

Mansoor named as new AG
F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has accepted the resignation of Attorney General of Pakistan Barrister Shehzad Ata Elahi and appointed Advocate Supreme Court Mansoor Usman Awan as the new Attorney General. The President accepted the resignation and made the appointment on the advice of the Prime Minister under article 100 of the constitution.

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PM summons Tarar

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif summoned Federal Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar to get a briefing about the Punjab Elections case hearing in Supreme Court on Monday. The law minister will give a briefing to the Prime Minister regarding hearing of the Supreme Court, says sources. In the meeting, there will also be a consultation regarding the appointment of the new Attorney General of Pakistan.

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RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif visits free Atta distribution points established under PM's Ramadan Package for deserving families.

Imran's graft to be exposed with full force, says Maryam

LAHORE (INP): The PML-N has decided to bring to the fore what they said "unjust and vindictive judgments and testimonies" against former prime minister Nawaz Sharif, while a strategy was also prepared to 'expose' PTI chief Imran Khan and his alleged facilitators.

These decisions were taken in a meeting of the PML-N's spokespersons, chaired by party Senior Vice President and chief organizer Maryam Nawaz here on Monday. The meeting also decided to bring to light the facts related to Imran Khan's alleged corruption, facilitators, malpractices and loot.

Maryam remarked that Imran had become the past of Pakistan, and now it was time to think about the future of the country. The meeting also decided to propagate the facts regarding the party's policies. Maryam Nawaz claimed the dissenting note of Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Jamal Mandokhel vindicated their narrative of "bench fixing".

"If the bench-making is not fair, how can the decision be considered fair?" she questioned. She also vowed to expose Imran Khan's alleged 'facilitators in the judiciary' with full force, as well as the alleged violation of Constitution and the law in trials against Nawaz Sharif. "If there is justice, then after all the evidences of injustices with Nawaz Sharif, the standards of justice should have been one by now," she exclaimed.

Maryam said in the four years of the PTI's rule, not one job out of the 10 million or one house out of the five million promised was given to the public. She also called Imran Khan's 10-point agenda to turn around the country's economy as a pack of lies. Later, in a tweet, the PML-N leader called Imran Khan a "foreign agent" whose purpose was to create anarchy and chaos.

ECC defers summary to increase drug prices

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of the Cabinet on Monday deferred summaries of Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination on fixation MPR of 54 new drugs and increase in prices of 119 drugs.

The ECC, met with Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar in chair, also considered a summary of Ministry of National Health Services, Regulations and Coordination for maximum retail price of Remdesivir 100 mg injection and decided not to increase the price of Remdesivir 100 mg injection and the existing MRP Rs. 1892/vial shall remain fixed.

The meeting was attended by Minister for Power Khurram Dastgir Khan, Minister for Industries and Production Syed Murtaza Mahmud, Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar, Minister of State for Finance and Revenue Dr. Aisha Ghaus Pasha, Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Masood Malik, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi and MNA/SAPM on Revenue Tariq Mehmood Pasha.

SAPM on Government Effectiveness Dr. Jehanzeb Khan, Coordinator to the PM on Economy Bilal Azhar Kayani, Coordinator to PM on Commerce and Industry Rana Ihsan Afzal, federal secretaries and other senior officers also attended the meeting. The ECC considered and approved a summary of Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) regarding arrangement of Finance Facility for funding of Government of Balochistan's share of obligation in Rekodi project dispute settlement with directions to the Finance Division to arrange payment of markup amounting to Rs. 6,238,358,879 for the period from March 31, 2022 to December 30, 2022 to the NBP for the short term finance facility of Rs. 65 billion.

Media persons present in the parliament's press gallery staged walk-out to protest against attacks on journalists in the Islamabad Judicial Complex, arrest of Siddique Jan, and non-payment of salaries to media workers by the media houses. Responding to points raised by the media persons, Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf directed the ministry of Interior to look into the matter of attacks on journalists.

Dedicated free flour centers being set up for poor: PM

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said dedicated counters were being established for the needy people, not registered with Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), to provide free flour bags to them at the distribution centres under Ramadan Package.

"A huge number of people who are not registered with BISP, deserve free flour bags as they are also living below the poverty line," he said while talking to media during his visit to a free wheat flour distribution centre. He said National Database Registration Authority (NADRA) and Punjab Information Technology Board took up the challenge to include non-BISP people by proposing a solution to this issue and developing a system which would be fully operational by today (Monday).

Under this system, he said the non-BISP deserving people would be eligible to get free flour from

the separate counters after registering their names in the system. The prime minister said from tomorrow (Tuesday), the people who have not yet received any flour bag, would be provided all three bags at a time so that they would not have to travel again for the purpose.

He said this was the first time in the country's history that free flour was being provided to deserving people, therefore the administration had to face a big challenge in the beginning but the process was getting streamlined.

He appreciated the Punjab government and Rawalpindi administration who were working day and night to make the distribution process smooth and uninterrupted. "Their passion to serve the poor during fasting is praiseworthy," he added.

He also appreciated the efforts of Punjab Chief Minister and Chief Secretary in the flour distribution process. PM Shehbaz Sharif said despite huge economic challenges,

the government was committed to working for the relief of the unprivileged segment of the society.

He said the government was putting in full efforts to change the fate of Pakistan. He also called upon people from all walks of life to support the government in its pro-poor efforts. He said he would also pay unannounced visits to the flour distribution centres across the province to ensure smooth distribution of the bags to the people.

Earlier, the prime minister met with the beneficiaries at the centre and inquire about the problems, they were facing while receiving the flour bags. The Rawalpindi Commissioner briefed the PM about the distribution process and informed that four centers were working in the city. The prime minister directed to resolve all the issues faced by the people at the earliest. He also directed to accommodate other people from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan but living in the Punjab.

IHC grants interim bail to Imran in seven FIRs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday granted interim bail to PTI chairman Imran Khan till April 6, in seven FIRs pertaining to riot and vandalizing public property at the judicial complex Islamabad.

The court stopped police from arresting the petitioner till the next date and also sought comments from the federal government regarding the withdrawal of security from the former prime minister. A two-judge bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Miangul Hassan Aurangzeb heard the bail cases along with the objections raised by the registrar's office in FIRs registered by various police stations.

Former prime minister Imran Khan appeared before the court in a personal capacity. During the course of the proceeding, the chief justice questioned why the petitioner had bypassed the relevant forum. He said that the biometric verification could also be done from anywhere. The chief justice observed that the law and order situation would be critical only when around ten thousand people would come along with the petitioner. He said that we admitted that the PTI was a big political party and people use to come but law and

order also needed to be maintained.

Justice Farooq further noted that serious security threats to the life of Imran Khan could be a genuine fact and he had already faced an attack in the past. Justice Miangul Hassan said that several times this court had given directions to the chief commissioner to ensure the security arrangements. The chief justice remarked that unfortunately Salman Taseer incident also took place here.

The court said the former prime minister Imran Khan also had his own security. Justice Farooq remarked that it was serving notice to the federal government on the issue of security for the ex-prime minister. The chief justice remarked that withdrawing security from the former prime minister was a wrong act. Justice Miangul Hassan asked the advocate general to get information and ensure the restoration of security immediately if it was withdrawn.

Advocate General Islamabad Jahangir Jadoon said that the trial court was shifted from Kachehri to judicial complex for security reasons. It was also the responsibility of Imran Khan to ensure a peaceful environment during his appearance, he said, and alleged that PTI workers set

fire to the vehicles there. The court also stopped Chaudhry Fawad Hussain and Jahangir Jadoon from cross-talk before it.

During hearing, Imran Khan also arrived at the rostrum and requested permission to speak. However, the court asked him to sit in his seat. Imran's lawyer Barrister Salman Safdar argued that there was a threat to the life of the former prime minister. The petitions had stated that the FIRs against Imran Khan were registered on political grounds. It prayed the court to grant

PTI chairman interim bail and stop the police from arresting him. Imran Khan's lawyer Barrister Salman Safdar argued that Lahore High Court (LHC) had accepted the protective bail to his client on March 17. His client filed bail petitions to the anti-terrorism court on March 18, but he was not allowed to enter. He said that two former prime ministers had been assassinated in the history of Pakistan. He said that his client had no objections to go judicial complex. Earlier, the registrar's office had raised two objections against the petitions including shortage of Imran Khan's biometric verifications and moving the cases directly to the high court without approaching the trial court.

Six killed in suicide blast in Afghan capital

KABUL (Agencies): A suicide attack on Monday near Afghanistan's foreign ministry in Kabul killed six civilians and wounded several others, the interior ministry said.

Security has dramatically improved since the Taliban stormed back to power in August 2021, ousting the US-backed government and ending their two decade insurgency, but the Islamic State group has proved an increasing threat. The attacker was identified by Afghan forces who shot at him in front of a business centre near the foreign ministry, interior ministry spokesmen Abdul Nafis Takor tweeted.

"With his killing, the explosives carried by the attacker also exploded which killed six civilians and wounded a number of

others," he said. Italian NGO Emergency, which operates a hospital in the capital, confirmed it had received two dead and 12 wounded, including a child. No group has claimed responsibility for the attack.

Monday's blast was the second attack near the foreign ministry in Kabul in less than three months, and the first since the Muslim holy month of Ramadan began on Thursday in Afghanistan. On January 11, a suicide bomber blew himself up near the foreign ministry, killing 10 and wounding 53 people, according to the United Nations. The Taliban authorities, who have often tried to play down attacks challenging their rule, had said that five people were killed in that attack,

claimed by IS.

The group has increasingly become a major challenge, killing and wounding hundreds of people in several attacks, some targeting foreigners or foreign interests in a bid to undermine the Taliban government. At least five Chinese nationals were wounded in December when gunmen stormed a hotel popular with businesspeople in Kabul. That raid was claimed by IS, as was an attack on Pakistan's embassy in Kabul also in December that Islamabad denounced as an "assassination attempt" against its ambassador. Two Russian embassy staff members were killed in a suicide bombing outside their mission in September in another attack claimed by IS.

Abbasi says in favour of 'polls within 90 days'

ISLAMABAD (INP): The former prime minister (PM) and PML-N leader on Monday said that he is in favour of 'elections within 90 days'.

In an interview with private TV news channel, the PML-N leader said that he still stands by his stance to hold elections within 90 days but it is ECP's responsibility. The constitution also asks the state institutions to assist the ECP in holding elections, he added. The former prime minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said "Now the supreme court will see this matter as the ECP had said they cannot hold elections."

He further said that if any political party violates the constitution, the state takes action against it but he is not in favour of baseless allegations against political parties. The PML-N leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that Nawaz Sharif is his leader, Maryam Nawaz is the party's chief organizer and Shehbaz Sharif is the president of the party. He doesn't believe in two leaders in one party. He added that history will tell how Shehbaz Sharif became the Prime Minister.

Per capita public debt stood at Rs 216,709: NA told

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Finance Aisha Ghaus Pasha on Monday informed the National Assembly that per capita public debt stood at Rs 216,709 by June 2022.

Replying to a query during the Question Hour, the minister said Pakistan had maintained a debt to gross domestic product (GDP) ratio at 73.5 per cent during the period under review. She said the country's total public debt was Rs 52,721 billion till December 2022, including domestic debt of Rs 33,116 billion and external debt of Rs 19,605 billion.

She said most countries relied on the debt inflows to fulfill the shortfall in available resources to fund the government budget. The government borrowed to mainly finance its budget deficit approved by the parliament every year which included the Public Sector Development Programme, running of the civil government, and more importantly to pay interest on loans taken in the past, she added. Answering another question, the minister the government was committed to an interest-free economy, and the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) in consultation with the Finance Division was working to devise a policy for adopting interest-free banking instruments.

A committee had been constituted and deliberations were underway to prepare a transformational plan in that regard, she added. The committee comprised officials from the SBP, Finance Ministry, Islamic and commercial banks, and Ulema as the entire financial system would have to change, she said. The minister said Islamic Banking witnessed an impressive improvement in the country in recent years. Aisha Ghaus said an amount of Rs 50,120 million had been released to the Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa government so far during the current financial year 2022-23 to meet current and development expenditures of the erstwhile FATA

(Federally Administered Tribal Areas). Rs 115,200 million (Rs 60 billion for current and Rs 55.2 billion for development) was allocated for current and development expenditures of the erstwhile FATA during FY 2022-23, she added. However, she said, no amount was earmarked for temporarily displaced persons (TDPs) during the current financial year. Mohsin Dawar, Minister for Religious Affairs Mufti Abdul Shakoor and Minister of Overseas Pakistani Sajid Hussain Turi staged a walk-out of the House for not releasing development budget to the erstwhile FATA.

Parliament's joint session continues debate on key national issues: The joint session of the parliament on Monday resumed discussion on national issues, including law and order and terrorism, economic policy, Jammu and Kashmir issue, respect for national institutions, China-Pakistan-Economic-Corridor, population explosion, Climate Change impact and foreign policy of the country.

PTI Senators are also taking part in the proceedings of the House for the first time since the convening of the Joint Sitting of the Parliament. Participating in the discussion, PTI leader Shahzad Wasim called for urgent elections in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa as per the spirit of the constitution. He criticized the Election Commission of Pakistan's decision to delay elections in Punjab.

Media persons present in the parliament's press gallery staged walk-out to protest against attacks on journalists in the Islamabad Judicial Complex, arrest of Siddique Jan, and non-payment of salaries to media workers by the media houses. Responding to points raised by the media persons, Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervaiz Ashraf directed the ministry of Interior to look into the matter of attacks on journalists.

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SR #	TENDER ENQUIRY NO.	DESCRIPTION	BID SUBMISSION DATE & TIME	BID OPENING DATE & TIME
1	OGDCL- SCM-SERVICES- CB-PROD -205685630- 2023	HIRING OF RETRIEVABLE BRIDGE PLUG (RBP) AND RETRIEVABLE PACKER SERVICES	13.04.2023 AT 1030 Hrs.	13.04.2023 AT 1100 Hrs.
2	OGDCL- SCM-SERVICES- CB-PROD -205793699- 2023	TUBING RUNNING IN AND PULLING OUT SERVICES	13.04.2023 AT 1030 Hrs.	13.04.2023 AT 1100 Hrs.

- Vendors not having Ariba Network ID are requested to register themselves on SAP Ariba Portal by clicking on the link supplier.ariba.com to access and participate in OGDCL tenders.
- 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 discovery.ariba.com/profile/AN01562899621.
- 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.
- 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".

EXTENSION

Reference to our Press Tender Notices published in national newspapers on 24.02.2023 and 11.03.2023, it is notified that the bids submission/opening dates are extended as follows:

SR #	TENDER ENQUIRY NO.	DESCRIPTION	FROM	TO
1	OGDCL-SCM-FA-CB-PROD-203223059-2023	CP MATERIAL FOR X-FIELDS	Date: 29.03.2023 Submission: 1100 hrs Opening: 1130 hrs	Date: 12.04.2023 Submission: 1100 hrs Opening: 1130 hrs
2	OGDCL-SCM-SERVICES-CB-RMD-204846231-2023	HIRING SERVICE OF CONSULTANT FOR RESERVES EVALUATION STUDY OF OGDCL FIELDS	Date: 30.03.2023 Submission: 1030 hrs Opening: 1100 hrs	Date: 17.04.2023 Submission: 1030 hrs Opening: 1100 hrs

- Bid submission/opening time and all other terms & conditions shall remain unchanged.
- Bidders are requested to contact **Manager Supply Chain Management (SCM) Foreign** at Phone # +92-51-92002-3652 and **In-Charge Supply Chain Management (SCM) Services** at Phone # +92-51-92002-3750 for further queries / information.
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KP govt declines taking over of PESCO; suggests provincialization of DISCOs

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has declined the Federal government's proposal to take over the financial and administrative responsibilities of the Peshawar Electricity Supply Company (PESCO) and urged the federation to take steps for provincialization of DISCOs.

In a letter written to Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif by the Chief Minister KP and available with APP, it was pointed out that PESCO was currently facing a huge

shortfall of approximately Rs 200 billion per annum along with Rs 30 billion per annum in receivables.

At present, PESCO was enjoying a uniform national tariff due to the tariff differential subsidy which could be at risk if the existing structure of the power sector was altered, it said, adding that the KP province was under severe stress due to current law and order situation and militancy coupled with low economic and social indicators and could not take over PESCO.

The CM said that the proposal could be considered if power generation was handed over to KP along with the income from electricity generation which would entail handing over of all federally owned hydropower stations to the province.

The CM referring to a report of the "Out of box solution committee" headed by the Deputy Chairman Planning Commission, said that its report should be placed before the Council of Common Interest (CCI) in the next meeting for con-

sideration.

He further proposed that a ministerial-level committee should be set up to deliberate upon the "Provincialization of DISCOs" for accommodation of the viewpoints of the provinces.

The letter mentioned that due to the poor financial and administrative conditions of the DISCOs, the federal government had proposed to shift the financial and administrative responsibilities of the power distribution companies to the provinces.



PESHAWAR: Christians delegation meeting Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali at Governor's House.

Address from container a childish act of IK: Faiza

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial vice chairperson, Qaumi Watan Party (QWP), Dr Faiza Rasheed that the childish act of addressing party workers while hiding in a container at Minar-e-Pakistan has proved that the Chairman PTI Imran Khan has no stake with the country and nation and only self is dear to him.

In a statement issued here on Monday, she said that leaders used to present themselves first for sacrifice while leading workers and the people and those making tall claims by delivering speech from bullet proof containers have no right to call themselves a leader.

Two nabbed in blind murder case

PESHAWAR (APP): The Daudzai Police on Monday claimed to have arrested two persons allegedly involved in the killing of a blind man about two months ago in Shegai Upper area, here on Monday.

The police team led by SHO Zafar Khan traced and nabbed the accused namely Naeem Ullah and Saeed Ullah who were involved in the killing of Khial Shah on January 20.

Police also recovered the weapon used in the crime.

Cloudy weather with isolated rain predicted

PESHAWAR (APP): The Regional Meteorological Center Peshawar on Monday forecast mainly cloudy weather in most districts of the province.

However, it said that scattered rain-thunderstorm with gusty winds and few heavy falls (isolated hailstorm) was likely to occur over Chitral, Lower & Upper Dir, Malakand, Buner, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Bajaur, Mohmand, Khyber, and Kurram districts.

Isolated rain-thunderstorm with gusty winds and few heavy falls (isolated hailstorm) is expected in Swabi, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Charsadda, Orakzai, Hangu, Karak, Kohat, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, North & South Waziristan districts.

During the last 24 hours, dry weather prevailed over most districts of the province. However, isolated rain-thunderstorms occurred in Kurram and Khyber districts. Rain recorded (in mm): Parachinar 10, Tirah Khyber 02.

The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded (in °C) at different stations of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar City 26/12, Chitral 21/08, Timergara 24/07, Dir 21/03, Mirkhani 26/06, Kalam 16/-02, Drosch 20/10, Saidu Sharif 23/08, Pattan 27/09, Malam Jabba 10/03, Takht Bhai 26/11, Kakul 20/07, Balakot 24/08, Parachinar 14/01, Bannu 26/12, Cherat 15/05, D.I. Khan 27/14.

The lowest temperature recorded in the province was -02°C in Kalam.

CS directs convenient distribution of free 'Atta' for BISP beneficiaries

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief Secretary of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, along with the Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar paid a visit to several sales and distribution points on Monday, which have been set up to provide free 'Atta' to deserving individuals registered under the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP).

During the visit, the Chief Secretary interacted with the locals and inquired about their experiences and the availability of the free 'Atta.' He directed all concerned officials to ensure that the distribution process is made as convenient as possible for the registered beneficiaries.

The BISP was launched by the government in 2008 to provide financial assistance to the poor across the country.

The program aims to help alleviate poverty by providing regular cash transfers to eligible families.

The government has taken various measures to support the vulnerable segments of society. The provision of free 'Atta' to deserving individuals is one such initiative that has been implemented to provide some relief to those who are struggling to make ends meet.

The chief secretary praised the efforts of the local administration and directed them to continue their efforts to ensure that

the distribution process runs smoothly. He emphasized that the government remains committed to providing assistance to those in need, particularly during these difficult times.

The distribution of free 'Atta' is being carried out through designated sales and distribution points across the province. Eligible individuals who are registered under the BISP are entitled to receive quota free of cost.

The government's efforts to support the vulnerable segments of society have been widely appreciated, and the provision of free 'Atta' is just one example of the steps being taken to alleviate the hardships faced by the people.

WSSC directed to launch special cleansing campaign

PESHAWAR (APP): City Mayor Peshawar, Haji Zubair Ali has directed Water Supply & Sanitation Company (WSSC) Peshawar for launching a special cleansing campaign to clear streams and drains before the new spell of rains beginning from March 29 (Wednesday).

He issued these directives on Monday to ensure the smooth flow of water in streams and nullahs in case

of heavy rains in the city so that the people may not face devastating situations like in the past.

The city mayor also expressed satisfaction over the special cleansing operation carried out in the streams and nullahs by the WSSC to improve the water flow during the last three-day spell of rains in Gulbahar, Nishtarabad, Phandu Road and other localities of the city.

Haji Zubair claimed that the PTI-led provincial government had taken no concrete steps for bringing improvement in the drainage system of the city.

He assured that the Capital Metropolitan Government would take priority-based measures for the resolution of the drainage and sanitation-related problems of the city to bring it at par with the requirements of the modern era.



PESHAWAR: An under construction work, which was stopped due to unknown reason at Gulbahar area, creating hurdles for commuters, needs attention of authorities concerned.

Prime Minister flour program: A landmark initiative to facilitate millions of poor in Ramadan

PESHAWAR (APP): The last year's devastating floods had adversely affected agriculture and livestock sectors in the country including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which resulted in significant increase in prices of flour, vegetables and dairy products during Ramadan.

Incurring USD 40 billion losses including \$3.7 billion to the agriculture, food, livestock and fishery sectors to Pakistan, the August 2022 moon floods and global economic recessions in the wake of Russian-Ukraine war besides others factors, have largely contributed to the record 31.1 percent hike in inflation recorded in February last since 1974 by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

The destruction to seasonal agriculture crops, fruits and vegetables by the flash floods have increased prices in Peshawar where 20 kg flour bag was available at Rs2800-3000 and 10kg bag at Rs1400-1600 in open market, which was beyond the purchasing

power of the poor, marginalized and low income groups.

