

Hassaan Niazi granted bail

QUETTA (INP): Hassaan Niazi, nephew of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan, was granted bail on Saturday on submitting Rs300,000 worth of surety bonds by a court in Quetta. The Judicial Magistrate 3 granted bail to Hassaan Niazi who had arrived in the Balochistan provincial capital on Saturday with Quetta police on one-day transit remand.

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SARGODHA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif visits free flour distribution points, established as part of Prime Minister's Ramazan relief package for deserving families.

Political victimisation, attacks

PTI writes to global forums

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) on Saturday approached Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and other international forums, seeking support against the 'political victimisation, assassination attempts and attacks on party.'

Former National Assembly Speaker Asad Qaiser penned down letters to Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) and other international forums to inform the world about the "severe violations of human rights" by the incumbent government.

"As a former speaker of the National Assembly, I am compelled to reach out and inform you of the alarmingly violent situation in Pakistan, severe and grave violations of human rights including, abduction, assassination attempts, custodial torture, enforced disappearances, inhuman treatment and murder or eminent journalists and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) political workers, leaders, former and current Members of Parliament, including [the] former prime minister of Pakistan Imran Ahmed Niazi by the present PDM government in Pakistan in connivance with the law enforcement agencies," he wrote.

In the letter, Asad Qaiser noted that after heavy political horse trading in "peculiar" political circumstances, the party resigned from the Parliament to get a fresh mandate from the people of Pakistan. He claimed that despite being in an 'oppressed opposition', the PTI have won 30 out of 37 by-elections with more than a 50 percent margin against twelve political parties.

"The current government in collaboration with two caretaker governments in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces, have committed such heinous crimes to suppress political dissent by the PTI and have adopted such ignominious

methods, that the basic tenets of decency, humanity and all international covenants on human rights are hanging by a tether," he wrote. He further said that the 'fake criminal complaint' was filed against Imran Khan to force his way out of politics. "This was followed by a coordinated assassination attempt on the life of Khan, wherein he sustained multiple bullet wounds and fractures along with 11 others that were injured and one passerby murdered," he added.

"Till date, he has not been allowed to exercise his constitutionally mandated right to induct the suspects involved and file a case against the accused persons in the attempted assassination of a former prime minister," he mentioned. The letter noted that as of today, 127 "fake and baseless" cases have been filed against the PTI chief; Khan's residence and family has been attacked more than once and arrested without cause; PTI chief's supporters are harassed and beaten daily on one pretext or another; Famous investigative journalist Arshad Sharif was murdered during an investigation into "official corruption" by those in power.

Qaiser added that the superior judiciary of Pakistan was under severe attack by the PDM government, which has released a series of "fake audio/videos" in an attempt to blackmail them. "The current Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has gone so far as to term to the party workers' militants for resisting violence and his niece, Maryam Nawaz, a party leader has made genocidal statements about the ethnicity of mainstream political workers," he added. The former NA speaker urged the global forums to take urgent notice of the situation and "play your role in protecting the people of Pakistan from the monster of political genocide, the annihilation of democracy and mayhem".

PTI chief playing with integrity of country: Memon

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Provincial Minister for Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon has said that PTI chief and it's accomplices were playing with integrity of Pakistan and every possible effort was being made to weaken the country. He said that late Dr. Israr Ahmed and late Abdul Sattar Edhi who known as neutral personalities had revealed the true face of Imran Khan long before he became the Prime Minister.

He said that Dr. Israr Ahmed had clearly predicted Imran Khan is following the agenda of Israel and Jews. While Abdul Sattar Edhi had pointed out the conspiracies of Imran Khan, how he had came to meet him along with Hameed Gul to overthrow the government of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto. The minister expressed these views while addressing the press conference in the Sindh Assembly Committee Room on Saturday. During the press conference, the Provincial Information Minister also played video clips of Dr. Israr Ahmed, Abdul Sattar and, late Arshad Shareef about the PTI chief. He said that President Arif Alvi had taken illegal and unconstitutional actions on number of occasions, he should be

impeached, but for that, numbers are needed in the assembly.

He said that why President Arif Alvi had remained silent and didn't written letters when PTI had taken illegal and unconstitutional actions. He said that president's own son is heading the social media cell and is at the forefront of campaigning against the state institutions. Why he has kept mum on that.

He said that president's own son is heading the social media cell and is at the forefront of campaigning against the state institutions though president is the head of armed forces. He said that the President had dissolved the National Assembly on the unconstitutional ruling of the then Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly. Minister further reminded that innocent people were killed in sahiwal tragedy by the Punjab police and accused were acquitted due to lack of evidence. Full protection had been provided to CTD Punjab officials. 'Who was the Prime Minister and Chief Minister of Punjab at that time, why was the President's eyes closed at that time, why didn't talk about human right,' the minister said. The minister demanded that a high-level commission should be formed to probe who is supporting Imran Khan in his

mission against the country.

"The commission should also probe those unconstitutional and illegal steps taken by PTI Chief and accomplices taken in power," the minister said. He said that Imran Khan is not making a heinous conspiracies against any person or any political party but he has waged war against the country. He urged the nation to be united for the security and stability of this country and to foil the nefarious designs of this gang. He said that insiders are being used in external conspiracies. Imran Khan is working on the agenda of Jewish lobby under a bigger game.

It should be investigated thoroughly. He said that late Arshad Sharif had also raised questions on Imran Khan's foreign funding in his program and revealed the facts of the funding PTI received from India and Israel. He said that all these things are closely interlinked. He said that they strongly condemns the statements of Zalmay Khalilzad and others and consider it interference in the affairs of Pakistan.

He said that the cat is out of the bag and foreign forces are openly supporting Imran Khan. Responding to a question, the minister said that Imran Khan had been badly exposed in front of the public.

Imran should tell nation about 'destruction': Marriyum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb, on Saturday taking a dig at Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan, said he should tell the participants of the rally at Minar-e-Pakistan tonight about his "forbidden foreign funding, Toshakhana gifts theft and Tyrian White".

Using her twitter handle, the minister said Imran should tell the nation about his four years of misrule which plunged the country into unprecedented inflation, unemployment and destruction. The minister said that a person who looted the country and pushed it into the mire of destruction and division, cannot salvage it as "he is only a fraud and a terrorist".

She said the "real freedom" narrative which started from the [taunts] of neutral animals, the indefinite extension offer to the then Army Chief General (Retd) Bajwa came all the way came to implicate Shehbaz Sharif and Mohsin Naqvi's role in his [Imran] ouster, and finally concluded at seeking pardons from the United States. She said the narrative of real freedom "has been buried and its funeral will be held tonight". The time has come for the nation to get real freedom from the "instigator terrorist", she maintained.

Imran secures bail in three cases

LAHORE (Agencies): An anti-terrorism court approved the interim bail of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan in three terrorism cases filed against him on Saturday. The former prime minister appeared before the court to secure bail in three cases including the Zille Shah murder case, arson, and interference in state affairs.

These cases were registered against the PTI chief at the Race Course police station under anti-terror, aiding and abetting provisions. The former prime minister, who reached the court, wrote in his petition seeking interim bail that he wants to be involved in the investigation but there is a fear of arrest by the police. During the hearing, the court directed the former PM to be a part of the investigation and not be absent on any hearing date.

The ATC granted Khan bail in three cases till April 4 in return for surety bonds of Rs100,000 in each case. Speaking to media persons outside the court, Khan said that he will announce the next action plan during today's gathering. "They have turned this country into occupied Kashmir by placing containers everywhere but the nation will break all barriers and reach the jalsa today," he added.

The Frontier Post

Man kills 7 of family

PAKPATTAN (INP): In a gruesome incident, a man killed his mother, brothers, sister-in-law and three children over a property dispute in Punjab's Pakpattan district on Saturday. The incident occurred at Bari Rakh village of Pakpattan where the suspect, aided by his friends, forcibly entry into his brother's house at the time of Sehar and killed his mother and other close relatives.

PM directs officials to ensure free flour for needy persons

F.P. Report

LAHORE / SARGODHA: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Saturday said provision of free flour to the needy should be ensured with the aim to lessen difficulties of people in the month of Ramazan.

He was chairing a review meeting here for the provision of free flour to the people of Islamabad capital territory. He said the government was taking all possible measures to reduce the difficulties of poor people in Ramazan. "After my visits to Lahore, Kasur and Sargodha, I will visit other cities to oversee the process for supply of free flour and to ensure quality."

The PM instructed that those eligible persons who were not registered with the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and could not get free flour, should be immediately registered. He directed that counters of National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and BISP should be immediately opened at the flour distribution points. He further directed that any needy person who comes to the free flour distribution center, should be given flour and in this regard all relevant departments should take steps.

The meeting was told that the provision of free flour was continuing in Punjab, Khyer Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad and a large number of fam-

ilies were benefitting from the scheme. It was told that the number of free flour distribution centers were being increased in Islamabad to facilitate people coming to obtain flour. Federal Ministers Rana Sanaulah, Marriyum Aurangzeb, Advisor to PM Ahad Cheema, former members of National Assembly Tariq Fazal Chaudhry, Anjum Aqeel and officers concerned attended the meeting.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday visited three centers established here to distribute free flour bags among the deserving people and reviewed the distribution process.

During the course of his visit, the prime minister interacted with the people, inquired about their issues and also issued directives for their immediate resolution. The prime minister participated in the distribution process and handed over bags to the people standing in queues, besides he also checked all the facilities and the quality of flour.

On the occasion, he directed the relevant authorities to take prompt steps for further facilitation of the deserving and poor people. Talking to media, the prime minister said that he had visited three centers set up in Sargodha where free atta bags were being distributed in an organized manner. The prime minister said that for the first time in the country's 75 years history, each poor family was

getting three flour bags free of cost.

He said that the government, relevant authorities and administration had been working to provide relief to the people. The prime minister appreciated the provincial and district administration and informed that he would be chairing a meeting today to review the steps for further facilitation of the process. He also urged the people to provide proper information. After receiving complaints about mismanagement over flour distribution process, the prime minister had started visiting different cities including Lahore and Kasur.

Shehbaz calls for collective efforts to save planet earth: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that saving the planet earth from the ill-effects of climate change was a collective endeavour in which everyone mattered.

On his Twitter handle, the prime minister reiterated that Pakistan joined the global community today in observing 'Earth Hour' and demonstrating its commitment to the fulfilment of its obligations to climate change actions. 'The Earth Hour is being observed across the globe on Saturday by millions of people from over 190 countries and territories, as they switched off lights for just one hour. The event launched by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) during 2007, is part of an annual tradition to raise awareness about climate change.

Imran believes PTI will win polls whether he is in jail

LAHORE (Agencies): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan has said that whether he is in jail or not, his party will "sweep" the elections. Speaking during a conversation with American media group National Public Radio (NPR), the former prime minister said he does not know if he will end up getting disqualified or not, but that it also "doesn't matter" because he believes his party has a popularity wave "unprecedented" in Pakistan's history.

Khan, a former cricket star, was prime minister from 2018 until 2022 when he was ousted from office in a parliamentary vote. Since then he has been demanding a snap election and holding protest rallies across the country to press his case. His successor as prime minister, Shehbaz Sharif, has rejected his demand and said an election would be held as scheduled later this year.

"What is happening is that the government is petrified of elections. They're scared that we're going to

win the elections. Therefore, they are trying everything to get me out of the way, including assassination, because I survived an assassination attempt - [and am] very lucky to be alive," said Khan — who survived an assassination attempt during a long march last year. Commenting on whether he is confident that there will be an election at the appointed time, Khan said that's what his worry was as constitutionally when the country dissolved its two provincial governments, the elections had to be held within 90 days.

When asked what would happen if his party — the PTI — returned to power, making a reference to the Opposition's claims that Khan cracked down on the media and other critics when he was in power last time. "Steve, my 3 and a half years were the most liberal 3 and a half years in our history. I mean, the - we never interfered with the judiciary, which was always the case in the past. We never interfered with the media. The only time there were problems with

the media was not because of us, because of the army, because of the army establishment," Khan responded.

He went on to say that currently, within five months, not just him but also all his senior leadership have cases against them. "They're running from one court to the other," he said. The interviewer pressed the former premier to share what his "attitude" would be toward the people he accuses of persecuting him now if he returns to power. At this, Khan said his "firm belief" because he's been all over the world as a professional international sportsman on the difference between rich countries and poor countries is not lack of resources, but rule of law.

"Countries that have rule of law prosper, countries that don't have rule of law become banana republics. So our fight in Pakistan is to bring the powerful elite under the law," he said. The rule of law means anyone who breaks the law, you actually - they are held accountable, Khan said.

Police swoop on PTI leaders ahead of rally

LAHORE (INP): Punjab police continued raiding houses of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leaders and workers and arrested several activists ahead of the PTI rally at Minar-i-Pakistan tonight as announced by party chairman Imran Khan.

Police raided the house of former special advisor to PM Usman Dar in Sialkot but could not arrest him as he was not home. The cops also raided ex-assistant advocate general Punjab Mian Shakeel. Police arrested several PTI activists including Chaudhry Ilyas, Mian Irfan, Sajid Butt, Ghulam Haider and others and shifted them to some unknown place.

According to sources, authorities have rounded up 165 PTI members from Sialkot. Police are also conducting raids for the arrest of PTI's members of parliament. The crackdown against the PTI workers also continued in Lahore. Police raided the Dera of Mian Abid Ali in Manawan and took away his employee Zahid Khan.

The authorities also conducted raids in Shera Kot and Nishtar Town but failed

to arrest PTI activists. In Shera Kot, police raided the Dera of PTI candidate for UC 93 Waqar Zulfiqar Bhatti but could not apprehend him as he was not at home. Police conducted a raid on the Dera of PTI vice president Manawan, Wahga Town Mian Abid Ali but could not find him there. They took with them his employee Zahid Khan from the Dera.

The authorities raided the house of PTI senior vice president Nishtar Town Asif Jut second time but again returned empty-handed as he was not available. Last time, police arrested Asif's son Jamshed Jut when they could not find his father at home. Jamshed was released on bail later. When the police raided the Juts house today, only women were at home. On the other hand, former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan announced to hold a rally at Minar-i-Pakistan tonight. He said that the authorities would try to put all sorts of hurdles to prevent people from attending the PTI 'Jalsa' but urged people to attend it despite all obstacles.

In a Twitter message, the PTI chairman wrote: "Tonight will be our 6th jalsa at Minar i Pakistan & my heart tells me it will break all records. I am inviting everyone in Lahore to attend after Tarawih prayers. I will give my vision of Haqqeeqi Azadi & how we will pull Pak out of the mess cabal of crooks have put our country in. "They will put all sorts of hurdles to prevent people from attending, but I want to remind our ppl that it is their fundamental right to attend a political gathering. Everyone must assert their right as people of a free nation that won its independence & come to Minar i Pakistan."

The administration has closed several roads with containers in order to implement the plan for the security of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) rally at Minar-e-Pakistan, Lahore. The roads from Data Darbar to Minar-e-Pakistan have been closed by placing containers. The road leading to Minar-e-Pakistan has been blocked by placing containers outside the Deputy Commissioner's office.

PTI approaches SC to obtain polls schedule

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has filed constitutional petition at Supreme Court of Pakistan to ensure elections for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab assemblies as per scheduled announced on the directives of this august court, on Saturday.

The constitutional petition filed by Muhammad Sibtain Khan, Mushtaq Ahmad Ghani, Abdul Rehman Khan, Mian Mahmood-ur-Rashid, Asad Umar and PTI as party while Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), Federation of Pakistan, Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, Ministry of Law and Justice, Secretary Cabinet Division, Chief Secretaries Khyber Pakhtunkhwa & Punjab and Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are made respondents in the case.

Barrister Gohar Ali Khan and Ali Zafar Advocate filed petition before SCP seeking to declare the order dated 22 March 2023 of ECP is illegal, unconstitutional, void ab initio and set aside the same. The petition argued that to direct ECP to hold election to the Provincial Assembly of Punjab on 30th April, as announced and decided by the President of Pakistan in pursuance of the judgement of SCP dated 01 March and the election schedule dated 8 March 2023 already announced by Election commission and further direct ECP to ensure that polls are held on the announced schedule.

The petitioner further seeking that SCP should direct Federation of Pakistan, Chief Secretaries Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab to assist ECP in holding elections to provincial assembly of Punjab on 30th April including the provision of funds, security, personnel, maintenance of Law and Order as may be required by ECP for holding the elections.

The constitutional petition further argued to direct Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to announce schedule for elections to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assembly. It is worthy to mention that both provincial assemblies of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab were dissolved immature by PTI-led governments to satisfy Imran Khan narrative for holding early election following his ousting from Prime Minister Office via Vote of No Confidence for first time in history of Pakistan.



QUETTA: Imrn Khan's nephew Hassaan Niazi is taken to be presented before the judicial magistrate.

Countering fake news

Sharjeel announces to establish info center

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon on Saturday announced to establish an information call center at Sindh information department and directed Secretary Information to prepare PCI for the project.

The minister announced this while presiding over a meeting held to review the performance of the information department at his office. Sharjeel added that the call center would provide timely and authentic information on the policies and initiatives of the Sindh

government and would also counter fake news and propaganda against the government.

The performance of the information department was also reviewed in the meeting. He said that the performance of the department should be improved and proper publicity of the development projects of the Sindh government should be ensured. The minister said that the Sindh government had done excellent work in every field. "It is the responsibility of the information department to disseminate and apprise the public regarding the

welfare initiatives of the government," he said.

Sharjeel said that he had given the policy guidelines, and now he wanted results. He said that focus should be paid to social media wing of the department and its performance should be further improved and enhanced. Secretary Information Nadeem-ur-Rehman Memon, Director Admin Muhammad Yousuf Kaboroo, Director Publications Mansoor Rajput, Director Advertisements Imtiaz Joyo, Deputy Director Advertisements Sarang Chandio and others also attended the meeting.

SFA to improve food items quality in Ramazan

KARACHI (PPI): On the direction of Provincial Minister for Food Mukesh Kumar Chawla and Director General Sindh Food Authority Agha Fakhar, Sindh Food Authority has decided to improve the quality of food items during Ramadan and ensure their sale at government rates, PPI learnt Saturday.

Special teams are active across the province. In this regard, Sindh Food Authority team conducted operation in Mominabad Orangi Town. The team was headed by Deputy Director Bashir Khan. The team was accompanied by the concerned Assistant Commissioner and other officers. The team of Sindh Food Authority also imposed fines on many shopkeepers due to poor sanitation arrangements and sub-standard food items. The team also checked the quality of food items and official rates of essential food items. On this occasion, Deputy Director Sindh Food Authority Muhammad Bashir Khan said that adulteration of food items would not be tolerated during Ramadan.

A special campaign against adulterers of food items was being conducted under the direction of Provincial Food Minister Mukesh Kumar Chawla and Director General Sindh Food Authority Agha Fakhar. A mobile testing lab was also accompanied by the team to check the quality of food items on this occasion.

fundamental rights of citizens regardless of their religion and beliefs and goes against Article 20 of the Constitution of Pakistan, which guarantees the freedom to profess and manage religious institutions," a letter issued by the SHRC stated.

It added that the SHO's behaviour was against the landmark judgment by former chief justice Tassaduq Hussain Jilani on minority rights, issued on June 19, 2014. SHRC Chairperson Iqbal Detho said asking the senior police officials to probe into the matter and take action against the SHO.

is taking away food. We do not run the dining service indoors during Ramzan," a man who was arrested by the police said. However, the SHO publicly forced the Hindu restaurant owner to take an oath on his sacred book. The police officer arrested more than one dozen people after physically assaulting them. After the video went viral, the Sindh Human Rights Commission (SHRC) took notice and wrote to the deputy inspector general (DIG) Sukkur and senior superintendent of police (SSP) Ghotki to take action against the police officer.

"The act is a violation of

Format for announcement in newspaper for correction Certificate / Document (s)

IT is to notify that I have corrected spelling of my name and father's name from Ahmed Mujtaba Jamali s/o Imdad Ali Jamali to Ahmed Mujtaba s/o Imdad Ali. Please read and write my name Ahmed Mujtaba S/o Imdad Ali. CNIC No. 43203-2550214-9. Address: Village Sher Muhammad Jamali, Dakhkhana Larkana, Tehsil Bago Vaghmal, District Larkana. Contact No. 0312-2556333.

Pak-China to cooperate promoting flaxseed research

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Gansu Academy of Agricultural Sciences and Sindh Agricultural University signed a memorandum of understanding for the China-Pakistan flax research and innovation hub.

"Our new flax varieties, the Longya series, are all selected according to the climate conditions of dry with little rainfall in Northwest China. In the planting experiments, the yield is generally more than 10 percent higher than that of the local varieties, and the resistance to diseases and insect pests is stronger. At present, Longya No. 11, No. 14,

and No. 15 have been planted in Pakistan preliminarily. I firmly believe that the Longya series should be able to exert a good effect of drought resistance and increase yield under the climate conditions of Pakistan," Zhao Wei, Researcher at the Crop Research Institute of GAAS, indicated in an exclusive interview with China Economic Net.

"It is a variety most Pakistani farmers are not familiar with but it can produce edible oil much needed in the country", project leader Abdul Ghaffar Shar, a doctoral candidate of Northwest A&F University who has

been studying in China for nine years told CEN, adding, "Experiment has started at SAU, Tandojam. Flaxseed contains 35-44 percent oil. The seed oil, rich in unsaturated fatty acids mainly linolenic acid, serves as a nutritional supplement, in addition to its huge role in coatings, textiles and animal husbandry. Flax is a promising economic crop."

As Abdul Ghaffar Shar pointed out, the average production of flaxseed in Pakistan is as low as 692 kg per hectare because of less soil fertility, blind use of fertilizers, lack of high-yield hybrid varieties and old cultivation practices.

Punjab cabinet approves provision of free 20kg flour bag to each poor family

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Punjab cabinet on Saturday approved provision of free 20kg flour bag to each poor family under the Ramadan relief package announced by the federal and provincial governments. The decision was taken during the 11th meeting of the provincial cabinet held under the chair of Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi in Lahore.

The meeting decided that under the Ramadan package, a family could procure 20kg free flour at the same time under the Ramadan relief package and the decision would be implemented from March 29. The decision was taken in order to save the citizens from the trouble to go to the flour distribution centres again and again to obtain free flour. Now they could get 20kg sack at the same time.

In the meeting, a detailed review of the provision of free flour throughout Punjab was taken. Chief Minister Naqvi asked all the provincial ministers and secretaries to continue their visits to the flour distribution centres and send their report to the CM office. In the meeting, various proposals regarding simplification of the registration process were reviewed and a committee consisting of provin-

cial ministers and senior officials was formed which will present its final recommendations regarding the registration.

The Punjab cabinet expressed its satisfaction on the process of providing flour. The meeting was briefed that so far more than seven million bags of flour were distributed to the deserving people. CM Naqvi also directed the officials to take measures for the provision of essential items at fixed rates, besides ordering them to visit bazars and markets to check quality and prices of the commodities.

The cabinet also approved the appointment of doctors and other staff in the Department of Specialized Health Care & Medical Education and the Department of Primary and Secondary Health Care on ad hoc basis. The meeting also gave approval to regularize services of contract employees of Public Health Engineering Department. The cabinet also gave its assent to give extension in the tenure of contractual employees of the Social Welfare Department and Baitul-Maal.

For the establishment of a state-of-the-art autism center for special children, the cabinet approved to transfer more than 26 kanal land in Johar Town of the Specialized Healthcare & Medical Education Department to

the Special Education Department. The cabinet expressed dissatisfaction on the performance of Child Protection Bureau and calling for its restructuring. The cabinet members were briefed that there were 1,050 children in the centers of Child Protection Bureau while these centres has staff of 750 people. The cabinet approved an MoU between the Social Welfare & Baitul Maal Department and the Lahore Institute of Health Sciences.

The meeting also gave approval for the establishment of Cabinet Standing Committee for Universal Health Insurance. Provincial Minister Specialized Health Care & Medical Education Dr Javed Akram will be the head of the committee while Provincial Minister of Industry SM Tanveer will be the chairman of the committee. The cabinet approved appointments of chairpersons at drug courts in Lahore, Faisalabad, Rawalpindi and Gujranwala.

