

Gandapur remand granted

SHIKARPUR (INP): A local court in Shikarpur has granted five-day judicial remand of former federal minister and PTI leader Ali Amin Gandapur. A court on Friday sent Gandapur to judicial remand. He was shifted to Sukkur Central Jail amid tight security. A large number of PTI activists were present in the court during hearing. On Thursday, an ATC in Lahore granted three-day transit remand of PTI leader Gandapur to Sindh police.

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SC bill formally becomes a law

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The National Assembly of Pakistan Friday notified Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill, 2023 in spite of a stay order that an 8-member bench of the top court granted in response to identical pleas challenging constitutionality of the legislation.

A week ago while grating stay order in the matter, the eight-member bench of the Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umer Ata Bandial issued notices to the Federal Government, Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP), political parties, Pakistan Bar Council (PBC) and the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) in response to pleas challenging the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill, 2023.

The CJP led bench has termed the bill 'interference with and intrusion into the independence of the judiciary.' However, the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill, 2023 – curtailing CJP's suo motu powers has become a law on Friday after being passed by the National Assembly (NA), fulfilling all the necessary requirements and regulations. The National Assembly of Pakistan shared the bill's copy on its official Twitter handle.

National Assembly Secretariat notified that the bill of the Majlis-e-Shoora (Parliament) deemed to have been assented by the president (with effect from April 21, 2023) under Clause (2) of the Article 75 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. President Dr Arif Alvi, for a second time, refused to give his assent to Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill, 2023 and sent it back to parliament, maintaining that the matter was now sub judice before the apex court. The bill was approved by the federal cabinet on March 28 and then lower and upper houses passed the instrument.

However, the president refused to sign it into law with the observation that it travelled "beyond the competence of parliament". Later, a Joint Sitting of Parliament passed the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill 2023 again on April 10. Three days later, the Supreme Court (SC) barred the government from implementing the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill, 2023. The passed bill – the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill, 2023 – aims at giving the power of taking suo motu notice to a three-member committee comprising senior judges including Chief Justice. It also aims to have transparent proceedings in the apex court and includes the right to appeal.

Regarding the constitution of benches, the bill states that every cause, matter or appeal before the apex court would be heard and disposed of by a bench constituted by a committee comprising the CJP and the two senior-most judges. It added that the decisions of the committee would be taken by a majority. Regarding exercising the apex court's original jurisdiction, the bill said that any matter invoking the use of Article 184(3) would first be placed before the above-mentioned committee. The bill says that if the committee is of the view that a question of public importance with reference to the enforcement of any of the fundamental rights conferred by Chapter I of Part II of the Constitution is involved, it shall constitute a bench comprising not less than three judges of the Supreme Court of Pakistan which may also include the members of the committee, for adjudication of the matter. The bill additionally said that a party would have the right to appoint its counsel of choice for filing a review application under Article 188 of the Constitution.

Nawaz meets Saudi Crown Prince

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif met with Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman, said Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb in a tweet on Friday.

The minister said that Maryam Nawaz was also present in the meeting. She said that the leaders discussed further strengthening brotherly relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. They also deliberated on the solutions to the problems being faced by Pakistan. She said that Nawaz Sharif expressed good wishes for the Saudi leadership.

Premier meets legal experts

ISLAMABAD (INP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif met the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) stalwarts and legal experts to discuss the political situation.

According to sources, the federal minister for law and justice, Ayaz Sadiq, Saad Rafiq and other leaders were present in the meeting. Furthermore, former law minister Zahid Hamid and Attorney General Mansoor Usman also had a detailed meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif. Sources said that the PM discussed the current political situation and the ongoing case in the Supreme Court.

Iqbal's death anniversary observed

ISLAMABAD (INP): The 85th death anniversary of the subcontinent's great philosopher, thinker and Poet of East, Dr Allama Muhammad Iqbal is being observed on Friday.

The day is being marked to acknowledge his struggle and services for a separate homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent. He was born on November 9, 1877 in Sialkot. He was a great representative of the Muslims of the subcontinent and one of the main exponents of the Pakistan Movement. Allama Iqbal was a great visionary poet, who conceived the idea of a separate homeland for the Muslims of the subcontinent, which was ultimately materialized in the shape of Pakistan. He is also considered one of the most important figures in literature with literary works in both Urdu and Persian languages. Asrar-e-Khudi, Payam-i-Mashriq, Bang-i-Dara, Bal-i-Jibril, Zarb-i Kalim and Armughan-e-Hijaz were amongst his best works.

Iqbal was a Sufi poet for the modern age who aroused a revolutionary spirit in the nation through his poetry. His poetry has been translated in Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, English and several other languages and is considered a great philosopher all over the world. Unfortunately, he could not see the independence of Pakistan and died on April 21, 1938. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday, paying tribute to Allama Muhammad Iqbal, said the great poet and philosopher gave the Muslim Ummah a new dimension of thinking.



ISLAMABAD: People offering dua on the last Friday prayer of Ramazan at Faisal Mosque.

Uyghur Muslims genocide issue raised at the White House

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: White House National Security Spokesperson John Kirby was asked at the White House Press Briefing whether the US is taking any concrete steps with the regard to the genocide of the Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang province of China who are mostly Turkic-speaking ethnic group.

John Kirby replied by stating that it is a kind of issue where "constant pressure" needs to be applied on China because "freedom of worship" is a basic right of every human being. It is pertinent to mention here

that US has officially declared the treatment of Uyghur Muslims in China as genocide and Congressman Chris Smith has written a letter to Chinese President Xi asking him that he (Chris Smith) personally wants to visit Xinjiang and see how Uyghur Muslims are being treated.

John Kirby was asked whether he was aware about the letter from Congressman Chris Smith, to which John Kirby replied by stating that Congressmen are entitled to write letters to whom ever they wish and they can visit wherever they want to visit. It is also pertinent to mention here

that US President Joe Biden is constantly being asked to take some concrete steps with regard to the mass detention centers in China where Uyghur Muslims are being held to do forced labor. China on the other hand calls these detention centers "reeducation centers" and claims that they are now closed.

It is also pertinent to mention here that Pakistani political leadership has constantly turned a blind eye to this inhumane treatment of Uyghur Muslims in China and it is believed that Pakistan does not raise this issue because of the vast Chinese investment in the country.

President imposes fine on accused in harassment case

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In order to discourage unnecessary litigation filed on flimsy grounds, President Dr Arif Alvi has imposed a fine upon the accused in a harassment case to bear the airfare charges of the complainant for filing representations on flimsy grounds in a hasty manner.

The president fined the accused also for putting the alleged victim under further mental and financial hardships by making her travel from Karachi to Islamabad with her counsel to attend the hearing. The president gave this order in a case of sexual harassment where a female Assistant Sub-Inspector (ASI) (the complainant) at Airport Security Force (ASF) posted in Sukkur was allegedly harassed by the airport manager.

According to her, the accused pressurized her to solemnize marriage with her, however, within four months of the marriage, the accused statedly started maltreating her and ultimately handed over the divorce deed to her in the month of February 2022. She alleged that the accused pressurized her to reside with him after the divorce failing which he threatened to destroy her job as he was the airport manager. The accused was also reported to have sent indecent WhatsApp messages to the complainant.

Feeling aggrieved, the complainant approached the Federal Ombudsman for Protection against Harassment of Women at Workplace (FOSPAPH). During the course of proceedings before the Ombudsman, the accused filed an application for rejection of the complaint on the ground that it was not maintainable as the allegations were vague and pertained to domestic issues of the parties. The counsel of the accused contended that the competent forum for such issues had been specified in the Domestic Violence (Prevention and Protection) Act, 2013 promulgated by the Provincial Assembly of Sindh.

FOSPAPH, after hearing the parties, rejected his application for dismissal of the complaint. The accused then filed a representation with the president assailing FOSPAPH's order, which was also rejected. The president rejected his representation by stating that the proceedings in the main case were still pending before FOSPAPH wherein the evidence was yet to

be recorded to ascertain the factum of harassment or otherwise.

He held that the accused had filed the representation unnecessarily to prolong the proceedings and such a tendency needed to be discouraged as it was nothing but a time-buying tactic. President Alvi said that it was well settled that no party was allowed to file representations in a hasty manner to cause inordinate delay not only wasting the precious time of the ombudsman and the president but also dragging the complainant into unmeritorious representations. "Such tendency of uncalled-for litigation needs to be discouraged", he added.

The president further said that the preamble of the Protection against Harassment of Women at the Workplace Act, 2010 explicitly provided that the main objective of the legislation was to provide speedy and expeditious relief by redressing the grievances of the litigants to promote good governance. He added that in order to achieve the objective of the Act, imposing an exemplary cost on the party filing representations on flimsy grounds was appropriate to curb inordinate delay in the disposal of harassment matters.

He stated that Section 14 of the Reforms Act, 2013 empowered the president to dispose of a representation by passing an order as he deemed fit and such power entailed that such power was to be exercised reasonably, fairly, justly and for the advancement of the purposes of the enactment. The president stated that the application filed by the accused for rejection of the complaint on the grounds which could not be adjudicated except by appraisal of evidence was nothing but an abuse of the process of law not only to defeat the main objective of the Act but also to put the complainant under further mental and financial hardships who had to travel to Islamabad from Karachi with her counsel to attend the hearing of the representation by incurring airfare cost.

President Alvi, therefore, rejected the representation of the accused and imposed the cost of air travel expenses of the complainant upon the accused. He further directed the ombudsman to conclude the proceedings expeditiously within a period of ninety days as contemplated in section 8 of its Act, besides ensuring the payment of airfare cost by the accused to the complainant before proceeding ahead.

India starts blaming Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): India has started to blame Pakistan for the possible failure of its announced meeting of the G-20 countries from May 21-23 to be held in Srinagar, Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK).

According to media reports, recently the fire that broke out in an army truck in Rajouri district at around 3 pm and resulted in the death of four soldiers was attributed to lightning. However, at 6 pm, the Indian Army declared the accident as a grenade attack by unknown terrorists. After seven o'clock, Indian media, former government officials and pro-Modi journalists blamed Lashkar-e-Taiba and other banned organizations for the attack. Some retired Indian Army officers and analysts started to blame Pakistan.

The purpose of the G20 countries' moot was to convince the world that the law and order situation in Kashmir was absolutely normal. In view of the worsening law and order situation and the disputed status of IIOJK, the Modi government was under severe pressure due to no participation of most of the G20 countries. During the meeting, anticipated severe protests and strikes by Kashmiris were also a headache for the Modi government.

Holidays Notice

THE offices of The Frontier Post will remain closed on Saturday and Sunday on account of Eidul Fitr. Therefore, there will be no issue on Sunday and Monday. The Frontier Post wishes all readers a very happy Eidul Fitr.

Jumatul Wida observed with great religious zeal

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Jumatul Wida was observed with great religious enthusiasm and reverence in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including seven merged tribal districts on Friday.

Like other parts of the country, the faithful in large numbers visited mosques in all districts of KP including Peshawar and offered prayers as the last Friday of the fasting month that holds special significance to the Muslims and sought forgiveness and mercy. Big congregations were held in all districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Mardan, Nowshera, Charsadda, Swabi, Abbottabad, Haripur, Mansehra, Batagram, Kohistan, Kohat, Bannu, DI Khan, Karak, Lakki Marwat, Bannu, DIK, Khyber, Bajaur, Kurrum, Dir, Chitral, Shangla, Hangu, Buner, Malakand, Parachinar, Waziristan, Bajaur, Orakzai, Mohmand and Swat.

In Peshawar, big congregations of faithful were witnessed in all major mosques of the provincial capital, including historic Masjid Mohabat Khan, Dervesh Masjid, Sonehri Masjid, Speen Jumaat and Zarghoni mosques. The faithful offered special prayers for progress and prosperity of Pakistan and independence of Indian illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir and Palestine.

The ulema and mashaikh delivered special sermons on the importance of Jumatul Wida, Lailatul Qadar, Ramazan-ul-Mubarak and Eid-ul-Fitr. They urged people to follow the path of Allah Almighty and the Holy Prophet (PBUH) to achieve success here and hereafter. Prayer leaders, belonging to different schools of thoughts, highlighted the importance of fasting, and observance

Eid to be celebrated in Pakistan today

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Eidul Fitr will be celebrated across the country and in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, today (Saturday). Chairman of Central Ruet-e-Hilal Committee Maulana Abdul Khabir Azad announced at a news conference in Islamabad last night that no evidence of sighting of Shawal moon was received from any part of the country. Meanwhile, in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Grand Mufti Nasir ul Islam announced that Eid-ul-Fitr would be celebrated across the territory today.

of rituals like Shab-e-Qadr, Aitekaf and Fitrana. They urged people to pay Fitrana before of Eid prayer at Rs300 per individual.

Meanwhile, the last Friday of Ramazan, also known as Juma-tul-Wida, was observed with great religious zeal and enthusiasm in the federal capital like other parts of the country.

Muslims across the city gathered in mosques to offer Juma-tul-Wida, seeking blessings and forgiveness from Allah Almighty. The largest congregation was observed at the iconic Faisal Mosque, where thousands of worshippers came together to perform the special prayers. The atmosphere was one of spirituality and devotion, with the sound of the call to prayer echoing throughout the city.

In his sermon, the Imam emphasized the importance of unity, forgiveness, and compassion. He urged the Muslim community to reflect on their deeds and seek forgiveness from Allah Almighty, as Ramazan draws to a close.

He also emphasized the need for Muslims to follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and extend compassion and help to those in need, especially during these challenging times. Speaking to the media, worshippers expressed their joy and grat-

itude for being able to observe Juma-tul-Wida in such a peaceful and spiritual environment.

They praised the government and religious authorities for ensuring the smooth observance of the holy month of Ramazan, which has helped to promote a sense of community and devotion among the people. In addition, Mosques belonging to Hanfi school of thought were echoed with Ramazan's farewell Kalam 'Alwada Alwada Mahe Ramazan'. Faithful recited this Kalam with one voice and tearful eyes as the holy month of Ramazan approaches to an end.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi urged the people to observe the night of Lailat-ul-Jaiza, also known as the Night of Reward, by avoiding unnecessary roaming in markets and gathering at recreational places. As a night of spiritual significance, he encouraged the community to spend this night in prayer, seeking blessings and forgiveness from Allah Almighty.

In his capacity as the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Interfaith Harmony and Middle East, Ashrafi emphasized the importance of continuing the spiritual momentum gained during the holy month of Ramazan.

Exchange of sweet dishes adds colors to Chand Raat celebrations in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The exchange of sweet dishes including jalebi, gulab jamans and confectionary among relatives and friends were adding colors to Chand Raat celebrations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The boys and girls besides other family members exchanged sweet dishes especially prepared as special item for Chand Raat in Peshawar, Charsadda, Swabi, Mardan, Bannu, DI Khan and Nowshera districts on occasion of Eidul Fitr. Besides traditional sweet cuisines, the faithful exchanged DI Khan's Sohan halwa, Mardani peera and Charsadda Rajjar methai that enhanced spirit of friendship, love and warmth besides bring-

ing relatives closers on Eid.

Like other sweets, Peshawari jalebi sweet also attracted a large number of people ahead of Eid festival. Being a popular sweet item of the subcontinent, Peshawari Jalebi is being preferred by a large number of people in Eid parties due to its unique taste, deliciousness and energy perspective.

Commonly called Zolobay in Pashto, jalebi stalls established in almost all bazaars of the provincial capital attracted people belonging to all social class and ages including the government employees, senior citizens, women, youth and children. Shopkeepers dealing with food serv-

ices have setup special vendor jalebi and sweets stalls in front of their shops by making roaring bussiness on the eve of Eid.

The popular sweet of KP are being prepared with different ingredients with unique colours and designs catching consumers' attention while passing through historic Qissa Khwani bazaar, Hashtnagri, Fawara Chowk and Gantagar bazars flooded with shoppers. Qaiser Khan, a retired government employee told APP at Qissa Khwani bazaar on Friday that jalebi and DI Khan sohan halwa was his favorite sweet items and his Eid was seemed incomplete without these popular food of Indo-Pakistan sub-

continent.

"Peshawari jalebi and Mardani peera besides Gulab Jaman are unique in its taste and sweetness. I have bought 10 kilograms Gulab Jaman including two KG for my two married daughter for Eid Milan tea party," he said, adding these sweet dish was being exchanged among relatives on Chand Raat that strengthening bonds of love and friendship on Eid. The demands of Pakistani jalebi, gulab Jaman and DI Khan halwa are very high in Middle East, Afghanistan and Gulf countries due to its unique quality taste and energy perspective.

The muslims in Pakistan, Iran and

Banglash were fond of these sweet items especially during Eid Milan parties. The Peshawar's jalebi and Mardani peera were very tasty, delicious and full of energy besides very popular especially among children, senior citizens and women. "Personally, I liked red jalebi cooked in oil on Eid." "I am going to my aunt house at Wapda Town Peshawar to give her two KG Jalebi and Gajar halwa as gift being her favorite item in Eid parties," he said.

He said its prices was high in local markets where one kilogram Jalebi were being sold at Rs420 and its prices is needed to be checked by the district administration. Eidul Fitr is a

special reward for Muslims after keeping Ramazan fast with patience and forgiveness. We could get the Allah Almighty enormous blessings by distributing charity money and food among poorer, homeless, needy, orphans and widows to include them in Eid celebrations.

He maintained that we need to help provide charity and financial support to poor people, orphans, persons with disabilities and labourers by opening our hearts so that they could purchase essential items for Eid. The ulema urged people to give Rs300 per head fitrana ahead of Eidul Fitr to poor and needy to include them in Eid celebrations.

Punjab Governor to meet public today

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Governor Muhammad Baligh-ur-Rehman would meet public tomorrow on first day of Eidul Fitr in Governor House.

According to official sources here on Friday, Governor House would open for people from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

During the time the Punjab Governor would meet people visiting the Governor House.

People were requested to bring their CNICs along with them and use Alhamra gate for entrance.

Minister inaugurates car parking

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Caretaker Minister for Auqaf Syed Azfar Ali Nasir on Friday inaugurated the car parking in basement of Hazrat Data Ganj Bakhsh RA shrine.

Minister and Punjab Auqaf Secretary Tahir Raza Bukhari also inspected the car parking. Syed Azfar Ali Nasir said that the parking had been opened again after 13 years.

Car parking had a capacity of parking 200 cars simultaneously, he added.

He further said that strict security arrangements had been made for the visitors at the 'Mazar'.

Modern equipment had been installed for ensuring proper security and surveillance in parking area.

It is pertinent to mention here that the parking has been made operational after its renovation as per the direction of caretaker Punjab Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi.

Sindh likely to experience hot, dry weather

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Meteorological Department on Friday predicted hot and dry weather for most parts of the Sindh province during the next 24 hours. The maximum temperature was expected to remain between 34-36 degrees centigrade, with 45-55 percent humidity, in the metropolis over the next 24 hours.

Hot and dry weather was likely to prevail over most parts of the province during the next 24 hours. However, dust-raising winds were likely to occur during the daytime.

Secretary PTA warns 16 transport companies for cancellation of route permits

F.P. Report

KARACHI: On the directives of the Minister Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sharjeel Inam Memon, actions have been accelerated against the transporters on charging excess fare from passengers on Eid-ul-Fitr.

In this regard Secretary Provincial Transport Authority Ameet Dev Narwani issued warning to 16 intra city transport companies for charging excessive fares.

During the campaign , the transport companies were found involved in charging excess fares from the passengers.

Secretary Provincial Transport Authority has warned them not to charge access fares other wise their route permits will be cancelled.

AKC, Al Madinah, KCS, Geo Farhan Coach Service, Umeer Movers, Geo Faizan, Shalimar Express , Sitara-i- Hilal Coach, Karachi Hyderabad Van Service,

Sitara-i- Hilal Terminal Service, AKG, Geo Farhan , Khan Movers, Geo larkana were found involved in charging excess fares from passengers.

Apart from this, last night Secretary Provincial Transport Authority Ameet Dev Narwani sealed the offices of 3 transport companies in Saddar area of Karachi. A total of 149 vehicles were checked in Karachi and Rs 469,000 were returned to the passengers.