In Peshawar, one kilogram potato was being sold at Rs100, onion at Rs 150 per kg, tomatoes at Rs 140 per kg, garlic at Rs500 per kg. Similarly, one kilogram apple was available at Rs350-400 per kg, guava at Rs200 per kg, strawberry at Rs400 per kg, banana at Rs 200 per dozen and watermelon at Rs 200 per kg besides lemon at Rs500 per kg during Ramadan. The price of chicken has also soared to Rs 580 per kg, meat at Rs 850 per kg and mutton at Rs 1600 per kg besides Rs220 each per litre of milk and yogurt per kilogram respectively.

Zilakat Malik, former Chairman, Economics Department, University of Peshawar told APP on Monday that besides international and regional geopolitical factors including global economic recession and Russian-Ukrain war, the prevailing high inflation and price hike in Pakistan was also caused

by the last year's monsoon flood that would likely to push additional 1.9 million poor households below the poverty line.

He said the lower middle-income poverty rate was about USD 3.2 per day and upper middle income poverty rate was USD 5.5 per day in the country where the national poverty ratio was expected to increase by 2.4 to four percent, thus around 26 percent of our population may face balanced problems if solid measures were not taken on priority basis.

To provide speedy relief to price-hike stricken people, Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbez Sharif has announced free of charge flour (Atta) to facilitate millions of poor people of the country including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The free distribution of flour started from 25th Shaban and would continue till 25th Ramadan in the country including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the provincial government has

announced a Rs19.77b flour package to facilitate over 5.750 million families in the province.

A KP Food Department spokesman told APP that 7600 centres were established in the province for distribution of free 'Atta' under the BISP program to people. As many as 2,000 flour distribution points were also set up in the far flung and remote areas of the province where approximately, 17.2 million kilogram atta would be distributed among poor families.

Like KP, free distribution of flour bags among millions of deserving families was smoothly continued in Punjab province. The 10KG bags were being distributed through 8500 utility stores besides distribution points was underway through BISP in Punjab where approximately 15.8 million poor families would be directly benefited.

"Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has won the hearts and minds of Pakistanis for launching free of charge atta to facili-

tate millions of poor households, which eased their financial burden during Ramadan," said Riazul Haq, a private school teacher of Nowshera district while talking to APP.

The PM's flour package has not only brought stability to the flour prices in open markets in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Nowshera and Peshawar but also helped the poor segment of the society to utilize the saved amount for education and marriages of their children, he added.

Meanwhile, caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan while taking notice of some unpleasant incidents that took place during the distribution of free wheat flour in some parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, directed the Chief Secretary to ensure its free distribution in an organized manner.

On compliance of CM orders, the chief secretary has assigned monitoring tasks to the administrative secretaries and deputy commissioners to ensure

distribution of free of cost flour in the province. The officials were directed to submit reports about free atta's distribution to the caretaker chief minister on a regular basis.

Ikhtair Wali Khan, PMLN KP spokesman told APP that Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif has started visiting different cities to personally monitor free distribution of flour among poor people during Ramadan.

He said the prime minister has recently visited Sargodha, Bahawalpur and Multan districts where he examined free of charge atta distribution among people and ordered officials to extend maximum assistance to the elderly citizens, women and differently-abled people at the centers.

Wali said despite the difficult economic situation, the Prime Minister has launched the free atta program to provide relief to price hike stricken poor people and was being appreciated at all levels.

He said Imran Niazi has

left millions of flood victims of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces at times when they badly needed his governments' support, adding had the PTI government continued for a few more weeks the country would have been bankrupted today.

Ikhtair Wali claimed that PTI has put the country under huge loans' burdens and brought record increase to the country's import bill in its last years besides introduced immensity scheme to launder the black money. He said that Imran Niazi has neither fulfill promises of construction of five million houses nor provided jobs to 10 million people besides abolished PTI's owned created Ehtasab Commission at Peshawar that negated his anti corruption slogans.

Ikhtair Wali claimed that PTI was losing footing in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa due to its government's poor 10 years performance and would face people's wrath in upcoming general elections.

12 business units sealed for hoarding essentials F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The provincial government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa sealed 12 business units and a cash penalty was also imposed on them for hoarding essential food items.

According to statistics shared by the Performance Management and Reforms Unit (PMRU) here on Monday, district administrations in various cities inspected 138 business units/ shops in the province.

During the operation, hoarding was found in 16 business units while 122 were found clear. In action against hoarding, 12 business units were sealed and a collective fine of Rs.139,500/- was imposed on 12 other units.

During the crackdown three shopkeepers were arrested and an FIR was registered against five others. Out of the 16 hoarding incidents five have been reported from Haripur, three each from Mohmand, Hangu, two each in Dir Upper and Mansehra and one in Abbottabad.

Rural Police foil narcotics smuggling attempt

PESHAWAR (APP): The rural division of the Capital City Police Peshawar foiled an attempt of smuggling 118 kilogrammes of narcotics including opium and hashish on Monday.

According to a press release issued here, smugglers were smuggling narcotics to other cities in a motorcar, and upon seeing a police party, they abandoned the vehicle and managed to escape while taking advantage of the night darkness.

During the search, police recovered 64 kilogrammes of hashish and 54 kilograms of opium from the vehicle, which has been taken into custody.

Police Station Chamkani has registered a case and under the supervision of the SP Rural Zafar Ahmad, constituted a special team, comprising DSP Chamkani Zahid Alam Khan and SHO Iftikhar Ahmad, to arrest the suspects.

Lateef Afridi murder case: ATC adjourns hearing

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Anti-terrorism court Peshawar has adjourned further hearing till 29th March of alleged facilitator Adil Advocate in former Supreme Court Bar Association President and senior lawyer Abdul Lateef Afridi, on Monday.

According to prosecution, the alleged facilitator Adil Advocate has cooperated with murderer Adnan Afridi in killing of Lateef Afridi at Peshawar High Court Bar Room on 16th January.

During investigation Adil Advocate was nominated by competent authorities in the offense as facilitator in the killing of Abdul Lateef Afridi Advocate.

Meanwhile, Additional District and Session Judge Abdul Qayyum Saddiqi has adjourned hearing till today (on Tuesday) in bail petition of murderer Sher Muhammad who has shot killed English's lecturer at Islamia College University.

During hearing, the counsel for complainant

submitted power of attorney and requested for merit to prepare the case on merit while honorable court has granted time to lawyer and adjourned further hearing till today.

It is worthy to mention that Sher Muhammad has shot English's lecturer within Islamia College University while escaped from the crime scene. However, police has arrested the murderer from Karak district and put behind while the culprit has approached honorable court for bail.

FMA demands regular wheat quota to control flour price

PESHAWAR (APP): Chairman of Flour Mills Association (FMA) Iqbal Ahmad Khan on Monday said that the association was totally in favour of the 'Free' flour distribution scheme, however, with the stoppage of regular quota for mills, the rate per 20kg bag in the market has increased by Rs 400.

He was presiding over the meeting of the Executive Body of the Pakistan Flour Mills Association KP wherein owners of flour mills and the group leader of the association

Muhammad Naeem Butt were also present.

Iqbal Khan said it was a good gesture that the poor and deserving people were being provided free flour, however, on the other side the general public was facing hardship in getting wheat flour.

The production of wheat flour in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was 20 to 25 percent, which is insufficient for consumption.

Iqbal Khan said constant complaints were being registered by the general public regarding the unavail-

ability of wheat flour.

Moreover, he said, "The poor who receive 'Free' flour through Benazir Income Support Program (BISP) were also complaining that when they apply for flour through a mobile app, they receive the message that they have taken their share of flour."

He appealed the government to provide quota on a regular basis to the KP flour mills so that deserving people and the general public could be provided sufficient wheat flour for consumption.

Millers extend help to free flour distribution scheme

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Flour Mills Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) while extending full support to free flour distribution among unprivileged people, has demanded a regular supply of wheat.

In a press statement issued here on Monday, the Executive Body of the Pakistan Flour Mills Association KP met here.

Speaking on the occasion, the Chairman of the association Iqbal Ahmad Khan said the association

fully supported the free flour distribution scheme launched by the government during the holy month of Ramadan.

However, they added, due to the closure of the regular quote of wheat for flour mills, the price of the commodity had been increased by Rs 400 per bag of twenty kg. They also mentioned, "Due to focusing on the provision of free flour among needy people, common people are suffering in obtaining the com-

modity in markets."

"Since KP is producing 20 to 25 percent of wheat in comparison to its demand and supply of free flour has created a shortage, creating problems for ordinary people in obtaining the staple food," the press release added.

It demanded of the government to ensure a regular supply of wheat to flour mills to overcome the shortage and pave way for the provision of the essential commodity to all the people.



In brief

Implementation on rates sought F.P. Report

HANGU: Residents claimed that administration has misguided public regarding establishment of subsidized bazaars during Ramzan while vendors are selling edible items at open market prices, on Monday. This was disclosed during journalists monitoring teams during their visit to alleged Sasta bazaars notified as per banners and brochures but residents compelled to obtained fruit-vegetable at highest at the proposed subsidized markets. The residents argued competent authorities to ensure provision of edible items on subsidized rates and demanded stern actions against hoarders and profiteers. The residents threatened that if edible items didn't provided on reasonable prices then they would be compelled to arrange protest on larger scale.

Beneficiaries get free flour

LOWER DIR (PPI): The free flour package by the government facilitated as many as 32429 beneficiaries in the district during the first five-day of the holy month of Ramazan while 5,601 beneficiaries got the package in one day. According to the district administration, the 236 points were established in Dir Payan while as per the directives of the provincial government more distribution points and flour quota were being added. Deputy Commissioner Dir Payan Iftikhar Ahmed and his team were inspecting distribution points and flour mills on daily basis, while separate desks for senior citizens, women and special persons were also set up at each distribution point to provide free flour to the beneficiaries in a dignified manner. The officials of Police, Levies, Civil Defense volunteers and Village Council Secretaries were assigned to ensure transparent and orderly distribution of flour and avoid any untoward incident. The free flour distribution program would continue till the end of Ramazan.

REO visits Rescue 1122 office

ATTOCK (APP): Regional Emergency Officer (REO) Rawalpindi Dr Abdul Rahman visited the Rescue 1122 office here on Monday, to inspect the rescue building and emergency vehicles and equipment. The armed rescue team saluted REO on his arrival. District Emergency Officer Ali Hussain gave a detailed briefing regarding accidents and community awareness programs in the district. Dr Abdul Rehman expressed his satisfaction with the performance of Rescue 1122 Attock and said, "The team is purely an organization for public service." REO also inaugurated the newly constructed control room to control the increasing number of emergencies at present. Ranks were assigned to those who were awarded and congratulations were also given to all the promoted officials.

SPHF, SRSO conduct workshop

SUKKUR (APP): Sindh People's Housing Foundation (SPHF) in collaboration with Sindh Rural Support Organization (SRSO) conducted a project inception workshop regarding the reconstruction of multi-hazard resilient houses at the SRSO Complex, here on Monday. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SRSO Muhammad Dital Khalhoro welcomed the participants and shared the brief strategy to be adopted for the implementation of the resilient housing project.



QUETTA: A large number of people a local market before Ifar time to buy various items.

Distribution of free wheat flour Tribesmen protest against mismanagement

F.P. Report

BARA: Number of people including tribal women in Jamrud and Bara came out on roads in protest against mismanagement and irregularities in distribution of wheat flour on Monday.

Women folk in Jamrud blocked Pak-Afghan highway at Bab-e-Khyber point while holding sit-in on it. They were of the view that until and unless the administration formulated a transparent system of distribution of free wheat flour under the government scheme, they would not give up their agitation.

The protesters rejected the hollow slogans of the concerned authorities for a smooth and transparent distribution process and said that for the last few days they had been visiting the supply points but they had been ignored. The protest women also accused the dealers for nepotism and said priority was given to those who had recommendations from influential ones.

They reopened the road after the officials ensured them smooth provision of



flour. In the same way, the locals gathered in main Bara Bazaar and flayed the administration for turning blind eyes towards their problem. They opined that if free flour was supplied on time to the rural areas, no rush of the beneficiaries would be found in the urban city distribution points.

The protesters urged the administration to mend ways of dealers and stress them to carry out the distribution process smoothly and clearly so that deserving ones could get free flour without hassle. In a statement issued from the DC office said that as per the scheme, the free flour

was provided to beneficiaries of Benazir Income Support Program (BSP) although people, especially women, approached the distribution points and asked for flour that created rush.

The administration officer called upon the masses to avoid rush only BISP recipients could visit the free flour distribution sites. According to Deputy Commissioner Khyber office, a total of 164 distribution points had been established in three tehsils i.e. Landi Kotal, Jamrud, Bara and 384 metric ton quota per day of flour has been reserved for Khyber.

municipal committee.

It must be mentioned here that the municipal committee had outdated machinery and equipment for lifting of garbage which was always removed after three days from backward localities but the areas of influential people were cleaned on priority basis daily.

The municipal committee is also facing acute shortage of sanitary workers as most of the appointed sanitation staff are Muslims who were recruited on the basis of political basis ignoring the fact that these posts are purely for non-Muslims but their recruiters have not yet been taken to task due to which residents are suffering the most.

Naundero gets fire brigade machine, cleaning material

NAUNDERO (PPI): Long outstanding demand of residents was finally met when cleanliness machinery, garbage dumping trolleys and a fire brigade machine was provided to the municipal committee authorities costing Rs75 million to ensure proper cleanliness in Naundero, the hometown of martyred Bhutto leaders.

The machinery includes seven garbage lifting vehicles and seven huge trolleys which will lift garbage from seven wards of the town regularly in the morning so that Naundero looks neat and clean away from environmental pollution. The lifted garbage will be dumped outside the town on a daily basis and the citizens have been advised to throw their garbage into the

specified trolleys so that it could be lifted regularly to keep the environment near and clean.

The municipal authorities told this scribe on Monday that the cost of the received cleanliness machinery is Rs7.50 crore for which the authorities had written to the Sindh chief minister sometime ago to provide the machinery and equipment so that cleanliness could be maintained at two mega events held annually at Garhi Khuda Bux of anniversaries of PPP founder and former prime minister Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto. Local PPP leaders Arshad Shah Rashidi and Anwar Burro handed over the machinery to Maulvi Mushtaque Korejo of the

Woman among three gunned near Khanpur

SHIKARPUR (PPI): Two persons and a woman were gunned down by unidentified armed men near Khanpur within the jurisdiction of Kot Shahoo Police Station situated in Katcha area of District Shikarpur on Monday.

According to a report, the residents of village Rahimdad Shar, were coming back from Pano Aqil through a boat after getting treatment when armed men opened fire on them while

they reached their village. As a result, two persons identified as Sonia, 18, wife of Anwar Shar, Attullah Shar, 20, son of Soomar Shar, were killed on the spot.

Soon after the incident, the area police rushed to the spot and with the help of villagers, shifted the bodies to Taluka Hospital Khanpur for medico-legal formalities. The bodies were handed over to their heirs after conducting postmortem

examination form THQ Khanpur. On the occasion, one of relatives Musamat Mehar Bibi came with bodies of deceased persons at Government hospital allegedly said that they had an enmity with Brohi Tribes men who killed their beloved men a woman. The murderers would be arrested soon and FIR would be registered at earliest when the relatives of deceased persons come to the Police Station, area police said.

Four held in crackdown on illegal kidney transplantation in Taxila

TAXILA (INP): Taxila police on Monday arrested four suspects in a crackdown on illegal kidney transplantation. According to the police, Dr Fawad, lady nurse Sobia, and paramedics Hasnain and Sharif were among those who had been arrested. The name of

Dr Fawad is already in the police record.

"Even at the time of the police raid, the process of illegally removing one person's kidney and transplanting it to another person was going on," police said. "The police have shifted the donor and the

receiver to the hospital. Instruments used in the surgery were also recovered from the possession of the accused," they added. "After interrogation from the accused, their accomplices and facilitators will also be arrested," they stated.

Robbers kill 2 in jewellery heist bid

MULTAN (INP): Robbers shot dead a jeweller and a student during an unsuccessful heist at a jewellery shop in Gulgasht area on Monday.

Eyewitnesses told police that six robbers entered a shop and tried to loot cash and gold ornaments at gunpoint. They opened fire after facing resistance from the shop owner and his employees. The firing left two persons, one of them a student, dead and three other people injured.

The firing incident triggered panic among local traders and visitors who managed to capture three suspects while three others managed to flee. A large number of people including students gathered at the crime scene and raised slogans against police for their failure to curb growing lawlessness. Rescue 1122 ambulances and policemen reached the spot and shifted the dead and the injured to a nearby hospital.

Partly cloudy weather in Balochistan

QUETTA (PPI): Pakistan Meteorological Department, Regional Center, Quetta on Monday forecast that during the next 24 hours, mainly partly cloudy weather is expected in most parts of the province. However, light rain / drizzle may occur at isolated places in districts Zhob, Kech and Gwadar during the next 24 hours.

Weather forecast for next 48 hours: rain, wind thunderstorms (isolated hailstorms) are expected in Kech, Gwadar, Panjgur, Surab, Kharan, Noshki, Chagai, Khuzdar, Kalat, Quetta, Mastung, Harnai, Bolan, Sibi, Kohlu, Barkhan, Zhob, Sherani, Killa Abdullah, Dera Bughti, Killa Saifullah, Ziarat, Pishin and its adjoining areas while partly cloudy weather with light rain / drizzle is expected in resty parts of the province. Snow fall may occur in hilly areas of Ziarat and Killa Saifullah during the next 48 hours.

Weather prevailed during the last 24 hours: rain recorded in district Loralai during the last 24 hours. Maximum temperature recorded on Monday was following: Barkhan 22, Dalbandin 29, Gwadar 30.5, Jiwani 28.5, Kalat 17, Khuzdar 25, Lasbela 33.5, Nokundi 30, Panjgur 27, Pasni 29.5, Quetta 19, Samungli 18.5, Sibi 30, Turbat 33, Ormara 30, Zhob 21, Uthal 32.5 and Usta Muhammad 31.5.

Commodity rates in markets inspected

SUKKUR (PPI): The Divisional Commissioner Sukkur, Ghulam Mustafa Phull here on Monday visited different areas to check the rates of fruits, vegetables and other food items and found shopkeepers flouting the official price list.

He directed the price control and district administration officials to penalize vendors involved in overcharging. The Commissioner issued directives to fine and arrest profiteers and warned them of strict action if such violations continued in the future.

Unfair distribution of free flour Women hold protest in Mardan

Fazle Haq

MARDAN: The residents of Mardan complained about mismanagement in the distribution of free flour bags. Many women have also protested against the unfeasibility of the free flour at the Par Hoti area, on Monday.

Speaking to "The Frontier Post", the majority of people said that the government had announced free flour bags for the poor, but poor planning and a lack of proper strategy meant that people were queuing for long periods to receive them. They added that the district administration had not taken practical measures for proper distribution, and pointed out that sale points had been given to flour mills whose licenses had been cancelled recently for embezzlement.

Moreover, there were no sale points at the gates of these flour mills. Instead of being a mercy to people, the free flour provided by the government was becoming a burden. Several people had been injured due to stampedes and rushes at different free flour distribution points in the district. The people demanded that the government establish distribution points in VC and UC at different schools to provide relief to the masses. A large number of women also protested against the unfeasibility of the flour at the Par Hoti area. They complained that they had spent all day trying to obtain free flour but due to mismanagement, they had failed to receive any.

The protestors added that when they finally got back to their houses, they had to start preparing Aftari, which was very difficult for them. When contacted, the deputy commissioner, Abdur Rehman, said that more than 440 points had been established for the distribution of free flour in the Mardan district.

He argued that the district administration had done its best to provide relief to the masses, but the issue had arisen when people who had not received messages from BISP also arrived at the distribution points. He added that the district administration would provide free flour to more than 4 lakh families, but people were not waiting for their turn and instead trying to gain an advantage over others.

He also said that they had doubled the quota for the Mardan district, and further improvements would be made at the distribution points. The district administration had imposed huge fines on some flour mills involved in mismanagement, but later got an undertaking from the mill owners and restored their quota. Deputy commissioner also stated that an assistant commissioner was strictly checking these flour mills.

Police beaton residents while protesting against unavailability of flour: Citizens protested against the non-availability of flour at the mega point of distribution of free Ramadan package flour in Mardan and blocked Mardan Nowshera road. Protestors

attacked a truck full of sugar on their way to the road, the police brutally charged with sticks, hurled stones at each other, injured many people including the policemen, a citizen's legs were broken in the chaos, a child was seriously injured, the distribution of flour is going on.

The situation worsened due to the disruptive elements, AAC headquarters. According to the details, yesterday in front of Mardan Sports Complex, the big distribution point for distribution of free flour, angry citizens staged a strong protest against the administration by blocking Mardan Nowshera Road. The protestors were of the opinion that for three days, they returned to their homes disappointed due to the lack of flour.

At the same time, mistaking the truck full of sugar passing by the road as flour, the protestors attacked the truck. The legs of the other rider were broken. The angry protestors pelted stones at the police officers who were charging with sticks, injuring several police officers.

In this regard, Additional Assistant Commissioner Headquarters Junaid Khalid, in charge of Mega Point, clarified that flour distribution is being done in a fair manner under the online mechanism, but some destructive elements are threatening to spoil the peaceful environment, which the administration does not allow. The distribution is going on as per routine and will continue till the end of Ramazan.

JI announces strike against admn's failure

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) has announced to stage protest rallies in Lower Dir against the government for its failure to control the price hike during the Holy month of Ramazan and ensure respectable distribution of subsidized flour in the district.

The announcement was made by the JI district chief Izazul Mulk Afkari after an executive council meeting held at the Ahya ul Uloom Balambat here on Sunday. Talking to local journalists the JI district secretary information Shuiab Ahmad said the party 'Shoor'a' expressed its anger that veiled women were being humiliated for a 10-kilogram bag of free flour. He said that mismanagement at every distribution point was observed as poor people including veiled women queued up for hours just to get a bag of free flour.

According to the announcement made at the meeting the JI was planning to stage protest rallies against the price hike, mismanaged and unjust distribution of free flour in the district. The JI also

demanding of the government to prepare a respectable way of free flour distribution in the district.