The audit reports of the accounts of the Government of Punjab for the year 2020-21 and 2021-22 were also approved. The meeting also endorsed the decisions of the last 10 meetings of the Punjab Cabinet. Provincial ministers, chief secretary, inspector general of police and secretaries of the concerned departments attended the meeting.

Authority blocks roads to thwart PTI public gathering

LAHORE (INP): Authorities have blocked various roads, including entry and exit points, in the Punjab capital to thwart the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) public gathering at Minar-i-Pakistan tonight. The political show comes despite postponement of elections in Punjab as Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) has excused for the holding polls due to financial and security constraints.

All roads leading to the Minar-i-Pakistan have been barricaded by parking trucks carrying shipping containers while Ravi bridge and Thokar Niaz Baig the two major entry and exit points – have also been closed for traffic. The measures to prevent the political gathering have caused hurdles for commuters, who are heading to their jobs. The areas where containers have been placed include Shah Alam Market, Bansawala Bazar, Railways Stations, and others.

In a tweet, City Traffic Police Lahore said the following roads are closed for traffic "from Lohay Wali Pulli towards Sabzi Mandi, outgate Lorri Adda towards Sabzi Mandi, R/O

Lorri Adda towards Sabzi Mandi, both sides of old Ravi bridge, both sides of new Ravi bridge, Barkat Pulli towards Shahdara, Masti gate towards Railway Station, Railway Station towards Masti Gate, Ik Moria bridge towards Railway Station, Railway Station towards Ik Moria from beneath and flyover, Bohar Wala Chowk, Railway Road, Brendth Road and Hafiz hotel, District Chowk towards Workshop Chowk both sides, Peer Makki U-turn both sides, Retigun chowk towards SSP corner. The police have asked people to take alternate routes. "Tonight's Jalsa will break all records"

Despite restrictions on roads, PTI Chairman and former prime minister Imran Khan is optimistic about his successful power show. Taking to Twitter, he said tonight PTI will hold its sixth gathering at Minar-i-Pakistan and "my heart tells me it will break all records".

"I am inviting everyone in Lahore to attend after Tarawih prayers. I will give my vision of Haqeeqi Azadi & how we will pull Pak[istan] out of the mess cabal of crooks have put

our country in," he wrote. "They will put all sorts of hurdles to prevent people from attending, but I want to remind our people that it is their fundamental right to attend a political gathering. Everyone must assert their right as people of a free nation that won its independence & come to Minar i Pakistan."

On Friday night, PTI leaders Azam Swati, Hammad Azhar and Zulfi Bukhari visited the venue to review preparations for the jalsa. Talking to media, Mr Azhar said the Met Office had predicted rains but vowed to hold the power show in every situation.

"We have made arrangements to pump out water from the ground," he said. He said the route for arrival of Imran Khan had been kept secret due to security reasons, adding that a bullet proof stage had been prepared for the former premier. Speaking on the occasion, Zulfi Bukhari said: "Whether wicket is dry or wet, we will play tonight". Meanwhile, police have arrested several PTI leaders and workers in a wide-scale crackdown in various cities across the country.

Rise of 'girls education' for poor to translates BRI's spirit

ISLAMABAD (INP): Currently, around 550 girls are enrolled in the China-Pakistan Gwadar Faqeer Middle School. Moreover, a recently established digital lab with 30 new computers, in collaboration with a Chinese company, is fully functional in the school, providing computer literacy among the girls, Gwadar Pro reported on Saturday.

Around the world, 129 million girls are out of school, including 32 million of primary school age, 30 million of lower-secondary school age, and 67 million of upper-secondary school age, says a 2022 UN report. In Gwadar, the Middle School Faqeer colony has risen as an illustrious promoter of girls education that meets UN global goals and BRI's spirit.

"My journey of study in the middle school has been empowering me to do something substantial for my hometown Gwadar as well as my country," Faiza, an 8th grade student of the Faqeer middle school told Gwadar pro.

Training of teachers launched

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Syed Sardar Ali Shah minister for education Sindh has said that 21200 newly recruited PST-primary school teachers out of 40176 PST s teachers are receiving trainings at 55 training institutes in the Sindh province aiming of training is how to teach the student and improve the quality of teachers.

Syed Sardar Ali Shah Minister for education Sindh has said that 21200 newly recruited PST-primary school teachers out of 40176 PST s teachers are receiving trainings at 55 training institutes in the Sindh province aiming of training is how to teach the student and improve the quality of teachers.



LOSS OF ALLOTMENT / TRANSFER LETTER

Allotment / Transfer Letter of Plot no. 2710, Block Gold Block measuring 5 Marla issued by Park View City at River Edge Housing Lahore in the name of Sadia Kashif W/o Kashif Latif R/o 9th Badar Bhai Street Faqir Abad No.2, Peshawar has been lost. Finder may return the same to transfer department, Park View City at River Edge Housing Scheme Lahore. Telephone No.111-249-249. Otherwise after 15 days original allotment letter shall be treated as cancelled.



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PUBLIC NOTICE

Auction of Gold

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Details:

Branch	Haripur
Branch code	0017
Date of auction	27-March-2023
Time	12:00 PM
Call Deposit	Rs. 100/-

Customer Name	Account #	Address
Shan zaib	132095132	Kandal P/o Bandi Mian Peer Dad Khan Tehsil & District Haripur

Notice is hereby given to the customer in above mentioned that if payment of entire outstanding amount financed along with markup is not made by them to MMBL within 1 day of the publication of this notice, MMBL shall auction the gold ornaments and no further Public Notice shall be issued to call upon the customers to make the payments.

Mobilink Microfinance Bank Limited



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AG: Govt to address prosecution’s issues — to ensure speedy justice

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Advocate General (AG) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Amir Javeed said that prosecution is backbone of criminal judicial system while it is foundation for provision of justice if the offense/case should deal professionally, on Saturday.

This he said while addressing District Public Prosecutors (DPPs) meeting and added that minor error at trial stage in court can damage whole case which ultimately lead to denial of justice. He claimed that it is necessary to overcome deficiencies in the system while provincial government is committed to address grievances of prosecution officers.

Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa claimed that he would personally upheld the issue with provincial government to strengthen prosecution which will ultimately lead to prosecution



vision of justice at trial judiciary/ district courts.

Additional Advocate General Jalal-u-Din Akbar, Azam Khan Gara, Umar Farooq, Muhammad Nisar and Danyal Khan Chamkani were also accompanied AG Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the ceremony.

Prosecution Officers Welfare Association president Sangeen Shah and General Secretary Javeed Mohmand along with district public prosecutors from all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were present.

Advocate General said that currently prosecution

department is facing several problems while he will uphold the issue with provincial government to ensure provision of justice. He argued DPPs to monitor their subordinates including deputy and assistant public prosecutors at their respective districts to award them for their services.

AG Amir Javeed claimed that all demands of Public Prosecutor would be placed before provincial government for redressal while DPPs briefed AG regarding proceedings of criminal cases at trial judiciary.

KPBC calls 3 names from each bench for election board

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council (KPBC) has called Abbottabad, Bannu, DI Khan and Swat Bar Association presidents to provide each three names for election board for Peshawar High Court Bar Association (PHCBA), on Saturday.

This was called by KPBC Executive Committee during its meeting chaired by Syed Mubashir Shah Advocate and ordered to submit names till 6th April in this regard.

KPBC also argued lawyers to submit their arrears with council till 31st March to enlist name in voter list. The lawyers with no arrears should be enlist in voter-lists to exercise their constitutional right.

It is worthy to mention that PHCBA Abbottabad, Bannu, DI Khan, Peshawar and Swat Bar Association election had been scheduled for 6th May 2023.

House roof collapses as six of same family hurt

PESHAWAR (APP): Six members of the family were injured when the roof of their house suddenly caved in in Marozai Bahadur village Peshawar, Rescue 1122 Officials said here on Saturday.

The officials said that due to torrential rain, the house collapsed in Marozai Bahadur village and initially six persons of a family were buried under the debris, including 2 children and 1 woman. The Rescue 1122 teams reached the spot and started rescue operations.

The Rescue 1122 personnel pulled out the injured trapped under the debris and the media team provided first aid to the injured and shifted them to the hospital.

The injured were identified as Rizwan aged 45 years, Rehanullah aged 5 years, Zain aged 2 years, Shah Nawaz aged 20 years, Hussain aged 30 years, and a woman aged 22 years.

Rains continues intermittently

PESHAWAR (APP): The series of rains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Peshawar continues intermittently on Saturday, an official of the Met Office said here.

After the onset of rains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the heat wave has come to an end with rains likely to continue till this evening, the officials of the Meteorological Department said.

Due to the rains, the temperature dropped significantly and the temperature of Peshawar is a record 13 degrees Celsius, the official said.



PESHAWAR: A view of collapsed roof at Bhanwari Chongi due to rain.

Secretaries asked to monitor free flour distribution, edible prices

PESHAWAR (APP): The caretaker government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has assigned monitoring tasks of free flour distribution to all Administrative Secretaries and directed them to ensure availability of food items on notified public rates.

On the directives of caretaker Chief Minister the administrative secretaries will monitor rates and availability of flour and other edibles in local markets generally, during the Holy month of Ramadan in their respective districts, said a notification issued here on Saturday.

Secretary, Food Department will monitor Peshawar,

Secretary C&W Department Mardan, Secretary Excise and Taxation Department Kohat and Karak, Secretary Irrigation Department Nowshera and Charsadda, Secretary Aqaf Department Khyber and Mohmand, Secretary Culture, Tourism, Archaeology and Museum Department Bannu and Lakki Marwat, Secretary Industries Department D.I Khan and Tank, Secretary Sports and Youth Affairs Abbottabad and Mansehra, Secretary Higher Education Department Swat and Malakand.

Similarly, Secretary Elementary and Secondary Education Chitral Upper

and Lower, Secretary Agriculture Dir Upper, Lower and Bajaur, Secretary RR&S Department Kurram, Secretary Health Hangu and Orakzai, Secretary ST & IT Department North Waziristan, Secretary Livestock Shangla and Batagram, Secretary Housing Department Buner, Secretary Public Health Engineering Department South Waziristan Upper and Lower, Secretary Population Welfare Department Haripur and Swabi, Secretary Minerals Department Upper Kohistan, Lower and Kolai Palas and Secretary Transport Department were duputed in Torghar district.

Sudden fire erupted in pipe factory located at Hayatabad

PESHAWAR (APP): A sudden fire broke out in Hayatabad Pipe Factory in Industry Estate Hayatabad Musharraf Colony, the official of the Rescue 1122 told media men here on Saturday.

Soon after the information was received, the fire vehicle of Rescue 1122 was dispatched to the accident site, the official informed.

The official said that the firefighters’ team of Rescue 1122 reached the spot and started extinguishing the fire, however, the Rescue 1122 firefighters from different sides completely controlled the fire within 35 minutes.

Promotion of Pak-Afghan trade Afghan envoy, businessmen agree on launching of collective efforts

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Acting Consul General Afghan Consulate Peshawar, Hafiz Mohibullah Shakir and businessmen from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have agreed over launching of collective efforts for removal of hindrances between Pak-Afghan bilateral and Transit trade.

The agreement was reached during a meeting of local businessmen with the Acting Consul General of Afghan Consulate, said a press release issued here on Saturday.

The businessmen were led by Director Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce

and Industry (PAJCCI), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi.

Second Secretary Consulate General, Mufti Noorullah Hotak, Commercial Attache, Waheedullah Himat and Protocol Officer, Shahid Ullah Zaheer were also present in the meeting.

Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi who is also former Senior Vice President of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) apprised the participants of the meeting by problems being faced by businessmen dealing in Pak-Afghan trade.

The issues raised by Zia included restoration of the Afghan document Ilm o

Khabar document, constitution of a liaison committee between the two countries, problems faced by exporters, importers, industrialists and others.

On this occasion, the Afghan Consulate officials also informed businessmen about their suggestions and some reservations on unnecessary and unregistered checking points at Torkham border, non-implementation of decision regarding cross tuffing of Afghan transit containers into local containers, inflicting losses on Afghan businessmen under the head of detention charges.

They also expressed reservation over delay in checking of Afghan transit goods at Karachi sea port, causing delay in reaching of consignment.

Speaking on the occasion, Zia Sarhadi said it is the need of the hour to take steps from both the government of Pakistan and Afghanistan for removal of hindrances in trade between the two countries.

He said bilateral trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan is very essential for bringing prosperity in the region and this goal can be achieved through launching sincere efforts.

FIA offloaded passenger traveling on fake passport

PESHAWAR (APP): The FIA Immigration officials at Peshawar Airport on Saturday offloaded a passenger travelling on alleged fake documents.

This was stated by the spokesman of the FIA soon after offloading a passenger named Amit Shah who was travelling to Austria from

flight No. EK637.

The spokesman said that a passenger named Amit Shah was travelling to Austria from flight number EK637, carrying a fake Afghan passport with no UV light features displayed on the passport.

The visa pages of the passport were simply num-

bered instead of a laser, the spokesman said. According to a preliminary investigation, the alleged accused obtained the passport from the Austrian resident agent.

Later, the alleged accused was handed over to FIA Anti-Human Trafficking Circle Peshawar for legal action, the spokesperson added.

Corona cases in KP increasing once again

PESHAWAR (APP): The number of Corona cases has increased once again in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including Peshawar, an official of the Health Department said here Saturday.

The official said that 7 cases of Corona positive had been reported in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the last 24 hours and the

number of people who died due to Corona in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was 6376.

The total number of Corona cases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has reached 225261, the official said. He said one person has recovered from Corona in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the total number has become 218739.

He said the number of people who died due to Coronavirus in Peshawar is 3153 and 5 new cases have been reported in Peshawar, making the total number of 85443. He disclosed that 41 Corona tests were conducted in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the last 24 hours and the number of active cases in the province is 146.



PESHAWAR: Vehicle passing through accumulated rain water after heavy rain in city.

Price-hike may cause malnutrition in children, lactating mothers

PESHAWAR (APP): Breaking the 49 years highest inflation record since 1974, Pakistan where around 22 percent of people were already living below the poverty line, may witness a significant increase in malnutrition and stunting among pregnant and lactating mothers and children due to substantial increase in prices of daily use commodities in the wake of last year’s devastated floods that has caused about USD 40 billion losses to the government kitty.

The Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) report 2023 has revealed that in February last, inflation in the country surged to a record 31.5 percent, which is the highest in the last 49 years since 1974, resulting in record increase in prices of daily use agriculture and non-agriculture commodities including vegetables, fruits, milk and meat prices in open markets in all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The economic, agriculture and health experts feared that such scenario might aggravate problems of stunting, underweight and overweight in children and anemia, Zinc and vita-

min A deficiencies in pregnant and lactating mothers could lead to premature births and underweight and weaker neonatal.

Professor Dr Muhammad Naem of Swabi University told APP that the country where the lower middle-income poverty rate was about USD 3.2 per day and upper middle income poverty rate was around USD 5.5 per day, is likely to push additional 1.9 million household including 12.1 million people into poverty in the wake of the last year floods devastations that played havoc to all socioeconomic sectors including agriculture, livestock and food services.

Resultantly, he said the national poverty ratio was likely to increase by 2.4 to four percent, thus around 26 percent of the country’s population may face great problems to get balanced food, quality health, water and natal care services.

“Normally, 15 to 20pc increase in prices of daily used items including meat, chicken, vegetables, pulses, dairy products and fruits were being witnessed during Ramazan and activation of price-control committees were

inevitable to control soaring prices of the food items in the open market,” he said.

In Peshawar, one KG meat of large animal was being sold at Rs800, a dozen eggs on Rs300, one KG milk and yogurt on Rs200, potato on Rs800, tomato on Rs110, onion on Rs150, apple on Rs300, strawberry on Rs300 and lemon on Rs200 per KG which was beyond of purchasing powers of the poor and local income groups.

The National Nutrition Survey has revealed that four out of 10 children under five years of age ie 40.2 percent were stunted, 28.9pc underweight, 9.5pc overweight and 17.7pc suffer from wasting (under height). In rural areas, un-nourished children were recorded more compared to urban areas of Pakistan.

In urban areas, 34.8pc children stunted, 16.2pc wasting, 24pc underweight and 9.6 percent overweight while in rural areas 43.2percent suffered from stunting, 18.6 pc wasting, 31.6pc underweight and 9.4 pc overweight.

As many as around 12 million children were underweight ie 40pc in KP, 48.3pc in newly merged

districts (NMD), 46.6pc in Gilgit Baltistan, 46.6pc in Balochistan, 45.5pc in Sindh, 36.4pc in Punjab, 32.6 in ICT and 39.3percent in Azad Kashmir.

Similarly, 15 pc un-nourished children were suffering from wasting, 15.3pc in Punjab, 23.3pc in Sindh, 18.9pc in Balochistan, 16.1 in AJK, 23pc in NMD and 12.1pc in ICT. Similarly, 12.9pc children were overweight in KP, 9.9pc in Punjab, 5.2pc in Sindh, 16.7 pc in Balochistan, 13.4pc in AJK, 18.6pc in NMD and 5.8pc in ICT.

“Anemia, deficiencies of Vitamin A, hemoglobin and zinc were major causes of stunting in children and underweight birth,” said Dr Riaz Khan, children specialist at Govt hospital Pabbi Nowshera while talking to APP.

He termed inadequate nutrition among mothers during pregnancy as one of the main reasons for malnutrition among children leading to stunting and underweight.

The un-nourished children and mothers suffer from depression and anxiety, cardiorespiratory disorders and low immunity and poor wound healing and concentration in stud-

ies and jobs.

Dr Riaz said nearly 45.8pc neonatal start breastfeeding in the first hour of birth out of which 44.6pc in rural areas and 47 percent in urban regions in the country against 50pc target set by the WHO, adding the proportion of children breastfed for first six months in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was estimated as 60.7pc in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 59pc in NMD, 42.1pc in Azad Kashmir, 43.9pc in Balochistan, 57.6 percent in ICT and 54.9pc in Gilgit-Baltistan.

“One out of three children received complementary food between 6 to eight months i.e. 35.9pc at the national level while 14.2pc children have an access to minimum dietary diversity, 18.2pc minimum meal frequency and 3.6pc in the minimum acceptable diet.”

The KP health department report 2022 has revealed that approximately 42 neonatal out of 1,000 live births die per year in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where 64 out of 1000 kids under five years of age expire while the infant mortality rate was about 53 out of 1000 live births.

“KP health department report prepared by the PTI government itself spoke of the poor performance of the PTI rulers, who failed to strengthen mother-child nutrition programs in the country against 50pc target set by the WHO, said Ikhtair Wali, PMLN KP spokesman.

He added the challenges of stunting, malnutrition and pregnancy-related deaths could have been averted if proper attention was paid by the PTI rulers. He accused the former PTI government of its failure in the construction of mothers-children hospitals in the province.

Dr Riaz said women of reproductive age of 15-49 years were bearing double burden of malnutrition and as per the national nutrition survey one in seven women i.e. 14.4 percent undernourished and 36.9pc food insecure.

He said malnutrition and stunting in women and children could prove fatal and underscored the need for arresting inflation and price hike to provide a balanced diet to all.

Mustaqem Khan, senior planning officer KP health department told APP that 56 sites in NMD were identified for the construction of mothers-children hospitals, basic health units and rural health centres.

The feasibility study of the project costing Rs12,440 million was completed besides allocation of Rs3,900 million for 2022-23, he said, adding extra allocation was made to mothers and children nutrition program in budget while a modern paraplegic centre was being constructed at Bakakhel

Bannu with an estimated cost of Rs900 million.

To protect mothers-children and the general public from chronic diseases, he said the KP Govt was spending Rs1.1 billion on purchase of medicines.

To boost balanced nutrition for mothers-children and prevent non-communicable diseases in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, he said a foreign bank would provide USD 90 million for the project to be completed in the next five years.

The district headquarters hospitals were being strengthened in terms of equipment, medicines and gynecology services, he said adding the Asian Development Bank has provided USD 25 million out of USD 100 million committed amount for the project to be completed by 2026.

The KP government would spend Rs2 billion on strengthening and running of BHUs and primary healthcare centres by establishing mothers-children wards initially in 15 districts besides spending Rs1.5 billion on maternal and newborn’s health and allied services in the province.



In brief

Traders with help of admn looting public F.P. Report

PABBI: The traders at Pabbi, Station, Taro and Akbarpura bazaars looting citizens with both hands while administration has turned blind eyes towards business community to grab money illegally in the month of Ramazan, on Saturday. This was claimed that public while purchasing edible items for their families at respective bazaars and claimed that administration and competent authorities are busy on social media performance neither interested in public grievances facing at ground. They claimed that government officers didn't coming out from their offices while receiving their shares from traders by illegal means. According to details, meat rate up to Rs800 per kilogram while milk and yogurt stands at Rs200 per kilo while other edible items are sold by traders as per their will.

Injured referred to Saidu hospital F.P. Report

SHANGLA: At least 10 persons were injured in a road accident near Sunaila area of tehsil Puran, the spokesman of Rescue1122 said on Saturday. An ill-fated Suzuki van carrying 16 passengers from Puran to Shangla was plunged into a deep ravine when the driver of the van lost his control due to heavy rain. The rescue teams reached the spot and shifted the injured to THQ hospital Puran. However, the doctors referred six persons who received critical injuries to Saidu Sharif Teaching Hospital, Swat.

PPP leader passes away

FEROZEPUR (PPI): PPP senior leader Chaudhry Yaqoob passed away on Friday. His funeral will be held at 1.30 pm after Zohr prayers at Jahangir Park on Ferozepur Road near General Hospital on March 25. The party leadership expressed condolence over the demise and showed sympathy with the bereaved family of the deceased. They paid tribute to Chaudhry Yaqoob for his lifelong services to the party and said he will be remembered in their heart. They prayed the Almighty may rest the departed soul in eternal peace and grant courage to the bereaved family to bear this repairable loss with fortitude.

Gilani's father death anniversary

MULTAN (INP): The 45th death anniversary of Syed Alamdar Hussain Gilani, father of former prime minister Syed Yusuf Raza Gilani was organized at Musa Pak Shahed shrine. Musa Pak Shahid shrine custodian, Abul Hassan Gilani offered prayers for Syed Alamdar Gilani. Along with former PM, Makhdoom Yazdani Gilani, Tanvir Gilani, Mujtaba Gilani and Allama Farooq Khan Saadi were also present. Later, talking to the media, Gilani stated that PTI Chairman Imran Khan was making hue and cry, instead of facing the cases against him. "When no-confidence motion against a PM is tabled, the PM can not advise the president to dissolve the National Assembly," said Gilani. While recalling the alleged unconstitutional move by the then PM Imran. "Though it was the responsibility of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) to hold elections, in my personal opinion, these should be held simultaneously," he maintained. Replying to a question, PPP leader stated that his part had never run away from elections.



CHARSADDA: Chief Secretary of KP Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry visiting various free Atta distribution centres.

Two children dead, four injured due to rainfall

F.P. Report

MARDAN: As many as two children were dead while four others are critically injured as a result of the recent heavy downpour in Takhtbhai, on Saturday.

According to details, two children died and 4 people were seriously injured in two different incidents of house roofs collapsing came where the roof of Nimatullah's house collapsed due to rain, 11-month-old Saira and 2-year-old Hafs died on the spot, while the head of the house Nimatullah and his wife were seriously injured.

Sabz Ali Khan and his wife were seriously injured as a result of the roof of the decaying room of the named person's house. On receiving the information, the Rescue 1122 ambulance and the medical team reached the spot and shifted

the dead bodies and the injured to Tehsil Headquarters Hospital Takhtbhai.

Distribution of free flour under BISP continues: The distribution of free flour among deserving people under Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) continued for the third consecutive day in district Mardan on Saturday.

For guaranteeing transparency in the distribution of flour, a follow-up meeting was also held with Deputy Commissioner (DC) Captain (Retd) Abdul Rehman in the chair. During the meeting, the Deputy Commissioner was given a detailed briefing on the distribution of flour through especially established mega delivery points and at Village Council level through selected dealers and their quota.