In Noshehro Feroz , Deputy Commissioner Shahzaib Shaikh along with Secretary District Regional Transport Authority Zameer Brohi and Motorway Police imposed a fine of Rs. 55,000 on the transporters charging excess fare and refunded more than Rs 100,000 to the passengers while taking action at Moro Toll Plaza. On Mathi Islamkot Road, Secretary District Regional Transport Authority Irfanullah imposed a fine of Rs. 2500 on the transporters and returned Rs. 11500 to the passengers.

People left Lahore to celebrate Eid at home towns

LAHORE (INP): Thousands of people left for their home-towns to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr. A large number of people was observed at local bus stations and railway station from where people would go to their native towns.

Asad Ameen, a passenger at the Lahore Railway Station told that he and his family were going to Narawal to celebrate Eid with his parents.

Amir, another passenger said only two trains were available for his home-town, so he was worried

how he would be able to travel with his wife and two children.

Whereas, transporters were charging double fare which irked passengers but they had no choice as no authority was available to protect rights of passengers. Shaheen, a commuter works here in an office, said he was going to Faisalabad but buses were so over-loaded that he was unable to travel.

On the other hand large number of people thronged the Lahore railway station to travel to their home-

Pakistan Railways restores Shalimar Express

LAHORE (NNI): The Pakistan Railways (PR) has decided to restore Shalimar Express Train between Lahore and Karachi from May 1, 2023.

The Shalimar Express (up and down) will depart from Karachi and Lahore simultaneously at 6 in the morning. In this connection, the PR department has started advance booking.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Railways has increased the fares of Shalimar Express. The economy class ticket from Lahore to Karachi has been increased by Rs1000 to Rs3200, while the AC standard ticket from Karachi to Lahore and Lahore to Karachi has been set at Rs5150.

District Admin prepares plan to facilitate people on Eid-ul-Fitr

LAHORE (APP): District Administration prepared a comprehensive plan to facilitate the people on the occasion of Eidul Fitr.

According to official sources here on Friday, Deputy Commissioner Rafia Haider said that task force had started working to ensure best arrangements at bus stops and railway stations for passengers.

She said that special campaign had also been initiated for cleanliness of Mosques, 'Eidgahs', public parks and other recreational spots.

Rafia Haider said that special duty rosters had

been issued in District headquarter hospitals and Tehsil Headquarter hospitals. DC said that strict action was being taken against those charging extra fares from passengers.2,124 vehicles had been checked in this regard and 65 had been fined for overcharging, she added.

She further said that fine had been imposed on 19 vehicles for overload. Rafia Haider said that caretaker Punjab Chief Minister was himself monitoring special arrangements being made to facilitate people on Eid-ul-Fitr.



KARACHI: A view of eid ul fitr prayer preparation at Polo gerund.

Sindh LG Minister orders ample arrangements on Eid-ul-Fitr

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Local Government Minister Syed Nasir Hussain Shah on Friday called upon the officials concerned to take meaningful measures regarding municipal services and security in the surroundings of all mosques and Eidgahs on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

In his statement regarding the Eid-ul-Fitr arrangements, he said that the Sindh Solid Waste Management Board should take full measures to ensure cleanliness

around all mosques and Eidgahs.

He also directed the Karachi Water and Sewerage Board (KWSB) that special measures should be taken regarding water supply and sewage while all man-holes should be covered.

All District Municipal Corporations (DMCs) will monitor the limestone powder sprinkling, cleaning and other relevant matters at the venues of congregational Eid prayers and mosques.

The provincial Local

Government Minister issued special instructions to the SSWMB to ensure the cleaning of garbage from around the main Eidgahs and to provide all possible facilities to faithful who come for Eid prayers.

Nasir Hussain Shah has said that providing all possible facilities to the people is the first priority of the government.

Green and Clean Sindh is the vision of his party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari.

All set to celebrate Eid-ul-Fitr in the metropolis with religious zeal and fervor

KARACHI (APP): All the arrangements to facilitate the faithful on the occasion of the holy festival Eid-ul-fitr, falling on April 22, have been finalized in the metropolis.

Prominent scholars will lead the congregational Eid prayers and will shed light on the teachings of the Holy Prophet (Peace Be Upon Him). Special prayers will also be held for sustainable development, progress, and prosperity of the homeland "Pakistan".

The Sindh Solid Waste Management Board (SSWMB) and the district municipal administrations (DMCs), Central, East, West, South, Malir, Kemari and Korangi have made appropriate arrangements for cleaning on the occasion.

Managing Director SSWMB Intiaz Ali Shah has directed the relevant officials in connection with Eid-ul-Fitr arrangements for ensuring cleaning and sprinkling limestone powder around Eidgahs, mosques, Imambargah, parks, and commercial areas to facilitate masses, said an

SSWMB spokesperson on Friday.

"The cleaning work will be performed on all Eid days without any break while operations at the Garbage Transfer Station (GTS) and landfill sites will remain continue, besides public complaints will also be redressed promptly."

"The largest Eid prayer gathering in the city under the administrative control of KMC will be held at 8 am in the Gulshan-e-Jinnah (Old Polo Ground) here," he added.

Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori, Administrator Karachi Dr Syed Saifur Rahman, Municipal Commissioner Syed Shujaat Hussain, diplomats of Islamic countries, former and current federal and provincial ministers, members of national and provincial assemblies, heads of local bodies, heads of various political and social organizations and a large number of dignitaries from the city will offer Eid prayers at the polo ground. Special ablution arrange-

ments have been made d for the citizens at the Polo Ground. Security arrangements have also been completed, besides, a gate with flowers has been prepared in front of the main entrance. Before the Eid prayer, the Eidgah and its surroundings will be sprayed with fragrance.

KMC Spokesman Ali Hassan Sajid said, "This old and traditional gathering is being organized at the Polo Ground since 1958."

The Eid prayer will be offered in Shahr-e-Quaid at 6:30 am. Eid-ul-Fitr prayer will also be offered at Kunz-ul-Iman Masjid Babri Chowk Guru Mandir at 6:30 am.

The Eid prayer will be held at Jama Masjid Khulfa-e-Rashideen Block 13-D Gulshan Iqbal at 7 am.

At 9 am Central Jamia Masjid Noor Mustafa Sector 4/B Surjani to be held by Maulana Fakhru Hasan Shah and at 10 am at Qadri Masjid, Khanqah Qadria Soldier Bazar led by Dr. Fariduddin Qadri.

Eid-ul-Fitr prayer timings in City

LAHORE (INP): Following are the Eid-ul-Fitr prayer timings in the provincial metropolis for Fiqh Hanafia. 6:00- Jamia Masjid Sheikhah Salim, Link Road Model Town, Jamia Masjid Hassaan Ameer Muawya Road, Rajgarh, Jamia Masjid Al-Rehman, Shadbagh, Jamia Haleema Saadia, Islampura. 6:15- Jamia Masjid Tauheed, Ahle Hadis at Daroghawala. 6:30- Masjid-e-Shuhada Mall Road, Masjid Darussalam Bagh-e-Jinnah, Makki Masjid New Anarkali, Jamia Ashrafia Ferozepur Road, Minar-e-Pakistan ground, Jamia Naeemia Garhi Shahu, Masjid Siddiqia, Masjid Sahaba Karam, Ravi Road, Masjid Amna Lohari gate, Masjid Sher Rabbani, Miani Sahab, Masjid Shahabuddin, Singhpura, Masjid Faizul Islam Ganpat Road, Anarkali, Markaz Islami Qainchi Chowk, Markaz Almadina China Scheme Shadbagh, Masjid Muhammadi Sher Shah Colony. 6:45- Main road Shadbagh, Jamia Masjid Shadman, Muslim Masjid Lohari gate, Jamia Masjid Shah Chiragh, Akari XI sector A. 7:00- Masjid Ahle Hadith Chowk Firdaus Market, Jamia Masjid Rizvia, F Block Gulshan Ravi, Jamia Masjid Rehmania, Yusfia, Jamia Masjid Madina, Super Market, Jamia Usmania, Block Number 2, Sector B 2 Township, Jamia Masjid, LGH, Jamia Masjid Baitul-Mukarram, Riway Garden, Masjid Gulzar-e-Madina, Gujarpura, Jamia Masjid Rehmania,

Shahdara, Punjab University New Campus Jamia Masjid, masjid Farooq Azam Sadar Gol Bagh, Masjid Rizwan Ghalib Market Gulberg, All DHA Sectors mosques in Phases I to XII and Rabher, Askari XI Sector B. 7:15- Race Course Park, Jamia Masjid Dar-ul-Uloom, Rasool Park, Multan Road, Masjid Al Feroze Hanifia, Sharif Park, Masjid Shah Gada Railway Road, Masjid Ittefaq, Model Town, University ground Chauburji, Masjid Khalid Bin Waleed Green Town, Markaz Albadar Mananwala, Moon Market Gulshan Ravi Car Parking, Markaz Al Madina China Scheme Shadbagh, Askari XI Heights mosque. 7:30- Jamia Masjid, DHA Rehbar Phase-11, all DHA phase mosques Ph-I to XII, Mansoorah Masjid, Jamia Masjid Minhaj-ul-Quran, Model Town, Jamia Masjid Dalgaran Chowk, Masjid Data Darbar, Model Masjid Auqaf Shah Kamal, Civic Centre Johar Town, Masjid Tayyaba Hanifia Shadbagh, Masjid Al-Mairaj Garhi Shahu, Shalamar Bagh Car Parking, Masjid Ibrahim Sadiq Chowk Township, Masjid Luqman Rehman Baghbanpura, Masjid Riazul Jannah Awan Town, Masjid Darus Salam Hanjarwal, Masjid Australia Railway Station, Masjid Hanafia Ghausia Bhaati Chowk, Jamia Masjid Qadria Rizvia, Auqaf Colony, Nabi Park, Ravi Road, Jamia Masjid Shimla Pahari, Jamia Islamia Hanfia, Habiullah Road, Jamia Masjid Sher Rabbani, Mast Iqbal Road,

Madina Masjid, Old Anarkali, Jamia Masjid Haqqania, Qainchee Amar Sadhu, Jamia Hanifia Hassaan Bin Sabit, Sabzazar Scheme, Multan Road, UET ground, Model Town Park, Madressah Taleemul Quran Gulberg II, Jamia Masjid Taj Bagh, Masjid Tauhid Dungi ground Johar Town, Masjid Farooqia Singhpura, Muhammadi Masjid Maqbool Road, Ichhra, MC Boys School Kot Khwaja Saeed, Barkat Market New Garden Town, Masjid Khwaja Bihari Upper Mall, Railway HQ ground, Dungi ground Samanabad, Masjid Shaikha Saleem Model Town Link Road, Masjid Bagh Wali Shah Alami Chowk, Masjid Mian Ranjha Dil Muhammad Road, Masjid Maulana Roohi Bhaati gate, Darul Uloom Ghausia Ziaul Quran Ghaziabad, Jamia Ghausia Talimul Quran GT road Shahdara, Jamia Faiz, Madina Wandala Road, Shahdara, Masjid Usman F Block Johar Town, Masjid Bilal Larex Colony Mughalpur, Masjid Ghausia near Shalimar Road, Masjid Sabria Mustafabad, Masjid Gulzar Mustafa, Masjid Akbar Mughalpur, Masjid Shimla Pahari, Masjid Hanifia Basti Saidan Shah, Masjid Gulzar Madina Wasa Colony, Masjid Hanifia Qasmia P block Gulberg, Baitul Mukarram Riway Garden, Jamia Karimia Lohari gate, 77 club Abbot Road ground, Masjid Anwarul Mustafa Johar Town, Idara Talimat Islamia Farooq Park Multan Chungi, Masjid

Kubra Samnabad, Masjid Usmania Nadirabad, Masjid Rehmania Ravi Road, Jamia Hanifia Qadria GT Road, Punjab University Mosque QA Campus, Jamia Manzoorul Islamia Saddar, Masjid Alnajam Muslim Park Rajgarh, Jamia Masjid Faiz Bagh, Masjid Onochi main bazaar Chah Miran, Noorani masjid Mian Mir, Masjid Shah Abul Maalik, Masjid Ghausia Malipura,

Masjid Khizra Peco Road, Masjid Fazal Block C Dars Baray Mian, Masjid Muhammadi Model Town, Masjid Tauhid Wapda Colony Shalamar, Masjid Baba Qutub Shah GT Road, Masjid Chowk Dargan, Ghurki Hospital Jallo More, Masjid Umar Farooq Pindi Rajputan Kot Lakhpatt, Masjid Ahle Hadith Loharan Khuj Multan Road, Masjid Muhammadi Chungi

Amar Sadhu, 7:45- Jamia Masjid Siddiqia, Swami Nagar, Masjid Nila Gunbad, Masjid Wazir Khan, Masjid Omni Bus Service Ichhra, Masjid Shama-e-Risalat (PBUH) Alfalah Building, The Mall, Masjid Imrania Gulberg II, Jamia Masjid Tech Society Canal bank, Children Park L Block Model Town, Masjid Siddiqia Swami Nagar Ghoray Shah.

Man shot dead woman for denying friendship

LAHORE (INP): A man shot dead a woman for denying friendship and later committed suicide in Basti Makhdoom village of Qadirabad police precincts of Mandi Bahauddin district.

Reports said Iftikhar Ahmed, 25, wanted a friendly relationship with a married woman, Sobia, 22, of the same village. But the woman declined his offer time and again upon which Iftikhar shot Sobia dead. Later on, he committed suicide by shooting himself in the head.

Police reached the spot and shifted the bodies to Phalia Tehsil Headquarters Hospital whereas a team of the Punjab Forensic Science Agency collected evidence from the crime scene.

The district administration on Thursday imposed a ban on bathing in the river and canal as well as installation of mechanical swings in amusement parks and other open areas without any prior permission.

Gujrat Deputy Commissioner Safdar Virk has also imposed Section 144 on the premises of rivers and canals of the district.

VACANCY ANNOUNCEMENT

The Institute of Regional Studies, an Islamabad-based autonomous and not-for-profit think tank that focuses on South Asia, invites applications along with detailed CVs from qualified candidates to fill the following positions on open merit and contract basis.

#	Designation	BPS	Posts
1.	Assistant Research Officer (South Asia Economic Development Program) The program will focus on regional connectivity, trade, macroeconomic developments, infrastructure, microfinancing, innovation, agriculture, human capital, cultural linkages, and poverty reduction.	17	01

Requirements:

- Minimum Bachelors (Hon.) or Master's Degree in Economics or relevant field from HEC recognized university.
- Foreign degree is preferred.
- Research experience or research-oriented training is preferred.
- Should not be more than **30 years** of age on the last date for submission of application, i.e, **05 May 2023**.

Application together with CV's can be sent to irspak@comsats.net.pk on the below mentioned email format by **05 May, 2023**. No application will be entertained without it.

Email Format

- Subject: **ASSEP2023**
- Email Body:

Name: _____
Qualification: _____
Experience: _____
Contact Details: _____
Attachment: CV/Resume

Note: IRS reserves the right to not to fill the position.

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رشد و ترقی



KP to be make free from all kinds of drugs and social evils

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control Haji Manzoor Khan Afridi will offer Eid-ul-Fitr prayers at Governor House Peshawar's Jamia Masjid. After Eid prayers, he will also call on Governor Haji Ghulam Ali and Caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan for exchanging Eid greetings.

In a bid to make Khyber Pakhtunkhwa a province free from all kinds of drugs and social evils, the provincial Secretary and Director General Excise took emergency measures and destroyed the poppy crop cultivated in some difficult mountainous areas of Swabi in the light of the special directives of the provincial government and the KP Chief Secretary. In the light of which, a joint operation of Excise Department and District Police was launched in Swabi.

This operation was carried out under the supervision of Director Narcotics Control Excise Dr Eid Badshah and Excise Taxation Officer Narcotics Control Zahid Iqbal Khan. While in this successful operation, a joint team comprising the Narcotics Control Wing of the Excise Department and the District Police destroyed the standing poppy (opium) crop spreading on about 150 kanals of land that was cultivated in different patches of the mountain beds.

The Circle Officer Mardan Region Syed Naveed Jamal, SHO Police Station

Excise Mardan Region Muhammad Riaz, Police Station Excise Peshawar Region, Excise Intelligence Bureau, DSP of District Police Roshan Zeib Khan, SHO Police Station Industrial Estate Swabi Liaquat Shah Khan actively participated in the operation. Similarly other Excise and District Police personnel also took part in this successful operation and destroyed the poppy crop cultivated in the most difficult hilly valleys. The operation was carried out in Mangalchai, Darorai and Chennai hills of Gadoon areas.

Excise Police Station Mardan, Excise Police Station Peshawar, Excise Intelligence Bureau and Swabi Police Stations jointly participated in this toughest operation that was launched and successfully completed in the mountain beds and slopes of Gadoon Amazai areas.

Meanwhile during the operation in these difficult hilly areas, a specific mafia gang came into action that waged a protest against destroying the opium cultivation in a wide area and resultantly blocked the local road. However after having a bitter conversation with the Swabi Police and Excise staff, the local elite immediately intervened who reached on the spot and paved way for a truce, after which the road was opened for traffic promptly.

Later, local dignitaries from Mangalchai area met the officers participating in the operation and apologized for the provocation against the law enforcement agencies.

Khyber celebrates Eid with Saudi Arabia

PESHAWAR (INP): Saudi Arabia, home to Islam's holiest shrines, and other Muslim countries are celebrating Eid-ul-Fitr on Friday marking the end of holy month of Ramadan. However, keeping up its tradition, some areas in district Khyber in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa are also celebrating Eid with Saudi Arabia today despite the announcement by the central as well as KP Ruet-e-Halal committees that Eid-ul-Fitr in Pakistan will fall on Saturday.

District Khyber continued the tradition of celebrating two Eids in the country. Though Eid will be celebrated across the country tomorrow, Eid prayers were offered in several mosques in Khyber. People hugged and wished Eid Mubarak to each other after saying Eid prayers in the morning. Several countries including Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Qatar, Jordan, Oman, Yemen, Sudan, Afghanistan, Turkey, America, Canada and European countries including United Kingdom have announced Eid-ul-Fitr today.

However, Muslims in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, Japan, Australia, Jordan, India, Bangladesh and many other countries will fast on Friday and celebrate Eid on Saturday (tomorrow) as Shawwal moon was not sighted in these countries on Thursday. In Saudi Arabia and other Gulf countries Eid is being celebrated with traditional religious fervor.

Big Eid prayer gatherings were observed in Masjid-ul-Haram and Masjid-e-Nabvi in which millions of Muslim worshippers participated. After offering Eid Nimaz, the worshippers prayed for the peace and wellbeing of the Ummah. The timing of Eid-ul-Fitr is determined by the sighting of the crescent moon, in accordance with the Muslim lunar calendar.

The holiday is normally celebrated with family gatherings. In Lebanon, Sunni clerics said the holiday will begin on Friday, while some Shiite leaders announced a Saturday start to the holiday. Libya, ruled by two rival administrations, will mark Eid on Friday in the country's east and on Saturday in areas under the control of the Tripoli-based government.

Statements from Iran's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei and Iraq's highest Shiite authority, Grand Ayatollah Ali Sistani, said Eid would start on Saturday in their countries. In Oman, too, the holiday will start on Saturday.

The daytime fasting month of Ramadan is one of the five pillars of Islam. Observant Muslims refrain from eating and drinking from dawn to dusk, and traditionally gather with family and friends to break their fast in the evening. It is also a time for prayer, with the faithful converging in large numbers on mosques, especially at night. Fasting is widely practised in Saudi Arabia, home of the holiest shrines in Islam in Mecca and Medina.



PESHAWAR: People buying sweets for Eid at a shop.

Tailors overcharging annoy Eid shoppers

PESHAWAR (APP): The overcharging by tailors have irked Eid shoppers and demanded the district administration to take action against price-hikers. As only few days left in Eidul Fitre celebrations, the male and female tailors started overcharging people by earning almost double profit in the last days of Ramadan than normal days that annoyed customers of all aged groups.

In Peshawar, Charsadda and Nowshera, the tailors are heavily charging customers demanding Rs2,000 to Rs25,00 per suit for stitching on the last days of Ramadan. Expressing dissatisfaction on overcharging and quality of stitching clothes by tailors, the Eid shoppers asked the district administration to maintain check and balance over the market rates and regulate charges of tailoring as quickly as possible.