Meanwhile the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz district president Malik Farooq Iqbal asked the district administration to start distribution of free flour on each village council level to avoid rush of people. Talking to local media reporters he said the Prime Minister Shabbaz Sharif had taken a historical step to provide free flour to the deserving people. He said that it was the administration's responsibility to ensure its just and dignified distribution. He said the free flour should also be provided to a male member of the family instead of giving it to a woman.

PML-N leader said that some opponents did not want the scheme initiated by the prime minister to be a success and they were busy spreading negative propaganda against it. Taking notice of the public complaints the Lower Dir deputy commissioner Iftikhar Ahmad along with additional deputy commissioner Abdul Wali Khan and district food controller Shahab ul Din

visited different distribution points and checked the record and quality of free flour.

DC directed the food controller to keep a regular check on the quality and quantity of the free flour. He also directed the concerned dealers to make separate counters for women and aged citizens. The DC asked the food department to increase the number of the distribution points to avoid unnecessary rush.

The Timergara assistant commissioner Shehzad Khan also paid surprise visits to the market and checked the rates of meat, fruits and vegetables. Several butchers were fined for overcharging customers at Timergara and Mian Banda. The additional assistant commissioner Samarbagh Numan Pervez also paid visits to local markets and fined several shopkeepers for selling substandard and expired items and overcharging commuters. The AAC directed the shopkeepers to strictly follow the official price list. He said that government officials in plain clothes would monitor the markets on a daily basis and the violators would be dealt with iron hand.

Increase in distribution points for free flour sought

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Awami National Party central spokesman and former senator Zahid Khan has demanded of the government and administration to increase the free flour distribution points in each village council. Talking to local journalists at Timergara here on Monday the ANP spokesman appreciated the federal government for launching the Ramadan flour package and said that it was a historic step of the government to ease the burden of current inflation.

He said that it was the responsibility of the local administration and food department to ensure a respectable way of free flour distribution. The ANP leader said that veiled women were being humiliated at officially designated distribution points for getting free flour. He said that only male members of the eli-

gible families should be allowed to collect free flour. Termining the flour collection by women as their insult, Zahid Khan said that it was a condemnable act as the administration and food department had failed to ensure a dignified and just distribution of the commodity. He said the administration should devise a strategy for the distribution of free flour so that the eligible families could get it on its doorstep.

Meanwhile the PML-N Lower Dir chapter demanded of the government to compensate the families whose members were killed during stampedes at free flour distribution points in Charsadda and other parts of the country. The PML-N district secretary information Bahramand Syed expressed his concerns and sorrows over the mismanaged and unjust distribution of free flour. He said the administration

had not been fulfilling its responsibility and that was why such ugly incidents were occurring in parts of the country.

Food packages: The Talha Foundation, a charity organization working for the uplift of marginalized communities in Dir on Monday distributed food packages among 40 poor families of Talash during a function. The PPP leader and former provincial minister advocate Muzafar Syed was chief guest on the occasion. The food packages consisted of rice, sugar, ghee, pulses, tea leaves etc were distributed among the selected families.

The Foundation chief Maulana Farman Hussain said that all wealthy people should support the orphans, widows and poor segment of society. He said the Foundation had planned to purchase an ambulance vehicle for serving the people of Talash.



Hong Kongers hold first protest in years under strict rules



HONG KONG (AP): Dozens of people joined Hong Kong's first authorized protest since the lifting of major COVID-19 restrictions under unprecedentedly strict rules, including wearing a numbered badge around their necks.

The rules set out by the police, who cited security reasons, came as the financial hub was promoting its return to normalcy after years of anti-virus controls and political turmoil.

During the pandemic, protests were rare due to COVID-19 restrictions. In addition, many activists have been silenced or jailed after Beijing imposed a national security law following massive protests in 2019. Critics say the city's freedom of assembly that was promised Hong Kong when it returned to China from Britain in 1997 has been eroded.

Demonstration against the proposed reclamation and construction of rubbish-processing facilities was the first police-approved march of its kind after the city scrapped its mask mandate and social distancing limits. But organizers had to comply with police requirements such as taking measures to ensure the number of participants would not exceed the expected turnout of 100 people and asking for proof of a "reasonable excuse" from protesters who wore masks during the event. At the height of the 2019 anti-government movement, Hong Kong's government invoked emergency powers to ban masks from public gatherings so it can identify protesters who officials accused of illegal acts. About 80 people expressed their opposition to the plans in Tseung Kwan O, a residential and industrial area, the organizer said. They had to walk in a cordoned-off moving line in the rain amid heavy police presence. Theresa Wang described the new restrictions as "a bit weird" but said they were still acceptable because the city was

adjusting to "the new Hong Kong." "I'm not happy but we have to accept it. We have to accept what is deemed legal now," the 70-year-old retiree said, adding that she hoped the protest would be a sign the government is more open to discussion.

Protester Jack Wong said he would prefer not to wear the badge printed with a number. Police said earlier the requirement aims to prevent lawbreakers from joining the march. "But if it is a requirement, what can I say? I prefer not to comment further. You know what I mean," he said. In granting its approval, police also requested that organizers ensure there would not be any acts that might endanger national security, including displaying anything seditious.

Cyrus Chan, one of the march organizers, said demonstrators had communicated with police on their promotional materials and slogans. Officers earlier had told him that participants should not wear all-black outfits, he said. Protesters commonly wore black during the 2019 protests. "It's definitely strict," Chan said. "We hope this is just an individual case. We hope to show them that Hong Kong society has the ability to have peaceful marches and they do not need to set that many conditions to restrict us." Earlier this month, the Hong Kong Women Workers' Association planned a march to call for labor and women's rights but canceled it at the last moment without specifying why. Days later, the association said on its Facebook page that police had invited it for further meetings after granting it the approval and that it had tried its best to amend the agreement. But it still could not launch the protest as it had wished, it wrote at that time. A pro-democracy group separately said national security police had warned four of its members not to participate in the association's march.

Taiwan residents flee remote islands

TAIPEI (Agencies): Life has been quieter than usual for residents of Taiwan on an outlying archipelago that is lined with sleepy fishing villages lapped by ocean waves. Those in the Matsus islands have been cut off from the outside world after two submarine internet cables were severed by Chinese ships last month.

All of a sudden, messages stopped sending, online videos weren't loading, bank transfers failed, and even credit cards couldn't be swiped. "Calls cut off midway; it's pretty annoying," grumbled Lin Shengyue, 80. "But it's more of a problem for the young people glued to their mobiles." "That's why all of them ran off to the main [Taiwan] island," he laughed. "The only ones left are old fogies like me and the soldiers stationed here." The internet outage has highlighted a critical security vulnerability - that Taiwan can't safeguard its communications in the event of a war with China.

"The incident in Matsus actually serves as a warning sign for Taiwan to better prepare its backup plans," said Lii Wen, head of the Matsus chapter of the country's leading Democratic Progressive Party. "What would we do if Taiwan's 14 international sea cables were damaged?" Cables in Matsus have been snapped 27 times in the past five years, often by Chinese fish-

ing vessels dropping anchors and dragging fishing nets. But this is the longest internet blackout residents have experienced, as repair ships won't arrive until the end of April to fix the cables - more than 300 miles long and about the width of a garden hose. "Locals like me, we wonder if China cut the cables on purpose," said Mr. Lin. "If we really were in wartime, this would be a very serious situation." Xi Jinping, the most powerful Chinese leader since Chairman Mao Zedong, has repeatedly vocalised his intent to annex Taiwan, a territory with its own democratic government that Beijing claims as part of China.

US intelligence indicates that Mr Xi has instructed the military to be ready to invade by 2027. Disrupting Taiwan's internet in the event of war could obstruct the government's ability to seek help from other nations and to reassure its public. Cutting the cables is a "way of showing that [China] can disrupt the information environment, whether that be civilian, commercial or military," said Oriana Skylar Mastro, a fellow at Stanford University's Freeman Spogli Institute for International Studies. Shoring up Taiwan's communications is a growing priority for the government, especially as China has sought to control the installation and maintenance of cables running

through international waters it claims as its territory. Most of the world's online traffic runs through these cables. But proposals for just how to do that reflect the complicated discourse in government and among the public on how best to position Taiwan given China's increasingly bellicose stance.

There are plans to install a surveillance system for the cables, though long-term options have been in the works after Taiwan observed Russia's cyberattacks during its invasion of Ukraine. The Taiwanese ministry of digital affairs is looking for multiple low-earth satellite operators to provide the internet in a crisis, though a law requires them to be majority-owned by a domestic shareholder. Diversifying is key to create a "honeypot" setup that could expose any cyber attackers and prevent Taiwan's communications from being shut down if one provider is incapacitated. If "you put all your eggs into one basket, then of course you're also saying that you lose everything if that basket holder cuts the basket," Audrey Tang, minister of digital affairs, told The Telegraph. "Our main idea is just diversity, and working with as many trustworthy vendors as possible." She is also planning to roll out mobile non-geostationary satellite receivers to 700 domestic locations and three international ones over the next year.

later, the visit of Rafael Grossi to Russia may well take place," Ulyanov added. Grossi is pressing for a security zone to be erected around Zaporizhzhia, Europe's largest nuclear power plant with six reactors, which has come under repeated shelling during the 13-month war Russia has been waging against its neighbour.

Researchers unearth 2,000 ram heads in Egypt temple

CAIRO (AFP): Archaeologists in Egypt have discovered more than 2,000 ancient mummified sheep heads left as offerings in a temple to the pharaoh Ramses II, the tourism and antiquities ministry said. Mummies of dogs, goats, cows, gazelles and mon-

gooses were also exhumed by a team of US archaeologists from New York University at Abydos, a site in southern Egypt famous for its temples and tombs. Sameh Iskandar, head of the American mission, said the ram heads were "offerings" indicating "a cult to Ramses II celebrated 1,000 years after his death". Ramses II reigned over Egypt for nearly seven decades, from 1304 to 1237 BC. Mostafa Waziri, head of Egypt's Supreme Council of Antiquities, said the finds will help people know more about the temple of Ramses II and the activities which took place there from its construction between 2374 and 2140 BC and the Ptolemaic period, from 323 to 30 BC. As well as the remains of mummified animals, archaeologists discovered the remains of a palace with five-metre-thick (16 foot) walls dating to some 4,000 years ago. They also found several statues, papyrus, remains of ancient trees, leather clothes and shoes. Abydos, which lies some 435 kilometres (270 miles) on the Nile river south of Cairo, is famed for its temples such as that of Seti I, as well as its necropolises. Cairo regularly announces new archaeological discoveries, which some suggest are made more for political and economic impact than their scientific or historic importance.

Egypt, home to some 105 million people, is mired in an economic crisis and relies on tourism for 10 percent of GDP, employing two million people. Cairo hopes to revive tourism by targeting 30 million visitors a year by 2028, compared to 13 million before the coronavirus pandemic. Critics, however, point to the dilapidated state of some archaeological sites and museums.

Venezuela arrests 21 in corruption crackdown

CARACAS (Reuters): An expanding anti-corruption probe in Venezuela has led to the detention of 10 officials and 11 businessmen, the country's attorney general said, adding that arrest warrants for 11 more people have been issued. The investigation, which began in October, is focused on state oil company PDVSA, a government entity supervising crypto currency operations, and the judiciary. This week, it led to the resignation of the country's powerful oil minister, Tarek El Aissami, who had served the government for two decades.

"We are talking about one of the most lurid plots in recent years, which involves officials, businessmen who benefited from corruption and young people - including the so-called mafia women - who participated in corruption and money laundering," Attorney General Tarek Saab told journalists in a press conference. A Venezuelan entity supervising the use of crypto currency for official transactions was assigned oil cargoes for sale with no administrative control, Saab said. Many of the buyers did not pay for the oil correspondingly, he added. PDVSA has accumulated \$21.2 billion in commercial accounts receivable since 2020 including \$3.6 billion potentially unrecoverable, documents viewed by Reuters showed this week, after turning to dozens of little-known intermediaries to export its oil under US sanctions.

The 21 people arrested face accusations of appropriation of public assets, money laundering, influence peddling and criminal association. Officials involved could also face charges of treason, the attorney general said. Venezuela's President Nicolas Maduro, who said he has been directly overseeing the probe, this week appointed PDVSA's head Pedro Telleschea as new oil minister, delegating in him the supervision of the whole industry.

Criticism makes it hard to cooperate with West: Hungary

UNITED NATIONS (AP): The West's steady criticism of Hungary on democratic and cultural issues makes the small European country's right-wing government reluctant to offer support on practical matters, specifically NATO's buildup against Russia, Hungary's foreign minister said. In an interview with The Associated Press, Hungarian Foreign Minister Péter Szijjártó also said that his country has not voted on whether to allow Finland and Sweden to join NATO because Hungarian lawmakers are sick of those countries' critiques of Hungarian domestic affairs.

Lawmakers from the governing party plan to vote Monday in favor of the Finnish request but "serious concerns were raised" about Finland and Sweden in recent months "mostly because of the very disrespectful behavior of the political elites of both countries towards Hungary," Szijjártó said. "You know, when Finnish and Swedish politicians question the democratic nature of our political system, that's really unacceptable," he said.

The timing of a vote on Sweden is harder to predict, Szijjártó said. The EU, which includes 21 NATO countries, has frozen billions in funds to Budapest and accused populist Prime Minister Viktor Orban of cracking down on media freedom and LGBTQ rights. Orban's administration has also been accused of tolerating an entrenched culture of corruption and co-opting state insti-

tutions to serve the governing Fidesz party. In a European Parliament resolution, EU lawmakers declared last year that Hungary had become "a hybrid regime of electoral autocracy" under Orban's nationalist government and that its undermining of the bloc's democratic values had taken Hungary out of the community of democracies. That criticism raised objections within Hungary and made it hard for the government to support Finland and Sweden's bids to join NATO, Szijjártó said. Skeptics insist that Hungary has simply been trying to win lucrative concessions.

When it comes to Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Szijjártó said that his country's advocacy of peace does not mean accepting that Russia would keep the territory it currently controls. "You know, stopping the war and sitting around the table does not mean that you accept the status quo," he said. "When the war stops and the peace talks start, it's not necessary that the borders would be where the front lines are. We know this from our own history as well ... Cease-fire has to come now." As for relations with the United States, Szijjártó said they had a heyday under former President Donald Trump. His government found things more difficult under President Joe Biden.

In perfect, nearly unaccented English, Szijjártó explained that Hungary is "a clearly rightist, right-wing, Christian Democratic, conservative, patriotic government." He

then went on in terms that would be familiar to millions of Americans. "So we are basically against the mainstream in any attributes of ours. And if you are against the liberal mainstream, and in the meantime, you are successful, and in the meantime, you continue to win elections, it's not digestible for the liberal mainstream itself," he said. "Under President Trump, the political relationship was as good as never before." Key to that relationship was Trump's acceptance of Hungary's policies toward its own citizens. The government has banned the sharing of materials with minors that it regards as a display or promotion of homosexuality or gender reassignment.

The law has been condemned by human rights groups and politicians from around Europe as an attack on Hungary's LGBT community. Szijjártó said Trump was more welcoming of such measures than the Biden administration. "He never wanted to impose anything. He never wanted to put pressure on us to change our way of thinking about family. He never wanted us to change our way of thinking about migration. He never wanted us to change our way of thinking about social issues," Szijjártó said. He also said Trump's attitude toward Russia would be more welcomed by some parties today. During Trump's term in the White House, Russia did not start "any attack against anyone," Szijjártó said.

Kenya braces for fresh protests despite police ban

NAIROBI (AFP): Kenyans were bracing on Monday for a new round of anti-government demonstrations over the high cost of living, after the opposition vowed the action would go ahead despite a police ban. Veteran opposition leader Raila Odinga has urged people to take to the streets, even after protests a week ago turned violent and paralysed parts of the capital, Nairobi.

But police announced the rallies would be banned. "We will not allow violent demonstrations," Inspector General of Police Japhet Koome told reporters. "The demonstrations they plan tomorrow (Monday) are illegal and will not be allowed."

A university student was killed by police fire during the previous Monday's clashes while 31 officers were injured as running battles erupted between riot police and demonstrators in

Nairobi and opposition strongholds in western Kenya. More than 200 people were arrested, including several senior opposition politicians, while protesters -- including Odinga's own convoy -- were hit with tear gas and water cannon. It was the first major outbreak of political unrest since President William Ruto took office more than six months ago after defeating Odinga in an election his rival claims was "stolen". Despite the police ban, Odinga called on Kenyans to join what he has called "the mother of all demonstrations".

"I want to tell Mr Ruto and the IG Koome that we are not going to be intimidated," he said. "We are not going to fear tear gas and police." Ruto has called on his rival to halt the action. "I am telling Raila Odinga that if he has a problem with me, he should face me and stop terrorising the

country," he said. "Stop paralysing the businesses of mama mboga, matatu and other Kenyans," he said, referring to women stall-holders and private minibus operators. Ruto himself will be out of the country on Monday for a four-day trip to Germany and Belgium during which he will meet national and EU leaders. Many Kenyans are struggling to put food on the table, battling high prices for basic goods as well as a plunging local currency and a record drought that has left millions hungry. During the election campaign, Ruto portrayed himself as champion of the downtrodden and vowed to improve the lot of ordinary Kenyans.

But he has since removed subsidies for fuel and maize flour -- a dietary staple. And last week, Kenya's energy regulatory body announced a hike in electricity prices from next

month, despite Ruto insisting in January there would be no such increase. Last week's protests proved costly, with Nairobi losing more than half its daily revenue as businesses shut their doors and people kept away from the heart of the city, the city's governor Johnson Sakaja said. Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua said they cost the country \$15 million. Police said they had launched a man-hunt for suspects involved in last week's riots, and published photographs showing people throwing rocks at police, burning tyres and vandalising property. But an AFP Fact Check investigation found that a number of the photographs were old and unrelated to Monday's events.

And, a red-faced Directorate of Criminal Investigations issued an apology on Twitter for what it said was a "mix-up of images".

New Zealand raises concerns with China over rights, Taiwan

WELLINGTON (AFP): New Zealand has raised concerns with China over human rights abuses and growing tensions with Taiwan, Wellington's foreign minister told AFP in an interview. Nanaia Mahuta held talks with Chinese Foreign Minister Qin Gang in which they discussed "challenging issues", she said, including human rights in Xinjiang, freedoms in Hong Kong and China's influence in the Pacific.

"There's a lot that we can agree on and we also discussed some of the challenging issues, working through where we don't agree on," she said at the New Zealand embassy in Beijing. "Human rights was an area where we did discuss some of those issues where we don't agree on." Mahuta this week made the first visit to China by a New Zealand foreign minister since 2018. She earlier said in a statement she had told her counterpart that the New Zealand government had "deep concerns regarding the human rights situation in Xinjiang and the erosion of rights and free-

doms in Hong Kong".

In the interview, Mahuta said she had "used the opportunity to highlight New Zealand's position on Russia's illegal and unprovoked aggression against Ukraine". Beijing has notably refrained from using such strong language to refer to the Russian invasion, instead accusing NATO of "fanning the flames". Mahuta added that New Zealand "urged China to use its influence with Russia to see the withdrawal of troops and ceasing of war". The statement affirmed that Wellington "would be concerned by any provision of lethal aid [by China] in support of Russia's illegal war". President Xi Jinping's visit to Moscow this week further exacerbated concerns that Beijing plans to provide material support to Russia.

Mahuta said that despite close economic ties between the two countries, there were still certain topics related to human rights on which the sides disagree. New Zealand has also called out China, its largest trading partner, over reports of the repression of the Uyghur

minority in Xinjiang. "In the discussion I urged China to respond to the recommendations of the Office of the [UN] Human Rights Commissioner," she told AFP. Last year the commissioner's office detailed a string of rights violations against Uyghurs and other Muslim minorities in the far northwestern region, highlighting "credible" allegations of widespread torture, arbitrary detention and violations of religious and reproductive rights. Beijing vehemently rejects the charges and insists it is running vocational training centres in the region to counter extremism.

New Zealand has also joined the United States in accusing China of attempting to increase its military presence in the Pacific. In Mahuta's talks with Qin she also raised concerns "over developments in the South China Sea", the statement said. Mahuta later said that, while New Zealand does not take any official position on specific territorial disputes in the region, it had registered "concerns with regards to maritime and aviation access".

Beijing has significantly ramped up its presence across the wider Pacific region in recent years, including by deepening diplomatic ties, strengthening economic relationships, and bolstering military capabilities. "We support greater Pacific resilience and that is the message that we have put to China," said Mahuta. Another major flashpoint she raised was Taiwan, whose 23.5 million people live under constant threat of invasion by China. Beijing claims the self-ruled democracy as part of its territory to be seized one day, by force if necessary. China's sabre-rattling has intensified in recent years under Xi, and Russia's invasion of Ukraine has deepened fears in Taiwan that China might move similarly. Mahuta also met the director of China's Central Foreign Affairs Commission, Wang Yi, during her trip. She said she hoped her trip would mark a resumption of "high-level" discussions between the two nations, touting a potential visit from New Zealand's new Prime Minister Chris Hipkins.

UN nuclear watchdog head may visit Russia soon

NEW YORK (Reuters): The UN nuclear watchdog head will not travel to Russia this week, but a visit is possible in the near future, Russian news agency RIA reported early on Monday, citing Moscow's permanent representative to international organisations in Vienna. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Director General Rafael

Grossi announced that he would visit the Russian-held Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant in Ukraine this week to assess the serious situation there.

When asked if Russia planned to invite Grossi to Moscow in the near future, permanent representative Mikhail Ulyanov said that was "quite realistic", according to RIA. "Not next week, but somewhat

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Role of foreign media in global imperialism

THE British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) stopped its Farsi Radio Service on March 26, after 82 years of continuous broadcast. The corporation announced the closure of BBC Farsi and Arabic radio in September last year as part of strategic changes to focus on publishing content on digital platforms.

As said, the global broadcaster has planned to cut costs by closing its Persian and Arabic radio stations, which would render at least 382 employees jobless. According to the BBC World Service, it aims to save £28.5m million by closing Persian and Arabic radio stations as part of a more considerable effort to save £500 million yearly.

