

**Elahi to approach LHC**  
LAHORE (Agencies): After meeting with the legal team, ex-CM of Punjab Ch Parvez Elahi has decided to approach the Lahore High Court regarding the interim government's actions. According to a private TV channel, senior lawyers including Mohsin Raza, Khubaib Zaman Baloch, Wasim Sandhu, Tayyab Usman, and Asif Hafeez along with Raja Basharat, Sajid Bhatti, and other political leaders were also present during the meeting.

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## Turkey-Syria quake death toll passes 5,200 Turkish leader declares emergency



**ANTAKYA: Children sitting in a shopping cart near a collapsed building following an earthquake in Hatay area of Turkiye.**

ANTAKYA (Agencies): Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan on Tuesday declared a state of emergency in 10 provinces devastated by two earthquakes that killed more than 5,200 people and left a trail of destruction across a wide area of southern Turkey and neighbouring Syria.

A day after the quakes hit, rescuers working in harsh conditions struggled to dig people out of the rubble of collapsed buildings. As the scale of the disaster became ever more apparent, the death toll looked likely to rise considerably. One United Nations official said it was feared thousands of children may have been killed. And residents in several damaged Turkish cities voiced anger and despair at what they said was a slow and inadequate response from the authorities to the deadliest earthquake to hit Turkey since 1999.

"There is not even a single person here. We are under the snow, without a home, without anything," said Murat Alinak, whose home in Malatya had collapsed and whose relatives are missing. "What shall I do, where can I go?" Monday's magnitude 7.8 quake, followed hours later by a second one almost as powerful, toppled thousands of buildings including hospitals, schools and apartment blocks. Tens of thousands of people were injured or left homeless in cities in Turkey and northern Syria.

Winter weather has hampered rescue and relief efforts and made the plight of the homeless even more miserable. Some areas were without fuel and electricity. Aid officials voiced particular concern about the situation in Syria, already afflicted by a humanitarian crisis after nearly 12 years of civil war. Erdogan on Tuesday declared the 10 Turkish provinces affected as a disaster zone and imposed a state of emergency there for three months. This will permit the government to bypass parliament in enacting new laws and to limit or suspend rights and freedoms. The government will open up hotels in the tourism hub of Antalya to temporarily house people impacted by the quakes, said Erdogan, who faces a national election in three months' time.

The death toll in Turkey had risen to 3,549 people, Erdogan said. In Syria, the toll was at least 1,712, according to the government and a rescue service in the insurgent-held northwest of the country. Turkish authorities say some 13.5 million people were affected in an area spanning roughly 450 km (280 miles) from Adana in the west to Diyarbakir in the east, and 300 km from Malatya in the north to Hatay in the south. Syrian authorities have reported deaths as far south as Hama, some 250 km

## Amendments in accountability laws SC seeks details of NAB cases sent back to Bureau

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Supreme Court has sought details of the NAB cases sent back by the Accountability Courts to the Bureau after the amendments in the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO) 1999.

A three-judge bench, headed by Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, and comprising Justice Ijaz ul Ahsan and Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah heard former prime minister Imran Khan's petition against the amendments in the National Accountability Ordinance (NAO), 1999.

The bench also told the NAB prosecutor to provide the details of amount recovered through plea bargain. During the proceeding, the chief justice said it was not the job of the apex court to resolve disputes of the parliamentarians. It added the legislators should resolve their disputes themselves. He asked the NAB prosecutor to inform who are those people benefited from the amendments in NAO.

Justice Mansoor questioned how many cases were sent back to the NAB

and how many cases were closed. He said they wanted to know the truth about the cases became ineffective and ended due to the amendments. The NAB prosecutor informed that none of the cases before the Accountability Courts were closed. However, he told that the cases sent back to NAB were shifted to other relevant forums.

Justice Mansoor further asked the prosecutor also submit the details of NAB cases, which were decided on merits. Justice Ijaz remarked that many cases automatically became ineffective after the amendment that all corruption cases involving an amount below Rs500 million would not come under NAB's purview. Makhdoom Ali Khan, representing the federal government, argued that the court should also be aware where is the money received by the NAB in plea bargain. He said when the Public Accounts Committee had inquired from NAB chairman about the amount collected in plea bargain, he did not submit any reply in that regard. He contended that

the Court should inquire from the petitioner how many NAB cases were terminated during his tenure. The chief justice remarked that since the creation of Pakistan there has been anti-corruption law in Pakistan, adding the petitioner might have concern over the objectives of anti-corruption law changed after the amendments. Justice Ijaz said the case before the Court is regarding public trust on NAB amendments. If it would be established that the amendment violated the public trust, then the court from any angle would render judgment in this case.

The chief justice said if the court does not intervene in the instances where the law is violated then it would be injustice with the people of the country. The Court in this case would determine the red-lines in NAB law. Earlier, the chief justice welcomed Shehzad Ata Elahi, newly appointed Attorney General for Pakistan, saying with the new AGP appointment the government legal team would be strengthened. The case is adjourned until today (Wednesday).

## 30 killed in Kohistan bus-car collision

F.P. Report

KOHIKISTAN: At least 30 people were killed on Tuesday night while many others were injured when a passenger bus plunged into a ditch after colliding with a car on the Karakoram Highway near Shatial area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Upper Kohistan district.

Speaking to media, Diamer SSP Sher Khan said the accident occurred when a bus travelling from GB's Ghizer district to Rawalpindi collided with a car travelling in the opposite direction. "Sixteen passengers travelling in the bus and five people travelling in the car lost their lives," he said, adding that the GB police were also taking part in the rescue operation. He added that officials were collecting information on how many people were on board the bus as well as the number of people travelling in the car. "A search and rescue operation is currently under way."

Meanwhile, GB Information Minister Fatehullah Khan said he had only received confirmation of 30 deaths so far. GB Chief Minister Khalid Khursheed, Governor Syed Mehdi Shah and GB Assembly Opposition Leader Amjad Advocate expressed grief over the lives lost in the incident.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday expressed his deep shock and grief over the tragic road accident near Chilas on the Karakoram Highway, which caused the loss of precious human lives. He prayed for the departed souls and expressed his condolences with the bereaved families. The Prime Minister also prayed for the early recovery of the injured and directed the authorities concerned to provide all possible medical aid to the injured.

## APC postponed once again

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Information Minister Mariyum Aurangzeb announced on Tuesday that the all-parties conference (APC) summoned by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has been postponed as the premier will be travelling to Turkey to condole with President Recep Tayyip Erdogan on the devastating earthquake that hit the country.

Taking to Twitter, the minister wrote: "Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif will leave for Ankara tomorrow morning, he will express his condolences to the Turkish president and to the people of Turkey over the destruction caused by the earthquake and the loss of life." Mariyum said that the APC has been called off due to the PM's visit to Turkey, adding that a new date for the moot will be announced after consultations with the government's allies. This is the second time that the APC, called following the Peshawar mosque attack, has been postponed by the government. Initially, the APC was scheduled to take place on February 7. However, the date was changed to February 9.

## Relief teams dispatched to Turkiye

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Pakistan Army has dispatched two contingents to Turkiye for relief efforts after devastating earthquakes hit Turkiye and Syria killing over 4,000 and damaging more than 5,000 buildings.

The ISPR, in a statement said, the "two contingents; Urban Search & Rescue Team comprising rescue experts, sniffer dogs, search equipment and a Medical team comprising Army doctors, nursing staff and technicians along with 30 bedded mobile hospital, tentage, blankets and other relief items" were dispatched to Adana, Turkiye via special aircraft of the PAF on night between Feb 6/7.

# The Frontier Post

## PM sets up relief fund for quake-hit Turkiye — appeals Pakistanis to donate generously



**ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif chairing a meeting of federal cabinet.**

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Tuesday established a relief fund to help earthquake-hit people of Turkiye, appealing to people of Pakistan particularly the businessmen and philanthropists to donate to the fund generously.

The decision was taken in the meeting of the federal cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif which expressed condolence over the hundreds of quake-caused deaths in Turkiye and Syria, and offered Fateha for the departed souls. The federal cabinet announced to donate one month salary to the relief fund. It was also decided that the federal government employees of grade 18 to 22 would donate one day salary for the distressed Turkish people.

The prime minister told the cabinet members that Turkiye had been at forefront to support the people of Pakistan after unprecedented floods hit the country in 2022. "The Pakistani nation would not leave their Turkish brethren alone in this hour of ordeal. I am also leaving for Turkiye by tomorrow to visit the quake-ravaged areas of Turkiye," he remarked.

He told the cabinet members that besides relief goods, the rescue teams were immediately dispatched for Turkiye to support the relief activities. He assured that Pakistan would extend every possible support to the people of Turkiye and Syria as the

whole Pakistani nation stood by the suffering people.

The cabinet meeting offered Fateha for peace of the departed souls and early recovery of the injured. The members also offered Fateha for the departed soul of the brother-in-law of Commerce Minister Syed Naveed Qamar. The prime minister mentioned his Monday's telephonic interaction with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in which he conveyed condolences and assured all-out support.

He told the meeting that the PIA and PAF flights as well as rescue teams, doctors and paramedics have been dispatched for Turkiye. Moreover, the supply of the relief goods will continue, he added. The federal cabinet approved to restart the process for appointment of National Bank of Pakistan president, instructing to complete the process immediately.

The federal cabinet formed a cabinet committee to deliberate over the draft of Criminal Laws Amendment Bill 2023 and present a report in the next cabinet meeting. The committee comprises Federal Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah, Law Minister Azam Nazeer Tarar, Economic Affairs Minister Sardar Ayaz Sadiq and representatives of the coalition parties.

**PM Relief Fund established:** A relief fund for the earthquake victims of Turkiye was formally established under the direction of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on

Tuesday.

A notification in this regard was issued by the Office of the Controller General of Accounts. The fund "G-12166" was created under the title "PM's Relief Fund for Turkiye Earthquake victims". Earlier, during a federal cabinet meeting, the prime minister had announced the establishment of the relevant relief fund for the quake affected people of Turkiye, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister appealed to the philanthropists, institutions and general public to make generous donations to the newly established account under 'PM Relief Fund for Turkiye Earthquake Victims'. The prime minister observed that a 7.8 magnitude quake had brought huge destruction in the brotherly country of Turkiye in which thousands of people lost their lives, the press release said.

Turkiye had always supported the national interests of Pakistan and its people in difficulties with generous and sincere help. During the 2005 quake, and during 2010 and 2022 floods devastation, Turkiye had supported Pakistan with generosity. Expressing solidarity with the people of Turkiye, the prime minister further said that in this difficult situation, the government and people of Pakistan would extend all possible support to their Turkish brothers and sisters. He said helping the people of Turkiye was also their religious duty.

## Court rejects Sheikh Rashid's post-arrest bail

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): A court in Islamabad has turned down Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmed's post-arrest bail plea in the case registered against him for levelling allegations against Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Co-chairperson Asif Ali Zardari.

The court had reserved its verdict in the case earlier today after hearing arguments of the prosecution and Rashid's lawyers and later announced it by rejecting Sheikh's plea. At the outset of the hearing, the court asked Rashid's lawyer whether their stance was that their client was not part of the conspiracy claimed to kill Imran Khan. Sardar Abdul Razzik, Rashid's counsel, told the court that his client had referred to Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairperson Imran Khan's statement and was not part of the conspiracy.

The lawyer also contended that the first information report (FIR) of the case was registered two days before Rashid gave the statement. "Even if a murder is committed right in front of the police, the case is not registered this quickly," said the lawyer. He added that the law enforcement agency carried out the inquiry and registered the case. The lawyer said that the police should have investigated Asif Ali Zardari but the opposite happened. He added that the PTI chair's statement was based on facts. "There is a conspiracy to kill Imran Khan for which a case is not being registered. However, a case has been registered for the defamation of Asif Zardari," said the lawyer.

The counsel also contended that a notice was issued against his client on January 31 but it was never sent to him but was aired on television channels. He added that when the notice was suspended by the high court the next day a case was registered against Rashid. Razzik also told the court that the case was registered on a private complainant's request not a state officer. "A common citizen, who is a PPP worker, had made allegations against Sheikh Rashid," said Razzik. He added that the case would have been different had PPP Co-chairperson Asif Zardari filed the complaint. The counsel said that

Zardari could have sent defamation notice to Imran Khan for making the allegations. He added that his client had only stated that whatever Imran Khan says is the truth.

The lawyer also contended that during his client's physical remand the police were not able to find anything. "Case against Sheikh Rashid was only registered to take political revenge," Razzik told the court. He also claimed that during the search carried out by the police at his client's home, they took Rs700,000 and valuable items. The lawyer claimed that two bulletproof cars at his client's home were also impounded.

"There is no need to investigate Sheikh Rashid. The bail plea should be approved. [The] high court in its verdict had also prohibited further action," said Razik as he wrapped up his argument. Intizar Panjotha, Rashid's other counsel, told the court that there was no political campaign or untoward incident over his client's statement.

While urging the court to accept the bail plea, Panjotha also told the court that the sections added in the FIR against Rashid can only be included if a state officer is the complainant. Once Rashid's counsel wrapped up their arguments, the judge told the lawyers that their client gave a statement against Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah in a hospital and asked whether there was a chance of anarchy spreading in the country due to the statement. At this, Rashid's counsel told the court that the Islamabad High Court had suspended the application related to this, adding that the statement came during detention which is why it holds no importance.

Meanwhile, the prosecutor contended that Rashid was committing an offence repeatedly with his statements during detention. The lawyer contended that Rashid wanted collision between the PTI and PPP. He added that there was chance of anarchy spreading in the country with Rashid's statement. The prosecution also told the court that the high court in its order had only stopped the summoning of Rashid. He added that the former interior minister's attitude during detention was also unusual.

## Court defers Imran's indictment

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Imran Khan Chairman Pakistan Tehrik-e-Insaf (PTI) and former prime minister Imran Khan has once again avoided his indictment in Toshakhana reference as a sessions court in Islamabad has approved his petition seeking exemption from personal appearance before the court.

Additional Sessions Judge Zafar Iqbal pronounced the verdict reserved earlier in the day after the PTI legal team filed a petition seeking exemption from personal appearance on health grounds. The indictment of the former prime minister in Toshakhana case was deferred as the court granted Khan an exemption to Imran Khan on medical grounds. The sessions judge declared that the date for indictment of Imran Khan will be fixed later.

During the hearing, Judge Zafar Iqbal remarked that if Imran Khan kept on submitting court exemption pleas, how on earth the court would frame charges against him in the reference. The judge then asked the PTI lawyer about the surety bonds. To this, he informed the court that he had submitted the bonds a day earlier. The court ordered Imran's lawyer to submit approved copies of the documents being submitted as proof. But PTI lawyer Barrister Ali Zafar informed the court that they had not been provided attested copies of the evidence and complaint. However, the ECP's lawyer objected to his claim saying that they had provided the said documents in front of the court.

## Pervez Musharraf laid to rest

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Former president General (ret'd) Pervez Musharraf was laid to rest on Tuesday in a military graveyard in the port city, more than 48 hours after he breathed his last in Dubai.

The former chief of army staff's funeral prayer was held at the Malir Cantonment's Polo Ground, shortly before his burial took place. The funeral prayer was attended by

Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad, former army chiefs Gen (ret'd) Qamar Javed Bajwa and Gen (ret'd) Ashfaq Parvez Kayani.

Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) leaders Khalid Maqbool Siddiqui, Mustafa Kamal, Farooq Sattar, Aminul Haque, Faissal Subzwari, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leader Amir Muqam, and other noted personalities were also among the attendees of the funeral

prayer of the ex-president. The mortal remains of the former military ruler were brought to Karachi on Monday night in a special plane from the UAE — after several delays in the flight.

Before leaving for Sindh's capital city, his body was given Ghussl (ritual washing and shrouding of the deceased ahead of burial) in Sonapur, Dubai. Along with the body of the deceased, the widow of the ex-army chief and their children were also flown in from the Gulf state.





# Michael Schiffe calls on Shazia Marri

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: A delegation of USAID, headed by Michael Schiffer, Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Asia, called on Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety Ms. Shazia Marri at Embassy of Pakistan Washington D.C.

The meeting discussed in detail various interventions being made under the umbrella of Benazir Income Support Program, to provide relief to the vulnerable sections of the society. The Federal Minister briefed the USAID delegation about the devastations caused by catastrophic floods of 2022, which inundated one third of the country, and affected 33 million people including 04 million children, and hundreds of thousands of pregnant women. She also updated on the latest status of recovery, rehabilitation and reconstruction efforts and how BISP was helping

in this effort.

The Minister said that BISP over the last 14 years has evolved into a successful model and it was serving the poorest of the poor without any discrimination. She highlighted that National Social Economic Registry has enabled the Government of Pakistan with a scientific database to the reach out to the most deserving and marginalized strata of society in Pakistan. The Minister informed the delegation that around 8.9 million families were being provided financial assistance under the BISP, which would be increased up to 9 million by June 2023, and up to 10 million by 2024, she continued.

She said financial assistance was provided directly to the women as family heads, which clearly reflected the priorities of the BISP program towards women empowerment. Likewise, the conditional transfer in education and health sector were

aimed at socio-economic uplift of the poor families with education, better health and skill development. She informed the delegation that 364 Benazir Nashonuma facilitation Centers were operating across Pakistan to address the nutritional issues of the women and children. On provision of relief in the aftermath of floods, the delegation was informed that an amount of Rs. 70 billion was disbursed to 2.5 million affected families through BISP. The Federal Minister appreciated continued support of World Bank, ADB and GIZ towards social safety and poverty alleviation. She mentioned about Pakistan Crisis-Resilient Social Protection (CRISP) Program of the World Bank to help establish an adaptive social protection. Minister informed that through National Poverty Graduation Program (NPGP), BISP beneficiaries were being provided assets and training in order

to graduate them out of poverty. The Federal Minister acknowledged the contributions of USAID and said that Pakistan looked forward to scaling up its partnership with the Agency in expanding the outreach of the program. Mr. Michael Schiffer lauded the role of BISP in social protection sector especially in providing swift relief to the calamity affected population. He underscored that USAID and the US Administration looked forward to strengthening its friendship and partnership with Pakistan. Mr. Michael Schiffer stated that USAID would like to balance its portfolio vis-à-vis allocation of sectoral assistance in social protection, poverty alleviation, nutrition, and education. He informed that he would be visiting Pakistan in late spring. He expressed particular interest in visiting the flood affected areas to obtain first-hand knowledge and experience.



ISLAMABAD: A delegation of USAID, headed by Michael Schiffer, Assistant Administrator of the Bureau for Asia, called on Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety Ms. Shazia Marri at Embassy of Pakistan.

## Governor for consensus on ‘Charter of Economy’

LAHORE (APP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman has said that consensus on the charter of economy is very important so that the continuity of policies is not disrupted by the change of governments.

Speaking at the two-day "Pakistan Chemical Expo 2023" at the Expo Center here on Tuesday, he said unless there is political stability, there will be no economic stability, adding that the country is suffering from economic problems as well as social problems. He said the government is facing many challenges and it is need of the hour to forge unity among our ranks and make joint efforts to steer the country out of turmoil.

Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman observed, "Terrorism is on the rise again and the mosque tragedy, that happened in Peshawar few days ago, has saddened the whole nation with sharp reminder of the APS tragedy."

Pakistan Chemical Expo 202 is being held under the auspices of Pakistan Chemical Manufacturers Association (PCMA).

The Punjab Governor said that

considering the development opportunities in the chemical sector and the current economic situation of the country, it is necessary to take immediate steps to create conducive business environment for the chemical industry.

He said the expo is a timely and appropriate step in the right direction to highlight investment and trade opportunities in the chemical industry, adding that the exhibition will play an important role in introducing Pakistan's chemical industry to the international market and promote it globally.

He said it is heartening to see that Pakistan's chemical industry not only follows the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals for the improvement of the environment, but has always been committed to them with a view to understanding its corporate social responsibility.

He said, "We need to take steps to introduce such chemicals that minimize the harmful effects on the environment." He expressed the hope that PCMA will further strengthen the relationship between

the industry and the government and international level.

PCMA Chairman, Jai Kumar said that more than 100 industries related to the chemical sector and relevant departments of leading universities have set up their stalls in this expo and eminent scientists from more than 15 countries will share their latest research in the conference.

He said that raw materials have been imported from Saudi Arabia for the first time in Pakistani currency through the platform of PCMA, adding that in order to truly benefit from the chemical sector, PCMA not only advocating long-term petrochemical complex projects, but also introducing bio-economy projects to take full advantage of the available resources. He called upon the government to come up with a comprehensive and coordinated plan in consultation with all stakeholders including PCMA to formulate a chemical policy so as to remove the barriers to the development of the chemical industry, and take full advantage of the opportunities for growth in this industry.

## CM announces to waive tuition fee for Kashmiri students

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Tuesday announced to waive off tuition fee of Kashmiri students studying in Punjab and said that 200 Kashmiri students would also be given laptops by the Punjab government.

Talking to a delegation of Kashmiri students studying in Punjab who met him at the Chief Minister's Office, the CM asked the traffic police to issue driving licenses to Kashmiri students and stated that the Bank of Punjab would also be asked to open accounts of Kashmiri students.

Similarly, steps would be taken to fix the post-graduation quota for Kashmiri students enrolled in med-

ical colleges and the prime minister would also be approached to resolve the visa issues of Kashmiri students, he added. The students thanked the CM and appreciated the organization of events on Kashmir Solidarity Day.

The participants also offered prayers for the departed souls of earthquake victims in Turkiye and Syria. Columnist Taufiq Butt said the hearts of every Pakistani beat for Kashmir and Kashmiris. Provincial Minister for Information & Culture Aamir Mir, Minister for Specialized Healthcare and Medical Education Dr Javed Akram, secretary specialized healthcare, secretary information, VCs of King Edward Medical University and Fatima Jinnah Medical University, Vice President

Punjab Medical Association and others were also present.

**Rescuers leave for Turkiye for relief operation:** On the direction of Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, UN-certified rescuers along with seven medical team have been sent to Turkiye for helping the earthquake victims.

The rescuers will reach Turkiye to take part in the rescue and relief operations. DG Rescue Dr Rizwan Naseer is supervising the team.

The rescue team includes a search squad, two technical rescue squads and a 7-member medical team.

Medical team members are skilled in providing medical aid to the injured. The team also includes a communication and logistics squad.

## Sharjeel expressea solidarity with Earthquake Victims of Turkiye & Syria

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon has said that devastated earthquake has caused extensive damages to human lives and infrastructure in Turkiye and Syria.

The Government of

Sindh and the people of Sindh express their solidarity with the earthquake victims in this difficult time. He added that Sindh Cabinet in its meeting held other day expressed its grief and sorrow over the loss of human lives and property in the earthquake and immediately approved 100000 tents for Turkiye. Mr. Memon said that the

Pakistani nation and Sindh government assure their Turkish brothers of all possible support in this difficult time. The provincial minister said that the government of Pakistan and the government of Sindh could never forget the generosity and services rendered by the Turkish government and people in every difficult time.

He said that the government of Turkiye and Turkish people had provided immense support and relief assistance to the flood victims of Sindh. Sindh Information Minister has expressed deep sorrow and regret over the deaths and losses caused by the earthquake and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured persons.

## Rainy spell expected

LAHORE (APP): Rain-wind/thunderstorm is expected in Pothohar region, Central Punjab including the provincial capital and adjacent cities from Thursday, said by Pakistan Meteorological Department. According to a spokesman of the Met office here on Tuesday, a westerly wave is likely to enter western parts of the country on Wednesday (night), and likely to grip upper parts on Thursday and may persist over northern areas till Friday. Under the influence of this weather system, rain-wind/thunderstorm (snowfall over the hills) with few moderate to isolated heavy falls are expected in Murree.

## Govt taking steps to boost chemical industry: Tasneem

LAHORE (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Industries and Production Tasneem Ahmed Qureshi has said the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM)-led coalition government was taking numerous initiatives to revive the chemical industry besides strengthening the national economy. He was addressing the Pakistan Chemical Expo-2023 organised by the Pakistan Chemical Manufacturers Association (PCMA) at the Expo Centre here on Tuesday.

The SAPM said the main focus of the government

was to improve exports and chemical manufactures was the key partners in this regard, adding that the industry was increasing by each passing day.

Providing pleasant environment to the industrial sector was among top priorities of the government, he said and added that it was time to save the state by putting politics aside. He said that the government was striving to steer the country out of crisis. The SAPM said Chemical Expo-2023 was providing business opportunities to manufacturers besides enhancing economy of the country's chemical industry

and its related businesses.

Tasneem Qureshi said that such exhibitions were the indicators that the country was on the path to development and progress.

He assured of his full support to manufacturers for resolving their problems and issues. Earlier, the SAPM also visited various stalls and desks set up at the expo by the various chemical manufacturers companies of the country. The expo was organised to maintain good business relations among the PCMA members and stakeholders in public and to attract new investment besides promoting chemical exports.