"The tailors started looting people as one suit was being stitched at Rs2000 to Rs2500 these days. Therefore, I opted to buy readymade cloth to save tailors charges," said Professor Ehtisham Qaiser of Wapda Town Peshawar on Wednesday. He accused the district administration for its failure to regulate stitching rates of tailors, forcing many to purchase

readymade cloths on Eid.

Zubair Afridi, a lady tailor of Fajirabad said the tailors has received double orders on this Eid comparatively from normal days as customers were pressing for new booking despite our refusal. To fulfill the placed and new orders, he said most of tailors hired extra labourers by working till late night in the local markets at Fajirabad, Qissa Khwani, Karimpura and Interior City.

Most of tailoring shops are overcrowded with customers due to advance payment of salaries to the federal government employees. Ayub Khan, a tailor of Pabbi told APP that his business was shined on the arrival of Eid. He said this was the right time we make some profit compared to other months in the wake of increase in price hike in Peshawar.

He made it clear that charges for suits stitching were almost double because of workload of the customers, increase of electricity charges, shops' rents, labour wages, relevant materials and "we have to put in extra effort to fulfill people orders by using generators in case of loading shedding." "I have visited several tailors shops but was unable to find anyone quality tailor ready to take

my order for Eid," said a customer Riaz Khan, a resident of Nowshera.

He said he would prefer readymade white Shalwar suit for this Eid with matching Peshawar Chappal keeping in view of high charges of the tailors and arrival of summer season. A online tailoring social media platform spokesman said that online service has been popular with female customers and we will continue to serve our people during Ramadan.

He said we were working round the clock to meet placed orders as quickly as possible ahead of Eid. Another women customer, Meena Gul of Nowshera district said that tailors with own sweetwill increased stitching charges upto Rs 500 for a single suit in Peshawar that needed to be checked by the district administration. Majority quality lady tailors have displayed their notices outside their shops inscribing that 'booking is closed' adding well off families were forced to pay double charges to stitch their suits from their favourite tailors. The people requested Deputy Commissioners to mobilize his staff so that overcharging by tailors could be avoided on the eve of Eidul Fitr.

Muqam performs Umra in Saudi Arabia

PESHAWAR (APP): Adviser to the Prime Minister for Political and Public Affairs and Culture Division, Engr Amir Muqam has performed Umra in Saudi Arabia

He prayed for progress and prosperity of Pakistan. Amir Muqam was accompanied by former member provincial assembly, Fazlullah who also performed Umra. They also celebrated Eidul Fitr in Saudia Arabia. Amir Muqam, who is also PML-N Khyber Pakhtunkhwa president is likely to meet PML-N Quaid and former prime minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif there.

ANF foils bid to smuggle 12kg heroin

PESHAWAR (PPI): Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) on Friday claimed to have foiled an attempt to smuggle 12kg heroin to Punjab from Peshawar. The ANF impounded a truck near Chanab Toll Plaza on Gujrat GT Road and recovered 12kg heroin. The police arrested two accused from Peshawar involved in the drug peddling.

In another action, the ANF recovered 2kg ice from a parcel being dispatched to Bahrain from GPO, Islamabad. The ice was concealed in tins of milk powder. The anti-narcotic force also recovered 10kg charas from a car near Mastung Bypass and arrested an accused belonging to Qalat. They also found 100kg charas buried in an under-construction house near Turbat Dhanook.

In another action, the Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) recovered 1,450 hallucinating drugs from the possession of a passenger at Jinnah International Airport, Karachi. He who was going to Mascot and he hailed from Muzaffargarh. The ANF spokesperson said that investigation has started against all the accused after registering cases against them under the anti-narcotics act.



PESHAWAR: A haircutter busy in cutting of hair of a customer on the occasion of Eid.

Henna, bangles' outlets attract girls, women

PESHAWAR (APP): The Eid shopping spree on Friday reached to climax in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where great rush of shoppers was witnessed on read-made garments, sweets, bangles and henna shops on the eve of Eidul Fitr.

The outlets of traditional bangles and henna were flooded with girls and women in Peshawar where special stalls in shopping centres and markets were established for Chand Raat. The exchange of bangles and henna as special gifts among the girls on Eidul Fitr is an old tradition of the sub-continent especially in Peshawar where great rush of buyers especially of the girls and students were being seen in the Henna and Bangles stalls, which are making roaring business.

Therefore, many shopkeepers have set up colourful stalls in the main markets including Jinnah Street, Deans Trade Centre, Gora Bazaar in cantonment, Meena Bazaar, Karimpura, Qissa Khwani

and other important locations in Peshawar, offering different kinds of henna, cosmetics, earrings, gleaming bangles, embroidered clothes, jewellery, handbags, shoes and colourful dresses as Eid special offer.

The shopkeepers selling daily goods and book sellers set up additional stalls of bangles and henna inside their shops keeping in view the girls attraction towards these Eid items. Samina Bibi, (25), who was busy shopping in Jinnah Street Peshawar Cantonment said that she came here from Nowshera to buy crystal bangles and henna for herself, relatives and friends on Chand Raat. "I have bought 10 sets of bangles, henna and will use it during Eid days to look different," she said. "Buying shimmering glass bangles matched with beautiful colours of dresses, adorning hands and feet with henna being essential features of eid festivities that multiply our joys" she remarked. "This is the cheapest way of taking along your

friends and relatives as one can buy a full set of bangles and henna for less than Rs 300," she said. Malaika, (9) who came along with his father for shopping at Deans Center told APP that shopping of bangles and henna always doubles her joy on Eid. She said that her sister has already bought bangles and cloths to avoid rush on Chand Raat and has decorated her hands with a henna expert. She said the henna tattoos were also available in markets and were easy to paste on hands, feet and could be removed easily, adding the young girls admired henna tattoos associated with celebrations of Eid.

However, she was not happy over the shooting prices of the imported items including readymade garments and shoes and demanded strict action against profiteers. The prices of the Eid special offers items are higher than the previous years and are beyond the purchasing capacity of the middle and salaried class.

Inflation reveals status of common man in Pakistan

Khawaja Wajih-u-Din

THE actual sufferer of any crises is a common man. While we are busy in a blame game of institutions, the news of people dying of hunger is going unnoticed. My soul cries it's heart out when I see long queues of human beings clinging to each other to get one bag of flour. Some people are lucky to get one. However, the most unfortunate one is a person who loses his life for that one bag. It's a different question altogether if we talk about the quality of flour that the people are being offered. Some say it is not even fit enough to feed the animals. However, we leave it to the conscious of those who are doing it.

Whenever budget is presented or increase in taxes is announced we hear from the governments that it will not affect a common man. This joke is continuing unabated. The experts would tell you that increase in the basic utilities would have an upward affect in the prices of everything. The earning capacity in our dearest home land is very low. Inflation is that all Time high. We compare the prices in Pakistan with the prices in other countries without realizing the earning capacity of the

citizens of those countries.

Everything is so expensive, nowadays, that even a middle-class person like me feel the pinch day in and day out. To say the least, Life is indeed extremely difficult for a common man in our beloved country. Things have become so bad that people are committing suicide's because they are not getting anything to feed their children. The unfortunate aspect is that nobody notices such painful happenings. As a child we were taught in the school a famous quotation of Hazrat umar (RA)

"Even if a dog dies hungry on banks of Euphrates, Umar (RA) will be responsible for dereliction of duty". A lot of questions automatically arise in one's mind. The situation, is very agonizing, besides being harrowing and immensely grieving. It is hard to contemplate in any civilized society. The suicide results in an irreparable loss to the kith and kin of the deceased, who must be countenancing deepest depths of despair and grief. It has also drastically destabilized, the image of the country still further.

The people of Pakistan have seen one crisis after another. There's have been shortage of flour before. I remember the 90s when I'm there was "Atta crisis". But proper and in

time handling, avoided a big catastrophe. Pakistan is an agricultural country and worlds best water system at its resources and a fertile land. Our farmers are hard-working and diligent. Point to ponder is then why shortage of food commodities.

It is a common observation that successive governments blame the previous one of the crisis that they are facing. This may or may not be pertinent to the matter in hand but it seems that the people at large, had, necessarily adopted a very apologetic attitude towards the approach of the governance. But now things have taken a U Turn, and the position is diametrically opposed to the old one. The issue of governance is a big challenge. Instead of realizing the problems of the country we indulge in blame games and unfortunately cannot even agree on an election date.

As a student, I do wish to explore the situation which now emerged much to our mental discomfiture. In the first instance Smuggling to Afghanistan of basic goods exists for a long time. Nothing seems to have been done to curb or channelize this activity. This actually affects the supply of basic human needs to the citizens of this country. While some people may make undue gains out of

smuggling of goods to a neighborly country, but it results in scaring prices, consistent inflation, lack of basic facilities to a common man patience of a common consumer has crumbled before the continuous onslaught of a few.

Secondly an irreversible realization has materially dawned many of us, that only we are being fleeced financially, while in the upper strata of society enjoy clout and affluence. Billions is spent on the maintenance of these so-called assemblies and senate, where intrigue and counter-intrigue associated with democracy, with little or no relief for the common man, who is suffering constantly. He cannot get even proper food in his own country, while these so-called public representatives enjoy lavish lifestyle in one garb or another, and all, at the expense of the common man, who pays tax.

Thirdly, many scandals have been highlighted in the press, over the years whereby billions of rupees have been squandered, bears abundant testimony to the dismal state of affairs. The most unfortunate part is that no scandal has come to its logical conclusion and nobody has been brought to the book. This is all public money, should have been utilized for the betterment of society, but

most unfortunately, it has found its way into the coffers of big guns and so-called elite. Result is Now all this, has completely demoralized the common man, who is flabbergasted at the turn of events, where there is a free for all situation, with no moral or legal compulsions. Where the concept of law, fair-play and ethics is thrown to the winds by those in authority, the general public gets thoroughly disillusioned. In such a situation, you cannot expect an average man to obey and respect law. Corrupt defaulters continue to accumulate wealth, and in consequence jeopardizing the virtual existence of common man groaning under tighter conditions.

In other words, it is not possible to enforce law and rules or discipline, nor expect this to materialize unless suitable conditions are not created. This must happen from the top, who should set healthy and pleasant precedents in fair-play, integrity and impartiality.

Fourthly, as a matter of policy we must teach the farmers to get more yield of crops from the land that is available, as is prevalent in rest of the world. Perhaps we need to make them more technically sound and apprise them of the scientific lines in growing more food. The age all

methodology adopted by the growers is not helping anyone.

Lastly, it can be safely said that currently, the rigors of law is confined to the poor and middle income people, who have to bear the brunt of this embarrassment, but how long can one expect this to continue. Let us hope that those at the helm of affairs, will consider the situation dispassionately, and ensure that administration of law is even-handed, and once it comes within the realm of possibility, much of the grievance of hard-hit mediocre people will vanish in the foreseeable future.

All the forces need to sit together to talk out a common strategy for overcoming the difficulties faced. This is indeed a need of time, I have an advice for the common people of Pakistan. We have to improve our ethics and morality. The teachings of the Holy prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the Lessons in the Holy book Must be practiced. Encourage Merit In every sphere of life and be a good professional. As a society we must learn to boycott those who sell goods at enhanced prices. This is a way adopted by civilized societies in the world to overcome such crisis.

The writer is former Registrar Peshawar High Court.



PESHAWAR: A customer selecting Chappal at shop.



In brief

Road closed in Kaghan

MANSEHRA (PPI): The district administration of Mansehra on Friday announced the closure of the main Kaghan Naran Road for all kind of traffic due to a glacier eruption near Kaghan. The eruption has posed a threat to the safety of tourists traveling to the area during Eidul Fitr holidays. The district authorities have advised all tourists to avoid all tourists to avoid traveling to Naran/Kaghan until further notice. The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tourism Department, Rescue 1122, Police, and Kaghan Development Authority are working on a priority basis to ensure the safety of tourists in the area. Furthermore, the district administration has issued instructions to all relevant departments to deal with the emergency situation. In case of any emergency, tourists can contact the tourist helpline at 1422 for assistance. The district control rooms in Mansehra and Balakot can also be contacted for any kind of information or emergency. The numbers for the Deputy Commissioner Control Room Mansehra, District Police Control Room Mansehra, and Assistant Commissioner Balakot Control Room are 09-97920174, 0997-920110, and 0997-501008, respectively. The district administration has urged all tourists to exercise caution and follow the guidelines issued by the authorities.

Dacoits attack police in action

RAHIM YAR KHAN (INP): Terrorists attacked the police busy in Kacha operation with rocket launchers and long range weapons in Katcha Rajwani area of Sadiqabad, police told media on Friday. According to the police, the Armed Police Constable (APC) suffered minor damage in this attack and the police in retaliatory action forced terrorists and dacoits to retreat. The police surrounded a band of around 18, 20 suspect terrorists of the Sukhani and Lathani gang. As soon as the incident was reported, the Chief Minister and IG Punjab left for South Punjab to review the latest situation and encourage the soldiers. According to the sources, the areas of Kacha Moro and Kacha Jamal have been cleared after operations. During last year's operation some police officials were martyred, but this time both areas have been cleared without any loss. Kacha police operation continues on the thirteenth day, meanwhile, Rahim Yar Khan Police have arrested 20 robbers while three have been killed. The spokesman of Punjab Police said the police will provide permanent peace to the people of the area by making the operation successful.

Eid gifts distributed

D I KHAN (INP): The police on Friday distributed Eid gifts and packages among families of martyrs of the police force of the district. According to police spokesman, on the direction of District Police Officer (DPO) Abdul Rauf Babar Qaisrani, police officers visited the families of martyred personnel and gave Eid packages to them. The DPO said that martyrs were our pride and that their heirs were part of the police family. He paid tribute to the martyrs of the police, saying they sacrificed their lives to ensure peace and protect the lives and property of the people. He added that the police department would take care of the bereaved families and kin of martyred police officials and would always help them through thick and thin.

Business community to be provided with full security in Dir

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: District Police Officer Tariq Iqbal has said that industry and business has a key role in the economic stability of a nation. He said this while talking to leaders of the Lower Dir Chamber of Commerce and Industries during his visit to the Chamber's office at Timergara. The DPO said that the security issues to the traders would be resolved on a priority basis. The Chamber's president Syed Noor Alam, former president Wajid Shoaib and senior vice president Khalid Iqbal were present on the occasion. The law and order situation in the district was discussed during the meeting. The DPO assured all cooperation with the Lower Dir Chamber of Commerce and Industry and the business community and added that there would be no compromise on peace and security. He said that the business community had a definite

and undeniable role in regional development. He said that any security situation faced by the Chamber would be compromised. The chamber's representatives thanked the DPO for visiting them and said the business community would fully support the law enforcement forces in maintaining peace in the area.

Iftar dinner for orphans: The Helping Hand for Relief and Development (HHRD), a non-profitable and non-governmental organization working for the uplift of children with disabilities in Lower Dir arranged an iftar dinner for orphans and special children in its Talash center. A total of 50 special and 50 orphan children, their relatives, area elders and social activists attended the dinner. Speaking on the occasion the HHRD programme officer Muhammad Bilal said that Eid gifts worth of Rs one million for a total of 300 orphans had been arranged.

The special children were also provided with school bags.

Also the Aghosh Al-Khidmat Gulabad center distributed Eid gifts among the orphans during a function held at the center here. The AKF assistant secretary general Fazal Mahmood and others distributed the gifts. Speaking on the occasion Mr Mahmood said the AKF was providing free home facility, education and health care to the orphans at its Aghosh homes across the country. He said the AKF stood firmly with the orphans in order to make them successful citizens for the nation.

Section 144 imposed: The Lower Dir deputy commissioner Iftikhar Ahmad imposed a complete ban on all kinds of fire-activities (lighting, fireworks, campfire etc) under section 144 crpc inside the forests or in the vicinity of forests by locals and tourists for a period of one month.

Shortage of transport created chaos for commuter

ABBOTTABAD (APP): Like every year, the shortage of public transport on the eve of the Eid-ul-Fitr vacation created chaos for commuters who were trapped by the public transporters as fares were also raised to double all over Hazara division.

According to the details, the transporters were charging fares at their own will and the people had no choice to reach their destinations except to pay the increased fares. While talking to APP, a commuter Riaz Ahmed said that hundreds of people along with

their families were waiting for public transport at Abbottabad Lorry Adda for the last few hours, despite the double fare charge public transport is unavailable and the vehicles are less than half as compared to routine.

He said that profiteers also jumped in to get their share of the situation. Old buses and other vehicles that are not fit for long routes are being used, adding Amjad Ali disclosed. Local passengers told APP that local transporters were also charging an extra fare as "Eidi"

while neither the regional transport authority nor traffic police are taking any action to stop increased fares.

They further said that from Abbottabad local transporters were charging 200 and 250 rupees for Manshera and in the same way on other routes transporters have also increased the fares. The main bus terminal in Abbottabad and all other bus terminals in the city were full of stranded passengers who were going to every part of the country and waiting for public transport.

Eid shopping reaches to peak in KP

CHARSADDA (APP): Eid shopping fever has reached its peak in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa where the centuries-old traditional Peshawari and Charsadda Chappals (shoes) attracted a large number of Eid shoppers.

With only few days left in Eidul Fitr's celebrations, the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and nearby districts of Punjab provinces thronged to Charsadda and Peshawari Chappal outlets at historic Namak Mandai, Qissa Khwani and Jahangi Mohalla bazaars in Peshawar to select an appropriate colour matching with suits in order to look different on Eid.

The outlets of these leather-made shoes were making roaring business in Peshawar where many shopkeepers hired extra labour to fulfill the placed orders. "I came from Nowshera to buy my favorite leather-made Charsadda chappal due to its durability, excellent shine and affordable price," said Professor Ehtisham Qaiser, a resident of Wapda Town Nowshera while talking to APP at Qissa Khwani, a hub of Charsadda and Peshawari chappals.

"Personally, I prefer shiny black chappal as it

can be used with Shalwar-Qameez and paint-shirts during Eid and normal days," he said. These days, Qissa Khawani's Jahangirpura bazaar, a hub of skilled cobblers and shoemakers were working against the clock to meet the pressing demands of the Eid shoppers of KP, Punjab and Karachi.

In the local market, Charsadda chappal is available on Rs3,000 to Rs3,500 depending on its quality and durability, which is cost-efficient than foreign brands footwear and within the reach of common people," said famous-shoemaker Muhammad Israr Khan while talking to APP. "On this Eid, people's response to Charsadda and Peshawari chappals is overwhelming due to significant reduction of corona virus cases and its affordable prices. We are working till Sehri to complete the pressing orders of our customers for this Eid," said Ustad Israrullah Khan, a shoe-maker of Charsadda and Peshawari Chappals at Qissa Khwani while talking to APP.

"We have stopped new booking keeping in view of the heavy load of the placed orders, load shedding and fasting," Israrullah said, adding he has received orders from Punjab,

Karachi and Islamabad from customers to buy these leather made decent, shiny and cost efficient chappals for themselves, friends and their family members as special Eid gifts. Inheriting the hard-earned business from his forefathers, Israr said a single pair of Charsadda and Peshawari chappal passes through six stages of skilled hands to become a finished product.

"In the first step, its sole is flattened with a rubber piece whereas in the second stage, a piece of leather is sewn and then fitting of the piece with the sole is done in the third and fourth stage respectively." In fifth stage, the pair was stuffed with a wooden piece to stretch and fix all the nails, leather and thread placed together to get the shoe adjusted and make it durable.

Finishing touches are given to a piece including polishing and varnishing to improve its look while artisans also paint its border with a selected chemical for a better shine in the sixth stage. Later on, finishing touches were given to a piece in sixth stage, which includes polishing and varnishing to improve its look while artisans also paint its border with a selected chemical for a better shine.



SAKHAKOT: Minister for State and provincial president of PPP Syed Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha addressing a press conference.

Nine killed, four injured in two road accidents

KOT ADDU, KHUSHAB (INP): Nine people were killed while four others sustained injuries in two different road accidents in districts Kot Addu and Khushab on Friday.

In one of the incidents, a speeding truck rammed into a car on Sargodha Road in Khushab, killing four on the spot. The victims belonged to Sahiwal.

As a result of a terrible collision between a truck and a car on Sargodha Road in Khushab, four people were killed and two were seriously injured. The accident occurred due to speeding. The truck driver managed to escape from the scene.