The British Broadcasting Corporation launched its first Persian radio service as part of its Empire Service on December 29, 1940, with support from the Foreign Office during World War II. The service had been airing the latest political, social, economic, and sports news relevant to Afghanistan, Iran, and Tajikistan and gained much popularity and enjoyed credibility among the locals due to its fact base news content and the absence of any competitor in the early decades of its worldwide operation. Interestingly, the magnificent joint initiative of Macroni corporation and the Daily Mail for public education, and entertainment turned into a propaganda mouthpiece after nationalization by the UK government in 2026.

Historically, radio and print media had been a tool for state propaganda, subversion, and a source for opinion-making within the country and abroad. Radio had been an effective means of communication and propaganda because of its long-range and wireless transmission during World War I & II and during the cold war up to the early nineties. The colonial powers including the UK, the US, Russia, German, Japan, and France established their outposts abroad and launched radio programs in foreign languages to influence public opinion, spread their narratives, and achieve their strategic objectives in other regions. Mostly, such initiatives had been run by foreign ministries and spy agencies of major nations to accomplish their global pursuits, while CNN, Voice of America, BBC, Voice of Russia, German DW, NHK World Japan, and World Radio Paris (WRP) were most popular broadcasting services across the globe. After the end of the cold war and the invention of the computer and the internet, radio services became less effective and lost their utility/ worth for governments as well as for audiences in the contemporary world. Currently, western policymakers and propagandists started the use the latest means of communication, cost-effective propaganda tools, and result-oriented hybrid war techniques to disseminate their message and mold public opinion in their support. In fact, the hegemonism, global rivalry, and unrestricted propaganda campaigns of great powers had turned the world into an unlivable place as the elements of chaos will plummet, and real peace and charm will prevail in the universe.

Over the decades, the worldwide British empire gradually contracted after world war II, and multiple former colonies in the Middle East, Asia, Africa, and Oceania got freedom from British rule which not only reduced the British influence in the world but also had an adverse effect on the British economy. The United Kingdom, once the sole power in the world, is now facing serious economic challenges amid the ongoing economic recession, the devastating impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, and Brexit. The former biggest colonial power is now contracting its global footprint to reduce its public expenses to avert imminent economic collapse. During this era of globalization, the closure of colonial foreign mouthpieces would not affect the life and leisure of the audiences but it would surely contribute toward the consolidation of the British economy in the days ahead.

Lebanon's rulers set the clock ticking down to destruction

FOLLOWING a stark warning from the International Monetary Fund that time was running out for Lebanon's economy, the country's ingenious political leadership responded with a radical solution - unilaterally changing the time. You couldn't make it up. The country is facing starvation, hyperinflation and civil chaos, but the ruling class are distracted with a legal amendment to delay the introduction of "daylight saving time," a decision that experts warn will cause travel chaos, malfunctioning electronic devices, and nationwide confusion - particularly as some organizations have already signaled that they will go ahead with the time change anyway.

Prime Minister Najib Mikati and parliamentary Speaker Nabih Berri couldn't have offered a better metaphor for the endless prevarication and incompetence of a leadership that for the past four years has been existing on borrowed time. The head of the IMF mission in Lebanon, Ernesto Ramirez Rigo, placed the blame for the catastrophic economic outlook squarely on continued inaction by Lebanese officials, and warned that a plunge into hyperinflation would ruin the quality of life of many Lebanese for

a years to come.

But Lebanon's elite still behave as if it's business as usual - dining at the same expensive restaurants, dipping into vast hard-currency reserves stashed safely overseas, while bickering with each other over petty trivialities and leisurely going round in circles over issues of the presidency, government formation and a crisis exit strategy. Why are IMF-prescribed reforms taking for ever to implement? Because the reforms would materially compromise the wealth and impunity of this top 0.1 percent who see no problem at all with the apocalyptic status quo.

The architect of many of the catastrophes wreaked upon Lebanon, Gebran Bassil, bizarrely sought to incite a campaign of civil disobedience over the time-change issue, arguing that it was prejudicial to Christians. As if Christians, or any other Lebanese sect - in the complete absence of electricity and basic services - are in a position to know or care exactly what time it is! And as if Bassil himself hadn't already done more than anyone alive to undermine the status of Lebanon's Christians!

The latest IMF warning coincided with thousands of protesters, including retired soldiers, trying to break through a fence leading to Beirut's government

Baria Alamuddin

headquarters, and with protests erupting elsewhere across the country. Demonstrators furiously blamed the authorities' incompetence and corruption for triggering an additional sharp decline in the value of the Lebanese pound, further exacerbating financial hardship. These are veterans who have dedicated their entire careers to protecting Lebanon and who are among the most loyal demographics to Lebanon's governing system. Monthly pensions for retired military personnel and public sector workers are now just over \$20! "Don't they feel guilty about the retired members of the military who have served their country all their lives, given that they are starving and not able to access medical care services?" one protester said.

Meanwhile, Hassan Nasrallah is yet again saber rattling toward Israel. After Hezbollah staged minor provocations inside northern Israel, Nasrallah dared Tel Aviv to invade: "If Israel starts a war against Lebanon for what happened, it could lead to a battle in the entire region," he crowed. Using unusually specific language, Nasrallah threatened that the killing of even one individual could provoke a major Hezbollah response.

But Israel is already striking targets associated with Hezbollah and its allies inside Syria on a near daily basis, not to mention the killing of senior personnel from the Hezbollah-Iran axis.

Everybody knows that Nasrallah has no intention of responding to this. In recent days there has been the worst outbreak of hostilities in several years between US forces and Hezbollah-aligned paramilitaries in eastern Syria, which risks triggering region-wide conflagration. Iran-backed paramilitaries have been entrenching themselves along the Syria-Iraq border for several years now, including massive fortifications and deep underground tunnels bristling with missiles. With US President Joe Biden warning militias to "be prepared for us to act forcefully to protect our people," there is potential for these tit-for-tat strikes to escalate in a climate in which US-Iran negotiations have long since broken down.

As Benjamin Netanyahu and his neo-fascist cronies hurl Israel into one of the worst political crises in its history - with the sole objective of keeping him out of jail - combined with Netanyahu's own escalating rhetoric against Iran and

Hezbollah, the entire region trembles on an unpredictable knife edge.

If Nasrallah does eventually get his wish and goads Israel into attacking Lebanon directly, he will already be hiding in his bunker deep underground, along with cronies and family members, while thousands of innocent Lebanese are killed and the country reduced to smouldering ruins. It is abominable that Nasrallah's mind is mulling over such confrontations when much of the nation is slowly starving to death in unimaginable misery. So many people are tolerating unbearable pain because they don't have money for medical treatment, and because there aren't any medicines in any case and the few hospitals that haven't closed their doors scarcely function after losing most of their staff and equipment. Amid these traumas, suicide rates have soared and families routinely die at sea as they flee in unseaworthy vessels. Hospital morgues are overflowing with rotting bodies in non-functioning fridges because citizens can't afford coffins.

Lebanon in 2023 is a semi-decomposed body gasping for its last breaths, while the rate of decline of its vital organs continues to accelerate. The entire political class appears to have resolved that it is better to

hasten Lebanon's absolute destruction, rather than to take one iota of action that might diminish their rates of accumulation of corrupt wealth. Such figures have a choice of luxury villas in Dubai, Paris or Qom to retreat to and probably have their exit plans impeccably prepared, private jets fueled up on the runway for the day when Lebanon finally disintegrates altogether. In this climate, Nasrallah needs to watch his mouth and halt his ridiculous warmongering, because he is unleashing forces he can't control, which will destroy his organization along with Lebanon in its entirety.

The last time Lebanon dissolved into full-blown armed conflict in the 1970s and 1980s, the resulting anarchy sucked in the entire region - Israel, Syria, the Palestinian movement, Iran and the West. The 2011 Syria conflict likewise rapidly became regionalized, even dragging in Russia, while spawning an entire alphabet of radical and terrorist factions. Without drastic action - and by this I mean far-reaching Arab and Western intervention - the eruption of a new Lebanese and region-straddling conflagration is simply a matter of time. The warning bells have been ringing for a long time now. Is it possible that, still, nobody is listening?

Arab News

China, Russia face sanctions from US states now. That's dangerous

SANCTIONS have become all the rage in international politics. The United States and its allies are imposing them on rivals with increasing frequency and severity. And those rivals are reciprocating where they can. Now, American states, too, are increasingly getting in on the act. And that's bad news - for the world, and for US foreign policy. A much-publicised episode of a Chinese balloon entering US airspace seems to have created new energy for such restrictions and has led to legislation being proposed in at least 11 states.

On Wednesday, the South Carolina State Senate passed a bill barring ownership of land in the state by citizens of US geopolitical adversaries Russia, China, North Korea, Iran and Cuba. The bill's top sponsor even compared a planned purchase of South Carolina land by a Chinese biomedical firm with the Trojan Horse plot of Greek mythology. Meanwhile, Texas State Senator Lois Kolkhorst has proposed a similar law that has drawn strong condemnation on human rights grounds but has been defended by Greg Abbott, the state's Republican governor. A simple reading of the original version of this bill would lead one to conclude that any individual who holds citizenship from any of the mentioned countries, or any firms which they own, would be barred from owning property. This would have included American citizens who hold dual citizenship. Since then, the language has been softened to protect dual citizens and permanent residents but not citizens of those countries residing in Texas on a

visa. Implementation of such language would impose new and unusual due diligence requirements on common land transactions. Meanwhile, creating special restrictions on various immigrant communities to

sanctions are for the satisfaction of domestic onlookers, they will not be designed and implemented with an eye towards efficacy and the security context. Other scholars, however,

Ahmadi Ali

cy decisions due to its clear mandate and wherewithal in this field. Congress has a constitutional role in foreign policy matters but it's far more likely to be influenced by domestic political

whether taxes or abortion rights. Yet their meddling in foreign policy isn't superfluous - it can actually be reckless, for global diplomacy and for US foreign policy. Here's how. As written, the mentioned measures are unlikely to mean-

up a precarious dynamic. The federal government might have to mollify or negotiate with state governments led by ambitious politicians responding to special interests or catering to local constituencies.

Equally, state governments of the party in opposition can actively undercut diplomatic efforts of the federal government using such sanctions. For example, a federal effort to ease sanctions on Cuba could create political momentum for state sanctions in Florida, where families of those who fled communist rule are a powerful lobby. Ultimately, sanctions are a tool of foreign policy and the capacity to modulate or even repeal them is critical to accomplishing the political goals behind sanctions campaigns. For the president or Congress to have to lobby with state governments, each representing a fraction of the overall population, to alter America's sanctions against a country would represent a bizarre new obstacle to the federal government's ability to carry out its foreign policy obligations.

The proposed Texas and South Carolina laws are textbook examples of sanctions as political grandstanding meant for domestic consumption. They are also a reminder of the jingoistic zeal that can be nurtured and exploited by foreign policy amateurs at the state level. As we embark upon what scholar Peter A G van Bergeijk calls the "second wave" of global sanctions, states will likely look further to getting in on the act with human rights and global affairs. Washington's basic ability to carry out a coherent foreign policy hangs in the balance.

own property poses human rights concerns. Existing sanctions laws and Treasury Department designations already block leaders from those American adversaries from transferring money into the US or owning property in the country. Meanwhile, recently introduced federal legislation aims to ban US adversaries from purchasing large swaths of farmland in the US.

So why would a state engage in what is essentially a foreign policy and national security matter? On the one hand, some scholars see sanctions as often being a product of domestic politics, aimed at portraying muscle to the electorate, at times influenced by pressure groups such as "ethnic lobbies". Those in this camp of scholars are more inclined to believe that sanctions are not particularly effective. If

argue that sanctions are indeed imposed due to a meaningful effort to address national security concerns.

Like many in the national security decision-making scholarship community, I feel both of these binary constructions frequently fail when confronted with the history of economic sanctions. The truth is that foreign policy choices are a product of complex national security matrices that accommodate both foreign policy and domestic political considerations. Yet irrespective of one's overall view on the efficacy of sanctions more broadly, it is hard for anyone to deny that policies against foreign nationals adopted by state governments can have little explanation other than domestic and even local politics.

In the US, the executive branch has always been best suited to make foreign poli-

pressures and national anxieties. The executive branch largely controlled sanctions policy throughout the Cold War era. But after the fall of the Soviet Union, as major threats to the homeland faded, Congressional and sub-federal forces became increasingly involved in this field. While Congress has largely ceded its war power authority in the modern era, it has become more active in sanctioning due to an impulse of members to be seen as projecting power against American adversaries even when it interferes with the president's efforts to engage in strategic policy.

What about state legislators and governors? They have no real national security staff nor the relevant mandate, as their elections almost always lack any meaningful foreign policy discussion and are decided based on provincial issues,

ingfully interfere with the federal government's ability to carry out its foreign policy. But one can imagine a scenario in which sanctions imposed by states do just that.

New York state and California preside over major nodes of the global banking community and the international technology supply chain. Texas itself is a major player in global energy markets. Other states can wield a more narrow version of such powers as well. There are already examples of when New York State has targeted European firms for their perceived violation of sanctions, ignoring objections at the federal level. States can, as the federal government has often done, impose restrictions on firms operating in their jurisdiction in a way that has extraterritorial consequences. This in turn sets

Turkiye's political parties make preelection concessions

THE Turkish parliament has decided to hold this year's national elections on May 14. President Recep Tayyip Erdogan supported this date because it coincides with the 77th anniversary, to the day, of the 1950 elections. The 1950 elections marked the end of the monopoly in power of the Republican People's Party, established in 1923 by Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, the founder of the Turkish Republic. Several negotiations took place this month between the various coalitions formed among the political parties ahead of the confirmation of the ultimate date for the parliamentary and presidential votes.

Beginning with the ruling Justice and Development Party, known as the AKP, it sealed agreements with two parties. One of them is the New Welfare

Party. This party is the continuation of the Welfare Party, established by the conservative leader Necmettin Erbakan. His son Fatih Erbakan established a party that he named the New Welfare Party to emphasize that it is the continuation of the party established by his late father. Fatih's negotiations with the AKP looked as if they were going to fail at one stage. There were two critical points in the negotiations. One was the AKP's request that the New Welfare Party should not participate in 23 constituencies because it had previously lost in these constituencies by a small margin. Therefore, it was expected that, when the New Welfare Party did not participate in these constituencies, the conservative votes would go to the AKP. How this controversy was ultimately solved has not been disclosed. Some serious exchanges of con-

cessions must have taken place behind closed doors. The sober faces of the negotiators during the signing ceremony may be a sign that the agreement did not please everyone.

The second bone of contention was Fatih's request to amend the law on the "Protection of the Family and the Prevention of Violence Against Women." Public opinion will soon know the exact extent of the amendment. However, independent from the bargaining between these two parties, the disclosure of the fact that there was disagreement on this subject has led to a wider debate on the subject. It involved the deputy chairman of the AKP in charge of family affairs as well as the minister of family. They had to side with women's rights. We will soon find out the details of this bargain. Another important agree-

Yasar Yakis

ment was made between the AKP and its successful former Finance Minister Mehmet Simsek. He had parted ways with the AKP several years ago and returned to his former job in international finance.

The third major negotiations were conducted by the AKP with HUDAPAR. This is a political party known for brutal assassinations of its opponents. Several years ago, Erdogan did not spare any blame for this party. It is mainly based in southeastern Anatolia, although it also has a presence elsewhere in Türkiye. It has no seats in parliament and received just 0.3 percent of the votes in the 2018 general election. In light of this background, it is unclear whether the AKP's bargaining with this party will increase its votes or, on the contrary, turn undecided voters away from the AKP. Another set

of negotiations were held, this time between the main opposition Republican People's Party, known as the CHP, and the pro-Kurdish HDP (Peoples' Democratic Party), whose nationwide political strength is estimated to be about 12 percent. These negotiations were concluded with a wide-ranging concurrence of views. So, the agreement can be considered to be sealed.

Many presidential candidates have already applied for the post. Each of them needs 100,000 signatures for their candidacy to be confirmed by the Supreme Electoral Council. It is obvious that the competition will take place between Erdogan and Kemal Kilicdaroglu, the leader of the CHP. The remainder must have applied in the expectation that, in the second round of voting, they may negotiate concessions with either of the leading two parties. Muharrem Ince

has become an active player in the upcoming elections. He has decided to participate under the banner of his Homeland Party, which is a breakaway from the CHP. He ran as the CHP candidate in the last presidential election and won about 30 percent of the vote. The opposition parties tried to persuade him not to run as an independent candidate this time around, as the votes cast in his favor will be deducted from the opposition parties. The ruling AKP is doing everything it can to promote Ince so that he steals as many votes as possible from the opposition parties. There is strong pressure coming from the opposition quarters to persuade him to give up. But he still maintains his ambivalent position. If Erdogan wins again, he will have a hard time fulfilling the exaggerated promises he is currently making. For now, however, his first target is to win the elections.

It is time to phase out fossil fuels

Saber Chowdhury & Ed Markey

ON March 20, the United Nations' top experts on climate science released a synthesis report on climate change. In it, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), the world's peak climate science body declares that we have fallen dangerously behind in trying to control climate change as our greenhouse gas emissions continue to grow instead of decline.

"The pace and scale of what has been done so far, and current plans are insufficient to tackle climate change," the authors of the report warn. Despite these and previous warnings by scientists, the world is dragging its feet on taking the drastic climate action needed to keep the world from warming more than 1.5 degrees Celsius - the threshold beyond which climate change will have the most devastating consequences for humanity.

We are already witnessing what climate chaos can do to our civilisation. Our nations - the United States and Bangladesh - are already suffering. Millions of Americans and Bangladeshis have been hit by floods, droughts and other extreme weather made worse by climate change. We have lost countless lives and suffered enormous economic losses due to our inaction. As elected representatives in the US and Bangladeshi legislatures who care for the fate of our communities, we call for immediate

action on climate change. We know that we cannot limit global warming to 1.5C unless we cut significantly our carbon emissions. That is why, we need to agree to phase out fossil fuels starting right now.

The IPCC report is the latest and direst warning that we need to reduce drastically our reliance on fossil fuels. Burning of coal, oil and gas has been the source of 64 percent of carbon dioxide emissions since the industrial revolution; over the past 10 years, this ratio has grown to 86 percent. Carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases drive up the Earth's temperature, which creates a spiralling crisis of extreme weather, rising sea levels, disease, biodiversity loss, water stress and poverty.

Despite being aware of this problem for decades, the fossil fuel industry continues to put profits first and ignore scientists' warnings. That is why, we need leaders who will put the people first. We need leaders at international financial institutions like the World Bank to firmly commit to addressing climate change and better supporting vulnerable nations - not doubling down on fossil fuel investments.

Since the Paris Agreement was signed, the World Bank has continued to invest billions in fossil fuel projects. It has fallen behind on its already meagre climate commit-

ments, which are less ambitious than the baseline targets set by other development banks. The World Bank and other international financial institutions need to take immediate action and commit to a fossil fuel phase-out that complies with the 1.5C target. We also need elected officials in nations across the globe to work in concert to address this planetary crisis. We need heads of state to pick up the pace on talks to end fossil fuels and follow the example of those who are leading the way.

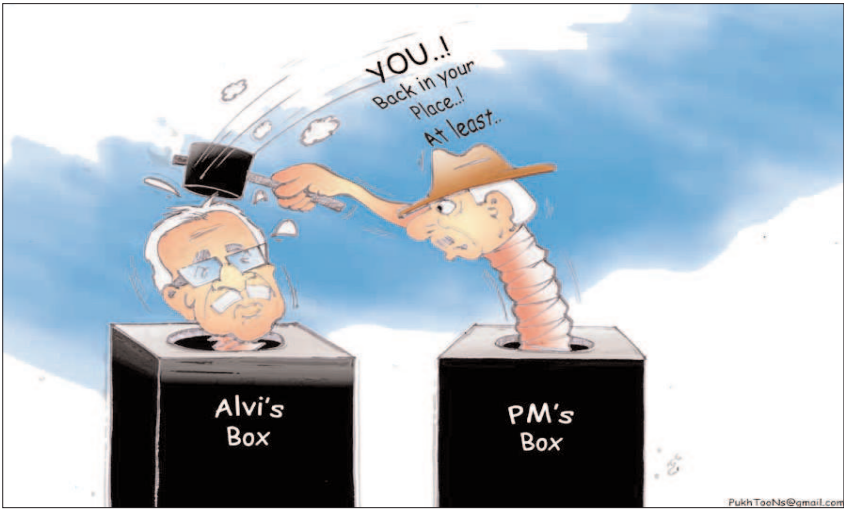
Tuvalu, Vanuatu and the European Parliament have endorsed the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. Colombia says it will ban new oil and gas exploration. Costa Rica and Denmark created the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance, a growing cluster of countries driving forward the managed phase-out of oil and gas production. That list needs to grow. Developed nations like the United States hold a much greater responsibility for climate change than the nations most affected by it, like Bangladesh. Yet, the latter are forced to foot the bill for the devastation wrought on their shores. We cannot continue to allow wealthy countries to externalise the damage of their pollution spree.

That is why, we also need leaders to uphold the promise of sup-

port made at last year's COP27 to nations at the front line of climate change and contribute meaningfully to an international loss and damage fund. International cooperation, commitments and treaties work because they provide accountability and set deadlines. As we work simultaneously on domestic efforts - from Bangladesh's visionary Mujib Climate Prosperity Plan to the United States' Inflation Reduction Act - we must commit as a global community to phase out fossil fuels. A global commitment to phase out fossil fuels would inject urgency and decisiveness into a debate where we have no more time left to lose. That is why, we have joined hundreds of parliamentarians from across the world calling for stronger international collaboration to end fossil fuels.

This year, a political opportunity to make that possible is on the horizon. The first "global stocktake" - a convention held by the United Nations to measure the progress of countries and other shareholders in meeting the goals established in the Paris Agreement - is our chance to get a reality check, hit the political reset button and start working hard to avert the most devastating consequences of climate change. It is time to end the cause of this carnage and seize the moment to phase out fossil fuels for good.