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah Tuesday said that education was the backbone of socio-economic development of any country and without tangible development and requisite advancements in this sector, a nation could not survive or thrive in the world.

This he said while speaking at a ceremony organised to distribute teachers' training certificates by the School Education department here at the Banquet Hall of the CM House.

The program was attended by Education Minister Syed Sardar Shah, CM Special Assistant Nayab Leghari, MPA Ghulam Qadir Malkani, Secretary of College Education Ahmed Bux Narejo, Secretary School Education Akbar Leghari, senior officers of the education department, members of civil society, graduating teachers and others. He said that his government was very

much focused and determined in bringing palpable improvement in the Education Sector which was evident from our policies and interventions in this particular sector of great significance to enlighten our province with education.

Talking about the incentives, the chief minister said that by bringing the 'out of school children into the education network, and abating dropouts, his government has introduced so many incentives which include Free Textbooks, Stipends to Girls students, rehabilitation of damaged school buildings, provision of furniture to the schools, the opening of closed schools, Merit-based recruitment of teachers.

Murad Shah, talking about the recruitment of Teachers, said that the Sindh government had hired hundreds of thousands of teachers, purely on merit engaging third party for the scrutiny of the candidates through the test

conducted in a fair and transparent manner.

"This merit-based recruitment of teachers started in the year 2008 and still continues under Teacher's Recruitment Policy - 2021," he said.

This policy of hiring teachers is one of the significant rounds of hiring to engage approximately 55000 candidates as PSTs and JESTs BS-14 throughout the province purely on merit and without any discrimination and political affiliation, the CM said and added the

total number of candidates appeared in IBA Test for PSTs in Sindh was 184249 against which 83968 qualified and for JEST the number of candidates appeared was 164372 against which 51785 qualified the test.

Talking about Teachers' training, Shah said that it was extremely important at the start of their career to make effective teaching and learning at schools and equip them with modern teaching methods through pedagogical skills in both aspects of content-based teaching.

### NOTICE FOR GENERAL PUBLIC

Mr. Ashraaf Qadar Khattak S/O Abdulqadar Khattak, Resident of H#1, Mohallah New Arbab Colony, Jamrud Road, Tehkal bala, Distt. Peshawar. Being the owner of Plot/House No. 150, Sector 4A/I, Zone IV, Area 1 Kanal. Duplicate letter of ownership being issued to him from P.D.A office.

So the applicant Mr. Ashraaf Qadar Khattak S/O Abdulqadar Khattak has floated an application for transfer. So the general Public is informed this if they have any objection contact with PDA within 15 days after this advertisement, otherwise it will be transferred.

**HOUSING OFFICER (TRANSFER), Regi Model Town, Peshawar Development Authority Zone-4, Peshawar**

## UET hosts lunch for Afghan students

LAHORE (APP): A luncheon was hosted in honor of Afghan students of the last semester studying in the University of Engineering and Technology (UET), here on Tuesday.

The luncheon was organized by the hostel management on the special instructions of Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Syed Mansoor Sarwar in which Deans, Senior Warden, Registrar and other administrative officers participated. On the occasion, the Vice Chancellor expressed good wishes for the students. He assured to provide all possible facilities to students from other countries studying in the university.

Dr Syed Mansoor Sarwar also urged the Afghan students to play their positive and effective role for the development of Afghanistan after completing their studies as well as for nurturing brotherly relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan.



LAHORE: PHA workers are digging ground for planting the seasonal flowers at the park near Lahore Railway Station.

**E-BIDS ARE INVITED THROUGH SAP ARIBA**

Oil & Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) is the largest Exploration & Production Company listed on Pakistan and London Stock Exchange. Details about the company can be obtained from website <http://www.ogdcl.com>. Bids are invited through **SAP-Ariba Discovery** for the service/material given below under competitive bidding procedure as per Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) rules:

S#	TENDER NUMBER	DESCRIPTION	Bid Submission Date & Time	Bid Opening Date & Time
1-	OGDCL-SCM-LB-HSEQ-Doc202942203-2023	Procurement of Hose Pipe	24-02-2023 AT 11:30 Hrs.	24-02-2023 AT 12:00 Hrs.
2-	OGDCL-SCM-LH-EXPL-Doc202475518-2023	Procurement of 08 Laptops	27-02-2023 AT 11:30 Hrs.	27-02-2023 AT 12:00 Hrs.
3-	OGDCL-SCM-LH-PNP-CHANDA-Doc202582991-2023	Procurement of Rubber Element for main coupling of Refrigeration	28-02-2023 AT 11:30 Hrs.	28-02-2023 AT 12:00 Hrs.
4-	OGDCL-SCM-LH-PNP-DAKHNI-Doc203178553-2023	Procurement of Charcoal Filters	01-03-2023 AT 11:30 Hrs.	01-03-2023 AT 12:00 Hrs.

2. Vendors not having Ariba Network ID are requested to register themselves on SAP Ariba Portal by clicking on the link <https://supplier.ariba.com> to access and participate in OGDCL tenders.

3. Complete Tender document(s) along with Scope of Work /TOR/ Clarifications can be viewed and downloaded from SAP-Ariba RFP by clicking on the link <https://supplier.ariba.com/profile/AN01562899621>

4. Original Bid Bonds as per RFP/Tender Document shall be submitted at the reception of OGDCL House, Jinnah Avenue, Blue Area, Islamabad, Pakistan on or before bid submission date and time mentioned above.

5. OGDCL reserves the right to accept or reject any bid and to annul the bidding process and reject all the bids as per Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) Rule-33".

6. This Tender Notice is also available on PPRA website [www.ppra.org.pk](http://www.ppra.org.pk) and OGDCL website [www.ogdcl.com](http://www.ogdcl.com).

**GENERAL MANAGER, (SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT)**  
**OIL & GAS DEVELOPMENT COMPANY LIMITED**  
 OGDCL House, Jinnah Avenue, Blue Area, Islamabad, Pakistan  
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# Officials to make their departments more public friendly

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Labor, Excise and Taxation Haji Manzoor Khan Afridi has urged the government officials to make their departments more people-friendly and instead of confining themselves to their offices, go to the people and mix their selves in them to better analyze their problems by themselves and hence they could mitigate public grievances in a better way, he added.

He was speaking with senior govt officers at Civil

Secretariat Peshawar during a visit to the Labor Department and an introductory meeting with the officers there. He appreciated the performance of the labor department officers on this occasion.

However he also made it clear that he will make surprise visits to all the departments and offices under him, and apart from keeping himself abreast with the performance of the officers, he will also review their behavior with the people. He said that the attitude of public officials should be polite and friend-

ly with the poor masses in all cases so that the fear of departments and officers is removed from the hearts of the people and they not only trust them but also freely apprise them of their problems and difficulties without fear.

The Caretaker Minister cautioned that wherever he receives a public complaint, he will take strict notice of it and after serious investigation of the matter, he will not refrain from reprimanding the government officials who are guilty of negligence or omission, he concluded.

Ali Yousafzai nominated as Subject Specialist



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Public Service Commission (KPPSC) has nominated Muhammad Ali Yousafzai as Subject Specialist at Elementary and Secondary Education Department last day.

In this regard, KPPSC issued list of successful candidates nominated as Subject Specialists for several subjects while Muhammad Ali Yousafzai is recommended for Pashto.

The successful candidate Muhammad Ali Yousafzai is young poet and writer of Pakhto language while focusing contemporary issues as well as norms of the society through his thoughts. He has served at different colleges as Lecturer Pashto across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Muhammad Ali Yousafzai declared his success to prayers of parent and hard work of his teachers throughout his carrier. He praised Allah Almighty for success and committed to educate nation with heart and zeal.

## Political parties urged to play imperative role to curb terror

PESHAWAR (APP): The participants of a seminar on "Protection and Rights of Citizens: Political Consensus" on Tuesday emphasised upon the political parties to focus on making serious efforts to implement national action plan, take stern actions to curb terrorism and extremism and introduce measures to address outstanding human rights issues.

The seminar was organised by Centre for Social Justice (CSJ), Executive Director of CSJ Peter Jacob, former MNA Bushra Gohar (NDM), Sardar Hussain Babak (ANP), Dr. Khadim Husain, Arshad Aziz Malik, Syed Ayub Shah Advocate (PPP), Shahid Mehmood, Augustin Jacob Social, Human Rights Activist and Suneel Malik were among the speakers, while Naina Samson moderated the seminar.

At this juncture, CSJ's report titled "Promises to Keep & Miles to Go" based on the analysis of pledges, actions, and performance regarding minorities rights made by political parties was launched which the political parties in the government and opposition largely failed to implement their pledges fully in the last three parliamentary tenures.

The study found that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) fulfilled none out of five promises made in election manifesto 2018, though it made partial progress on two promises.

Peter Jacob said that CSJ shares the grief of families and the entire nation affected by the attack on police lines Peshawar a week ago.



PESHAWAR: KP Caretaker Minister for Labour, Excise & Taxation Haji Manzoor Afridi talking to high ups of his Department at Civil Secretariat.

# PRs plan to restore cargo train service from Peshawar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Railways, Divisional Superintendent Peshawar Muhammad Nasir Khalily said the institute is intending to restore freight train service from Peshawar to Karachi.

The DS Railways realized that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar is lagging behind in freight as compared to other cities of the country. He stressed it is essential to restore cargo train operation from Peshawar.

He said Pakistan Railways with full responsibility is carrying out smooth and swift operations of freights based on origin destination.

The senior official said PRs has designed a holistic plan for resumption of freight train service from Peshawar.

He added KP potential sectors would be focused under the cargo train restoration plan. The DS railways assured the SCCI president Muhammad Ishaq that they will take up allied-issues of the business community with relevant departments and authorities and would promptly resolve them.

The senior official furthermore emphasized the need of hour to use railway transportation service to improve trade, exports and businesses to stabilize the national economy.

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The SCCI chief hailed the offer of DS Railways Mr Khalily regarding resumption of cargo train service from Peshawar.

He assured the senior official that SCCI will provide data and details of the potential sectors in order to resume cargo train service swiftly to facilitate trade and businesses.

Ishaq said the Pakistan Railways would earn huge revenue if the cargo train services were resumed from Peshawar.

He hoped PRs would become a profitable entity

from it. Muhammad Ishaq suggested giving SCCI representation in the Railways Advisor Committee, upon which the DS Railways Peshawar agreed.

The DS Railways reiterated his resolve that the Pakistan Railways will utilize all available resources to facilitate the business community and resolve their issues on priority basis.

Mr Khalily also agreed with other proposals of the SCCI office bearers and participants.

## PHC rejects writ against appointments at UOP

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) has rejected writ against appoint of Graduate Training Teachers in subordinate schools of University of Peshawar (UOP), on Tuesday.

UOP's lawyer Wasim-u-Din Khattak Advocate along with legal officer Riaz Khan appeared before PHC divisional bench comprised of Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Shakeel Ahmad while informed that the petitioner was over aged up to 12 years.

The counsel for Imran Ullah argued that petitioner has applied for the posts while other candidates with lower score were recruited for the post of Graduate Training Teachers at UOP's subordinate schools.

The divisional bench of PHC comprised of Justice Ishtiaq Ibrahim and Justice Shakeel Ahmad rejected writ petition and declared UOP decision in line with the law.

# Farewell function for retiring DG Information and Public Relations



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A farewell function for the retiring DG Information and Public Relations Imdadullah was held on Tuesday. Secretary Information and Public Relations Arshad Khan, Deputy Secretaries, Section Officers, information department's directors, deputy directors, assistant directors along with ex president Peshawar Press Club M. Riaz, Senior journalist Shamim Shahid and other senior journalists attended the farewell function. It is worth to mention that besides DG

Imdadullah, Directors Noor-ul-Hadi, Mian Amjad Ali Shah Kaka Khel, Zabita Khan Mohmad, Gul Karim and Administrative Officer Farman Ali have retired recently after completing their service tenure. Imdadullah has served the Information department for more than 30 years and during this period, he had been posted on different important posts. He had been director general Information for the last four years. Addressing the farewell function, Secretary Information and Public Relations Mr. Arshad Khan threw light on the services

of Retiring DG Imdadullah and other directors said that these officers performed their duties efficiently and their services for the department would be remembered for a longer period. He further said that as DG Information, Imdadullah was a beacon for other officers. He said the way he performed his duties honestly and diligently was worthy of emulation for all.

Retiring DG Information Imdadullah in his address on the occasion thanked Secretary Information and all officers and officials of the department and said

that the role of Information department in the present scenario is very important. He advised to have team work and better working relationships for fulfilling the official obligations. Retiring directors Noor-ul-Hadi, Mian Amjad Ali Shah and Gul Karim in their addresses highlighted the role of information department in informing the people about the welfare steps of the government and conveying true information to them.

Secretary Information Arshad Khan presented shields to Imdadullah Khan and other officers on the occasion.

# Caretaker Minister meets ambassadors of Uzbekistan, Indonesia and Philippines

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's Caretaker

## Retired food's officer passed away

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Imtiaz Ahmad a retired Food's department Officer has been passed away on Tuesday while his funeral prayer was offered at Amin Garden Civil Quarters. The bereaved family including of Kashif Khan, Muhammad Majid, Shakeel Ahmad, Shehzad Advocate, Arshad Shahab and Iftikhar Bacha.

Minister for Industry, Commerce and Revenue Adnan Jalil called on the ambassadors of Uzbekistan, Indonesia and Philippines in Islamabad. Matters of mutual interest were discussed in detail in these meetings.

On this occasion, the caretaker provincial minister invited the ambassadors to invest in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and assured full cooperation from the provincial government in this regard.

He also said that this beautiful province of Pakistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, has its own unique identity in terms of tourism in the world and in this regard, there are vast opportunities for investment in the field of travels,

hotelling and tourism in Pakistan.

The ambassadors thanked the caretaker minister for the invitation to visit Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and assured the full cooperation of their governments and people in terms of cementing bilateral ties and investment in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province.

On this occasion, the ambassadors also expressed regret over the loss of precious lives in the Police Lines Mosque explosion in the city of Peshawar and the tragedy of Tanda Dam in Kohat in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province in the recent past and in this context expressed their complete solidarity with the government and people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.



PESHAWAR: KP Caretaker Minister for Higher Education and Law Irshad Qaisar visiting Provincial Ombudsman office.

# Alarming trends of online drug selling in educational institutions

Ishaq Khan

PESHAWAR: "I am aware of it that the use of drugs will leave some scars on my health but it's becoming difficult for me to concentrate on the studies without using these stuffs", says M Ajmal, a final year student of MA English.

M Ajmal (changed name) told The Frontier Post that it all started in a fun way as it was all new for me after shifting to Peshawar from district Buner for studies.

"I couldn't handle the independence as none of my family members were there to show me the right way and slapped me after I joined the wrong gathering" he said with an embarrassing smile on his face.

"Only a phone call or Whatsapp message is enough to get drugs (Hashish, Ice) and it's quite easy now as plenty of drug suppliers are there to deliver at your doorstep what you want", he revealed.

While sharing his story, Ajmal told that in 2018 some of my friends were using Ice and hashish, they were studying, playing without getting sleep in two or three days which was very surprising for me as how it is possible for a human to stay active without sleep, so I started using it but fortunately my roommates threatened me to leave it or they will inform my family about my wrong activities, in fact one of them was always with me to keep close eye on me.

He further added that those were the hard days of my life to get rid of these drugs but my roommates helped me a lot and I will not repay them. Yes I was able to get rid of Ice but still struggling to leave the addiction of hashish (chairs), he said.

Aurangzeb Khan, a retired government officer

whose two sons are studying in university, expressed his worries after he found out that his elder son was consuming chairs (Hashish) with his university friends.

"It was very surprising and hard for us to believe that my son was involved in such activities as he was very allergic to all these things and now he is consuming drugs", Aurangzeb lamented.

As a father, it was so disturbing news because we had a plan for our children and if he was wasting time and health in such activities what will be his future? he shared his thoughts.

"After questioning and pressuring my son, he told us that they were ordering chats on WhatsApp and the drug peddler delivered them easily within the university premises without any trouble in a hour or two", he said.

He further said, then we kept close eye on our son

and made sure to keep him away from such activities and focusing on his study for which he was admitted in university but it is very hard for any parent to follow the young children with the aim to maintain the decency if all these banned drugs were available easily in educational institutions.

"I believe that my son left his wrong path of consuming drugs and now focusing on his studies but the thoughts of his return to such activities will never leave my mind", he said.

Aurangzeb said that educational institutions were meant to be producing good citizens and professionals, but if such banned drugs were easily available than one can imagine that what will be the future of our children and our society, it is the responsibility of government to provide drug free environment and make sure the arrest of this ele-

ments which were poisoning our children.

But the parents also need to play their role in this regard and regularly check their mobiles and other devices because there are many easy ways that their children might trap and could destroy their lives, he suggested.

Police shared the details that in the first nine months of 2022, police recovered over 903.645 kilograms of ice, 1279.431 kilograms of heroin, 18841.834 kilograms of hashish, 1381.3 kilograms opium and 12883.52 litres of liquor in the operations of Narcotics Eradication teams in conducted in different parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Similarly, the Campus Police Station of University of Peshawar confirmed that a total 19 First Information Reports (FIR) related to drug selling were registered last year including 17 of Chars (hashish), one ice

and one liquor case.

While contacting the Chief Capital Police Officer (CCPO) Muhammad Ijaz Khan, he claimed that the operations against the drug dealers are going on by the regular police and Narcotics Eradication teams in different parts of the city.

CCPO added that the officers have been directed to intensify crackdown against the drug dealers, especially those involved in poisoning our youth for selling drugs in the vicinity of education institutions.

Another official said that apart from taking action against the drug dealers, awareness is being created among the students, parents and teachers through seminars in colleges and universities while previously elders and religious scholars were also involved to create awareness against the drugs.

Muhammad Nauman,

Public Relation Officer (PRO) of University of Peshawar, told The Frontier Post that in 2005 the Peshawar University was declared a tobacco-free university and the sale of cigarettes, Naswar was banned within the premises of the varsity, all the shops and canteens were directed to stay away from the sale of tobacco items otherwise their shops will be sealed and action would be taken against them according to the rules.

Nauman claimed that the administration, Campus police and Provost strictly monitor the varsity and no one would be allowed to smoke openly in the premises of this historical education institution.

The administration is making all out efforts to make the university free from drugs and root out the evils from educational institutes, and to provide a conducive environment to

students in hostels, departments with the aim to keep them on the positive path, he said.

He informed that we arranged awareness seminars on different occasions with the coordination of Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) to create awareness among the students about drug prevention, and its negative impacts on the health of human beings.

Regarding the online sale of online drugs, he said that we are monitoring the situation with the help of CCTV cameras, campus police and our proctors, to make sure that the drug peddlers could not reach our youth, and we succeeded in it to the maximum extent.

"Everyone including (Students, Teachers, Police and Administration) should be on the same page to save our generations from the menace of drugs", Nauman suggested.





## In brief

### Canadian national hunts Markhor

CHITRAL (APP): Mr. Thomas Renato Martini, a Canadian national, hunted 01 number of Kashmiri Markhor at Tooshi-Shasha Community Managed Game Reserve, the other day, said Wildlife Department on Tuesday. The size of left horn was 43 inches while right horn size was 43-1/2 inches. The tip to tip distance was 26 inches and diameter of left and right horns were 12 inches while basal distance between two horns was 1-1/2 inches. The shot was fired at 03:30 PM. The distance of the shot was 350 yards. The age of the markhor was approximately 11 years old. The community participation in conservation, initiated by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Wildlife Department is a success story.

### Construction work inspected Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Malakand, Sajjad Khan Tuesday visited building of Traffic Warden Headquarters and inspected ongoing construction work. During visit, RPO acquired briefing about the construction work and site plan of the building. He expressed satisfaction over pace of construction work and said that building would help enhancing performance of traffic police and also improve service delivery. He said that all the needed facilities would be provided in the traffic warden headquarters and traffic police station would also be established in headquarter building.

### Child dies in road mishap

MALAKAND (INP): A child died and six others injured after a coalition between a car and passenger coaster at Bakikhela here on Tuesday, police sources confirmed. The tragic incident occurred at levy Post Bridge where a coaster bearing registration NO LES-4133 and car IE-4361 crashed, they said. The wounded were shifted to a nearby hospital. Police said the incident occurred due to over speeding.

### Young man dies in Sukkur

SUKKUR (INP): A young man accidentally shot himself and died while making a TikTok video in Sukkur, police and family said. They said that the incident took place in the Bachal Shah area within the jurisdiction of the Airport police station. Victim's father Abdul Jabbar said that his 22-year-old son, Abdul Ghaffar alias Babar, brought a pistol from a relative to make a TikTok video. He said that they were sitting in an adjacent room when they heard a shot. They ran to the room and found the youth lying in a pool of blood. The area police reached the scene and shifted the body to the Taluqa Hospital for medico-legal formalities.

### Murder accused arrested F.P. Report

PARACHINAR: Following instructions issued by DPO Kurram, Abdul Samad Khan regarding the arrest of proclaimed offenders, SHO police station Central Kurram under the supervision of DSP, Inayat Khan arrested an absconding murder accused on Tuesday. Kurram police said the accused named Zahid, son of Yusuf, resident of Kemal Baza Kurram, wanted to Central Kurram police under PPC 302 was arrested during a raid and handed over to the investigation team for further interrogation.

# PTI to steer country out of crises: Zulfi

ATTOCK (INP): Central leader Pakistan Tehree-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and expected candidate for NA-50 Attock, Syed Zulfiqar Abbas Bokhari (alias Zulfi Bokhari) while addressing a public gathering here on Tuesday has claimed that PTI under the leadership of Imran Khan will steer the country out of political and economic default like situation after coming into power.

Among others, the public gathering was also participated by candidate for MPA Attock Sardar Mumtaz Hussain Mahjia, Col. © Mohammad Anwar, Vice President, PTI Malik Kamran Khaki, Sardar Farukh Khan, Malik Liaquat Ali Khan, Sardar Mohammad Ali Khan, as well as former chairmen,

councilors and thousands of people from Tehsils Fatehang.

Speaking on the occasion, Zulfi Bokhari has said that PDM alliance government had compelled the poor people to beg before the political pundits for provision of bread and butters. These pundits are only desirous taking over the rule of the country at their own wish and whims pushing their people to the age of slavery but now time has come to get rid of all these political big wigs who were exploiting their masses for the last many decades.

The PTI leader said that the political cheaters are exposed before the people. He said the elected candidates are the obedient having the mandate of the peo-

ple. He said the deteriorated condition of Larkana Sind is also reflected in the visual and pictures of PPP Chairman Mr. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari governed their province for the last fifty years as compare to the socio-economic living standards of our people seem a Dubai.

Mr. Zulfi Bokhari said that PML(N) Alliance Government of Mian Shabbaz Sharif have snatched bite of bread from the poor segment of society who are even forced to get one bag wheat flour after waiting in que for long hours. The price hike of petrol, gas, electricity, kitchen items, un-employment, terrorism, extremism reached beyond the control of the citing rulers, he added.

## Journalist martyrdom anniversary observed

### F.P. Report

WANA: The 18th martyrdom anniversary of journalist Allah Noor and Ameer Nawab, who were murdered on February 7, 2005, was observed with great devotion and respect in District Press Club Wana, on Tuesday.

Deputy Commissioner South Waziristan Lower Muhammad Nasir Khan, DSP Headquarter Nadir Khan, Youth Officer South Waziristan Lower Sardar Ali Wazir, Tahsildar Wana, Taj Muhammad Wazir from the business community, Imran Mukhlis from PPP and leaders of various political parties participated.

Amir Khan, the son of Allah Noor martyred, participated in the event as a special participant. All the participants paid their respects to the martyrs and said that martyrs never die,

because they are alive.

Addressing the ceremony, the Deputy Commissioner said, "I pay homage to the martyred journalists." Journalism is a sacred profession, if it is conducted in a positive manner. He said that journalism is the eyes and ears of society, tribal journalists have played a frontline role in the war against terrorism and have even offered their lives, which can never be forgotten.

Journalists should highlight public problems so that they can be solved. DC that our cooperation with journalists will continue all the time. District Press Club Wana Secretary General Zardad Khan and Vice President Noor Ali Khan thanked all the guests on behalf of the District Press Club Cabinet and said, that you guys have encouraged us by partici-

pating in this event, be clear, that Ameer Nawab and Allah Noor were on their way back after the agreement between the district administration and Taliban commander Baitullah Mehsud on February 7, 2005 in Sararogha Tehsil of South Waziristan. That the terrorists opened fire on their van near the headquarter hospital Wana, as a result of which Amir Nawab and Allah Noor were martyred on the spot, while Anwar Shakir was seriously injured.

District Press Club Wana President Mubeeb Ur Rehman has said that it has been eighteen years since Allah Noor and Amir Nawab left us, but we have not forgotten them, they are alive for us, and every year their anniversary will be celebrated with great splendor.