Deputy Commissioner commended the performance of dealers for distribution of flour on quota basis. However, he also annoyed the dealers for its distribution in less people than their quota and directed for doubling the quota of good performing dealers and cancellation of the bad performing one.

Deputy Commissioner directed bringing further improvement and easiness in the process of the distribution of free flour and taking steps for the issues faced by the dealers and flour mills linked with the mobile software. He directed the officers of district administration, food, local government, social welfare, civil and others to monitor the distribution of flour to ensure its supply to deserving people in a transparent manner.

Protest against load shedding held F.P. Report

PARACHINAR: The tribesmen arranged protest against unscheduled load shedding despite government announcement regarding zero load management in the month of Ramazan in Parachinar city, on Saturday.

The protestors burnt tires and blocked the road. Addressing the protestors, the president of Anjuman Tajran Haji Imdad Hussain, Haji Rauf Hussain, Zartaj Hussain, Mujahid Hussain and other speakers said that despite paying the monthly bills to WAPDA, the electricity system is in disarray.

He said that in Parachinar city, despite paying monthly bills for 1700 electricity meters, electricity is supplied only for two hours during Suhoor and Iftar and thousands of skilled people have become unemployed during the day. Protestors burnt tires in front of the press club. The protestors will lock down the grade station.

140 Ramzan packages distributed F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: Shaheed Dr. Fazal Rahim Foundation distributed Ramazan packages to 140 deserving families. The Ramadan package consisted of rice, ghee, dates, pulses, Rooh Afza and other food items.

On this occasion, Dr. Nadeem Fazal, son of Dr. Fazal Rahim, said that his father late Dr. Fazal Rahim dedicated his life to orphans and destitute people. And continuing his mission, Dr. Fazal Rahim Foundation has been established, which has distributed the second Ramadan package to the deserving ones.

Fazal Rahim Foundation reaches and helps as much as possible. He said that these activities will continue in the future on behalf of the Foundation in the month of Ramadan, and God willing, the volunteers of the Foundation will offer their services and help in times of pain.

Bazaars inspected in wake of Ramazan: On the special instructions of Deputy Commissioner Dir Payin Iftikhar Ahmed, Tehsildar Khal Habib ur Rehman visited Rabat and Khal Bazar, checked expiry, price list, cleanliness etc. in general store, chicken shop, fruit/vegetable shops.

Rulers have put constitution in danger: Haleem

HYDERABAD (PPI): Leader of the Opposition in Sindh Assembly Haleem Adil Shiekh said Saturday that the sitting rulers have put the constitution of the country in danger and people should foil their dark designs with their unity. Shiekh along with the PTI leaders Aminullah Moosakhel, Rana Waseem, Imran Qureshi, Lala Owais Khan, Khadim Turk, Taimor Kerio, Azhar Haider, Adil Chandio, Owais Qaiser and others reached at Hyderabad Bar Association on Saturday.

Talking to media, he said a lawyer had struggled for the creation of Pakistan. He said today dark clouds are hovering over the constitution and the state is facing threats. He said the lawyers have to come forward to ensure the uphold of the constitution. He congratulated the newly elected general secretary Faisal Mughal and other office-bearers and presented them the gift of Ajrak.

Haleem said that when an assembly is dissolved, the constitution says that elections should be held within 90 days. He said that the Election Commission of Pakistan had violated the order of Supreme Court. Haleem said Pakistan has made a banana republic and those who have to save the state are mere silent spectators. He said that the lawyers have to play their role to save the country. He said presently there is no law in the country. He said the members of ECP should be tried under Article 6 of the constitution.

He said: "Today inflation is at its peak. People cannot arrange two time meals for their families. He said the

basic rights of the people were being violated. He said the thieves were running away from elections. He said we have presented our case before lawyers and courts because we are fighting for the upholding of the constitution. The whole nation is looking to the Supreme Court."

Hyderabad Bar Association general secretary Faisal Mughal said on the occasion that the bar associations was working for upholding law and constitution. He said the country should be run as per the constitution. He said the contempt to the constitution should be tried in the courts. He said the bar associations could not remain silent over the prevailing situation. He said they wanted law and order and the supremacy of the constitution.

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Man 'tortured' to death in Attock

ATTOCK (INP): Some unknown kidnappers shot dead a 24-year-old young man at the outskirts village Baryar of police station Attock Saddar on Saturday. According to the police, the unknown killers fled after leaving the dead fluttering in a pool of blood. The police, after reaching the spot, took the dead body into custody and collected potential evidence from the crime scene.

Police said that Hamza Ali Awan, the 24-year-old son of local contractor Noor Muhammad Awan went to see his friend on March 21 by his motorbike but he did not come back despite a hectic search by his family. On his father's complaint, police registered FIR under Section 365 PPC at the Model Police Station Attock City and launched a hunt for the kidnappers. Meanwhile, his bullet-ridden body was found in the locality of the village Baryar.

The police handed over the dead body to its real heirs after getting its detailed autopsy from Asfandyar District Headquarters Hospital Attock. However, the police could not find the clue of the killers till the filing of this story.

Education dept directed to achieve enrolment of 6778 children: Deputy Commissioner Attock Rao Atif Raza has urged upon the education department to achieve the targeted enrolment of 6778 children from five to fourteen years in district Attock. While starting education drive 2023 here the Government MC Boys School Attock, DC Attock said that effective measures are required to be taken to ensure 'education for all' on a priority basis. He further said that the

government of Punjab will launch admissions from nursery to grade eighth in all public schools across the district. He also highlighted the importance of education and termed education as 'the third eye of a human being and said that every child has a right to get an education.

Moreover, the children aged up to four years would get enrollment in the play-group and early childhood classes, while children age 5 and 12 will get admissions from nursery to grade five, DC Attock added. The CEO Education Attock Malik Mohsin Abbas, DEO Attock Secondary Mr. Akram Zia, DEO Elementary Taqi Shah, Deputy Director of Public Relations Attock Mr. Shahzad Niaz along with other relevant officers of the Education Department were also present on this occasion.

Reporting for peace, development stressed

F.P. Report

BARA: Chairman Department of Journalism and Mass Communication (JMC) University of Peshawar (UoP) Dr. Faizullah Jan has said that it is binding on the tribal journalist community to be partial while reporting for the peace, education and development of the merged districts.

Addressing on the occasion of concluding day of training session, themed Community Resilience Activity (CRA) North, as a chief guest held here in Bara press club last day he said that before merging, journalism was banned in the former tribal agencies as it was an information black hole.

Due to restriction of publication act to the ex-Federal Administrator Tribal Region (Fata) no proper medium of communication was available to convey miseries of the tribesmen to the world and vice versa, he added. Dr. Faizullah Jan said that because of the lack of local communication



mediums, the wrong image of the Fata was presented that they would further provide training facilities to make them competent to convey problems of the people to the rulers and the areas to develop. Beside district officer of CRA, North Ijaz Durrani, lecturer Journalism Department Ali Imran, tribal elders and members of the civil society attended the gathering.

Addressing the local journalists, he maintained that they would further provide training facilities to make them competent to convey problems of the people to the rulers and the areas to develop. Beside district officer of CRA, North Ijaz Durrani, lecturer Journalism Department Ali Imran, tribal elders and members of the civil society attended the gathering.

Trade disputes shapes global future's economy

Farhan Ahmad

INTERNATIONAL trade policies and agreements are fundamental to the global economy and play a vital role in shaping international affairs. They allow countries to specialize in producing goods and services that they can efficiently produce, and then trade those goods and services with other countries. However, the interdependence of international trade has created opportunities for conflicts and disagreements between countries, which can range from differences in trade practices to broader economic and political issues.

One of the most significant examples of a world trade dispute is the ongoing situation between the United States and China. Since 2018, both countries have imposed tariffs on each other's goods worth billions

of dollars. The dispute has escalated to include several other issues, such as intellectual property rights, market access, and technology transfer. The U.S. has accused China of engaging in unfair trade practices, including stealing American intellectual property, subsidizing its industries, and maintaining non-tariff barriers to trade. China, on the other hand, has accused the U.S. of protectionism and violating the World Trade Organization (WTO) rules.

Similarly, the ongoing conflict between the European Union (EU) and the United States over aircraft subsidies has escalated to a trade war. Both sides have accused each other of providing illegal subsidies to their respective aircraft manufacturers, Boeing and Airbus. The dispute has resulted in both sides imposing tariffs on each other's goods, affecting trade flows between the two regions.

World trade disputes can also

arise due to the implementation of environmental regulations. For instance, in 2009, the EU imposed a ban on the import of seal products due to concerns over animal welfare. Canada, one of the world's largest seal hunting nations, challenged the ban at the WTO, arguing that it discriminated against its seal hunters. The dispute lasted for several years, with the WTO ultimately ruling in favor of the EU.

Resolving world trade disputes can be challenging and often requires the intervention of international organizations such as the WTO. The organization's dispute settlement mechanism is based on a set of rules and procedures designed to ensure transparency, predictability, and fairness in the resolution of trade disputes.

However, the current dispute settlement mechanism of the WTO has been facing challenges. The U.S. has blocked the

appointment of judges to the WTO's Appellate Body, resulting in the body being unable to hear new cases. The EU has proposed an interim solution, but the U.S. has rejected it. This has raised concerns over the future of the WTO's dispute settlement mechanism and its role in resolving world trade disputes.

World trade disputes can have significant economic and political implications for the countries involved and the global community at large. Tariffs and other trade barriers can lead to higher prices for consumers, reduced competitiveness for industries, and ultimately, slower economic growth. They can also lead to political tensions and strain diplomatic relations between countries. For instance, the ongoing U.S.-China trade war has impacted global stock markets and raised concerns over the possibility of a broader economic slowdown.

The resolution of world trade

disputes requires the cooperation and engagement of all parties involved. International organizations such as the WTO can play a crucial role in facilitating the negotiation and settlement of trade disputes, ensuring a fair and equitable global trading system. The WTO's dispute settlement mechanism, while facing challenges, remains the most viable platform for resolving trade disputes.

However, some countries have resorted to bilateral negotiations and trade agreements outside of the WTO framework. For instance, the U.S. has renegotiated its trade agreement with Mexico and Canada and has signed a phase-one trade deal with China. While these agreements may offer short-term solutions, they could undermine the multilateral trading system and create uncertainty and unpredictability in the global trade landscape.

Moreover, the COVID-19

pandemic has further complicated the world trade landscape. The pandemic has disrupted global supply chains and led to a sharp decline in international trade. Countries have implemented various measures, including export restrictions, to protect their domestic industries and ensure sufficient supply of critical goods such as medical supplies and food. These measures have further strained global trade relations, with some countries criticizing others for their handling of pandemic and trade policies. The pandemic has also accelerated the adoption of digital technologies in trade, with e-commerce and digital services playing a more significant role in facilitating international trade. However, the digital divide between countries and the need for regulatory frameworks to address emerging issues such as data privacy and cybersecurity have added a new layer of complexity to the world landscape.



Africa is world’s ‘future’ for touring US VP Harris

WASHINGTON (AFP): US Vice President Kamala Harris will start a three-country tour of Africa this weekend, promoting the White House's positive vision of the continent as the "future of the world." Harris' trip to Ghana, Tanzania and Zambia is the latest salvo in deepening US engagement with a continent largely ignored under Republican Donald Trump -- and long viewed in Washington as more of a problem area than a land of opportunity.

"We want to dismantle long-held and often outdated notions of what it means to live, work and invest in Africa," a senior US official told reporters, speaking on condition of anonymity. Harris "believes African innovation and ideas will shape the future of the world," said the official.

The tour is also part of Washington's pushback against growing Chinese and Russian involvement in the resource-rich continent, with US officials touting what they say is the more positive US message. "It's no secret that we are engaged in competition with China very clearly, to compete (with) China in the long term," a senior US official said. Citing "real concerns" about China's use of loans to gain control over weak economies in Africa, the official insisted the United States is not trying to copy Beijing's methods.

"Our relationship with Africa cannot and should not be defined by competition with China," he said, proclaiming an "affirmative agenda in Africa" that leans on public-private partnerships and transparency. Preceding Harris, who lands today in Ghana for the first stop, have been trips to Africa by five of President Joe Biden's cabinet secretaries and First Lady Jill Biden.



The vice president's journey, which will take her to Tanzania, then Zambia, has a special poignancy. She is the first Black person and woman ever in the White House number two job and she visited Zambia as a young girl, when her maternal grandfather, who was from India, worked there. The trip will also help her burnish her foreign policy credentials ahead of what is expected to be Biden's bid for a second term in office -- with her again at his side.

Harris is due to meet with President Nana Akufo-Addo of Ghana, President Samia Hassan of Tanzania and President Hakainde Hichilema of Zambia. Topics will include debt relief, democracy, economic growth, food security, and impacts of Russia's war in Ukraine. A senior official said the Biden administration recognizes the "strategic

importance" of Africa in global issues including climate change, supply chain resilience and also as players in the United Nations.

A big overall focus for Harris on her trip will be youth in this rapidly growing continent, where the average age is just 19 and where an estimated one in four people in the world could be living by 2050. Highlights will include a "major speech" to young people in Ghana and a visit there to Cape Coast Castle, once a slave trading hub. Further stops will include meetings with tech entrepreneurs, digital sector leaders, and groups advancing women in the economy. In a reminder of the deep-rooted -- and ongoing -- unrest involving extremist groups, Harris will lay a wreath to commemorate the 1998 bombing of the US embassy in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.

Taiwan recalls ambassador to Honduras

TAIPEI (AFP): Taiwan recalled its ambassador to Honduras over a visit by Tegucigalpa's foreign minister to China, Taipei's government said in a statement. "Honduras ignored more than 80 years of friendship between (Taiwan and Honduras) when they sent their foreign minister to China, which has seriously damaged the feelings of our government and people," said a foreign ministry statement.

"We have decided to immediately recall our ambassador in Honduras to express our strong dissatisfaction." The announcement came as Honduran Foreign Minister Eduardo Enrique Reina was heading to China to hold talks on the establishment of diplomatic relations with Beijing, government officials said. China considers self-ruled democratic Taiwan as a part of its territory, to be retaken one day - by force, if necessary.

Last week, Honduran President Xiomara Castro ordered Reina to establish diplomatic relations with China, a move that would sever its ties with Taiwan. Under Beijing's "One China" principle, no country may maintain official diplomatic relations with both China and Taiwan. Taipei maintains a similar policy, having cut ties in the past with countries that switched recognition to Beijing. If Honduras does formally switch recognition, it would leave Taiwan with just 13 countries with which it has formal diplomatic ties, having lost several Latin American allies in recent years.

Reina was being accompanied to China by lawmaker Xiomara Zelaya, the daughter of President Castro, three government and diplomatic officials told AFP on condition of anonymity. The Honduran delegation will meet China's Foreign Minister Qin Gang, Minister of the Presidency Rodolfo Pastor told local daily El Heraldo. China's foreign ministry has not confirmed the visit, but spokesman Wang Wenbin said China was "ready" to establish ties with Honduras.

Dominican govt razes homes to erect wall on Haiti border

HAITI (AFP): Leocadio Guzman is one of dozens of residents of La Mara in the Dominican Republic whose house was torn down by the military. Like many others in this impoverished neighborhood, his house stood in the way of an anti-migrant wall his government is erecting along the border with Haiti -- a country with which the Dominican Republic shares an island but very little else.

Where Guzman's house once stood there is now only a wooden plank on the ground with the code "MF 011-5" painted on it in red. Locals presume the MF stands for "muro fronterizo" or border wall -- it is an abbreviation spray painted onto dozens of homes still in the crossfire of a mass demolition that started last November. "When the military came, I was at work. I returned and found the house marked," the 41-year-old told AFP.

Guzman packed up his belongings, took his pregnant wife, and rapidly got out of the way -- moving to a small wooden shack he had built himself in preparation for this very day. Like Guzman, about 30 families of the La Mara and La Bomba neighborhoods of Dajabon province have been uprooted by the state. Another 50-odd households in the neighboring province of Monte Cristi are next in line to make way for the wall that is President Luis Abinader's signature project.

Abinader was elected in 2020 on a promise to curb immigration from Haiti -- a problem-laden neighbor with whom the Dominican Republic has a complicated relationship also tainted by xenophobia. Some half-a-million Haitians live in the Dominican Republic, a nation of some 11 million.

The cross-border migrant flow has increased with criminal gangs

China’s top diplomat: Confident about ties with New Zealand

BEIJING (Reuters): China regards New Zealand as a key partner and has confidence in stable bilateral ties, China's top diplomat Wang Yi said, just as the South Pacific nation showed signs of taking a harder stance on China's presence in the region. China and New Zealand have always respected and trusted each other, and bilateral ties have long been at the forefront of China's relations with developed Western countries, Wang told New Zealand's Foreign Minister Nanaia Mahuta, according to a statement by the Chinese foreign ministry. "China-New Zealand cooperation has great potential," Wang said. Mahuta arrived in China for a four-day trip, the first by a New Zealand minister

since 2019, with her trip seen paving the way for a future visit by Chris Hipkins who became prime minister in January after Jacinda Ardern resigned. New Zealand and China's interactions have remained largely cordial, with the two sides upgrading their free trade pact last year. China remains New Zealand's largest trading partner.

But last year Ardern said New Zealand was "gravely" concerned about the possible militarisation of the Pacific after the Solomon Islands formed a security pact with China. The Solomon Islands and China have consistently denied that their security partnership would allow a naval base. This week, the Solomon Islands said it had awarded a deal to a

Chinese state company to upgrade a port in Honiara. Ahead of her visit, Mahuta she said would advocate "for approaches and outcomes that reflect New Zealand's interests and values, including on human rights."

"I also intend to raise New Zealand's concerns about key regional and global security challenges, including the illegal Russian invasion of Ukraine." Wang told Mahuta that China will continue to play a constructive role in promoting political settlement of the Ukraine crisis, according to the foreign ministry statement. China has long refrained from condemning Russia for its invasion of Ukraine. Moscow refers to its actions as a "special military operation".

Mexico denies cartels control parts of country

MEXICO CITY (Reuters): Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador denied that parts of his country are controlled by drug cartels, responding to recent comments from US Secretary of State Antony Blinken.

Blinken said in a congressional hearing that it was "fair to say" that parts of the country were controlled by cartels instead of the government. "That is false," Lopez Obrador said in a regular news conference. "There is no place in the country that does not have the presence of authorities."

Blinken had also said that the opioid fentanyl coming from Mexico was killing both Americans and Mexicans. Lopez Obrador has denied in recent days that Mexico is responsible for the quantities of the

drug coming into the United States. "More fentanyl reaches the United States and Canada directly than reaches Mexico," Lopez Obrador said last week. The comments also follow a report from the US State Department which said credible evidence existed of human rights abuses such as killings by officials, government-led disappearances and torture in Mexico.

Lopez Obrador had rejected the findings, calling the department "liars". He appeared to take a softer tone against the United States, saying that Blinken, whom he called a good guy, was "just doing his job." Lopez Obrador has pointed to fentanyl being trafficked across the border by US citizens, rather than undocumented migrants, and blamed the crisis in

part on a deterioration of family values and lack of government support for families. The Mexican leader also alleged that the outcry from the United States was politically fueled, coming ahead of the 2024 elections.

A Reuters investigation found that Mexico had dramatically upped drug lab raid numbers conducted during Lopez Obrador's administration, which two security sources and former senior law enforcement figures said are not credible. "I can tell Mr. Blinken, we're constantly destroying labs," Lopez Obrador said. The back-and-forth between the neighboring countries over drug trafficking follows the death of two Americans and a Mexican bystander at the hands of a believed drug gang in the northern border town of Matamoros.

UN accuses Moscow, Kyiv forces of ‘summary executions’ of prisoners

MOSCOW (AFP): The United Nations said it was "deeply concerned" by what it said were summary executions of prisoners of war by both Russian and Ukrainian forces on the battlefield. The allegations came shortly after Kyiv accused Russian forces of killing a captured Ukrainian serviceman who was filmed saying "Glory to Ukraine" before being shot dead.

The head of the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, Matilda Bogner, said that her organisation had recently recorded killings by both sides. "We are deeply concerned about (the) summary execution of up to 25 Russian prisoners of war and persons hors de combat by the Ukrainian armed forces, which we have documented," Bogner said at a press conference in Kyiv.

"This was often perpetrated immediately upon capture on the battlefield," she said. "While we are aware of ongoing investigations by Ukraine authorities into five cases involving 22 victims, we are not aware of any prosecution of the perpetrators," she added. Bogner also expressed "deep" concern over the alleged executions of 15 Ukrainian prisoners by Russian armed forces after their capture.

She said the Wagner mercenary group, which claims to be leading Russia's assault for Bakhmut -- the longest and bloodiest battle of the war -- was responsible for 11 of those killings. Moscow and Kyiv have accused each other of mistreating prisoners of war since Russian President Vladimir Putin invaded a year ago. In response to the UN report, Kyiv's Ministry of Foreign Affairs said it was "unacceptable" to hold the "victim of aggression" responsible.

One UN report issued claimed Ukrainian military personnel had subjected prisoners of war to death threats, mock executions or threats of sexual violence. Some beatings were "purely retaliatory", it said. "In some cases, officers beat POWs saying: 'This is for Bucha'," the mission reported detainees as saying, referring to a town near Kyiv where Russian forces were accused of widespread atrocities. "Before questioning, they showed me an axe handle covered in blood as a warning," the report quoted a Russian POW as saying.

"The questioning lasted for about an hour and they used electricity 5 times, whenever they thought I was lying," the detainee said, according to the report. Ukrainian POWs quoted in the report said they were sub-

jected to torture, sexual violence, a lack of food and water and denied medical attention.

They said they were tortured and ill-treated to extract information or as a form of punishment, the mission said. Ukrainian prisoners reported being beaten with shovels, stabbed, subjected to electric shocks and strangled. "Some of them lost their teeth or fingers, had their ribs, fingers or noses broken," the report said.

"They did not just beat us, they broke us. They used their fists, legs, batons, tasers. There were POWs who had their arms or legs broken," one man was quoted as saying. The Ukrainian parliament's human rights commissioner Dmytro Lubinets said that he was "surprised" by the allegations against Ukrainian troops and said he had not been informed of them in advance. On Telegram, he wrote that he wanted to "know the facts and the indisputable arguments on which the conclusions" of the UN report were based. In a separate statement, Kyiv's Ministry of Foreign Affairs thanked the UN monitors for their work but emphasised that Ukraine "expects that the UN mission will avoid any steps that may be interpreted as equalising the victim and the aggressor".

Frustrated Kenyans voice anger over economic crisis

NAIROBI (AFP): Hempstone Monari's taxi business was just getting going when the wheels fell off his financial future and a Kenyan bank auctioned off his car over the non-payment of a \$9,900 loan. "They took my car even though business was slow," the 29-year-old told AFP, his eyes red from tear gas and several days' stubble on his chin under an orange cloth mask.

Now unemployed and struggling to feed his family of three, he joined hundreds of pro-opposition demonstrators in the capital Nairobi to protest the high cost of living in Kenya. "Life has become difficult", he said, as police and demonstrators exchanged volleys of tear gas and rocks. An economic and political powerhouse in East Africa, Kenya has seen a slew of ambitious infrastructure projects take off in recent years -- but problems are festering beneath the ritzy facade.

Inflation hit 9.2 percent in February, according to the latest government figures. A record drought has left millions hungry, with a sixth rainy season between March and May forecast to fail. The country's currency, the Kenyan shilling, has sunk to historic lows, losing nearly four percent of its value against the dollar in the past month alone, according to the think tank Oxford Economics Africa.

Although the Covid-19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine have contributed to the crisis, protesters like Monari believe their government could do much more to ease their pain. They are now set to stage demonstrations twice a week, throwing down a major challenge to President William Ruto's administration, six months after he took office. Protest proved costly, with Nairobi losing more than half its daily revenue as people kept away from the central business district, the city's governor Johnson Sakaja said.

Deputy President Rigathi Gachagua said the demonstrations cost Kenya \$15 million. Ruto, a young ambitious leader, campaigned relentlessly for the August election on a promise to revive the economy and put money in the pockets of the downtrodden.