Aljazeera



Trump's support faces its biggest test

Richard Galant

THE Platte River flows eastward through Nebraska at depths far too shallow for shipping. "In some places it is a mile wide and three-quarters of an inch deep," the writer Edgar Nye said in 1889, coining a phrase still in use. Last week, as former President Donald Trump's legal troubles continued to mount, so did a fundamental question about the 2024 Republican presidential campaign. Is Trump's support in the GOP rock-solid, as suggested by the many party figures who rushed to his defense and the fans who attended his rally Saturday - or is it only a mile wide and an inch deep?

If prosecutors in New York City, Atlanta and Washington bring any charges against him - and there's no assurance they will - would it strengthen his support or complicate and potentially weaken his campaign for the Republican nomination? So far, Trump is leading the pack in early primary polling and could even see his numbers grow if he is arrested - as he predicted last weekend. That arrest has not happened.

"The danger facing Republicans is that they will either have to bind themselves even tighter to the mast of an intensely polarizing figure, or risk splitting the party by not coming out in his defense," wrote Patrick T. Brown. "Navigating between those pitfalls will require some willingness to criticize Trump," he added. "The more daring Republicans may try to ding Trump for his seamy behavior even

while attacking the politicized prosecution. One of Trump's presumed rivals for the nomination, Gov. Ron DeSantis of Florida, took a not-so-veiled shot at the former president's behavior," Brown noted.

"I don't know what goes into paying hush money to a porn star to secure silence over some type of alleged affair," DeSantis said even as he accused Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg of "pursuing a political agenda and weaponizing the office." If Trump is prosecuted, he could reap short-term gains, wrote Republican strategist Karl Rove in the Wall Street Journal. "An indictment would likely provoke many MAGA Republicans to rally around Mr. Trump, at least temporarily. His standing in 2024 GOP primary polls might improve as a shoddy case from a left-wing district attorney is likely to anger partisans," but Rove added, "Mr. Trump's strategy appears to focus exclusively on winning the votes of true believers. But many are suffering Trump fatigue and there weren't enough of them to re-elect him last time."

"The most probable result of his current ranting and raving will be to convince more Republicans that he's unelectable." Still, Trump "thrives on media attention," observed Julian Zelizer. "This is his major weapon in political combat. He loves to dominate the news cycle, redirect national conversations, lash out at his enemies and eclipse all other issues."

"It doesn't seem to matter that much of the atten-

tion is negative. As president, reality television star and real estate mogul, Trump has cast himself as a fighter who has warded off individuals and institutions that he claims are out to get him.

This is an essential part of his political persona: the aggrieved public figure who is at perpetual war with the world around him." On Saturday, Trump held his first rally since announcing he is running for president again. The location: Waco, Texas. As Nicole Hemmer pointed out, "the rally coincides with the 30th anniversary of a siege just outside of Waco between religious extremists, a sect known as the Branch Davidians led by David Koresh, and the federal government. The 51-day standoff began in February 1993 and ended in mid-April with a fire that killed 76 people, including 25 children ... For three decades, the city's name has been a touchstone for groups who see the federal government not just as a problem but as the central enemy in a slow-rolling civil war."

"In choosing Waco as the kickoff site for his campaign rallies, Trump has signaled that his courtship of extremist groups will continue, and that he sees his role as a pivotal figure in the far-right mythos as central to his efforts to retake the presidency," Hemmer observed. A spokesperson for Trump said Waco was selected because it is conveniently located "to have as many supporters from across the state and in neighboring states attend this historic rally."

CNN

There's more to life than work - as everyone

John Harris

LAST Thursday marked three years since the start of the first British lockdown - and by implication, the third anniversary of the start of a conversation about life and work that is still going on, in the UK and all over the world. As people were confined to their homes, it soon became clear that many of them were thinking deeply about their jobs, and the sacrifices they often required. Suddenly, people had time to consider more fundamental thoughts about family life, caring, free time, and the horrors of the daily commute. By the autumn of 2020, the result was a huge amount of media noise about rising conflicts between people's "core values" and their everyday lives, the choices they were starting to make, and the newly fashionable prospect of somehow exiting the rat race. And it has never died down.

"Get your fucking ass up and work," says that goddess of hard graft Kim Kardashian. But the cultural winds seem to be blowing in the opposite direction. Last year, Microsoft's annual work trend index found that 47% of its "employee respondents" said they were "more likely to prioritise family and personal life over work than they were prior to the pandemic". We now talk about quiet quitting: the art of mentally cutting loose from your job - and, to quote the young American whose TikTok video sent the concept viral, "the hustle-culture mentality that work has to be your life". Politicians and journalists fuss and fret over the so-called Great Resignation, the social shift that has seen some people changing jobs in pursuit of better pay and greater wellbeing, while others have embraced early retirement or simply exited the job market. In France, the tensions that swirl around life, work and politics are being spectacularly highlighted by the revolt against President

Macron's plans to raise the national retirement age. Here in the UK, their most obvious manifestation is a very British backlash against shifting public attitudes that is driven by the political right - Tory MPs and their allies in the press still equate working from home with the scourge of wokeness.

Meanwhile, senior Conservatives pin the blame for our current Brexit-related labour shortages on an entirely imaginary army of malingers and benefit scroungers, as if the solution lies in shaking out jobcentres and brazenly denying the barriers that sit between paid employment and illness and disability. "We believe work is a virtue," said Jeremy Hunt in his budget speech, combining his pitch for Aristotelian profundity with a quotation from the millionaire haulier Eddie Stobart: "The only place success comes before work is the dictionary." The chancellor also recited an aphorism parroted by Tory and Labour politicians for the best part of 30 years: "Those who can work, should." The unspoken class element of that kind of rhetoric demands to be called out. As ever, the idle recipients of unearned wealth and inherited fortunes escape any kind of censure. Meanwhile, even if some people are newly au fait with shorter working weeks and flexitime, these look set to remain largely middle-class privileges. For millions of others, the trade-off between work and life continues to fall only one way, not least when it comes to the tensions between employment and caring responsibilities. The Conservatives are still fond of presenting themselves as the party of the family; the truth, as ever, is that millions of people's roles as mothers, fathers, guardians, carers and all the rest must always come second to pushing them into the grind of paid employment, even if that has no

end of human consequences.

The announcements in Hunt's "back to work" budget contained a particularly vivid example of this, which also highlighted a huge social change that is still overlooked. Fifteen years ago, lone parents - mothers, mostly - who were on the benefit then known as income support were not required to look for paid work until their youngest child left full-time education at either 16 or 18. But towards the end of the New Labour years, against the backdrop of such social reforms as Sure Start, the relevant age was reduced first to 12, then 10, with steps then taken to cut it to seven. And once the Tory-Liberal Democrat coalition had taken office, it went down even further. Now the government is going to effectively bin the remaining "parental easements" in the benefits system. Thanks to changes made in 2017, when their youngest child turns three - three! - "lead carers" who claim universal credit must currently make themselves available for up to 16 hours of work a week and agree to take part in timed "job searches". And that requirement will now increase to up to 30 hours, a drastic move that will particularly hit lone parents, supposedly facilitated by the government's proposed expansion of state-funded childcare, although huge question marks hover over whether that childcare exists and what a sudden expansion in entitlements could mean for existing provision. Note also yet another bit of classist sophistry: the fact that Hunt is aiming to bring highly paid people back into the labour force by scrapping the upper limit on pensions savings and thereby showering them with cash - whereas those lower down the social hierarchy are to be kicked back into work under the threat of having their benefits docked.

Last week, I spoke to Kate

Andersen, an academic from the University of York who specialises in women's experiences of work and the benefits system. The government's plans for parents, she told me, "very much say that your primary contribution in society is to undertake paid work - and if you're not doing that, you're a lesser citizen. It really undervalues how important unpaid care is to human flourishing, and the relational values of love involved in care." This is not, just to be clear, the kind of argument voiced last week by the Tory MP George Eustice, when he talked about women being "biologically wired" for a "natural nurturing role". In principle, it could just as easily be applied to male caregivers. The point is that in the most fundamental sense, there has to be more to life than paid work. Andersen sent me excerpts from her interviews with people who had been subject to the kind of compulsory "job search" regimes that the government seems to be set on expanding, spending endless, usually futile hours looking for work and applying for jobs. One quoted an unnamed mother who wanted to emphasise "things that are really important like being able to read with [children] after school and being able to go out and buy them a pair of shoes because you've got time."

Those things are not seen as important ... [but] they are important." They really are. So are our responsibilities to older relatives and friends - which, as we confront the realities of an increasingly ageing society, will become equally inescapable. One of the key social questions of the 21st century will be simple: who will have time for caring? In the depths of lockdown, millions of people thought about exactly that issue. The fact that the government is now offering only the cruelest, most class-based of answers speaks volumes about how little they understand the future.

The Guardians

Rwanda has to probe killings of Opp members

Victoire Ingabire Umuhoza

TODAY, we observe the International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims. One purpose of this important annual observance, as stated by the United Nations, is to "pay tribute to those who have devoted their lives to, and lost their lives in, the struggle to promote and protect human rights for all". The list of such people is long in my country, Rwanda. It includes members of opposition groups, independent activists and journalists, among many others.

While all those who fell in the battle to uphold human rights in Rwanda deserve to be remembered and honoured on this day, here I would like to pay special tribute to those who lost their lives, or disappeared, after responding to my call to struggle for the establishment of genuine democracy, respect for human rights and rule of law in our homeland. Iragena Illumine, who worked as a nurse at the King Faisal Hospital in Kigali, was a member of my previous party, United Democratic Forces (FDU-Inkingi). In March 2016, she went missing on her way to work. Her family reported her disappearance to the police, but never received an official response. Worried by the lack of information on her situation, international human rights organisations also sent queries to the government. These were also left unanswered. I heard of Iragena's disappearance while I was still in prison and was devastated. She had been one of my strongest sources of support during my incarceration, regularly visiting me in prison. The last message I ever received from Iragena was handwritten on the front page of the book that she helped me publish from behind bars. She arranged for a copy to be sent to my cell and signed it with "the

struggle for democracy continues". Iragena was in her early thirties and a mother of four when she disappeared. One of her kids has special needs and suffered immensely from being deprived of her mother's care at a young age.

Boniface Twagirimana, a father of two in his early 40s, was deputy leader of FDU-Inkingi. In September 2017, while I was still in prison, he and several other members of my party were arrested and charged with crimes linked to state security, including forming an irregular armed group and offences against the president. The arrests came after Twagirimana denounced the killing of local party representative Damascene Habarugira as a politically motivated murder tied to his opposition to the government's agricultural planning policies. Habarugira had gone missing after meeting an official responsible for village security. A few days later, his family members were called to collect his badly mutilated body from a local hospital. In October 2018, Twagirimana was transferred alone from a prison in Kigali to one in southern Rwanda. His family was not informed of the transfer. Three days later, the authorities announced that he had disappeared and suggested he must have escaped without presenting any supporting evidence. To this day, Twagirimana's spouse is not able to explain to her children what happened to their father. Anselme Mutuyimana was my assistant. In March 2019, the 30-year-old was kidnapped from a bus station in the western Mahoko area. A day later, his body was found in a forest close to his parents' home. Mutuyimana was killed just six months after his release from prison, where he spent six years accused of inciting insurrection. His alleged crime was to invite

young people from his region to participate in a meeting with the secretary general of my party. Anselme's mother had passed away a few months before his release and at the time of his death, he was looking forward to comforting his father and spending time with him. The old man, who was already struggling with his wife's sudden death, was left heavily traumatised after his son's passing.

Eugene Ndereyimana, 29, was a popular FDU-Inkingi representative in Rwanda's Eastern Province. He went missing in July 2019 and has never been seen or heard from since. Just two months before his disappearance, in May 2019, we travelled together to the Eastern Province to meet our party's supporters there. During our visit, we got into an argument with local government representatives. As the exchange became heated, Ndereyimana started recording on his mobile phone. Officials ordered him to delete the recording, but he refused. When he went missing, Ndereyimana was a father of two sons and his wife was pregnant with their third child. Sylodio Dusabumuremyi, a father of two, was the national coordinator of FDU-Inkingi. In September 2019, two unidentified men stabbed him to death as he worked in the shop of a health centre in the Southern Province. Just two days before his murder, he had told me that he feared he might be the next opposition member to be killed or "disappeared". His children still do not know who killed their father and why.

Venant Abayisenga, 30, was a close aide of mine. In June 2020, he left my house to buy some credit for his phone and has not been seen or heard from since. Venant spent two and a half years in prison accused of terrorism. He was acquitted of all charges and

released in January 2020, just six months before his disappearance. Shortly before he went missing, he had recorded and uploaded to YouTube a video in which he talked about the torture he suffered during the early days of his detention. Venant was an orphan. His two siblings still wonder what happened to their brother. The Rwanda Investigation Bureau (RIB) is yet to announce concrete findings in any of the aforementioned cases.

It is extremely painful for me to witness my followers and other members of the opposition being arrested, killed or forcefully disappeared as they struggle towards protecting and promoting the rule of law, human rights and democracy in Rwanda. When I came to Rwanda to engage in political activities, I was prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice for my country - I was prepared to die to ensure the establishment of genuine democracy. During my years of struggle, I met countless activists and opposition members who have the same conviction. Just like the late Nelson Mandela, we all believe "only through hardship, sacrifice and militant action can freedom be won". We will not give up our struggle, and we will not stop fighting for the betterment of Rwanda. We also will not forget about our unjustly incarcerated and mysteriously killed and disappeared friends and colleagues.

On this International Right to Truth Day, I therefore call on my government to set up an independent commission of inquiry to investigate mysterious deaths and disappearances of opposition members, including those of my friends and colleagues. Truth and accountability will not only help the families of those we lost least, but will also improve Rwanda's image in the international arena and pave the way for a more democratic, peaceful and prosperous future for our people.

Saudi-Iran deal opens the door to peace in Yemen

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

ONE of the most important issues linked to the recent agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran is a possible end to the conflict in Yemen. This month's deal was a step in the right direction, as the Iranian government has asserted that rapprochement with the Kingdom will help achieve this critical objective.

The Iranian leaders appear optimistic that the detente between Tehran and Riyadh will indeed bring peace to Yemen. In a meeting with UN Special Envoy for Yemen Hans Grundberg just a few days after the agreement was sealed, Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian insisted that his government "backs any negotiations which would help establish peace and stability in Yemen."

It has also been reported that Iran's permanent mission to the UN believes the deal with Saudi Arabia stands to contribute to the realization of a permanent ceasefire in Yemen. A statement released by the mission said that the reinstatement of diplomatic ties would have "positive" implications on the bilateral, regional and international levels. "It appears (therefore) that reestablishment of political relations between Iran and Saudi Arabia will accelerate the achievement of a ceasefire in Yemen," the statement noted. Several other positive developments have occurred since the Saudi-Iranian pact was reached. For example, the UN has initiated "intense" diplomacy as a result. Grundberg told the UN Security Council this month that there has been "a step change in the scope and depth of the discussions."

He also urged Yemen's internationally recognized government and the Houthi rebels "to seize the opportunities" created by the new momentum. Grundberg added: "The parties must seize the opportunity presented by this regional and international momentum to take decisive steps towards a more peaceful future ... This requires patience and a long-term perspective. And this requires courage and leadership."

One critical step that would help bring peace and stability to Yemen would be for Iran to stop delivering weapons to the Houthis. The Iranian government can order the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps to refrain from providing any military assistance to the Houthis. Fortunately, the Iranian leaders have pledged that they will do so, according to The Wall Street Journal, which reported that Tehran has agreed to "halt covert weapons shipments to the Houthi allies" in "a move that could inject new momentum into efforts to end one of the region's longest-running civil wars."

By halting its deliveries of weapons to the Houthis, Iran's legitimacy will be enhanced not only in the region, but also on the global stage due to the fact that Tehran will show that it is respecting international law and honoring the UN's arms embargo on the Houthis. UN Security Council Resolution 2216, which was passed in 2015, stipulates that "all Member States shall immediately take the necessary measures to prevent the direct or indirect supply, sale or transfer to" the Houthis. It covers "weapons and ammunition,

military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary equipment, and spare parts for the aforementioned, and technical assistance, training, financial or other assistance, related to military activities or the provision, maintenance or use of any arms and related materiel, including the provision of armed mercenary personnel whether or not originating in their territories."

One of the major reasons for the intensity, scope and length of the conflict in Yemen is the Houthis' ability to acquire weapons, without which there would be a greater incentive for the group to reach an agreement in order to bring an end to the conflict. While Yemen does not pose a national security threat to Iran, it does to Saudi Arabia, since it shares a border with the Gulf state. Generally speaking, when nonstate actors believe that a government is backing them financially and militarily, they will have less incentive to reach a deal.

Another benefit that the Iranian government will gain from shifting its policy toward the Houthis and halting its weapons deliveries is economic. Halting its financial, advisory, intelligence and political support to the Houthis would not only enhance Tehran's legitimacy, but it could also save the Iranian leaders a significant amount of money. In a nutshell, thanks to the Saudi-Iranian agreement, Tehran can play a critical role in bringing peace and stability to Yemen. And the latest development to come out of Tehran - Iran's reported decision to stop arming the Houthis - is a positive step in the right direction, which will undoubtedly increase regional peace, security and stability.

Important Notice

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

PSX witnesses bullish trend, gains 58.32 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed a bullish trend on Monday, gaining 58.32 points, with a positive change of 0.15 percent, closing at 40,000.37 against 39,942.05 points on the previous day.

A total of 64,511,856 shares were traded during the day as compared to 46,728,175 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 2.501 billion against Rs 1.294 billion on the last trading day.

Annual General Meeting of Askari Bank Limited held

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: This is to inform that 31st Annual General Meeting (AGM) of Askari Bank Limited held on Wednesday, March 29, 2023 at 11:00 am.

Besides other agenda items Election of Directors was also on the agenda of the meeting. The members were informed that pursuant to Section 159 (3) of the Companies Act 2017 the following persons have filed notices offering themselves to be elected as Directors of the Bank:

1. Mr. Waqar Ahmed Malik
2. Mr. Sarfaraz Ahmed Rehman
3. Mr. Arif Ur Rehman
4. Dr. Nadeem Inayat
5. Syed Bakhtiyar Kazmi
6. Mr. Manzoor Ahmed, NIT Nominee
7. Mr. Kamran Yousuf Mirza
8. Ms. Zoya Mohsin Nathani
9. Ms. Samina Rizwan
10. Raja Muhammad Abbas

Since the number of persons who have offered themselves for election is not more than the number fixed by the Board in terms of Section 159 (1) of the Companies Act, 2017, therefore, the above named persons stand elected as Directors of the Bank for a period of next three years w.e.f. March 29, 2023, subject to the clearance of the State Bank of Pakistan.

Further, Mr. Atif R. Bokhari, President & CEO of the Bank shall continue to be a deemed director in terms of Article 131 of the Articles of Association of the Bank read with Section 188 (3) of the Companies Act, 2017.

Court Notice

In the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No.22/1. Institution 25/1/2023. Date of hearing. 1/4/2023. Sher Mehmod VS Sher Nawab Khan. Notice to no 5.Yaqob Khan.6.Zaher Khan sons of Sher Azez Khan resident of Ghazikhana, tehsel Gadezai district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the

ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 1/4/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Court Notice

In the Court of Jouhar Ali Safi Civil Judge I /Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No.66/1. Institution 4/3/2023 Date of hearing. 28/3/2023. Gauhar VS Sheramn Khan. Notice to Sheramn Khan son of Sujawal Khan resident of Kulyary tehsel Gagra district Buner at present out of country. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 28/3/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

As many as 317 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 135 of them recorded gains and 154 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 28 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 5,040,140 shares at Rs 1.20 per share, Meezan Bank XD with 4,762,770 shares at Rs 92.75 per share, and Telecard Limited with 4,363,500 shares at Rs 7.29 per share.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 54.95 per share price, closing at Rs5155.05, whereas the runner-up was Sapphire Tex with a Rs

49.39 rise in its per share price to Rs 1099.10.

Raffhan Maize witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 412.50 per share closing at Rs 7557.50, followed by Ismail Ind. with a Rs 24.90 decline to close at Rs 455.01.

Rupee sheds 38 paisas against dollar

Pakistan rupee witnessed a 38 paisas devaluation against the dollar in the interbank trading on Monday and closed at Rs 283.57 against the previous day's closing of Rs 283.19.

According to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market were recorded at Rs 284.20 and Rs 287

respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 04 paisas and closed at Rs 305.15 against the last day's closing of Rs 305.19, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen increased by 03 paisas to close at Rs 2.16, whereas a decline of 27 paisas was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which was traded at Rs 347.38 as compared to its last day's closing of Rs 347.65.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and Saudi Riyal increased by 10 paisas each to close at Rs 77.21 and Rs 75.48 respectively.

Flying between giants: Red Bull athlete, paraglider Horacio Llorens to join documentary screening

F.P. Report

LAHORE: In June 2022, two international paragliders, Thomas de Dorlodot from Belgium and Horacio Llorens from Spain, arrived in Pakistan. The two aerial adventurers came with a purpose to break the altitude record by flying over K2, the second highest mountain in the world. While the weather and wind conditions did not allow that, the athletes did set a new world record of flying past four of Pakistan's mountains in a single seven-hour long flight they called the 'Grand Slam Flight'.

Their month-long journey leading up to, during and after the Grand Slam Flight has now been made into a half-hour documentary called 'Flying Between Giants'. The documentary takes us behind the scenes from packing to travel to Pakistan to all the way to the incredible flight. "We fell in love with the country when we first visited. It's one of the most welcoming countries and is one of the best for paragliding," said de Dorlodot about Pakistan in an interview last summer.

"It feels like every time I have come to Pakistan, it has been to prepare for this trip," he added. "I've been to Pakistan six times. And every time, we learn something new and I feel everything is in place now to go for an epic expedition. This

will be our biggest expedition ever in Pakistan for sure."

Even in the documentary, he is heard raving about his experience. "The feeling that you get when flying at 7500m, so close to K2... I feel so fortunate," de Dorlodot says as we see Llorens and him fly across the diverse gray and white textures and between the rocky giants. Llorens too was super pumped to be exploring new places and embarking on breathtaking expeditions. "There are many more things to do," he said. "I love this place. This time, we are much more prepared, mentally and physically. Hopefully, if the weather is good, we are here to do something big."

And something big they did as they flew across Muztagh Tower, K2, Broad Peak all the way to Gasherbrum IV, and back to the base camp in a single seven-hour flight. Flying Between Giants chronicles their superhuman task at hand and the physical, mental and emotional journey the two paragliders went through to accomplish it.