Police, however, shifted the bodies to a local hospital for medico-legal formalities. In another incident, which took place in Kot Addu, a high-speed bus collided with a motorcycle loader rickshaw, causing the deaths of five people, all belonging to the same family, and leaving two others in critical condition.

The accident occurred when the bus driver lost control and collided with the rickshaw on Kot Uddu Mianwali Road due to his negligence. According to witnesses, the bus was travelling at a high speed, and the driver failed to apply the brakes in time to avoid the collision.

The impact was so severe that two people on the rickshaw were killed on the spot, while three others succumbed to their injuries later in the hospital. The victims have been identified as Abdul Kareem, Naseem Mai, Saira Bibi, Ali Hamza, and Muqadas Mai.

Man tortures wife to death

OKARA (INP): woman was killed for 'honour' in Mecca-Madina town area of Okara district on Thursday, police said.

Police said preliminary investigations showed that the husband of the victim tortured her to death. The suspect fled the crime scene after the murder. The body was shifted to the state hospital for autopsy. The police assured the victim's family that the culprit would be soon behind the bars and justice would be swiftly served.

Khuhro wants polls on same day

LARKANA (PPI): PPP Sindh President Senator Nisar Ahmed Khuhro said that in the country, no other decision is acceptable except conducting the elections of the National and Provincial Assemblies on the same day, adding if those elections are not conducted on same day in the whole country, then Sindh will become a protest.

He expressed these thoughts during an emergency press conference held at the Larkana Press Club today. Mr Khuhro said that in the case of suo moto case, the Supreme Court was talking about the capacity that all the parties should sit together and consult, then the capacity could be taken to hold elections in the country on the same day, so a full court should be formed on the matter.

He further said that holding elections is the

authority of the Election Commission and the court did not review Article 69 of the Election Act in the suo moto case, which provides for one-day polls, and the court had mentioned in the suo moto notice that Punjab and the KPK assemblies were dissolved legitimately or not?

There will be a discussion on this point as well, but there is no mention of the reasons behind the dissolution of the two assemblies until the case is heard and the decision is reached. The court has again given an unconstitutional date to hold the Punjab Assembly elections on May 14, because this date has not been completed in 90 days.

He further said that the assemblies can be dissolved only when the law and order situation is bad, the economy is not good and the members do not

have confidence in the Chief Minister, but in Punjab, after taking the vote of confidence in the Chief Minister, the stubbornness and crisis situation of a single person. In order to create, the people and public representatives were insulted by breaking the Punjab Assembly and Imran Khan broke the two provincial assemblies and started a riot.

Is the court becoming a tool for this? which is the solution. He said that today the country is caught in a quagmire where the political system is going downhill which has never happened in the history of Pakistan. He said that the court is interfering with the powers of the parliament which should not be done and this interference is not acceptable in any way because the parliament has the authority to make the constitution and amend it.

Call to vaccinate children against 12 diseases

LARKANA (PPI): From 24th April to April 30, in cooperation with the World Health Organization, 12 dangerous diseases, including polio, tuberculosis, measles, typhoid fever, whooping cough, and other diseases, are being prevented at Children Hospital of Chandka Medical College Hospital (CMCH) in Larkana through vaccination for which a seminar was held at the Paeds Medicine Hospital.

Speaking on the occasion, Deputy Commissioner Rabia Siyal said that in order to avoid the above-mentioned diseases, it is important that children should be vaccinated against these dangerous diseases along with polio and in this regard, the program was inaugurated today, which will continue for one week and also women who are between 15 years to 49 years of age should get the vaccine. She further said that here are the officers of the health department, doctors, lady health workers and other important people, the role of all of you is important and you should go and inform the common people and oblige them not to expose their children to this disease. Get the neces-

sary vaccines to avoid the disease, she asked women. While the role of the management is to monitor you, for this, the common people and especially the women should also be vaccinated to avoid these infectious diseases.

Director Health Services Larkana Dr. Abdul Sattar Sheikh said that the purpose of this seminar which we are holding is to make people aware and this message should be started from their homes and should be conveyed to the common people that they should avoid these dangerous diseases. In order to make sure that your children are vaccinated. They should be told that these vaccines will not cause any harm, rather these will be beneficial. In this regard, if one person's life is saved by your efforts, it is as if you saved humanity, for this you and we pledge to vaccinate the children.

Medical Superintendent of Chandka Medical College Hospital, Dr. Gulzar Tunio said that our workers are working day and night at the Union Council level to save common people from these diseases and we are trying to reach everyone for this. The people are also requested to

cooperate and get their children vaccinated to avoid diseases. He further said that as we worked in the previous COVID19 campaign and in the same way in this campaign, we should get our children vaccinated to avoid the complications of these dreaded diseases.

IC DHO and Head of Paeds Department, Dr. Shanti Lal, said that along with the whole of Pakistan and the province of Sindh, we are also celebrating this week in Larkana district so that we can save our children from these infectious diseases and in this regard with the district administration, we also have the cooperation of all the doctors and WHO representatives and we will appeal to the common people to come forward and vaccinate their children to avoid these diseases, especially measles. After the ceremony, an awareness walk was organized to inform about the program, which started from Children Hospital and ended at Lahori Regulator Bridge. A large number of doctors, health department officials, civil society representatives and common people participated in this walk.

Crisis to confidence - ensuring stability in European banking system

Farhan Ahmad

THE European banking industry has faced significant challenges in recent years, posing threats to the stability of the financial system. The global financial crisis in 2008 and subsequent regulatory reforms have increased vulnerability in the European banking sector. The collapse of Silicon Valley Bank (SVB) has exposed poor risk management practices, leading to contagion risks and doubts about the effectiveness of regulatory mechanisms. Policymakers, regulators, and stakeholders are actively working towards addressing these challenges and finding solutions to ensure the stability of the European banking system.

The implementation of tighter regulations and stronger capitalization requirements by regulators in response to the global

financial crisis in 2008 has increased vulnerability in the European banking sector. While these measures were intended to enhance the stability of banks, they have also resulted in unintended consequences. The contraction in credit supply, as a result of these regulations, has raised concerns about lower economic growth and further deterioration of bank balance sheets. Additionally, the European Union's efforts to address the high stock of non-performing loans have faced challenges in restoring the overall health of the banking sector and facilitating lending to the real economy.

The lingering effects of the global financial crisis, coupled with the burden of regulatory compliance, have posed significant hurdles for European banks. The increased regulatory requirements, combined with market uncertainties and changing consumer behavior, have impacted the profitability and

resilience of banks. Striking the right balance between stability and growth in the banking sector remains a key challenge for policymakers and regulators. Ensuring that banks are adequately capitalized to absorb potential shocks while also supporting credit availability to foster economic growth is crucial. Sustainable and balanced regulatory frameworks, along with effective risk management practices, will be essential in safeguarding the stability and resilience of the European banking system in the long term.

Transparency and risk management are critical aspects of ensuring the stability of the European banking industry. Regulators and banks themselves need to be vigilant in managing risks and ensuring robust risk management practices. Enhancing transparency in banks' operations, financial statements, and risk exposures can help identify and address

potential vulnerabilities in a timely manner. This includes proper disclosure of complex financial instruments, off-balance-sheet activities, and concentration risks in high-risk sectors.

Strengthening capitalization is also crucial for the stability of the European banking system. Banks need to maintain adequate capital buffers to absorb unexpected losses and shocks. This requires regular assessment of capital adequacy levels, stress testing of banks' balance sheets, and appropriate capital planning to ensure that banks have sufficient capital to weather potential crises. Additionally, banks should diversify their capital sources and avoid over-reliance on specific types of debt instruments, such as AT1 bonds, which can be more vulnerable to market fluctuations.

Efforts to address underlying structural challenges in the European banking sector are

also necessary to foster a resilient and sustainable banking industry. High levels of non-performing loans, particularly in some countries, pose significant risks to the stability of the banking system. Addressing these non-performing loans through effective loan recovery mechanisms, restructuring, and resolution frameworks can help improve banks' asset quality and reduce the risks of contagion.

Furthermore, changing business models in the banking sector also pose challenges. The rise of digitalization and changing customer preferences are disrupting traditional banking models, and banks need to adapt and innovate to remain competitive. This includes investing in technology, developing digital banking capabilities, and exploring new business opportunities while managing associated risks. Banks also need to enhance their risk management practices to

effectively identify, assess, and mitigate emerging risks associated with changing business models.

Policymakers, regulators, and stakeholders must work together to address these challenges and implement effective solutions. This includes strengthening capitalization, enhancing risk management practices, addressing non-performing loans, and adapting to changing business models in the banking sector. Sustainable and balanced regulatory frameworks, coupled with proactive risk management and transparency, are crucial for ensuring the stability and resilience of the European banking system in the face of ongoing challenges. By addressing these issues and implementing appropriate measures, the European banking system can regain stability and continue to play a critical role in supporting economic growth and financial stability in the region.



Taiwan, foreign supporters ‘playing with fire’: China FM

BEIJING (AP): China’s foreign minister warned Taiwan and its supporters that they are “playing with fire” if they go against Beijing’s demand to exert control over the self-governing island democracy.

Qin Gang’s remarks came at the end of a speech espousing China’s contribution to the global economy and the interests of developing nations, in which he repeatedly praised Communist Party Secretary General Xi Jinping’s Global Security Initiative. The concept is the latest of China’s moves to position its single-party political system, with its claim to social stability and economic growth, as an alternative to the Western liberal approach that largely defines international relations.

Toward the end of his speech in the financial hub of Shanghai, Qin turned to what China calls the “Taiwan problem.” While China has taken a consistently hard-line position on Taiwan, it has usually delegated threatening statements to spokespeople or lower-lever diplomats speaking through news releases or in bilateral settings. Qin answers directly to the Politburo Standing Committee of the ruling Communist Party led by deeply nationalistic leader Xi, and his comments reflected a harsher tone of Chinese language over the possibility of a military clash over Taiwan.

As a former chief spokesperson at the Foreign Ministry, Qin was a forerunner in taking Xi’s more confrontational approach toward relations with the United States, its Asian allies and Western democracies. Countries from South Korea to Germany have recently spoken out against China’s threats against Taiwan, underscoring a war of words that teeters on the edge of outright conflict with recent Chinese military exercises surrounding Taiwan and the strengthening of US alliances in Asia aimed at responding to Beijing’s increased military presence.

The threat level toward Taiwan is difficult to rank, but US officials have said China intends to be prepared to launch an invasion within the next decade. Qin’s comments, while not unprecedented, gave higher visibility to the Chinese threats in front of an international audience of the type China has sought to recruit as partners in business and development. “The safeguarding of national sovereignty and territorial integrity is beyond reproach,” Qin said.

“The Taiwan problem is at the core of China’s core interests,” he said. “We will never back down in the face of any act that undermines China’s sovereignty and security. Those who play with fire on the question of Taiwan will burn themselves.” Such remarks are typically directed at the

island’s democratically elected government under President Tsai Ing-wen and its most important ally, the United States. China considers Taiwan a part of its territory to be annexed by force if necessary.

Earlier in April, China held large-scale air and sea drills in the areas surrounding Taiwan in retaliation for Tsai’s meeting with US House Speaker Kevin McCarthy on April 5 in California. China said the exercises simulating an encirclement of Taiwan were intended as a “serious warning” to pro-independence politicians on the self-governing island and their foreign supporters. China has stepped up its military pressure and diplomatic isolation against Taiwan in recent years, sending fighter jets and navy vessels towards the island on a near-daily basis.

While Taiwan maintains official diplomatic relations with just 13 sovereign states, it retains robust ties with most major nations, including the US. After former House Speaker Nancy Pelosi visited Taiwan in August, China sent more military vessels over the midline of the Taiwan Strait, an unofficial boundary that had been accepted for decades.

The heightened pace of military activity and increasingly bellicose language have raised concerns about a possible conflict in one of the world’s most economically vital regions. Taiwan produces much of the world’s much-needed computer chips and the Taiwan Strait separating the island from mainland China is one of the world’s busiest waterways.

Taiwan will elect a new president and parliament in January, with China seen as heavily favoring the opposition Nationalist Party that backs political unification between the sides under terms yet to be defined. Taiwanese and US authorities say China is using economic leverage and disinformation to bolster its military threats, but most Taiwanese responding to surveys back the status quo of de facto independence. At a daily briefing, Foreign Ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin criticized recent comments by South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol opposing any changes in the status quo across the Taiwan Strait.

Wang said that recent tensions are the responsibility of Taiwan’s government, which opposes Beijing’s demand that it recognize China’s claim to the island. “Taiwan independence cannot coexist with peace and stability in the Taiwan region,” he said. “To maintain the situation in the Taiwan Strait and regional peace and tranquility, it is necessary to clearly oppose Taiwan independence and external interference.”

North Korea calls its nukes ‘stark reality,’ criticizes G-7

SEOUL (AP): North Korea’s foreign minister called the Group of Seven wealthy democracies a “tool for ensuring the US hegemony” as she lambasted the group’s recent call for the North’s denuclearization.

The top diplomats from G-7 nations, who met recently in Japan, had jointly condemned the North’s recent ballistic missile tests and reiterated their commitment to the goal of North Korea’s complete abandonment of its nuclear weapons. Their communique was prepared as a template for leaders at the G-7 summit next month in Hiroshima, where North Korea’s nuclear program will likely be discussed again. North Korean Foreign Minister Choe Son Hui said her country will take unspecified “strong counteraction” if G-7 countries — the United States, Japan, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Canada, Italy and the European Union — show “any behavioral attempt” to infringe upon the fundamental interests of North Korea.

“G7, a closed group of a handful of egoistic countries, does not represent the just international community but serves as a political tool for ensuring the US hegemony,” Choe said in a statement carried by North Korean state media. Choe said the G-7 communique “malignantly” raised the North’s legitimate exercise of its sovereignty.

North Korea has steadfastly argued it was forced to develop nuclear weapons because of US nuclear threats against it. It has said the United States’ regular military drills with South Korea are a rehearsal for invasion, though US and South Korean officials have said their drills are defensive and they have no intentions of attacking the North. North Korea has test-fired about 100 missiles since the start of last year in the name of responding to US military training with South Korea. But many experts say North Korean leader Kim Jong Un likely uses his rivals’ military drills as a pretext to advance his weapons programs, cement his domestic leadership and be recognized as a legitimate nuclear state to get international sanctions on the North lifted.

North Korea has been hit with 11 rounds of UN sanctions because of its past nuclear and ballistic missile tests banned by UN Security Council resolutions. Kim has previously said those sanctions “stifles” North Korea’s economy. The G-7 foreign ministers in their communique said North Korea will never have the status of a nuclear-weapons state under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons.

The treaty sought to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons beyond the five original armed powers — the US, Russia, China, Britain and France. It requires non-nuclear signatory nations to not pursue atomic weapons in exchange for a commitment by the five powers to move toward nuclear disarmament and to guarantee non-nuclear states’ access to peaceful nuclear technology for producing energy. Choe also said the North’s position as a nuclear weapons state “will remain as an undeniable and stark reality.” She said North Korea is free from any of the treaty’s obligations because it withdrew from the treaty 20 years ago.

North Korea joined the NPT in 1985 but announced its withdrawal from the treaty in 2003, citing what it called US aggression. Since 2006, North Korea has conducted six nuclear tests and a slew of other weapons tests to develop nuclear-tipped missiles designed to attack the US and South Korea. South Korea’s Unification Ministry said that North Korea must halt its threats against neighbors and pay heed to international concerns about its “reckless” nuclear and missile programs.

UK deputy PM quits after bullying investigation

LONDON (AP): U.K. Deputy Prime Minister Dominic Raab grudgingly resigned after an independent investigation found he bullied civil servants, though he criticized the report as “flawed.”

Raab’s announcement came the day after Prime Minister Rishi Sunak received the findings of an investigation into eight formal complaints that Raab, who is also justice secretary, had been abusive toward staff members during a previous stint in that office and while serving as Britain’s foreign secretary and Brexit secretary. Attorney Adam Tolley, who conducted the inquiry, said Raab “acted in a way which was intimidating,” was “unreasonably and persistently aggressive” and “introduced a punitive element” to his leadership style.

“His conduct also involved an abuse or misuse of power in a way that undermines or humiliates,” Tolley wrote in the 48-page report. “His conduct was bound to be experienced as undermining or humiliating by the affected individual, and it was so experienced.” Raab, 49, denied claims he belittled and demeaned his staff and said he “behaved professionally at all times,” but said he was resigning because he had promised to do so if the bullying complaints were substantiated.

The investigation made two findings of bullying against him and dismissed the others. Raab said in his resignation letter. He called the findings “flawed” and said the inquiry “set a dangerous precedent” by “setting the threshold for bullying so low.” Raab said he quit because he was “duty bound” to resign since he had promised to.

Sunak said he accepted the resignation “with great sadness,” in a letter that praised much of the work Raab had done. He also referred to “shortcomings” in the investigation, which he said had “negatively affected everyone involved.” The resignation spared Sunak the difficult task of deciding the fate of his top deputy.

If he had fired Raab, he would have opened himself to criticism for appointing him in the first place despite reportedly being warned about Raab’s behavior; if he had kept him in the job, he would have been criticized for failing to follow through on his promise to restore integrity to the Conservative government. Sunak received the investigation report and didn’t immediately make a decision. Spokesperson Max Blain, speaking before Raab’s resig-



nation, said Sunak still had “full confidence” in Raab while he reviewed the report.

The ministerial code of conduct requires ministers to treat people with respect and have proper and appropriate relationships with colleagues, civil servants and staff. It says harassment, discrimination and bullying will not be tolerated. Sunak’s delay in not acting swiftly, as he promised, gave his political opponents an opportunity to attack him for dithering.

Opposition Labour leader Keir Starmer criticized Sunak for failing to sack Raab. “What I think this shows is the continual weakness of the prime minister,” Starmer told broadcasters. “He should never have appointed him in the first place, along with other members of the Cabinet that shouldn’t have been appointed, and then he didn’t sack him. Even today, it’s Raab who resigned rather than the Prime Minister who acts.”

Raab was elected to Parliament in 2010 and unsuccessfully sought to become Conservative Party leader in 2019 before throwing his support behind Boris Johnson. Appointed deputy prime minister under Johnson, he briefly took charge of the government when Johnson was hospitalized with COVID-19 in April 2020. Raab said in his letter that he had “not intentionally belittled anyone” and was “genuinely sorry for any unintended stress or offense that any officials felt.”

Sudan conflict: ‘I’m drinking water from the River Nile’

KHARTOUM (BBC): After six days of fierce fighting that have brought normal life to a halt in Sudan’s capital, Khartoum, I have left my house for the first time. Although I can still hear explosions and gunfire across the city, I had no choice.

We have run out of water. So I have driven to the River Nile. At home, I have been sheltering inside with my wife and children. Clashes have been happening near my house. When we hear shelling we hide under the furniture to try and protect ourselves. The bombing has hit key infrastructure, like water pipes. So we have no running water and the electricity and internet supply is cutting in and out. So I went to a nearby store to try and buy water and essentials - but the shop was shut.

Many families, like mine, are in the same position - stuck in their houses for days on end, running out of water and food. So I decided to risk the journey to one of the longest rivers in the world in search of drinking water. I drove in my car. Most of the gas stations are closed, and the prices are getting higher. But I have fuel.

I’ve been reporting from Sudan for almost two decades. I’ve covered protests and military coups before, but this coverage is the most difficult because it’s happening right on the streets around me. It feels like death is all around us. As I make my way to the river, groups of people, like me, are flocking to this area, which is one of the places where people are collecting water. They come here to bathe, to wash things and to get drinking water.



In this part of Sudan the White and Blue Nile move in parallel before mixing together to form the Nile as it starts its course to Egypt. As I stand on the west bank of the river, known as the White Nile, specifically in the Fatehab area of Omdurman, I can see in the distance plumes of smoke rising from the combat zone, where heavy fighting continues despite the promise of a 24-hour ceasefire from both sides. Here, I speak to families who have resorted to collecting water from the Nile for drinking and for other purposes.

They tell me how difficult they’ve found this week during the fierce fighting, especially during Ramadan and how they’ve been affected a lot by water cuts as well as previous droughts. “We came here to collect water from the river, as our water has been completely cut. The power is cut too, we’re in the dark. People are really, really suffering, all while everyone is fasting. The women and children are even having to help,” one man explains.