But his decision to remove subsidies for fuel and maize flour -- a dietary staple -- has sparked anger and incomprehension. "Honestly, we don't know what tomorrow or next week or next month will look like," Jane Chege, 33, told AFP. Her electronics shop has seen revenues slump by more than half in the past six months.

"Paying rent itself is a hustle. The cost of importing smartphones will soon be unaffordable for small businesses like mine." Economists say the future looks grim. "Our short-term outlook remains tilted to the downside," Shani Smit-Longton of Oxford Economics told AFP, adding that the country would continue to suffer from a lack of foreign exchange for up to 18 months. The dry weather spell is expected to dampen agricultural prospects, while the vital tourism industry, which accounts for almost 10 percent of GDP, may take a hit from the protests.

The weakening currency, now trading at around 140 shillings to the dollar, has also dealt a blow to debt-ridden Kenya's loan repayment costs, which have ballooned. Public debt currently amounts to about nine trillion shillings (around \$70 billion), according to central bank figures, nearing the 10-trillion-shilling ceiling set last year by parliament. The treasury has proposed to replace the ceiling with a debt anchor of 55 percent of GDP.

Until the government restructures the debt, the economic situation is unlikely to change, economist Reginald Kadzutu told AFP. "We have been running an economy on

debt that has not been that productive," he said, adding that the economy had been "driven by government infrastructure spending." The International Monetary Fund is set to review the country's credit facility in May, with more loans expected to be disbursed in June. "The problem is that we are going for excessive debt, we are borrowing to repay debt," Kadzutu said. Nonetheless, the World Bank projects that Kenya's economy will grow by 5.2 percent "notwithstanding current global and domestic shocks". Ruto meanwhile has sought to reassure investors and sent a warning shot to the demonstrators.

Venezuelan gangster killed

CARACAS (Reuters): A man accused of leading a prominent drug-running ring has been killed by authorities in northeastern Venezuela, the country's interior minister said. Carlos Enrique Gomez Rodriguez, also known as "El Conejo" or "The Rabbit," was wanted for a string of crimes, leading police to offer \$1 million for information related to his whereabouts last month.

Gomez was killed in the town of Irapa, in Sucre state, Interior Minister Remigio Ceballos said in a brief broadcast on state television. Authorities had been tracking him for months, Ceballos added, but did not indicate whether a tipster had led them to Gomez.

Gomez is accused of having led a gang which trafficked drugs and weapons in the central state of Aragua, and was wanted on charges of terrorism, extortion, kidnapping and homicide. Authorities say Gomez's gang had recently attacked police and the National Guard in Aragua.

Tanzania pilots failed to heed warnings before crash

DODOMA (AFP): Tanzanian authorities said that the pilots who flew a Precision Air plane which crashed into Lake Victoria last November failed to heed warnings from an automatic "pull up" alarm system. Nineteen people died when the plane plunged into Africa's largest lake on November 6 last year, with police blaming bad weather for Tanzania's worst aviation accident in decades.

President Samia Suluhu Hassan promised a formal investigation into the disaster as anger erupted over the government's handling of the rescue effort. In the second preliminary report to be published since the accident, the transport ministry said that an enhanced ground proximity warning system (EGPWS) issued three alerts "about the excessively high descent

rate". "The warning was not followed by corrective action of the flight crew," the ministry's aircraft accident and incident investigation branch said.

"Instead, the flight crew pushed the control column into a nose down position." The EGPWS alerts the cockpit if a plane is in danger of flying into the ground or hitting something. The report said the pilots were flying in bad weather and in conditions marked by poor visibility, which "may have contributed to the failure to react to terrain warnings during the final approach."

"This type of weather is common around the Bukoba airport and is well known to pilots," it said, adding that the aircraft circled for about 20 minutes before its descent. An earlier report published by the ministry soon after the acci-

dent said the rescue effort was too slow, and that more passengers would likely have survived had emergency workers been better prepared and equipped to carry out their duties. Fishermen, who were the first to arrive on the scene, used canoes to pluck people to safety after a crew member unlocked a rear door, allowing survivors to get out.

But most of the victims were in the submerged front of the plane, while the two pilots were unable to escape the cockpit. Investigators said the cause of the crash was still being probed. Precision Air, which is partly owned by Kenya Airways, said 39 passengers and four crew members were on board flight PW 494 from financial capital Dar es Salaam to the northwestern city of Bukoba.

Farmers flood their fields in order to save them

HELM, California (Reuters): When Don Cameron first intentionally flooded his central California farm in 2011, pumping excess stormwater onto his fields, fellow growers told him he was crazy.

Today, California water experts see Cameron as a pioneer. His experiment to control flooding and replenish the ground water has become a model that policy makers say others should emulate. With the drought-stricken state suddenly inundated by a series of rainstorms, California's outdated infrastructure has let much of the stormwater drain into the Pacific Ocean. Cameron estimated his operation is returning 8,000 to 9,000 acre-feet of water back to the ground monthly during this exceptionally wet year, from both rainwater and melted snowpack. That would be enough water for 16,000 to 18,000 urban households in a year.

"When we started doing this, our neighbors thought we were absolutely crazy. Everyone we talked to thought we would kill the crop. And lo and behold, believe me, it turned out great," said

Cameron, vice president and general manager of Terra Nova Ranch, a 6,000-acre (2,400-hectare) farm growing wine grapes, almonds, walnuts, pistachios, olives and other crops in the San Joaquin Valley, the heart of California's \$50 billion agricultural industry. If more farmers would inundate their fields rather than divert precipitation into flood channels, that excess could seep underground and get stored for when drought conditions return.

California swings between disastrous drought and raging floodwaters. This season has been especially rainy, with 12 atmospheric rivers pounding California since late December, placing greater importance on flood control. More wet weather is forecast in the coming week. Terra Nova's basins are filled with 1.5 to 3.5 feet of water, Cameron said. He plans to eventually flood 530 acres of pistachio trees and 150 acres of wine grapes plus another 350 acres that are planted only when excess floodwater is available.

The state Department of Water Resources provided \$5

million and Terra Nova another \$8 million for the project, which includes a pumping system. So far there has been virtually zero return for the company, Cameron said, though it may acquire future water rights for its groundwater contributions. Cameron "is definitely what we call the godfather of on-farm recharge. He's really the pioneer who began doing it first," said Ashley Boren, CEO of Sustainable Conservation, an environmental group with a focus on supporting sustainable groundwater management.

This mimicking of nature - letting water flow across the landscape - is the most cost-effective way to manage peak flood flows, experts say, while banking the surplus for drier days. "It's not only going to benefit us, it will benefit our neighbors," Cameron said. Cameron began his 30-year-old passion project before the state passed the Sustainable Groundwater Management Act (SGMA) of 2014, a law that sought to avoid a looming disaster from overdrafts.

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President's Credo and rift between the two Big

RECENTLY, President Dr. Arif Alvi wrote a letter to Prime Minister Mian Shehbaz Sharif, emphasizing that all relevant executive authorities of federal and provincial governments should be directed to refrain from abuse of human rights and also to assist the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in holding general elections in the provinces of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa within the given timeframe set the constitution and further endorsed by the Supreme Court of Pakistan. President Alvi noted that it appeared that federal and caretaker governments in Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa advised the heads of departments concerned to indicate their inability to provide the necessary support for holding general elections. He referred to Article 220 of the Constitution which clearly states the duties of all executive authorities in the Federation and in the Provinces to assist the Election Commission in the discharge of its functions. According to the President, the glaring violations of fundamental and human rights took place in the recent past that were sufficiently highlighted by the print, electronic and social media and needed to be brought to the prime minister's notice to ensure remedial measures and preventive action.

The President and Prime Minister of Pakistan are not on normal working terms, are resistant to their direct contact, and use the public domain for their mutual communication, advice, and sensitization of his immediate confederate and vice versa even in sensitive issues relating to the governance, democracy and the rule of the law. In fact, both top-ranking public representatives are more influenced by their political motives and ego than by national obligations attached to their high offices, national interest, and public well-being. The recent open letter of the Country's President to the Premier is in fact a charge sheet that not only accused the incumbent government of coaxing or using its authority for sabotaging the electoral process in two federating units through no provision of funds, necessary administrative support, and security troops to the Election Commission essential for the conduct of secure and credible elections in the provinces. Apparently, the President's proposition was justified because the wrongful and politically motivated conduct of the sitting rulers and persistent opposition of government departments in the conduct of polls in Punjab and KP forced the ECP to postpone its plans for an early election in two provinces.

The second important point raised by the President in his letter to the Premier was the violation of human rights, and reduced space for freedom of press, speech, and assembly by the incumbent government, which has varied perspectives and manifestations by the treasury and the PTI-led opposition as well as the public. Although the incumbent rulers have squeezed space for media freedoms and positive criticism through the introduction of multiple laws, and victimized their opponents on political grounds. However, the ongoing anti-Army campaign on social media, name-calling and harassment of government officials, and condemnable violence at Judicial complexes in Islamabad and Lahore as well as PTI-Police clashes at Lahore's Zaman Park are the issues for which the administration could not be blamed solely and the PTI has played unlawfully for making up of that catastrophe. In fact, bulldozing the writ of the law, offering resistance to the purposeful functioning of the LEAs, and gathering political crowds inside the court complex are neither fundamental rights of the citizens, political workers, and parties nor come under freedom of assembly, expression, and civil liberties. All political groups must ensure that Political and civic activities must be governed by the law and should not obstruct official work and citizenry life at any cost.

The honorable President has rightly shared his concerns regarding the state of affairs in the country that merits due attention from the executives and relevant ministries/institutions in the country. Realistically, the country has struck into unceasing economic turmoil while political disagreement has further aggravated the situation. The recent events have badly tarnished the image of the country and made a joke of Pakistani democracy at the global level. Dr. Alvi owes a unique position to play a bridging role during his chaotic situation to forge a consensus on upcoming elections and relevant electoral laws, so the nation gets out of the current crisis and moves toward political and economic stability.

Seizing the moment in Yemen through the GCC-EU partnership

THE diplomatic breakthrough announced between Saudi Arabia and Iran in Beijing on March 10 has raised hopes of progress toward a political solution in Yemen, where Iran has sustained the Houthis rebels with funding, training and arms, including drones and ballistic and anti-shipping missiles.

To seize on this rare opportunity, the European Council on Foreign Relations and the current Swedish EU presidency convened a meeting on March 17 in Brussels to explore how the EU and Gulf Cooperation Council could work together to move things forward. The meeting included officials and experts from Yemen, the GCC and the EU, in addition to the UN, US and Sweden's special envoys to Yemen. The systematic engagement between the GCC and Yemen started in 2001, when Yemen joined the GCC institutions on education, health, labor and sports, followed later by six additional organizations. In 2002, the Sanaa Accord was signed to align Yemen's economic laws with those of the GCC. In 2006, a joint GCC-Yemen committee was tasked with studying Yemen's development needs and ways of integrating its economy into the GCC's. The UN, World Bank, OECD and others helped in that effort. The committee agreed on a 20-year timeframe for integration and, in 2006, mobilized about \$6 billion, 70 percent of which came from GCC donors, for Yemen's development needs.

That process of GCC-Yemen integration was partially sidelined in 2011 as focus shifted to managing the political crisis resulting from widespread protests.

Through the GCC Initiative, a power-sharing agreement was reached in 2011, with early elections and a transitional government in early 2012, following which the joint committee mobilized another \$9 billion to fund the transition, with 80 percent coming from GCC sources, especially Saudi Arabia. The GCC also helped fund

Dr. Abdel Aziz Aluwaisheg

providing urgent assistance to the millions of Yemenis who became dependent on outside help.

In March and April 2022, the GCC hosted in Riyadh about 1,000 Yemenis from the government, parliament and civil society. Although the Houthis were invited, they

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Last year, the two blocs agreed on a new strategic partnership framework that could serve as a mechanism to cooperate on Yemen, utilizing this rare moment of optimism after the Saudi-Iran breakthrough and the Saudi-Houthi talks in Sanaa. I presented six main priorities for discussion in the Brussels meeting last week. The first was sup-

Council unity and empowering it to manage the economy and strengthen state institutions.

Fourth was humanitarian assistance. During last month's pledging conference for Yemen in Geneva, only a fraction of the UN's funding goal was met, as donors shifted their attention to the Ukraine war and the aftermath of the Turkiye-Syria earthquake. Fifth was development assistance. While Saudi Arabia and the UAE have continued to provide significant development aid, most other donors have focused their efforts only on humanitarian assistance.

The final priority was security. The GCC and EU have recently agreed to increase their security cooperation. A good place to start is maritime security, safeguarding the freedom of navigation and reducing arms smuggling to Yemen. The guiding principle in all of this should be promoting GCC-Yemen integration as a goal. The EU could help maintain that focus, as it is the paramount example of successful integration, while taking into consideration Yemen and the GCC's special particularities.

Despite many obstacles, the GCC and Yemen are destined to integrate. Their shared geography, history and culture make it inevitable. Economic logic and the complementarity between the two sides argue for cooperation and against conflict. They need to complete the process of integration that was started 22 years ago and gained significant momentum between 2006 and 2011, but has since derailed. The GCC-EU partnership could serve as a useful tool to overcome the inevitable challenges of integration and make it happen faster.

Arab News

The GCC has sided with the internationally recognized government. Despite the war, Yemen's further integration with the GCC nevertheless remained a stated goal, although it became more difficult to pursue as focus and resources shifted toward peace-making and providing urgent assistance to the millions of Yemenis who became dependent on outside help. In March and April 2022, the GCC hosted in Riyadh about 1,000 Yemenis from the government, parliament and civil society. Although the Houthis were invited, they chose to stay away. The 10-day talks resulted in a new power-sharing arrangement - the Presidential Leadership Council. A truce was announced during the talks and that has held since April 2, 2022, which is unprecedented in this conflict. But despite the UN and the Presidential Leadership Council's valiant efforts, there has been no movement toward a political solution, while the economy has stagnated and the humanitarian situation remains worrisome. The Saudi-Iranian deal may change all that and create the momentum needed to break through the obstacles that have plagued Yemen's peace-making. While strictly speaking an agreement to resume diplomatic ties and reopen embassies, the deal has a greater symbolic and psychological impact, not only in Yemen but throughout the region.

and organize the National Dialogue Conference in 2013-2014. However, with Iran's support, the Houthis overthrew the government in September 2014 and Yemen descended into the civil war that has continued ever since. The GCC has sided with the internationally recognized government. Despite the war, Yemen's further integration with the GCC nevertheless remained a stated goal, although it became more difficult to pursue as focus and resources shifted toward peace-making and

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in Yemen but throughout the region. Direct Saudi-Houthi talks have also contributed to the new cooperative atmosphere. This new climate may explain the sudden conclusion of a prisoner swap deal. On Monday, agreement was reached between the government and the Houthis to release 877 detainees after more than four years of negotiations.

Like the GCC, the EU has expressed a deep interest in helping Yemen transition from war to peace, reconciliation and stability.

porting UN efforts to maintain the informal truce. Ramadan and the holidays make it likely to continue, but it should be formalized and, if possible, turned into a ceasefire.

The second priority was UN-mediated political talks, which have so far failed to make progress. The prisoner swap earlier this week was significant, but it should be followed by other steps, including progress on the Taiz blockade and Hodeidah revenue sharing. Third was Presidential Leadership

The shutdown of SVB is more of the same for Millennials

Jill Filipovic

THE shutdown of Silicon Valley Bank has a lot of Americans understandably worried. Chaos and tension are palpable. The Biden administration is scrambling to stabilize the banking sector and many populist voters are chafing at the idea of what they fear could be another bailout, while some conservatives are bizarrely blaming the breakdown on "wokeism" because the bank's entire board wasn't White and male. And then there are Millennials like me, stressed but somewhat resigned as we conclude: This again.

While "Millennial" is often treated as shorthand for "young," the oldest of my generation are in our 40s, and our lives are not nearly as stable as we would hope. That's in part because of a series of crises that have disrupted our earning and wealth-building power. The financial crash of 2008 happened just as many of us were entering our working years, and as the first in, we were often the first out. The rest of our adult lives have looked like this: instability, job losses, recovery, reversal. While many of us managed to

reenter the labor force after losing jobs, our earnings have taken permanent hits. We lost a larger proportion of our earnings from the Great Recession than any other adult generation, and by entering the workforce at a time of cut wages and more competition, we were set up for a lifetime of lower earnings and less savings.

As we entered our 20s and 30s, housing prices skyrocketed, putting home ownership largely out of reach. At the same time, jobs were increasingly concentrated in large cities - the places where housing costs, including rent, were highest. As many of us poured huge chunks of our take-home pay into our monthly rental costs and our astronomical student loan payments, there wasn't much left over to save for a down payment. With interest rates now high, the promise of home ownership feels even further away for many Millennials. We remain far behind Boomers, Gen Xers, and even members of the Silent Generation when it comes to home ownership in one's 20s, 30s and 40s. We live with our parents longer; when we move out, we are more likely to rent than to

buy.

Then, Covid-19 hit. The pandemic was a disaster for everyone, and was deadliest for the oldest Americans. But it was financially calamitous for working parents and for single moms of young children in particular. And who were most of America's working parents of young children during Covid-19? Millennials. Many of us struggled to work for pay and care for kids who were suddenly home fulltime; it was Millennial (and some older Gen Z) mothers who were the most likely to lose or be forced to quit their jobs, interrupting their earnings and career trajectories in crucial years - money and opportunities they will never get back.

And now, another potential crash on the horizon, this one coming in our prime working years. Already, the tech industry - with its many Millennial-owned businesses, and an employer of so many Millennials - has been laying off workers en masse. Meta just announced it is terminating another 10,000 workers, after eliminating 11,000 in November. Now, with the failure of Silicon

Valley Bank, we see the threat of even greater disaster at worst, and yet more instability to cope with at best. And we wonder: Why haven't the people in charge worked harder to secure our futures?

Millennials have unusual politics in the sense that we are a broadly liberal generation that has not grown more conservative with age. While older adults tacked right as they hit middle age, Millennials have not. This is not a coincidence.

American Millennials were born into the Ronald Reagan's America, one in which the safety net had been badly punctured and the stage was set for radical inequality to take root. As we entered the world, America diverged from our economic peers in Europe - our health care costs skyrocketed while our health outcomes and life expectancy stagnated. Many European nations implemented generous paid parental leave policies, invested in public transport and planned for affordable childcare while the US simply did not; American special interests pushed both parties to strip away the guardrails that

kept banks from taking unforgivable risks and kept things like college affordable.

Millennials have paid the price. While we've done everything right - we went to college in record numbers, delayed marriage and childbearing, spend less frivolously and save more diligently - we have still found ourselves entering middle age feeling like financially insecure 20-somethings. And we are wising up to the fact that this isn't our fault - that it wasn't the avocado toast. We see Baby Boomer politicians who refuse to step down and make way for the next generation, and who also refuse to invest in our lives and futures. We look across the pond or up north and see our European and Canadian peers who get months off when they have babies, who are not drowning in student loan debt, who can go to the doctor without worrying about overdrawing their checking accounts or torpedoing themselves into bankruptcy, whose toddlers are eating fresh vegetables in free or affordable high-quality daycare and who go on long paid vacations every summer.

We see Republicans in

particular who try to distract us by fearmongering about drag shows and gay penguins while they keep throwing our lives into precarity. Former President Donald Trump, notably, rolled back some of the regulations put in place after the 2008 financial crisis, opening the door to this new one, and it's Republicans who are fighting student debt relief all the way up to the Supreme Court. We are staring down the possibility of yet another crisis, again caused by a feckless and greedy financial industry and a Republican Party that has put the interests of banks over the basic stability and wellbeing of the rest of us. I don't speak for every Millennial, but I certainly hope President Joe Biden does everything in his power to keep the US economy, and by extension the global one, stable and afloat.

I realize that may require some politically unpopular choices. But Millennials have borne the brunt of these repeated failures, which threaten to keep us broke, stressed and financially unstable for the rest of our lives. And we deserve a long-overdue bailout.

The food system revolution is coming

Robin Willoughby & Nico Muzi

DISRUPTION is coming to the agriculture sector. Around the world, livestock farmers are leaving the land, policymakers are targeting the harmful environmental and social effects of industrial meat production, and consumers are shifting away from meat to embrace healthier, more sustainable alternatives. With the sector approaching a crossroads, decision-makers in government, industry and civil society will need to heed the lessons from major transitions in other industries and start preparing.

The preparation will require a careful inventory of farmers, workers and consumers' needs. While farmers are growing older and leaving the land for other pursuits or retirement, the agriculture sector is struggling to attract new entrants - and not just in richer industrialized countries. For every farm man-

ager under 40, there are three over the age of 65 in Europe; and from sub-Saharan Africa to Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean, the number of older people living in rural areas is increasing, while the number of young people declines. At the same time, farms are becoming larger and small farm operations are being squeezed. Owing to the challenging economics of farming and the power of a small number of giant industry incumbents, farms are being consolidated in the name of efficiency and economies of scale. As a result, the EU lost more than a third of its farms, and 40 percent of its livestock farms, from 2005 to 2020. Policymakers are thus left to consider whether and how to protect family farms and how to avoid the risks of animal welfare violations, poor working conditions and diseases that are inherent in industrial livestock farming.

Policymakers are also waking up to the compelling body of evidence about industrial meat production's environmental harms. While agriculture accounts for nearly a third of all greenhouse gas emissions, livestock alone (particularly cattle) contribute nearly 15 percent. Moreover, animal agriculture is the main cause of deforestation and biodiversity loss. Forests are razed to free up land not just for animal grazing but also for the additional crops needed to feed those animals. Beef production alone takes up some 60 percent of land used for agriculture, even though it contributes less than 2 percent of total calories consumed globally. In Spain, factory farm pollution has become so pervasive that pig manure has contaminated nearly a quarter of all ground and surface water in the country. No wonder regulators are

urgently seeking ways to target livestock pollution and produce more on less land. Given the increasing risk that infectious diseases will spread from animals to humans (zoonoses) through industrial livestock farming, the impetus for tighter regulation will only grow.

While livestock and agriculture have traditionally been excluded from most emissions reduction schemes, policymakers in Denmark, the Netherlands and New Zealand are already working to close this gap, and many other countries will soon follow suit. The question now is not whether there will be increased regulation of the livestock industry, but what shape and form it will take. Farmers and companies alike should be prepared to adapt to changes that are now inevitable. Finally, consumers, too, are shifting away from meat and dairy. Over the past decade, the

average person's meat consumption has decreased by almost 17 percent in the UK and by 11 percent in Germany. Notwithstanding a recent slowdown, there is still growth in the uptake of alternative proteins - a food source that produces only a tiny fraction of the negative environmental and animal welfare effects of traditional meat products. Plant-based meat and milk sales are already trending up across the board in the EU, but also in countries like Thailand and South Africa. When these products reach taste and price parity with meat, their uptake by consumers could accelerate very quickly indeed.

Public policy also has a role to play. Livestock farming tends to be heavily subsidized in many countries, owing to the sector's low margins and high levels of debt. As sales fall, declining revenue is likely to have significant welfare implications for farmers and other workers tied to the industri-

al meat production systems. Given the complexities of these interacting trends, policymakers and corporate leaders need to start getting in front of this issue now. The experience of other sectors that have begun decarbonizing - not least energy - shows that a planned and guided transition is always better than an ad hoc, unmanaged process.

One need look no further than last year's farmer protests in the Netherlands or New Zealand to see how abruptly climate policies can be disrupted when workers and communities feel left out. Unfortunately, we still have only a limited understanding of how best to integrate policy and corporate action to reduce food system emissions, while also protecting livelihoods. Since resisting change is not an option, policymakers and corporate leaders would do well to start thinking about how they will manage it in the coming years.

How the Tories might win the next general election

EDI Rama, the Prime Minister of Albania, is an unusually important ally for Rishi Sunak. Not so long ago, about 1 per cent of Albanian men were in Britain applying for asylum, accounting for almost half of all small-boat arrivals. Just before Christmas, a deal was struck to have them flown back to Tirana to be assessed there. Once the planes started to take off, Albania's small-boat arrivals collapsed - almost overnight. To Sunak, this was a breakthrough moment: a sign of how quickly things can change.