The Belgian Red Bull athlete Tom De Dorlodot has been flying for over 20 years, since the age of 14, when the first time his feet were off the ground and he fell in love with the sport. Since then, he has paraglided over mountains across the world and started SEARCH Projects with the goal of searching for new

adventures and documenting them. His first visit to Pakistan was in 2013.

Whereas, Horacio Llorens is a Red Bull athlete and five-time world champion in paragliding, having glided over from the Mayan ruins in Guatemala to Aurora Borealis. He also set the Guinness World record for hitting 6G in his 568 rotations (called Infinity Tumbling) on the way down to the Mayan ruins at Takalik Abaj in Guatemala. Llorens has visited Pakistan multiple times in the past and is once again here to take on another insane flight.

Last summer, the two paragliders experienced the local paragliding sites and interacted with the local community during their time here. And Llorens is back again. But it's not just because of the paragliding but also the "traditional culture and people" who treated them well during the stay.

In the wake of the Flying Between Giants release and its already massive reach worldwide, Red Bull Pakistan will host a screening of the documentary and a meet-and-greet with Horacio Llorens on Sunday March 19, 2023 at Red Bull Pakistan Head Office, Karachi.

We cordially invite the media and the audience to join in on an evening full of adventure stories, Pakistani culture and the candid look into the phenomenal story of Flying Between Giants.



ISLAMABAD: People standing in a queue for purchasing 10kg flour bags outside utility store at Sitara Market.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Gas carrier 'Umm Bab' carrying 141,460 cubic meters of LNG, berthed at Engro-Elengy Terminal on Sunday. Meanwhile three more ships, America, Mega I and Evridiki carrying Containers, Palm oil and Gas oil also arrived at outer anchorage of the port during last 24 hours.

A total of 03 ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them an oil tanker 'Leader' is expected to sail on today.

Cargo throughput during last 24 hours stood at 102,028 tonnes, comprising 83,142 tonnes imports cargo and 18,886 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 596 Containers (323 TEUs Imports and 9,809 TEUs export) was handled at the port.

There are 07 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them, two ships, Gulf Jumeirah, and America & another ship, Maersk Boston carrying Mogas and Containers are expected to take berths at FOTCO and QICT respectively on Monday, while another containers ship MSC Aria III is due to arrive at Port Qasim on same day and three more container vessels, Maersk Denver, MSC Levina and Olympia are due to arrive on.

ICCI for focusing on Tajikistan to promote exports with Central Asia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari President of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Monday requested the Embassy of Pakistan in Tajikistan to cooperate with the private sector in promoting trade and exports.

He said that Tajikistan is a gateway for Pakistan in Central Asia and Pakistan can significantly improve its business relations with these countries by establishing close relations with Tajikistan.

He said this while talking to Muhammad Saeed Sarwar, ambassador-designate of Pakistan to Tajikistan during his visit to ICCI.

Ahsan Bakhtawari said that Tajikistan is an import-based country and Pakistan can export many products to it including textiles, pharmaceuticals, surgical instruments, cement, sports goods, and leather products, for which cooperation of the embassy is important.

He said that there is a distance of only 16 kilometers between Tajikistan and Pakistan at the Wakhan strip, and if this route is made usable, there can be a significant improvement in bilateral trade between the

two countries. He said that ICCI would consider sending a delegation to Tajikistan to explore its market.

Speaking at the occasion, Mohammad Saeed Sarwar, Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Tajikistan, said that the business community is playing an important role in promoting the country's trade and exports, and assured that he would try to explore new opportunities for Pakistan's export to Tajikistan.

He said that a transit trade agreement has been signed between Pakistan and Tajikistan, and its implementation would improve trade relations between the two countries. He said that the government is focusing on exports and the Pakistani foreign missions would cooperate in this mission.

Faad Waheed, Senior Vice President of ICCI said that the Chamber has established a facilitation desk for the Central Asian Countries to facilitate the business community in finding new opportunities for doing business with these countries.

He said that the cooperation of the embassy will be

helpful in making the desk more effective.

ICCI Group Leader Khalid Iqbal Malik said that the role of embassies in promoting Pakistan's business interests in the international market is very important and hoped that Pakistan's embassy in Tajikistan would play an active role in this regard. He said that embassies should be given annual targets for exports so that our exports can grow faster.

Zafar Bakhtawari, former President of ICCI said that the direct air links of Pakistan with Central Asia, including Tajikistan, are very important for Pakistan, as they will strengthen people-to-people contacts, increase exports, and promote tourism.

He urged the Embassy of Pakistan in Tajikistan to start a direct flight between Istanbul, Islamabad and Dushanbe.

He said that Pakistan provides easy access to Tajikistan and other Central Asian countries to the outside world through its Gwadar and Karachi ports, so the close relations will be a win-win outcome for Pakistan and Central Asian countries.

Askari Bank partners with BPC

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Askari Bank announced a partnership with Banking Payments Context (BPC), a global payments fintech. Through this partnership BPC will implement its next-generation SmartVista suite to enable state of the art credit card management system by migrating the existing solution and services. Also an Enterprise Fraud Management Solution powered by AI & Machine Learning models shall be introduced to detect and prevent fraudulent activities on Askari Bank's digital channels in real time to fulfil the bank's security targets and maintain an exceptional user experience.

Askari Bank has expanded its branch network with 600+ Conventional and Islamic branches, along with a Wholesale Bank Branch in Bahrain and a representative office in Beijing, China. To support this impressive growth, the Bank required a highly scalable and configurable



credit card management system which can adhere to local and international standards as well as requirements. Any growth in digital transformation requires a sophisticated high security platform which is built upon latest technology and is already proven in the market through leading players locally and globally while providing end-to-end fraud management detection and prevention in real time.

Implemented by leading financial institutions around the world, BPC's SmartVista Suite comprises cutting-edge banking payment and commerce solu-

tions such as digital banking, ATM and switching, payments processing, card and fraud management. This proven technology, coupled with BPC's local experience in Pakistan, was key to winning this trust.

Mr. Atif R. Bokhari, President & CEO AKBL, commented, "We are pleased to partner with BPC for our digital transformation projects. By joining forces, we are taking a new approach to security throughout our financial initiatives and compliance. Together we will ensure that our financial services are highly configurable, scalable and secure."

Commenting on the partnership, Mr. Furrugh Ali Baig, Managing Director BPC Pakistan, said: "We are excited to expand the use of our SmartVista product suite across Pakistan and enable Askari Bank's ongoing improvement of financial services in a fast-growing market. This partnership is an important step in improving Pakistan's digital financial transformation with more scalable, secure and advanced technology. We hope that this partnership will further strengthen our place in the banking sector which is undergoing advancements at an unprecedented rate."

Dealing with ADHD

Nandara Shahid

ADHD stands for Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder which includes two types of conditions: Inattentiveness and Hyperactivity. This disorder develops in children and continues up to adulthood. For a common person, knowing how to diagnose ADHD, should not be the matter of concern but they shall be aware of how to behave around people suffering from such a condition. This is the reason why spreading awareness about ADHD is crucial. Pakistan is far off from western countries in managing such issues due to lack of awareness, late diagnosis, long untreated period and difficulty in

approaching a proper mental health specialist. There is also a lack of specialty in this field. Moreover, first line medications for such patients are psycho stimulant medicines which are not easily available in Pakistan. So psychiatrists have to go for second line medications for managing the behavioral issues of their patients. We as part of the society should learn to be understanding, compassionate and patient towards people with ADHD because divisions only lead to more divisions. "Not a disability but a different ability"

Parent's reaction: According to a psychiatrist Dr. Aasma Kiyani "parents are usually exhausted when they approach mental health

specialists so they are mostly comfortable with the diagnosis of their child and are more interested in treatment prognosis". She further explained that it is very easy for parents to notice the symptoms of hyperactivity in their children if they see them overactive or uncontrollable around the house. However, the symptom of inattentiveness is not very frequently caught in parent's sight and this result in a late diagnosis which may lead to academic decline, nutritional deficiencies, physical injuries, exhaustion, harm to oneself, parenting burden etc. Thereby, parents are suggested to build conversations with their children and try to understand what their child is going through. Similarly,

the Headmistress of Special Children Bahria College explained how sometimes parents even after bringing their children to such schools are not ready to accept that their children are "special" or have a disorder. Self-confidence originates from one's family. However supportive their friends are, if a person's family is not ready to accept their ADHD, the person would never be able to accept himself. This lack of awareness among parents would portray a wrong image to their child that they are not a part of this society and a mere burden on their parents. Families have to ensure that they remain to be a perpetual support for their children.

Other common reac-

tions: Other people that a person with ADHD frequently might come across could be their fellow peers, classmates and teachers at school etc. It is equally important that they know how they should react around such people. Young people don't really understand which of their actions can affect another person mentally or emotionally. Hence, they are always requested to be compassionate and patient towards people with ADHD in specific and in general toward all. The medically able people have more social skills compared to a person suffering from this disorder so they shall be the ones to make the first step to initiate a friendship and not judge them.

Secondly, the schools in Pakistan play a great role in such people's lives. If teachers hold a student with ADHD responsible for disturbing the decorum of the classroom and punish them instead of putting themselves in their shoes and understanding their situation, it would lead to nothing but resentment. Teachers should be supportive, should make such children sit in the front row and repeatedly question if they are understanding or not. Moreover, if they believe that the student has attention problems and may have a specific disorder, the message must be conveyed to parents as soon as possible and with immense care and respect.

We suggest that educational institutions should

start awareness campaigns and steps against bullying to not only protect people with ADHD but everyone against discrimination. Furthermore, following the analysis of the situation in Pakistan regarding this issue, we would like to urge the government to set up more special schools with all sorts of facilities for such people.

Conclusively, after conducting several surveys we found out that there is a major lack of awareness about ADHD in Pakistan than in any other country. We have taken the initiative to spread awareness among common people aiming to remove the stigma around ADHD and encourage people to seek a diagnosis for their symptoms.



In brief

Sarwar, Shahid win bridge competition

ISLAMABAD (APP): Sarwar Khan and Shahid Hamid won the pair contest organized by Islamabad Club here to mark the Pakistan Day. The event was contested among the local bridge players. Sarwar and Shahid with a tally of 59.63 were at the top of the table, followed by Noshervan Sultan and Brig (R) M. Butt at 57.04. The second runner up were M. Naqvi and Choudry Sultan with 55.93 points. The thrilling daylight event concluded with the distribution of prizes amongst the winners.

World squash tv to stream multiple events

ISLAMABAD (APP): Squash fans in Europe and beyond would be able to stream more content than ever before on the World Squash Federation's (WSF) free streaming platform, Worldsquash.tv, after agreements were reached with a number of upcoming major European tournaments. Following discussions between the WSF, the European Squash Federation and tournament organisers, Worldsquash.tv would provide a free stream for the European Individual U19 Championships and European Mixed Team U19 Championships in Zurich (April 1-9), the European Team Division 1 and 2 Championships in Helsinki (April 26-29), and the European Mixed Team U15 and U17 Championships in Prague (May 11-14), said a press release. Commenting on the new partnerships, WSF CEO William Louis-Marie said, "We're thrilled to be adding more exciting competitions to worldsquash.tv. Being able to showcase events from all over the world on our free, dedicated squash streaming platform is a great opportunity for fans to see top quality squash and for Federations and Associations to show off their brilliant competitions." Thomas Troedsson, ESF President, said, "European Squash have a mission to make squash more attractive and visible - we are happy for the opportunity to broadcast our European Championships through it."

Sam wins title as Rory loses semi-final

NEW YORK (BBC): American Sam Burns won the WGC-Dell Technologies Match Play Championship after Rory McIlroy suffered a dramatic semi-final defeat earlier on Sunday. McIlroy was beaten by American Cameron Young in a sudden-death extra hole, having been two up with three to play and one up starting the 18th in Texas. Young levelled with a pressure putt on the 18th and then clinched the match with birdie on the first extra hole. But the 15th seed was easily beaten 6&5 by compatriot Burns in the final. Thirteenth seed Burns, 26, upset world number one Scottie Scheffler in a similarly tight semi-final which required three additional holes. Against Young he fell one down on the second but dominated the match afterwards with a run of eight birdies in 10 holes from the fourth. Young found the water on 12 and 13 as he aggressively looked to reduce his deficit before the pair shook hands on the 13th green. "What a week," said Burns, who sealed his fifth win on the PGA Tour. "I am so tired. He didn't play best stuff but it was a great match. I felt like I found something at the end of my match with Scottie."

Taskin relishes the chance to bowl on flat pitches

CHATTOTGRAM (Agencies) : Bangladesh's ability to bowl under pressure was put to the test in a rain-shortened first T20I against Ireland, and Taskin Ahmed helped them come through with flying colours. The visitors had raced to 32 for 0 in less than three overs. The target - 104 for eight - was well within range. And then suddenly it wasn't, because Taskin had come on in the fourth over, picked up three wickets in five deliveries and pretty much ended the game. He removed Lorcan Tucker first ball with a yorker, then went through the dangerous Paul Stirling as well and finally had George Dockrell caught at third man. He also took Harry Tector's wicket in the final over to finish with career-best figures of 2-0-16-4.

"They needed 104 runs from eight overs in favourable conditions and the ball was coming on to the bat," Taskin said at the post-match press conference after Bangladesh took a 1-0 lead in the three-match series. "It was slightly wet out there too. But we didn't relax till the

last over. We stuck to the process. We focused on the execution, whatever the situation demanded. It is our responsibility to adjust to the wicket. We are assessing the conditions and adjusting ourselves to the behaviour of the wicket. It is part of the learning process. If we can execute properly, we can bowl better."

Taskin also observed that the more Bangladesh play on batting-friendly conditions, the better it will be for the fast bowlers. "Major events are played on sporting pitches so we should play all levels on these conditions. It favours both batters and bowlers. It will challenge the bowlers in batting-friendly conditions but there will be improvement too. More we play on good wickets, we will be more confident. We won the last two series playing in better wickets, so this is a good motivation."

"Accuracy has to be 100% on good wickets otherwise there's a chance of leaking boundaries. So on better wickets, the bowler will be more focused on perfect execu-

tion. It will definitely lead to improvement."

Taskin reiterated Bangladesh's desire to be one of the best fast bowling groups in the world. "If we can all become world-class bowlers, it will be tough for the opponents to handle us," he said. "Big teams have four or five world-class fast bowlers. We want the same thing. We are treating it like a family, the bowling unit, and helping each other in the last two and a half years."

"We are improving but we are still to reach the next level but I believe we are in the right track. We have a great mindset so we can reach the goal of becoming a world-class attack." Taskin said that all-round support from the teammates and team management is helping Bangladesh evolve into a more aggressive team. "Fear of failure holds you back. We want to play free cricket. Everyone is supporting each other, starting from the very top of the team management. They tell us not to hesitate when executing our skills. They want us to play our game freely, bring our A-game. Play aggressive cricket."

Mickey Arthur wants Pakistani youngsters to be given more opportunities

ISLAMABAD (APP): Former Pakistan head coach, Mickey Arthur, believes the young talent of the Pakistan cricket team must be groomed and given more opportunities to gain experience. Arthur was concerned about the young talented players of the national team, particularly the top order currently participating in the ongoing three-match T20I series against Afghanistan at the Sharjah Cricket Stadium.

Given the amount of experience that Mickey has, he took to Twitter and dropped in some suggestions for Saim Ayub, Muhammad Haris, and Abdullah Shafique.

"Saim, Abdullah, and Haris have loads of talent, but finding out that International cricket brings different pressures and responsibilities to franchise cricket....groom them, give them time, and allow them opportunities to bat with experienced players, and they will come through," he said as quoted by cricket-



pakistan.com.pk.

Afghanistan won the second T20I match against Pakistan and bagged the series for the very first time with a margin of 2-0 with one game remaining.

Meanwhile, Former Pakistani Skipper Shahid Afridi also reacted to Pakistan's defeat in the T20 series. He took to Twitter to share his thoughts on the matter as the team suffered back-to-back losses against the Rashid Khan-led Afghan team in the T20 matches. He also congratulated the Afghan team on

their victory, saying they played the best cricket. He specifically praised Rashid Khan, who was as brilliant, for his excellent performance throughout the series.

The 46-year-old also commended the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) for giving opportunities to new players. However, he suggested that instead of benching senior players, they should have played alongside the young players. "Well played Afghanistan congrats on the win, and Rashid Khan you were amazing as always. Good move by the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) to believe in the upcoming talent but they should have been accompanied by senior players to transfer on-field experience and not sit on the bench," he said.

Afghanistan has taken a 2-0 unassailable lead in the three-match T20I series. This was Afghanistan's first-ever series win over Pakistan in any format. The third and final match of the series would be played today at the same venue.

Hussey hopes Welsh Fire's 'gamble' on Shaheen, Rauf will have 'huge pay-off'

LONDON (Agencies): Mike Hussey, Welsh Fire's new men's coach, has admitted that signing Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf in last week's Hundred draft was a "gamble" due to uncertainty over their availability, but one he believes could have "a huge pay-off".

The limited availability of overseas players has been a constant issue across the Hundred's first two seasons, owing to clashes with bilateral series and the Caribbean Premier League. Most teams responded by prioritising availability over star power in Thursday's draft, with Babar Azam, Kieron Pollard and Andre Russell all going unselected as a result. But Fire, who brought in Hussey as a replacement for Gary Kirsten after a winless 2022 season, broke the mould in signing two of the world's leading white-ball bowlers for a combined £160,000, despite a lack of clarity over Pakistan's fixture list in August, when the Hundred will be played.

Fire will play their opening match on August 2, away at Manchester Originals, and Hussey anticipates Shaheen and Rauf will be available for seven of their eight group games. Pakistan are due to finish a two-Test series in Sri Lanka in late July, and have a three-match ODI series against Afghanistan pencilled in for late August, leading into the Asia Cup and then the World Cup.

"We've been told that they're available up to about the 20th," Hussey told ESPNcricinfo and the Press Association. "I think that's about seven games, and there's a chance that the series they've got against Afghanistan may be called



off as well. It's a bit of a gamble, but if that is the case, it'd be a huge win for us to have them for the whole season, which would be amazing for us.

"They are big stars, and they're match-winners as well. The first seven games is a fair chunk of the tournament. If they can come in and have a huge impact and win us a few games, and get us right up there, then that will help build some confidence and belief. And then there's still some quality performers out there that we can attract as suitable replacements."

"The gamble is, we know we've got them for seven games at this stage, but it could also be the whole tournament which would be a huge pay-off for us. Obviously they are both world-class performers and have performed on the biggest stage in the past, so hopefully they can have a big impact for us."

The pair have played

together extensively for Pakistan, and have also been integral parts of Lahore Qalandars' back-to-back PSL titles over the last two seasons, revitalising a struggling franchise in a way that Hussey hopes they can repeat in Cardiff. "It's great that we've got them as a pair," he added, "so they've got a bit of camaraderie off the field and both have a buddy there as well. I think that's going to helpfully help them settle in nicely."

Welsh Fire's first move in the draft was to try and sign Tim David, but as Hussey had anticipated, Southern Brave used their Right-To-Match (RTM) to bring him back for a third stint with them. Instead, they used their first pick to bring in Somerset's Tom Abell on a £125,000 contract, which will be further topped up by a captaincy bonus. "I obviously did a lot of background [work]

and got a lot of information from a lot of different sources," Hussey said of Abell. "and the information I got was that he sounds like an outstanding character and a really good leader, which is something that we identified that we really wanted this season."

It took several conversations with Hussey to prise Abell away from Birmingham Phoenix, who offered him a retention despite injuries limiting him to a single game across the Hundred's first two seasons. "Tom's such a loyal guy, so the initial conversations were a bit nervous," Hussey said.

"He really respected Birmingham so much and they'd stood by him when he was injured in a previous season, and so he was very reluctant to leave them, to be honest. We had to work extremely hard to help him see the vision of what we had in place, and what we would hopefully create over the next few years, and that we saw him as a huge part of that, particularly being the leader of the team. "Thankfully, he made the choice to go back into the draft and obviously to secure his services we were going to take him as early as we could."

We've got a really good player that can hopefully play well in the conditions in Cardiff in particular - but all around the country as well. And then obviously throwing in those leadership capabilities as well was something that we were really attracted to." Their other picks were David Willey (£125k), Glenn Phillips (£75k), Roelof van der Merwe (£50k), Stevie Eskinazi and Dan Douthwaite (both £40k), and while the draft system meant Hussey inevitably missed out on some targets, he said he was "very happy" with his squad overall.

Adviser to CM Punjab Wahab Riaz vows to resolve athletes' issues

LAHORE (APP): Country's top athletes called on Adviser to Chief Minister Punjab on Sports and Youth Affairs Wahab Riaz under Elite Players Meet up initiative here at National Hockey Stadium on Monday.

The important meeting was convened to provide top athletes of the country an opportunity to share their issues including training, nutrition, funding and participation in international sports events. Wahab Riaz asked the players about their problems and assured them that all possible measures will be taken to resolve their issues.

DG Sports Punjab Tariq Qureshi and Director Youth Affairs Syed Umair Hassan were also present in the meeting.

World Cup winning kabaddi star

Shafiq Chishti, Olympian Arshad Nadeem, Paralympic gold medalist Haider Ali, World Snooker Champion Ahsan Ramzan, World Beach Wrestling Champion Inam Butt, athlete Shajar Abbas, wrestler Shareef Tahir, national junior cyclist Fatima Tahir and Aqib Shah also participated in the meeting.

Addressing the meeting, Adviser to CM Punjab on Sports said that the top athletes of the country will be provided all necessary facilities for modern training, nutrition, conditioning etc. The services of top foreign coaches will be hired for the coaching of top national athletes, he added.

The sports facilities in Punjab will be developed on modern lines. "The doors of my office are open all the time for all players. They can

share their issues and any kind of problems with me," he added.

Tariq Qureshi on this occasion said that a sports endowment fund of Rs 2 billion is ready and it will be implemented soon. "Under sports endowment fund, Sports Board Punjab will provide scholarships and stipends to players. Besides this, the top players will also be extended financial support for their participation in international sports events," he added.

