey, Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates.

However, official sources confirmed to Khaama Press that they

have not closed and are continuing their normal day-to-day activities.

Since the overthrow of the previous government in August 2021, most diplomatic missions closed. As of now, only 12 embassies are operational in Kabul, including Turkey, India, UAE, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Russia, Iran, Pakistan, Qatar and China.

Over the past couple of months, ISIS has launched terror attacks on the embassy of Russia and Pakistan, as well as a Chinese-run hotel in the heart of Kabul.

On top of other issues, security remains a critical challenge for the Islamic Emirate government of Kabul. The security situation in Kabul and other major cities of Afghanistan has deteriorated with each passing day.

## Herat rounding up large numbers of drug addicts



HERAT (TOLOnews): The counter-narcotics department in Herat said that they are collecting addicted people from across Herat province of Afghanistan.

According to this department's statistics, more than 4,500 addicted people are being treated in addiction treatment centers in Herat.

"There are some from Iran, and the Islamic Emirate is there for them and collects them and transfers them to the treatment

center," said Hayatullah Rouhani, head of the counter-narcotics department at Herat Police Command.

According to this department, the addicted people will be returned to their families after treatment.

Meanwhile, some addicts demand more opportunities.

"I am tired of my situation I don't want to use drugs anymore and there was nobody to help me," said Nazar Mohammad, an

addicted person.

"We are tired of being addicted, it has been four years that I am in this situation," said Salim, an addicted person.

Meanwhile, doctors said that gathering these addicts prevents the spread of many diseases in society.

"They were suffering from respiratory diseases and some of them were suffering from incurable diseases," said Ahmad Khashalwak, a doctor.

## Private education centers face stagnation in Herat

HERAT CITY (Pajhwok): Owners and teachers of private educational centers in western Herat province say they have lost students and the absence of girls has dulled their activities.

Zamarai Mukhtar Barakzai, manager of Atai Educational Center in Herat, said that 50 percent of their students were girls and their absence had a negative impact on the private educational centers.

He said the attendance of male students in the private educational centers had also decreased due to people's poor economic situation.

Meanwhile, Mohammad Yaqoob, one of the teachers in these centers, said the closure of schools against girls had also eroded the boys' interest in study.

He said male students had demotivated and their

number was decreasing with each passing day.

However, some students of the private centers, told Pajhwok that despite financial problems, they wanted to continue their lessons and hoped for a bright future.

Abdul Jalil, a high school graduate who is preparing for the university entrance test, said the presence of girls in universities and educational centers was good for positive academic competition between boys and girls.

On the other hand, Mohammad Arif Ramish, head of private educational centers union, said 30 percent of such centers had been closed due to financial problems.

He said the rest 70 percent also ran the risk of closing down if the same

situation continued until spring.

He cited closure of girls' schools, excessive taxes and high rents of buildings among main problems the private education centers faced.

Maulvi Abdullah Amin, director of Herat Education Department, acknowledged to Pajhwok that the private educational centers were facing serious problems.

He said he had shared the issue in writing with Kabul officials, but received no response as yet.

The Ministry of Education through a letter has asked the provincial Education Department to close girls' schools above sixth grade until further notice.

Girls hope their schools will be reopened in the next academic year beginning next month.

## Pessimism grips Badghis cinematographers

BADGHIS (Pajhwok): Cinematographers in western Badghis province ask the caretaker government to support them, while Information and Culture officials say they will support cinematographers who operate in accordance with Islamic principles.



The cinematographers say they have been working by using their own sources and they have never been supported by the previous government.

Noorullah, one of them, told Pajhwok Afghan New the previous government did not pay attention to promoting the cinema art and they

were currently being also neglected.

He asked the current caretaker government to support cinematographers and encourage their artistic activities.

Abdul Sami Qaderi, another cinematographer said whatever they had achieved they used their own resources in the absence of government's support.

He said the previous government had many resources, but it never supported cinema or cinematography art.

He said the art of cinematography would disappear in the country if the government did not support it.

Film director Abdullah Kheradmand also said the cinema and cinematographers of Badghis were not in good situation.

"The role of cinema in reform and development of a society is very important, if the cinema develops, the society will also develop", he added.

But MatiullahMuttaqi, acting director of Information and Culture Department, said the government will support cinematographers who operated in accordance with Islamic principles.