## Pakistan stands with Turkiya and Syria

### F.P. Report

QUETTA: Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri has expressed deep sorrow and grief over the deaths and losses as a result of the terrible earthquake in Turkey and Syria. In her statement, expressing sympathy and regret to the governments and people of Turkey and Syria, Turkey and Syria are our friendly countries and they have fully supported Pakistan in every difficult time.

Senator said that at this time our friendly countries Turkey and Syria are going through a difficult time and all business life has stopped. She said that in this difficult time, the entire Pakistani nation is with the people of Turkey and Syria and they will not be left alone. She assured the governments and people of Turkey and Syria of

all possible help from the Pakistani government and people to deal with the devastation of this terrible earthquake and the teams are actively participating in rescue operations. In her statement, Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri said that the earthquake was extremely severe and as a result of which thousands of people have died and thousands of injured in Turkey and Syria as a result of the tragic natural disaster. While many thousands of buildings have collapsed in which people are still trapped, while there is an emergency situation in both brotherly countries.

Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri said that rescue teams from Pakistan have reached Turkey and Syria and are actively participating in rescue operations, while rescue teams from other

countries around the world are also reaching Turkey and Syria. Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri further said that as a result of this terrible earthquake that occurred in Turkey and Syria, every eye is in tears over the number of deaths and losses and the Pakistani nation shares the grief of the people of Turkey and Syria equally. She said that there is an emergency situation in both the countries at this time.

She strongly appealed to the international community to provide full support to Turkey and Syria to deal with the worst situation after the terrible earthquake in Turkey and Syria. She prayed that May Allah grant those who died in the earthquake a high place in Jannat al-Firdous and speedy recovery to the injured.

## ‘Craft platforms will be provided to women’

### F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: Deputy Commissioner Lower Dir along with District Police Officer and Additional Deputy Commissioner (Finance and Planning) visited the office of Dir Chamber of Commerce and Industry (DCCI), on Tuesday.

President Dir Chamber and Commerce Noor Alam. They welcomed the distinguished guests and gave a detailed briefing regarding the Dir Chamber of Commerce and Industry and said that craft platforms will also be provided for the

women of Dir Payin at their homes so that women can start dignified employment at their homes. Dir Chamber and Commerce Noor Alam presented the demands for the establishment of land and industrial zone for the Chane office, while the Deputy Commissioner assured them that the district administration will continue to fully cooperate with the Chamber of Commerce and Industry in this regard, proposed to conduct separate awareness sessions with business community and general public regarding polythene bags.

Upon the arrival of the

Dir Chamber of Commerce and Industry Office, the President of the Dir Chamber of Commerce presented the shield to the distinguished guests and appreciated their efforts regarding development work and peace. Also inspected the various units of Deer Chamber of Commerce and Industry. On this occasion, Senior Vice President Dir Chamber of Commerce and Industry Khalid Iqbal, Vice President Sahib Zada, Founder Dir Chamber of Commerce Haji Hussainullah, Rahimdad Iqbal Alam were also present.

## QWP to observe martyrdom anniversary of Hayat Sherpao

### F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: Provincial Chairman of Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Sikandar Hayat Khan Sherpao has said that the 48th anniversary of the former governor of KP Hayat Muhammad Khan Shaheed will observe on February 13 with devotion and enthusiasm. For the rights of the Pakhtun nation.

QWP chairman said that Hayat Muhammad Khan took martyrdom. He said this while talking to a delegation comprising Qaumi Watan Party leaders Arbab Naseemullah, Farhad Ali, Jamshed Khan,

Arbab Asadullah and Arbab Sirajullah at Watan Kaur Sher Pau. Our mission is to end backwardness, poverty, poverty and unemployment and to raise the image of Pakhtuns all over the world who are peace-loving and patriotic. After the martyrdom of the martyred leader, Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao, the national leader of the party, has continued the mission of the rights of the poor people, and the Pakhtun nation should join Aftab Ahmed Khan Sherpao's caravan and strengthen his hands so that the Pakhtun nation can get their rights.

## Blast victim cop succumbs to injuries in hospital F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: The critically injured police constable in Dheri Zardad check-post attack has lost the battle for life by succumbing his injuries and laid to rest in his ancestral graveyard in Parang Baba here on Tuesday.

The deceased Rameez Khan had received bullet wounds in a militant's attack on Dheri Zarda check-post in the limits of Nisata Police station on Feb 2, last. He remained admitted in hospital in precarious condition for four days and succumbed to his injuries.

The funeral prayer of late Rameez Khan was held in his native town Parang Gul Baba that was attended by Regional Police Officer, Mardan, Muhammad Ali while large number of police officers and jawans attended. The fresh contingent of police presented salute to the coffin of martyred Rameez Khan who was later laid to rest with official honor.

## Tribesmen hold protest against raids on houses F.P. Report

GHALANAI: Tribesmen arranged protest and blocked Bajaur-Peshawar road for traffic against unscheduled load shedding and raids on residences without court's order, on Tuesday.

The tribesmen hold protest at Halimzai bazaar Mian Mandi while chanted slogan against illegal raids on residences without court orders and unscheduled load shedding in the tribal district. The protestors claimed that only for two hours electricity is available for the tribesmen which has impacted every segment of livelihood.

The protestors claimed that it is unfortunate that despite two dams in Mohmand district, the residents are deprived from power. However, the protestors dispersed peacefully after assurance from district administration for provision of 8-10 hours electricity to the area.

## Inclusion of elite in tax net sought Syed Wali Ullah Shah

NEWSHERA: Markazi Anjuman-e-Tajeeran (MAT) Nowshera argued both federal and interim provincial governments to bring elite class in tax net along with withdrawal of subsidies provided to industrialists despite imposing new taxes on common man, on Tuesday.

This was demanded by MAT acting president Sher Zaman Shah, Qazi Usman-ul-Haq, Shakeel Ahmad Khasgi, Maulana Arif Khan, Atta-ur-Rehman, Akbar Khan, Nasir Khan, Malik Riaz, Saeed Shah and Saud Ahmad Paracha while congratulating newly elected cabinet of Nowshera press club.

The cabinet member including president Jahanzeb, general secretary Syed Wali Ullah Shah, Pir Taj Mir Shah, Haji Zahoor Ahmad, Fida Muhammad, Nasir and Muhammad Shahid paid thanks to MAT delegation for congratulation. The MAT delegation claimed that traders with the support media community will uphold voice of public at every forum and will play their role in their economic crunch.

## 430 arrested Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: The district police apprehended 430 suspects including four wanted criminals during the first three-day of a week-long special campaign against anti-social elements launched across the district.

During the crackdowns a huge cache of arms and narcotics were recovered while 41 drug dealers were sent to jail. The detained suspects included three facilitators of proclaimed offenders and two illegal Afghan nationals, said an official communique issued here on Tuesday.

## Students hold condolence reference for Latif Afridi



### F.P. Report

BARA: People from different walks of life expressed their deep sorrow and grief over the assignment of a senior lawyer and ex-President of the Supreme Court Bar Association in a condolence reference held here at Bara press club last day.

The activity was organized by Pakhtoon Students Federation (PSF) Khyber chapter and was attended by former federal minister Waris Khan Afridi, Sayasi Ittehad (political alliance) Bara Shah Faisal Afridi, son the deceased Danish Afridi, Senior vice-President Awami National

Party (ANP) Shareen Afridi, General Secretary of Khyber Union Zahidullah, Chief of Malgari Ustazan, Khyber Gulabdin Afridi, provincial vice-President of PSF Faheem Afridi, senior poet Qandahar Afridi beside number of students, political and social workers and members of civil society.

Addressing on the occasion, speakers paid rich tribute to the renowned lawyer Latif Afridi and shed light on different aspects of his life. They maintained that it was credit of the late advocate that he created awareness against the draconian law, Frontier Crime Regulation (FCR) and

apprised the tribesmen of drawbacks of the law and won a basic right of adult franchise for the tribal.

With murdering of Latif Lala, the area was deprived of a powerful voice for the rights of the poor, they added. They extended their heartfelt condolence to the bereaved family and prayed to Allah to shower His blessings upon the departed soul. The deceased's son Danish Afridi thanked the organizers for initiating a condolence reference in the honor of his father and vowed that he would continue serving the neglected sections of the society while following footprints of Latif Afridi.

## Two persons killed in Havelian

### F.P. Report

GHAZI: Two persons were killed at different places including tribesman by unknown culprits within the limit of Havelian police station, on Tuesday.

According to the details, two people were killed on the same day at different locations in the jurisdiction of Havelian police station, Afsar Khan, the younger brother of the former member of the district council,

Haji Amreez Khan, was killed in the village of Majiya where he had gone to participate in a Nimaz e Janaza when the culprits opened an indiscriminate firing on him, resulting death of Afsar Khan at the spot, while in the other

incident, the owner of a block factory, situated in the river of Hawiliyan city.

Moreover, Khan Badshah son of Raheem Shah resident of Mohmand agency was killed by unknown persons. Both the bodies were handed over to their heirs after postmortem at THQ Hospital. Police has registered FIRs of both separately occurred incidents and started investigations.

Meanwhile, Central Additional General Secretary of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and former federal minister Omar Ayub Khan filed his nomination papers to contest by-election from NA-19 Haripur. Before submission of the nomination papers, a heavy gathered ceremony was

held at the central office of Omar Ayub Khan. While addressing to participants of the ceremony former ministers Omar Ayub Khan, Akbar Ayub Khan, Arshad Ayub Khan, PTI district Haripur Raja Ehtisham, General Secretary Allah Yar and others said that during the golden era of PTI Khan Brothers had done record developmental work in their constituencies worth billions of rupees.

The example of which is not found in the past. They said that they would continue to serve the masses of the region and to resolve their problems at their doorstep. Thousands of people raised their hands and assured their full support to Omar Ayub Khan.

## DRO Swabi takes notice of violation of ECP guidelines

### F.P. Report

SWABI: District Returning Officer (DRO) Swabi has taken notice of the violation of guideline/code of conduct for by-elections announced by the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), said a press release issued here on Tuesday.

The action has been taken on the complaint filed by a person, Biland Iqbal Tarakai with the DRO for NA-18 and NA-19 Swabi regarding advertisement/notice for development projects inviting tenders dated 06 February, 2023 to be opened on 09 February

2023 by the office of Executive Engineer (XEN) PHE Division, Swabi.

The notice further said that the Election Commission of Pakistan, has announced schedule for the conduct of election in NA-18 Swabi-I and NA-19 Swabi-II while schedule for general election to provincial assemblies of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are to be announced shortly.

In the light of the foregoing the ECP vide Notification No.F.(No2(1)2023-Cord, dated 22th January 2023 have not to announce/execute any kind of develop-

ment scheme in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces except those which are ongoing and approved before the announcement of election schedule.

Moreover, the provincial government and the local governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have been directed not to issue tenders of such schemes till the culmination of general elections of both assemblies. The Executive Engineer concerned has been directed to cancel the notice inviting tenders in the light of the notification of the ECP and intimate the office of DRO Swabi.

## Public services delivery assured on priority

### Hafiz Aziz-ur-Rehman

HAFIZABAD: The senior officer of the Punjab, Umar Farooq Warraich assumed the charge of the post of Deputy Commissioner Hafizabad. Ex-Chairman Press Club Ch. Intiaz Ahmad Taj, Ex-President Press Club Zafar Iqbal Butt, ADCR Abdul Rauf, Assistant Commissioner HR and Coordination Ishfaq Ahmad, PSO Malik Abdul Qadoos, District Nazir Malik Shoaib Aslam Awan and heads of different branches welcomed newly appointed Deputy Commissioner Hafizabad Umar Farooq Warraich on his arrival.

Deputy Commissioner Umar Farooq Warraich said on the occasion that addressing of problems and provision of maximum relief to the people would be may top priority. He said that every citizen of the district could come to my office without any reference and their problems would be addressed on

merit indiscriminately.

**Outgoing DPO praised:** In-charge Police Liaison Committee Hafizabad Rana Khalid Mehmood said that outgoing District Police Officer Hafizabad Rai Mazhar Iqbal took effective and result-oriented measure to maintain peace and to provide relief to people in the district during his posting which would be remembered forever.

He expressed these views while presenting honorary shield to DPO Rai Mazhar Iqbal. He said that Rai Mazhar Iqbal was taken people friendly measures and promote concept of community policing for bridging gap between police and people.

Addressing on the occasions DPO Rai Mazhar Iqbal said that transfer was integral part of government employees and it was my top priority to maintain law and order situation, ensure protection of property, lives and honours of the people as well as provide maxi-

mum relief and justice to the people. He said that my team was work day and night to come up on the expectation of people for creating sense of security in the district.

## RPO visits bereaved families F.P. Report

BANNU: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Bannu Region Syed Ishaq Anwer visited bereaved families of police line mosque blast martyrs here and expressed solidarity with them.

An press release issued by RPO office, Syed Ishaq visited the houses of police constables Shabeeb resident of Fatima Khel, Rafiq resident of Bazar Ahmed Khan, Hanifullah and Liaquat Ali Shah resident of Gorkha and Saeed Khel resident of Lakki Marwat.





# Biden aims to deliver reassurance in State of Union address

WASHINGTON (AP): President Joe Biden is ready to offer a reassuring assessment of the nation's condition rather than roll out flashy policy proposals as he delivers his second State of the Union address seeking to overcome pessimism in the country and concerns about his own leadership. His speech before a politically divided Congress comes Tuesday night as the nation struggles to make sense of confounding cross-currents at home and abroad - economic uncertainty, a wearying war in Ukraine, growing tensions with China among them - and warily sizes up Biden's fitness for a likely reelection bid.

The president will stand at the House rostrum at a time when just a quarter of US adults say things in the country are headed in the right direction, according to a new poll by The Associated Press-NORC Center for Public Affairs Research. About three-quarters say things are on the wrong track. And a majority of Democrats don't want Biden to seek another term. Biden will aim to confront those sentiments head on, aides said, while at the same time trying to avoid sounding insensitive to Americans' concerns.

Brian Deese, director of the National Economic Council, said Biden would "acknowledge and meet American people where they are," adding that their "economic anxiety is real." "I think the core message is: We have to make more progress, but people should feel optimism," he added.

Chapman University presidential historian Luke Nichter said the closest parallel to Biden's present circumstance may be the 1960s, when global uncertainty met domestic disquiet. Biden, he said, has an opportunity to be a "calming presence" for the country.

"Usually we're looking for an agenda: 'Here's what he plans to do.' I don't know that that's really realistic," Nichter said. "I think Americans' expectations are pretty low of what Congress is actually going to achieve. And so I think right now, sentiment and tone, and helping Americans feel better about their circumstances, I think are going to go a long way." The setting for Biden's speech will be markedly different than a year ago, when it was Democratic stalwart Nancy Pelosi seated behind him as speaker. She's been replaced by GOP House Speaker Kevin McCarthy, and it's unclear what kind of reception restive Republican will give the Democratic president. With COVID-19 restrictions now lifted, the White House and legislators from both parties are inviting guests designed to drive home political messages with their presence in the House chamber. The parents of Tyre Nichols, who was severely beaten by police officers in Memphis and later died, are among those expected to be in the audience.

Biden is shifting his sights after spending his first two years pushing through major bills such as the bipartisan infrastructure package, a bill to

promote high-tech manufacturing and climate legislations. With Republicans now in control of the House, Biden is turning his focus to implementing the massive laws and making sure voters credit him for the improvements rather than crafting major new initiatives. It's largely by necessity. Biden faces a newly empowered GOP that is itching to undo many of his achievements and vowing to pursue a multitude of investigations - including looking into the recent discoveries of classified documents from his time as vice president at his home and former office. At the same time, Biden will need to find a way to work across the aisle to raise the federal debt limit by this summer and keep the government funded. Biden has insisted that he won't negotiate on meeting the country's debt obligations; Republicans have been equally adamant that Biden must make spending concessions.

One the eve of the president's address, McCarthy challenged Biden to come to the negotiating table with House Republicans to slash spending as part of a deal to raise the debt ceiling. "Mr. President, it's time to get to work," McCarthy said in remarks from the speaker's balcony at the Capitol. While hopes for large-scale bipartisanship are slim, Biden was set to reissue his 2022 appeal for Congress to get behind his "unity agenda" of actions to address the opioid epidemic, mental health, veterans'

health and fighting cancer. The speech comes days after Biden ordered the military to shoot down a suspected Chinese spy balloon that flew brazenly across the country, captivating the nation and serving as a reminder of tense relations between the two global powers.

Last year's address occurred just days after Russia launched its invasion of Ukraine and as many in the West doubted Kyiv's ability to withstand the onslaught. Over the past year, the US and other allies have sent tens of billions of dollars in military and economic assistance to bolster Ukraine's defenses. Now, Biden must make the case - both at home and abroad - for sustaining that coalition as the war drags on. "The president will really want to reinforce just what a significant accomplishment has already been achieved and then to reinforce how much more has to be done, how we are committed to doing it, and how we will ask for a bipartisan basis the US Congress to join us in doing that work," national security adviser Jake Sullivan said. While COVID-19 has eased at home, Biden will turn his sights to other national ills, including the deadly opioid epidemic, gun violence and police abuses.

The president spent much of the weekend into reviewing speech drafts with aides at the Camp David presidential retreat in Maryland. Senior White House adviser Anita Dunn will preview broad themes of Biden's



address to Democratic lawmakers throughout the day on Tuesday, starting with a breakfast with House Democrats on Capitol Hill. McCarthy called on Biden to embrace the Republican effort to put the nation's finances on a path toward a balanced budget, which would require deep and politically unpopular reductions in federal spending that Biden and Democrats have vehemently resisted. "We must move towards a balanced budget and insist on genuine accountability for every dollar we spend,"

McCarthy said.

He insisted cuts to Medicare and Social Security, the popular health and retirement programs primarily for older Americans, were "off the table" in any budget negotiation. The GOP leader also said "defaulting on our debt is not an option." The White House has insisted Republicans cannot be trusted to protect the programs and blasted Republicans for "threatening to actively throw our economy into a tailspin with a default" by putting conditions on the debt limit.

## South Africa's power cuts hit vineyards: No power, no pinot

JOHANNESBURG (BBC): South Africans are struggling with crippling power cuts on a daily basis, which are imposing huge costs on business. As the country's grape harvest gets under way, there are fears about the impact on the wine industry. The rumble of tractors, the churning of the wine press and occasional bouts of laughter from the farm workers provide the soundtrack to the busiest time of the year for the Grootse Post vineyard.

Everyone is active as the picking and processing of the grapes begin at this winery in the picturesque town of Darling, less than 80km (50 miles) from Cape Town, in the west of the country. Bunches of dark pinot noir grapes lie in wooden pallets stacked next to the wine press. A fork-lift truck tips a pallet into the press, releasing a sweet odour into the air. I taste a grape, which is smaller than the supermarket varieties, and much sweeter and full of robust flavour. "In 16 months from now these grapes will be in your glass and you'll be sipping on some lovely bubbly," Peter Pentz, Grootse Post communications manager says. And while that may be true, the winemaker will be having a harder time getting it on to tables in South Africa.

The difficulty for every firm in the industry is that this crucial time of year coincides with the worst rolling power blackouts the country has ever experienced. Not a day has gone by in 2023 without the electricity from the state-run power company Eskom

going down. The interrupted power supply is having a big effect on those hoping to make wine. "As soon as the power cuts, it means that [without a generator] none of the operation can continue within the cellar," Mr Pentz tells the BBC. "No labelling can continue, no bottling and [no] cooling. Especially in the harvesting season it's vital for us to get the fermentation process started."

This vineyard, like many others in the region, has been forced to invest in a back-up generator, but the exorbitant price of diesel is driving up costs and making it hard for small and medium-sized wineries to survive. Grootse Post is spending around 50,000 rand (\$2,800; £2,400) per month on diesel for its generator and the farm still has to spend more on fuel for its tractors. This is representative of the extra costs facing an industry which has big ambitions to grow. South Africa is the eighth largest wine producer in the world, generating about \$3bn in revenue every year.

Around half of the wine made in the country is exported to overseas markets, with UK drinkers being the largest consumers of South African wine. Many wineries are exploring opportunities in Asia - exports to China, for example, have seen double-digit growth in recent years. But the constant power cuts are slashing growth forecasts. The impact is being felt across all sectors of the economy. According to global accounting firm PwC, the South African economy could have grown

by around 7% - instead of less than 2% - last year were it not for "load shedding", as the power cuts are known locally. "This is challenging for us, in fact this is a crisis for us," says Christo Conradie, manager of wine business at Vinpro, which represents nearly 2,600 wine producers and sellers.

"Power is important for our producers because we need to irrigate, specifically at this time of the season we are looking at the ripening of the berries. 'That's why we need to have it [power] and now we are sitting with Eskom that can't supply at an optimal level,' Mr Conradie adds. Though South Africa's power crisis is not new, the problems seem to be getting worse. The country has a fleet of old and inefficient coal-fired power stations that are constantly breaking down. There are two new power stations, but they are not up and running yet and are massively over-budget. Eskom is expected to impose load shedding on a continuous basis for the next two years while it works on a plan to extricate the country from the crisis.

The wine industry is not being passive in its criticism of load shedding. Representatives are talking with the government and have put proposals on the table. Mr Conradie says they have drawn up a timetable of when the winemakers need power most - usually in the early hours of the morning and just after lunch - and have asked for the blackouts to be scheduled around them. The industry is also seeking rebates for diesel fuel and for the government to remove red tape so there can be more investment in solar and other alternative sources of power. Load shedding during the harvest season will exacerbate the situation for battered winemakers which have been lurching from one crisis to another.

The wine industry was just starting to make a comeback following a tough period during the Covid-19 pandemic. Alcohol sales were banned in South Africa during the height of the health emergency and domestic wine sales dropped by 20%. This year's crop is set to be smaller than that of 2022 due to unfavourable weather conditions earlier in the season. To try and alleviate some of the pressures, the department of agriculture last month set up a task team to monitor the impact of load shedding.

"Technical work to measure financial costs is under way and will help to underline the strategy," says department spokesperson Reggie Ngcobo. But when that strategy emerges is hard to know. Nevertheless, back at the Grootse Post vineyard, work continues despite the challenges. There is a resilience and defiant optimism. Mr Pentz is proud of the wines they produce and the way that they can touch different parts of the world. Holding up a fat bunch of grapes he says proudly: "It's amazing to think that we start off from this, and we end up with someone, somewhere in the world, sipping on some grapes coming from South Africa."

## Nigerian senator and wife on trial

LAGOS (BBC): A Nigerian senator is on trial charged with exploiting a 21-year-old to come to London and donate a kidney. Ike Ekweremadu, his wife Beatrice, their daughter Sonia, 25, and an associate, Dr Obinna Obeta, 50, allegedly broke modern slavery laws. The Old Bailey heard that Mr Ekweremadu illegally paid a street trader from Lagos, to travel to the UK, for a donation to help Sonia, who suffers from a kidney disease.

The defendants deny the charges. Opening the case, prosecutor Hugh Davies KC said Mr Ekweremadu's "status and influence had produced a significant degree of wealth". The family from Willesden Green, north-west London, had "international connections," he said. Sonia Ekweremadu's condition, he said, could have been alleviated or cured by a kidney transplant, and the family was "close, open and loving", with a "direct interest in Sonia's medical treatment." But, he told the jury, rewarding someone for a kidney donation was illegal. He said there was an "obvious risk that those providing organs for transplantation for reward are likely to come from the poorest and most vulnerable sections of society." The defendants have been charged under modern slavery legislation which makes it an offence to "arrange or facilitate the travel" of a person to the UK for exploitation.

This offence carries a higher potential sentence of life, compared to a maximum of three years for illegally making an organ donation. The alleged victim, who cannot be named for legal reasons, was recruited from the street markets of Lagos, the court heard, where he had a cart and sold mobile phone parts. He was from a remote village and did not know his exact age, so he "adopted" a date of birth which would make him around 22 now, jurors were told. The court heard he was given medical tests in Nigeria to assess his suitability as a donor before being flown to the UK. He was allegedly offered the equivalent of £2,400 plus the promise that he could live and work in the UK. "To him", Mr Davies said, "a street trader from Lagos, these sums and rewards were significant."

Jurors were told the alleged donor did not understand until his first appointment with a consultant at the Royal Free Hospital that he was there for a kidney transplant. He was said by the consultant to have "limited understanding" of what he was there for and was "visibly relieved" on being told the transplant would not go ahead, the court heard. Mr Davies told the jury that no potential donor would have done it without some form of reward. He said that "elaborate steps were taken to create the wholly false impression that [the alleged victim] and Sonia Ekweremadu were cousins."

## NK pledges 'expanded, intensified' military drills

SEOUL (AFP): North Korea's top army officials have said they will expand and intensify military drills to ensure their readiness for war, state media reported Tuesday, ahead of a massive parade. The pledge came at a meeting overseen by leader Kim Jong Un and follows last week's staging of joint air drills by South Korea and the United States.