He further said that a wrestling academy is being established in Gujranwala and we are planning to build a wrestling academy in Lahore. "Javelin throw track will be built in Olympian Arshad Nadeem's city Mian Channu while a Kabaddi stadium will be constructed in Sahiwal".

Andreescu and Sabalenka march into last 16 in Miami

MIAMI GARDENS (AFP/APP): Former US Open winner Bianca Andreescu and world number two Aryna Sabalenka cruised into the last-16 of the Miami Open on Sunday with straight sets victories at Hard Rock Stadium.

Sabalenka's power was simply too much for Marie Bouzkova with the Belarussian breaking serve twice in the opening set on the way to a 6-1, 6-2 victory.

Any chance of a comeback from Bouzkova vanished when she was broken in the opening game of the second set and Sabalenka was in no danger on her serve, not facing break point at any time in the 66 minute encounter.

Andreescu looks a player reborn and she oozed confidence as she enjoyed a 6-4, 6-4 victory over American Sofia Kenin.

The 22-year-old Andreescu, the 2019 US Open winner, has been impressive so far having beaten Emma Raducanu and world number 10 Maria Sakkari in the previous rounds.

In a match with few rallies, Andreescu dominated with her serve game, with a 70% first serve percentage and it was not until mid-way through the second set that Kenin caused any real problems.

Kenin, the 2020 Australian Open winner, broke Andreescu to cut the lead to 4-3 but despite the improved forehand from the Floridian, Andreescu kept her cool and won with her first match point.

"These victories are definitely very sweet and I've had many tough matches against Sofia, so it feels really good to get through," said Andreescu who converted all three of her break points.

"I definitely feel like I am getting



better match by match, even physically.

Like I'm feeling really good. I'm feeling very fresh," she added.

Andreescu will face Russian Ekaterina Alexandrova in the next round after she beat world number nine Belinda Bencic of Switzerland 7-6 (10/8), 6-3.

In a good day for Russian women, qualifier Varvara Gracheva reached her second straight WTA 1000 fourth round with a straightforward 6-1, 6-2 win over Polish lucky loser Magdalena Frech.

The 22-year-old Gracheva also made it to the last 16 as a qualifier at Indian Wells.

There will also be a strong Czech presence in the fourth round with Petra Kvitova, Barbara Krejickova and Marketa Vondrousova all winning on Sunday.

Two-times Wimbledon winner

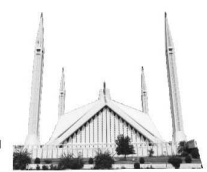
Kvitova beat Donna Vekic 6-4, 7-6 (7/3), surviving a strong effort from the Croat in the second set.

"She was always coming back after a (service) break, and it wasn't really easy already in the first set. ... It was very difficult, she played very well, she served very well," said Kvitova.

Krejickova, the 2021 French Open winner, beat American Madison Keys 7-6 (7/4), 6-3 while Vondrousova beat out-of-form compatriot Karolina Pliskova 6-1, 6-2.

Romanian Sorana Cirstea made it to the fourth round in Miami for the first time in a decade after beating Czech Karolina Muchova 7-5, 6-1.

The 32-year-old, now coached by Swedish former Australian Open winner Thomas Johansson, is enjoying a mini-revival after also reaching the same stage in Indian Wells last month.



In brief

IRSA releases 70,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 70,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 61,500 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1422.95 feet and was 24.95 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 20,100 cusecs while outflow as 13,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1095.10 feet, which was 45.10 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded at 18,500 cusecs and 17,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded 36,900, 38,700, 36,200 and 7,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 16,400 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 7,400 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

13 outlaws arrested

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad capital police on Monday claimed to apprehend 13 outlaws from different areas of the city and recovered drugs and weapons from their possession. Police said that Kohsar police team arrested an accused Nadeem and recovered one 9mm pistol with ammunition from his possession. Likewise, Phulgrah police team arrested three accused namely Hashmat Khan, Shahzad and Rustam Khan and recovered 1076 gram heroin, 160 gram ice and one dagger from their possession. Similarly, Shalimar police team arrested an accused namely Adnan involved in illegal sale of petroleum products. Sabzi Mandi police team arrested Inayat and recovered 1130 gram hashish from his possession. Moreover, Shams Colony police team arrested Ifikhar, Asim and Zubair and recovered a total of 465 gram hashish and one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from their possession. Noon police team arrested three Afghan nationals namely Hamza, Sabir and Arshad living in Pakistan illegally. Furthermore, Lohi Bher police team arrested an accused namely Akbar Khan and recovered one 30-bore pistol with ammunition from his possession. Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

Two gangsters arrested

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Shalimar police have arrested two gangsters and recovered cash and weapons along with ammunition from their possession. According to police, Islamabad Capital Police have started a crackdown against criminal elements in order to save the precious lives and property of citizens. The Shalimar police team arrested two gangsters and recovered cash and weapons along with ammunition from their possession. The accused have been identified as Adnan and Talah Ejaz. Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway from them. DIG Operations Islamabad Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari has further directed all senior officials for effective crackdown against the accused involved in heinous crimes. "Safety and security of the citizens is our foremost priority and no laxity will be tolerated in this regard" he added.



ISLAMABAD: Former Member National Assembly, Hanif Abbasi calls on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Kashmiris diaspora should fully expose Indian rights abuses in IOJK: Sultan

ISLAMABAD (APP): AJK President Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry on Monday said the Kashmiri diaspora in the United Kingdom should play their due role in fully exposing India's fascist government's ugly face and the worst human rights violations being committed by its occupation forces in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu & Kashmir (IOJK).

Referring to the worsening political and human rights situation in

the IOJK, he said India had broken all records of barbarism and brutality in Kashmir.

The Azad Jammu & Kashmir (AJK) president was talking to Chaudhry Khadim Hussain, President of Kashmir Peace Forum International Midland, who called on him here at the Kashmir House.

He said that under the given circumstances, it was our shared responsibility to draw world attention towards the plight of our Kashmiri brethren

who he said were being humiliated, harassed, beaten and even killed day in and day out by India's so-called security forces. "It is our responsibility to expose Modi's malicious ambitions as well as his nefarious designs in the region", the president said. Barrister Sultan Mahmood Chaudhry on this occasion appreciated the efforts made by Kashmir Peace Forum International to highlight the Kashmir issue in the UK.

ANF recovers over 74 kg drugs; arrests five

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) recovered over 74 kg drugs while conducting seven operations across the country and arrested five accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He informed that ANF and ASF in an operation at Islamabad International Airport recovered over two kg Ice drug from the possession of a Qatar-bound passenger, resident of Swabi.

In another operation, 131 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from the possession of a Dubai-bound passenger, resident of Khyber Agency netted at Islamabad International Airport.

In third operation at Lahore International Airport, 30 heroin-filled capsules were recovered from the possession of a Bangkok-bound passenger, resident of Pakpattan.

The spokesman informed that ANF in an operation in Faisalabad managed to recover 4.8 kg opium and rounded up two accused, residents of Faisalabad.

ANF and FC in two different operations in Khyber recovered 43 kg charras.

He informed that ANF foiled a bid to smuggle drugs from Afghanistan to Balochistan and recovered 25 kg crystal heroin from Chaghi area.

Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigation are underway, he said.

IESCO issues power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Monday issued a power suspension programme for Tuesday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to the IESCO Spokesperson, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 07:00 AM to 11:00 AM, Islamabad Circle, I-11/3, Feeder Chakwal Circle, Basharat Feeder and surrounding areas.

Peace in country must for general poll: Kaira

ISLAMABAD (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister on Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Affairs, Qamar Zaman Kaira on Monday said it was necessary to have peace in the country to hold general elections as Imran Khan created chaos and uncertainty in the country.

Addressing a news conference, the PM's aide said there was a debate sparked in the assemblies, media and decision-making circles due to the postponement of provincial assembly elections in Punjab.

Kaira said there was an uncertain situation in the country which was at its peak.

The first goal during such situation was to make decisions with logic and reason.

At present, he said the problems faced by the country demanded the stakeholders to take decisions with patience, vision and tolerance. He regretted that on the contrary, everyone was trying to defeat his or her opponents either it was in the departments or media. The reality has gone obscure and people were left directionless, he said. The elections in the two provinces were postponed and a huge hue and cry was made on it and termed it a major constitutional violation by the Opposition.

Kaira said the coalition parties tried to stop Imran Khan from dissolving the assemblies of KP and Punjab but it failed.

"The powers whatsoever enshrined in the constitution are based on some logic and demands from the one who exercise to use it prudently," he added.

He claimed that the Punjab Assembly dissolved by the then CM Pervaiz Elahi was not carried out as per his own will rather on Imran Khan's whims.

That decision, he said was not based on Elahi's own free will, adding, "the election process involves security deployment, management of electoral staff, finances from the Ministry of finance which is a complete exercise," he said.

The ECP categorically stated that it was not able to provide mass level staff deployment to hold elections, he said.

He mentioned that national census was underway in the country and teams were in the field across the country.

The departments concerned informed that due to census staff was not available, he said adding, "The census is held after ten years but this time it is being held after seven years. It has been decided in CCI under then Prime Minister Imran Khan to hold census in a more transparent and fair manner. So that, new polls are to be held under the new census."

The ECP wrote a letter to the Prime Minister, apprising him on the fact that the departments concerned had denied aid to hold polls on April 30 due to the census and law and order situation in the country, he added.

The PM convened the cabinet meeting that endorsed the situation and the ECP in the light of those facts had delayed the elections, he said.

Abbasi says in favour of 'elections within 90 days'

ISLAMABAD (INP): The former prime minister (PM) and PML-N leader on Monday said that he in favour of 'elections within 90 days'.

In an interview with private TV news channel, the PML-N leader said that he still stands by his stance to hold elections within 90 days but it is ECP's responsibility. The constitution also asks the state institutions to assist the ECP in holding elections, he added.

The former prime minis-

ter Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said "Now the supreme court will see this matter as the ECP had said they cannot hold elections."

He further said that if any political party violates the constitution, the state takes action against it but he is not in favour of baseless allegations against political parties.

The PML-N leader Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that Nawaz Sharif is his leader, Maryam Nawaz is the party's chief organizer and Shehbaz Sharif is the

president of the party. He doesn't believe in two leaders in one party. He added that history will tell how Shehbaz Sharif became the Prime Minister.

He asked when Saqib Nisar was the chief justice, what he did in his tenure, can he question anything now? Shahid Khaqan Abbasi added that jailing political leaders, abuse and hatred is not part of politics and if politics cannot improve the quality of people's life then all politicians have failed.

PTDC hopeful for boom in tourism sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC) after taking numerous measures to promote tourism in Pakistan by projecting and marketing the country's history, culture, arts and tourism, was hoping to achieve a boom in the tourism sector.

After realizing the growth potential of the tourism sector in the country, the PTDC initiated devising policies, strategies and frameworks to attract tourists coming from various parts of the country and the world.

"Pakistan is rich with cultural heritage and potential for immense tourism due to its unmatched landscape, natural beauty, diverse culture, and cuisine," said a press release issued by PTDC on Monday.

"It is representing the country by organizing domestic and international events

and exhibitions for assisting tourists with the provision of transport and accommodation facilities within the country."

"The incumbent government has taken many initiatives to promote and revive the tourism industry to explore historical sites to yield desirable results in this sector."

"The Task Force on Tourism had already been formed to achieve milestones in the sector as it is contributing massively to the socioeconomic development of the country, it added.

"A large number of tourists including local and foreign dignitaries are visiting Pakistan due to its diverse tourist sites."

"Due to the attention of the PTDC with the financial support of the present government, it is utilizing all available resources to evolve policies to facilitate tourists, said a press release.

Commissioner visits free flour points to review arrangements

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Liaquat Ali Chatta here on Monday visited Double Road and Liaquat Bagh free flour distribution points and reviewed the arrangements made to facilitate the citizens.

Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi, Hasan Waqar Cheema and Additional Commissioner Coordination, Syed Nadarat Ali were present on the occa-

sion. The Commissioner reviewed the arrangements and monitored the national identity card scanning and record entry process at different counters set at free flour distribution points.

The Commissioner inquired from the citizens about the behaviour of the officials and the supply of flour. He expressed satisfaction on the arrangements made by the administration

and issued instructions to the officials concerned to provide guidance to all the citizens who visit the points to get free flour. The commissioner issued also instructions to the authorities concerned to increase the number of counters at all mega points, improve seating arrangements for the citizens, and ensure a transparent and dignified supply of flour to the people.

Pakistan should play leading role in establishing fund for climate victims

ISLAMABAD (APP): As thousands of flood victims are still struggling in Pakistan to rehabilitate their lives and livelihoods, international climate experts are set to meet in Egypt this week (27-29 March 2023) to deliberate operationalization of a Loss and Damage (L&D) Fund. If L&D fund had existed already and Pakistan had access to its finances, the 2022 flood victims would have been in a somewhat better situation.

This was mentioned in a press statement by Resilient Future International, an Islamabad-based research and training company. The agreement on a Loss and Damage Fund was the most important win for climate-vulnerable countries at the last climate change meeting, Conference of Parties - 27 (COP27) at Sharm El Sheikh, Egypt (Nov 6-Nov 18, 2022).

Loss and Damage refer to the permanent loss caused by climate change, including floods, heat waves, hurricanes, sea-level rise, drought and desertification. The L&D Fund aims to provide financial assistance to climate-vulnerable countries, such as Pakistan that faced USD30-40 billion losses due to the historic floods in 2022. A "Transitional Committee" was set up to deliberate the operationalization of the Loss and Damage Fund. The Committee is meeting this week in the historic city of Luxor in Egypt and will meet two more times this year before sharing its proposals at the next global climate meeting (COP28) scheduled in Dubai from 30th Nov to 12 Dec 2023. The Transitional Committee works with the support of the United Nations Framework Convention of Climate Change (UNFC-

CC). The Committee consists of 24 experts, including 14 from developing and 10 from developed countries.

Aftab Alam Khan CEO of Resilient Future International, believes that the COP27 agreement on an L&D fund was a big victory, the next big win would be creating a framework for the fund. "Another phase of struggle starts for climate-vulnerable countries with the inception of Transitional Committee meetings. The vulnerable countries should join the meetings with a clear strategy. Pakistan should play a leading role as it played in COP27 for the agreement on L&D Fund.

It is important that the Transitional Committee achieves the first thing first. It needs to prioritize creation of a framework for the L&D Fund over discussion on funding arrangements. The discussion on funding arrangement at this stage may distract the committee because once the Fund is created the arrangements would follow, anyway." Aftab Alam Khan noted that the Transitional Committee has only three meetings this year to deliberate on the L&D Fund before COP28. The climate-vulnerable countries should conduct smart negotiations. "Climate negotiations are arduous. There exist important questions around L&D funding arrangements but they should be treated secondary to the primary deliverable of a new Fund. For instance, a legitimate question is how to coordinate L&D funding with humanitarian assistance and other existing vehicles of climate finance. Nevertheless, developing countries should ensure that such questions are considered in a separate process and 2023 is focused on the core work of creating the framework of the new L&D fund."



ISLAMABAD: Mukhtar Ahmad, member registration chaired a meeting with the representatives of Private Educational Institutions (PEIs) in the committee room of ICT-PEIRA.

6 billion Afs allocated

KABUL (Agencies): 6 billion Afghanis have been allocated to strengthen the banks of the Amu Darya and the threat level has reached zero. The Director of Amu Darya in the northern zone, Mawlavii Abdul Hakeem Hikmat said that advanced procedures have been cast-off to reinforce the banks of the Amu Daryay and to prevent further damages. The IE is firm not to refrain from any effort to protect the prosperity of the people and the territorial integrity of the country.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Ramazan 06, 1444 — Tuesday, March 28, 2023

Food distributes in Takhar

TAKHAR (Agencies): The World Food Program (WFP) distributed food items to 7,893 needy families in Takhar province. Officials from the provincial rural rehabilitation and development department reported that the WFP provided food items in BanGi, ChaAl, and Dasht Qala districts of the province. The food package included flour, cooking oil, and other essential items, and will be distributed four more times to families in need in the region.

Afghans begging on streets to recieve aid

KABUL (TOLONews): The economic deputy prime minister, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, said that around 30,500 beggars will be provided with assistance during Ramadan.

Around 1,600 beggars were provided assistance in the first round. "Around 30,500 beggars are allocated for, and a committee has been formed for them. We will soon provide aid for them," Baradar said.

Baradar said that efforts are underway to minimize the number of people begging in the country.

Speaking at an aid distribution event for people

begging in Kabul, Deputy Prime Minister Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar urged non-government organizations and Afghan traders to help vulnerable people during Ramadan.

"We are striving for-and hoping to see-- no one begging. We feel ourselves to be responsible for nobody being forced to reach a hand out to beg," Baradar added.

"The Islamic Emirate is trying to help all people stand on their own feet and no one will be forced to beg from now on," said Abdul Mateen Rahimzai, head of the Kabul refugees department.

This comes as the people who gathered to receive assistance said they are in critical condition.

"I am in a critical condition. I passed the previous winter in a bad condition," said Baseera, a vulnerable person.

"I am a widow. I am now facing a bad economic condition; therefore, I want traders and aid organizations to provide assistance to poor Afghans," said Farzana, a vulnerable person.

More than 30,000 people who beg on the streets of Kabul will be provided with assistance, according to officials.

DAB revokes individual licenses

KABUL (Agencies): Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) has announced new regulations aimed at improving the management, transparency, and supervision of non-banking financial organizations, specifically money exchange and monetary services.

As part of these changes, DAB has revoked all individual licenses and provided company licenses to 876 money exchange services last year to standardize and increase transparency in their activities.

Da Afghanistan Bank issued corporate licenses to 876 money changers and money service providers in last year, according to the bank statements.

Based on the banking sector, includes non-banking financial institutions that include money changers, money service providers, electronic money, payment and small loan institutions, in charges for organization.

Poppy land eradicated in 4 provinces

KABUL (Agencies): The counter-narcotics police eradicated over 15 acres of land from poppy cultivation in four provinces of the country.

The counter-narcotics police have eradicated over 15 acres of land in the provinces of Laghman, Farah, Nuristan and Uruzgan said the Ministry of Interior in a statement.

The counter-narcotics police of Interior Ministry, discovered four drug factories with 50,000kgs of Yama in Ghor, burned 28,000kgs of yama in Herat, and arrested 11 people on charges of production and dealing drugs from these provinces, said the Ministry.

Doctors perform surgery

KABUL (Agencies): Brigadier General Dr. Abdul Wali Ahmadzai and a team of specialists at the Kabul military hospital have successfully operated on a man from Helmand who was born with a club foot.

The medical team from the orthopedic department of the Sardar Mohammad Dawood Khan Hospital in Kabul, said the patient, Abdul Ahmad, never received corrective surgery on his right foot as a child.

"He had not seen a doctor, he was in a defective condition," a statement issued by the hospital read.

Now, however, Ahmad's foot has been realigned and he is expected to make a full recovery.

Another success story was Sara, a 13-year-old girl, who had been struggling with a severe limb deformity and had been unable to walk. After successful surgery, she can now walk, doctors said.

The team of specialists has made enormous progress in recent months in treating patients - often performing life-changing surgery.

With the appointment of qualified staff and ensuring standards are maintained, treatment being offered is helping to prevent patients from having to travel to neighboring countries for medical treatment.

Famous Afghan historian buried in Kabul

KABUL (TOLONews): Ghulam Mohammad Mohammadi, a famous Afghan historian, died of cancer at age 69 in Kabul. He was buried in Kabul on Sunday.

Mohammadi wrote 31 works, some of which remain unpublished. "He was pious. He lived in poverty but with honor," said Abdul Mubin, a relative of Mohammadi.

"The work that Mr. Mohammadi left is good work and is in archives in neighboring countries and even European countries," said Ezatullah Nazari, a relative of Mohammadi.

Some historians described Mohammadi as a critical writer and urged the caretaker government to publish his works.

"Lecturer Mohammadi was one of the figures who would oppose other works and try to investigate and then write new (historical) work," said Farzad Majeed Por, a researcher.

Mohammadi was born in 1333 (solar year) in Anaba district of Panjshir. He was wounded in the civil war.

Mohammadi spent most of his life as a teacher and researcher.

2 killed, 12 hurt in blast near Foreign Ministry



KABUL (Khaama Press): A blast occurred near a checkpoint on the road leading to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in downtown Kabul on Monday afternoon, sources describing it as a heavy explosion.

According to the sources, the blast happened when the Ministry of foreign affairs employees left their offices, saying it was a suicide bombing.

Meanwhile, according to the Emergency NGO in Kabul, 12 wounded, including a child, were brought to the hospital after the blast near the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Two other victims are already dead. Taliban authorities have not commented yet.

Several ambulances reached to the area to transfer the injured people to Wazir Akbar Khan hospital.

A similar explosion occurred in January, which killed several employees of the Ministry and wounded several others.

Recently, the Taliban security forces have increased their operations against Daesh or IS-K militants nationwide, killing several top leaders and arresting several others.

A recent raid by the Taliban in Mazar-e-Sharif killed three top leaders of the Islamic State, including Ziauddin, the acting governor of Islamic State-Khorasan, including two others.

Another suicide blast kills 6:

According to Kabul police authorities, a suicide bomber was shot down before reaching its target near the security Checkpoint at Malik Asghar intersection of the second security zone of Kabul.

While targeting the attacker, the suicide bombing exploded as a result, six civilians were killed, and several others were injured, including three Taliban forces, said Kabul police officials.

This came after the blast occurred in front of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Kabul on Monday this afternoon, killing two and injuring 12 employees.

The suicide bombing in the capital city of Kabul exactly came after British General Michael Kurilla said that the Islamic State (Daesh) had a more significant presence in Afghanistan than the previous year, and he claimed that the group would be able to strike American interests in Europe and Asia within six months.

The Taliban authorities have rejected the claims and said it is an exaggeration. However, the British Foreign Ministry recently released a statement advising citizens to avoid visiting Afghanistan at any cost.

"There is an ongoing and high threat of terrorist attacks throughout Afghanistan, including around the airport. There is a heightened threat of terrorist attacks in or around religious sites and during religious festivals, such as Ramadan.

Travel throughout Afghanistan is extremely dangerous, and border crossings may not be open," the statement said.