Rama was in London this week to strengthen the alliance - the first, Sunak hopes, of many. Boris Johnson struck a deal with Paul Kagame of Rwanda to deport asylum seekers, but his failure to make legal preparations meant his plan was halted by the European Court of Human Rights. The ECHR tends to pick its battles and not contradict specific laws made by member states, so Sunak is changing the law. The hope in No 10 is that the first flight for Rwanda takes off in summer - and that it will change everything. It's a gamble, but the whole Sunak premiership is a massive gamble. He recognises that he has a eight-to-one chance of winning next year's election, so needs to pull off the seemingly impossible.

His pledge to "stop the small boats" certainly fits that description. More than 40,000 arrived on them last year and the rate shows no sign of slowing. "He won't just fail, he'll be humiliated," says one former leadership contender. "We'll end up with even more arriving." But if he succeeds, it could be a sword-from-the-stone moment. It would underline his main election claim: to be the man who gets things done. It's hard to overstate public concern over small boats. It has been a visible sign of Britain losing control of the borders, being outwitted by people-smugglers and overwhelmed by sheer numbers. Some 166,000 are being (slowly) processed, of whom a third are staying in 400 hotels at a cost of £6 million-a-day. "My constituents are open-minded," says one Cabinet member. "But when two

local hotels are booked up for a year by the Home Office for asylum seekers, most of them Albanian men, people start to ask what's going on." The Home Office has recently been making decent progress in its Rwandan deportation case, having won in the High Court, and is now delayed only by appeals. The plan

accommodate anyone who arrived with a "well-founded fear of persecution". Harder when 120 million are on the move and far more can now afford the £5,000 to £15,000 typically charged by people-smugglers.

And this - the sheer amount of money - is the real game-changer. The United Nations reckons the

It's hard to overstate public concern over small boats. It has been a visible sign of Britain losing control of the borders, being outwitted by people-smugglers and overwhelmed by sheer numbers. Some 166,000 are being (slowly) processed, of whom a third are staying in 400 hotels at a cost of £6 million-a-day. "My constituents are open-minded," says one Cabinet member. "But when two local hotels are booked up for a year by the Home Office for asylum seekers, most of them Albanian men, people start to ask what's going on." The Home Office has recently been making decent progress in its Rwandan deportation case, having won in the High Court, and is now delayed only by appeals.

is to start the Rwanda deportations not with new arrivals but the easiest cases: rejected applicants whose case failed at every stage. And the ECHR? It is, at heart, a political court. And one unlikely to resist once it becomes clear that there is a European consensus emerging on mass deportation. Norway has been doing this for a while. Denmark reached its own deal with Rwanda shortly after Britain did, and even Germany has now started a "repatriation offensive" with a minister assigned to overseeing it. The whole legal architecture of asylum law, governed by the 1951 Refugee Convention, is creaking. It was, once, feasible for countries to

human trafficking industry is worth \$7 billion, all scraped together by those fleeing either persecution or poverty. All desperate enough to risk death by going to criminal gangs if there are no legal routes - as is, all too often, the case with Britain. So Sunak's opponent is not, really, refugees: Britain helps thousands at home and far more abroad. The opponent is a well-resourced criminal network exploiting every weakness in the UK system.

And this is what makes Sunak confident: if they're a business, he says, then he'll break the business model - as he did with Albanian arrivals. As things stand, non-Albanians arriving illegally in

Britain face no realistic risk of deportation. But if that changes - and the world can see planes taking off for Rwanda - it's no longer worth the huge cost of transit. The demand dries up, as it did for the old lorry stowaway passage model after the introduction of proper scanners. The hope in No10 is that this would happen quickly: perhaps even by the end of this year. But there's one major missing element to the Sunak strategy. If he's going to close off illegal routes then he needs to improve the legal ones. He could pledge to settle one, even two genuine asylum seekers in the UK for every Rwandan deportation. The parents of Nadhim Zahawi and Priti Patel both fled persecution, arriving here from Iraq and Uganda respectively. How would they have done so, if they had to leave now? This needs to be about how, not whether, Britain discharges its duty to the world's persecuted and displaced.

So Sunak ought to frame the debate in those terms: that he's not just dealing with small boats but creating a new asylum framework. He ought not to be afraid to boast about how many refugees are already helped abroad by UK foreign aid - and how the cost of helping one person at home can help 30 overseas. This is about stamping out criminality, not asylum. When Sunak took over, some polls put the Tories 30 percentage points behind Labour. Now, it's closer to 15 points. The Northern Ireland agreement, the San Diego deal with Joe Biden over Aukus, the unexpected SNP implosion - all have given the Prime Minister a decent run of luck. If it keeps going, it's not impossible to envisage Labour's lead narrowing to single digits. After which, a fifth Tory term starts to look feasible.

Earlier this month, Sunak spoke from a podium in No10 with "stop the boats" written on top. The day before, some 197 asylum seekers had disembarked from such boats. It's not too much of an exaggeration to say that his entire re-election hopes now hang on this very long shot. Will he pull it off? It's still unlikely. But for the first time, I can see how it's possible.



Riyadh-Tehran deal: Iran has a great opportunity

If the Iranian government continues to honor the agreement that it reached with Saudi Arabia this month, it has a great opportunity to improve the country's economy. Saudi Finance Minister Mohammed Al-Jadaan was last week asked how soon he thinks the Kingdom might start making investments in Iran and vice versa. He replied: "When people really stick to the principles of what was agreed, I think that could happen very quickly. Our aim, and I think this has been made very clear previously by our leadership, is to have a region that is stable, that is able to provide for its people, and prosper. And there is no reason for that not to happen."

Foreign investments are critical for any country, particularly the Islamic Republic in these critical times as it seeks to boost its economy. According to ResearchFDI, a foreign investment can "stimulate a target country's economic development and create a more conducive environment for companies, the investor, and stimulate the local community and economy." The Canadian market research firm added that FDI "creates new jobs and more opportunities as investors build new companies in foreign countries.

This can lead to an increase in income and more purchasing power to locals, which in turn leads to an overall boost in targeted economies." The Iranian government is not opposed to foreign investments. In fact, Tehran has long attempted to attract foreign investments. For example, after the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action nuclear deal was reached in 2015 and UN

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

Security Council sanctions against Tehran were lifted, the Islamic Republic actively tried to facilitate foreign investments. Then Minister of Industry, Mines and Trade Mohammad Reza Nematzadeh said: "The government (and) the parliament are trying to remove all the obstacles for free investment and for reducing interference of government in private investment."

A report by Reuters at the time also stated that the Iranian government had "offered to sell state assets to foreigners, said it would cut the government's role in the economy and pledged a tight monetary policy as it sought to attract billions of dollars of investment from abroad after over a decade of isolation." In fact, many foreign companies made business deals with Iran after the nuclear agreement. For example, French car manufacturer PSA Group signed a deal worth nearly a half billion dollars with Iran Khodro and Total signed a contract to buy 150,000 to 200,000 barrels of oil per day from Tehran. Once the nuclear deal was reached, foreign countries and companies appeared to be rushing to rekindle business with the Islamic Republic, which had effectively been cut off from global trade.

The Iranian government reciprocated this interest in conducting business with other countries in many areas, including technology, manufacturing, gas and oil. After the nuclear deal, several international oil companies, including Shell, BP and Eni, expressed an interest in returning to Iran's oil market. Among European countries, Germany and France were the first to rush to rekindle

business with the Islamic Republic. Sigmar Gabriel, Germany's economic minister and vice chancellor at the time, visited Iran in 2015 along with a business delegation.

Iranian leaders also planned to strengthen their airplane fleet. After the nuclear deal was reached, Mohammed Khodakarami, the director of Iran's Civil Aviation Organization, stated that "Iran will buy a total of 80 to 90 planes a year from the two aviation giants (Airbus and Boeing) in the first phase of renovating its air fleet." Iran has great potential for foreign investments. The first appealing sector in Iran is the energy sector: oil and gas. The Islamic Republic has the world's fourth-biggest proven crude oil reserves and the second-largest natural gas reserves.

Additional enticing sectors are Iran's consumer and technology markets. At more than 80 million, it has the second-largest population in the Middle East and is in the top 20 in the world. What is more intriguing regarding the consumer market is that more than 60 percent of the population are under 30 years of age. Iran also has a highly educated population but suffers from a high level of brain drain. Even under economic sanctions, Iranians spent more than \$75 billion on food, more than \$20 billion on clothes and \$18.5 billion on tourism in 2012. Finally, the Islamic Republic of Iran is considered to be the world's largest untapped emerging market. If the Iranian government sticks to its new agreement with Saudi Arabia, it will enhance its legitimacy and bring the country out of isolation, offering great economic opportunities, particularly from foreign investments.

Why ‘Ted Lasso’ belongs at White House

ON Monday, the White House hosted cast members from the Apple TV+ show "Ted Lasso" for a discussion of mental health awareness. It was a genial pairing of President Joe Biden, who's touted plans for expanding mental health care in his "Unity" agenda, and "Lasso" creator and star Jason Sudeikis, whose titular soccer coach has become for many a beacon of bipartisan empathy in the TV landscape. In the show's second season, his character struggled with panic attacks and began talking to a therapist about anxiety.

"We shouldn't be afraid to ask for help ourselves," Sudeikis said in the White House press room. "That does take a lot, especially when it's something that has such a negative stigma to it, such as mental health, and it doesn't need to be that way." Yes, of course, agreed. Yet watching clips of the event, my main takeaway was: Truly, how is there still a stigma around mental illness? Could anything, at this point, be more ubiquitous than people struggling with anxiety and depression? Find me someone whose life is untouched by these things, and I'll show you an independently wealthy person who's been doing nothing but watching "The Great British Baking Show" for the past seven years.

Statistics, and most of the experts, will tell you that large

swaths of this country's population are not okay. US Surgeon General Vivek Murthy calls mental illness "the defining public health crisis of our time." Who is suffering the most? Teens. Teen girls, particularly. LGBTQ+ people. Transgender and nonbinary people, especially young people. Women. Gen Z, millennials. People of color. Anyone with a job in the US. Anyone struggling with their finances. A whole lot of the population, in other words.

And we all know this to be true, don't we? Last October, a KFF/CNN Mental Health in America survey reported that "an overwhelming majority of the public (90%) think there is a mental health crisis in the US today." And yet, when Senator John Fetterman sought inpatient treatment for clinical depression last month, his openness about the diagnosis was still seen (and, thankfully, largely lauded) as unusually forthright, with the White House calling his actions "brave." And this is true!

But how depressing (so to speak) that we still have to frame it that way. A handful of other politicians in this country and around the world have disclosed similar struggles in recent years, though their stories are still singular enough that every such event goes through its own cycle of praise for

the sheer courage of the openness. The Lasso-Biden summit at least was well-timed, arriving shortly after a baffling study in the British Medical Journal announced that during the pandemic, "changes in general mental health, anxiety symptoms, and depression symptoms have been minimal to small with no changes detected in most analyses."

To which I (and lots of other people) can only say: Really? Social media responded with an impressive and bleakly hilarious torrent of suggestions to the contrary, some of the best of which are helpfully rounded up here. So many people took issue that Twitter added an advisory that "the review admits that it was lacking in data for many vulnerable groups, and that the findings in it can't necessarily be applied to everyone." Or, as one commenter put it, "Yes except for women and young people and the poor. Great study."

You might think Republicans would come out in force with a show of support for the Biden-Lasso summit, purporting to be big fans of this topic. But no: Members of the party that reliably uses mental illness as a talking-point distraction from any discussion of gun control after yet another mass shooting still managed to find fault with the Biden White

House for holding a PR event dedicated to that very thing. Newt Gingrich, who has written and spoken out about the importance of mental health treatment, slammed the Lasso event as "shallow" on a Fox News appearance, calling the Biden administration a "situation comedy." And Texas Congresswoman Beth Van Duyne tweeted of the event, "What the hell is Biden doing with his time?"

The criticism feels out of touch. Yes, Ted Lasso is a fictional character and yes, "Ted Lasso" is a comedy; it's also one of Apple's most popular shows, with what Politico has referred to as a "strange bipartisan appeal" that's led to its being mentioned frequently by politicians from both sides of the aisle. And judging from White House spokesperson Karine Jean-Pierre's reaction, the cast's appearance Monday drew a record number of reporters to the press room and yielded a ton of coverage, all of which included Sudeikis' comments about mental health. I'd argue that goes farther, in terms of sheer messaging, than any straightforward political comments on the subject. It's not the substantive action we need to make mental health care widely accessible. Yet. But it's still a fairly savvy way to get a wide range of Americans thinking and talking about it, which seems like a decent step forward.

CNN

and then send it back in the same way. Women have also not given up on employment. Despite restrictions and harassment, women continue to run their own businesses - such as beauty parlours and cosmetics stores - and some even work as street vendors. Women also continue to work as nurses and doctors in hospitals and teachers at elementary schools.

Afghan women abroad also contribute to the struggle. A number of activists, journalists and former officials who fled the country work tirelessly to keep the Afghan women's cause on the international agenda. They speak up about the imprisonment and torture Afghan women have faced and challenge the Taliban's claims that its decision to restrict women is based on religious considerations. This pressure is contributing to the continuing international reluctance to recognise the Taliban government and normalise relations with it. Indeed, Afghan women have demonstrated incredible bravery, resilience and dignity in their fight for their rights. They are challenging an armed group and a merciless government that many Afghan men have failed to stand up to. I know that as my girls grow up, they will have plenty of Afghan heroines to look up to. The world needs to recognise these women and girls' courage and support them in their fight. They more than deserve the Nobel Peace Prize.

Aljazeera

Hujjatullah Zia

Afghan women deserve a Nobel Peace Prize

OVER the past few weeks, there has been a vivid debate among Afghans on which prominent individual from among our women compatriots deserves a Nobel Peace Prize. Some have suggested women who held official positions before the Taliban takeover of Kabul in 2021. Others have supported women's rights activists in exile. Still others have named Fatima Amiri, a 17-year-old girl who survived the September 30th bombing of the Kaj Educational Center in Kabul's Dasht-e-Barchi neighbourhood. The attack killed dozens of students, mostly girls, who had gathered at the private school to take a mock test for the Kankor exam, which is needed to enter public universities in Afghanistan.

Notwithstanding being traumatised, suffering from serious injury and mourning the loss of her classmates, she took the Kankor exam and scored above 85 percent, which made her eligible to study her favourite subject, computer science, at Kabul University - something she is now barred from doing. Indeed, Fatima has emerged as a symbol of women and girls' struggle for their rights under the Taliban regime. As a father of two girls, I constantly worry about the present and future of my children. But young women like Fatima and others that I see or hear about in my everyday life give me hope that things will change.

Since the Taliban took over Kabul, its government has imposed various restrictions on women. Afghan girls have been barred from going to high school and university, and even private educational institutions. Afghan women have been banned from going to parks, gyms, and other public places and from working in nongovernmental organisations and certain government institutions. They are also not allowed to travel alone and have to wear a head-to-toe covering in public. As a result, places in Kabul that used to bustle with women and girls are now almost completely dominated by men. Many coffee shops that were the favourite hangout spots for girls and women have had to close down, as they have lost many of their customers. Parks no longer enjoy crowds, as men cannot go there with their families or girlfriends, and many beauty parlours ran out of business as women are reluctant to visit them. But Afghan girls and women have resisted the injustice of being stripped of their rights to education, work and access to public spaces. They have held protests in many cities, especially Kabul, demanding their rights.

However, the Taliban authorities have responded with an increasingly harsh crackdown, and some of the protesters and activists have been arrested and imprisoned. Activist Zarifa Yaqubi, for

example, was arrested in November last year after she tried to launch a women's rights movement. She was detained for 40 days.

When I spoke to Zarifa last month, she held back her tears and refused to talk about her imprisonment out of fear. She told me she was traumatised and had to take medicine and receive psychological care. She said that the world is unwilling to support Afghan girls and their struggle, and only issues empty condemnations. In her view, the international reactions to Iranian women's protests were much more powerful and visible. But Afghan women have not given up. Girls and young women have started flocking to secret schools led by courageous teachers. Others have joined online classes organised on messaging apps like WhatsApp and Telegram.

When the Taliban declared a ban on private educational institutions in December 2022, I joined other volunteers to teach English to high-school and university-age girls. Information about online classes spreads through word of mouth and when there are enough students, we get them together in a WhatsApp or a Telegram group. We record the lessons and send them as voice messages, along with other teaching materials, in these apps and give them home assignments. They download the lessons, listen, do their homework

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The Telegraph



ICCI calls for finalizing food standards in consultation with stakeholders

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on Saturday said that the business community welcomes the establishment of the Food Authority in Islamabad as it will ensure the supply of safe and unadulterated food to the citizens.

However, he emphasized the Food Authority to finalize laying out food standards and laws in consultation with the stakeholders, which will yield better results for both sides.

He said this while talking to Dr. Tahira, Chairperson Islamabad Food Authority during her

visit to ICCI office.

Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that the Islamabad Food Authority (IFA) should conduct awareness sessions in markets to educate and sensitize the business community of the food sector about food standards.

He said that ICCI will cooperate with IFA for awareness sessions and is ready to provide its auditorium for this purpose.

He said that a committee comprising representatives of ICCI and IFA should be formed to play a role in solving the problems of the food sector and move forward with consensus.

Speaking on the occa-

sion, Dr Tahira, Chairperson, of Islamabad Food Authority said that the aim of her authority is to ensure the availability of quality food to the citizens and hoped that the business community of the food sector would cooperate in achieving this goal.

She said the business community of the food sector, including restaurants and bakeries, will be provided comprehensive guidance about food safety measures to save them from fines and punishment. She hoped that the business community would provide all possible support in advancing the mission of IFA.

Azharul Islam Zafar,

Vice President ICCI, urged for taking ICCI on board about any complaint against any restaurant, bakery or trader so that such issues can be solved with joint efforts and the food interests of citizens can be better protected.

Zafar Bakhtawari former President ICCI, Khurram Khan President Islamabad Restaurant Association, Ajmal Baloch President Anjuman Tajaran Pakistan, Khalid Chaudhry, Haji Mumtaz Ahmed, Saqib Abbasi and others also spoke at the occasion and emphasized the need for taking business community on board for enforcement of food standards.

Bank shares sink as contagion fears return

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): Bank shares tumbled Friday, jolting stock markets as fears about the health of the financial sector resurfaced with Deutsche Bank now in the eye of the storm.

Markets had rallied earlier this week after financial authorities took steps aimed at preventing contagion from the collapse of US regional lenders this month.

But sentiment soured following decisions by central banks in the United States, Britain and Switzerland to hike interest rates despite concerns about the impact of the monetary tightening on banks.

Fears of contagion led to the takeover of embattled Swiss bank Credit Suisse by domestic rival UBS on Sunday.

The focus has now turned to another major European lender, Deutsche Bank, whose shares nose-dived by as much as 14 percent on Friday, as the cost of insuring against the bank defaulting on its debt spiked. It closed 8.5 percent lower.

The German lender

returned to financial health last year following a major restructuring after years of problems.

European officials lined up to reassure the markets.

German Chancellor Olaf Scholz said after a European Union summit that "there is no reason to be concerned" about Deutsche Bank as the lender is "very profitable."

European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde told EU leaders that the single currency area's banking sector is "resilient because it has strong capital and liquidity positions," according to an EU official.

After markets closed on Friday, US President Joe Biden sought to reassure investors, saying banks are "in pretty good shape" following recent financial sector turmoil.

"I think it's going to take a little while for things to just calm down, but I don't see anything on the horizon that is about to explode," he told a news conference in a visit to Ottawa.

But City Index analyst Fiona Cincotta told AFP

that the selloff in bank shares has highlighted "just how fragile sentiment is towards the sector."

"As central banks continued hiking rates this week, the outlook is looking increasingly shaky," she said.

European stock markets finished another turbulent week sharply lower, with London down 1.3 percent while Frankfurt and Paris both shed around 1.57%.

Wall Street's three main indices opened lower but shook off gloomy banking news from Europe by day's end. But shares in US financial giant JPMorgan Chase were down 1.5 percent while Citigroup slipped 0.8 percent.

In Paris, Societe Generale sank more than six percent and BNP Paribas dropped more than five percent.

UK bank Standard Chartered also tanked by more than six percent in London while Barclays was down around four percent.

Concerns that the turmoil could trigger a recession sent oil prices sliding more than two percent.

Share prices in energy majors including BP, Shell and TotalEnergies also slumped.

Global markets were slammed this month by the collapse of three regional US lenders, notably Silicon Valley Bank, which had lost \$1.8 billion in the sale of a bond portfolio whose value dropped due to the higher interest rates.

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen chaired a meeting of financial regulators on Friday, who heard a presentation from New York Federal Reserve staff on market developments, the Treasury Department said in a statement.

The Financial Stability Oversight Council "discussed current conditions in the banking sector and noted that while some institutions have come under stress, the US banking system remains sound and resilient," the department added.

But "contagion fears are not yet going away," said Fimalto analyst Neil Wilson. "It only stops once people stop asking who's next."

China's province sees robust trade growth

HARBIN (APP): Heilongjiang, China's northernmost province, saw its foreign trade in goods grow by 30.7 percent year on year to 48.38 billion yuan (about 7 billion US dollars) in first two months of this year, customs data showed.

From January to February, Heilongjiang's imports saw a 27.3-percent increase to 39.07 billion yuan, while its exports grew by 47.6 percent year on year to 9.31 billion yuan, according to Harbin Customs in the provincial capital.

Its trade with countries along the Belt and Road hit 38.04 billion yuan, accounting for 78.6 percent of the province's total foreign trade. Trade with the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) members rose 27.4 percent to 4.7 billion yuan.

The province saw robust growth in the exports of steel, mechanical and electronic products in the first two months of 2023, while imports of agricultural products, iron ore and wood logged notable increases during the same period.

Fed's 2 per cent inflation target arbitrary

NEW YORK (Agencies): There's rarely a convenient time for the Federal Reserve to openly debate whether its 2 per cent inflation target makes sense. This isn't that time, but the Fed better get ready.

More urgent matters pre-occupy the Fed right now. It is simultaneously stanching a crisis in the banking system while tightening financial conditions to squelch inflation. The central bank raised its benchmark Federal funds rate a quarter point to a range of 4.75 to 5 per cent. It also assured the markets

that "the US banking system is sound and resilient".

The last thing the Fed needs at this moment is further complexity in its public messaging. "We will get inflation down to 2 per cent, over time," Jerome Powell, the Fed chair, said at a news conference.

Two per cent is supposed to be the sweet spot for inflation, low enough for consumer comfort but relaxed enough for the economy to flourish, according to Fed doctrine settled years ago. The Fed isn't reconsidering it in

public now.

Yet the inflation target is an important issue, one that scholars and Fed watchers are quietly discussing because it could become crucial soon. The Fed itself projects that inflation will drop to about 3.3 per cent by the end of this year and to 2.5 per cent next year. Well before that happens, it's worth re-examining the 2 per cent target: how the Fed arrived at it, whether it still makes sense and whether current rules allow sufficient flexibility in decision making.

Microsoft threatens to restrict data from rival AI search tools

NEW YORK (Reuters): Microsoft Corp has threatened to cut off access to its internet-search data, which it licenses to rival search engines, if they do not stop using it as the basis for their own artificial intelligence chat products, Bloomberg News reported on Friday.

The company has told at least two customers that using its Bing search index - a map of the internet that

can be scanned in real time - to feed their AI chat tools violates the terms of its contract, the news agency said, citing people familiar with the dispute.

Redmond, Washington-based Microsoft may also terminate licenses providing access to its search index, Bloomberg added.

Microsoft did not immediately respond to a request for a comment.

The maker of the Windows operating system had said in February it was revamping its Bing search engine and Edge Web browser with artificial intelligence, signaling its ambition to retake the lead in consumer technology markets where it has fallen behind.

The upgraded Bing search engine was rolled out to users late last month.

pany's shares have lost around more than a quarter of their value this month, including Friday's 8.5% fall, and the cost of protecting against a default on its bonds soared, even though few put it in a class with Credit Suisse.