ISLAMABAD: Newly appointed Attorney General of Pakistan, Barrister Shehzad Ata Elahi, called on President Dr. Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## India opens largest helicopter factory

NEW DELHI (Agencies): India unveiled on Monday its largest helicopter factory, which can turn out at least 1,000 aircraft a year, as part of a defence self-reliance push to counter China's growing assertiveness. New Delhi also announced a double-digit increase in its annual defence budget last week with an eye on its geopolitical rival, with which it shares a disputed northern border.

India is one of the largest arms importers in the world and, even with its recent push towards local defence production, still relies heavily on hardware from Moscow, its largest and oldest military supplier. The new helicopter facility fulfils "our government's pledge to gradually reduce

India's dependence on foreign countries for its defence needs", Prime Minister Narendra Modi said after the inauguration.

"I am happy that hundreds of different weapons and defence systems — from modern assault rifles to tanks, aircraft carriers, helicopters and transport aircraft — are now being made in India," he said. What was trumpeted as Asia's largest helicopter factory would initially produce Indian-designed and developed Light Utility Helicopters and then expand to build other multi-rotor helicopters.

The factory in southern Karnataka state was inaugurated only months after New Delhi unveiled its locally made attack heli-

copters, designed for use in high-altitude areas such as the Himalayas. India also introduced its first locally made aircraft carrier in September 2022, a significant step in its efforts to counter Beijing's growing presence in the Indian Ocean region.

Asia's third-largest economy also became only one of six countries with nuclear strike capabilities on land, sea and air after it tested a ballistic missile from its first indigenous nuclear-powered submarine. India has fought wars and has long-standing border disputes with both its nuclear-armed neighbours, arch-rival Pakistan and China. Twenty Indian troops were killed in a border clash with China in 2020.

## PM orders to restore Wikipedia: Marriyum

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Monday said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had directed to restore the Wikipedia website with immediate effect.

"The prime minister has also constituted a cabinet committee on the matters related to Wikipedia and other online content," the minister said in a tweet. She said the five-member committee, spearheaded by Minister for Information Technology and Communication Syed Amin Ul Haque, included Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb, Law Minister Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar, Minister for Trade Syed Naveed Qamar, and Minister for Communication Asad Mehmood.

PM Shehbaz Sharif constituted the committee as well as issued the directives for the restoration of the Wikipedia website in light of the recommendations of a ministerial committee, which conducted the "preliminary examination of the matter (Ban on Wikipedia)". The ministerial committee included the ministers for Information and Broadcasting, Law and Justice, and Economic Affairs.

## CS, IGP call on CM discuss law and order in KP

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan has taken notice of wearing uniforms by private security guards of some political leaders similar to the official uniforms of law enforcing agencies. In a statement issued here on Monday, he directed the Chief Secretary, Inspector General of Police and the Home Department to take necessary steps to effectively prevent such practice by private security guards and to ensure that uniforms of all private security guards are totally different than those of the official uniforms of law-enforcing agencies.

The Chief Minister has said that it has been observed that some private security guards of individuals were wearing uniforms similar to those of the law enforcing agencies during political gatherings in recent days adding that such practice on the part of private security guards is not only illegal but also creates confusion for the personnel of LEAs, and the same could lead to any untoward incident which requires timely steps to be prevented.

# President calls for shunning war strategies, focusing on peace

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has called for shunning destructive war strategies and instead focusing on peace strategies to promote international peace and cooperation. He said that the priority of the world should be to address global issues, such as climate change, global warming, hunger, poverty, pandemics, diseases, and illiteracy, rather than spending trillions of dollars on armaments and armed forces.

He further stated that the world was facing the challenges of hunger, poverty, and illiteracy that could be overcome by spending almost a trillion dollars, which was far less than the military spendings by the developed world. The President expressed these views while talking to a delegation of foreign military officers currently undergoing training at Command and Staff College, Quetta, that called on him, at Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Monday.

Talking to the participants of the course, the President said that war

was not the solution to any issue as it only brought devastation and miseries to mankind, and emphasised the need for negotiations and reconciliation that could help find solutions to global and regional issues. He stated that wars had inflicted destruction in different regions of the world and the Middle East and Africa had been especially ravaged due to wars imposed by other countries as well as internecine conflict. He highlighted that polarization and re-alignments were taking place in the world and the developing countries should remain neutral in international rivalries.