The agenda was topped by "the issue of constantly expanding and intensifying the operation and combat drills of the (Korean People's Army) ... strictly perfecting the preparedness for war", the official Korean Central News Agency said. The meeting of North Korea's central military commission comes as commercial satellite imagery suggests "extensive parade preparations" are underway in Pyongyang ahead of key state holidays this month. North Korea celebrates the founding anniversary of its armed forces and the "Day of the Shining Star" on February 16. The latter is the birthday of Kim Jong Il, son of North Korea's founder Kim Il Sung and father of Kim Jong Un.

South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff said Tuesday it was closely monitoring areas surrounding Pyongyang's parade training ground, adding it had seen a "great increase in personnel and vehicles" in recent days. Seoul and Washington have moved to bolster joint military drills following a year of sanctions-busting weapons tests by North Korea, infuriating Pyongyang, which sees such joint exercises as rehearsals for invasion. Last week, the security allies staged joint air drills featuring strategic bombers and stealth fighters, prompting Pyongyang to warn such exercises could "ignite an all-out showdown". The joint exercises, their first this year, came a day after US Defense Secretary Lloyd Austin and his South Korean counterpart vowed to boost security cooperation to counter an increasingly belligerent nuclear-armed North.

North Korea's foreign minister has said the move to ramp up joint drills crossed "an extreme red line". Seoul's defence ministry said a North Korean balloon had crossed over to its airspace at the weekend, but concluded it did not pose a threat. It was believed to be a weather balloon, Yonhap News agency reported, citing officials, and the ministry said it had taken "measures" without elaborating.

The report came after Washington shot down a suspected Chinese surveillance balloon, with Beijing saying that it was a civilian aircraft that had accidentally crossed into US airspace. Experts say meeting of North Korea's top brass aimed to highlight the country's readiness to face down upcoming joint military drills between South Korea and the United States -- and also stress it was prepared for an actual war.

"North Korea is hinting about the possibility of military action in the future in the name of operational and combat training and war preparedness," said Hong Min, researcher at the Korea Institute for National Unification, Yang Moo-jin, professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul, added that the meeting signalled Pyongyang's determination to "aggressively beef up its military". Kim recently called for an "exponential" increase in Pyongyang's nuclear arsenal, including mass-producing tactical nuclear weapons and developing new missiles for nuclear counterstrikes. Kim has also said his country must "overwhelmingly beef up military muscle" in 2023 in response to what Pyongyang calls US and South Korean hostility.

## UN chief fears world is heading toward a wider war

UNITED NATIONS (AP): The United Nations chief warned that the world is facing a convergence of challenges "unlike any in our lifetimes" and expressed fear of a wider war as the first anniversary of Russia's invasion of Ukraine approaches. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said experts who surveyed the state of the world in 2023 set the Doomsday Clock at 90 seconds to midnight - the closest ever to "total global catastrophe."

He pointed to the war in Ukraine, "runaway climate catastrophe, rising nuclear threats," the widening gulf between the world's haves and have-nots, and the "epic geopolitical divisions" undermining "global solidarity and trust." In a wide-ranging address Guterres urged the General Assembly's 193 member nations to change their mindset on decision-making from near-term thinking, which he called "irresponsible" and "immoral," to looking "at what will happen to all of us tomorrow - and act."

He said this year's 75th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights should serve as a reminder that the foundation of the inalienable

rights of all people is "freedom, justice and peace." Guterres said the transformation needed today must start with peace, beginning in Ukraine - where unfortunately, he said, peace prospects "keep diminishing" and "the chances of further escalation and bloodshed keep growing." "I fear the world is not sleepwalking into a wider war. It is doing so with its eyes wide open," he said.

The world must work harder for peace, Guterres said, not only in Ukraine but in the decades-old Israeli-Palestinian conflict "where the two-state solution is growing more distant by the day," in Afghanistan where the rights of women and girls "are being trampled and deadly terrorist attacks continue" and in Africa's Sahel region where security is deteriorating "at an alarming rate." He also called for stepped up peace efforts in military-ruled Myanmar which is facing new violence and repression, in Haiti where gangs are holding the country hostage, "and elsewhere around the world for the two billion people who live in countries affected by conflict and humanitarian crises." The secretary-general said it is time for all countries to

recommit to the UN Charter, which calls for peaceful settlement of disputes, and for a new focus on conflict prevention and reconciliation.

The proposed new UN Agenda for Peace, he said, calls for "a new generation of peace enforcement missions and counter-terrorist operations, led by regional forces," with a UN Security Council mandate that can be enforced militarily and guaranteed funding. "The African Union is an obvious partner in this regard," he added. Guterres also said it is time for nuclear-armed countries to renounce the first use of all nuclear weapons, including tactical nuclear weapons, a possible use that Russia has raised in Ukraine. "The so-called 'tactical' use of nuclear weapons is absurd," he said. "We are at the highest risk in decades of a nuclear war that could start by accident or design. We need to end the threat posed by 13,000 nuclear weapons held in arsenals around the world."

As for the global financial system, Guterres called for "radical transformation" to put the needs of developing countries at the center of every decision. He pointed to rising poverty and hunger around the world, developing countries forced to pay five times more to borrow money than advanced economies, vulnerable middle-income countries denied concessional funding and debt relief, and the richest 1% of the world's people capturing "almost half of all new wealth over the past decade." Multilateral development banks must change their business model to invest more capital in developing countries to achieve UN goals including ending extreme poverty and addressing climate change, Guterres said.

Guterres told diplomats that 2023 must also be "a year of game-changing climate action," not of excuses or baby steps - and there must be "no more bottomless greed of the fossil fuel industry and its enablers." The world must focus on cutting global-warming greenhouse gas emissions by half this decade, which means far more ambitious action to cut carbon pollution by speeding the transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy, especially in the world's 20 richest global economies, he said. It also means cutting emissions from the highest emitting industrial sectors - steel, cement, shipping and aviation, he said.

## Liberal-minded Russians seek a home

BELGRADE, Serbia (AP): At a central square in Serbia's capital of Belgrade, dozens of Russians gathered recently to denounce President Vladimir Putin's war in Ukraine, holding up photos of political prisoners from their homeland. Across the plaza, a billboard touts the Russian propaganda outlet RT, which has launched an online news portal in the country but is banned elsewhere in Europe. Heroic portraits of a bare-chested Putin adorn souvenir T-shirts and coffee mugs, or are painted on city walls.

These conflicting images reflect the complex and delicate relationship these days between Russia and Serbia. The Slavic country is Moscow's closest ally in Europe, with historic, religious and cultural ties that are bolstered by Kremlin political influence campaigns. Russia backs Serbia's claim over its former province of Kosovo, which declared independence in 2008 with Western support. And Serbia has refused to impose sanctions on Moscow over the invasion. At the same time, Serbia wants to join the European Union. Populist President Aleksandar Vucic has denounced the invasion, and about 200,000 Russians have flooded into the country in the past year, with many seeking a new life in a brotherly land free of Kremlin oppression. "Here in Belgrade, we are not perceived with hostility, and that means a lot," said Anastasia Demidova, who arrived in the Balkan nation from Moscow three months ago.

"I've been talking to a lot of Serbian people here and other foreigners. When they ask me 'what are you doing here,' I say: 'We are against Putin and for a democratic Russia and we are against the war in Ukraine, obviously,'" she told The Associated Press. Others say they fled to avoid being drafted or because Western sanctions crippled their businesses or took away their jobs. As a result, Russian can be heard spoken everywhere in Belgrade, a city of about 2 million. Russian-owned restaurants and bars have sprouted. Private Russian enterprises have mushroomed, especially in the IT sector. The influx has sent the price of real estate soaring. This reminds some here of the wave of Russians fleeing the Bolshevik Revolution in 1917, and many of those who stayed in Serbia left their mark on its culture and art.

These modern Russians, however, are maintaining links to their homeland, including financial ties, said historian Aleksej Timofeev. Unlike their predecessors, he said, they can't go onward to the West because of the sanctions and still need visas to travel to richer countries in Europe. "They did not choose this country but came here because it is the only one that would have them," Timofeev added. The newcomers say they can still feel Moscow's heavy-handed influence, especially when it comes to Serbians' approval for Putin, via media outlets like

RT. Russian activist Petar Nikitin calls it a "coordinated propaganda effort."

Nikitin first came to Serbia in the early 2000s. Back then, "this admiration for the Russian government was a lot more marginal ... and I saw it grow exponentially," he said. Russians "who recently arrived, who didn't know much about Serbia before, yes, many of them told me they were completely shocked to see this idolization specifically of Putin, and this picture of Russia that is completely divorced from reality," Nikitin said. Moscow has boosted this sentiment in the pro-Russia media by feeding Serbian anger with the West over Kosovo following the breakup of Yugoslavia in the 1990s. The dispute between Serbia and Kosovo has been a source of tension since the war in 1998-99 that ended when a NATO bombing campaign forced Serbia to pull out of the former Serbian province after a bloody crackdown against Kosovo Albanian separatists and civilians Serbia's rejection of Kosovo's declaration of independence has Moscow's support - one of the reasons why Belgrade maintains friendly relations with Putin and has refused to join Western sanctions. While Vucic has criticized the invasion of Ukraine, he puts a uniquely Balkan spin on it. "We do support territorial integrity of Ukraine, as we do support territorial integrity of Serbia," he told the World Economic Forum in Davos last month.



The Frontier Post

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## Human rights and Mali’s dictator

ACCORDING to the media, Mali’s ruling junta has declared the head of the UN Human Rights Division in their country, Persona Non-Grata (PNG), and told him to leave the west African nation within 48 hours. According to the details, Mali Military rulers accused the UN official of involvement in subversive and destabilizing activities against Mali and having a biased view during the recent UN Security Council briefing regarding Mali.

The Republic of Mali has been embattled with jihadist militant Groups and communal violence in various parts of the country over the past decades. The resource-rich African nation faced foreign conspiracies along with political and economic instability most time in its history, while recurrent military coups remained instrumental in the economic depletion and frailty of democratic institutions in the country. Previously, the United Nations deployed UN Peace Keepers in Mali under MINUSMA (United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali) in 2013, while France also deployed its troops under a bilateral arrangement with its former colony for a train and assist mission to help support Malian Security Forces to combat extremist violence. The reports suggest that over 75% of Malian territory is under the control of extremist groups that are massively involved in violence, and human rights abuses while the civilian population is totally at the mercy of armed groups and military commanders.

The trilateral efforts including UN Peace Keepers, French Special Forces along with Malian troops failed to realize peace despite multiple extensions in MINUSMA’s mandate in the past years, which led to frustration among the partners. The Malian military junta struck a deal with the Russian private contractor, the Wagner Group to support its military campaign against rebels, while France quickly pulled back its troops from Mali after Russia’s intervention in the African state. The UN Peace Keepers are still idling in violence-hit Mali with no significant achievement, whereas the host nation completely broke off with the UN contingent.

Presently, a renewed tussle had been prompted between Mali and US-led western nations who perceive the presence of the Russian Wagner Group as a major threat to their strategic interests in Africa. Although conflict-hit Mali had been an epicenter of violence against civilians and human rights abuses thought-out history, however, the western human rights campaign against Mali is unmatched after Bamako forged a partnership with the Russian Private Contractor. On the other hand, the Malian military regime also took notice of western criticism of its policies and human rights issues by intensifying its diplomatic row against France and the UN mission in Mali for their noncooperation and alleged inference in domestic affairs.

Apparently, the Malian military junta failed to control jihadist violence and restore democracy over the past two years, yet it is facing political pressure and serious economic backlash in maintaining its grip on the country. Therefore, Military rulers launched a disinformation campaign to portray Russia and its Wagner Groups as saviour of the Malians and discredit the UN and the west by labeling them as hegemonies and colonial powers. In fact, low-caliber people abuse high offices in arrogance and self-admiration. Although, the Malian dictator has reprimanded the UN human rights defender, however, he will ultimately feel regret over his action after his deposition from power.

## FATA residents and new social code

ACCORDING to the reports, the tribesmen from Erstwhile FATA became frustrated with the delays justice system and prolonged hearing of cases, corrupt practices of the Police, and no service of the local governments of newly merged districts of tribal regions. Although tribesmen are mostly satisfied with the FATA merger because they receive the services of over 30 government departments at their doorstep including Rescue 1122, but lengthy, complicated, and delayed justice delivery often makes them uncomfortable and look the former Jirga system a hundred times better than modern-day British Judicial System.

Erstwhile FATA has been ruled through draconian law including the Frontier Crime Regulations (FCR), tribal Malikis, and Political Agents who had been acting as Viceroy in their respective region. That system of governance was introduced by the British government date back in 1901. The FCR is usually remembered as black law because it introduced collective punishment of families and tribes for crimes of individuals and also empowered tribal chiefs and jirga to act as court and award punishments to the culprits in their respective areas. The jirga system significantly curbed the crimes in Tribal societies but it flourished the transgressions in another way that tribal areas become safe havens for criminals across the country along with hubs of illegal arms, drugs, and other illegal activities.

After the FATA merger, the political agents and jirga systems were replaced by police and magistrate courts, their unending investigations, prolonged case hearings, unethical prosecution, along with the corruption of government servants complicated the process for poor masses, thus the public became annoyed by the new social culture. Meanwhile, the 19th amendment introduced a full-fledged local government system in tribal districts which outlawed drug business, keeping and smuggling arms, terrorists harboring, and other multiple activities that were not banned earlier, thus the crooks and their facilitators were frustrated extremely with the new mechanism and making all efforts to revitalize their lost heavens. Apparently, there are multiple faults in the current-day British judicial and police system including corruption and nepotism. At the same time, the conservatism of tribesmen is another reason for their disassociation with standard procedure. Finally, all that will go well with the public in due course of time.

# Why some EU countries in the east are still pro-Russia

Sona Muzikárová

Brussels, while ramping up domestic anti-EU propaganda.

The persistent pro-Russian sentiments in these three countries have a lot to do with recent history and Russian opportunism. The transition from communism in Eastern Europe came with high expectations for free-

refused to deliver arms to Ukraine, echoing the popular belief that doing so would drag these countries into the conflict. Bulgaria’s previous government had to secretly provide Kyiv with ammunition and fuel, concealing the fact from the public.

While the Slovak government has extended bold and open help to Ukraine,

ideas of pan-Slavic unity, and similarities across languages, history, and culture.

Of course, these strategies succeed better where weak democratic fundamentals enable them to. Surging energy prices, the cost-of-living crisis, poverty, and high inflation have

propaganda across Eastern (and Western) Europe should be tackled head-on.

The average share of Eastern European households with internet access has risen markedly compared to a decade ago, to 93 percent in 2022, providing malignant actors with an excellent opportunity to reach the masses. Social media platforms have been,

who push its propaganda on traditional media channels. In Bulgaria, for example, a senior member of the previous government revealed that public figures are paid 2,000 euros (\$2,150) to spread pro-Kremlin propaganda in the public space.

There are several things that can be done to take the narrative back. In Europe, the war has highlighted the benefits of information space regulation, personal data protection, policies that increase the transparency of online platforms, and understanding of algorithms and content moderation. Awareness campaigns that caution users about online spaces’ misuse and risks should be instituted to shield the general public, especially vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, as social media platforms are now a dominant source of information, as well as a space for social interaction. Brussels is also late to adopt policies on digital literacy for children and young adults. In a 2021 study, only about half of 15-year-olds in the EU reported being instructed on how to detect fake or biased information, despite the pandemic having hastened the trend towards internet use and online learning. The displacement of traditional, more carefully curated information sources, such as encyclopedias and journals, demands new skills, including fact-checking and critical thinking, for students and teachers to be able to navigate this new complexity.

Indeed, information resilience may look like an uphill battle, but it is crucial for the EU to pursue it. The unhindered spread of falsehoods can threaten the integrity and security of entire nations and undercut an effective EU response to the war in Ukraine.

Aljazeera

**Moscow, using its Cold War propaganda toolkit, cleverly tapped into these anxieties and irrational nostalgia for the "comfort" of communism, exploiting the ideas of pan-Slavic unity, and similarities across languages, history, and culture. Of course, these strategies succeed better where weak democratic fundamentals enable them to. Surging energy prices, the cost-of-living crisis, poverty, and high inflation have also fed popular frustration and further fuelled pro-Russia sentiments. This is not just Slovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary's problem, but the EU's at large and it must be addressed. Clinging to such attitudes perpetuates the long-standing east-west rift within the EU, weakens the EU resolve on backing Ukraine, and opens the door to Russia's "divide and conquer" tactics. Tackling the economic crisis and intergenerational change in institutions can help mitigate some factors that feed Euroscepticism and pro-Russia sentiments. But they are in no way a comprehensive solution. Pro-Russian propaganda across Eastern (and Western) Europe should be tackled head-on. The average share of Eastern European households with internet access has risen markedly compared to a decade ago, to 93 percent in 2022, providing malignant actors with an excellent opportunity to reach the masses. Social media platforms have been, indeed, shaping the ways in which events - such as the COVID-19 pandemic or the war in Ukraine - are understood, narrated, and remembered.**

including supplies of heavy weaponry, and is among its top backers internationally in terms of aid given as a percentage of gross domestic product (GDP), it has sided with Hungary when it comes to economically uncomfortable decisions, such as last year's EU oil ban, for which it negotiated an exemption. Both Bratislava and Budapest have also threatened to pay for Russian gas in roubles, if push came to shove, following Moscow's decision to receive gas payments only in its currency. The Hungarian administration has repeatedly blocked sanctions against Russia in

dom, democracy and prosperity that have not always been met. The pursuit of the Western model of development not only failed to deliver in the eyes of some Eastern Europeans, but produced feelings of inadequacy and disillusionment.

This disappointment created a space for foreign malignant interference, buttressed by the growth of social media and other unregulated digital spaces in the past 15 years. Moscow, using its Cold War propaganda toolkit, cleverly tapped into these anxieties and irrational nostalgia for the "comfort" of communism, exploiting the

also fed popular frustration and further fuelled pro-Russia sentiments. This is not just Slovakia, Bulgaria and Hungary's problem, but the EU's at large and it must be addressed. Clinging to such attitudes perpetuates the long-standing east-west rift within the EU, weakens the EU resolve on backing Ukraine, and opens the door to Russia's "divide and conquer" tactics. Tackling the economic crisis and intergenerational change in institutions can help mitigate some factors that feed Euroscepticism and pro-Russia sentiments. But they are in no way a comprehensive solution. Pro-Russian

indeed, shaping the ways in which events - such as the COVID-19 pandemic or the war in Ukraine - are understood, narrated, and remembered. That is why Moscow has ramped up its disinformation campaign after the full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Restrictions imposed by the EU on its propaganda channels, such as RT and Sputnik, have not limited the reach of its fake news. The Kremlin has not only looked for new online channels to reach targeted audiences, but also weaponised its diplomats and expanded a network of paid commentators in various European countries,

## Blair’s failures over Omagh bombing have become outright hostility to the truth under Conservatives

Fintan O’Toole

IT is hard to imagine anything worse than the Real IRA’s bombing of the market town of Omagh on 15 August 1998. It was the deadliest single atrocity of the Troubles in Northern Ireland. The 29 people who were slaughtered that day included toddlers, primary school kids, teenage girls volunteering in the Oxfam shop and a young woman who was pregnant with twins.

Yet for those left behind, and for the 220 people injured that day, there was in fact one thing worse: the tormenting thought that it could all have been prevented. The bereaved and the survivors have had to live with the haunting possibility that the police and the intelligence services could have saved them from this unspeakable calamity. Only now, with the announcement by the Northern Ireland secretary, Chris Heaton-Harris, of an independent inquiry into what the security services knew in advance of the attack, can they hope to lay those ghosts to rest. The inquiry should have been established 20 years ago. In December 2001, Nuala O’Loan, then the police ombudsman for Northern Ireland, published a report

on what the Royal Ulster Constabulary may have known before the Omagh massacre. Her remit did not go beyond the RUC, and O’Loan could not investigate the British intelligence services or indeed the police across the border in the Republic, where the bomb was prepared. Yet even this limited perspective revealed some very disturbing evidence.

On 4 August 1998, 11 days before the bombing, the RUC received an anonymous telephone call warning that there would be an "unspecified" terrorist attack on police in Omagh on 15 August 1998. The caller gave a detailed account that identified two putative attackers by name. The officer who took the call was convinced that the informant was genuine. This warning was given to special branch, but never passed on to the relevant divisional commander in Omagh. According to O’Loan: "When he was shown the intelligence two years later, on the anniversary of the explosion, he said he would have set up vehicle checkpoints." Those checkpoints would probably have blocked the bombers.

Three days before the bombing, a reliable informant,

ant, known as Kevin Fulton, who spied on the IRA for MI5, told his handlers that the Real IRA was about to "move something north over the next few days". Fulton had earlier told them that a known associate of the Real IRA "smelled of fertiliser", which was used in making the bomb. While the car bomb was being moved into position in Omagh on 15 August 1998, a call was made from this same man’s mobile phone to one of those later thought to have been responsible for the atrocity. No attempt was made to assess this intelligence, let alone act on it. Records of the handler’s meeting with Fulton seem to have disappeared from the special branch files. Likewise, when a review of the RUC’s own handling of the Omagh case was conducted in 2000, these warnings were initially withheld from the investigators. The record of the anonymous call was specifically marked as "Intelligence does not refer to Omagh".

Most egregiously, we know that intelligence reports relevant to the atrocity were never passed on to the police team that was supposed to be bringing

the perpetrators to justice. O’Loan identified at least 280 such documents, and believed there were probably more. Does any of this really matter? None of it changes the essential truth that the massacre was the work of a gang of IRA dissidents seeking to destroy the peace deal created a few months earlier through the Good Friday agreement. None of it can now make up for the failure to convict anyone for this horrendous crime. (The Real IRA leader, Michael McKevitt, who was almost certainly involved in the Omagh bomb, was convicted in the Republic for the less specific offence of "directing terrorism".)

It matters, though, for two big reasons - one human, the other political. First, there is the pain of the bereaved and the injured. It is unconscionable that their suffering has been deepened both by the failure to bring the perpetrators to justice and by what looks very like a covering up of information that would help them to understand what happened. They should not have to wade through waters that have been deliberately muddled. The demands of basic decency

aside, however, there is a wider political context. The refusal of the state for more than 20 years to engage with the aftermath of Omagh is part of a wider failure to deal with the legacy of the Troubles. O’Loan’s report appeared shortly after a much more spectacular terrorist atrocity, the 9/11 attacks in the US. Tony Blair, who was then prime minister, was "moving on" from Northern Ireland to other (disastrously ill-conceived) missions. Raising awkward questions about the uses and abuses of intelligence became, in the run-up to the Iraq war, increasingly undesirable.

This neglect of duty by Blair has turned, under Conservative governments, into active hostility to truth-seeking. The Omagh families are finally getting an inquiry because the high court in Belfast recognised that they have a right under the European convention on human rights to a proper investigation of their loved ones’ murders. But ending the UK’s adherence to the ECHR is an obsession of the Tory right. Even worse is the government’s Northern Ireland Troubles legacy and reconciliation bill, now before the House of Lords, which seeks to close down all further crim-

inal and civil actions related to crimes committed during the Troubles. It will even shut down inquests - 23 of which are pending.

The vindication of the Omagh families after more than two decades of official obfuscation is a reminder of why the ECHR is necessary - without transnational standards of human rights, the UK’s duty to stand up for its own citizens can be brushed aside. And the concession of an inquiry into Omagh contradicts the British government’s belief that "reconciliation" can be achieved by burying the pain of the Troubles. Every bereaved family has the right to know as much of the truth about how their loved ones died as can be recovered from the pit of shame, amnesia and evasion into which so much of it has been cast. Whether the perpetrators were loyalists or republicans, soldiers or police, the agony of not knowing is the same. Only a comprehensive truth recovery process in which immunity from prosecution is dependent on honest accounting for what was done to the victims can stop the past from being a living torment. So long as that imperative is postponed, ghosts will continue to haunt the land.

## From demands about avocado rotation to staff in tears, working for the Tories can be perilous

Gaby Hinsliff

WHEN Hazel Settas took a job as housekeeper to a wealthy Tory MP, she evidently wasn’t ready for what she found. Her instructions for running the former minister Jonathan Djanogly’s £7m home read more like the backstage rider of a particularly demanding pop diva than something out of Mrs Beeton.

Rules on the management of avocados alone ran to 100 words, with a strict system of rotation between bowl and fridge to maintain ripeness ("check to see if there are eight soft avocados in the fridge ... if not add up the missing number of soft avocados and put this number of hard avocados into the fruit bowl"). Phone calls were to be answered within four rings, and there were instructions on carrying items correctly from the coffee table to the

sink. Settas, who lasted only a fortnight in the job, said she had to work until 10 or 11 at night to complete her tasks and that the MP’s wife, Rebecca Silk, allegedly shouted at her to "hurry up"; the housekeeper cried, she says, in her room at night.