"We are not concerned today about counterparty, liquidity issues" with Deutsche, JPMorgan analysts said in a Friday report.

For now, few investors see this year's events as a repeat of the systemic crisis that swept through markets in 2008, taking down Lehman Brothers and prompting govern-

ment bailouts of large financial institutions. But investors are guarded, wary that another bank run could erupt if people believe US or European regulators won't protect depositors.

"It's almost like the prisoner's dilemma where if everyone agrees that they won't pull their deposits then everything should be okay, but if just one person decides they are getting out then the snowball keeps growing," said Tim Murray, capital market strategist in the Multi-Asset Division of T. Rowe Price, who is underweight equities, focusing



ISLAMABAD: A vendor selling dates during holy fasting month at sasta Ramzan Bazaar.

Banks will remain open on Saturday, Sunday

ISLAMABAD (INP): All the designated branches of banks will remain open today Saturday and Sunday to receive Hajj applications.

The State Bank of Pakistan has given these directions on the request of the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony.

The banks will remain open on Saturday and Sunday from 9 am to 2 pm to collect Hajj applications along with dues from intending pilgrims for this year's Hajj.

Gold prices decreased by Rs1,800 to Rs203,900

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.1,800 and was sold at Rs. 203,900 on Saturday against its sale at Rs. 205,700 the previous day. All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs. 1,543 to Rs.176,355 from Rs.177,898, whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went down to Rs.161,658 from Rs. 163,073.

However, the price of per tola silver increased by Rs. 30 to close at Rs. 2,250 and the ten-gram silver surged by Rs. 25.71 to close at Rs.1929.

The price of gold in the international market dipped by US\$19 to \$1978 against its sale at \$1997, the association reported.

Oil prices fall amid renewed banking fears

NEW YORK (APP): Oil prices decreased, but managed to notch a gain for the week. The West Texas Intermediate (WTI) for May delivery dropped 70 cents, or 1 percent, to settle at 69.26 US dollars a barrel on the New York Mercantile Exchange. Brent crude for May delivery lost 92 cents, or 1.21 percent, to close at 74.99 dollars a barrel on the London ICE Futures Exchange.

The decline came as traders continued to focus on the banking industry.

Shares of Deutsche Bank were under considerable pressure after a spike in the cost of insuring against its default.

Emirates to launch first A380 service to Bali

DUBAI (INP): Emirates, the world's largest international airline, will deploy its signature A380 aircraft to Bali starting from June1, 2023, marking a milestone in Indonesia's aviation history as the first scheduled A380 service to the country.

The new 2-class Emirates A380 service will replace one of the two daily services to Bali currently operated by a 2-class Boeing 777-300ER aircraft. The airline's debut A380 flight EK368, will depart from Dubai International Airport (DXB) at 03:25 hrs, arriving in Denpasar International Airport (DPS) at 16:35 hrs local time. The returning flight, EK369, will depart Bali at 19:40 hrs, arriving in Dubai at 00:45 hrs local time. All times are local.

Tickets can be purchased on emirates.com, the Emirates App, at Emirates sales offices, and via both online and offline travel agents. Travellers are also encouraged to check the Emirates website for the latest travel requirements.

Highlighting the deployment of the world's largest passenger aircraft to Bali, Adnan Kazim, Emirates' Chief Commercial Officer, said: "The Emirates A380 is synonymous with our fly better promise and world-class products and services, and we're excited to offer our travellers the opportunity to experience its uniqueness and unmatched beauty on flights to and from Bali.

Needless to say that we've been working closely with our partners

at Bali's Ngurah Rai International Airport to ensure our A380 operations will be seamless and smooth. We'd like to thank the authorities and our partners for all their support.

Bali continues to be one of the most popular tourist destinations in our network and strategic markets in Southeast Asia, and the Emirates A380's debut in Indonesia underscores our long-standing commitment to its travel and tourism sector. We look forward to driving more inbound traffic to the island, while also offering leisure and business travellers more opportunities to connect to Dubai and beyond to cities across Europe and the Americas through Emirates' extensive global network."

Oil prices fall amid US banking crisis, low demand

ANKARA (APP): Oil prices fell on Saturday amid concerns surrounding the US banking sector and worry over lower oil demand.

International benchmark Brent crude traded at \$76.27 per barrel at 10.14 a.m. local time (0714GMT), a 0.55% decrease from the closing price of \$76.69 a barrel in the previous trading session.

At the same time, American benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) traded at \$70.45 per barrel, a 0.63% fall after the previous session closed at \$70.9 a barrel.

The US Federal Reserve raised its benchmark interest rate Wednesday by another 25 basis points despite a banking crisis, which saw the sudden demise of four banks in a matter of weeks.

Fed Chair Jerome Powell said Wednesday that banking issues in the US could undermine the whole system if they remain unchecked.

"History has shown that isolated banking problems, if left unaddressed, can undermine confidence in healthy banks and threaten the ability of the banking system as a whole to play its vital role in supporting

the savings and credit needs of households and businesses," he said.

"The failure of a small bank, like a community bank, can likewise trigger a run on other banks, and failure of that bank could lead to a systemic failure," Janet Yellen said before the Financial Services and General Government Subcommittee at the US Senate.

The increase in the commercial crude oil stocks of the US, the world's largest oil consumer, also put downward pressure on prices with the perception that the demand in the country is low.

Germany reaches deal with European Union

FRANKFURT/BRUSSELS (Reuters): The European Union and Germany have reached a deal on the future use of combustion engines, officials said on Saturday, an issue that has been closely followed by the auto industry.

The agreement will allow some combustion engines beyond 2035 and was quickly condemned by a prominent environmental group.

The bloc and its largest economy had been at odds over the planned 2035 phase-out of CO2-emitting cars, but leaders signalled in recent days that they

were close to a resolution. Germany had wanted assurances that new combustion engine cars can be sold beyond the deadline if they run on e-fuels - a request supported by parts of Germany's powerful car industry.

"We have found an agreement with Germany on the future use of e-fuels in cars," Frans Timmermans, head of EU climate policy, said on Twitter.

German Transport Minister Volker Wissing said "the way is clear" with the agreement reached late Friday.

"Vehicles with internal combustion engines can still be newly registered after 2035 if they fill up exclusively with CO2-neutral fuels," he said in a post on Twitter.

Sweden, which holds the EU's rotating presidency, said EU diplomats would vote on Monday to formally approve the 2035 phase-out law.

That would mean energy ministers could then give the law the final sign-off needed for it to enter into force on Tuesday, at a scheduled meeting in Brussels.

Banking woes, Fed keep US market investors on edge

NEW YORK (Reuters): Investors are settling in for a long slog in the US stock market in coming months, braced for more tumult in the banking sector and worries over how the Federal Reserve's tightening will ripple through the economy.

Banking sector concerns drove sharp moves in financial stocks in the United States throughout the week after the collapse of two US lenders and last weekend's Swiss-government-backed takeover of troubled Credit Suisse (CSGN.S) by rival UBS (UBSGS). Many worry that other

nasty surprises are lurking as the rapid series of interest rate hikes the Fed has delivered over the past year dry up cheap money and widen fissures in the economy.

"The market is very nervous at this point and investors are acting first and looking into the nuances later," said Wei Li, global chief investment strategist at fund giant BlackRock. "It's understandable because it's not super clear that this is definitely contained."

In recent days, investors have focused on German giant Deutsche Bank (DBKGn.DE). The com-

pany's shares have lost around more than a quarter of their value this month, including Friday's 8.5% fall, and the cost of protecting against a default on its bonds soared, even though few put it in a class with Credit Suisse.

"We are not concerned today about counterparty, liquidity issues" with Deutsche, JPMorgan analysts said in a Friday report.

For now, few investors see this year's events as a repeat of the systemic crisis that swept through markets in 2008, taking down Lehman Brothers and prompting govern-

ment bailouts of large financial institutions. But investors are guarded, wary that another bank run could erupt if people believe US or European regulators won't protect depositors.

"It's almost like the prisoner's dilemma where if everyone agrees that they won't pull their deposits then everything should be okay, but if just one person decides they are getting out then the snowball keeps growing," said Tim Murray, capital market strategist in the Multi-Asset Division of T. Rowe Price, who is underweight equities, focusing

on money market accounts that offer yields comparable to Treasuries.

Uncertainty over the Fed's intentions is amplifying investors' hesitation in stocks and sparking huge swings in US government bond prices.

The Fed raised rates by 25 basis points on Wednesday but indicated it was on the verge of pausing further increases. Investors piled into the safe haven of US Treasuries, sending yields on the two-year note, which closely reflects Fed policy expectations, to 3.76% this week, the lowest since mid-September.

Further banking industry failures could mean sooner rate cuts as weakened financial conditions allow the Fed to ease up on its fight against inflation, said Tony Rodriguez, head of fixed income strategy at Nuveen. Futures contracts suggest the Fed will start cutting rates by year-end.

Falling interest rates would make dividend-paying stocks and some riskier assets such as higher-quality below-investment-grade bonds attractive, Rodriguez said. "It makes sense to take risk in those areas to take advantage of the weakness we're seeing

now."

Risk assets have been somewhat resilient despite the concerns in the banking sector, said Jason England, global bonds portfolio manager at Janus Henderson Investors. The S&P 500 is up 3.4% this year, though far off its early February highs, and it rose 1% this week, helped by a rally in tech shares.

"If inflation comes down because of disruptions in banks and you create tightening for homeowners, the Fed suddenly has its work done for it," he said.

England expects longer-

duration bond yields to start to rise from current levels, making short-term bonds and money market funds more attractive.

Investors will likely remain steeled for the potential for another high-profile failure until the Fed or Treasury respond in a way that calms fears of another bank run, said Katie Nixon, chief investment officer, wealth management, at Northern Trust, who is focusing on tech-sector stocks with "fortress balance sheets."

"Right now it's a crisis of confidence and everyone is looking for direction," she said.

**In brief****FESCO wins cricket match**

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Electric Supply Company (FESCO) won a friendly cricket match by defeating Electronic Media Association team by 57 runs, here on Saturday. Winning toss, FESCO team decided to bat first and scored 117 runs in 10 overs. Chasing the target, the Electronic Media Association team took a thrilling start, but could not stay for a long time because FESCO team sent all players of rival team to pavilion for just 60 runs. Chief Executive Officer (CEO) FESCO Engineer Bashir Ahmad witnessed the match as the chief guest and later he also distributed trophies and prizes among the winner and runner-up teams.

Piquet fined for racist comments

BRASILIA (BBC): Three-time Formula 1 world champion Nelson Piquet has been ordered to pay five million Brazilian Reals (£780,000) for making racist and homophobic comments about Lewis Hamilton. The 70-year-old Brazilian used a racially offensive term in referring to Hamilton in an interview in 2021. Hamilton called for "archaic mindsets" to change after the footage surfaced. Piquet later apologised for his "ill-thought-out" racially abusive remark about the British Mercedes driver. Formula 1, Hamilton's Mercedes team and world motor-sport governing body the FIA condemned Piquet's comments where he discussed the accident between Hamilton and Red Bull driver Max Verstappen, who is the partner of Piquet's daughter, on the first lap of the 2021 British Grand Prix. Piquet said he "made no defence" of the remarks, but added the term he used "is one that has widely and historically been used colloquially in Brazilian Portuguese as a synonym for 'guy' or 'person' and was never intended to offend". In another interview that surfaced later, Piquet used racist and homophobic language when describing how Hamilton missed out on the 2016 championship to Nico Rosberg. Seven-time world champion Hamilton is the sport's only black driver. The charges against Piquet were brought by four human rights groups, including Brazil's National LGBT+ Alliance, which wanted Piquet to pay 10 million Brazilian Reals for alleged moral damages.

James withdraws from squad

PARIS (BBC): Chelsea defender Reece James will miss England's Euro 2024 qualifier against Ukraine at Wembley on Sunday through injury. The 23-year-old has returned to the Premier League club for what the Football Association says is "assessment of an ongoing issue". James came on for Arsenal's Bukayo Saka after 85 minutes of Thursday's 2-1 win over Italy in Naples. Manager Gareth Southgate has decided not to call up any replacements. James missed last year's World Cup with a knee injury and picked up another knee problem in December which kept him out for another month. The remainder of the England squad, including the suspended Luke Shaw, will continue their preparations at the Tottenham Hotspur training ground on Saturday.

Shadab backs 'talented youngsters' despite Afghanistan loss

SHARJAH (INP): Pakistan captain Shadab Khan lent support to his young side despite the first-ever international defeat at the hands of Afghanistan in the first T20I of the three-match series.

Pakistan fielded a young side in the first T20I, marking the debuts of Tayyab Tahir, Saim Ayub, Zaman Khan and Ihsanullah. Meanwhile, Shadab, leading the fresh-look squad against Afghanistan,

backed his youngsters and asserted that the nerves of international cricket may have affected their performance.

"This series is for our youngsters. We tried to give them confidence. Sometimes, this can happen due to the nerves of international cricket but we have to back them because they have the talent, and hopefully, they'll show it in the next game," said Shadab.

"These players are tal-

ented and we are sure about that. We should not make someone a star after just one good performance or discard them after one failure. We will back these players and give them full opportunity to perform during the series," he added. Opting to bat first in the opening T20I, Pakistan's batting lineup faltered and the side could amass a meagre 92/9 in the allotted 20 overs, their fifth-lowest in T20Is.

New Zealand's Shipley tears through Sri Lanka in 198-run ODI thrashing

AUCKLAND (AFP/APP): Henry Shipley tore through Sri Lanka's batting line-up as New Zealand romped to a 198-run win in the first one-day international in Auckland on Saturday.

Playing just his fourth match for the Black Caps, tall seamer Shipley took 5-31 as the tourists were skittled for 76 at Eden Park, their lowest ODI score against New Zealand.

Sri Lanka's capitulation in just 19.5 overs was their fifth-heaviest loss by runs to any ODI opponent, and New Zealand's seventh-biggest win.

The visitors never recovered after slumping to 31-5, with only three batters reaching double figures, including top scorer Angelo Mathews (18).

It comes just two months after Sri Lanka's world-record 317-run loss to India in Thiruvananthapuram -- when they were skittled for

73. Their batters succumbed to a series of loose shots allowing Shipley to claim New Zealand's first five-wicket bag in the format for more than four years.

The 26-year-old worried his opponents with steep bounce and pace, prompting a series of shots to be lofted aimlessly to waiting fielders. Daryl Mitchell took 2-12 and Matt Henry 2-20 in an innings that lasted little more than an hour and a half.

Earlier, Chamika Karunaratne claimed four wickets in a career-best bowling display for Sri Lanka as New Zealand were dismissed for 274 after being asked to bat.

Opener Finn Allen top-scored with 51 but he was one of several Black Caps guilty of not pushing on after making a start.

Allen's 49-ball knock helped the hosts into a

strong position with nearly half of their overs remaining. But they lost their way over the latter stages and were dismissed with three balls remaining.

Karunaratne took 4-43 off nine overs, with New Zealand's batsmen mostly falling to shots that ballooned into the outfield.

All-rounder Rachin Ravindra departed late in the innings for 49 on his ODI debut while Mitchell scored 47 and Glenn Phillips 39. Seamers Kasun Rajitha and Lahiru Kumara, who both played in Sri Lanka's 2-0 Test series loss to New Zealand, took two wickets each.

The tourists needed a clean sweep of the three-match series to take an automatic World Cup berth. With that no longer a possibility, they are increasingly likely to be forced to play in a qualifying tournament in June-July.

Euro 2024 qualifying: What they said

PARIS (AFP/APP): Key quotes on the second day of Euro 2024 qualifying on Friday: "There are a lot of positives even if the match was almost wrapped up at half-time. But we remained serious and focussed, that's very good. We are in a qualifying race so winning this match for us is important. But we have another that comes quickly in three days. We have little time to recover."

France coach Didier Deschamps after the 4-0 win over the Netherlands but keeping one eye on Monday's clash against

Ireland in Dublin.

"We've been preparing all week with the idea that we couldn't disappoint our fans. It's the first time we've played since the World Cup. We're very happy, it's a successful first step, now everything remains to be done in the group. I try to do my job, try to be decisive, to take the others with me. Today it worked but it's only the start. The hardest part remains to be done."

New France skipper Kylian Mbappe who scored twice on Friday night in Paris. "Those are three very important points. Taking

three points and scoring three goals in Sweden is never easy for any team. Winning is always the best thing to unite a group. As for my selection choices -- the boys have shown that I wasn't wrong."

New Belgium coach Domenico Tedesco after a 3-0 win in Sweden.

"With this team, I have found a family. There were three 19-year-olds out there today. Others in their early 20s. Stars talking and laughing with everyone. A new generation is coming."

Belgian 19-year-old striker Johan Bakayoko.

Bairstow to miss IPL to continue injury rehab

LONDON (BBC): England's Jonny Bairstow will miss the Indian Premier League (IPL) to continue his recovery from injury. Bairstow had surgery on a broken left leg and dislocated ankle after slipping on a tee box while playing golf in September and has not played since.

The 33-year-old right-hander was due to play for Punjab Kings in the IPL, with the tournament starting on 31 March.

He has said he will be fit to play in this summer's Ashes series against Australia, which starts in June. "Unfortunately Jonny Bairstow won't be with us this campaign - his injury hasn't recovered in time," said Punjab Kings coach Trevor Bayliss.

"We wish him a speedy recovery, it's a shame not to have a player of his standing." Australian batter Matthew Short will replace Bairstow in the Kings

squad. Yorkshire play six games in the County Championship and four in the Vitality Blast before England's summer begins with a four-day Test against Ireland at Lord's on 1 June.

Yorkshire's director of cricket Darren Gough said at the county's Annual General Meeting (AGM) on Friday that Bairstow hoped to be available for two Championship games in May.

He has been batting in the nets and recently returned to jogging.

The five-Test Ashes series against Australia starts on 16 June at Edgbaston in Birmingham.

Speaking to ITV at the Cheltenham Festival on 15 March, Bairstow said: "I'm really happy with my rehab. I'm running, batting in the nets and it's going as well as it can be and although we haven't got a return date set, I'll be back for the Ashes, absolutely."

Bairstow had been in brilliant form in 2022, scoring 1,061 runs and six centuries in 10 Tests, but the injury ruled him out of the final Test of the summer against South Africa, England's T20 World Cup triumph in Australia and their Test series win in Pakistan and draw in New Zealand over the winter.

Bairstow's replacement in the Test team, Yorkshire team-mate Harry Brook, has enjoyed a superb start, scoring 809 runs in his first six Tests, including four centuries.

However, England head coach Brendon McCullum has said there is "no doubt" Bairstow will return to the team when fully fit. He has played 39 games in the IPL and scored 1,291 runs at an average of 35.86. He made 253 runs in 11 matches in his first campaign with Punjab Kings in 2022 after spending three years with Sunrisers Hyderabad.



Williams, Ballance, Madhevere help Zimbabwe clinch series against Netherlands

HARARE (Agenices): Wessly Madhevere and Gary Ballance notched up fifties, and Sean Williams hit 43 and took a three-wicket haul as Zimbabwe beat the Netherlands by seven wickets in the final ODI in Harare to clinch the series 2-1.

Opting to bat first, Netherlands started off slowly with Vikramjit Singh and Max O'Dowd putting on a 67-run partnership for the opening wicket. Once fast bowler Blessing Muzarabani removed O'Dowd for 38, Vikramjit also fell soon after, to the offspin of Sikandar Raza. Colin Ackermann and Musa Ahmed steadied the innings with a stand of 60 for the third wicket.

However, Madhevere bowled Ahmed out for 29 in the 30th over to trigger the collapse. From 129 for 2, Netherlands lost their next five wickets for 63 runs. Captain Scott Edwards' 41-ball 34 and contributions from the lower order lifted the visitors to 231 for 9. While Williams accounted for Wesley Barresi and Edwards, Raza added Teja Nidamanuru's wicket to his bag.

In reply, Zimbabwe were never in



trouble with Madhevere and captain Craig Ervine stitching together a 96-run partnership in 18 overs for the first wicket.

The stand was broken when Shariz Ahmad had Ervine caught six runs short of a half-century. In his next over, the legspinner removed Madhevere too, who scored a 61-ball 50 with the help of seven fours. But even before

Netherlands could sense an opening, Ballance and Williams added 96 to blunt their attack.

Ballance top-scored for Zimbabwe with an unbeaten 64 off 72 deliveries, while Williams made 43 before being bowled by Fred Klaassen in the 39th over. Raza then smashed an unbeaten nine-ball 18 to complete the formalities with 50 balls to spare.

Lawrence Okolie v David Light Predictions for WBO cruiserweight title fight in Manchester

MANCHESTER (BBC): Briton Lawrence Okolie defends his WBO cruiserweight world title against New Zealand's David Light in Manchester on Saturday.

Okolie - making the third defence of his belt - has won all 18 of his fights since turning professional in 2016. But the 30-year-old Englishman has been out of the ring since beating Poland's Michal Cieslak 13 months ago.

He will be fighting with new trainer SugarHill Steward in his corner, and with promotional company Boxer for the first time after leaving Matchroom Boxing.

Light, 31, has won all 20 of his fights and is Okolie's mandatory challenger. BBC Sport has asked the fighters, their teams and some of boxing's biggest names for their opinions on the fight. Okolie: "Of course a knockout is always nice, but I really want to demonstrate some of the stuff I've done in sparring. I'll get the knockout but I want to set it up the exact way I want it."

Light: "I see it playing out a number of different ways, whatever way I have to take it. I'm sure there will be adjustments during the fight. I've got to roll with the punches."

Steward: "I want to see a spectacu-

lar, sensational knockout. I want to see a big knockout from Lawrence Okolie. He's already a big puncher. The things that we worked on, I want to see him use those things to get that big knockout."

Featherweight Karriss Artingstall: "Okolie by knockout. He doesn't throw much but I think Light will be too eager and Okolie will land a backhand." Former world champion and 5 Live Boxing analyst Barry Jones: "After being out for so long, it's a fresh start for Okolie. A new trainer, a new beginning. I think David Light is the perfect opponent. A guy who is small and comes with his hands low. He's brave but hittable. I think with that, and the power Okolie possesses, this fight won't go beyond five rounds. Okolie will get that right hand into play very early and the finish will be very conclusive. Lawrence will move on to bigger and better things."

Olympic champion Lauren Price: "A knockout for Okolie in the middle rounds." Boxing coach Joe Gallagher: "Lawrence has got to make a statement. I think he'll do that. No disrespect to his opponent but I think he's tailor-made for Lawrence Okolie's right hand. When the first bell goes, it's back to business for

Okolie and I would be surprised if it's not over in four rounds."

Former world champion Anthony Crolla: "I'll be very interested to see how Steward has tried to implement the Kronk style on Lawrence Okolie. He likes his fighters chopping down with those big right hands. They train for the knockout, I believe we'll see Lawrence Okolie behind that jab and he detonates that right hand. By six I think it's all over."

WBO and Ring Magazine lightweight-welterweight champion Josh Taylor: "I'm going to go with Okolie on points. I think with his awkward-to-fight style and boxing at range he'll make Light miss and frustrate him."

BBC Radio 5 Live pundit Steve Bunce: "It needs to be a new-look Lawrence Okolie because SugarHill demands that. The old Okolie would win comfortably, stopping Light in rounds eight or nine. The new Okolie might do it in a couple. I'm going Okolie inside two." Boxer promoter Ben Shalom: "I'd like to see a statement, like SugarHill said."

That's why Lawrence is with him now - he wants to bring that to his game. But it's a dangerous fight. I just hope we get through with a win. David Light is extremely confident and believes he is here to win.

Sheikh Jassim also submit 2nd bid after Sir Jim Ratcliffe

LONDON (BBC): Qatari banker Sheikh Jassim has joined Ineos owner Sir Jim Ratcliffe in submitting a second bid to buy Manchester United.

A representative for Sheikh Jassim said on Saturday they put in a revised bid overnight.

On Thursday, Ratcliffe put in his second bid after Wednesday's confusion and extended deadline.

It followed Finnish entrepreneur Thomas Zilliacus stating he has submitted a bid to buy the Old Trafford club.