While talking about regional cooperation, the President said that other regional organizations, like ASEAN, were very effective and successful in the promotion of economic and regional cooperation whereas, regrettably, SAARC could not achieve its objectives due to India's hegemonic attitude and the imposition of her will over other smaller countries of the region.

The President said that the resolu-

tion of the Jammu and Kashmir Dispute was the key to regional peace and prosperity but, unfortunately, India was not implementing UNSC resolutions on the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Dispute. He added that India was involved in grave human rights violations and was committing brutalities for several decades against the civilian population of the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. He urged the international community to help implement UNSC resolutions on the J&K Dispute.

The President also highlighted the achievements and sacrifices rendered by Pakistan against terrorism, saying that Pakistan single-handedly defeated the menace of terrorism. It is worth stating that Command and Staff College, Quetta is Pakistan's oldest and premiere military training institution. Currently, mid-ranking military officers from different friendly countries are undergoing training at the college who visited Aiwan-e-Sadr, on Monday.

## Ready to bury the hatchet for peace: Asad Qaiser

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) senior leader and former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser has said that the party is ready to set aside their differences for peace in the country. In a statement issued on Monday, the PTI leader called upon the government to change its behaviour as the "country is going through serious crises."

"National unity is the need of the hour," he said, adding that the government would have to improve its behaviour first. "In our [PTI] tenure, the government evolved a better strategy and succeeded to restore peace [in the country]. Our strategy was in the best interest of the country," he added. Responding to a question about the All Parties Conference (APC),

the former NA speaker said that the government's representatives made a telephone call to him on Sunday and verbally invited him to the multi-party conference.

"It was not an appropriate way to invite anybody to the APC," he said, adding, "National harmony in Pakistan is out of the question as the government shows unconstititutional behaviour." On February 3, PTI Secretary-General Asad Umar said the party Chairman Imran Khan would not attend the federal government's APC scheduled for February 9 (Thursday). However, earlier the APC was to be held on Tuesday (tomorrow). The statement of the PTI leader came as Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif confirmed the invitation he

had extended to the PTI chief at an apex committee meeting in Peshawar.

During the high-level huddle, the premier without naming the PTI chief, said: "I have also invited the person who does not want to even shake hands with me," adding, "All parties are invited to the APC and apex committee meetings and I hope that it will not be rejected." It is pertinent to mention here that following last week's deadly bombing at a Peshawar mosque, PM Shehbaz summoned the APC to find solutions to "important national challenges". The premier seeks to bring heads of all political parties to the table so they can figure out ways to address the challenges, Information Minister Marriyum Aurangzeb said in a statement.

## Fiscal deficit contained at 1.4%, primary balance improves

ISLAMABAD (APP): The fiscal deficit during the first five months (July-November) of the current fiscal year has been contained at the same level of 1.4 percent of GDP as it was recorded in the comparable period last year, finance ministry said in a report.

According to the monthly Economic Update and Outlook for January 2023, the primary balance improved during July-November (FY2023) and posted a surplus of Rs 511 billion (0.6 percent of GDP) against the deficit of Rs 36 billion (-0.1 percent of GDP) last year. "The first five months of CFY have ended with some developments; containing fiscal deficit and surplus in primary balance due to effective fiscal management," it

says. According to the report, the private sector credit observed developments in the month of December 2022 as it increased by Rs 458 billion compared Rs 413.6 billion in December 2021, emanated more credit demand both from working capital and fixed investment. During 1st July to December 30, FY2023 money supply (M2) showed growth of 2.0 percent (Rs. 562.8 billion) compared to growth of 4.3 percent (Rs. 1047.3 billion) in last year.

The current account deficit shrank to \$ 400 million in December 2022 as against \$ 1857 million in the same period last year, largely reflecting an improvement in the trade balance. Current Account

posted a deficit of \$ 3.7 billion for Jul-Dec FY2023 as against a deficit of \$ 9.1 billion last year, mainly due to a contraction in imports. The report termed fiscal consolidation as the key to saving official reserves and exchange rate stability of the country. It says, the fiscal consolidation may temporarily be costly in terms of growth prospects in the short term. However, long-run prosperity and growth could only be achieved by augmenting the country's long-term equilibrium growth path by expanding production capacities and productivity. The report says, Pakistan was currently confronted with the challenges like high inflation, low growth, and low levels of official foreign exchange reserves.