"I was shocked she would behave like that when her husband was an MP," Settas told the Sunday Mirror, after successfully pursuing Silk through the courts for £886 in wages that she argued she was owed. But, given how some of Djanogly’s colleagues have been behaving lately, perhaps it won’t have come as much of a shock to readers. A second, unnamed housekeeper, who also took legal action after working for the Djanogly-Silk household, was awarded £3,148 in unauthorised wage deductions, overtime and annual leave, with the

judge concluding that Silk had "sought to deprive" her of important working rights. By grim coincidence, all this hit the headlines just as the House of Lords was due to debate the fate of employment laws post-Brexit - amid concerns that a raft of protections derived from the EU could be swept away at the stroke of a ministerial pen - and Downing Street was grappling with a series of workplace bullying allegations against deputy prime minister Dominic Raab (which he denies).

Working for the rich is famously never easy, and the same can be true of cabinet ministers under pressure. What’s fascinating about both these cases is that they fall into a grey area of workplace behaviour that’s becoming more and more crucial to define.

Withholding pay is obviously against the law; nothing grey about that. But being strangely controlling about avocados isn’t illegal. The ministerial code does specifically outlaw bullying at work, defined by the civil service as intimidating or insulting behaviour. But it’s still ultimately a subjective judgment as to whether leaving junior officials in floods of tears, as Raab is said to have done, is a sacking offence or still just within the boundaries of what one ally tactfully calls behaving "like a CEO". When does being the kind of scary boss many of us have occasionally encountered tip over into being the kind of boss nobody should have to tolerate? Or to put it another way: how far should anyone, in any walk of life, be allowed to behave like a jerk?

On the one hand sits a "never did me any harm" brigade, who think it’s feeble to complain about the sort of ritual hazing that happened all the time when they were young. On the other are people who recognise that that was 30 years ago, and that Tory MPs who have spent a decade or more in parliament - as arcane a workplace, in its way, as the mansions of the super-rich - may have lost touch with what they fondly imagine the outside working world to be like. Mark Price, another former Tory minister and the former managing director of Waitrose, who is now running the digital career development platform WorkL, warned at the weekend that his firm’s research suggests 33% of British workers are considering leaving their jobs. That’s unusual, on the brink of a recession, but is a

marker of changing times, where workers can - if only temporarily - afford to be more picky, with more vacancies lying open than a shrunken post-Brexit workforce can currently fill. Keeping people happy, Price told the Sunday Times, is now paramount for employers; the biggest driver of job satisfaction is a good relationship with your manager, yet on average British bosses dish out far more criticism than praise. Maybe the Ministry of Justice should get him in for some pointers.

Or better still - and ideally before ministers run the red pen over all those hard-won employment rights - maybe this administration could accept that the world has moved on since the 1990s, and that whatever the 2023 definition of being "like a CEO" involves, it isn’t making people cry.



# The ‘leftwing economic establishment’ did not bring Liz Truss down. Reality did

“This soul-searching has not been easy,” she writes. But though she looked everywhere, Liz Truss never found it. Instead, she found blame to scatter on everyone but herself for the havoc left by her 49 days: even ChatGPT would have written her 4,000-word non-apologia with more humanity and humility. Truss's attempt at resurrection would be easily dismissed, except that her hallucinations are rampant across her party: ideas not cauterised by searing confrontation with reality.

Though Truss was outlasted by a lettuce, let's reprise how she did such damage in so short a time: her mini-budget was more of a mini H-bomb. Within hours the pound plummeted and borrowing costs soared. When her chancellor proclaimed more was to come, gilt markets plunged and the Bank of England rushed in with a monster £65bn bailout. That has left some highly exposed defined benefit pensions missing billions and people with mortgages paying the price.

The country still suffers her "moron premium": it is less trusted to borrow and so obliged to pay more, says Prof David Blanchflower, a former member of the Bank of England's monetary policy committee. "She has exposed the UK economy as knife-edge fragile," he tells me. "And she made it worse with what she has written." That's because, unrepentant, she exposes the core beliefs of a party where many are all too eager to try her killer recipe again. The failure of her real-life

Polly Toynbee

experiment has left many as convinced as ever of the theory. Plenty in her party agree that she was essentially right, she just didn't roll the pitch. They cling to their theoretical Laffer curve, claiming tax cuts for the rich yield more tax to the exchequer, though as Blanchflower says, "Trump disproved it definitively. His \$2tn tax cuts for the rich left \$2tn of debts." The head-on smash when ideology confronts the real world seems to have left Truss and her party concussed but undeterred. Hers was the latest of three lethal economic experiments. Austerity came first, George Osborne cutting back to a smaller government during a recession, when every economic precedent said it was a time to invest, so UK growth lagged behind. Then came Brexit, its high price to be paid for years to come. And now, this Trussonomics crash.

Free markets, that was the mantra of the contributors to Britannia Unchained, the 2012 Truss, Kwasi Kwarteng, Dominic Raab, Chris Skidmore and Priti Patel manifesto for Singapore-on-Thames Toryism. Yet those free markets brought her down, not her imaginary "leftwing economic establishment". The hedge-funder Crispin Odey, a Brexiteer and Tory donor, who made another fortune betting on Truss trashing the pound and bonds, is the market personified: the brute force of money trumps ideology every time. Bleating that no one warned her of the risk to bond markets as she borrowed billions to give the well-off

a tax cut, it was she who had had enough of experts; she who fired Tom Scholar, head of the Treasury; she who threatened the governor of the Bank of England, questioning the institution's remit; and barred the Office for Budget Responsibility from alerting her to exactly this kind of blunder. She writes: "Even though the measure was economically sound, I underestimated the political backlash I would face, which focused almost entirely on the 'optics'." The optics? No, reality brought her down.

Most Tories seem none the wiser, as the jittery factions fight it out, ready to back that magic cuts formula again if May's local elections are half as bad as they fear. Truss has few personal adherents, but she is the party's standard-bearer for low taxes. The other resentful ex-PM echoes her themes, telling Nadine Dorries that cutting tax "needs to happen", helping the "Bring back Boris, he did nothing wrong" grumbling groundswell. Suella Braverman, with her old-school rightist faction, is of that ilk; no contender is too improbable after Truss. But they have lost public trust on the economy, and whenever Truss speaks she will remind voters of who really chose her as prime minister, what she did and the small state ideal they still cleave to. And look at their so-called "sensibles". Up pops BlackRock's Rupert Harrison, an architect of Osborne's austerity which knocked the UK economy back behind most of the EU. He

tweets patronisingly that Truss got things in the wrong order: tax cuts should only come after "public sector reform and a sustainably smaller state". The destination is the same, on the same Truss spectrum of delusion, along with their supporters in the press. The Sunday Telegraph leader says: "The statist Tory establishment has had its turn and the party is cratering in the polls; the free-marketeers must now speak up." The Mail leader says: "The ideas she stands for may be due for serious re-examination." Tory thinktanks, funded by God knows who, swirl with this "solution" to the party's directionless drifting.

But their great omerà, what they never dare reveal, is what "small government" and "deregulation" mean and how on earth they could ever turn it into an even faintly palatable election platform. When ambulances no longer turn up to save Grandma and mothers give up work for lack of childcare, when pay for nurses and teachers is falling, while energy bills are due to shoot up again and no one can see any difference when the railways are on strike, "small state" looks a formidably hard sell. They never say what, exactly, they mean to cut, shrink or deregulate. This is their addictive elixir to revive flagging spirits when all else looks lost, though it's a sure-fire loser. Incidentally, observers puzzled by the Truss phenomenon may like to check the Dunning-Kruger effect: "Unskilled and unaware of it: how difficulties in recognising one's own incompetence lead to inflated self-assessments."

The Guardian



## In Ukraine’s skies, drones tell a story of two wars

Keir Giles

**To understand Russia and Ukraine's very different ways of fighting, a good first place to look is up. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has been described as the "first full-scale drone war." That description may be a little misleading - all of the ways in which we have seen drones being employed in the conflict have precedents, some of them dating back over a decade.**

And this isn't the first war in which the capabilities of unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) have been so thoroughly integrated into operations. But it is true that the fighting in Ukraine represents the first long-term, sustained conflict where all the currently available uses for drones are an indispensable part of combined operations - and on both sides. Those two sides are very different. The drones involved, and how they are used, present a kind of shorthand for Russia's and Ukraine's contrasting approaches to fighting wars overall.

We see Russia turning to its fellow authoritarian regimes for help. In drone warfare, we see the pitting of Russian (or Iranian) low-tech mass against Ukraine's expensive defense capabili-

ties. These solutions cover the full range - from hobby drones adapted for surveillance and reconnaissance, through to improvised mini-bombers carrying grenades for dropping on Russian troops, and full-scale military-specification UAVs purchased through citizen funding.

Drone operations also highlight Ukraine's skill in the information war with Russia, and in the battle for hearts and minds far beyond the battlefield. Take for instance the drone that was most prominent in reporting in the early stages of the conflict - the Turkish-built Bayraktar TB2. Because this was a Ukrainian-operated system that could inflict visible and dramatic damage on the Russian invader, its role in the conflict was carefully played up by Ukrainian information operations.

This was a key element in challenging the widespread perception of the Russian armed forces as greatly superior in capability to Ukraine's, and sparked a competition between Ukraine and Russia for public perceptions of drone effects - a competition which Ukraine has won convincingly. Like so many

demonstrated the utility of so-called kamikaze drones (now more euphemistically referred to by some users as "one-way UAVs"), designed not to carry weapons but to be the weapons themselves, destroying enemy vehicles through direct impact. This capability sparked intense interest in Russia, where military officers saw it as a potential key enabler for tackling NATO tanks. But as in other cases, Russia still wasn't able to develop the technology itself, leading it to turn instead to Iran. Besides simply shooting a drone down if it presents a large enough target, it can be neutralized by jamming or hijacking its data link (electronic warfare) or hacking its operating system (the "cyber" option). Private suppliers to the Ukrainian Armed Forces, including through crowd-funding, have been requesting sourcing of consumer drones with very specific firmware versions - in some cases preferring older firmware to newer - because they have been found to be more resistant to capture using Russian hacking methods.

It's clear an unpublishable cyber contest between Russian and Ukrainian UAV operators is playing out - a kind of cat-and-

**But a closer look at them shows the low-tech solutions - plastic bottles and ordinary consumer cameras - that Russia cobbles together to get a drone flying. It also turns out that both Russia and Iran rely on components imported from the US and the West, to build their current generation of drones. Meanwhile Ukraine turns instead to its citizens, and friends abroad, to crowdfund solutions on a volunteer basis because its people are the ones that are motivated to win this fight for survival. These solutions cover the full range - from hobby drones adapted for surveillance and reconnaissance, through to improvised mini-bombers carrying grenades for dropping on Russian troops, and full-scale military-specification UAVs purchased through citizen funding. Drone operations also highlight Ukraine's skill in the information war with Russia, and in the battle for hearts and minds far beyond the battlefield. Take for instance the drone that was most prominent in reporting in the early stages of the conflict - the Turkish-built Bayraktar TB2.**

ties. It's a tactic seeking to exhaust Ukraine by making that defense unaffordable - Ukraine has no choice but to conduct costly intercepts of cheap drones to protect its critical civilian infrastructure from Russia's campaign of destruction. We see the hype about advanced Russian capabilities that was heard in the years before the war shown up in some cases to be empty flimflam. Some of Russia's drones are designed to be flown as high-tech packages supporting each other and relaying information back to artillery batteries to conduct strikes. But a closer look at them shows the low-tech solutions - plastic bottles and ordinary consumer cameras - that Russia cobbles together to get a drone flying.

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other aspects of Russia's warfighting capacity, analysts had anticipated ahead of February's full-scale invasion of Ukraine that drone warfare would be overwhelmingly weighted in favor of Moscow. But Ukraine too entered the drone war fully prepared - after a long process of upgrading capabilities and adapting tactics based on the lessons of its eight-year struggle against Russian regular and proxy forces in the east of the country.

This included integrating large numbers of smaller adapted consumer drones, alongside more expensive higher-specification UAVs. In other conflicts, like Syria, these drones were labeled "the poor man's air force." But in Ukraine, an emergency solution - a low cost, commercially available stopgap - evolved instead into an integrated capability. Meanwhile, other previous conflicts highlighted the rapid pace of new applications for drones, driven by the integration of additional technologies.

The brief conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan in April 2016

mouse game of operators and their adversaries struggling for control of drones. And drones are used to deliver cyber attacks too - something Russia was doing well before 2022. The long-anticipated next phase in their evolution is the harnessing of machine learning to give drones greater autonomy - either operating in self-managing swarms, like a lethal version of popular drone light shows, or even making their own decisions on when to launch attacks.

Here too, Russia's hype has been shown up - claims that Russia was already operating drone swarms in major exercises three years ago turned out on closer inspection to just mean multiple drones flown by multiple operators at the same time. But with the speed at which drone technology is advancing, Western militaries should have decisions in place now for how they are to deal with both the operational and moral challenges of their own or their enemies' drones being able to kill without human supervision.

CNN

## Will Sweden, Finland’s NATO membership prolong Ukraine war?

Huseyin Bagci & Tolga Sakman

**Russia remains firmly opposed to Sweden and Finland's possible NATO membership, but both countries are adamant on discarding their longstanding neutrality and becoming part of the military alliance. Below, two experts present their views on whether the Nordic states' push to become NATO members could escalate and prolong the ongoing war in Ukraine.**

Tolga Sakman: Sweden and Finland's NATO accession can help end the Ukraine war. NATO is expected to further deter Russian aggression without embroiling itself in a direct conflict with Moscow. For this, NATO needs to increase its military capacity, pursue a cohesive political policy, and be more capable diplomatically. Sweden and Finland firmly belong in the community of Western values, which NATO also represents. Any possible conflict with Russia will not just be shaped by leaders or weapons.

The fact is that both Sweden and Finland are known for their neutrality and economic prowess. Having them in NATO will not only boost the confidence of the bloc's members, but also open a new front against Russia. On the other hand, there has been debate among NATO allies, which created a new conjuncture and led to some regional challenges. Russian aggression against Ukraine took place in the midst of these disputes, which is why NATO was

unable to give a quick joint response. Many hope that Europe will become stronger with Sweden and Finland's accession to NATO.

With this context, it can be predicted that both Sweden and Finland, which borders Russia, will enable NATO to play a more active role in ending the Ukraine conflict. The military capacities of both countries are already above NATO standards. Finland has increased its defense budget to 2% of its GDP in line with NATO targets, while Sweden aims to do the same by 2028. Both countries have hiked spending on military vehicles and ammunition. Finland inked a deal to buy 64 F-35 fighter aircraft from the US, while Sweden developed its own fighter jet, Gripen.

The two countries have ramped up interaction with NATO since the war began, participating in every meeting about the conflict and becoming somewhat part of the alliance's defense mechanism. Their membership will also give NATO some geographical advantages over Russia. First, Russia's border with NATO would more than double with the addition of 1,340 kilometers (832 miles). This will be particularly challenging for Moscow because Finland shares a border with what is Russia's most strategic region in terms of nuclear capacity.

For Moscow, military buildup in the region is one of the main

strategies it relies on to projects threat of expanding the war. It is also obvious that the Baltic countries, which do not pose a direct threat to Russia, will receive additional support with Sweden and Finland's inclusion in NATO. Russia's two strategic regions of St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad are in the Baltic region, leading to a security dilemma for both sides. We know that Russia officially opposes Sweden and Finland's accession to NATO. Their inclusion will challenge Moscow's defense capacity and possibly force it to switch to a new strategy.

All of this means Russia will be more likely to take a strategic step back and be more inclined to negotiate in Ukraine in order to navigate this transformation or implement measures against these new threats. Huseyin Bagci: Finland and Sweden's NATO membership will not help end the Ukraine war. On the contrary, their accession could prolong the war. The Ukraine-Russia war can be seen as a part of NATO's grand strategy. When it began in February 2022, it radically changed all regional and global calculations that existed since the end of the Cold War. In particular, Finland and Sweden's push to immediately join NATO is driven by concerns over Russia's potential aggression against its other neighbors.

When they join NATO, Sweden will shed 200 years of neutrality

and Finland more than 70 years, marking a turning point in European history. Their inclusion in NATO, therefore, will not end the war. On the contrary, it will take the war into a new phase. Russia will have a new 1,300-kilometer (over 800-mile) border with a NATO state, which will lead to a change in Moscow's foreign policy. NATO expansion will push Russia to send more troops to this region and escalate its tensions with the alliance. According to statements emanating from Moscow, there is also the possibility of a spillover into a tactical nuclear war. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg's remarks on Russian nuclear threats indicate the bloc will respond to any possible nuclear attack.

He has warned Russia "that a nuclear war can never be won and therefore should never be fought." The threat of nuclear war is looming over Europe and all sides are aware of the danger. As a matter of fact, Germany, Finland, and Norway's decisions to send Leopard 2 tanks, as well as the US' approval for delivery of Abrams tanks to Ukraine, destroyed any hopes for talks to end the conflict. Discussions within NATO will now include giving warplanes to Ukraine as part of the alliance's military support for Kyiv. Finland and Sweden's NATO membership will definitely prolong the war, particularly as it seems that both Ukraine and Russia are not yet ready for peace talks.

## Canada is coming undone

Andrew Mitrovica

**THREAD by thread, the idea of lovely Canada is coming undone. Some, if not many, Canadians are likely to consider my indictment as a click-bait-driven exaggeration or hyperbole. There is, I think, more than a measure of truth in that uncharitable opening sentence. This nation, widely known and admired for its tolerance and kindness, has changed and is changing in ways that call into question Canadians' understanding and appreciation of what has allegedly made Canada different from other, much more turbulent and much less generous places in the world.**

The discovery over the past two years of mass, unmarked graves of Indigenous children - victims of the cruel, forced assimilation by white, evangelical settlers - has proven, of course, to be a blunt antidote to the myth of "caring, considerate" Canada. The country is only beginning to confront and make tangible, not rhetorical, amends for that historic injustice and inhumanity. The notion of enlightened Canada was wounded - perhaps beyond repair - after the usually sedate capital, Ottawa, was occupied in early 2022 by an army of obnoxious extortionists who wrapped their ignorance and selfishness in the maple leaf and claimed the flag as their own with such grating arrogance and certainty.

Like petulant children, they were loud and impatient, consumed by incoherent anger that made them blind to the necessity of sacrifice in pursuit of a greater and common good that the pandemic and extraordinary circumstances demanded of each of us. The residue of their irritating pettiness and fictitious grievances not only lingers like a persistent rash, but is also being exploited by rank, myopic politicians who con-

fuse tantrums with "freedoms" to sow division and mistrust. It was a sad, depressing spectacle which confirmed that a familiar, sinister strain of extremism - born of illiteracy and faith in lunatic conspiracy theories - had metastasized into and throughout Canada with all the sorry, corrosive consequences.

The image of a quiet, peaceable Canada has been defaced by wannabe insurrectionists who, despite the incessant honking, bouncy castles and makeshift hot tubs, had real designs to overthrow a sitting government to satisfy their rage-fuelled political aims. These days, their sick view of "public discourse" is to threaten and intimidate civil servants - online and in-person - with a barrage of coarseness and profanity since they are allergic to what could even be remotely described as a novel thought. They are unrepentant bullies, not so-called "patriots". The jarring scene of the deputy prime minister, Chrystia Freeland, being called "a traitor" and "a b\*\*\*h" by a beefy, T-shirt-wearing lout in the lobby of an Alberta hotel just months after the disinformation "convoy" was evicted from Ottawa is disgraceful evidence of how obscenity has, it seems, trumped Canada's celebrated civility. Canada's character and conscience were shocked again when, on New Year's Eve, a 37-year-old mother, wife and firefighter died in intolerable pain after waiting for urgent care in a teeming emergency room in Nova Scotia for many hours. The horror experienced by Allison Holthoff and her loving family was not supposed to happen in a country where universal access to hospitals and the doctors and nurses who populate them is determined not by money or stature, but by need. The

details of what Allison endured not only defy belief but pierce the heart and soul. Her long, agonising death has also revealed that something deep and essential to what once defined Canada has gone wrong.

At a news conference, Allison's husband, Gunter, recounted their dreadful ordeal in a calm, dispassionate voice. Gunter carried Allison into the emergency room on his back. He found a wheelchair and ferried his wife into the triage portal to register. A security guard offered the pair some water and a blanket. Allison, Gunter said, was in "obvious" pain. Nurses arrived and recorded Allison's vitals and took blood samples. Getting Allison to provide a urine sample was difficult. She collapsed onto the bathroom floor, her pants drooping below her waist. Security guards helped Gunter lift Allison into the wheelchair. They returned to the main waiting room. Gunter told nurses Allison was "getting worse". Then, Allison laid on the floor, in a fetal position, to try to relieve the pain. The nurses told Gunter to put Allison back into the wheelchair.

"[I] can't really blame them," Gunter said. "There was a lot going on. It was fairly busy." Gunter was promised that the "next bed would be ours". The "next bed" would be hours away. In the meantime, Allison's condition deteriorated. Still, they waited. Finally, Allison was wheeled into an "exam" room. Apart from a bed, a chair and a desk, the room was empty. Gunter returned to the nurse's station several times to say Allison was in distress. The nurses gave her a bedpan. A nurse asked Gunter if Allison "was always like this" or "on drugs". "No", Gunter replied, on both counts.

Allison told Gunter that she was convinced she was dying. "I feel like

I'm dying," Allison said. "They're going to let me die here." Gunter reassured his wife. "We're going to get you fixed up." As Allison's pain worsened, she screamed. "Help. Help," Allison cried out. A new nurse showed up to retake Allison's vital signs. Her blood pressure was alarmingly low, her pulse had quickened. Allison was moved to another room and given an intravenous solution. A doctor suggested that Allison's pain might be a reaction to marijuana use. Gunter and Allison agreed: the theory was nonsense.

More tests were ordered. Allison was given a drug to blunt the pain. She was hooked up to oxygen and prepped for an X-ray and a CT scan to determine the source of her pain. She seemed to rally. That did not last. The pain returned with a vengeance. Suddenly, Allison was having trouble breathing. Gunter held Allison's hand as her eyes rolled backwards. A nurse declared a "code blue". Now, doctors and nurses rushed in. They tried to resuscitate Allison, but the damage had been done, and irreversible.

Later, after talking to friends, family and doctors, Gunter decided to cease treatment. "She didn't look good," Gunter said. "There was not much chance for her ever having a normal or dignified life." This was no "tragedy". It was, instead, the product of dithering politicians who prefer to call doctors and nurses "heroes" rather than pay them what they deserve to be paid and to starve hospitals of the resources and people to tend to all the other Allison Holthoffs who venture to emergency rooms every day for attention. "The system is obviously broken," Gunter said. It is indeed. Allison Holthoff was another casualty of the fraying - thread by thread - of Canada the good, the thoughtful, the compassionate. Sadly, she won't be the last.

### Important Notice

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# Governor supports LCCI demand for Charter of Economy

LAHORE (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) Governor Haji Ghulam Ali on Tuesday supported the Lahore Chamber of Commerce & Industry (LCCI) demanding a Charter of Economy for exports promotion and economic well-being of the country.

He was talking to business community during his visit to LCCI here, he added that all segments of society including politicians and the business community should think beyond all kinds of political affiliations and play their active role for economic development of the country.

The KPK Governor said that collective approach had to be adopted to resolve the issues being faced by the business community, economy and the state. He said that when the state was weak, its foundations were shaken, citing that trade and industry were the main pillars of state. "We have to think about the development of economy, industry, elimination of unemployment and to control the

inflation," he maintained.

He said that all 54 chambers of commerce should stick to their demand of election boycott if the Charter of Economy was not signed.

He said that only the business community could bring the country out of economic difficulties.

The Governor said that KPK was enriched with vast mineral resources which would not be exhausted even in the next hundred years. He said that the business community should invest in the mineral sector of KPK, assuring that full support would be extended to the investors and a seminar would also be organized in this regard in Governor House of KPK.

"I have suggested that all the political parties should be persuaded to sit together and hold the election on the same day," he said and added that it would cost only Rs. 50 billion instead of Rs. 200 billion.

He said that Punjab was a big brother, if there was any problem in Punjab, the

backbone of the whole country would be broken. He cited that Turkey also got out of economic difficulties and achieve the goals of economic development.

In his welcome address, the LCCI President Mian Kashif Anwar demanded a Charter of Economy by all the political parties instead of elections. He said, "Our country is currently suffering from severe political instability which is having a direct impact on our economy. The conditions of our country require that a charter of economy should be signed without any delay and whichever political party comes to power, should fully implement this charter."

He said that Pakistan could not afford inflation rate of 27 percent, asserting that economic problems had multiplied due to hike in dollar rate against Pak rupee. This situation, he said, was not only keeping the foreign direct investment away but also discouraging the local

investors.