Another woman tells me how she is finding it tough, especially in this 40C heat. “I swear to you it’s so hot and

we have no water, we’re having to sit outside. What has come of this country?” she asks. “The power has been cut for five days. We have no water and no power, we have nothing.” People gather the water, some in small buckets, which they carry away, others in big containers, on carts with wheels to make it easier to transport, often pulled by donkeys.

Everyone tends to boil the water before consuming it but I must admit it isn’t completely clean. Luckily not all neighbourhoods have had their water cut off, so some people are heading there to fill their bottles. Although a report by Unicef and the Sudanese government into drinking water safety in Sudan, in 2017 said “the status of the water of the Nile rivers is such that no very serious contamination of water is taking place”, it did warn back then, that “the water-related health risks are rapidly increasing”. It blamed such risks on an increase in the population and economic activities along the Nile (among the highest population densities in the world) and the lack of drinking water and sewage or agriculture drainage water treatment.

Lebanon lawyers see ban from union

BEIRUT (AP): In crisis-hit Lebanon, lawyers have been increasingly alarmed by a recent ban from their union on media appearances not authorized by the syndicate, saying it amounts to political interference. Lawyers and human rights activists say the ban also violates laws on free speech and muzzles their accountability work.

The alarm was sounded again, when the Beirut Bar Association interrogated for three hours Nizar Saghie, a prominent activist lawyer, over violating the ban and appearing in the media without permission from the head of the association.

Saghieh, who heads watchdog group Legal Agenda, spoke to reporters in defiance of the decision. The head of the association, Nadir Gasbard, said the ban, issued in March, was justified to prevent what he described as “chaos in the judiciary,” citing lawyers who frequently appear in the media and comment publicly on unfinished cases. Saghie had criticized the government’s probe in the deadly 2020 Beirut Port explosion and has provided legal analysis on corruption cases — including a probe of Lebanon’s embattled Central Bank governor for money laundering — as well as political decisions and alleged human rights violations. He and 12 other lawyers have filed a legal appeal against the association’s ban; the judiciary is to decide on the case early next month. There were concerns the association could revoke Saghie’s license following the interrogation, but that did not happen.

Climate tension: UN chief chides Biden, leaders

WASHINGTON (AP): UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres bluntly challenged the climate efforts of President Joe Biden and other world leaders in a message for a White House summit, charging that expanded oil and gas drilling and other policies of the richest countries amount to a “death sentence” for the planet.

The warning marked a public rebuke from the UN’s highest official of what he described as “the major emitters” of gases from burning fossil fuels that are heating the planet. The challenge — recorded by Guterres in a video for the White House virtual climate summit — came as Russia’s war in Ukraine and other threats to the world’s short-term oil and gas supply are leading the US and some other nations to up production of climate-damaging oil, natural gas and coal.

Biden opened the summit recounting his administration’s billions of dollars in climate efforts and by announcing \$1 billion in new climate finance for developing nations, as well as other recent and planned legislation and programs. In the US and elsewhere, however, the renewed embrace of fossil fuels is creating conflicts with the climate efforts, plans and promises. “Geopolitical divisions must not torpedo the world’s climate fight,” Guterres warned in his video.

“The science is clear: New fossil fuel projects are entirely incompatible” with keeping global warming within the limits that the US and roughly 200 other nations committed to in the 2015 Paris climate accord, said the UN chief. Current national

policies are taking the world to a level nearly twice as high, he said, calling that a “death sentence.” “Yet many countries are expanding capacity. And I urge you to change course,” said Guterres, whose calls for an immediate stop to new oil and gas drilling have sharpened since a dire report from a panel of global experts last month indicated the world is heading rapidly toward more disastrous levels of warming.

Asked about the UN secretary-general’s remarks, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean-Pierre said the US believes global warming requires “global collaboration and global action. And that’s what you saw this president do.” Jean-Pierre declined to answer a question whether Guterres’ video was viewed by Biden and others attending. Guterres did not single out the US or any other nation by name, but the policies he targeted, including expanded fossil fuel production, apply to the United States, strategic US partners in the Gulf, and many others.

President Barack Obama initiated the Major Economies Forum as a way to get the world’s biggest economies and polluters talking among themselves about emissions cuts and climate finance. Biden revived the annual summits after President Donald Trump let them lag. This year’s event comes during Russia’s market-disrupting invasion of Ukraine and reluctance by Saudi Arabia and other oil producers to increase their short-term pumping in response. Resulting spikes in gas prices last year posed political threats for Biden and other leaders in their home

countries.

The US Energy Information Administration projects the US will pump a record 12.4 million barrels of crude oil a day this year and top that with 12.8 million barrels a day next year. While praising many US climate efforts, advocates especially fault Biden’s approval of the big new Willow drilling project in previously off-limits areas of Alaska, saying it will lock in increased production for decades to come. “Behind the green screen of Biden’s climate promises, he continues to greenlight destructive fossil fuel expansion in project after project,” said Jean Su, director of the Center for Biological Diversity’s Energy Justice program.

“We need a real reduction in the oil and gas burning up our future, starting with reversing the Willow approval and an end to all new fossil fuel project permits,” Su said in a statement. Biden in opening remarks for the virtual summit announced \$1 billion for the Green Climate Fund, an initiative that helps less-wealthy nations to fortify themselves against the rising seas and increased disasters of climate change, and to develop clean renewable energy. Biden also said he would ask Congress for \$500 million over the next five years to help slow the destruction of the Amazon, a vital natural reserve soaking up fumes from oil, natural gas and coal in South America. Administration officials have been openly pessimistic about getting congressional approval for climate support abroad, especially with a Republican-controlled House.

the report said.

Sea level is now rising at about double the rate it did in the 1990s, WMO Secretary-General Petteri Taalas said in a news conference. Oceans can rise another half a meter to a meter (20 to 39 inches) by the end of century as more ice melts from ice sheets and glaciers and warmer water expands, he said. “Unfortunately these negative trends in weather patterns and all of these parameters may continue until the 2060s” despite efforts to reduce emissions of heat-trapping gases

because of the pollution already spewed, Taalas said. “We have already lost this melting of its glaciers game and sea level rise game. So that’s bad news.”

Last year was close to but not quite the hottest year on record, ranking fifth or sixth hottest depending on measuring techniques. But the past eight years are the hottest eight years on record globally. The world kept that warm despite the rare third year of a La Nina, a natural temporary cooling of parts of the Pacific Ocean that changes

weather worldwide. The United Kingdom, France, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Belgium, Luxembourg, Italy, Germany, Switzerland and New Zealand had their hottest years on record.

Global heat and other weather records go back to 1850. “In 2022, continuous drought in East Africa, record breaking rainfall in Pakistan and record-breaking heat waves in China and Europe affected tens of millions, drove food insecurity, boosted mass migration, and cost billions of dollars in loss and dam-

age,” Taalas said. China’s heat wave was its longest and most extensive in that country’s record with its summer not just hottest on record but smashing the old record by more than 0.5 degrees Celsius (0.9 degrees Fahrenheit), the 55-page report said.

Africa’s drought displaced more than 1.7 million people in Somalia and Ethiopia, while Pakistan’s devastating flooding — which put one-third of the nation under water at one point — displaced about 8 million people, the report said.

UN’s weather agency: 2022 was nasty, deadly, costly and hot

The Frontier Post

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SCO forum and Pak-India ties

RECENTLY, Pakistan's Foreign Office has announced that Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will lead the Pakistan delegation to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Council of Foreign Ministers (CFMs) summit being held in Goa, India during the first week of next month. According to the Spokesperson, Pakistan's participation in the meeting reflects Pakistan's commitment to the SCO Charter and the importance that Pakistan accords to the region in its foreign policy agenda.

Pakistan and its staunch rival India have both been active members of the 8-member regional cooperation bloc, since 2016. Being the current chair of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), New Delhi hosted a series of events for the SCO member nations in India over the past few weeks, while the Indian government blatantly abused the global norms and the charter of the organization during the past meetings because of it's biased behavior and dealing with Pakistan. The government of Pakistan category raised its concerns regarding the biased attitude of New Delhi at the SCO headquarters and decided to attend the meetings of the forum on Indian soil only to preserve the spirit and momentum of regional cooperation under the charter of the SCO forum. Currently, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is attending the SCO Council of Foreign Ministers meeting at the invitation of the current Chair of the SFM Dr. S. Jaishankar, Minister for External Affairs of India, which is another manifestation of Pakistan's region-centric diplomacy with the aim not to let the SCO forum fall prey to India's hegemonism and arrogant behavior.

Pakistan and India have not been on normal diplomatic terms, and there was no official trade, tourism, or sports between the two countries after the Modi government unilaterally changed the status of India's Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) on August 5, 2019. Historically, Jammu and Kashmir is a major and long-standing dispute between India and Pakistan since the two countries got independence from British rule. The Modi regime betrayed the global community and blatantly violated the UN resolutions by revoking the special status of the disputed territory under the Indian constitution. Historically, New Delhi occupied the Muslim-majority region by force, and currently over 700 thousand troops are deployed in Indian-held Jammu and Kashmir. Both neighbors had fought four wars and Kashmir is one of the most militarized zones and nuclear flash-points in the world. Ironically, India has not only changed the legal status of the Indian-held Jammu and Kashmir but persistently taken multiple measures including the mass migration of Indian Hindus to disputed area, issuance of citizenry status to non-Kashmiris, and fake delimitation of the electoral constituencies in a bid to change the demography of the Muslim-majority region.

There was no dialogue and diplomatic engagement between the two neighbors after February 2019 military standoff and condemnable acts of the Modi regime thereafter. Presently, Pakistan has not only decided to send its Foreign Minister to India to attend the summit but also expressed its openness to any bilateral engagement with New Delhi on the sidelines of the Goa Summit to help initiate constructive activity between the two neighbors. Pakistan perceives that negotiation and dialogue are the only way forward for the two nuclear-armed states to settle their decades-long disputes and move forward toward peaceful coexistence, and regional economic cooperation in the greater interest of the people of the region.

Realistically, India must abandon its hegemonic designs in a changed global and regional geostrategic environment. The SCO forum provides equal opportunities to all member states for greater regional integration and economic and security cooperation to achieve common goals. There is a famous quote, friends can be changed but neighbors can't be changed. Therefore, both Pakistan and India accept this reality and must negotiate and resolve their outstanding issues including the core issue of Jammu and Kashmir. So, peace prevails and humanity prospers in the area like all other regions in the world.

Myanmar's military increasing its violence due to lack of control

Dr. Azeem Ibrahim

did not pay attention and did not care.

The truth is that the junta in Myanmar is less entrenched and less powerful than it pretends. It is wholly dependent on foreign support from some

could be done with sanctions or simple export bans. The schools and villages of Myanmar, which are often targets, would be the beneficiaries of such a policy.

chance to reconsider. Because it is plain that the military is less in control than the junta claims and less than its leaders would like to be.

not a situation that implies the military is successfully winning its war. And yet, even though this is true, the junta has some of the false benefits of supposed legitimacy. Its people hold the metaphorical seals of

All of this is an illusion built upon the army's occupation of Yangon. It is not an immutable fact. The truth is that the military is in power but, perhaps crucially, not in control. This is a bitter fact, one it does not want to accept. And because of this - and international ambivalence - the military is increasing its brutality. Partially, it is doing this out of frustration with a war that the generals long ago expected to win. But all this violence is also an attempt to win the war more quickly. The world has seemingly shown itself uninterested. More violence cannot hurt. This is the logic of the mass-murdering regime throughout the ages and it is one that juntas and dictators unable to win a civil war often resort to in the end.

It is the job of the wider world to prevent this from happening. Not with a formal intervention by a peacekeeping force, which is not practical or desired. But through targeted diplomatic and economic activity. Withholding the regime's men's diplomatic credentials and the regime's air force jet fuel may seem small and symbolic. But each would do a world of good. And in a brutal phase of civil war, each action would also likely save many lives. This is something the international community ought, above anything else, to consider the point of its role in the future course of Myanmar.

This could be done with sanctions or simple export bans. The schools and villages of Myanmar, which are often targets, would be the beneficiaries of such a policy. Yet it is not being done. The world simply does not care enough. Perhaps it is time to care. While many international diplomats justified their initial hesitance to acknowledge or recognize the Myanmar opposition with a sense that the army was always destined to win the war, now they have a chance to reconsider. Because it is plain that the military is less in control than the junta claims and less than its leaders would like to be. Here are the facts. In the two years since the coup, the military has not secured the country. Instead, it has united opposition against it, with ethnic and armed groups ally-

ing with the disgraced former coalition members who shared government with the army before their ouster. This is not a situation that implies the military is successfully winning its war. And yet, even though this is true, the junta has some of the false benefits of supposed legitimacy. Its people hold the metaphorical seals of office. They are accorded diplomatic status. International bodies agonize over whether to host the junta's men abroad.

quarters and oceans of indifference from all others. Campaigners and activists say that, because of the army's reliance on air power, its military activity and violence could be significantly cut down with a few simple things, such as an international effort to deny its aircraft fuel. This

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office. They are accorded diplomatic status. International bodies agonize over whether to host the junta's men abroad. They are given the chance to set refugee policy in Bangladesh, relating to the very people - the Rohingya refugees - who fled genocide at army hands in 2017.

US hypocrisy: Serial rules-breaker forfeits global credibility

Grenville Cross

ON May 3, 2021, when the US secretary of state, Antony Blinken, was interviewed by 60 Minutes, he said, "Our purpose is not to contain China, to hold it back, to keep it down. It is to uphold the rules-based order that China is posing a threat to." Then, on May 26, 2022, he followed this up by saying the US would not block China from growing its economy, but wanted it to adhere to international rules.

And when, on Jan 11, 2023, Blinken praised Japan for agreeing to double its defense spending by 2027, he deprecated threats to the "international rules-based order". Taking their cue from the US, the likes of Liz Truss in the UK, Scott Morrison in Australia, Fumio Kishida in Japan, and Jens Stoltenberg in Belgium (NATO) eagerly regurgitate similar soundbites. Although Blinken and his acolytes rarely explain what exactly they mean, they may have in mind the shared commitment of countries to conduct their activities on the basis of established rules. If so, this involves upholding freely entered-into agreements, respecting legal norms, and avoiding arbitrary decisions, the very areas in which the US has let everybody down, allies included. After Iran, for example, following intense negotiations with seven countries, including the US, entered into a landmark nuclear agreement in 2015 (the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA), by

which it agreed to restrict its nuclear program, the US arbitrarily withdrew from it in 2018. Although Iran had acted in good faith throughout and complied with the JCPOA, the US simply walked away from it for no good reason (beyond keeping Israel happy), leaving its partners in the lurch, and slapping over 1,000 sanctions on Teheran.

In 2022, moreover, when the US, after a change of heart, sought to revive the JCPOA, it had the gall to criticize Teheran for creating obstacles. Iran would, of course, have been fully entitled to refuse to negotiate at all, given that the US had unilaterally broken the agreement, but it magnanimously returned to the negotiating table. When a country like the US lets down its treaty partners so egregiously like this, its moral authority vanishes, and it is in no position to preach to others about adhering to international rules. It is, however, fortunate that those who violate the global rules sometimes have to face the music, as the US recently discovered. In 2016, Teheran brought a case against Washington in the International Court of Justice (ICJ), also known as the World Court, for breaching a 1955 friendship treaty by allowing US courts to freeze the assets of Iranian companies. Although Iran denied supporting international terrorism, the US arbitrarily decided to hand its companies' sequestered money to the victims of terrorist attacks. On March 30, 2023, the ICJ decided that Washington had illegally

allowed its courts to freeze the assets of Iranian companies, and ordered it to pay compensation. The presiding judge, Kirill Gevorgian, said, "The court has concluded the US violated its obligations under ... the treaty of amity," and that, if the parties could not decide on the amount of the compensation to Iran within 24 months, the court itself would determine the sum. Although the ICJ's rulings are binding, they cannot be enforced, and observers fear that, notwithstanding its advocacy of the "rules-based order", the US will simply ignore the judgment.

After all, the US contempt for the global rule of law is notorious, as the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), Fatou Bensouda, discovered in 2020. After the ICC, operating under its United Nations mandate, began an investigation into whether American military personnel and CIA operatives had committed war crimes and crimes against humanity in Afghanistan, the then-US president, Donald Trump, issued an executive order imposing sanctions on the ICC's investigators. Thereafter, Bensouda, and her deputy, Phakiso Mochochoko, were classified as "specially designated nationals," alongside terrorists and drug traffickers. In consequence, their assets were blocked, they and their families were denied US visas, and American citizens were prohibited from having any

dealings with them. Although the then-US secretary of state, Mike Pompeo, claimed that the ICC "continues to target Americans", and that Bensouda was "materially assisting" its efforts, the enormity of what his government was doing was lost upon him, the "rules-based order" notwithstanding. It was, therefore, left to others to place the outrage in context, albeit to no avail. Although, for example, Human Rights Watch's international justice director, Richard Dicker, said it "marks a stunning perversion of US sanctions, devised to penalize rights abusers and kleptocrats, to persecute those tasked with prosecuting international crimes", this was water off a duck's back.

When the French government condemned the "serious attack" on the ICC, and called for the sanctions to be lifted, the US refused to listen, meaning that nothing could be done to redress what the ICC called an assault on "the rule of law more generally". Although, once Trump left office, the US revoked the sanctions on the two prosecutors in 2021, Antony Blinken nonetheless made clear that the US continued to "disagree strongly" with the ICC's investigation. This was shocking, given that the investigators were seeking, in the interests of global justice, to determine if the gravest possible crimes had occurred in Afghanistan (and, if they had, to hold the culprits to account). One day, perhaps, Blinken will explain how

he squares his opposition to the investigation of alleged atrocities in Afghanistan with his professed belief in the "rules-based order," although nobody should hold their breath. On Jan 1, 1995, the World Trade Organization (WTO) was established, with a mandate to manage and enforce the rules of international trade. Although the US was a founding member, it simply disregards any rulings it dislikes. The WTO recently declared that the US violated global trading rules by requiring that goods imported from Hong Kong be labeled as "Made in China," even though Hong Kong is a separate WTO member. It also separately ruled that the tariffs the US has imposed on steel and aluminum from China, Norway, Switzerland and Türkiye contravened the rules. However, despite its advocacy of the "rules-based order," the US has denounced both of the WTO's judgments, and refused to recognize them. It clearly thinks it is not bound by the rules that govern lesser countries, and it has set a dreadful example to everybody who believes that those who join international organizations should respect their rulings.

In a further affront to the legal order, the US has appealed against both of the rulings to the WTO's Appellate Body, knowing this will have the effect of freezing them. This is because, although the tribunal is supposed to comprise seven judges who consider appeals in disputes brought by WTO members, it currently has no members at all, meaning appeals cannot

be processed. This has come about as a result of a calculated US decision to block the appointment of any new judges on the pretext it wants an overhaul of the WTO. This, however, is a smokescreen, and, given its arbitrary trade practices, the US wants to castrate the WTO, which should surprise nobody. In January, it was reported that, since 2001, when China joined the WTO, 28.4 percent of complaints lodged by member states have targeted the US, compared to 12.2 percent for China. This is highly embarrassing for the US, which holds itself out as the exemplar of free trade and globalization. This is why, as a bully boy, it is shamelessly abusing the WTO's processes, knowing it cannot be held to account. Although the likes of Truss, Morrison, Kishida and Stoltenberg may be willing to disregard US rule-breaking, those leaders who disapprove of double standards and believe that the great powers should set an example to others will be appalled, and must call Washington out.

Whenever, moreover, Blinken pontificates about the "rules-based order," everybody should reach for their sick bags. The US is a serial rules-abuser, and its hypocrisy knows no bounds. Indeed, the next time Blinken holds forth about his "rules," people should remember Ferdinand Barnacle, the Charles Dickens character, who, in Little Dorrit, said, "We must have humbug, we all like humbug, we couldn't get on without humbug."

China Daily

War of wills likely to block Sudan's path to change

Mohamed Chebaro

EVERYBODY was expecting a clash between the army and paramilitary units in Sudan eventually, causing the country's transition to civilian rule to teeter and potentially fade away. The de facto military regime of Sudan - led by Army chief Abdel Fattah Al-Burhan and his deputy, Mohammed Hamdan Dagalo, nicknamed Hemeti, who is the head of the Rapid Support Forces, a militia turned paramilitary group - has been supervising the country's search for a representative system of civilian rule since the coup of October 2021. That has to wait, apparently. As fighting continues in the capital Khartoum and other parts of the country and as powerful rival military factions battle to control the country, there is a risk that the violence will spiral into an all-out civil war.