Zilliacus wants to buy half of the club with the other half bought by fans, who will be part of club decision-making.

On Saturday, Zilliacus claimed he had also increased his bid for United overnight. Interested parties had until 21:00 GMT on Wednesday to enter their bids before the deadline was extended.

On Thursday, an Ineos spokesperson said: "Ratcliffe and Ineos can confirm we have submitted a revised

bid."

The Glazer family, who bought Manchester United for £790m in 2005, announced they were considering selling the club in November.

The Americans have established a valuation of £5-6bn for United.

Ineos wants to buy the combined Glazer shareholding of about 69%, but the Qataris are targeting 100% of the club.

Ratcliffe and Sheikh Jassim were the only publicly declared bidders until Zilliacus announced his offer. Zilliacus said: "Any sport club ultimately should belong to its fans. My bid is built on equality with fans."

"The current development, where billionaire sheiks and oligarchs take over clubs and control them as their personal playgrounds, is not a healthy trend." The current market value of the club is just under \$3.9bn (£3.17bn). That means that if every one of the fans of the club would join in buying the club, the total sum per fan would amount to less than \$6.

"My group will finance half of the sum needed to take over the club, and will ask the fans, through a new company that is being set up for this specific purpose, to participate for the other half. "If every fan joins it means less than \$3 per fan."

Zilliacus plans to give fans a say through an app from which they can "participate and cast" their vote "when deciding on footballing matters relating to the club".

It is also understood US investment company Elliott has made an offer to purchase a minority stake, irrespective of who ends up owning the club.

Zilliacus, who has previously been involved with HJK Helsinki and ice hockey champions Jokerit in his homeland, is the founder and chairman of new social media group novaM Group.

He wants to buy United through XXI Century Capital, which is an investment firm owned by his holding company.

HEC completes nationwide Volleyball Talent Hunt Trials

ISLAMABAD (APP): Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan in collaboration with selected Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) has successfully completed the Volleyball Trials under Talent Hunt Youth Sports League in 25 locations across the country under the auspices of Prime Minister Youth Programme (PMYP).

Around 7,000 young male and female players of age 15 to 25 years appeared for the trials.

HEC has been entrusted by the Government to conduct talent hunt activities to engage youth in 12 selected sports including Volleyball, Hockey, Cricket, Football, Table Tennis, Badminton, Squash, Boxing, Judo, Handball, Wrestling, and Weightlifting. After the successful completion of Volleyball trials, provincial leagues will be organized between the teams of best players in these trials and the outperforming players of provincial leagues will then be given an opportunity to participate in Volleyball National

League. Before participating in the National League, players will be provided coaching and mentorship in training camps. These camps will enhance capability of these aspiring players and would enable them to participate in national as well as international competitions.

In her message on completion of the trials, Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs, Shaza Fatima Khawaja said, "Our aim is to engage youth in productive activities including sports and revive the sports culture in Pakistan. These talented players will be brought into the national pool of Volleyball players. Along with the promotion of sports, various steps are being taken by the incumbent Government to provide unprecedented opportunities to the youth." She further said that the Prime Minister of Pakistan has special interest in youth welfare projects and the Government is running several projects for youth through HEC, including Prime Minister's National Innovation Award, Talent Hunt Youth

Sports League, Establishment of Sports Academies and Resource Centers, Green Youth Movement, Digital Youth Development Centers, Prime Minister's Laptop Scheme, and other projects.

Director Sports, HEC, Javed Ali Memon said that we have achieved this milestone within a short span of time. "There is no shortage of talent in Pakistan, the need is to provide right opportunities to the youth," he said. Officials from Pakistan Volleyball Federation and several Volleyball players participated in the trials as Technical/Selection Committee members and Brand Ambassadors in the talent hunt activities held throughout the country.

The participants of trials were excited for the fact that the top performers in leagues will get an opportunity to improve their skills under the supervision of qualified coaches.

Aspiring players who want to appear for other sports may apply online through the portal: <https://pmyp.gov.pk/HEC/SportsForm>



In brief

IRSA releases 70,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 70,100 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 63,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1422.46 feet and was 24.46 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 19,600 cusecs while outflow as 25,000 cusecs. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1094.40 feet, which was 44.40 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 18,300 cusecs and 20,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded 24,600, 40,300, 29,300 and 6,000 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 15,500 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 3,000 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Police bust gang

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have busted a gang involved in street crime and recovered snatched amount of Rs 4,50,000 from their possession during a crackdown here on Saturday, informed a police spokesman. The leader of the Walli Badshah gang was held involved in street crime along with 02 accomplices Shehbaz Khan, Azizullah and Tariq Khan by the New Town Police. Police have recovered the motorcycle and weapons used in the crime from their custody. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress. SHO said that the accused used to snatch cash and mobile phones from the citizens at gunpoint, and the stolen goods were recovered after the identification from the accused. SP Rawal Faisal Saleem appreciated the performance of the police team and said that the accused who were involved in attacking the lives and property of the citizens cannot escape from the grip of the law.

PBC starts live video Ramadan transmission

ISLAMABAD (APP): Radio Pakistan has started the first ever live video Ramadan transmission titled "Paigham-e-Ramazan" on "Radio Pakistan Podcast" available at the national broadcaster's social media platforms. The four-hour video transmission from 5:00pm to 9:00pm daily brings a lot of valuable knowledge and enlightenment for the audience about the holy month of Ramadan and the health-related issues, said a press release issued here on Saturday. Eminent religious scholars, nutritionists and other health experts participate in the transmission and share their views on the matters pertaining to fasting. Besides, Naat Khawan recite Naat. Tilawat-e-Quran-e-Pak along with translation is also presented during the transmission. People may also participate in the transmission through live phone calls at 051-9208940 from 5:30pm to 6:00pm. The launch of this video Ramadan transmission is part of the initiatives being taken by Director General PBC Muhammad Tahir Hassan to enhance technological advancement and improve the content of the state broadcaster in line with modern-day requirements. In addition to making "Radio Pakistan Podcast" efficient and vibrant, some specialized FM channels have been launched to cater to specific audience needs.



ISLAMABAD: Traffic on the way during rain at Faisal Avenue in the Federal Capital.

Commissioner chairs meeting to review progress of ADP schemes

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chhatta here on Saturday chaired a meeting to review the progress of Annual Development Programme (ADP) schemes.

Director Development, Director General, Rawalpindi Development Authority, SE Highways, Building, National Highways and other officers concerned attended the meeting. The meeting was informed that 235 new schemes worth Rs 94,564 million were launched in Rawalpindi division under ADP and funds amounting to Rs 7,147 million were released out of budget allocated for the schemes while 71 per cent had been utilized.

The Commissioner said that the dangerous and dilapidated buildings of the education department should be given priority.

Necessary action should be taken in all such places which have been declared dangerous. Apart from this, measures should also be taken to provide basic facilities in schools and to improve the educational standards, he added. The policy guidelines given for the ongoing projects across the division should be followed in accordance with the law, Liaquat Ali Chhatta said.

The projects should be completed within the stipulated time frame, enhancing the pace of work and using quality material, he said adding, timely completion is essential to make the projects effective.

Delayed projects cause hardships to the public instead of convenience, he added.

640 schemes including 405 ongoing and 235 new worth Rs 273,482 million were included across the division under the ADP. A

total of Rs 25,928 million funds were released for these schemes while 78 per cent of funds had been utilised. The ADP included 120 schemes of Attock district, 99 of Chakwal district, 66 of Jhelum district, 52 of Murree district and 303 of Rawalpindi district. 303 schemes of Rawalpindi district including 123 new and 180 existing are being completed.

In Rawalpindi district, 72 projects of road sector, 36 of urban development, 32 of public buildings, six of specialized health care and medical health, 11 of primary and secondary health care, 33 of WASA, 07 of irrigation, 42 of local government, 26 schemes of school education and 09 of higher education were included. After completion these schemes would bring convenience to the people of Rawalpindi district, the Commissioner said.

ANF recovers over 60 kg drugs, arrests seven

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) recovered over 60 kg of drugs and arrested seven accused in six different operations, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here Saturday.

He informed that the ANF managed to recover 21.6 kg charras and 14.4 kg opium from two cars intercepted near Hiran Minar, Sheikhupura Motorway Toll Plaza. The drugs were concealed tactfully under seats while three drug smugglers were also held during the operation.

In another operation, the ANF in collaboration of Airport Security Force (ASF) recovered over two kg of heroin from the possession of a Dubai-bound passenger hailing from Pakpattan, and arrested him at Multan Airport.

In the third operation, the ANF conducted a raid near Lahore DHA Phase-1 and recovered 824 grams heroin concealed in surgical tools in a car. An accused going to send the parcel to London through a private courier service was also arrested.

In two separate operations, the ANF foiled two bids to smuggle drugs from Haripur to Mansehra and arrested two, residents of Haripur with 2.4 kg charras. In an operation, the ANF and FC conducted a raid in Khyber and recovered 19.2 kg charras.

Stolen vehicles recovered

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested two member gang involved in the incidents of robbery and motorcycle theft and recovered 09 stolen motorcycles, 02 rickshaws and cash amounting Rs 12,500 from their possession here on Saturday, informed police spokesman.

During course of action, Saddar Wah police held Shebi gang involved in robbery and motorcycle theft along with his accomplice, identified as Shoaib Alias Shebi and Burhan. Police have registered separate cases against both of them and further investigation was in progress. SHO said that the accused will be challenged with concrete evidence and will be punished, SP Potohar Muhammad Waqas Khan while congratulating the Saddar Wah Police team said that the accused who deprived the citizens of their valuable assets would be punished strictly.

Sanjrani urges citizens to participate in 'Earth Hour' for a sustainable future

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani on Saturday urged citizens to be a part of the change and participate in Earth Hour 2023, which will be celebrated tonight from 8:30pm onwards. In a message, he emphasized the importance of the efforts made by the WWF-Pakistan team. As a result of their efforts, governments, individuals, and organizations from 190 countries around the world have joined hands to protect the environment and combat climate change.

Chairman Sanjrani acknowledged the efforts of WWF-Pakistan and highlighted the significance of 'Earth Hour' as an opportunity to reflect on the impact of our actions on the planet and take meaningful steps towards a sustainable future.

The partnership between governments, organizations, and individuals from 190 countries to protect the environment and combat climate change has been hailed as a powerful representation of our individual and shared responsibility in creating a sustainable world. He urged everyone to use this hour to

demonstrate their commitment towards protecting the environment and working towards a better future.

Earth Hour is a global initiative organized by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) that encourages people to turn off non-essential lights for one hour on a designated day to raise awareness about environmental issues.

Sanjrani also emphasized Pakistan's commitment to promoting sustainable development and working with the international community to address global environmental issues.

He concluded his message by saying, "Together, we can make a positive impact on the planet and create a better world. Let us make every hour count towards a sustainable future." 'Earth Hour' is celebrated worldwide and is a symbol of unity towards protecting the environment.

The event encourages individuals, organizations, and governments to switch off their lights for one hour to raise awareness about environmental issues and promote sustainable practices.

HEC concludes training program for newly inducted members of HEIs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Academy of Higher Education (NAHE), HEC organized the fourth cohort of the National Faculty Development Programme (NDFP) for newly inducted faculty members of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) at HEC Islamabad.

Around 20 faculty members from public sector HEIs across Pakistan attended the 15-day training. Eminent resource persons from different disciplines and expertise provided a holistic understanding of teaching and its various components necessary for participants to become better teachers and researchers. Sessions were held on Effective

Teaching and Learning, Course Design, Lesson Planning and Delivery, Assessment and Evaluation, Technology in Classroom, Learning Management System, Grant Writing, Publishing Research, and Personal and Professional Development.

Adviser (Academics, Curriculum & NAHE) HEC Engr. Muhammad Raza Chohan was the chief guest in the certificate distribution ceremony. He administered the teacher's oath to the participants. In his address, he stressed the importance of the professional development of teachers and its positive impact to unleash the potential of their students by inculcat-

ing innovative and entrepreneurial mindsets. He advised the participants to keep themselves updated with the latest knowledge and skills to achieve excellence in their profession. NAHE has been organizing NDFP since 2020 for the Interim Placement of Fresh PhDs (IPFP) applicants in online mode.

In 2022, the programme was redesigned to Face-to-Face mode and launched for newly inducted faculty members as well. Since November 2022, four Cohorts of the programme have been organized through which 96 faculty members have been trained and are expected to cascade similar trainings at their parent institutions.

'Changes in routine during Ramadan may impact driving'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Drivers need to exercise extra caution during fasting in Ramadan as drivers' abilities may get compromised due to alterations to eating, drinking and sleeping patterns.

A statement issued by DIG Motorway North Zone Muhammad Yusuf Malik here on Saturday said that drivers may experience tiredness, sleepiness or weakness behind the wheel.

Medical experts advise that people with underlying health conditions, such as diabetes, should take extra precautions before setting off on a long journey.

To ensure a safe journey, it is recommended that drivers get adequate sleep and rest before embarking on any long

drives. If drivers feel tired or drowsy during their journey, they are encouraged to stop immediately at a safe location and rest.

Furthermore, it is essential to plan journeys in such a way that drivers reach their destination without feeling exhausted. Seat belts should always be worn, and drivers must adhere to traffic laws, avoid speeding and pay attention to the road.

In case of any emergency or assistance, the helpline number 130 can be contacted.

By following these guidelines, drivers can help ensure a safe and comfortable journey during the holy month of Ramadan.

Umrah not allowed to be repeated in Ramadan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Hajj and Umrah has stressed that pilgrims are not allowed to repeat Umrah during Ramadan, and they have the right to perform it only once.

This move is to give the opportunity to all other pilgrims who have the desire to perform Umrah during the holy

month and can perform the rituals with ease and comfort.

The Ministry stressed the necessity of pilgrims to issue a permit from the Nusuk app to perform Umrah, in addition to the importance of their commitment to the specified time. There is no feature to amend the Umrah date, but pilgrims can delete

their appointment via Nusuk app, before entering the permitted time and then they can issue a new permit, Saudi Gazette reported. The Ministry confirmed that the appointments are updated periodically, noting that if the pilgrims do not find a date for reservation, then they can search for another date at a later time.

21 absconders involved in various criminal activities held

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad capital police have arrested 21 absconders involved in heinous crime during the last 24 hours, a police public relations officer said. He said that, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, special tasks were assigned to all police officials to ensure the arrest of proclaimed offenders and absconders involved in heinous crimes.

During the crackdown Islamabad capital police teams of Secretariat, Margalla, Shalimar, Aabpara, Bhara Kahu, Phulgran and Bani Gala police station team arrested 21 absconders during the last 24 hours.

CPO/DIG Operations Islamabad Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari has appreciated the performance of the police team and said that Islamabad police are making all out efforts for the safety and security of citizens. He further said that, the Islamabad Capital Police is taking all possible steps to eradicate crime from the city and those involved in heinous crimes and illegal activities will be dealt with iron hands. Safety to the lives and property of the citizens is the foremost priority of Islamabad capital police.

Six outlaws arrested; drugs and weapons recovered: Islamabad capital police apprehended six outlaws from different areas of the city and recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession, a police public relations officer said.

He said that, following the special directions of Inspector General of Police

(IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad capital police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city. Following these directives, the Bani Gala police team arrested an accused namely Arslan and recovered one 30 bore pistol from his possession. The Karachi Company police team arrested an accused namely Ikeh Uchenna Ibezim and recovered 640 gram heroin from his possession.

Similarly, the Golra police team arrested an accused namely Wajid Mehmood and recovered 519 gram heroin from his possession. The Industrial Area police team arrested an accused namely Shahzad Hakeem Zada and recovered 572 gram hashish from his possession.

Moreover, the Noon police team arrested an accused namely Abdullah and recovered one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from his possession. The Koral police team arrested an accused namely Hamad and recovered one 30 bore pistol with ammunition from his possession.

Cases have been registered against the nabbed accused and further investigation is underway.

CPO/DIG Operations Islamabad Syed Shehzad Nadeem Bukhari directed all senior officials for effective crackdown against the accused involved in drug peddling and possessing illegal weapons and said that the safety of the lives and property of the citizens is our prime responsibility. The performance of police officials in this regard would be reviewed on a continuous basis, he maintained.

ISLAMABAD (INP):

Pakistan has taken in 89 more Covid-19 infections with no fatality with daily number of tests cutting down to half during the last 24 hours, showed the statistics released by the National Institute of Health (NIH) on Saturday morning.

According to the NIH data, the death toll in the country remained the same at 30,648 whereas the number of total infections now shot up to 1,579,006 after adding the fresh 89 cases. During the last 24 hours (Friday), 2,530 tests were conducted throughout Pakistan whereas the positivity ratio stood at 3.52%. The number of patients in critical care stood at 19.

The Indian government has said that the number of active Covid cases stands at 7,600 at the moment with XBB.1.16 variant driving the surge. "Around 1% of the global cases being reported in India as of now. Active cases stand at 7,600 right now, 966 cases being reported on a daily basis,

on average. In the second week of February, 108 daily cases were being reported on average, it has now increased to 966," said Indian Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan.

"The eight states where maximum number of cases are being reported are - Maharashtra, Gujarat, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan. I had personally written to these states on March 16 on what actions they need to take up," he added. A total of 349 samples of Covid-19's XBB.1.16 variant, which might have been behind the recent rise of coronavirus cases in the country, have been detected, according to INSACOG data. These 349 samples of the variant have been found in nine states and Union Territories.

The highest number of cases due to this variant has been found in Maharashtra at 105, followed by Telangana 93, Karnataka 61 and Gujarat 54, according to INSACOG

data accessed by PTI.

XBB 1.16 was first found in January when two samples tested positive for the variant. In February, 140 samples of the XBB 1.16 variant were found. In March, 207 XBB 1.16 variant samples have been found till now, according to INSACOG data.

The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) advised all the states to continue focusing on the 5-fold strategy of Test-Track-Treat-Vaccination and Covid Appropriate Behaviour to fight Covid-19. The notification stated, "We will do another mock drill to see the Covid-19 preparations. Mock drills will be done soon in all the states/UTs." According to the notification issued by the Health Ministry, more than 220.65 crore total doses of vaccines have been administered in the country. "There has been no evidence of an increase in hospitalization. Precaution doses should be increased.

Thousands provided work

BAGHLAN (Agencies): Local officials of Baghlan say that laborer work has been provided for thousands of people in exchange for food in that province. The provincial head of Baghlan's Economy Department Abdul Mateen Akhundzada told BNA correspondent: "The World Food Programme has provided work for 4,500 unemployed people in this province. They are working in the construction of bridges, culverts, rivers, and many other places in their regions."

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Ramazan 04, 1444 — Sunday, March 26, 2023

7 suffered casualties

BAMYAN (Agencies): In a collision with a car, two people lost their lives and 5 others were injured. Two people, including the driver of the car dead, and five others, were injured in a deviation car, said Mohammad Khawani Rasa, the police spokesperson of Bamyan, to Bakhtar News Agency. The police officers of Bamyan reached the site shortly and transferred the injured to the hospital. Meanwhile, the medics reported the condition of two of the injured critical.

147 Afghan migrants return home from Iran

KABUL (Khaama Press): Afghanistan's Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation on Saturday announced that 147 Afghan refugees returned to the country from Iran through the Islamqala border in eastern Herat province.

According to Taliban border officials out of 147 returnees, 67 people have been referred to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to receive food and other basic requirements.

Over the past weeks, the Taliban's Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation has repeatedly reported on the return of Afghan citizens from Iran. Some of these refugees have been forcefully deported, and others willingly left Iran, according to a statement by Taliban officials.

Since the Taliban's return to power in August 2021, thousands of Afghans fled Afghanistan to the neighboring countries fearing persecution and death threats. Most of these people entered host countries through illegal channels, now facing serious prob-



lems including forceful deportation and imprisonment.

Over the past months, the Iranian government has taken serious measures to deal with undocumented Afghan refugees in the host country. They have been continuously incarcerating and forcefully deporting Afghan nationals through

Islamqala and Abrishum crossing points.

Meanwhile, as per a new policy introduced by the Pakistani government in the past week, the free movement of Afghan nationals from one city to another has been restricted within the country. It is also stated that upon the expiry of visas, Afghan nationals will have to leave the country, or they

will face serious consequences.

Although Iran and Pakistan have hosted millions of Afghans over the past decades, Afghan migrants are currently faced with immense challenges in both countries, with UNHCR having no clear policy regarding Afghan refugees' legal status in the host countries.

DAB to auction 15m USD today

KABUL (Agencies): Da Afghanistan Bank will auction 15 million USD today (Sunday) to keep the local currency rate stable in the market.

DAB in a statement received by Bakhtar News Agency asked all eligible commercial banks, and money exchangers to attend the bid.

It is mentioned in the newsletter that partial transaction is not allowed and the winner of the auction is obligated to deliver the amount in cash at a specific time to DAB.

DAB last week also auctioned off \$15 million for strengthening the Afghani currency.

Meanwhile, today, Saturday one dollar was exchanged for (86.80) Afghani in the market.

115 projects conducted in last year

BALKH (Agencies): Local officials of Balkh say that 115 micro and macro construction projects were conducted and completed in the past year in Balkh.

The Deputy Governor of Balkh, Mawlawi Noor ul-Hadi Abu Idris told BNA that during last year, 115 construction projects were carried out and completed in Balkh, and fourteen billion afghanis were collected through the customs and other departments."

He said that about 35,600 square meters of government land and 100,000 acres of grassland have been taken back from usurpers in this province.

According to him, last year, in coordination with the Departments of Economy, and Natural Disasters Management, in cities and districts of Balkh, food items and cash have been distributed to the needy by national and international aid organizations.

The International firms, who operate in Balkh, the security of their offices and employees are secured by the security forces, he added.

National Symposium to be held

GHAZNI (Agencies): During a visit to Ghazni province, Dr. Azim Khinjani, head of the Turkish Coordination Council in Afghanistan, announced plans to hold a national symposium in the memory of Sultan Mahmud Ghaznavi in the provincial capital.

Representatives from several Islamic countries will be invited to the conference, he said.

A report of Ghazni historical sites will be shared with different organizations and embassies in coordination with the Ministry of Information and Culture so that measures can be taken to restore them.

The provincial Head of Information and Culture of Ghazni, Mullah Hamidullah Nisar, welcomed the Turkish council and said the Department will support the Turkish Coordination council with all its resilience.

Needy families received food

JAWZJAN (Agencies): Food aid was distributed to 4,856 needy families in Jawzjan, said local officials of the province.

The World Food Programme, in cooperation with CHAI, distributed food to 1,500 families in the Khawja Dako district and 3,356 families in the Darzab district of Jawzjan.

The aids include flour, cooking oil, Lentils, and salt, where distributes to needy families of Jawzjan, according to local officials of the province.

The families who received aid express happiness from the aid organization.

Female schools will reopen after curriculum formalized

PARWAN (TOLONews): The head of the security department in Parwan, Azizullah Omar, told TOLONews that schools for female students will reopen soon after the work on the curriculum is finished.

"There is no problem about the start of schooling. There is only a problem in the curriculum. And therefore a committee has been formed for its reform. After confirmation of the clerics, the schools will begin," he said.

This comes as female students expressed concerns, saying that the closure of schools has affected morale.

"I am absolutely hopeless about life. We hoped the schools would be reopened in the new educational year," said Zuhail, a



student. "We ask the Islamic Emirate to reopen the doors of schools for us," said Mursal, a student.

This comes as female students, who were recently barred from attending their universities, also urged the interim government to reopen their universities.

"We had our eyes on the reopening of our universities and thus we would be allowed to go to universities," said Husna Behzad, a student. The ban on female schooling by the Islamic Emirate faced reactions inside Afghanistan as well as by the international community.

Female entrepreneurs complain of lack of markets



KABUL (Khaama Press): Some Afghan female entrepreneurs complain of a lack of market opportunities for their products.

Businesswomen said that sales of their goods have been poor in recent months and urged the government authorities to build more facilities to support their business activities.

"Women that run production in the private sector—the government has to provide permanent markets for them so they can make sales," said Mumtaz Yosif Zai, a businesswoman.