The LCCI President said that the foreign exchange reserves reached at the lowest level in the history because of which, the banks were not opening new LCs (Letters of Credit) while thousands of imported containers were stuck at the ports occurring demurrage and detention charges. He said that due to non-availability of raw materials, many industries had closed down their operations.

Kashif Anwar informed the Governor that Lahore Chamber had written a letter to the leaders of all the political parties to sign a Charter of Economy. The Lahore Chamber had also formulated some important proposals to fix the current economic conditions of the country and requested the heads of political parties to share their economic manifesto with them so that they could help create a joint charter.

He said that there was no doubt that political stability was essential for economic

stability, and Lahore Chamber was in constant liaison with all the chambers in Punjab and making all-out efforts for joint proposals for sustainable solution to the economic ills. "LCCI is also willing to have improved relations with the chambers of commerce in KPK province," he added.

The LCCI President said that KPK had a lot of potential for tourism as most of the tourist destinations of Pakistan were located in KPK, and to exploit the potential of tourism, it was necessary to ensure hotels and other facilities for tourists.

He said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was rich in mineral deposits and there was a lot of investment potential in the minerals and mining sector. He said that by using modern technology like blasting to extract marble and other minerals, not only waste of raw material could be avoided but it could also be manufactured according to international standards and

could be sold at a better price.

The LCCI President suggested that the government of KPK should organize a special briefing session for the investors of Punjab to increase investment in the mineral and mining sector. He added that according to official statistics, worst floods and rains last year cost US \$ 33 billion to the national economy while KPK suffered a loss of US \$ 2.3 billion. He said that if new dams and reservoirs had been built in the country, the situation would have been much better. He said that it was necessary to build new dams and water reservoirs on a war footing.

'Along with this, we also need to work on solar energy, which will provide cheap electricity from renewable resources and reduce our dependence on fossil fuels.' He said that Pakistan imported US \$ 23.3 billion worth of crude oil to meet its energy needs which adds to its trade deficit.

Kashif Anwar said that

business community had always insisted on increasing the tax base by suggesting the government to immediately announce the Declaration Scheme so that the Undeclared Foreign Reserves could become part of our economy. He said that Pakistan had been playing its role in the war on terror very actively for a long time. "We have observed that due to this, many changes have taken place in the economic, social and political landscape of our country. I hope that this struggle will yield positive results soon and our country will get rid of many problems forever," he maintained.

The LCCI President mentioned that smuggling of goods transported under Afghan Transit Trade to Pakistani markets were causing a great loss to local industries and the national exchequer as well which called for making further improvements in border management. Apart from this, the law enforcement agencies of both the

provinces should ensure information and resource sharing. He said that Pakistan had also been facing security concerns for a long time due to which foreign buyers and investors did not visit Pakistan. There was an atmosphere of concern in the business community that a new wave of terrorism was starting. In recent days, there was a suicide blast in a mosque in Peshawar, in which many precious lives were lost and many injured were still undergoing treatment in hospitals.

Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry and Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt also spoke on the occasion. LCCI Executive Committee members and former office-bearers were also present.

The participants also passed a resolution saying "we want economy, not elections". Earlier, participants of the meeting offered fateh for the martyrs of earthquake in Turkey, Syria and blast in Peshawar incident.

## PSX continues with bullish trend, gains 331 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 331.99 points, a positive change of 0.81 percent, closing at 41,522.76 against 41,190.77 points the previous day.

A total of 296,595,844 shares were traded during the day as compared to 176,726,529 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs. 12,519 billion against Rs 8,794 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 357 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 185 of them recorded gains and 144 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 28 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 44,714,226 shares at Rs.1.23 per share, Pak Petroleum with 31,774,289 shares at Rs 81.12 per share, and Sui South Gas with 16,127,166 shares at Rs.11.48 per share.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.39.00 per share price, closing at Rs.5,338.99 whereas the runner-up was Premium Tex with a Rs.27.76 rise in its per share price to Rs.550.00.

Unilever Foods witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs.1,146.07 per share closing at Rs 22,500.00 followed by Raffan Maize with Rs 299.00 decline to close at Rs.8,000.00.

**Rupee sheds 99 paise against US dollar:** The exchange rate of the Pakistani rupee depreciated by 99 paise against the US dollar in the interbank trading on

Tuesday and closed at Rs 276.28 against the previous day's closing of Rs 275.29.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollar in the open market were recorded at Rs. 279 and Rs. 282.00 respectively.

The price of the euro depreciated by 54 paise and closed at Rs 296.42 against the previous day's closing of Rs 296.96, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese yen remained unchanged to close at Rs 2.09, whereas an increase of 07 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British pound, which was traded at Rs 332.13 as compared to its last closing of Rs 332.06.

The exchange rates of the Emirates dirham and Saudi riyal increased by 26 paise each to close at Rs 75.21 and Rs 73.63 respectively.

**Gold prices decrease by Rs4,300 to Rs200,000 per tola:** The per tola price of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.4,300 on Tuesday and was traded at Rs.200,000 against sale at Rs. 204,300 the last trading day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs.3,686 to Rs.171,468 against Rs.175,154, whereas that of 10 grams of 22 karat declined to Rs.157,179 from Rs.160,558, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported. The price of one tola silver decreased by Rs.20 to Rs.2,230 whereas that of ten gram silver declined by Rs.17.14 to 1,911.86.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by US\$1 to US\$ 1,869 as compared to its sale at US\$1,870 on the last trading day, the association reported.

## AIIB appreciates govt reforms

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Economist of Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank (AIIB), Erik Berglof here on Tuesday appreciated the economic policies and reforms of the present government for social uplift of the masses.

During a call on meeting with Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Berglof highlighted the role of AIIB in infrastructure development projects and investment in Pakistan and discussed future cooperation in development projects especially eco-friendly and climate resilience.

Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Finance, Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Revenue, Tariq Mehmood Pasha and senior officers from finance division participated in the meeting, according to press statement issued by the finance ministry.

On the occasion, the finance minister shared with Erik Berglof the current economic outlook of the country.

He apprised him about the economic policies and reforms of the government for sustainable economic development and social uplift of the poor segment of society.

He said that despite economic challenges, the government was determined to set the things in right direction and put the economy on positive trajectory.

He also apprised about the economic losses due to the devastated floods in Pakistan and rehabilitation and reconstruction in the flood affected areas.

## Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI (APP): Five ships namely, MSC Noa, Lana, Corona, White Purl and Al-Maha carrying Containers, Palm oil and LPG, berthed at Qasim International Containers Terminal, Liquid Cargo Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal and SSGC LPG Terminal respectively on Monday 06th February.

Meanwhile three more ships, EM Astoria, MSC Leo VI and Fairchem Sword carrying Containers and Palm oil also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during the last 24 hours.

A total of 07 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them a containers ship 'MSC Noa' left the Port on Tuesday morning, while 03 more ships, Lana, Al-Maha and Parnassos are expected to sail on today in the afternoon.

A Cargo volume of 81,359 tonnes, comprising 41,994 tonnes imports cargo and 39,365 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 1,909 Containers (267 TEUs Imports and 1,642 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are 11 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them, 02 ships, Star Jeannette and MSC Leo VI & 02 more ships, Maersk Selator and Yihai carrying Conola Seed, Containers and Palm Kernel are expected to take berths at PIBT, QICT and MW-2 on Tuesday.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Economist of Asian Infrastructure and Investment Bank Erik Berglof meeting with Federal Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar.

## ICCI lauds Ambassador for mobilizing Pak business delegation to Ethiopia

ISLAMABAD (APP): President, Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI), Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on Tuesday

lauded the efforts of the Ethiopian Ambassador to Pakistan, Jemal Beker Abdula, for mobilizing a high-profile Pakistani delegation to Ethiopia.

President, ICCI leading a delegation visited the Embassy of Ethiopia and held a meeting with Ambassador, Jemal Beker Abdula, to discuss the matters regarding inclusion of ICCI representatives in the Pakistan business delegation scheduled to fly to Ethiopia from March 5-10, 2023 to explore business and investment opportunities in the Ethiopian market, said a press release issued here.

Ahsan Bakhtawar said that Ambassador, Jemal Beker Abdula in a short span of time showed his commitment and dedica-

tion to promote trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Ethiopia.

He said that Africa is an untapped market for Pakistan and hoped that the visit of the business delegation to Ethiopia would open up new avenues of promoting trade and exports with the African region.

He said that ICCI members of pharmaceuticals, construction, IT and other sectors would join the Pakistan delegation to tap the Ethiopian market for business and investment opportunities.

The President ICCI also appreciated the efforts of the Ethiopian Ambassador for the start of direct flights by Ethiopian Airline between Addis Ababa and Karachi from March 22, 2023 that would help in promoting people-to-people and B2B relations between the two countries.

Speaking at the occasion, Ambassador of

Ethiopia said that some big companies of Pakistan are joining the Pakistan delegation to explore market in Ethiopia, the gateway to Africa.

He said that Ethiopia offers a lot of business and investment to Pakistani businessmen and their visit would enable them to capitalize on them.

He said that Ethiopia imports 82% of pharmaceutical products, which account or US\$ 1370 million and Pakistani pharma companies should take advantage of this potential.

The Ambassador assured that he would fully cooperate with them in their registration and documentation process in Ethiopia.

He said that Ethiopia also has huge demand for textile products, surgical instruments, sports goods, rice, chemicals, steel and cement and Pakistan can increase their export to Ethiopia.

## Stocks slide on US rate-hike expectations

LONDON (AFP/APP): Stock markets mostly fell Tuesday as investors braced for President Joe Biden's State of the Union address and fresh signals from US Federal Reserve chairman Jerome Powell about the direction of interest rates.

Wall Street opened lower while Frankfurt and Paris struggled in afternoon deals, but London was up. Hong Kong and mainland Chinese indices finished

higher while Tokyo was flat.

A blockbuster US jobs report last week has undercut hopes that the Fed will put the brakes on its rate-hike campaign, which it launched last year in an effort to tame decades-high inflation.

"A strengthening labour market theoretically makes it less likely that the Federal Reserve will halt interest rate rises anytime soon," said Russ Mould,

investment director at AJ Bell.

"The Fed needs to see both the jobs market and inflation start to cool before it can justify changing its stance on rates."

Focus was on a speech due later Tuesday from Powell, who "remains a big wild card every time he speaks", said Chris Senyek at Wolfe Research. "We still believe that the Fed will be 'higher for longer'," Senyek added.

## Askari Bank signs MoU with Akhuwat Islamic Microfinance

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Askari Bank has signed an agreement with Akhuwat Islamic Microfinance to provide interest free business and agriculture loans under Prime Minister's Youth Business & Agriculture Loan Scheme, to eligible customers.

The Agreement was signed by Atif R. Bokhari, President & CEO, Askari Bank and Dr. Kamran Shams, CEO, Akhuwat Islamic Microfinance.

Dr. Amjad Saqib, Chairman- Akhuwat Foundation (through video link), Mr. Khurshid Zafar, Chief Operating Officer, Askari Bank, Mr. Rana Fasih Ul Hassan, Chief Risk Officer, Askari Bank and senior executives from Askari Bank's Institutional Sales, Islamic Banking and SME Products Divisions, were also present at the occasion.

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## FFC holds 1st corporate briefing for year-2023



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Fauji Fertilizer Company (FFC), held its First Corporate Briefing for the year 2023, as part of its best corporate governance practices. FFC has been recognized by Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) as first amongst Top 25 Companies consecutively for 12 years attributed to its Compliance of Code of

Corporate Governance, Company Performance and Efficient Management.

In the same backdrop the subject briefing for the year ended 31st December 2022 was held at FFC's corporate Head Office, Rawalpindi. Virtual access was also provided to all the desirous stakeholders. Prominent capital market analysts and dignitary from Pakistan Stock Exchange attended

the event.

Company Secretary FFC, Brig Asrat Mahmood SI (M) (Retd) opened the briefing and apprised the house about significance of the event. Chief Financial Officer, Syed Atif Ali briefed the house about FFC's performance for the year 2022 and assured Company's commitment to achieve higher standards of performance and sustained earnings.

## Tokyo shares end flat ahead of Powell remarks

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo shares ended flat Tuesday as investors sat on their hands ahead of Federal Reserve chair Jerome Powell's remarks later in the day.

The benchmark Nikkei index edged down 0.03 percent, or 8.18 points, to 27,685.47, while the broader Topix index added 0.21 percent, or 4.18 points, to 1,983.40.

During the day, Tokyo shares were buoyed by the relative strength of the dollar against the yen, particularly in the morning when the Nikkei was driven higher by active buying of banking shares and firms with strong earnings.

"But the market again saw a resistance around the 27,800 point, and investors

returned to selling as they waited for opportunities to buy again," IwaiCosmo Securities said.

Traders also "gradually pulled their hands off the market as they waited for FRB Chair Powell's address this evening," the brokerage added.

After the closing bell, one dollar bought 132.03 yen, compared to 132.65 yen in New York.

Daiwa Securities said investors wanted to lock in profits after recent gains by the Nikkei.

Still, rising US yields encouraged the dollar to firm against the yen, providing support for the Japanese market.

Nissan gained 0.36 percent to 474.1 yen after it signed a deal with alliance

partner Renault for a "rebalanced" partnership.

The agreement will end Renault's dominant position, reducing its stake in the Japanese firm from 43.4 percent to 15 percent.

Toyota fell 0.86 percent to 1,897 yen. Honda inched up 0.06 percent to 3,260 yen.

SoftBank Group lost 1.01 percent to 6,268 yen. After the closing bell, the global tech investor reported a surprise loss of \$5.9 billion for the third quarter.

Nintendo shed earlier losses and ended up 0.05 percent to 5,624 yen. The creator of the popular Switch console downgraded its annual net profit forecast, partly due to the global chip shortage, after the market closed.



ISLAMABAD: COMSATS University Islamabad organized a Seminar on occasion of Kashmir Solidarity Day in support of Kashmiri people against oppression and tyranny of Indian government in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.





In brief

Asian-Indoor Athletics C'ship

ISLAMABAD (APP): As many as five Pakistani athletes would feature in the 10th Asian-Indoor Athletics Championship, to take place in Astana, Kazakhstan from February 10. According to details, a total of five athletes would participate in the Asian-Indoor Athletics Championship which will conclude on February 12. The athletes include Sharaz Abbas (60m), Sharoz Khan (High Jump), Mohammad Imran (High Jump), Uzair Rehman (400m) and Jaffar Ashraf (Pole Vault) while Qazi Tanveer Hussain would accompany the national contingent as manager-cum-coach. Meanwhile, a national competition 'The 1st Aitchison Half Marathon' was also around the corner to be held at Aitchison College Lahore on February 18. The male athletes from affiliated units including Railways, Pakistan Army, Wapda, Higher Education Commission (HEC), Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Islamabad, Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK), Police, Gilgit-Baltistan and student-athletes of Aitchison College would feature in the Half Marathon race. Cash prizes would also be awarded to athletes. The winner would be awarded Rs. 100,000 while the runner-up will receive Rs. 50,000 and third position takers Rs. 25,000. Whereas, other athletes would be given Rs 10,000 each.

Asad Shafiq becomes student at KU

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Renowned cricket star of Pakistan Asad Shafiq has got admission to the Karachi University BS Health Physical Education and Sports Sciences (HPESS) and become a student at the University. Asad Shafiq along with the chairman HPESS Professor Dr Basit Ansari met the KU Vice Chancellor Professor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi at the VC Secretariat, said a statement on Tuesday. He scored 12 test centuries so far in his career and made nine centuries while batting at number six which is a world record and makes him the most prolific ton scorer at the test level. He has broken the previous world record of Sir Garfield Sobers who previously held the record by scoring eight centuries at the same number for West Indies. Asad Shafiq will be a student of BS Third Year in the evening shift. Asad said during his meeting with the KU VC that he was unable to study further after completing graduation because he was playing domestic and international cricket and due to his commitments to national duty and sports. He said that now is the best time to complete his higher studies. He hoped that other fellow cricketers would also resume their educations in near future. Meanwhile, Prof. Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi while welcoming the test cricketer to the University of Karachi said that this is a good sign and trend that sportsmen are now coming to campus to complete their dreams and it would give them opportunities to fulfill their degrees. The former national cricket team captain Mohammad Hafeez has also become a student at the same department of the University of Karachi this year while another former cricket captain and winner of the Champions Trophy Sarfaraz Ahmed and newly debuted test cricketer Saud Shakeel are already studying at the KU HPESS.

## U19 Kashmir Day Girls Squash Top-seeded Zohra enters semi-finals

PESHAWAR (APP): Top-seeded Zohra Abdullah took berth into the semi-finals on Tuesday after recording a victory against her tough rival Afsah from Abbottabad in the ongoing 'Kashmir Day Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Girls Junior Age Group Squash Championship' being played here at Qamar Zaman Squash Complex.

Zohra, who also played international squash, took no time in toppling her strong rival Afsah from Abbottabad in the marathon five sets battle, the score was 11-7, 9-11, 8-11, 14-12 and 12-10. Both girls, Zohra and Afsah played a good game and gave each other a tough fight in the marathon five-set battle that lasted for 49 minutes.

Zohra has full command over her strong smashes from the back of the court and succeeded in putting Afsah on the back foot besides exhibiting some perfect nicks and drops which created a panic-like situation for Afsah in the 3-2 battle.

In the second quarter-finals, Iqra Shah (Abbottabad) defeated Rida Hussain by (3-0), the score was (11-6 11-7 11-4). She made it to straight sets against Rida Hussain of Peshawar in the match that lasted for 23 minutes.

Meanwhile, in the third quarter-final, Naheed Faiz defeated her strong rival Romaisa in a 3-1 battle. Romaisa, playing good squash with some attacking smashes won the first set by 13-15 but she failed to click in the remaining three sets won by Naheed Faiz at 11-9, 12-10 and 11-9. Both Naheed and Romaisa played well and gave each other a tough fight. In the fourth quarter-final, Manahil Aqeel defeated Noor Muhammad Sohail by 3-0, in straight sets, the score was (11-2 11-5 11-3).

Whereas, in the U13 quarter-finals, Ayesha Qasim, Nimra Rehman, Omama, Maliha Shah took berth into the semi-finals after recording victories against their respective rivals in the quarter-finals. In the first quarter-final,

Ayesha Qasim defeated Amna Khan by 3-0, the score was (11-4 11-5 11-4).

In the second quarter-final, Nimra Rehman secured victory against Shandana Zafar in straight sets. The score was (11-6 11-3 11-5), and Maliha Shah, the second-seeded defeated Wareesha Jamshed by 3-1, the score was 10-12, 11-9, 11-8 and 11-7.

In the U17 quarter-finals, Mashal Khan, Wajeeha Altaf, Hifsa Yousa and Rania Qazi made their way to the semi-finals before registering victories against their respective rivals. In the first match, Rania Qazi of Abbottabad defeated Sahar Noor by 3-0, the score was 12-10, 11-9 and 11-9, in the second quarter-final.

Mashal Khan beat Alisha by 3-0, the score was (11-7 11-3 11-5) while international Waheeha Altaf defeated Manahil Khan by 3-0, the score was (11-4 11-6 11-8), whereas in the last quarter-final, Hifsa Yousaf beat Raheela by 3-0, the score was (11-4 11-7 11-2).

## Kohat Zalmi wins First Zalmi Media T10 Cricket Cup, beat Mardan Zalmi by 40 runs



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Kohat Zalmi clinched the trophy after defeating Mardan Zalmi by 40 runs in the final of the Peshawar Zalmi Media T10 Cricket Cup played here at historical Islamia College Cricket Ground on Tuesday.

The Cup is jointly organized by the sports committee of the Peshawar Press Club and Zalmi Cricket Foundation and Sports Writers Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa with a total of eight teams taking part in the three-day event.

The captain of Mardan Zalmi,

Senior Reporter of Express News Yasir Ali won the toss and invited Kohat Zalmi to bat. Kohat Zalmi scored 128 runs for the loss of 5 wickets in the scheduled ten overs, in which Zahid Imdad smashed an elegant knock of 45 including three sixes and two boundaries, captain Israr Ahmed made another key knock of 34 with three sixes and three boundaries, while Rizwan Zaman was outstanding with 32 runs off 14 balls including four sixes and three boundaries.

Iftekhar Ahmed and Irfan Khan were dismissed two each on behalf of

Mardan Zalmi. In pursuit of 128 runs, Mardan Zalmi could only score 88 runs for the loss of 8 wickets in the allotted 10 overs, in which captain Yasir Ali scored 48 runs off 22 balls with three towering sixes and four boundaries and Siddique Bangash scored 22 runs.

On behalf of Kohat Zalmi, Zahid Imdad and Rizwan Zaman showed excellent bowling and dismissed three players each. At the end of the match, special guests Imdad Khan Afridi and Malik Abdullah Saraf distributed prizes among the players. Kohat Zalmi's Zahid Imdad was given the man of the match award for his best performance, while Mardan Zalmi's captain Yasir Ali and best player Umar Farooq were awarded the best batsman of the tournament.

Similarly, Wajid Shahzad of Kohat Zalmi was declared the best bowler of the tournament. On this occasion, Peshawar Press Club President Arshad Aziz Malik thanked Peshawar Zalmi Foundation for organizing the best tournament for journalists and hoped that such events will continue in the future.

Arshad Aziz Malik appreciated the enthusiasm and best sportsmanship spirit of the members of the press club participating in the tournament and announced that the press club will form teams for cricket as well as various sports which other press clubs of the country.

## Asif Afridi banned from all cricket for two years



LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): The Pakistan Cricket Board has banned international spinner Asif Afridi for a period of two years from all cricket after he pleaded guilty as charged for two violations under the PCB's Anti-Corruption Code for Participants.

For the breach of Article 2.4.10, Mr. Afridi was handed a two-year period of ineligibility, while he was given a six-month ban for the violation of Article 2.4.4. Both the periods of ineligibility will run concurrently and will commence from the day of his provisional suspension, which commenced on 12 September 2022.

While reaching its determination on the sanction period, the PCB took into consideration the admission of guilt, expression of remorse, past track record and Asif Afridi's request that the PCB considers his case compassionately,

claiming he had unintentionally breached the Code. Chair of PCB Management Committee, Mr Najam Sethi: "It gives the PCB no joy to suspend an international cricketer for two years, but we have a zero-tolerance approach towards such offences. As the game's governing body, we need to make examples, handle such matters robustly and send out strong messages to all cricketers.

"It is bitter fact that corruption poses a threat to our sport as selfish corrupters lure cricketers in different ways and methods. That's precisely why the PCB has been investing heavily on player education so that they remain vigilant and can help the PCB eradicate this menace by reporting approaches and if, despite all our best efforts to create awareness, a player falls victim to his greed, then the PCB has no sympathy."

Notes to Editors:

Article 2.4.4 of the PCB Anti-Corruption Code reads as: "Failing to disclose to the PCB Security and Anti-Corruption Department (without unnecessary delay) full details of any approaches or invitations received by the Participant to engage in Corrupt Conduct under this Anti-Corruption Code."

Article 2.4.10 of the PCB Anti-Corruption Code reads as: "Directly or indirectly soliciting, inducing, enticing, persuading, encouraging or intentionally facilitating any Participant to breach any of the foregoing provisions of this Article 2.4."

According to Article 6.2, the range of permissible period of ineligibility for those charged and found guilty under Article 2.4.4 is a minimum of six (6) months and a maximum of a lifetime

According to Article 6.2, the range of permissible period of ineligibility for those charged and found guilty under Article 2.4.10 is from zero to up to a maximum of a lifetime

Asif Afridi was issued a Notice of Charge and was provisionally suspended by PCB under the PCB 'Anti-Corruption Code (the "Code") on 13 September 2022.

### Trophy of 18th Cholistan Desert Rally unveiled

BAHAWALPUR (APP): The trophy of the 18th International Cholistan Desert Rally 2023 was unveiled at Grand Rohi DHA Bahawalpur today.

Addressing the ceremony, Commissioner Bahawalpur Division Raja Jahangir Anwar said that Cholistan Desert Rally has become an international sports event. The effort of government departments in organizing the event was commendable.

The International Cholistan Desert Rally included food festivals, handicrafts, and cultural and other entertainment programs, he said.

Commissioner Bahawalpur Division Raja Jahangir Anwar, Project Director DHA Bahawalpur Brigadier (ret'd) Basharat, Regional Police Officer Bahawalpur Rai Babar Saeed, and Managing Director TDCP Agha Ali Abbas unveiled the winner trophy.

Managing Director Tourism Development Corporation of Punjab (TDCP) Agha Ali Abbas said that the soft image of Pakistan would be showcased through the International Cholistan Desert Rally and the culture of Cholistan would be highlighted.

He said that quad bike, dirt bike, and truck races would also be part of this year's International Desert Rally.

A Memorandum of Understanding was also signed between DHA Bahawalpur and TDCP for the promotion of tourism in the region.

Project Director DHA Brig (Rtd) Bisharat said that various cultural programs would be organized at DHA under the MoU signed with TDCP. He said that local residents would be provided employment during the event.