Sudan is no stranger to autocratic military rule. Al-Burhan and Dagalo took power after a 2019 people's uprising amid worsening economic conditions had unseated Omar Bashir, the autocrat who had ruled the country for 30 years.

A veteran soldier, Al-Burhan rose to become a high-ranking officer during the last days of Bashir's rule. He was sworn in as Sudan's interim leader in April 2019. Later that year, he chaired the ruling Sovereignty Council of military and civilian figures that was tasked with steering the country's transition to full-fledged democratic rule. Two years later, he led a coup and arrested the prime minister and his civilian Cabinet, prior to returning to the negotiation table as spiraling political and economic turmoil proved unsustainable. Al-Burhan in July last year made a surprise vow to "make room for political

and revolutionary forces and other nationals" to form a civilian government. The framework agreement signed at the end of last year could not mask the months of tension building between the army and the paramilitary RSF. That friction was brought to a head by clauses in the internationally backed final framework agreement that was due to be signed early this month and which called for both the army and the RSF to cede power. Two issues have proved to be particularly contentious. One was the timetable for the RSF to be integrated into the regular armed forces and the other was when the army would be formally placed under civilian oversight.

The chaotic scenes of fighting that have seen the use of tanks, artillery, truck-mounted machine guns and even the use of air

power in densely populated areas of the capital and other cities are unprecedented. They are also not a good omen for the country's 46 million citizens, who had hoped the uprising could lead Sudan away from its decades of autocracy, internal conflicts and economic isolation under Bashir. A conflict on the scale seen in recent days could also destabilize a volatile region that borders the Sahel, the Red Sea and the Horn of Africa. If the fighting endures, as both parties are armed to the teeth and do not lack resources for resupply, it risks spreading to the war-wrecked western Darfur region and areas of northern and eastern Sudan near the borders with Egypt and Ethiopia. It could also become an open conflict that may be used in the battle for influence between Russia, China and the US and also between influen-

tial regional powers that have previously courted various actors in Sudan.

Neither party spared a moment to divide the war along traditional lines, with each leader allegedly trying to save the revolution and blaming the other for helping invigorate the remnants of the Islamist-leaning Bashir era. Al-Burhan and Dagalo are likely to fight to the end, as their sights have been set very high. Sudan observers have often warned of the massive forces at their disposal, which could leave behind a long trail of destruction. They are unlikely to rush to answer international and regional calls for a lasting ceasefire or to resume their dialogue and negotiations. That is clear from the parallel war of words, as the army has branded the RSF a rebel force and demanded its dissolution, while Dagalo has called Al-Burhan a criminal and blamed him for unleashing destruction

on the country.

The resources and size of the national army, including its air power, should make it superior to Dagalo's forces. But the RSF should not be discounted, as it is a large, well-armed and well-organized force. Unfortunately, this raises the specter of a protracted conflict on top of a long-running economic crisis and the existing large-scale humanitarian needs of the country. With the world busy with Ukraine's open-ended conflict, it has also become more divided than ever. And while the Middle East was hoping for some respite, it hardly had time to digest any benefits that could emerge from the new China-brokered agreement between Saudi Arabia and Iran, which could ultimately translate into an end to the conflict in Yemen, before Sudan suddenly exploded as another area of crisis that could simmer for years.

Leaked documents show how Russia, China collaborate on censorship

LEAKED documents provided to VOA's sister network RFE/RL confirm reports that Russia and China collaborate on censorship and internet control tactics. The materials detail documents and recordings said to be from closed-door meetings in 2017 and 2019 between officials from the Chinese and Russian agencies charged with policing the internet in both countries. In those documents and recordings - reported on by RFE/RL - officials from both countries share strategies for tracking dissent and controlling the internet, including requests for help to block "dangerous" news articles and advice on beating circumvention technology.

RFE/RL said its Russian Investigative Unit obtained the recordings and documents from a source who had access to the materials. DDoSecrets, a group that publishes leaked and hacked documents, provided software to search the files. VOA has not seen the files. While there have been previous reports about Moscow and Beijing collaborating on tactics related to censorship and other forms of repression, the content of these specific conversations had never before been reported. Neither the Russian Embassy nor the Chinese Embassy in Washington responded to VOA's emails requesting comment. In some of the leaked materials, Chinese officials appear to ask Russia for advice on dealing with popular dissent and regulating media, the report said. Meanwhile, Russian officials asked for advice from Beijing on issues such as how to impede circumvention tools like virtual private networks and how to regulate messaging platforms.

The revelations underscore how repression is much more sophisticated in China than Russia, accord-

ing to Yaxue Cao, founder of China Change, a website that covers human rights in China. "China's censorship and China's suppression

Firewall censorship and surveillance system. Two years later, officials from the Cyberspace Administration of

Other materials showed that in 2017, Aleksandr Zharov, the former head of Russia's internet regulator Roskomnadzor, asked China's internet regulator to arrange a visit for Russian officials to China to study China's Great Firewall censorship and surveillance system. Two years later, officials from the Cyberspace Administration of China (CAC), China's internet regulator, asked Russia to block links to a variety of China-related news articles and interviews that they had deemed to be "of a dangerous nature and harmful to the public interest." At the 2019 World Internet Conference in the eastern Chinese city of Wuzhen, the CAC and Roskomnadzor signed a deal on counteracting the spread of "forbidden information."

of access to information is total. Russia has a lot more to learn from China," Cao told VOA. "The whole system is propped up by their narratives, their revisionist history, their total control of the media, their total control of the opinion field." Cao said, referring to China. Other materials showed that in 2017, Aleksandr Zharov, the former head of Russia's internet regulator Roskomnadzor, asked China's internet regulator to arrange a visit for Russian officials to China to study China's Great

China (CAC), China's internet regulator, asked Russia to block links to a variety of China-related news articles and interviews that they had deemed to be "of a dangerous nature and harmful to the public interest." At the 2019 World Internet Conference in the eastern Chinese city of Wuzhen, the CAC and Roskomnadzor signed a deal on counteracting the spread of "forbidden information." Documents obtained by RFE/RL showed that some requests made by the CAC later that year to block

information in Russia were made under that agreement.

In one request, Chinese officials asked Russia to censor a Chinese-language BBC story about a government campaign launched in 2015 to improve the country's sanitation. In another request, Chinese officials asked Russia to block a blog post about rumors that President Xi Jinping had injured his back. The Kremlin has grown even more restrictive over the past year since Russia invaded Ukraine in February 2022, according to Eto Buziashvili, who researches Russian disinformation at the Atlantic Council's Digital Forensic Research Lab. "Following Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Russia has been trying to double down on censorship in Russia, and the reason is to prevent factual information on the war from spreading in Russia," Buziashvili told VOA.

The RFE/RL report on the leaked information confirms how Beijing and Moscow work together on censorship and propaganda, according to Buziashvili. For example, she said, Chinese state media representatives and outlets have previously amplified Russian propaganda narratives on social media. Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, Chinese state media have echoed Russian disinformation about the war. "This report just confirms the collaboration between the two states and their entities," Buziashvili said. It makes sense that the two authoritarian states would work together on influence operations, she added, and the state-controlled media ecosystems in both countries naturally facilitate this kind of collaboration. "If they are cooperating in offline spheres, why not cooperate online and have stronger narratives and reach broader audiences?" Buziashvili said.

VOA



Why are Americans being shot for knocking on the wrong door?

Francine Prose

IN the past week, two people have been shot, in separate incidents, for making an innocent mistake. In Kansas City, Missouri, Ralph Yarl, 16, was shot in the head and critically wounded by 84-year-old Andrew Lester, whose door Yarl knocked on, in error. Yarl had come to pick up his younger brothers, who turned out to have been with friends at another house with a similar address. In rural upstate New York, 20-year-old Kaylin Gillis was shot and killed when she and her friends, having lost their way, drove up Kevin Monahan's driveway. The car was turning around to leave when Monahan, 65, fired two bullets through the car window.

I live in the country. It's easy to lose your way. Mailbox numbers flake off. Satellite signals vanish. Our packages have been delivered to the raccoons in the empty house down the road. I can't count the times we've gotten lost en route to a friend's, taken the wrong turns, stayed on the wrong dirt road until we could turn around. What would have happened if one of those driveways had belonged to Kevin Monahan, who, according to neighbors, had a "short fuse" and was enraged about trespassers?

Once, 15 years ago, a young man driving to work at five in the morning swerved off the road, tore up our lawn, demolished two lilac trees and smashed into a corner of my husband's studio. We'd been asleep. We ran outside. It never occurred to me that he was a terrorist or a criminal fleeing the cops. It couldn't have been more obvious: He'd fallen asleep at the wheel and missed the curve, Dazed but apparently unhurt, he lowered his window, handed us his phone, and asked us to call his brother.

The differences between

that upsetting but not fatal experience and the recent shootings in Missouri and upstate New York are a measure of what has changed in a decade and a half. It's hard to pinpoint the reasons why things have taken such a dire turn. The increase in gun violence has put us all on edge. An uptick in impulsive, explosive, trigger-happy rage ramps up the fear and paranoia that has us warily eyeing our fellow passengers and shoppers. Race may well have determined a white octogenarian's decision to shoot the Black child who'd come to the wrong address, but we can't assume that without knowing more about the shooter. Age might have played a part, too. There's no indication that drugs or alcohol factored in either of these two cases, but these substances can fuel the paranoia that might inspire a driveway or a front-porch shooting - road rage without leaving the house.

Everything we hear, read and observe for ourselves about the deep divisions in our country comes with a more or less veiled threat: the other side is out to get us. While the right confronts the specter of Ruby Ridge, of Randy Weaver's wife and child killed by FBI agents, the left is haunted by racially motivated murders and random mass homicides. Anyone could start shooting at any moment as we remain locked in a series of struggles: red v blue, white v Black, men v women. Obviously, we can scale down the violence and death by limiting access to guns, but there will always be guns. So how do we change the belief that it's a good idea to shoot first and ask questions later? How do we repair this broken chromosome in our nation's cowboy DNA?

Given that Breaking Bad, The Wire and The Sopranos are among my all-time favorite TV series, I hesitate to advocate dialing down the violence in our entertainment. On the other hand, we might want to consider the fact that Yarl's shooting was headline news. An alternate scenario - Andrew Lester calmly telling Ralph Yarl that he was on Northeast 115 Street, when actually he was looking for Northeast 115 Terrace - would never have been reported. Violence is news. If it bleeds, it leads. It's our daily diet, the disease we can watch proliferate in prime time. Do Andrew Lester and Kevin Moynahan watch TV? Have they seen cops shoot multiple bullets into a Black man before one word is exchanged? For some, the lesson of that sort of footage is: it's something guys do. It happens.

I'm not saying we shouldn't see those films. We need to know that this strain of violence isn't going away. But we might consider the downside of prurience, of the numbing effects of sensationalism, of watching the same chaotic body-cam clip night after night. Perhaps we need to consider the balance between normalizing and reporting. It's hard to imagine someone being shot for knocking on a stranger's door in Finland, Spain or Canada. We Americans seem to have a national anger-management problem, which grows even more toxic when it interacts with racism, sexism, jingoism, homophobia, transphobia and a slew of other "reasons" for hatred.

I can't imagine the magic cure for an epidemic of impulse murder. It's too huge, too systemic, too ingrained in the fabric and the moment. It's as if our population needs therapy or guidance. At the least, we need to learn not to kill strangers who may need our help - but rather to ask if they are lost.

The Guardian

Importance of industrial linkages for universities or HEIs in Pakistan

A university's mission in research and development (R&D) is to generate new knowledge and discover creative solutions to problems that arise in many academic disciplines. Researchers, students and professors work together to perform basic and applied research in a variety of subjects, including science, engineering, medicine, social sciences, humanities and more. Commonly universities serve as centers of learning and academic inquiry.

In universities or Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), the basic function of scientific and scholarly research is to design and test new products or services. It is necessary to develop new technologies and to create innovative solutions to real-world problems. Universities can contribute to economic growth, social & cultural development and discoveries & innovations by conducting activities related to research and development. The outcomes of such research activities can benefit society as a whole.

Universities are essential in encouraging interdisciplinary research and cross-disciplinary collaboration, which can help to provide new knowledge and innovative solutions. The next generation of scientists and researchers, who will spur future innovation and aid in resolving societal problems, can be trained on these platforms. Simply, a university's job in research and development is to produce new knowledge, develop original ideas, and educate the next generation of scientists and researchers to advance human

progress in a variety of academic subjects.

A collaborative partnership between universities and industries is called "industrial linkage". It aims to advance knowledge transmission, technology transfer, and research & development. It entails collaborations between academic researchers and industry executives to tackle real-world issues, develop novel technologies, and come up with ground-breaking ideas that can benefit society. The benefits of industrial linking to universities are numerous. The first one is that it gives universities access to knowledge, resources, and experience from the industry that they may use to expand their research and development efforts. This collaboration may result in the creation of fresh research initiatives, as well as useful goods and solutions for the market.

Secondly, Industries may be eager to sponsor research programs or offer research grants to support particular fields of study, opening up financing prospects for universities. The research infrastructure, new employee hires, and student scholarship programs can all be supported with the help of this funding. Thirdly, exposure to industry professionals and chances for hands-on learning can help students develop their knowledge and abilities and increase their employability after graduation. Students can see the most recent technology and practices utilized in their disciplines directly through internships, research collaborations, and industry visits.

Dr. Muhammad Suleman Tahir

Last but not least, industry partnerships can assist universities in making an impact and adding value to society. Universities can provide cutting-edge answers to social problems like climate change, health, and energy by collaborating closely with industry. This cooperation may also result in the development of fresh ventures, goods, and services that can boost the economy and provide employment. Simply, access to industry knowledge and resources, funding opportunities, opportunities for students to gain real-world experience, and chances to contribute to society through research and innovation are all advantages of industrial linkage for universities.

To build and strengthen linkages with industry, Pakistani universities must overcome several obstacles. In Pakistan, there is a comparatively weak culture of industry-academia partnership. Universities are not often considered viable partners for research and innovation by many industrial organizations in the nation. Similarly to this, many institutions don't take a proactive stance to forge connections with Industry, which makes it challenging to forge close bonds between the two. In comparison to developed nations, Pakistan's research and innovation ecosystem is comparatively underdeveloped. The inability of universities to carry out high-quality research that is pertinent to industrial needs is caused by a lack of funds, infrastructure, and facilities for research and development.

The culture of investing in R&D

is lacking in many industrial organizations in Pakistan. They may not recognize the importance of funding long-term R&D partnerships with universities since they are more concerned with short-term earnings. The needs of industry and university research priorities are frequently out of sync. While the industry is more interested in applied research that can result in the development of new products and services, universities may concentrate on basic research. Many university professors in Pakistan lack the knowledge and expertise needed to work with industry. Additionally, there aren't many incentives for faculty members to collaborate with the industry, which may deter them from doing so. There is no entrepreneurial culture in Pakistani universities that supports the commercialization of research and innovation. Because of this, it is challenging to turn academic research into profitable products and services.

In conclusion, there are several obstacles that Pakistani universities must overcome to build and strengthen industrial ties, including a weak culture of collaboration, a weak ecosystem for research and innovation, a lack of industry support for R&D, a misalignment of industry and academic priorities, a lack of faculty-industry collaboration, and a lack of an entrepreneurial culture. To overcome these obstacles, universities, industry, and policymakers must work together to foster an atmosphere that encourages cooperation and innovation because the industrial linkage is one of the effective lifeline for Pakistani universities.

How DeSantis could beat Biden

DEMOCRATS have recently had a good run. Their resounding victory in the Wisconsin state Supreme Court race was especially welcome. One liberal pundit went so far as to say: "It is hard to imagine any Republican presidential candidate carrying Wisconsin in 2024, and that pattern is likely to hold in other key Midwestern states." This seems premature. Democrats won a similar race in 2020 by an almost identical margin - indeed, they were running against the very same Republican. But President Biden carried the Badger State later that year by only six-tenths of a point. I wouldn't call Wisconsin in the bag yet.

No, what is driving Democratic exuberance is the belief that Donald Trump will be the GOP nominee. And it is true that Trump has been polling strongly in Republican primary trial heats. His New York indictment has so improved his standing that his margin over Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis among Republicans is now averaging around 24 points. But none of that guarantees that Trump will be the Republican nominee. He is viewed far less favorably by Republican voters today than he was as president, when his "strongly favorable" number pushed 70 percent. About one-third of Republicans now say they are Trump-first Republicans; when he was in office, half of Republicans commonly described themselves that way. Much will

depend on how Republicans value the question of electability as the race takes shape; the more they do so, the more it opens the door for non-Trump candidates. The most obvious of these is DeSantis, who has yet to declare his candidacy but might do so in May. Could DeSantis beat Biden and, if so, what might his coalition look like?

Start with Biden's weaknesses. The latest CNN poll found only 37 percent approving of how Biden is faring on helping the middle class, while 62 percent disapproved. That's a net negative rating of 25 points. Among Hispanics, Biden was 32 points underwater on this measure; among all non-college-educated voters, he was minus 37 points; and among White non-college-educated voters, his net negative rating reached an astonishing 51 points. These numbers will change, most likely, but they are not trivial challenges. Meanwhile, DeSantis is also beating Biden in trial polls. In the RealClearPolitics running average, he's ahead of Biden by a couple of points and was ahead or tied in every poll since the beginning of March. DeSantis has been leaning hard into culture-war issues with his "war on woke," from legislation restricting discussions of gender and sexuality issues for public school children to reconfiguring curriculums at some public universities. This is generally viewed as an effort to capture hard-right and evangelical votes in the

Republican primaries. But there might be more to it than that. For college-educated Democrats, these moves are simply authoritarian, if not fascist, and could not possibly appeal to any but a fringe of the most reactionary voters. But their views might not correspond to how many ordinary non-college-educated voters see such policies.

For example, across the two March polls where relevant data are available (Marquette Law School and Harvard-Harris), DeSantis averaged a 12-point advantage over Biden among non-college-educated voters. That compares with Trump's modest four-point advantage among non-college-educated voters in 2020. Modeled estimates show that an improvement of five points in the Republican share of the working-class vote (and a corresponding five-point decline in the Democratic vote share) would - all else equal - produce a solid 312-226 GOP electoral vote majority in 2024. The states that move into the GOP column are Michigan, Pennsylvania and Nevada by three points, Arizona and Georgia by four points and Wisconsin by five points. Among Hispanic voters, DeSantis's relative strength against Biden might prove to be greater. In March polls, DeSantis was losing Hispanics by seven points to Biden compared with Trump's deficit of 25 points - a difference of 18 points. And consider his track record. In 2020, Biden won the

Hispanic vote in Florida by nine points. But in the 2022 gubernatorial election, DeSantis carried the Hispanic vote in the state by 13 points. DeSantis won heavily Hispanic Miami-Dade County, historically the Democrats' firewall, by 11 points. He carried Osceola County by almost seven points - a county where Puerto Ricans, once a dependable Democratic vote, loom large. Statewide, DeSantis split the Puerto Rican vote nearly 50-50 with Democratic gubernatorial nominee Charlie Crist.

Significant improvement by DeSantis over Trump among Hispanics could endanger Biden in some key states in 2024. DeSantis would not need to carry Hispanics in these states but just continue to erode the Democrats' advantage among these voters. In Nevada in 2020, the Democrats' margin among Hispanics declined by 16 points; in Arizona, it declined by 10 points. If DeSantis continues these trends - as current data suggest is possible - Democrats' tenuous hold on these states could slip. Can DeSantis really pull enough working-class and Hispanic votes to beat Biden? We don't know, of course. The race has hardly begun, and DeSantis's initial outings have been so shaky that some of his donors are having second thoughts. But Democrats, lulled into complacency by the prospect of running against Trump yet again, would be wise to take DeSantis seriously and plan accordingly.

The Washington Post

WHETHER by incompetence or design, Suella Braverman finds herself, yet again, on the frontline of the culture wars. This time, for making sweeping statements branding British-Pakistani men, without nuance or caveats, as child sex abusers who "hold cultural values totally at odds with British values".