## Apex court rejects plea seeking dissolution of CII

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Supreme Court of Pakistan has dismissed a constitutional petition seeking dissolution of Council of Islamic Ideology (CII).

Lawyer Khawaja Ahmad Hussain filed the petition in the apex court beseeching it to disband the Islamic council. A two-judge bench of the SC headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Umar Ata Bandial on Monday heard the petition. At the outset of the hearing, lawyer Hussain

argued that the CII does not have any constitutional standing nor does it enjoy any authority. He said that the council had presented its final report to the parliament in 1996. He said that the IIC was required to take review of the country's laws in light of the Islamic laws under the Article 230(4) of the Constitution.

"After the submission of the report to the parliament, the CII should have been dissolved," the lawyer said. CJP

Bandial remarked that the CII presented its report after reviewing the laws enacted in the past. He, however, observed that to review the future laws, the CII was the only constitutional body which could do so. The lawyer contended that now the Federal Shariat Court could review the future laws in the light of Islamic laws. Justice Athar Minallah inquired of the lawyer which basic rights were being violated if the CII stayed.

## Satti case: Court awards capital punishment to two convicts

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The district and sessions court of Islamabad has handed down death sentence to two convicts and sentenced three others to life in prison in Usama Satti murder case.

Additional Sessions Judge Zeba Chaudhry pronounced the verdict. The court asked all the media representatives and unrelated persons to leave the court before pronouncing the verdict.

The accused namely Iftikhar Ahmed, Saeed Ahmed, Shakeel Ahmed, Mudassar Mukhtar and Muhammad Mustafa were produced in the court handcuffed. The court sentenced Iftikhar Ahmed and Muhammad Mustafa to death and imprisoned Saeed Ahmed, Shakeel Ahmed and Mudassar Mukhtar for life. It is to be noted here that on January 1, 2021, 22-year-old Usama Nadeem Satti was shot dead by the personnel of anti-terrorism squad in the G-10/4 area of Islamabad.

## APC to be held now on 9th

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Monday that All Parties Conference (APC) convened by the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on the issue of terrorism was rescheduled and now it would be held here on Thursday, February 9, instead of Feb 7.

In a tweet, she said all the national and political leadership of the country has been invited in the Conference. Marriyum said the national leadership would formulate a joint strategy to combat terrorism and other challenges being faced by the country. The minister said National Action Plan would also be reviewed in the APC.

Meanwhile, Minister for Information also expressed her deep grief and sorrow over the loss of lives and destruction caused by the earthquake in Turkey and Syria. In a statement, the minister expressed her heartfelt condolences over the loss of precious lives and damages to the properties in the devastating earthquake.

## Team of Command & Staff College Quetta calls on CJ

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): A 50-member delegation of the Command and Staff College Quetta have called on the Chief Justice of Pakistan Justice Umar Ata Bandial as a part of their study tour.

The delegation was headed by Directing Staff, Lt Colonel Muhammad Sheraz Iqbal Cheema and comprising course participants from officers of the Armed Forces of 25 friendly countries. The Chief Justice of Pakistan welcomed the delegation and gave them an overview of the Constitution of 1973 of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. He informed them about the trichotomy of power in Pakistan, functions and importance of each organ of the State i.e. Parliament, Executive and

Judiciary. The delegation was briefed about the judicial system, its functioning, role, dispensation of justice and constitutional jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and the High Courts and the jurisdiction of the District Courts under law to provide relief to the people. His lordship emphasized that the access of the citizens to law courts under an efficient and effective system of justice is the first condition for fair dispensation of justice.

Furthermore, Chief Justice apprized them about the fundamental rights assured by the Constitution. He informed the delegation about the contribution made by the court in the development of the laws assuring rights of minori-

ties, children, women and environmental protection. He explained that the Armed Forces in Pakistan have a constitutional role for defence of Pakistan and to aid civilian government. In performing their duties the soldiers of all ranks have laid down their lives in the service of the country. Later, he answered the questions of the participants in an interactive session.