Event Manager Nauman Khan told that foreign drivers were also participating in the 18th International Cholistan Desert Rally.

## Kamran Akmal retires from all forms of cricket

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan wicket-keeper batter Kamran Akmal has announced his retirement from all forms of professional cricket.

Akmal, who is currently serving as a temporary batting consultant for Peshawar Zalmi, said he would no longer be part of the Pakistan Super League as a player in order to shift focus to newer roles.

Recently, the 41-year-old was also named chairman of the selection committee constituted by the PCB to conduct U13, U16 and U19 trials for the selection of regional and district teams.

"I will not be able to play cricket anymore because of my new responsibilities as a selector and a coach," he said while talking to the media on Tuesday.

Akmal, who last represented the national side in April 2017, with his latest announcement called time on both his international as well as domestic career.

The right-handed batter gathered 6871 runs across formats during his international career spanning around 15 years. He has six Test and five ODI centuries to his name.

He is also the PSL's second highest-run getter with 1972 runs in 74 innings. He has scored three centuries, the most by any batter in the league.

## Aaron Finch retires from int'l's cricket

SYDNEY (Agencies): Former Australia white-ball captain Aaron Finch has announced his retirement from international cricket. Opening batter Finch, 36, was Australia's T20 captain, having retired from one-day internationals in September.

He represented Australia in five Tests, 146 one-day internationals and 103 T20s, leading them to their first T20 World Cup title in 2021. Finch said it had been "incredible honour" to play for Australia. He is set to continue playing in domestic T20 competitions, including in the Big Bash League (BBL) for Melbourne Renegades.

"Realising that I won't be playing on until the next T20 World Cup in 2024, now is the right moment step down and give the team time to plan and build towards that event," he said. Finch is Australia's highest runscore in men's T20s, with 3,120, which puts him sixth in the all-time rankings. He hit two centuries in T20 internationals, finishing with an average of 34.28 and a strike rate of 142.53.

He scored 5,401 runs in ODIs at an average of 39.13, including 17 centuries, and was part of the Australia squad who won the 2015 50-over World Cup. "Team success is what you play the game for and the maiden T20 World Cup win in 2021 and lifting the ODI World Cup on home soil in 2015 will be the two memories I cherish the most," he added. "To be able to represent Australia for 12 years and play with and against some of the greatest players of all time has been an incredible honour."

Finch has the highest individual score in men's T20 internationals - 172 off 76 balls against Zimbabwe in 2018 - beating his own record at the time of 156 against England in 2013. Only India's Rohit Sharma (182) and New Zealand's Martin Guptill (173) have hit more than Finch's 125 sixes in T20 internationals.

Finch made his international debut in a T20 against England in 2011 before playing his first ODI against Sri Lanka two years later. He played all five of his Tests in 2018, scoring two half-centuries at an average of 27.80.



### Ghana footballer Atsu found alive in quake rubble: envoy

ACCRA (Agencies): Ghana national player and former Newcastle midfielder Christian Atsu has been found alive in the rubble of an earthquake that killed more than 4,800 people in Türkiye and neighboring Syria, Ghana's ambassador to Türkiye said Tuesday.

Atsu, 31, joined Turkish Super Lig side Hatayspor in September, based in the southern province of Hatay near the epicenter of Monday's massive quake.

"I have good news coming. I am just getting information from the president of the Ghana association that Christian Atsu has been found in Hatay," Francisca Ashietey-Odontun told Accra-based Asaase Radio, referring to a local Ghanaian community association.

The envoy gave no further details on his condition. Hatayspor official Mustafa Ozat told Play Spor streaming channel on Monday that Atsu was still in the rubble and was trying to escape. Atsu spent five seasons at Newcastle after an initial campaign on loan before leaving for Saudi Arabia in 2021.

He won the last of his 60 Ghana national caps in September 2019. "We pray for Ghana International Christian Atsu and victims of the earthquake in Türkiye and Syria," the Ghana Football Association said on Twitter.

Dozens of nations have offered aid since the 7.8-magnitude quake struck early on Monday as people were sleeping. Freezing weather has hampered emergency efforts. Multi-story apartment buildings full of residents were among the more than 5,600 structures reduced to rubble in Türkiye, while Syria announced dozens of collapses.

## Manchester City's problems mount for manager Pep Guardiola

MANCHESTER (AP): Pep Guardiola had enough to worry about even before Manchester City became embroiled in probably the biggest Premier League scandal of all time.

Off the field, City is facing accusations that the club breached a slew of financial regulations with its lavish spending. On it, Guardiola faces his own battle to defend the league title and keep his team's season on track.

While City's position in the standings remains healthy enough, five points behind leader Arsenal in second place, Sunday's loss to Tottenham fed into a growing feeling that all is not right within the club. That was the case even before Monday's bombshell action by the Premier League.

Indeed, there has been a sense of unease and uncertainty around the club for much of the season. Erling Haaland is increasingly becoming a point of scrutiny when trying to deci-

pher what is going wrong at City.

"Erling has been fantastic. No one says anything when he's scoring goals and winning," City defender Kyle Walker said. "All of sudden now when we don't win and he doesn't score, they say, 'Is it the problem? Do we play better without him?' I hear it all the time." Walker has a point, but his comments also suggest doubts from outside the club are filtering through to the players.

Haaland has been outstanding, scoring 31 goals in 27 games. Yet City has become more predictable as a result of having such a prominent target at center forward. In recent years, Guardiola has relied on goals from all over his team, making it more difficult for opposition defenses to close down areas of threat. While City's total of 53 goals after 21 games is identical to its record at the same point last season, it has picked up

eight points fewer.

Even with the addition of Haaland, City is finding it more difficult to win games — three less than at this stage last term. The problems, however, do not rest on Haaland's shoulders alone. He is, after all, producing remarkable numbers in front of goal. And Guardiola seems focused on other areas of his squad. Last month, he noted that a team that has won four of the last five league titles has lost its edge.

"We are far away from the team we had in previous seasons," Guardiola said. "Do you think we are going to chase the gap to Arsenal the way we are playing? No way." With a squad packed with world class players, Guardiola has the luxury of leaving out some of his biggest names in a bid to freshen things up. Phil Foden, one of the brightest young talents in Europe, has been a peripheral figure at times this season.





## In brief

### Fire doused in ICT building

ISLAMABAD (APP): A fire broke out in a commercial building on Tuesday in Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) Blue Area as the rescue officials and fire brigades reached the area and doused the fire. ICT administration's spokesperson, the fire erupted in a residential flat located in Khyber Plaza. "The cause of the fire is not known yet," he said and informed that the deputy commissioner ICT was monitoring the situation and no casualties had been reported. Meanwhile, the DC directed the Directorate of Fire Emergency and Disaster Management to submit an inquiry report; reason for the fire eruption; and the installation of fire safety equipment in the building.

### Bid foiled for smuggling flour

RAWALPINDI (APP): The district food department and police team on Tuesday foiled a bid for smuggling flour bags and arrested two transporters. According to police spokesman, the food authorities along with Naseerabad police foiled a bid to smuggle flour and rounded up two drivers namely Asghar and Firdous besides recovering 904 flour bags. SP Potohar said, "Strict action will be taken against illegal wheat and flour smugglers without any discrimination." He informed that the accused were trying to illegally transport wheat flour bags out of the Rawalpindi division.

### Power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Tuesday issued a power suspension programme for Wednesday 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, Orchard Scheme, CDA Pump, CDA Flats, Shaheed-e-Milat, PHA Flats, Burma, Lohi Bhir, Korai, UC Road, Karor, Sharifabad, Coratail Hotel, G-9/2, FHS, I-8/4, I-10/1, G-11/2, Kalingar, Rehara, CM Pak Zong, Bahria Enclave, Isolation Hospital, Sunny Bank, Cecil, Kohala, P/Catina, TDCP, PAF, Peer Suhawah Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Kashmir Road, Dhok Farman Ali, Meeka Chowk, Rehmatnabad-1, NPF-1, Mora Negyal, National Park, Askari-7, Shahpur, Kohala, Garja-1, Chongi No. 22, Sahala College, Lahtrar-2, Komali Sadiq, Ghazan Khan, Mandra, Pind Jatlan, Bhangali, Syed Kasran, Chak Bailly Khan-2, Shegan, Adiala Jail, Khasala Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, 4th Road, Effendi Colony, Shakriyal, KRL, Farooq Azam, Zafar-ul-Haq, Liaquat Bagh, Fawarah Chowk, Iqbal Road, Amin Town, Eid Gah, Azizabad, Madina Colony, Ameer Hamza Colony, Bhadana, Noon, FOCHS, BB Shaheed Feeders, Attock Circle, Nawababad, Nawazshahabad, Wahdat Colony, Sangjani, AWC Housing, Shaiya, Munirabad, Rashid Minhas, Hussainabad, Hasan A. Badal, Hazro, Shamsabad, Qaziabad, People's Colony, Barazai, Akhuri, Neka Kalan, Azim Shaheed, Morat, Maqsood Shaheed, Meera Sharif, Kamrial, Galial, Gul Muhammad, Khanda Feeders, Jhelum Circle, Langarpur, Shukriala, Fatehpur, F-6 Machine Mohalla, Pakhwal, M Riaz Shaheed, Dina-1, Bakrala, Padyal.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Law and Justice, Senator Azam Nazeer Tarar chaired third meeting of Anti-Corruption Taskforce for review of institutional framework of Anti-Corruption Institutions.

## Imran Khan using delaying tactics instead of facing cases: Tarar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Interior Attaullah Tarar on Tuesday demanded the apex court to ensure hearing of the cases against Imran Khan on day to day basis as the PTI chairman had been using delaying tactics instead of facing them.

Addressing a press conference, he said Imran Khan was scared of facing cases and imprisonment because he had been involved in crimes of stealing gifts from Toshakhana and others.

It is to mention here that a sessions court in the federal capital Tuesday deferred the indictment of former prime minister Imran Khan in the Toshakhana case after the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chief skipped the hearing citing health reasons. He said Imran Khan did not appear even through video link and had been using delaying tactics instead of making arguments and resorting to tech-

nicalities for the delay. During the trials against PML-N leadership in past, Attaullah Tarar said that the hearing was conducted on day to day basis but Imran Khan had been trying to die down the cases instead of pursuing it.

The SAPM said that PTI leadership considered itself as 'untouchable' but this 'ladla syndrome' would not be effective further. "He is such a leader who never struggled for public issues and remained missing during the lawyer's movement when all political parties particularly PML-N were on the roads for the restoration of the then deposed judges'," he maintained.

Referring to another case, Attaullah Tarar said that an affidavit was submitted in the court declaring the aunt of Tyrian White as her guardian but Imran Khan had now challenged the jurisdiction of the court instead of facing the case about it.

In both aspects of this particular case, Attaullah

Tarar viewed that Imran Khan would be disqualified because he had concealed facts being a public figure as information about kids was necessary to be submitted to the Election Commission of Pakistan and Federal Board of Revenue before contesting elections.

Attaullah Tarar said that an amount of Rs 1.6 billion was embezzled and transacted into the accounts of Farah Gogi, a close aide of Imran's wife Bushra Bibi. He also screened various slides during the press conference about 959 transactions by the 'cash boys' into the account of Farah Gogi in three years.

The advisor said that all this amount was bribed money and 10-12 accounts were opened to get it. He said that a huge amount was received for the posting and transfers in the Punjab and nexus including the wife of Usman Buzdar, Bushra Bibi and Farah Gogi were involved in it.

Dr. Shima Daud, Former President, Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industries briefed that the rising import bill of health related equipment and products needs interventions from indigenous solutions and besides innovative products, the country can also reengineer the requirements locally.

Dr. Shah Rukh, Associate Professor NUST shared her health projects' success story with the participants and encouraged the involvement and interest of industry professionals in research backed solutions being offered by academicians.

## HEC organizes roundtable on challenges of health sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Higher Education Commission (HEC) organized a roundtable conference to address the challenges faced by the health sector and propose solutions through the active involvement of academicians and researchers. The conference was chaired by Executive Director HEC, Dr. Shaista Sohail and cochaired by Dr. Habib-ur-Rehman Chairman, Shifa International Hospital.

Dignitaries from chambers, health-care industries, pharmaceuticals, ORIC heads of higher education institutions, and notable researchers and academics attended the conference.

Dr. Shaista Sohail emphasized the role which academicians and researchers can play to bring innovative and need-based solutions to the requirements of the health industry.

Dr. Habib-ur-Rehman appreciated the efforts of HEC in bringing together the academicians and health industry focal persons and stressed on the role that requires immediate collaborative efforts to promote made in Pakistan solutions to the requirements of the health sector.

In the open discussion session, the participants reiterated their commitment to work in collaboration and address the challenges

faced by the health sector. Dr. Shima Daud, Former President, Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industries briefed that the rising import bill of health related equipment and products needs interventions from indigenous solutions and besides innovative products, the country can also reengineer the requirements locally.

Dr. Shah Rukh, Associate Professor NUST shared her health projects' success story with the participants and encouraged the involvement and interest of industry professionals in research backed solutions being offered by academicians.

## Alkhidmat Foundation launches emergency response after earthquake in Turkiye, Syria

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Alkhidmat Foundation in collaboration with Turkish partner organizations is responding on the ground in quake-hit areas of Turkiye and Syria by distributing hot meals, blankets, mattresses and shelter tents to the victims. A seven-member medical team of Alkhidmat is also leaving for Turkiye.

Immediately after a devastating earthquake in Turkiye and Syria, an emergency meeting of the Central Board of Management of Alkhidmat Foundation was held at Alkhidmat Complex, Lahore presided by President Alkhidmat Prof. Dr. Hafeez Ur Rahman.

The Central Board of Management of Alkhidmat expressed its deepest sadness at the loss of life and the destruction of property. And expressed its condolences to the families of victims as well as to the people and Government, wishing the injured a speedy recovery.

President Alkhidmat Prof. Dr. Hafeez Ur Rahman expressed his solidarity and announced all along support for the suffering brothers and sisters in Turkiye and Syria.

While sharing the details of Alkhidmat's response, President Prof. Dr. Hafeez Ur Rahman said that Alkhidmat in collaboration with Turkish partner organizations is responding on the ground in quake-hit areas of Turkiye and Syria by distributing hot meals, blankets, mattress-

es and shelter tents to the victims.

In addition, a seven-member medical team of Alkhidmat is also leaving for Turkiye, consisting of two orthopaedic surgeons, one general surgeon, two anesthesiologists, one operation theatre technician and one nursing team member. The medical team will also carry necessary equipment and medicines with them for continuing medical operations in the earthquake-affected areas for the next two to three weeks, he explained.

Referring towards people-to-people fraternity and Muslim brotherhood, President Alkhidmat Prof. Dr. Hafeez Ur Rahman said that Turkiye and Syria are our Muslim brother countries.

Whenever there was an emergency in Pakistan, the brothers and sisters from Turkiye generously helped us, now it is our retrospective duty to support them in this hour of difficulty, he urged. Currently, the earthquake-affected areas are also experiencing extreme cold and medical aid including hot meals, shelter tents, mattresses and warm clothes are urgently needed, he identified.

Alkhidmat Foundation is in constant contact with the Turkish Embassy in Pakistan, the Turkish charity organization 'TIKA' and the Turkish Red Crescent and will continue to provide all possible assistance to the earthquake victims as a gesture of goodwill.

## ANF arrests 27, recovers drugs in operations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) in various operations across the country, arrested 27 accused smugglers including two women, and recovered 1758.295 kg drugs worth US\$ 66.194 million internationally from their possession.

According to the ANF spokesperson, the team conducted 31 operations across the country and seized drugs comprising 6.708 kg heroin, 1446.098 kg hashish, 31.900 kg opium, 19.558 kg Methamphetamine (Ice), 0.031 kg marijuana and 254 kg ketamine.

In Balochistan, the force recovered 1147.3 kg hashish in five operations while arrested two persons involved in drugs smuggling.

The Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) in Punjab recovered 23.861 kg drugs in six operations while arrested five persons involved in drugs smuggling including a woman and impounded a vehicle. The seized drugs comprised 1.124 kg heroin, 16.800 kg hashish, 0.031 kg marijuana and 5.906 kg methamphetamine (Ice).

The force in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) recovered 8.836 kg drugs in five operations while arrested five persons involved in drugs smuggling and impounded a vehicle. The seized drugs comprised 0.192 kg heroin and 7.644 kg hashish.

The ANF in Sindh recovered 290.2 kg drugs in six operations while arrested five persons involved in drugs smuggling and impounded two vehicles.

The seized drugs comprised 1.200 kg heroin, 35 kg hashish and 254 kg Ketamine.

The ANF North recovered 288.098 kg drugs in nine operations, arrested ten persons including a woman in drugs smuggling and impounded three vehicles.

The seized drugs comprised 30.900 kg Opium, 4.192 kg Heroin, 239.354 kg Hashish and 13.652 kg Methamphetamine (Ice).

Cases have been registered at respective ANF police stations under CNS Act 1997 (Amended 2022) and further investigations were underway.

## Parliamentary cooperation crucial for global challenges: Raja

ISLAMABAD (APP): National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf said Tuesday inter-parliamentary cooperation was crucial for addressing global challenges, such as climate change, terrorism, and transnational crime.

He said this while talking to Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) President Daurte Pacheco while discussing the role of parliamentary diplomacy in promoting peace and stability in the region, as well as the importance of strengthening inter-parliamentary cooperation here.

They emphasized the need for parliamentarians to work together across borders and political divides in order to find solutions to these complex and interconnected issues.

The speaker also expressed his appreciation for the IPU President, who always remained at the pole position to ensure continued engagement between the

National Assembly and other IPU Member States. He noted that this relationship was key in ensuring that parliaments remained at the forefront of the global dialogue and action on democracy, peace, human rights, and sustainable development.

Daurte Pacheco expressed his gratitude to the speaker for his kind remarks. He also conveyed his deep condolences for the recent incident of terrorism in Peshawar and extended his sympathies to the families of the victims.

He noted that terrorism remains a major challenge for the world and that it was important for parliamentarians to work together to find solutions for pressing issues of terrorism. The president assured the speaker that the issue of terrorism would be included in the upcoming IPU conference agenda, and expressed the IPU's commitment to supporting efforts to combat this global threat.

## Govt to raise Kashmir issue at all int'l platforms

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development, Sardar Saleem Haider said that the nation shared strong historical and blood ties with Kashmiri people and "no power on earth can disrupt this relationship."

He said, "The government will raise Kashmir issue at every international forum and expose blatant violation of international laws by India and the atrocities being committed against the innocent Kashmiris by Indian troops."

Addressing the occasion in connection with the 'Kashmir Solidarity Day' at OPF Girls College, F-8/2, Islamabad, the SAPM said that the freedom movement of people of Kashmir is rooted in the two-nation theory. The dream of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the sub-continent can not be completed without the freedom of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

We still believe in peaceful settlement of the

'Kashmir Issue' according to the will of Kashmiri people, as guaranteed by the UNSC resolutions.

He urged the international community to raise its voice in seeking an end to the gross violations of human rights and the reign of terror unleashed by Indian occupation forces in the IIOJK. The PM aide appreciated OPF for providing quality education to the children of overseas Pakistanis and general public across the country. Earlier, he visited SAPM art exhibition featuring the art works of students.

## Unresolved Kashmir dispute to remain a stigma on UN face: Mushaal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organisation, Mushaal Hussein Mullick lashed out at the UN and world powers for their failure to resolve the decades-long Kashmir issue and said that the unresolved Kashmir dispute would remain a stigma on the face of the world body. Speaking at a seminar organised by Shaheed Bhutto Foundation and JK-PSF to mark Kashmir solidarity day, as a chief guest here on Tuesday, she said that bleeding Kashmir would remain a constant threat to regional as well as world peace.

Mushaal, wife of jailed Kashmiri Hurriyat leader Muhammad Yasin Malik, said that Hindutva regime unleashed a wave of terrorism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) but ironically the world largely remained oblivious to the world's worst human catastrophe. The Hurriyat leader stated

that settlement of Kashmir dispute was not only inevitable for Kashmiris to live free life from fascist Narendra Modi government's subjugation but it was also vital for the UN to restore its fast losing credibility and effectiveness.

Rehana Hussein Mullick Co Chairperson Peace and Culture Organisation said that the oppressed people largely considered the UN as a protector of the interest of mighty oppressors rather than guardian of the oppressed and weak nations. Mushaal said that it was high time for the world body to implement it's own resolutions on Kashmir truly to restore it's sanctity and respect.

She made it clear that the brave Kashmiris would continue their struggle until breaking the shackles of Indian slavery despite all the ongoing war crimes and atrocities.

## Shallwani for demolishing illegal structures in govt residences

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Secretary for Housing and Works Ifthikhar Ali Shallwani Tuesday directed the officials concerned to start an anti-encroachment drive to immediately demolish the illegally structures in the government residences of the Federal Capital.

He issued directives during a meeting with the senior officers of the Capital Territory (ICT) administration and Capital Development Authority, said a news release.

CDA Chairman Noor-ul-Amin Mengal and Deputy Commissioner Islamabad

Irfan Nawaz and Director General Estate Office Ghulam Sarwar were also present during the meeting.

The secretary said that encroachments in Islamabad were increasing gradually undermining the beauty of the planned city and causing inconvenience to the public.

Ifthikhar Shallwani also emphasized to restore footpaths to their original condition which was fully supported by the Chairman CDA and Deputy Commissioner Islamabad.

During the meeting, Ghulam Sarwar apprised the officials regarding the

implementation status of recommendations made by National Assembly Standing Committee on Housing and Works regarding the issues pertaining to additional construction and subletting of federal government owned residential accommodations. He also briefed about the recent survey being conducted by the ministry and said the final notices had already been issued to the residents of the government residences by the Estate office for extra construction inside the courtyard/rooftops by disturbing the original map of the building.



ISLAMABAD: Students performing in tableau during function in connection with Kashmir Solidarity Day at OPF Girls College F-8/2.



### Poppy farms eradicated

LAGHMAN (Agencies): Chief of the Counter-Narcotics Department of Laghman province, says that poppy farms on 10 acres of land were eradicated in Umarzi village on the outskirts of the capital of the province. Qari Ghulamullah Idris, chief of the Counter-Narcotics Department of Laghman province, said that a number of poppy farms in Mehtarlam, the provincial capital and Alingar, Qarghayi, and Badpash districts were eradicated in the recent past.

## The Frontier Post

# AFGHANISTAN

Rajab 16, 1444 — Wednesday, February 08, 2023

### Needy families received aid

TAKHAR (Agencies): Food aid distributed to over ten thousand needy families in Talaqhan by the World Food Programme. The provincial head of Rural Rehabilitation and development of Takhar, said that food including flour, cooking oil, beans and salt was distributed by the World Food Programme to 10,857 poor families in Talaqhan. These families will receive materials monthly for up to five months, he said.

## UN: 28m Afghans in dire need of humanitarian aid

KABUL (TOLONews): The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has announced that Afghanistan needs immediate humanitarian aid, amid the dire economic situation.

UNICEF Deputy Executive Director Omar Abdi's said that Afghanistan is experiencing the worst period in the past two decades.

Mr. Abdi said on Twitter that humanitarian needs are felt now more than ever before in Afghanistan, and has warned that disruptions of aid will lead to a humanitarian catastrophe in the war-torn country, already plagued with critical challenges of different kinds.

"Some 28 million Afghans are in dire need of humanitarian aid, which

needs the immediate attention of the international community, partners, and Taliban's caretaker government," Abdi said.

During his visit with Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi, UNICEF Executive Director Henrietta Fore reiterated that the organization is committed to continuing its much-needed operations in the areas of education, health-care, and children's vaccination in Afghanistan.

Prior to this, UNICEF had announced that Afghanistan is among the eight most hunger-hit countries in the world.

Meanwhile, the restrictions on women by Afghanistan's de facto authorities

continue to increase, including restrictions on women's movement and access to public spaces, including parks, which is having a detrimental impact on women's and children's safety and well-being throughout the country.

The implementation of gender-based restrictions and the harsh winter have further complicated the situation for international aid organizations and aid groups to deliver lifesaving services to vulnerable families across Afghanistan.

Some aid organizations have even set the return of women employees to work as a precondition to the resumption of their operations, while others have already closed doors.

### Logar residents call for resumed work

LOGAR (TOLONews): Logar residents want the construction of a special museum in Mes Aynak to resume.

They said that after the Islamic Emirate came to power, the construction of this museum stopped and has not been resumed.

"We call on the government to resume the construction of this museum because it's a source of income for Logar and attracts tourists," said Shakil Ahmad Tasil, a Logar resident.

"Foreign and domestic tourists will come and visit this place and this will have a good impact on the county's economy," said Bashir Ahmad Dariz, a Logar resident.

Meanwhile, local officials in Logar said efforts are being made to restart the construction of this museum.

According to officials of this museum, the historical artifacts obtained from the area of the Mes Aynak mine will be preserved.