Braverman's own ethnic origin has shielded her from criticism for too long. Many people within the Conservative party have been hesitant to call out what has been staring members in the face. They struggle to hold an ethnic minority MP to account in the same way they would a white parliamentarian. This needs to change. If we are going to start to have honest conversations, let's start by saying this - black and brown people can be racist too. As a Conservative parliamentarian, it's painfully disappointing to see these comments being made under the most diverse cabinet in history. I do not believe Sunak shares Braverman's extreme views. In his own statement on government plans to tackle child sexual exploitation, he did not use the same language as Braverman and looked uncomfortable when questioned about it. But as head of the party, the responsibility stops with him. As the first prime minister from an ethnic minority background, he should not want to be remembered for presiding over a government that engaged in racist rhetoric.

The prime minister must now reach out to the people who have been harmed by Braverman's comments: those diverse communities who are suffering the direct impact of her inaccuracy. He must address the concerns raised by those diverse and varied leaders and organisations who have written him letters in their hundreds calling for an end to this irresponsible and divisive language. His legacy depends on him having the strength to stamp out this rhetoric, and stop it becoming a part of this government's identity. I have been assured by senior members of the party that Braverman's language is not part of a deliberate election strategy to stoke up fear and anger. I want to believe that. And if this is true, then it is part of her own strategy - and the party must act now to distance itself from it. What that looks like is for Sunak to decide.

Braverman is a trained barrister. If somebody who is trained to be an advocate cannot communicate on serious issues in a thoughtful, reasonable, evidence-based way, that's an issue of incompetence. Whether this consistent use of racist rhetoric is strategy or incompetence, however, doesn't matter. Both show she is not fit to hold high office. Those who cry "free speech", that she's entitled to say whatever she likes, are missing the point. As a s t r a i g h t - t a l k i n g Yorkshirewoman now in my 50s, I've spent my career drawing attention to issues that were seen as taboo, from forced marriages to FGM, and indeed child sexual exploitation. Criticising

Sayedda Warsi

Braverman's language is not about shutting down important debate about policy, or being culturally sensitive. It's about demanding a home secretary who makes policy announcements that are accurate and based on fact and evidence, which Braverman has failed to do.

A Home Office report in 2020 concluded that most child sexual abuse gangs are made up of white men under the age of 30, for example. Specifics and nuance are important, too. It is not enough for her to backpedal by suggesting, patronisingly, that "the vast majority of British-Pakistanis are law-abiding, outstanding citizens" - by making her uncaveated comments a week ago the damage has already been done. Calling out people within your own party is a difficult thing to do. It's even harder calling out another woman of colour. I am cautious about the language I use in speaking about Braverman's comments. As someone who's faced racism all my life, I recognise it when I see it. And however difficult it may be, I will not let cultural sensitivity and the colour of the home secretary's skin stop me from speaking out. The faces within our cabinet may have changed, but attitudes and the language being used are from a bygone era. Change, it seems, is only skin deep. Real progress and true inclusivity should lead to more informed policymaking. In these difficult times the country demands it of us, and my party needs to rise to that challenge rather than play politics in the gutter.

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Pakistan inflation shatters all records, climbs to 47.23pc

ISLAMABAD (INP): The weekly inflation, measured by Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.51pc to jump to an all-time high of 47.23 per cent year-on-year (YoY) for the week ending on April 19.

According to the data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the increase was mainly driven by soaring food prices, which caused a 0.51% rise in short-term inflation on a week-on-week basis.

During the week under review, the prices of 29 items increased, eight decreased and 14 remained stable. Out of the 51 monitored items, the average price of 29 items increased, 8 items decreased whereas 14 items registered no change during the week.

During the week under review, the items whose prices increased the most compared to the previous year were Cigarettes, Wheat Flour, Tea Lipton, Diesel, Potatoes, Bananas, Eggs, Petrol, Rice, Basmati Broken (87.30%), Rice Irri-6/9 (83.52%), Pulse Moong (68.94%), Bread and Pulse Mash.

Eurozone economy accelerates to 11-month high in April

BRUSSELS (AFP/APP): The eurozone economy's growth accelerated in April and hit an 11-month high, according to a closely-watched survey published on Friday.

Data from the HCOB Flash Eurozone purchasing managers' index (PMI) survey published by S&P Global rose to 54.4 in April from 53.7 in March.

A figure above 50 indicates growth.

Cyrus de la Rubia, chief economist at Hamburg Commercial Bank (HCOB), said the indices for the eurozone showed "a very friendly overall picture of an economy that continues to recover" but warned, "a closer look reveals that growth is very unevenly distributed".

"For example, the gap between the partly booming services sector on the one hand and the weakening manufacturing sector on the other has widened further," he added.

The strength of services comes despite inflation remaining high in the eurozone and incomes that have not kept up with rising consumer prices.

Inflation fell to 6.9 per cent on an annual basis in March, but is still far above

the European Central Bank's two-percent target.

Although concerns over a Europe-wide recession has receded in recent months, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) official warned Europe would see a "sharp slowdown" in economic growth this year.

"There is certainly in some countries a recession risk, but it's very different from what we foresaw and feared for, even in January," Alfred Kammer, the director of the IMF's European department, told AFP last week.

Germany is the only

euro area country the IMF now forecasts will enter recession in 2023.

Kammer said much of Germany's contraction was due to the ongoing economic impact of the war in Ukraine.

The data also showed a sharp decline in output in France's manufacturing sector.

Manufacturing firms pointed to subdued demand from what we foresaw and feared for, even in January," Alfred Kammer, the director of the IMF's European department, told AFP last week.

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enhanced trade volume and health. The Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and all its affiliated chambers shall cooperate in exploring companies for these working groups."

Speaking on the occasion, leader of the delegation Shahid Nazir said, "Pak-Kyrgyzstan bilateral trade is not up to the real potential of both countries and stressed identifying new avenues of increasing trade between both countries." He emphasized for creating better awareness in the private sectors of both countries about each other's markets to increase business ties.



HYDERABAD: Women busy in selecting and purchasing bangles during chand raat at Resham Bazaar.

Kyrgyzstan wants to bolster bilateral trade relations with Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman Kyrgyzstan Trade House Meher Kashif Younis on Friday said that Kyrgyzstan always valued its cordial relationship with Pakistan and wanted to further bolster bilateral trade and economic relations between the two Muslim brotherly countries.

Talking to a delegation of importers and exporters led by Shahid Nazir at the trade house in Lahore, he said, "Kyrgyzstan-Pakistan bilateral trade is below its vast potential that must grow and flourish in the days to come as Kyrgyzstan wants a sustainable enhanced trade volume

and health. The Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and all its affiliated chambers shall cooperate in exploring companies for these working groups."

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He said, "Both countries are doing trade in limited items and there is a need of finding new product lines and avenues of cooperation for enhancing trade volume between the two countries."

He said, "Both countries shall encourage the regular exchange of trade delegations to explore all untapped areas of mutual cooperation." "Ulanbek Totuiaev Ambassador Kyrgyzstan is also very active and helpful and contributing significantly for the promotion of bilateral trade between the two countries," Meher Kashif Younis concluded.

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SCCI stresses to unlock potential of regional economic cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): President SAARC Chambers of Commerce and Industry Ifitikhar Ali Malik has stressed the urgent need of unlocking the potential of regional economic cooperation and integration to boost trade among SAARC member countries, especially with Afghanistan at this critical juncture.

Talking to a delegation of traders led by Muslim Khan Buner here on Friday, he said inter-regional trade in South Asia was less than one-third of its potential, which indicates 67 percent of trade was not being fully exploited. Other members of the delegation included Asif Majeed, Mian Zeeshan Elahi, Mian Affan Elahi of Marvel Cables.

He said the role of Afghanistan as a connector and as a land bridge between Central Asia, the Middle East and South Asia needs to be

reviewed in the prevailing scenario to primarily focus on the promotion of trade and investment. He said even today, Afghanistan is seen as a viable doorway to South Asian countries for direct access to oil and gas of the republics of Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Uzbekistan.

He said better trade ties would help promote economic growth and to do away with abject poverty in the region, specifically in Afghanistan thus enhancing its cross-border and transit trade with neighbouring countries. He said poor trade facilitation at borders and the prevalence of a variety of non-tariff barriers were major hurdles in further enhancing mutual trade manifolds with Afghanistan.

Ifitikhar Ali Malik said at the moment what we need was total upgradation and strengthening of

existing facilitation, handling and clearance of transport and trade at the Pak-Afghan land borders, besides consolidation of initiatives taken by the new regime of Taliban. He said Pakistan after Iran and China was the third largest trading partner of Afghanistan, which exports cement, pharmaceuticals products, sulphur, stone, plaster, peel of citrus fruit, melon, vegetable fats, edible fruits and oil, etc.

He said Afghanistan's main exports were carpets and rugs, representing 45 percent of total exports, whereas dried fruits constitute 31 percent, and medicinal plants 12 percent. He said the main export partners were Pakistan 48 percent, India 19 percent and Russia 9 percent while others include Iran, Iraq and Turkiye.

PFC to participate in 133rd Canton fair

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Furniture Council, in collaboration with ChenOne, will participate in the world's top 133rd Canton Fair to showcase Pakistani products and explore new export markets, besides attracting foreign investments.

Chief Executive Officer PFC Mian Kashif Ashfaq, while talking to a delegation of exporters led by Faran Shahid, said on Friday that it was an efficient trade platform for global business opportunities which is being held since 1957. "It will provide an opportunity to present a world-class range of Pak-made furniture products

and all other allied services, including import and export mainly with various and flexible patterns of trade," he added.

Ashfaq said PFC and ChenOne would both hold a series of meetings with other multinationals and exchange their professional expertise with each other to further improve the quality of their products at par with international standards for bolstering the rate of trade in the field.

He said nearly more than 25,000 of China's best forties trade companies and about 6,000 overseas companies were likely to participate which he added would help determine market

potential and evaluate competition besides initiating joint ventures and project partnerships.

Mian Araib, another member of the delegation, urged the Trade Development Authority of Pakistan to manage single-country expos in all major countries for the effective and result-oriented promotion of Pak products that can compete globally with their competitors in terms of their best quality. He said these Pak expos would help find out new partnerships to increase the volume of exports and enter into new joint ventures in their areas of interest.

Japan's inflation slightly down in March

ANKARA (AA/APP): Japan's overall annual consumer inflation eased to 3.2% in March, outpacing the Bank of Japan's target of 2% for the 12th straight month, according to a government data released Friday. This was the second consecutive month of decline thanks to the government's efforts to soften the impact of higher electricity and gas costs.

Headline inflation was slightly down from 3.3% in February after hitting a 41-year high of 4.3% in January, data from the Statistics Bureau of the Internal Affairs and Communications Ministry showed. Meanwhile, core inflation, which excludes fresh food, remained steady at 3.1%. On a monthly basis, the consumer prices index rose 0.3% in March.

German manufacturing PMI drops

ANKARA (AA/APP): Germany's manufacturing purchasing managers' index (PMI) surprisingly tumbled to a three-year low in April, according to preliminary flash data released on Friday.

Germany's Hamburg Commercial Bank (HCOB) Flash Manufacturing PMI dropped from 44.7 in March to 44 in April, the lowest level since June 2020, the US-based financial services company S&P Global said. The market expectation was a rise to 45.7 in April. This was led by a sharp and accelerated reduction in stocks of purchases, combined with a fresh record improvement in supplier delivery times, read an S&P Global report.



QUETTA: People selecting traditional cap from roadside vendor.

Need stressed to promote AI in all fields to ensure sustainable economic growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federation of Pakistan Chamber of Commerce and Industry's United Business Group Chairman Shahzad Ali Malik Friday stressed the urgent need for the promotion of artificial intelligence in every sphere of life to develop a future roadmap for sustainable economic growth and help boost exports.

Talking to a delegation of industrialists and traders led by Momin Ali he said here today that artificial intelligence has the potential to add up to 16% or about \$13 trillion to the global economy by the year 2030 besides additionally it could boost the global gross domestic product (GDP) by

up to 26%.

He said Pakistan must prepare for a world in which AI is the norm. "But we must understand that to reap the benefits of these technologies, and not just suffer their harms, we need to build the resilience of our democracy". He said Artificial Intelligence is a top emerging technology with applications across industries and implications for our society. It has been reshaping the global economy and national security. He said the global AI industry is thriving as in 2021, AI global funding doubled to \$66.8 billion, and a record 65 AI companies reached \$1B+valuations, up 442% from the previous year.

Each year, more and more companies and governments worldwide adopt AI solutions he added.

Throwing light on its emerging importance, Shahzad Ali Malik Sitara-Imtiaz, said a fresh report presents a brief overview of top AI global hubs outside the United States and each country includes an AI ecosystem overview, government incentives & policies, education & research institutions, leading events, and industry groups. The initial markets for this report were selected based on global rankings, the highest number of AI companies concentrated there, venture capital, and related research institutions he added.

Asian markets track Wall St losses on rate, recession fears

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Asian markets fell Friday on lingering recession worries as data indicated the US economy was slowing down, while Federal Reserve officials pressed their case for further interest rate hikes to battle stubborn inflation.

The losses tracked a sell-off on Wall Street, where tech firms took a hit from bets on further monetary tightening and carmakers tumbled due to concerns about a possible price war.

Investors were also spooked by earnings reports from US regional banks that pointed to a weakening profit outlook following sector turmoil

last month that saw three lenders collapse.

Figures showing recurring unemployment benefit claims hitting their highest level since November 2021 combined with an increase in new applications for jobless insurance pointed to a softening labour market.

That came with news that the closely watched Philadelphia Fed Manufacturing Index fell more than expected and stood in contrast to a surprise surge in the New York Empire Fed Survey on Monday.

The readings indicated the world's top economy was beginning to feel the weight of a year-long rate

hike campaign by the Fed. But while that suggests inflation could come down, there is a worry that a recession is coming.

"The trend higher in jobless claims clearly shows a slowing in the labour market and plays to views of a US recession in 2023," said National Australian Bank's Tapas Strickland.

And Edward Moya at OANDA said jobless claims "will soon see new cycle highs as corporate America has steadily announced more layoffs". But he added that "the lag in when the layoffs will happen will keep wage pressures strong throughout the next few months".

All three main indexes on Wall Street ended in the red, and Asia followed.

Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Sydney, Seoul, Singapore, Wellington and Taipei all fell.

While traders are keeping close tabs on the release of corporate earnings, their attention is turning to next month's Fed rate decision.

The broad expectation is for another 25-basis-point hike, but debate surrounds whether the Fed will lift again in June or decide to pause, particularly in light of last month's banking scare, which was widely seen as a result of the tightening.

On Thursday,

Philadelphia Fed chief Patrick Harker said in prepared remarks that "some additional tightening may be needed to ensure policy is restrictive enough" to support the Fed's dual mandate of keeping both unemployment and inflation low.

"Once we reach that point, which should happen this year, I expect that we will hold rates in place and let monetary policy do its work," he said.

His comments were in line with those of New York Fed president John Williams and Fed governor Christopher Waller.

Harker said he did not expect inflation to come

down to the bank's two percent target until 2025.

Tokyo stocks open lower tracking US falls: Tokyo stocks opened lower on Friday, tracking falls on Wall Street, where auto sector woes pressured the market. The benchmark Nikkei 225 index was down 0.24 percent, or 68.01 points, at 28,589.56 in early trade, while the broader Topix index lost 0.35 percent, or 7.11 points, to 2,032.62.

After recent gains in the Japanese market and falls on US shares, "profit-taking actions are seen weighing on the market", Mizuho Securities said in a note.

Overnight, Wall Street stocks ended lower following lacklustre corporate results from electric vehicle maker Tesla and several regional banks.

The blue-chip Dow Jones Industrial Average closed 0.3 percent lower at 33,786.62, while the broad-based S&P 500 dropped 0.6 percent and the tech-heavy Nasdaq Composite Index plunged 0.8 percent.

The dollar fetched 134.04 yen in early Asian trade, against 134.24 yen in New York late Thursday.

Among individual shares, Uniqlo casual wear operator Fast Retailing was down 1.11 percent at 32,190 yen, Toyota was off

0.85 percent at 1,798 yen, and shipping firm Mitsui O.S.K. Lines was down 0.43 percent at 3,480 yen.

Banks were lower, with Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group trading down 1.19 percent at 5,660 yen and Mizuho Financial Group down 1.87 percent at 2,017 yen. Panasonic was up 0.39 percent at 1,288 yen and Hitachi was up 0.52 percent at 7,723 yen.

Japan's consumer prices rose 3.1 percent in March, matching last month's figure and roughly in line with expectations, according to official data released before the opening bell.

The data did not prompt strong market reactions.



In brief

Rybakina retires

STUTTGART (Reuters): Wimbledon champion Elena Rybakina suffered an injury setback ahead of the French Open after she retired with a lower back issue in her last 16 match against Beatriz Haddad Maia at the Stuttgart Open on Thursday. The Kazakh player won only one point in the opening set and called for a medical timeout in the second when she was 2-1 down, the women's tour said. After play resumed, Haddad Maia won another game before Rybakina decided to retire trailing 6-1 3-1. The Brazilian will face third seed Ons Jabeur in the quarter-finals later on Friday. Last week, Rybakina helped Kazakhstan advance to the Billie Jean King Cup finals for the second time after defeating Poland 3-1 in their qualifier. The French Open, the second Grand Slam of the year, will be held from May 28 to June 11. Rybakina's best finish at the claycourt major came in 2021 when she reached the quarters.

Amir slams management

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Former Pakistan speedster Mohammad Amir on Thursday took to social media to defend Ihsanullah, saying the team management should "not destroy his confidence". Ihsanullah was benched for the first four matches of the ongoing T20I series against New Zealand, despite the fact that he is one of the best bowlers in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) season eight and the T20I series against Afghanistan in Sharjah — where he made his international debut. "I was looking forward to see Ihsanullah bowl in the New Zealand series but he has been benched. He was the best bowler in the PSL and the series against Afghanistan," Amir tweeted. "Everyone was enjoying his fast and furious bowling and celebration. We should groom Ihsan instead of destroying his confidence," he added. It must be noted that a hailstorm shower ended the fourth T20I in Rawalpindi after New Zealand's Mark Chapman and Chad Bowes hit aggressive bowles hit centuries against Pakistan on Thursday. Chapman was 71 not out off 42 balls as New Zealand — sent into bat by Pakistan — were 164-5 in 18.5 overs when rain stopped play at Rawalpindi stadium. It turned into a hailstorm as match officials assessed the conditions before calling off the match as abandoned. Pakistan leads the five-match series 2-1 after winning the first two matches by 88 and 38 runs while New Zealand took the third by four runs — all in Lahore.

McColgan out of London Marathon

LONDON (Agencies): Eilish McColgan has "shed a lot of tears" after a knee injury forced her to withdraw from the London Marathon. McColgan, 32, was set to make her debut at the distance on Sunday in an event won by her mother Liz in 1996. However, the Briton, who has stepped up after a successful season over 5,000m and 10,000m, has had to admit defeat in her attempt to make the start line. "Trust me, I've tried but it's just got to the point where it's not going to be feasible to run," she said. "It's nothing serious but I don't want to take any unnecessary risks because I don't want to put my long-term career in danger. There's been a few factors — a bad storm — over the past few weeks and this knee thing is just the last crack in the armour."



BARCELONA: Stefanos Tsitsipas during the match against Alex de Minaur, corresponding to the quarter final of the Barcelona Open Banc Sabadell, 70th Conde de Godo Trophy.

Govt extends tenure of PCB management Committee

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The federal government has extended the tenure of the Management Committee of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) with effect from April 22.

The approval was granted after the Ministry of Inter Provincial Coordination's Sports Wing sent a summary in this regard. It is recalled

that the coalition government had formed a management committee under the supervision of Najam Sethi in Dec 2022 to run the affairs of the board after former PCB chief Ramiz Raja was removed from the post.

The tenure of the committee has expired today April 21, 2023. The ministry has now recommend-

ed two to four weeks extension in the tenure.

"Meanwhile, PCB has been also directed to submit a comprehensive report of activities so far made under the supervision of Management Committee, after revival of PCB's Constitution 2014 from 22.12.2022 to 20.04.2023 (Annex-III)," reads the ministry's letter.