The delegation presented a shield to the Chief Justice as a token of remembrance. The Chief Justice of Pakistan reciprocated the gesture of goodwill by presenting a shield to the delegation. Earlier the delegation also witnessed the court proceedings before different benches at the Supreme Court of Pakistan.

# Massive quakes kill 2,600 in Turkey, Syria

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in northern Syria. He had fled for his life from there to Gaziantep, across the border in Turkey, in 2020. But on Monday morning, like millions of people across southern Turkey and northern Syria, al-Abrash woke up to the heavy shakes of a 7.8 magnitude earthquake, which hit the wider region and left death and devastation in its wake.

"I realised, oh no, I'm actually supposed to be in a safe space, in Turkey," al-Abrash said. He immediately ran down the building as parts of his apartment collapsed. His thoughts went immediately to his family and friends still in Syria, where the earthquake has also destroyed countless lives. "In Syria I learned to manage these kinds of situations, but I never expected to have to relive that trauma again," al-

Abrash said.

He is not the only one to have arrived in Gaziantep seeking refuge, only to be cruelly surprised by Monday's earthquake. When 21-year-old law student Karina Horlach woke up in the early hours of the morning to her bed heavily shaking, she had flashbacks from the last time she was in Ukraine. "It's February, and exactly one year ago I was woken up by that same bed shaking," Horlach told Al Jazeera, with panic in her voice.

"But then, I realised I wasn't in Ukraine. It took me some time to understand what was going on." Horlach is enrolled in an Erasmus student programme in Gaziantep. She was given the opportunity to escape from the war in her own country and settle as a temporary refugee in a supposedly safer environment. She never expected to get post-traumatic memories of Kharkiv, her hometown, in the

city that has sheltered her for the past six months. "I thought I was experiencing an air strike again," Horlach said. "It gave me flashbacks of home."

Gaziantep, one of southern Turkey's major cities, has a population of almost two million people, and between one-quarter and one-third of them are Syrian refugees. Fifty-year-old Sawsan Dahman lives in the same building as al-Abrash. When it started shaking, she ran down to the street with her family of four children. She looked desperately to find a safer shelter as the cold air, rain and snow battered her face. Dahman said that she immediately thought of the big mosque located in 100 Yil Park, a green area near the centre of the city, where she found local Turkish people waiting to help.

She immediately liaised with her Syrian contacts through various

WhatsApp groups to inform them of the safe shelter. "Often, because of language barriers, Arabic speakers here are left behind in emergency situations," Dahman said. "I wanted to fill that gap." In just a few hours, Dahman had become a point of reference for the Syrian community in Gaziantep, as well as women of any background who found themselves alone.

A faded Dahman has already faced having to take care of her children alone on the journey from her home in Damascus to Turkey. But as she spoke from the common prayer room in the early afternoon, a big aftershock shook the mosque. With horror in her eyes, Dahman grabbed her children — aged between 17 and 23 — as flashbacks from the war in Syria began overwhelming her. For others, it was the more immediate memory of the earlier earthquake

that set them running in every direction.

The minaret shook, threatening to fall on the crowd. A child was hit by a car, amidst a rainstorm, and people gathered to help the girl. Amidst the despair and adverse weather, people have found temporary common shelters where they can, some wrapped in blankets inside improvised tents on park benches. Others took refuge inside cafes — the few that had dared to open — sitting in circles around electric heaters. Warming his hands around the heater, 24-year-old economics student Izzat Umman thinks of the shock of waking up to his books falling on his head.

"I didn't know what was going on, I just ran to the streets, seeing other people running," he said. "We've never experienced something like this here. A single minute felt like 15."

Already battered by the unusually bad weather conditions, Gaziantep was not prepared for such an emergency, he added. "It came so unexpectedly that we're still in shock." As the day went on, the aftershocks did not stop and came unexpectedly, leaving Gaziantep in constant fear of the next quake. The traumatic experience will resonate for many for a long time to come.

Many have now taken to fleeing the city in their cars or buses, with the airport closed. Walking around the rubble of the buildings and streets he used to know by heart, al-Abrash saw an image his eyes were bitterly familiar with. "We already had to deal with traumatic experiences from the Syrian conflict. Now that we're a few kilometres from the border, it seems like history has repeated itself. And we'll have to confront ourselves with yet another trauma."