"Efforts are being made to resume construction on a special museum, and we have talked with the Ministry of Information and Culture officials, and they assured us that they will pay attention to this regard," said Rafiullah Samim, head of the Information and Culture in Logar.

"We call on the Ministry of Information and Culture to resume the construction of the museum that was started by the previous government, said Mer Hashim Hizbullah, Mohamad Agha District Governor of Logar.

According to the information and culture department of Logar, at the museum a research center for Logar's antiquities was also planned to be built.

### NAC ready to conduct 36 projects in Kapisa

KAPISA (Agencies): The Norwegian Afghanistan Committee said that the committee is ready to complete 36 construction projects in different sectors in Kapisa.

Engineer Kawa Khurosh, the head of the Kapisa marine sub-district, met with Engineer Hasibullah Asadi, the provincial manager of the Norwegian Afghanistan Committee for Afghanistan and the coordinator of the Norwegian projects in Kapisa, in this propose, according to the Ministry of Energy and Water's statement.

The official of Norwegian Afghanistan Committee shared details about the construction projects of that committee in Kapisa, said that 18 projects have been surveyed in Najarab district and 18 in Tagab, which are mainly water supply projects, and the work of surveying 24 other projects in the district Al Sai will start soon.

The implementation of these projects will cost two hundred and thirty-four thousand and five hundred dollars, which will be paid from the World Food Programme, according to NAC.

## Deadly Earthquake: Afghanistan extends support to Turkey, Syria



KABUL (TOLONews): Ministry of Foreign Affairs extended condolences to Turkey and Syria, for the loss of hundreds of lives and substantial financial losses, said the statement.

"IEA-MoFA, on behalf of the Afghan people and government, expresses its deepest condolences and sympathies to the Muslim brothers, countries and people for the

loss of hundreds of lives and huge financial losses caused by the recent earthquake in Türkiye and Syria."

The statement said that the IEA shares the grief of its Muslim brothers and sisters with the people of both countries and urged Islamic countries and aid organizations to take urgent actions to assist the victims of this tragedy.

Meanwhile, the statement also said that based on human sympathy and Islamic brotherhood, the IEA extended the aid of \$ 110 000 with the devastating earthquake -that hit the Turkish people and \$55,000 to the Syrian people.

The statement also asked the diplomatic mission and Afghans living in Turkey to support the Turkish people.

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## Higher Education Ministry' working on plan' for female education

KABUL (TOLONews): The Ministry of Higher Education said it is working on a plan for the education of female students so that there will not be barriers to their education in the future.

The work on this comprehensive plan has progressed, ministry officials said. "As we have already said, work is currently being done on a plan. A comprehensive plan will be put in place so that barriers to education will not be put in place again. The work has progressed, and it will soon be finished," said Lotfullah Khairkhan,

deputy of the Ministry of Higher Education. A group of religious clerics and elders from the province of Nangarhar asked the Islamic Emirate to provide women access to employment and educational opportunities within the framework of Islamic law.

"Start working on an alternative way so that our sisters can be educated and go to work, and their honor and dignity is preserved," said Nangial Mujahid, a tribal elder.

"Regarding the opening of schools and universities, we ask the Islamic Emirate

to let them get an education based on Sharia law and the Quran's principles," said Zahidullah Haqqani, a religious cleric.

The religious leaders said that providing education is one of the responsibilities of the Islamic Emirate and that it is a requirement for all of the nation's residents. "They should provide an environment in which scientific progress is made, but which also adheres to the Islamic hijab and Afghan culture are also observed in it," said Fazl Malik Haqqani, a religious cleric.

"Ninety percent of the issues that the Islamic Emirate had with Sharia and Afghan culture have been addressed, and in the near future, the focus should be directed toward education under the framework of Islamic law and Afghan culture," said Habibullah Mukhtar, another religious cleric.

Earlier, some Islamic Emirate officials gave assurances that the girls' education plan would be completed and that schools and universities would reopen by the start of the coming academic year.

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## Doctors Without Borders reports on Afghan economy, health needs

KABUL (TOLONews): Doctors Without Borders said in a report that a broken healthcare system, widespread poverty, and increased bans on women are fueling the current humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan.

This organization in a report titled "Persistent barriers to access health care in Afghanistan," commented on the effects of a protracted crisis and a staggering economic situation in Afghanistan, with 95 percent of respondents in the report saying they cannot afford food due to economic challenges, unemployment and increased cost of food materials in the past 12 months.

The report said that sanctions imposed by the international community have crippled the economy, while \$7 billion of the Afghan Central Bank's assets remain frozen abroad and are inaccessible to people in need.

According to the report, the health situation is worse for women, and the



recent bans in Afghanistan through the current government about working for non-governmental organiza-

tions and from university-level education will likely only worsen women's access to health care.

### Police arrests three abductors

KANDAHAR (Agencies): Local security officials of the Kandahar say that the police of the province have arrested 3 people in charges of abducting.

The police spokesperson of Kandahar Hafiz Sabeer, told this new agency that two people were arrested by police from 12th police district and one person arrested Shawalikot district.

The detainees are under police investigation, after which they will be introduced to judicial bodies, Sabeer said.

Meanwhile, police personnel arrested four people with charges of robbery from Kabul city. The commander police of Kabul in a statement said that police arrested 4 people on charges of criminal offenses from the 10th police district.

## Exiled Afghan journalist wants to sell his kidney for survival

KABUL (Khaama Press): An Afghan journalist who feared death treads and fled to Pakistan now wants to sell his kidney to cope with the serious economic challenges he is plagued with. Sami Jahesh, an Afghan Journalist currently residing in Pakistan Tuesday said on Twitter 'I have no money, no food to eat, no other option, but to sell my kidney'.

Jahesh took on Twitter by posting one of his pictures and WhatsApp number, asking people who need kidney to directly contact him.

Prior to the recent regime change in Afghanistan, Jahesh used to work for Aryana News, a private broadcasting channel in Afghanistan. After the Taliban seized power in

August 2021, he fled to Pakistan fearing death threats and persecution under the Taliban regime.

According to his relatives, Jahesh was bitten and harassed by the de facto authorities of Afghanistan a couple of times. Many Afghan journalists who fled the Taliban regime, now live in desperation and uncertainty in Pakistan and other neighboring countries.

Since the Taliban's takeover of Kabul in August 2021, thousands of Afghans migrated to the neighboring countries. A large group of journalists, human rights activists, and civil society members also left the country for fear of persecution and killing by the ruling regime.

Many Afghan journalists and human rights activists

expected to be transferred from the neighboring countries to one of the refugee-accepting states still remain in Pakistan and Iran and are struggling with grave economic challenges.

Groups of Afghan journalists have already protested and called on organizations supporting journalists, however, they have been long forgotten and left in complete desperation in Pakistan.

The late regime change in Afghanistan has had negative impacts on the living conditions of people from different walks of life. Journalists, human rights activists, civil society members, minority groups, and women and girls have been marginalized from public life under the Taliban-run administration.

## Security Deptt assures traders of security



KABUL (TOLONews): The Security Department in Kabul vowed to provide traders with security, saying that they have conducted several rounds of meetings with the traders to address their challenges.

A spokesman for the Kabul security department, Khalid Zadrán, said that the security forces will provide security for both citizens and traders in the country.

"We not only pay attention to the security situation of the citizens but also the traders. We have meetings with them (traders) at the end of every month ad every week and discuss their security issues in coordination with them," Zadrán said.

The Afghanistan Chamber of Commerce and Investment (ACCI) said that nearly 350 weapon licenses have been issued to the members of the private sector.

Acting head of the ACCI, Mohammad Younus Momand expressed optimism over ensuring the security of the traders by the security departments in the country.

"The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has helped the private sector in security issues. In only one day, it issued 350 licenses for weapons and also provided any kind of help we asked them for," he said.

This comes as the residents of Kabul called on the

Islamic Emirate to pay further attention to the security in Kabul.

"We call on the Islamic Emirate to pay attention to every aspect. For example, the cases of abduction and our economic figures are being abducted all the time," said Rohullah, a resident of Kabul.

"The situation is better now than before. The people were very afraid of the security situation before. The situation deteriorated during the night," said Hakimullah, a resident of Kabul.

Earlier, there were reports published about the abduction of 13 traders in the country but the Kabul security department denied it.

## Forces arrests man on charge of abducting child

KABUL (Agencies): The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan's Intelligence forces arrested a man on charge of abducting a child in Kabul city.

The man Yar Mohammad, who is a resident of Herat province, kidnapped his niece Pajman and transferred from Isfahan, Iran to Kabul and later demanded money from his release, said the General Intelligence Directorate department in a statement.

The detainee confessed to his crimes abducting his niece Pajman from Isfahan, Iran, 22 days back and



demanded one hundred million Tomans in exchange for his release, added to the statement.

The General Intelligence Directorate in it's said that the abducted child reunited back with his family.

## Women's handicrafts exhibition opened in Baghlan

BAGHLAN (Agencies): Local officials of Baghlan say that an exhibition of women's handicrafts was opened on Tuesday in the province.

The provincial head of Information and Culture of Baghlan, Mawlawi Assadullah Mustafa Hashemi said that the purpose of launching the exhibition is to strengthen handicrafts and grow the economy of families.

The exhibition has been launched by the Department of Information and Culture in cooperation with the Aga Khan Development Foundation for three days.

An official of the Nageen sewing workshop,

who brought his products to display and sell in this exhibition, asked the local authorities of Baghlan to

provide them with a permanent place for trading women's handicrafts.

During the first day of

this exhibition, hundreds of Baghlan citizens and several local officials visited it.





# PTI plea seeking election within 90 days PHC issue notices to ECP, KP govt

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) issued notices to the Election Commission of Pakistan and the caretaker provincial government on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) plea seeking election within 90 days after the dissolution of the KP Assembly, on Tuesday.

It is to be noted that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Assembly was dissolved on January 18 after Governor Haji Ghulam Ali signed the advice for the dissolution of the provincial assembly sent to him by the then Chief Minister Mahmood Khan a day ago.

Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf moved PHC for elections in the province within 90 days of the dissolution of the assembly. PTI in its plea said as per the constitution, elections are to be held within 90 days but the KP governor has so far not given any date, citing law and order issues.

The governor said elections cannot be held due to the law and order situation, Moazzam Butt said and asked when the situation is not favorable how come

by-elections on 33 seats are being?

Advocate General Aamir Javed in his remarks before the court said the governor can consult with the ECP for 36 days and added PTI filed the plea in haste. Later, the PHC while issuing notices to the ECP and the caretaker government, summoned their response by February 14.

The divisional bench of PHC comprising Justice Atique Shah and Justice Ishtaique Ibrahim remarked elections should be held within 90 as per the law and ordered to submit reply 14th February.

Senator Shibli Faraz claimed that if elections were delayed from more than 90 days then PTI's activists will launched "Jail Baro Tehreek" (Fill the prisons) and it will be initiated by party leadership. He claimed that from March 2022 fascist government has take control over Pakistan which has destroyed economy.

This he said while addressing media personnel after issuance of notices to ECP. Governor along interim government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in the prem-

ises of PHC and added that ineligible government has imposed on the nation which has put PTI's leadership behind the bars.

Senator Shibli Faraz argued that PTI has dissolved Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab assemblies as per law of the land but the ruler neither believe in constitution of Pakistan nor following the law. He claimed that development is directly dependent on rule of Law and added that economy is facing destructions while Prime Minister is busy in foreign visits.

PTI leader also condemned bringing dead body of Pervaiz Musharraf on government expenses and claimed that he was a dictator who has abrogated and suspended constitution of Pakistan which is high treason.

Former Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Shah Farman claimed that PTI has approached PHC to obtain schedule for election of provincial assembly because current government doesn't willing to hold polling within 90 days which is constitutional obligation.

## President visits Peshawar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: President Dr Arif Alvi has reiterated the resolve to uproot and eliminate terrorism from the country. He said that the government and the security forces of the country would take all possible measures to fully defeat the menace of terrorism. He expressed these views during his visit to Lady Reading Hospital, Peshawar, wherein he inquired after the injured in the Peshawar Police Line terrorist attack.

Speaking on the occasion, the President said that Police Line terrorist attack was a painful and heinous act of terrorism, and expressed grief over the loss of precious human lives. He said that Pakistan had successfully tackled the menace of terrorism, and it would continue to take steps till its complete elimination. He appreciated the government for providing financial aid to the families of the martyred as well as those who were injured during the attack. The President also met with the sole female survivor of the terrorist attack and expressed his condolences over the martyrdom of her family members.

## Wikipedia services restored

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) on Tuesday restored Wikipedia services across Pakistan. As per details, the PTA has unblocked the service on the orders of Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif.

Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif earlier directed the Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) to immediately restore online encyclopedia, Wikipedia, which was banned for not blocking/removing sacrilegious content. The prime minister then constituted a committee comprising the law, economic affairs and information ministers for preliminary examination of the matter.

"Blocking the site in its entirety was not a suitable measure to restrict access to some objectionable contents/ sacrilegious matter on it. The unintended consequences of this blanket ban, therefore, outweigh its benefits," the statement added. It is pertinent to mention here that Pakistan Telecommunication Authority (PTA) blocked Wikipedia services in the country after the platform failed to remove blasphemous content.

## Israeli forces martyr Palestinian teen

RAMALLAH (Agencies): Israeli forces martyred a 17-year-old Palestinian on Tuesday during a raid in the occupied West Bank, the Palestinian health ministry said, and the army described him as a gunman who had fired on troops. Hamzeh al-Ashkar was shot in the face by soldiers who raided the northern city of Nablus at around dawn, the ministry said.

"He was armed and was firing on the (Israeli) forces," a military spokesperson said when asked about the incident. The Den of Lions, a group of Nablus fighters with loose factional affiliations, said some of its members exchanged fire with Israeli forces who had "stormed a housing area".

The group said the slain teenager was from the Askar refugee camp near Nablus but did not claim him as a member. Also early on Tuesday, Israeli forces arrested at least 18 Palestinians in the northern West Bank town of Burqin near Jenin, the Palestinian Prisoners Club advocacy group said. The operations came during a time of heightened tensions that have drawn fears of a further escalation in violence.

On January 27, a gunman killed seven people near a synagogue in East Jerusalem, a day after an Israeli raid in the West Bank city of Jenin in which 10 Palestinians, including eight gunmen, were killed. The Palestinian health ministry said at least 42 Palestinians, civilians and militants, have been killed by Israeli forces and settlers since January 1. Israel said the raids are a security measure targeting suspected militants.



PESHAWAR: President Dr. Arif Alvi along with Caretaker Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan inquiring after the health of cop, injured in Police Lines attack.

## Petition seeking Imran's disqualification Islamabad High Court forms larger bench

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has formed a larger bench to hear a petition seeking disqualification of Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan as a lawmaker for "concealing" his alleged daughter in his nomination papers.

A three-member larger bench headed by IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and comprising Justice Mohsin Akhtar Kayani and Justice Arbab Muhammad Tahir will hear the case on February 9. The petitioner is seeking disqualification of the PTI chief, an MNA from the NA-95 Mianwali-I constituency, contending that all candidates contesting elections for either national or provincial assemblies are required to furnish an affidavit with respect of their credentials and assets.

He said that one such information is about the children who are dependent on a candidate, and in this connection, Imran had wrongly mentioned two children including "Qasim Khan and Sulaiman Khan" and had omitted the third. He claimed, "The respondent no. 1 [Imran Khan] has deliberately and willfully failed to declare his daughter Tyrian White in the relevant columns of the nomination papers and the affidavit appended therewith, hence he is not sagacious, righteous, honest and a man of good character in terms of Article 62 of the Constitution."

The petitioner urged the court to summon the former prime minister and inquire about the reasons for the violation of Article 62 of the Constitution, which says, "a person shall not be

qualified to be elected or chosen as a member of Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) unless — he is sagacious, righteous, non-profligate, honest and ameen, there being no declaration to the contrary by a court of law".

He also prayed to the court to question Imran for "submitting a false declaration and affidavit and as to why he should be allowed to be a member of the parliament ... and may not be de-seated in all accumulated consequences for the violation of the Constitution and the law." Earlier, a single bench of IHC comprising Chief Justice of IHC Justice Aamer Farooq had decided to form a larger bench to hear the petition of a citizen Muhammad Sajid seeking disqualification of Chairman Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

## Prices of twenty essential medicines cut: Senate told

ISLAMABAD (INP): "Government has recently reduced the prices of twenty essential medicines and a notification to this effect was also issued on 11th of last month" Minister of State for Law Shahadat Awan has stated this in senate on Tuesday.

Responding to a calling attention notice, Minister of State for Law Shahadat Awan said the government has recently reduced the prices of twenty essential medicines and a notification to this effect was also issued on 11th of last month. He also referred to the increase made in the medicines by the previous government of PTI. Moreover, the Senate was informed that 190 passenger coaches and seven hundred and fifty high capacity wagons will be locally assembled in Pakistan under transfer of technology agreement with China.

Minister of State for Law Shahadat Awan told the House during Question Hour that efforts are afoot to reduce the deficit of Pakistan Railways by improving its service. He said a land business plan has also been prepared to minimize its revenue and expenditure gap. The Minister of State said up-gradation of infrastructure under ML-1 will go a long way in uplifting Pakistan Railways. He said there is also a plan to shift the trains to electricity after the completion of ML-1.

Responding to a supplementary question, Minister of State for Law Shahadat Awan said Radio Pakistan is a national broadcaster and it will always be our endeavor to further improve its performance. He said both Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television will see development in the days to come. The Senate was informed today that a center has been established in Tarlai area of Islamabad to keep the stray dogs.

Minister of State for Law Shahadat Awan told the House during Question Hour that at present, seven hundred and three dogs are housed in the center. He said a complaint cell has also been established where the people can report the presence or free roaming of stray dogs. The Minister of State said the animals also have the rights and these will be taken care of. Responding to another Calling Attention Notice moved by Danesh Kumar, Minister of State for Law said work is in progress for the dualization of 790 kilometers N-25 from Karachi to Quetta and Chaman. He assured that this

important highway will be completed to ensure smooth and safe flow of traffic on it.

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## Abbasi asks ex-NAB chief to name those who forced him to pursue false cases

LAHORE (INP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leader and former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi on Tuesday pushed ex-National Accountability Bureau (NAB) chairman retired Justice Javed Iqbal to name the persons at whose behest he filed "false" cases against the political leaders.

Mr Abbasi, who is also facing a case over alleged corruption in the award of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) import contract, told media

that he was baffled by the case registered against him. Saying Mr Iqbal will have to be answerable, the PML-N stalwart reiterated his stance that the NAB should be abolished as no government could be run with its existence.

He said Fawad Hassan Fawad, his former principal secretary who was recently acquitted in the corruption case, was also embroiled in the false case. "Public has to pay the price when the NAB is used to pressurise

politicians," he said.

Responding to a question, Mr Abbasi, who has resigned as senior vice president of the PML-N, said he was not leaving the party. He also dispelled rumours of receiving an offer from Imran Khan led-Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Responding to another question he stated the PML-N head Mian Nawaz Sharif will return to Pakistan after completion of his medical treatment.

## SHC orders registration of Keamari death cases

KARACHI (Agencies): The Sindh High Court has ordered to register all death cases occurred during the last three years in Keamari due to inhaling toxic gas emitted from some factories of the area.

The court ordered the authorities to conduct investigations into the deaths by the SSP rank officers and also directed to take action against the people responsible for these fatalities.

SHC Chief Justice Ahmad Ali Shaikh conducted hearing of the case. Sindh IG police, advocate general and other officials appeared before the case. During the hearing, the court expressed its ire over quashing of cases under A Class in 2020. The judge inquired of the IG police how many people died in Keamari. IG Police Ghulam Nabi Memon replied that as many as 18 deaths were occurred.

The judge expressed his exasperation and said that if 18 people died, why no case was registered. The IGP replied if the people came forward to bring their complaints, then the police had been able to register cases.

Justice Shaikh remarked that it was the responsibility of the area's station house officer to register a complaint on behalf of the state. "Why the SHO was waiting for the complaint? If people were dying, there should be someone who could look into it," the judge reprimanded the IGP adding that it was the standard of the police investigation that only one post mortem was conducted so far after so many deaths. Keamari deputy commissioner told the court that only three deaths were reported in his area and those were not caused by inhaling toxic gas.

Justice Shaikh gave the DC a good addressing down saying that he should go to tend his land. "You should not hold the post of the deputy commissioner as you do not know what happened in your area," he added. The CJ ordered the police to contact the families of the deceased and register all cases of deaths occurred between 2020 and January 2023. He said if no affected family came forward to register its complaint, even then the police should register the death cases. He also ordered the authorities to entrust inquiry of the cases to some senior police officers and if anyone tried to conceal the facts, a legal action should be taken against him.

## ECP submits progress report in IHC

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Tuesday filed a progress report to Islamabad High Court (IHC) regarding the scrutiny of funding of three political parties.

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq heard the petition filed by PTI seeking scrutiny of funding of PML-N, PPP and UI. During the hearing, the director general of law (ECP) told the court that the institution was working on the scrutiny pertaining to thousands of transactions.

The DG law said that he was heading the scrutiny committee and the accountant was also part of the body. The chief justice remarked that the ECP should also hire the services of a chartered accountant and forensic experts to complete the procedure.

## Saad: Polls should be held simultaneously in country

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Federal Railways and Aviation Minister Khawaja Saad Rafique said on Tuesday that elections should be held simultaneously in the country, otherwise, a chaotic situation would emerge. Talking to the media after attending a court case here, he said that a new crisis would surface, if the elections were held separately and the country could not afford it, adding that it was also not possible that elections should be held in the country throughout the year, leaving aside other work.

He said that elections were delayed in the past on different occasions due to specific circumstances. He said that economic meltdown was too big and the whole country was in its grip. "In this situation, if the elections of two assemblies and remaining assemblies were held separately then it would cause further division", he added. To a question, he said that no one was escaping from the elections, adding that PML-

N contested the 2018 elections in difficult situation. "No PDM party was escaping from the elections as they had taken part in many elections," he added.

The minister said that if the demand of elections were accepted then Imran Khan would further demand the change of the Election Commission, which had constitutional protection. "It is the nature of Imran Khan that if you accept one demand then he would raise another", he added. He further said the constitution empowered the leader of the house to dissolve assembly, adding that it was not a blind power. He questioned the dissolution of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assemblies and said that the assemblies were dissolved on the orders of a person who did not have any constitutional position.

He said that Imran Khan announced the dissolution of the assemblies and forced chief ministers to dissolve the assemblies. Whether the step was con-

stitutional, or it was morally correct to dissolve assemblies without any reason, he questioned. He said that all political parties and the nation should be united in the war against terrorism. He said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) must attend the all parties Conference, adding that the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz leader Ayaz Sadiq had spoken with senior PTI leaders in this regard and now the party (PTI) should show seriousness in this matter. "No politics should be done on national issues, we should be united at one policy against terrorism", he added.

Earlier, Khawaja Saad Rafique and his brother Khawaja Salman Rafique appeared before an accountability court in connection with hearing of Paragon City reference. The court adjourned further hearing till February 22 after the National Accountability Bureau sought time for filing supplementary report about co-accused.



KARACHI: General Sahir Shamshad Mirza, CJCS and others offering dua after funeral prayer of former President Pervaiz Musharraf.

## PTI hopeful to get Punjab, KP elections date

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) secretary-general is hopeful to get dates for by-polls in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa by next week. Addressing a press conference in Islamabad, Asad Umar termed elections in Pakistan, a first step towards real independence. The PTI leader expressed hope that by the end of this week, the date of Punjab and the next week's election date will be announced in KP.

Asad Umar claimed that Pakistan is currently 'occupied' by some political parties and selfish groups. This war is not for any political party or individual but for everyone, he added. The PTI leader called upon every section of the society to join the struggle for 'real' independence because this war has to be won by the people of Pakistan. He stated that federal government is openly threatening to 'abrogate' the constitution.

"Don't make yourself guilty of Article 6 by delaying elections within 90 days."

Replying to a question about the invitation to attend the All Parties Conference, Asad Umar said that the entire party office was checked and no invitation from the federal government for APC was received. The former federal minister also said that the IMF delegation is in Pakistan and the negotiations for the revival of the stalled loan program are underway. He said Pakistan is going through the worst inflation in history, and millions of businesses have been destroyed.

On the other hand Tehreek-e-Insaf leader Fawad Chaudhry has said that whenever PTI Chairman Imran Khan announces Jail Bharu Tehreek, I will be the first to offer my arrest from District Jhelum. While talking to media persons he stated that PTI has

## 'Elections to be held as per schedule'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik on Tuesday said the Election Commission of Pakistan would follow the Constitution for conducting elections as per schedule.

Talking to a private news channel, he said that PTI leader Imran Khan was trying to "derail the democratic process". He said Imran Khan was not serious about resolving public interest issues as the PTI leader had refused to participate in the APC meeting.