Since the Taliban took control of the country, the IS group has strengthened and claimed responsibility for several deadly attacks.

UN urged to remove sanctions on members



KABUL (Khaama Press): Taliban authorities have once again asked the United Nations to remove the names of the group's members from the UN blacklist, adding the international community should engage with the group instead of putting pressure.

The UN Security Council failed to reach an agreement to extend the travel exemptions, allowing 13 Taliban officials to travel abroad, which expired in August 2021. "Some 20 to 25 Islamic Emirate officials are on the UN blacklist and have been sanctioned. Some of them have died, and few are working with the caretaker government," Zabihullah Mujahid, Taliban senior spokesperson said.

According to Mujahid, adding pressure and force will not bear results. The

war of the past 20 years has proven that the people of Afghanistan will not surrender to pressure. Instead, engagement and negotiations are ideal options to reach a comprehensive conclusion, he added.

Moreover, including of the Islamic Emirate officials on the UN blacklist violates the Doha Agreement, according to Mujahid.

The Doha Agreement is a peace deal between the US and the Taliban aimed at restoring peace in Afghanistan. The agreement was signed in Doha in 2020, finalizing the US withdrawal from Afghanistan contingent on Taliban security assurance that Afghan soil will not be used against US by Al-Qaeda and other terrorist groups.

One of the drawbacks of the Doha Agreement was the exclusion of the Afghan

government, which granted the Taliban the legitimacy to negotiate with the US on international stages in the absence of Afghan authorities, according to some Afghan politicians and experts.

In the comprehensive Doha Agreement, it was also stated that human rights, the rights of women, ethnic groups, and religious minorities should be respected, which has not been fulfilled as of now by the de facto authorities of Afghanistan.

The deteriorating humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, and the continuous violation of the rights of women and girls to education, work, and public life are the primary reason for the sanctions on the Taliban, according to a political analyst, Torek Farhadi.

IE pledges to invest in major uplift projects

KABUL (TOLONews): The current Afghan government said there are plans for mining and water management projects, as well as projects in other areas, to be launched this year.

The deputy spokesperson of the Islamic Emirate, Bilal Karimi, emphasized that the current government supports domestic and foreign investors and is providing opportunities for them.

"The Islamic Emirate will focus attention on the projects that are very crucial for the country's infrastructure, for example, the management of water, in mining... as well as in the health and education sector,

and other sectors where there is a need," Karimi noted. Economists say development efforts in the country are currently weak and poverty and unemployment have not decreased in Afghanistan.

"The investments made are insufficient, and the results show that even half-completed development projects were not completed. And because the World Bank and foreign nations did not support them, the initiatives that were scheduled to begin did not," said Sayed Masoud, an economist.

Some residents of Kabul asked the Islamic Emirate to do more to eradicate

poverty in the country.

"We will be happy if some help is given to us. We are poor people. I am the sole breadwinner of a family of seven members," said Mohammadullah, a resident of Kabul.

"We want this government to be recognized, and we also want to see a reduction in the level of poverty and despair among the people. We ask our government to bring peace to our nation," said Sayed Ahmad, another resident of Kabul.

According to data provided by the UN, more than 700,000 people have lost their employment in Afghanistan during the past 1.5 years.

Needy families received cash aid in Jawzjan



JAWZJAN (Agencies): Cash was distributed to 1,120 needy and families who suffered natural incidents in Darzab Jawzjan district.

The provincial head of Refugees and Repatriation

Department of Jawzjan, Amanullah Talha said that each families received 320 to 340 dollars from the office of the organization in cooperation with the Women's Office for Afghan women for provid-

ing shelters.

Meanwhile, non-food items were distributed to 125 families in Bamyan, including a package of winter children's kit, a package of kitchen tools, sanitary and a carton of soap.

IEA Refugee Minister urge Iran to abide by immigration agreement

KABUL (Agencies): The acting minister of refugee and repatriation affairs during a meeting with the ambassador of Iran said that his country should follow the immigration agreement signed between the two neighbors.

The Ministry of Refugee and Repatriation Affairs in a statement said, that Acting Refugee and Repatriation Affairs Khalil Al Rahman Haqqani met Iranian Ambassador Hassan Khazimi Qumi and discussed Afghan refugees problems in Iran.

During the meeting, Mr. Haqqani said that Iran should not mistreat Afghan



refugees and respond to their problems as well as send across the corpses of

those died in various incidents in Iran. He also urged Iranian government to fol-

low the immigration agreement signed between the two countries.

Japan contributes \$21 million for life-saving vaccines in Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Embassy of Japan in Afghanistan on Monday announced that Japan has contributed US\$ 21 million for live life-saving vaccines for mothers and children, and water and sanitation in schools.

With this funding, UNICEF will provide clean water for 30,000 people in four provinces, and vaccines for 18.3 million mothers and children across Afghanistan.

Amid the devastating humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan, the government of Japan has donated to UNICEF US\$ 18 million in support of essential

vaccines for over 18 million mothers and children, and US\$ 3.6 million for water and sanitation facilities in public schools.

The vaccines include measles, rotavirus, tetanus and diphtheria, polio, hepatitis B and others. These funds will also enable UNICEF to reach around 10 million children with oral polio vaccines during national vaccination campaigns in 2023.

"This support from the Japanese government will not only help to give mothers and children the immunity boost they need to stay healthy, but it will also improve sanitation

and hygiene in schools," said Rushnan Murtaza, UNICEF Afghanistan Deputy Representative.

"Complementing our past support to Afghanistan in health, nutrition and education, we hope these contributions will create cleaner, safer learning environments and communities for children and their families," says Takashi Okada, Ambassador of Japan to Afghanistan.

Water and sanitation projects will be implemented in Ghor, Uruzgan, Zabul and Pakitika which are among the most deprived provinces in

Afghanistan, according to UNICEF officials.

Since the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021, the government of Japan has generously contributed towards improving the living conditions of women and children, who have been the most vulnerable segments of society under the Taliban regime.

As a friendly partner, Japan has always stood with the people of Afghanistan, and supported programs in areas including education, nutrition, health, sanitation and more over the past two decades.

Khalilzad says death of Daesh leaders would be a 'significant blow' to group

KABUL (Agencies): Washington's former special envoy for Afghanistan Zalmay Khalilzad said on Monday that if the Islamic Emirate's claims of having killed three senior Daesh members was confirmed this would be a "significant blow to IS-K in Northern Afghanistan."

Khalilzad tweeted that the IEA had committed in the Doha Agreement to fight Daesh and that the "removal of these ISIS leaders indicates that it is

doing so."

"The US and Taliban should increase engagement to complete implementation of the Doha Agreement which serves Afghan and US interests," he said.

This comes after the IEA announced on Sunday that three "key members" of Daesh had been killed in an operation in Balkh province.

According to the IEA, Mawlawi Ziauddin, the second highest ranked person

in Daesh in the country; Abu Omar Afridi, a member of the Khorasan branch council; and Ustad Salman Tajikistani, one of the officials of Daesh military training unit, were killed.

Ziauddin had reportedly been the "Governor of Daesh for Khorasan" and "in charge of administrative and judicial affairs."

The IEA said Ustad Salman was a citizen of Tajikistan and a specialist in military training and making explosives.



ISLAMABAD: Security personnel using bullet proof shields to protect PTI chief Imran Khan during his hearing at High Court.

PPP sweeps Sindh LB by-elections

KARACHI (PPI): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) on Monday topped the chart in Sindh local bodies by-elections, bagging 39 seats out of 59 seats, unofficial and unconfirmed results suggested.

The Grand Democratic Alliance (GDA) secured six seats in the elections, PTI grabbed two seats, while JUI and MQM Pakistan bagged one seat each. Nine independent candidates also won seats. Polling time for local government (LG) by-elections elapsed in 15 districts of Sindh at 5pm on Sunday. Violence was reported at some polling stations in different districts. Activists of PTI and PPP clashed at a polling station in Hyderabad.

In Nawab Shah's UC8, PPP's Qazi Rasheed Bhatti was ahead of MQM's Yaqoob Arain, who's at the second spot, and the candidates of the PTI and the TLP. PPP's Ali Ahmad and Ghulam Mustafa were elected chairman and vice chairman respectively in Old Nawab Shah. UC Somar Jamali also witnessed PPP's Qurban Ali Arain and Ali Ahmad Burohi leading the table. PPP's Azam Jagirani topped the chart in Sukkur's union committee Panhwari ward 1, while PPP's Jeevan Khan and Abdul Wahab succeeded at district councilor and general councilor's seats respectively. In Jacobabad's UC23 Kot Jangu, the independent candidate for chairman Zafar Khoso won, while independent candidate Abdul Muttalib Khoso secured the vice chairman's seat leaving PPP's candidates behind.

Badin's UC 49 saw PPP's Pagahro Ghulam Rasool bagging the district councilor's seat leaving GDA's Mir Hassan in the second spot. Larkana's Dokri Town committee ward 2 also witnessed PPP's Basheer Thaheem taking a lead on GDA's Habibullah Khokhar and PTI's Imam ud din Jalbani. In UC Shehddad Kot, PPP and JUI bagged two seats each while four others were secured by candidates backed by the PPP.

UC Bagodro also saw the victories of PPP backed independent candidates chairman, vice chairman, member district council, two general councilor seats while remaining two general council seats were bagged by the JUI. PPP's candidate for district councilor of the UC28 of Kandhkot Mir Ahmad Raza staged a win over JUI's Raees Zafar Bheo while PPP's Kashif Ali Bheo managed to win on chairman slot, and PPP's Muhammad Salah has won as general councilor.

The polling was held for multiple seats including seats for Chairman, Vice Chairman, Member District Council, and General Members. A total of 109,687 registered voters were expected to cast their votes, with 59,310 male and 50,377 female voters in 15 districts. The repolling took place in Jacobabad, Kashmore, Shikarpur, Larkana, Qamber Shahdadkot, Sukkur, Khairpur, Shaheed Benazirabad, Sanghar, Mirpurkhas, Umarkot, Tharparkar, Hyderabad, Jamshoro, and Badin from 8am to 5pm.

The local government polls were conducted with the help of 15 district returning officers, 26 returning officers, and 52 assistant returning officers. A total of 81 polling stations were set up across the districts, including separate stations for men and women as well as combined stations. The upcoming local government polls in 15 districts of Sindh had a total of 275 polling booths. Among these booths, 140 were exclusively designated for male voters, 135 for female voters, while the remaining 275 booths were combined and open to both genders. The electoral watchdog took necessary steps to ensure fair and transparent elections by conducting the revote in response to allegations of misconduct during the previous local government elections held in 15 districts of Sindh. The move aimed at addressing the concerns and allegations of irregularities in the previous elections.

Muqam calls on KP CM

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Prime Minister on Political and Public Affairs, Engr. Amir Muqam on Monday called on Caretaker Chief Minister

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan. They discussed law and order and distribution of free flour among people in the province.

The Chief Minister assured that the caretaker government will utilize all available resources for the welfare of people in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Meanwhile, Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan has directed the concerned authorities to improve the mechanism of provision of free flour to the deserving and needy people in the province.

In a statement issued in Peshawar on Monday, he asked the District Administration officials to ensure their presence on ground during distribution of free flour across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Muhammad Azam Khan stressed the need for proper monitoring of the process of free flour distribution so that the needy and poor families can get the flour. The Chief Minister also directed for appropriate and effective planning to avoid any untoward incident.

PTI's Hassaan booked

KARACHI (PPI): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Hassaan Niazi and his accomplices have been booked in a separate case in Karachi for inciting people to revolt against national institutions, according to a report Monday.

The case has been registered on the complaint of a citizen named Muhammad Iqbal in the Jamshaid Quarters police station. According to the text of the FIR, Hassaan Niazi was involved in inciting people to revolt against national institutions and attempted to provoke disharmony in a video on social media. The statement has created anger and distress among the masses, the FIR further said. It has been learnt that a team of Karachi East police will leave for Lahore and Islamabad to arrest Hasaan Niazi in the case.

On Sunday, a district and sessions court in Quetta handed over Barrister Hassaan Niazi, the nephew of former prime minister Imran Khan, to Punjab police on one-day transit remand.

Judicial Magistrate Kaleemullah approved one-day transit remand of PTI leader Hassan Niazi. Sources told ARY News that a delegation of Lahore police were present in Quetta for the custody of Hassaan Niazi.

Zubair Niazi's interim bail extended till April 4: While seeking a report from the JIT at next hearing, an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Lahore Monday extended the interim bail of PTI leader Zubair Khan Niazi till April 4 next in the case of vandalism during the party's 'jail bharo' movement.

Zubair Niazi appeared before the court and got his attendance marked. "This case is being investigated along with other cases by the JIT. The investigation report will now be submitted by the JIT," the prosecutor told the court.

Non-allotment of quarter to washerwoman President censures CDA's discriminatory act

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has expressed displeasure over the Capital Development Authority (CDA)'s discriminatory and misogynist act of non-allotment of a residential quarter to a woman employee. The CDA had taken the plea that quarters could only be allotted to adult male working dhoobis (washer men) as per past practice.

President Alvi said that CDA had discriminated against the female employee, and upheld Wafaqi Mohtasib's orders directing CDA to allot the quarter to the female employee. While rejecting CDA's representation against the orders of the Wafaqi Mohtasib, the President said that the most unfortunate part of the CDA's defence was that allotment could only be made to a male and could not be made to a female for the same services.

"This is highly discriminatory, CDA is directed to improve its rules that are ensuring such misogynist practices and send the report to Wafaqi Mohtasib of the same in 60

days," he said. The president underscored that Pakistan could not progress if its female equal members of the society were discriminated against in such a manner. He said that it was against the spirit of the founders of Pakistan, the fair practices of Islam, and also the Constitution.

He directed CDA to comply with Wafaqi Mohtasib's orders and redress the grievance of the complainant and, if so required, and seek the approval of the competent authority/forum without further loss of time. Shahnaz Begum (the complainant) had alleged that her late husband was an ex-washer man attached with CDA, and he had applied for allotment of a Dhoobi quarter.

She joined CDA as a washerwoman, after the death of her husband, and made a request for the allotment of a quarter, but CDA issued the same to another employee who was junior to her in the seniority list. Feeling aggrieved, she approached Wafaqi Mohtasib who passed the order that maladministra-

tion on the part of CDA was evident as it had discriminated against the complainant and was recommended to issue allotment orders for the quarter in question to the complainant and submit a compliance report within 30 days.

The CDA filed a representation against the orders of the Wafaqi Mohtasib and contended that from the beginning, the accommodation had been allotted to CDA's male employees (washermen) and it had never been allotted to any female (washerwoman). The CDA further argued that Dhoobi had been defined as an adult male working Dhoobi and the relatives of Dhoobi meant adult blood relations viz. father, brother, and son.

After perusal of the record and hearing the parties, it was observed that CDA had already issued allotment of another quarter to a female washerwoman in the year 2000. The president, therefore, rejected CDA's representation and upheld Wafaqi Mohtasib's orders to issue the allotment letters of the quarter in question to the female Dhoobi.

BRT, BTAP, Malam Jabba cases being reopened

PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Minister for Transport, Shahid Khan Khattak has said that Bus Rapid Project (BRT), Billion Trees Afforestation Project (BTAP), Malam Jabba and other cases were being reopened.

He hinted that caretaker Chief Minister KP would soon write a letter to the relevant investigation agencies to probe alleged corruption in the pavement of banks of river Kabul in Nowshera and small dams in the province.

Addressing an open

chachary held at the office of the deputy commissioner Nowshera Kabir Afridi and later talking to media after distributing free flour among people, the minister claimed that PTI government has ruined the economy during its nearly 10 years rule that resulted an increase in inflation and price-hike in the country especially Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He claimed that there were still PTI's remnants in bureaucracy, which were creating hurdle in the way

of the provincial government. He said politics on free flour should be avoided and all poor households should be given free flour bags in a dignified manner. The Minister said the former PTI government has recruited about 5,000 media influencers for its personal projection and paid salaries through taxpayers' money while sitting in homes. He said that time would be required to clear the mess created by the PTI's incompetent rulers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Pakistan flays Israeli raid on Al-Aqsa mosque

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan on Monday strongly condemned a raid by the Israeli forces on Al Aqsa Mosque on the third day of holy month of Ramadan, expelling the worshippers and violating the sanctity of the Mosque – one of the holiest sites of Muslims.

Pakistan called upon the international community to take urgent action to put an end to the Israeli transgressions that have been particularly ascendant since the beginning of this year, Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release. The indiscriminate use of force by Israeli occupation forces against defenseless Palestinians defied all humanitarian and human rights norms and laws.

Such reprehensible attacks on Al-Aqsa Mosque by Israeli occupation forces, during the holy month of Ramadan, have become a regular feature in recent years. By carrying out the illegal raids, the spokesperson said, Israel backed out on its own recent commitment to respect the sanctity of

Ramadan, it was added.

"These acts not only constitute grave violation of fundamental right to freedom of religion or belief of the Palestinian people but also an affront to the religious sentiments of over 1.5 billion Muslims around the world," the spokesperson said Pakistan reaffirmed its unstinted support for the Palestinian people and the Palestinian cause, and renewed its call for a viable, independent and contiguous Palestinian State, with pre-1967 borders, and Al-Quds Al-Sharif as its capital being the only just, comprehensive and lasting solution of the Palestinian question, in accordance with the relevant United Nations and Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) resolutions.

Meanwhile, Pakistan also strongly condemned yet another "abhorrent" act of desecration of the Holy Quran in Denmark, calling it the manifestation of growing hatred and Islamophobia. "The recurrence of such wilful and vile acts is a troubling manifestation of growing

hatred, racism and phobia against Muslims and their faith," Foreign Office spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said in a statement.

She said the repeated occurrence of such premeditated acts calls into question the efficacy of legal framework behind which Islamophobes hide and incite hatred with impunity. She said the exercise of the right to freedom of expression could not be used as a smokescreen to deliberately denigrate the Holy Scriptures or personalities of any religion.

The spokesperson called on all states to develop legal deterrence with a view to preventing and prosecuting such acts, in line with the responsibilities and duties enshrined in international human rights law. "We also call upon the international human rights machinery to speak out against such intentional actions that constitute incitement to hate, discrimination and violence against Muslims solely because of their faith," the spokesperson remarked.

PTI to launch report on HRs violations against party

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) is all set to launch a report today (Tuesday) which summarises all the human rights violations against PTI from May 25 till now". While talking to a country leading Newspaper, PTI central leader Fawad Chaudhry said the party is launching a report on Tuesday (today) which summarises "all the human rights violations against PTI from May 25 till now".

He alleged that the government in Pakistan is involved in crimes and custodial torture for political reasons". When pressed on the allegations of a political witch-hunt led by PTI when Mr Khan was in power, Mr Chaudhry said: "This is a false parallel, it's rubbish. There is a difference between what happened then and now.

As members of the embattled Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf face a slew of cases, late-night arrests and even alleged enforced disappearances, representatives of the party in the United Kingdom and Europe have sprung into action by staging protests, writing to MPs and speaking with human rights organisations to inform

them about the crackdown against the party at the hands of the PDM government. PTI's focal person for UK and Europe Sahibzada 'Chico' Jahangir said the party doesn't want anything from the international community, but it is certainly calling upon the Pakistan government to hold free and fair elections.

"The European countries specially are very pro-democracy and pro-human rights," the source said, adding that though "it is obvious no intervention is expected, they are keen to know our point of view regarding what's going on". Separately, PTI member and former National Assembly speaker Asad Qaiser approached the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), a global organisation of national parliaments, about the "political victimisation, assassination attempts and attacks on PTI".

Mr Qaiser wrote a letter to the IPU, which has 179 members, in which he criticised the PDM government as being "fascist" and accused it of "illegal policies and severe violations" of human rights. Mr Qaiser hoped the forum would take notice of the situation and play its role

in protecting the people of Pakistan. In the last week, large PTI protests have been held in London outside Parliament House and 10 Downing Street, as well as a sizeable demonstration in Brussels outside the European Parliament. At each of these protests, chants in favour of Imran Khan and against PML-N leader Nawaz Sharif were heard.

Police fail to arrest Gandapur

D I KHAN (PPI): Police on Monday raided the house of Ali Amin Gandapur in Dera Ismail Khan but failed to arrest him as the PTI leader was out of the city.

The police are conducting raids for the arrest of Gandapur. They reached his house today but the PTI leader was not at home as he was reported to have gone out of city. Last night, police raided Gandapur's residence in the vicinity of Cantt police station but the former minister fled using the rear door of his house before the arrival of the law personnel.

Anti-state propaganda: PTI's worker sent to jail

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Judicial Magistrate Peshawar Muhammad Shoaib has sent social media activist on14 days judicial remand to jail for evoking propaganda against state's institutions, on Monday.

According to prosecution, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) worker Azhar Ali has evoked propaganda against state while a First Information Report was filed in this regard at Khazana police station.

Police has arrested PTI worker Azhar Ali last day from the premises of Khazana station while Judicial Magistrate Peshawar has sent the social media activist to jail on 14 days judicial remand after conclusion of arguments.

Meanwhile, Additional District and Session Judge Bakht Alam has granted interim bail to PTI's social media activist Ikram Khatana and adjourned further hearing till 4th April while ordered police to submit record in this regard.

The complainant has registered case by stating that Ikram Khatana running propaganda against Army's officers as well as evoking disparaging narrative against state's institutions to sharpen the bridge. The derogatory propaganda has hurt sentiments of thousands of Pakistanis including complainant.

Following conclusion of initial arguments stopped police from arresting PTI worker Ikram Khatana and ordered to produced record before court while adjourned further hearing till 4th April 2023.

PEMRA bans coverage of rallies in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) on Monday banned live and recorded coverage of rallies, and public gatherings in Islamabad ahead of former prime minister Imran Khan's court appearance in the federal capital.

According to details, PEMRA has issued a notification, stating that the ban has been extended to cover public meetings and rallies in the Islamabad area for March 27? The notification said that the license of satellite TV channels would be revoked for violating the instructions.

The Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority further said the live broadcast of violent mobs and attacks on law enforcement agencies, spread chaos and panic. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan departed for Islamabad to appear before an Islamabad court today to seek interim bail in five cases related to vandalism in the judicial complex.

The decision was made during a meeting presided over by Imran Khan himself, where he discussed the matter with party leadership and legal team.