"Women face a lack of markets for their products because people have economic issues and cannot buy our products," said Zakira, a businesswoman, ToloNews reported.

A three-day exhibition was held in Dubai, organized by the United Nations Development Program and the Afghan Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry (AWCCI).

The Afghan businesswomen could not participate in the exhibition due to travel and visa restrictions. However, they took part remotely via video link from Kabul capital city of Afghanistan. A recent report by the International Labor Organization estimated that since the Taliban seized power in 2021, 25% of women's jobs have vanished.

The report also added that many women had started home-based enterprises, preventing a further decline in women employed.

Lack of a permanent market, access to the foreign market, lack of purchasing power, safety and security and restrictions are

the major issues for women entrepreneurs in Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, the UN has reiterated that the country suffers from a severe humanitarian crisis and estimates that two-thirds of the country's population will need humanitarian assistance in 2023.

The estimates also show that 28.3 million Afghans will need humanitarian and protection assistance this year, while it was 24.4 million in 2022 and 18.4 million in 2021, UNOCHA said.

Since December last year, the de facto administration has banned Afghan females from working with national and international organizations. This has added to the severity of the crisis amid the country's security deterioration during the past few months.

50 children patients returned home after being treated



KABUL (Agencies): 50 children patients returned to the country after being treated in Germany.

50 sick children who were dispatched to Germany for treatment returned to Kabul, said the Afghan Red Crescent society in a statement.

These children suffered from severe burns and bone

germ disease, which were dispatched to Germany for treatment last year.

The head of the Afghan Red Crescent Society, Mawlawi Mutiul Haq Khalis thanked the German Charity Foundation for facilitating the treatment of these children.

He asked the families whose children were treated in Germany to take serious care of their children.

Since 1368, the German Peace Village Foundation has dispatched hundreds of children with long burns, bone-breaking diseases, and heart holes for treatment in that country and after recovery, they returned them to Afghanistan.

People trapped in storm rescued by security forces

GHOR (Agencies): The nomads trapped in the storm were rescued in the Tor Ghor district of.

Last night, a caravan carrying the nomadic people, which was moving

from Helmand to Ghor, was trapped in the storm, snow, and rain in Tor Ghor district, said Abdul Rahman Badri, police spokesman of Ghor, said.

The police of Ghor

rushed to rescue the trapped after being informed he said. No human casualties in this incident, but several sheep and a camel were killed in this storm, he added.

Interim govt delegation visits Afghan Consulate in Khorog Tajikistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): The Foreign Ministry of Taliban has announced that a delegation of Islamic Emirate visited the Afghanistan Consulate General in Khorog, the capital of Badakhshan province in Tajikistan.

Abdul Qahar Balkhi, Taliban's spokesperson of the Foreign Ministry on Saturday in a series of Tweets said that Mohammad Mosa Amiri, head of the ministry's financial and administrative department headed the delegation.

Besides observing the

administrative affairs of the consulate, the delegation assessed the damages caused to the consulate building due to the recent avalanches, Balkhi said.

Taliban claims that the Afghan Consulate building in Khorog province of Tajikistan has sustained certain damages due to the avalanches.

The Taliban officials have not yet shared any video or photos of the group's delegation to the Afghanistan Consulate in Khorog Tajikistan.

Afghanistan Embassy in Tajikistan has not yet com-

mented about the visit. This visit comes as the Afghan embassy in Tajikistan is not handed over to the Taliban, and still operates in line with the policy of the previous government of Afghanistan.

Tajikistan is the only neighboring country that has not handed over Afghanistan's embassy and consulates to the Taliban regime. Since the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021, Dushanbe has shut down its embassy in Kabul and has no ties with Afghanistan's de facto regime.

Furthermore, the Central Asian nation closed its border with Afghanistan following the overthrow of the previous government and has repeatedly called on the Taliban regime to establish an inclusive government, respect human rights, and insure the security of all people of Afghanistan.

The government of Tajikistan has not commented on the Taliban delegation's visit to Khorog Tajikistan. Further developments in this regard will be shared in a timely manner.

Hundreds of military vehicles left by US in Afghanistan repaired



KABUL (Khaama Press): Taliban's Defense Ministry has confirmed that the group has repaired around 300 military vehicles left by the United States in Afghanistan.

Most of these military vehicles had been intentionally partially damaged by the American forces when they withdrew from Afghanistan in August 2021, Bakhtar News

Agency reported.

The Taliban's Ministry of Defense said that their technical team and engineers have also managed to repair hundreds of vehicles including 150 International Kamazes, 125 Humvees, 2 assault tanks, 4 trucks, 10 Porcliff vehicles, and 15 Humvee ambulances.

According to the US House of Representatives,

after the withdrawal of the country's military forces from Afghanistan, seven billion dollars worth of military equipment has been left behind in Afghanistan.

The fall of the US-backed government in Afghanistan gave Taliban fighters access to more than \$7 billion worth of American military equipment, according to data in

a report submitted to American lawmakers and confirmed by the Pentagon.

"The \$7.12 billion figure cited in the department's recent report to Congress corresponds to ANDSF equipment and not U.S. military equipment used by our forces," Lodewick said in a statement. "Nearly all equipment used by U.S. military forces in Afghanistan was either retrograded or destroyed prior to our withdrawal."

With the Taliban in power, now the US is concerned that the military equipment could be used by terrorist groups or would be accessed by China or Russia.

Some US combat commanders claim that the military equipment left to the Taliban was used by Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF), not American forces, and some of the equipment need high maintenance to keep them operating.

Over 3,000 needy families received aid in Balkh, Samangan



KABUL (Agencies): Officials of rural rehabili-

tation and development of Balkh and Samangan

provinces said that the World Food Program or

WFP distributed Food Items to 3,686 needy families in the provinces.

According to the Samangan Rural Rehabilitation and Development Department officials, the World Food Program distributed food items in the Hazrat-e-Sultan district of the province with each family received flour, cooking oil, and lentil.

Elsewhere, 866 needy families received food assistance in Marmal district of Balkh province where each family received flour, cooking oil, lentil, and child nutrition food.



LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan at anti-terrorism court during hearing.

Four dead, 17 injured in rain-related incidents

PESHAWAR (APP): Four people died and 17 others were injured during rain related incidents in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, said a report issued by the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) here on Saturday.

It said that in Mardan two died and two injured when the roof of their house collapsed due to heavy rains while one casualty has also been reported from Peshawar in the similar incident. The death of a woman in a roof collapse incident is also reported from South Waziristan.

Heavy rains have also damaged six houses including one fully destroyed and five partially damaged. Three cattle were also perished due to heavy rains. The Provincial Disaster Management Authority has directed administrations of all affected districts to accelerate relief operations in their respective districts.

Shehbaz can face contempt: Sheikh Rashid

RAWALPINDI (PPI): Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmed said on Saturday Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif could face contempt of court over delay in elections.

In a series of tweets, the former interior minister said the tenure of the caretaker government would end after 90 days, adding that the government had postponed the elections due to rising popularity of PTI Chairman Imran Khan. "Those who are not ready to hold elections on April 30 will not let it happen on Oct 8," he said. Mr Ahmed said inflation had broken all records as it hovered around 50 per cent, adding that such a situation would prove the last nail in the coffin of the coalition government.

He said the international community was worried about Pakistan but rulers were busy in photo sessions at flour distribution points. Saying there were no positive vibes from the IMF, he said the country was heading towards collapse.

ATC rejects bail of PTI leaders over no-show

LAHORE (PPI): An anti-terrorism court in Lahore on Saturday dismissed interim bail pleas of PTI leaders Fawad Chaudhry, Hammad Azhar and Farrukh Habib after they skipped court hearing in a case registered against them for committing violence, vandalism, attempt to murder and meddling in official affairs.

ATC judge heard the case as PTI leaders Fawad Chaudhry, Hammad Azhar and Farrukh Habib did not appear before the court. The court dismissed their interim bails for skipping a court appearance. The Race Course police had registered cases against PTI leaders under 12 different sections including terrorism, murder, attempt to murder, vandalism, and obstructing law enforcers in performing their duties during PTI rally.

Separately, PTI leaders Mehmood-ur-Rashid and Ijaz Chaudhry appeared before an anti-terrorism court. The court extended their interim bail till April 4. On Friday, the anti-terrorism court granted post-arrest bail to 93 PTI workers in the Zaman Park Riots case. The ATC judge Ejaz Ahmad Bhuttar announced

the verdict and granted post-arrest bail to 93 PTI workers.

LHC moved for round the clock foolproof security for Imran: While disagreeing with Punjab police high-ups claim regarding adequate security measures to former prime minister Imran Khan on Saturday Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's counsel sought Lahore High Court (LHC) directives for round the clock foolproof security to his client in adherence to constitutional provisions.

In March 20, during adjudication of a petition seeking security for Imran Khan, a single-member bench of the LHC comprising Justice Abid Aziz Sheikh asked Khan's counsel, advocate Azhar Siddique, and the PTI leadership to pay visit Zaman Park in order to verify the prevailing security arrangements to the former premier.

It is pertinent to mention that Imran Khan had requested "foolproof security and permission to mark his attendance into court's proceedings through video link" to avoid any potential harm following an assassination attempt in Wazirabad. Appearing

before the bench, a law officer representing the police high-ups assured the court that adequate security had been deployed, consisting of as many as 123 police personnel, including officers and officials, in three shifts with approximately 35 officials on each shift. The law officer also claimed the physical presence of security personnel could be verified.

On Saturday, advocate Azhar Siddique filed an application on behalf of Imran Khan, contending that insufficient security had been deployed at the PTI chief's residence. The plea stated that the petitioner had to make private security arrangements to safeguard his life due to the security lapses of the respondents, despite the constitutional obligation of the government and police high-ups to provide adequate security. Advocate Siddique also shared a list of previous and current security arrangements, saying that inadequate security had been provided to his client. He submitted that Imran Khan has been left undefended against the persons/assassins who are out to murder him in cold blood.

Residents take to streets against power outage

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Local residents at Samarbagh on Saturday staged a protest rally against the power outage, substandard subsidized wheat flour and its improper distribution and shortage of staff at Nadra office. The protesters blocked the main Shahi road for some time and chanted slogans against the government for its failure to meet their demands.

The rally was addressed by the Samarbagh tehsil chairman Saeed Ahmad Pachia, Haji Rehman, Hameed Khan and others. The speakers said that poor people were being humiliated by keeping them standing in long queues behind cheap and subsidized flour. They said that the women who wished to

get registered in the BISP stood in long queues due to heavy rush while a few of them were registered daily.

The speakers said that the government had failed to control the artificial price hike that had made it difficult for the poor people to live in this blessed month of Ramadan. They said that the prices of edibles, fruits and vegetables had gone beyond the purchasing power of common people while the government did nothing to resolve people's grievances. "We will lock the BISP office in Samarbagh if proper staff was not provided to it," Saeed Ahmad announced and demanded of the government to depute proper staff at the Samarbagh BISP and Nadra offices.

The speakers com-

plained the people of Darangal, Miskini, Asharkor, Tettar and Barchonai had no power supply for the last three days and despite repeated complaints, no one was listening to their complaint. The protesters threatened to bring all residents on the roads if the problems were not resolved within a week. Later the additional assistant commissioner Nauman Pervaz reached the venue, held talks with the protesters' leaders on which the protesters dispersed peacefully.

Also in the day the Awami National Party senior worker Buzarg Ahmad Jan demanded of the government to restore the previous procedure of flour distribution among the deserving people.

GB police not to accompany CM, Governor to other provinces

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Interior Ministry has banned the Gilgit Baltistan (GB) police from accompanying the Chief Minister (CM) and Governor to other provinces.

As per details, the interior ministry stated that the concerned province where the Chief Minister and Governor Gilgit Baltistan will visit that province will provide security to them. The letter was sent to IGs and chief secretaries of all four provinces and Azad Kashmir. The ministry also directed the Inspector General of Police (IGP) and chief commissioner Islamabad to provide security.

Earlier, the Federal minister for information and broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb claimed that Gilgit Baltistan force used against Punjab police in Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan's possible arrest from his Zaman park Lahore residence.

ECP finalises arrangements for repolling

ISLAMABAD (APP): Arrangements have been finalized for repolling in 15 districts of Sindh on Sunday, in response to allegations of irregularities in the previous local government (LG) elections.

The repolling is being held for the seats of Chairman, Vice Chairman, Member District Council, and General Members, to address allegations of irregularities in the previous elections on the directives of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and the Supreme Court following the allegations of irregularities. A total of 109,687 voters are registered to cast their votes in the 15 districts, with 59,310 male and 50,377 female voters among them.

A total of 15 district returning officers, 26 returning officers, and 52 assistant returning officers have been deployed to conduct the local government polls. A total of 81 polling stations have been established across 15 districts, including 21 for men, 22 for women, and 38 combined stations for both male and female voters.

As many as 275 polling booths have been set up in 15 districts of Sindh for the upcoming local government polls. Of these, 140 booths are designated for male voters, 135 for female voters, and 275 are combined booths for both genders.

This move is aimed at upholding the principles of democracy and addressing any concerns regarding the previous elections. Repolling for local government elections will be held on Sunday in the districts include Jacobabad, Kashmore, Shikarpur, Larkana, Qamber Shahdadkot, Sukkur, Khairpur, Shaheed Benazirabad, Sanghar, Mirpurkhas, Umakot, Tharparkar, Hyderabad, Jamshoro, and Badin.

Trump warns of 'death, destruction' if charged with a crime

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Former US President Donald Trump warned of potential "death and destruction" if he faces criminal charges, hours after New York prosecutors probing his hush-money payment to porn star Stormy Daniels said they would not be intimidated.

The early post on Trump's Truth Social media site was the latest in a string of verbal attacks on Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg since last Saturday when Trump wrongly predicted he would be arrested three days later. Trump falsely claims his defeat in 2020 was the result of fraud — a claim that inspired his followers to launch a deadly Jan 6, 2021, assault on the US Capitol in a failed bid to stop Congress from certifying the election of Democratic President Joe Biden, who bested the Republican Trump by more than 7 million votes.

"What kind of person can charge another person, in this case a former President of the United States, who got more votes than any sitting President in history, and leading candi-

date (by far!) for the Republican Party nomination, with a Crime, when it is known by all that NO Crime has been committed, & also known that potential death & destruction in such a false charge could be catastrophic for our Country?" wrote Trump, who is seeking the 2024 Republican presidential nomination. Bragg's office, in a letter to Republican committee chairmen in Congress on Thursday, challenged their standing to investigate his office and said Trump had "created a false expectation that he would be arrested" in his Saturday post.

The letter called the chairmen's request for communications, documents and testimony an "unlawful incursion into New York's sovereignty." Stormy Daniels, an adult film actress and director whose real name is Stephanie Clifford, has said she received the money in exchange for keeping silent about a sexual encounter she had with Trump in 2006.

Trump has denied ever having an affair with Daniels, and has called the payment a "simple private

transaction." He has said he did not commit a crime and has called the investigation politically motivated. The Manhattan grand jury probing Trump is not due to reconvene until next week. In other cases, Georgia prosecutors are looking into Trump's attempts to overturn his election defeat there, and a federal special counsel is investigating both his attempts to overturn his loss and the removal of classified documents from the White House after Trump left office.

On Saturday, Trump will hold a campaign rally in Waco, Texas, 30 years after a raid on the Branch Davidians religious sect there by federal agents resulted in 86 deaths, including four law-enforcement officers. The event has become a symbol of government overreach for some and is a seminal moment for some right-wing extremist groups. In an e-mail, a Trump campaign spokesperson said Waco was chosen because it is situated between several major population centers and has the infrastructure needed to host a large event.

Covid infections, tests drop sharply in Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan has taken in 89 more Covid-19 infections with no fatality with daily number of tests cutting down to half during the last 24 hours, showed the statistics released by the National Institute of Health (NIH) on Saturday morning.

According to the NIH data, the death toll in the country remained the same at 30,648 whereas the number of total infections now shot up to 1,579,006 after adding the fresh 89 cases. During the last 24 hours (Friday), 2,530 tests were conducted throughout Pakistan whereas the positivity ratio stood at 3.52%.

The number of patients in critical care stood at 19. The Indian government has said that the number of active Covid cases stands at 7,600 at the moment with XBB.1.16 variant driving the surge. "Around 1% of the global cases being reported in India as of now. Active cases stand at 7,600 right now. 966 cases being reported on a daily basis, on average. In the second week of February, 108 daily cases were being reported on average, it has now increased to 966," said Indian Health Secretary Rajesh Bhushan.

"The eight states where maximum number of cases are being reported are - Maharashtra, Gujarat, Kerala, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Delhi, Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan. I had personally written to these states on March 16 on what actions they need to take up," he added. A total of 349 samples of Covid-19's XBB.1.16 variant, which might have been

behind the recent rise of coronavirus cases in the country, have been detected, according to INSACOG data.

These 349 samples of the variant have been found in nine states and Union Territories. The highest number of cases due to this variant has been found in Maharashtra at 105, followed by Telangana 93, Karnataka 61 and Gujarat 54, according to INSACOG data accessed by PTI.

XBB 1.16 was first found in January when two samples tested positive for the variant. In February, 140 samples of the XBB 1.16 variant were found. In March, 207 XBB 1.16 variant samples have been found till now, according to INSACOG data. The Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) advised all the states to continue focusing on the 5-fold strategy of Test-Track-Treat-Vaccination and Covid Appropriate Behaviour to fight Covid-19. The notification stated, "We will do another mock drill to see the Covid-19 preparations. Mock drills will be done soon in all the states/UTs."

According to the notification issued by the Health Ministry, more than 220.65 crore total doses of vaccines have been administered in the country. "There has been no evidence of an increase in hospitalization. Precaution doses should be increased. Enhanced lab surveillance and testing of all severe acute respiratory illness (Sari) cases needs to be done", reads the statement. India has recorded 1,134 new coronavirus

cases, while the active cases increased to 7,026, according to Health Ministry data. The death toll climbed to 5,30,813 with five deaths. One death each has been reported in Chhattisgarh, Delhi, Gujarat and Maharashtra while one fatality was reconciled by Kerala, the data updated at 8 am stated.

Country facing a storm of inflation: Tessori F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori on Saturday said that he would write a letter to the Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah to increase 35 percent in salaries of government employees to meet the growing prices.

He said that private organizations and media houses should also increase the salaries of the employees as the people were experiencing very tough time. While addressing a press conference at Governor House, he said that the entire country was facing a storm of inflation and strict action was necessary against the hoarders and profiteers in the holy month of Ramadan.

Kamran Tessori said they had announced a week ago that they would fight against the storm of inflation and had thought they would ensure essential commodities at the doorsteps of the people and considered to set up bachat bazaars.

UN conference ends with bold plan to tackle global water crisis

UNITED NATIONS (APP): The UN 2023 Water Conference has wrapped after a breakthrough response to the global water crisis, with governments, businesses and civil society making almost 700 commitments to advance the water agenda, a dealmaker for accelerating sustainable development overall.

Pakistan's 4-member delegation, led by Hasan Nasir Jamy, took part in the historic conference's intense deliberations on water-related challenges over the past three days. The conference drew more than 2,000 participants. Apart from other issues, Jamy, who is Secretary of the Ministry of Water Resources, especially highlighted the need for transboundary water cooperation, citing the 1960 Indus Water Treaty between India and Pakistan — a lower riparian state — as an example of such successful cooperation that provides an effective mechanism to deal with issues related to shared water resources.

In this regard, he drew attention to precedents and principles on the rights and obligations of both upper and lower riparians arising from bilateral and multilateral instruments, saying, "These norms must be fully respected by the concerned Parties". The conference's agenda sets out a series of action-oriented game changing commitments, from making smarter food choices to re-evaluating water as a powerful economic driver, and part of the Earth's cultural heritage.

From protecting the spread of disease to fighting poverty, natural resource also flows through the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at a time when the world is grappling with climate change, water scarcity, and pollution. "The commitments at this Conference will propel humanity towards the water-secure future every person on the planet needs," UN Secretary-General António Guterres told delegates at the closing ceremony.

The conference forged an "ambitious vision", the UN chief noted. "Your dedication to action and transformation is propelling us towards a sustainable, equitable and inclusive water-secure future for people and planet alike," he said. "This conference demonstrated a central truth: as humanity's most precious global common good, water unites us all, and it flows across a number of global challenges." Co-hosted by Netherlands and Tajikistan, the Conference brought together world leaders, civil society, business leaders, young people, scientists, academics, the UN System and others from across sectors — agriculture, energy, environment and water — around a common goal: to urgently tackle the water crisis and set the world back on track to achieving Sustainable Development Goal 6 — On Clean Water and Sanitation by 2030.

To achieve this, the Secretary-

General highlighted key game-changers: from reinforcing water's place as a fundamental human right and reducing the pressures on the hydrological system, to developing new, alternative food systems to reduce the unsustainable use of water in food production and agriculture and designing and implementing a new global water information system to guide plans and priorities by 2030. The Secretary-General also advocated for integrating the approach on water, ecosystems and climate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and strengthen communities — from resilient infrastructure, water pipelines and wastewater treatment plants, to ensuring every person in the world is protected with early warning systems against natural disasters by 2027; and continued to press for climate justice and global action to limit global warming to a 1.5-degree rise. Lastly, he called for a dramatic acceleration in resources and investment into the ability of all countries to reach SDG 6.

Access to safe water, sanitation and hygiene is the most basic human need for health and well-being, and a declared human right. But some 2 billion people around the world still lack access to safe drinking water and 40 per cent of the world's population is affected by water scarcity. Agriculture demands alone account for some 70% of water usage. Adding to the pressure, more than 90 per cent of disasters are water-related, with

climate change hitting hardest through water. And humanity's demand for water keeps growing, with pressure on freshwater projected to increase by more than 40 per cent by 2050.

Against this background, conference deliberations ranged from the urgency of the water crisis, including its role in forced migration, climate change and conflicts to stressing its critical link to good health, poverty reduction and food security. Attention was also given to solutions, with deliberations spanning the need for better data collection, enhanced governance systems, capacity development opportunities and funding gaps in the water sector. With financing needs at between US\$182 to more than US\$600 billion annually, the importance of unlocking financing and innovative funding schemes, calling for new innovations and investments at scale in the water economy was also underscored.

Responding to this, the Water Action Agenda, the key outcome of the Conference, captured over 700 commitments aimed at driving transformation from a global water crisis to a water-secure world. The agenda represents the global community's bold resolve to address the water challenges through a more coordinated and results-driven approach, it was pointed out. A number of other follow-up steps are also under consideration — including the appointment of a Special Envoy on Water.

سول نورن گیس
Sui Northern Gas
پائپ لائنز لمیٹڈ

📞 1199 Helpline

📱 SNGPL Official

گیس چوری کی سزا

بدنامی، حیرمانہ، جیل کی ہوا

<p>وہلی یا سڑی ہوئی گیس کو نقصان پہنچانا</p> <p>10 برس قید اور 30 لاکھ روپے جرمانہ</p>	<p>گیس پائپ کو نقصان</p> <p>14 برس قید اور 1 کروڑ روپے جرمانہ</p>
<p>خواب کاری کے ذریعے گیس ریزرکیشن یا گیس کو نقصان پہنچانا</p> <p>14 برس قید اور 10 لاکھ روپے جرمانہ</p>	<p>کرکشل یا صاف میٹر کو نقصان پہنچانا</p> <p>10 برس قید اور 50 لاکھ روپے جرمانہ</p>
<p>کرکسل یا صاف میٹر کو گیس پریشر میں ملوث ہونا</p> <p>6 ماہ قید اور 1 لاکھ روپے جرمانہ</p>	<p>بدلتی ہوئی گیس کا فیاض یا گیس کے کڑی یا ناکام کو نقصان پہنچانا</p> <p>7 برس قید اور 50 لاکھ روپے جرمانہ</p>

خبردار!

گیس چھینٹ کنٹرول اینڈ ریکوری ایکٹ 2016 کے تحت گیس کے غیر قانونی استعمال، گیس خصلیات کے ساتھ چھینچھپاؤ اور گیس فراہمی میں رکاوٹ پیدا کرنا قابل مجازم ہے۔

CRACK DOWN

📞 1199 پر دیں