Hall in contention behind surprise leader Chien

TEXAS (Agencies): England's Georgia Hall trails surprise Chevron Championship leader Peiyun Chien by three shots at the first women's major of the year.

Taiwan's 189th-ranked Chien shot a 67 to top the standings on five under at The Club at Carlton Woods in Texas. Olympic champion Nelly Korda is among six players tied second, one shot behind, on four under.

A group of 12 - including Hall - are on three under, while world number one Lydia Ko is four shots off the lead. New Zealand's Ko had a mixed round in which four birdies and three bogeys contributed to an opening round of 71.

Korda, defending champion and world number two Jennifer Kupcho, US Open winner Minjee Lee and British Open winner Ashleigh Buhai were among the late starters who were interrupted for almost an hour when play was suspended because of bad weather.

Chien, 32, reached the turn two under and, after dropping a shot on the first, finished strongly with four birdies in five holes.

"I saw the pin sheet last night, and I can't sleep," said Chien, who recorded her best result of the season in finishing tied fourth at last week's Lotte Championship.

"It feels so hard. I think we did very well today." Korda is joined by compatriots Marina Alex and Lilia Vu one shot off the lead, along with Japan's Ayaka Furue and Chella Choi of South Korea.

Hall, seeking her first major triumph since the British Open in 2018, hit two bogeys and four birdies in her 70 to sit tied ninth.

Compatriot Charley Hull had a disappointing day with seven bogeys in her 79. This year is the first in which the tournament is being held at the course near Houston, which was designed by Jack Nicklaus, after 51 years at the Mission Hills Country Club in California.

Babar is a wonderful talent: Mickey Arthur

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan team Director Mickey Arthur has recently termed the national side skipper Babar Azam "a wonderful talent", adding that there is still room for the skipper to "keep improving".

Speaking at a press conference at the Pindi Stadium in Rawalpindi on Thursday, Arthur — who was accompanied by Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) defacto Chairman Najam Sethi and PCB Director Domestic Haroon Rasheed — said: "I firmly believe that Babar is a wonderful talent and I still think he's got room to keep improving and I will keep challenging him to get better and better because he's going to be a legend of the game."

Terming his turn to the national side a "privilege", Arthur said he was very attached to Pakistan and its cricket team.

"It's a privilege for me to come back and work hard to improve the team. Hopefully, win the World Cup and be No 1 in all formats of the game," he said.

In response to a question, Arthur said there is no such thing as online coaching.

He added that he had kept tabs on Pakistan over the years and knew "exactly what they are thinking and what they need to be successful".

Mickey said he had an incredible support staff and he would work to ensure that the team got the best possible coaches available.

"I'm giving them a very clear path and direction, I looked at the team, the talent in that dressing room is second to none," he said.

He further shared that there were some "seriously talented players" in the team.

"I don't want to name them as the challenge is to keep them getting better, keep pushing them, to become better players and match winners for Pakistan."

"As a team evolves you need to have those young players pushing the senior players for places and that's when you create a healthy environment and I think we have that at the moment," the director said.

Talking about the Pakistan skipper, Arthur said: "What I saw with Babar Azam, the first thing that impressed me was his hands. When you look at a young batsman it's the

speed of his hands that gets you excited."

He said that he was amazed as he hadn't seen a similar talent before.

"The key to backing him was to give him opportunities to succeed. I knew that he was going to become a key part of a very successful Pakistan team. I always thought that he was going to become the number one batsman in the world," the director shared.

During the meeting, Sethi also spoke about the Asia Cup controversy between India and Pakistan, saying that the Green Shirts would go to India to play the ICC Men's One Day International World Cup only if the Men in Blue travelled to the country for the Asia Cup.

"We are told that India can consider playing in Pakistan when the Champions Trophy arrives here, so Asia Cup should be played at a neutral venue and Pakistan should go to India to play the World Cup," Sethi shared.

Adding that there were no security issues in Pakistan, he added that since all other teams were coming, India too was welcome.



SHEFFIELD: Ronnie O'Sullivan of England plays a shot during their round two match against Hossein Vafaei of Iran on Day Seven of the Cazoo World Snooker Championship 2023.

Klopp backs 'long-term project' Nunez to come good at Liverpool

LONDON (Agencies): Liverpool boss Jurgen Klopp remains confident Darwin Nunez will provide "long-term" value for the Reds despite being relegated to the bench in recent weeks.

A failure to reinforce Klopp's midfield last summer has been criticised as Liverpool instead plunged the vast majority of their transfer budget into a £66 million (\$82 million) move for Nunez, that could rise to £88 million with add-ons.

The Uruguayan has scored 15 goals since arriving from Benfica but has fallen down the pecking order since the arrival of Cody Gakpo in January and the return to fitness of Diogo Jota and Luis Diaz.

Nunez came off the bench to net as Liverpool smashed Leeds 6-1 on

Monday.

But it has often been a far more difficult season for Klopp's men as they sit eighth in the Premier League, nine points adrift of the top four.

"It's not helpful to go through a debut season when it's difficult for the whole team. How can a striker shine when the whole team is struggling?" Klopp said at his pre-match press conference ahead of Nottingham Forest's visit to Anfield on Saturday.

"He was injured in some moments, suspended in other moments. That's not a problem at all. This is a long-term project. I understand that he wants to play desperately from the beginning but we have to find a way that really works for us again and then fit in the

players we can use with the specific strengths.

"I am completely fine with the situation. I understand that Darwin isn't always fine. He doesn't smile in my face when he realises he won't start and says: 'Thank you boss'."

"But when you have five or six players available up front you have to make decisions and that's good."

Trent Alexander-Arnold's form has been another reason for Liverpool's slide down the table this season, but the right-back has shone recently from a new role as he has pushed into midfield in possession. Alexander-Arnold has provided three assists in the past two games, but Klopp said it was still a work in progress.

Harden ejected as Sixers beat Nets in play-offs

NEW YORK (Agencies): There were two ejections and controversy about a Joel Embiid kick as the Philadelphia 76ers beat the Brooklyn Nets 102-97 for a 3-0 lead in their Eastern Conference play-off.

Embiid appeared to kick Brooklyn's Nic Claxton in the groin area early in the first quarter but stayed on.

However, the 76ers had James Harden ejected for striking Royce O'Neale in the groin area in the third quarter. Claxton was ejected early in the fourth for a second technical foul.

"First time I've been ejected," said Harden, who scored 21 points in the match. "I'm not labelled as a dirty player, and I didn't hit him in a private area."

"Somebody is draped on you like that defensively, that's a natural basketball reaction. I didn't hit him hard enough for him to fall down like that. But for a flagrant two, it's unacceptable."

"This is a play-off game. We've seen around the

league, things are much worse than what that play was. "Honestly, I didn't think it was a foul on me. But that's unacceptable. It can't happen."

Referee crew chief Tony Brothers said: "Based on the point of contact directly to the groin, it rose to the level of excessive and ejection." The victory puts the Sixers within one game of securing victory in the first-round, best-of-seven play-off meeting and the teams next play on Saturday.

Embiid escaped being ejected after tangling with Claxton in a decision which frustrated Nets coach Jacques Vaughn. "For a guy to intentionally kick someone in an area that none of us want to be kicked at or toward, and for him to continue to play - I've never seen that before," Vaughn said.

Tyrese Maxey scored 10 of his 25 points for the Sixers in the fourth quarter, with his three-pointer with 44.7 seconds left giving his side a 99-96 lead.

Spencer Dinwiddie pulled a point back with a free throw before Embiid, who scored 14 points and managed 10 rebounds, produced a crucial block to his shot with eight seconds remaining as the Sixers held on for the win.

Devin Booker scored 45 points in a performance which also included seven rebounds and three steals as he helped the Phoenix Suns to a 129-124 victory against the Los Angeles Clippers.

Kevin Durant added 28 points for the Suns, who went 2-1 up in their Western Conference first-round play-off series.

The Golden State Warriors reduced their deficit to 2-1 in their play-off against Sacramento Kings with a 114-97 victory. Stephen Curry was the top scorer in the game with 36 points for the Warriors, who were without Draymond Green after he was given a one-match suspension for stamping on the Kings' Domantas Sabonis.



NEW YORK: Philadelphia 76ers' James Harden, left, and Brooklyn Nets' Mikal Bridges scramble for the ball during the second half in Game 3 of an NBA basketball first-round playoff series Thursday.



In brief

Tourists urged to follow traffic rules

RAWALPINDI (APP): Senior Traffic Officer (STO) Munir Ahmed Hashmi urged tourists to follow traffic rules to avoid traffic congestion and road mishaps during Eid ul Fitr holidays while visiting Murree. The STO also inspected traffic arrangements over there and said, "Uninterrupted flow of traffic in Murree and providing the best traffic facilities to tourists is the top priority." He informed that more than 260 traffic police officers will be on duty in Murree during the Eid holidays. He advised the tourists to keep their vehicles in single lanes, avoid overtaking under any circumstances and avoid parking vehicles on the road. The STO said that there would be a complete ban on illegal parking on the roads in Murree. He urged the tourists to cooperate with traffic police so that the traffic mess could be avoided. "The good conduct and excellent character of the traffic police with the tourists is also the guarantor of the dignity of the force," he added.

Dry weather likely to persist

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Met Office on Thursday predicted dry weather in most parts of the country, while hot in southern parts. However, the Met Office predicted that rain-wind/thunderstorm is likely in upper Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), upper Punjab, Kashmir & Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). According to the Synoptic Situation, "A shallow westerly wave is affecting the upper parts of the country." During the past 24 hours, rain-wind/thunderstorms occurred in upper KP, Kashmir, GB, upper/central Punjab, and Islamabad. Meanwhile, the weather remained dry in other parts of the country. The rainfall(mm) observed in KP including Saidu Sharif 28, Kakul 18, Dir (Lower 11, Upper 09), Pattan 10, Kalam 07, Mir Khani, Drosh 06, Balakot, Malam Jabba 05, Cherat 03, Parachinar, Chitral 02, Kashmir: Garhi Dupatta 12, Rawalakot 10, Muzaffarabad (Airport 09, City 05), Kotli 01, Punjab: Rawalpindi (Shamsabad 20, Chaklala 04), Islamabad (Saidpur 16, Zeropoint 14, Bokra 05, Golra 01), Murree 15, Joharabad, Narawal 03, Gilgit-Baltistan: Bagrote 06, Astore and Gupis 01. Today's Recorded Highest Maximum Temperature in °C: Shaheed Benazirabad 42, Mithi, Hyderabad, Sibbi, Padidan and Tando Jam 40.

1,000 policemen deployed

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police have finalized all the arrangements to provide effective security and to maintain flow of traffic in Murree during Eid ul Fitr holidays. Over, 1000 police officers and cops men will perform duty. As many as 260 traffic officers have also been assigned to keep flow of traffic in Murree. City Police Officer CPO Khalid Mahmood Hamdani said that the senior officers themselves will be present in the field to ensure effective supervision. Special pickets have also been installed at 14 different places to ensure the safety and convenience of tourists on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr. Whereas, 06 facilitation centers have also been established in Murree to guide the tourists. CPO said that the Murree Police is busy 24/7 for the protection and provision of facilities to tourists during Eid. To ensure implementation of instructions issued by tourist police, district administration and meteorological department, CPO said that all available measures are being taken to ensure a safe and pleasant journey of tourists, in case of any problem or emergency call 15, he added.



ISLAMABAD: A religious scholar deliver Jumma Khutbah (sermon) at Faisal Masjid during Juma-tul-Wida, the last Friday of the holy month of Ramadan.

Sanjrani urges unity, prosperity on Eid ul Fitr

ISLAMABAD (APP): Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has extended heartfelt Eid greetings to Muslims worldwide and particularly to Pakistanis, urging them to work together to overcome the challenges facing the country.

In a message on the auspicious occasion of Eid ul Fitr, Senate Chairman Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani emphasized the importance of the virtues of piety, discipline, patience, and tolerance cultivated during the month of Ramadan, and called on all Muslims to demonstrate these qualities in their daily lives to achieve success in both this world and the hereafter.

Muslims are blessed with an immense gift from Allah during the holy

month of Ramadan, which can lead to success in the hereafter, he said adding on the occasion of Eid ul Fitr, Allah accepts the prayers and worship of all Muslims.

This day is a celebration of the completion of divine mercy and a day of gratitude. Allah's infinite blessings and mercy require us to illuminate our lives with His guidance, as this is the straight path that leads to success in both this life and the hereafter.

Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani emphasized the importance of including loved ones, neighbors, and the underprivileged in our celebrations, as it is a reflection of the teachings of our religion and society. He urged everyone to make a special effort to share the

joy of Eid with those around us.

The Chairman emphasized the importance of working together to achieve the development and prosperity of the country.

He stated that Eid-ul-Fitr teaches us to celebrate happiness with peace and love and that a joint action plan is necessary to make our country a symbol of peace.

According to him, Eid-ul-Fitr holds great significance for the Muslim world, and the Muslim community shares common problems that require collective wisdom to solve.

He urged everyone to put aside their differences and work towards the development and prosperity of the country on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr.

Bid to smuggle wheat, flour to Afghanistan foiled

RAWALPINDI (PPI): The officials of the Punjab Food Department on Friday foiled a bid to smuggle wheat and flour to Afghanistan. As per details, over 70 containers loaded with wheat and flour were being smuggled to Afghanistan from Rawalpindi Motorway. District food authority officials said 46 containers loaded with wheat and 16 containers of flour were seized during checking.

The wheat and flour were being smuggled from Punjab to Afghanistan. The containers have been sealed while 16 people have been booked. It may be noted that there is a ban on the transportation of wheat from the province.

Earlier, the Punjab Cabinet granted approval for wheat purchase policy for 2023- 2024.

Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi presided over 8th Cabinet meeting at Chief Minister Office which made decisions to promote merit in the province and elimination of recommendation culture by relaxing rules in the departments and declaring null and void the decision to make inductions through departmental committees.

Int'l Earth Day 2023 tomorrow

ISLAMABAD (APP): Earth Day will be marked on tomorrow (Saturday) across the globe including Pakistan which aims to inspire awareness and appreciation for Earth's environment.

The United Nations calls the event 'International Mother Earth Day'.

The Earth Day is usually celebrated with outdoor performances, where individuals or groups perform acts of service to Earth.

Typical ways of observing Earth Day include planting trees, picking up roadside trash, conducting various programs for recycling and conservation, and using recyclable containers for snacks and lunches.

Some people are encouraged to sign petitions to governments, calling for stronger or immediate action to stop global warming and reverse environmental destruction. Television stations frequently air programs dealing with environmental issues.

Juma-tul-Wida observed with religious zeal in federal capital

ISLAMABAD (APP): The last Friday of Ramadan, also known as Juma-tul-Wida, was observed with great religious zeal and enthusiasm in the federal capital like other parts of the country.

Muslims across the city gathered in mosques to offer Juma-tul-Wida, seeking blessings and forgiveness from Allah Almighty. The largest congregation was observed at the iconic Faisal Mosque, where thousands of worshippers came together to perform the special prayers. The atmosphere was one of spirituality and devotion, with the sound of the call to prayer echoing throughout the city.

In his sermon, the Imam emphasized the importance of unity, forgiveness, and compassion. He urged the Muslim community to reflect on their deeds and seek forgiveness from Allah Almighty, as Ramadan draws to a close.

He also emphasized the need for Muslims to follow the teachings of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) and extend compassion and help to those in need, especially during these challenging times.

Speaking to the media, worshippers expressed their joy and gratitude for being able to observe Juma-tul-Wida in such a peaceful and spiritual environment.

They praised the government and reli-

gious authorities for ensuring the smooth observance of the holy month of Ramadan, which has helped to promote a sense of community and devotion among the people. In addition, Mosques belonging to Hanfi school of thought were echoed with Ramadan's farewell Kalam 'Alwada Alwada Mahe Ramadan'. Faithful recited this Kalam with one voice and tearful eyes as the holy month of Ramadan approaches to an end.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mehmood Ashrafi urged the people to observe the night of Lailat-ul-Jaiza, also known as the Night of Reward, by avoiding unnecessary roaming in markets and gathering at recreational places.

As a night of spiritual significance, he encouraged the community to spend this night in prayer, seeking blessings and forgiveness from Allah Almighty.

In his capacity as the Prime Minister's Special Representative on Interfaith Harmony and Middle East, Ashrafi emphasized the importance of continuing the spiritual momentum gained during the holy month of Ramadan.

He advised the people to continue their worship and seek guidance from Allah Almighty in all aspects of their lives.

Eid shopping continues

ISLAMABAD (APP): As the

Ruet-e-Hilal Committee announced that Eid ul-Fitr would be celebrated tomorrow, residents of the twin cities rushed to the markets to give their Eid shopping the final touches. According to a private news channel on Friday, a huge rush of buyers was being witnessed in almost all shopping malls and bazaars, including Commercial Market, Sadder Bazaar, Moti Bazaar, Jinnah Super, G-9 Markaz and various other markets of the capital city.

A large number of women and children are thronging to markets and commercial plazas to purchase clothes, footwear, cosmetics, henna, bangles and other items. The shopkeepers have decorated their shops with colourful lights to attract customers.

Special Eid stalls of cosmetics, mehndi and bangles, the most demanded items of Eid-ul-Fitr, are nowadays being witnessed everywhere particularly in busy markets and bazaars of the city.

As the festival of Eid comes closer, the stalls of beautifully designed colourful bangles, jewellery and mehndi in the markets of the city have been set up which are

attracting female customers. "The young girls are very much interested in buying bangles that match with the colours of their Eid dresses, whereas many of them are rushing towards mehndi stalls to embellish their hands before Eid," said a mehndi stall owner at Jinnah Super Market.

With the start of the third Ashra of Ramadan, Eid shopping had gained momentum and the citizens were thronging bazaars and malls. Families are specifically enjoying the hustle and bustle of Eid the most as they are seen in larger proportion at stalls, shops, malls and markets.

Three healthcare establishments sealed, 2 suspended in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority (IHRA) sealed three Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) and suspended the services of two HCEs in different areas of the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

According to the media reports, the IHRA officials said that the authority's inspection teams carried out assessments of 42 Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) over different medical non-compliance. Right Ways Rehab Center and Grow

past two weeks. IHRA sealed three medical centers with name Zahir Khan Clinic, Maryam Clinic and Al-Barka Medical Centre due to malpractices like the absence of qualified medical staff, unhygienic conditions, not getting registration with IHRA and functioning during the suspension.

IHRA suspended the services of two Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) over different medical non-compliance. Right Ways Rehab Center and Grow

plaza. Two accused residents of Peshawar were also sent behind the bars.

ANF managed to recover 10 kg opium from a car intercepted near Mastung bypass. An accused resident of Kalat was also rounded up during the operation. In fifth operation conducted near the Turbat Danok area, 100 kg charras was recovered from an under-construction house.

of a Muscat-bound passenger, resident of Muzaffargarh, going on flight no PK-225.

In another operation at GPO Islamabad, two kg Ice drug was recovered from a parcel booked for Bahrain.

He informed that in the third operation, ANF recovered 12 kg heroin from secret cavities of a truck intercepted near Gujrat G.T.Road Chenab Toll

DEO advises citizens to strictly follow traffic rules during Eid-ul-Fitr

RAWALPINDI (APP): District Emergency Officer (DEO) Rawalpindi Eng. Kamran Rasheed on Friday advised the citizens and strictly follow traffic rules to avoid road accidents during the Eid holidays.

He said that Rescue-1122 had finalized emergency arrangements for Eid-ul-Fitr and the relevant staff would remain on special duty and would remain on high alert during the holidays. They would be on duty in the district control room and emergency rescue stations with 21 equipped emergency ambulances, nine fire vehicles, five rescue and recovery vehicles, two water bowlers, and two specialized vehicles.

The Rescue points would be established at Commercial Market, Committee Chowk Underpass, GPO Chowk Sadder, Chungi No. 22 at Chand Raat where as key points for Eid-ul-Fitr prayer would be established at Eidgah Shareef, Children Park Gawalmandi, Liaqat Bagh Ground, Chungi No. 22 Chowk, Jamia Masjid Faizan-e-Madina

Adyala Road, Capt Bilal Shaheed Chowk Chaklala-III and suburbs.

The Rescuers provide emergency cover to Nawaz Shareef Park, GPO Chowk Sadder, Jinnah Park, Ayub National Park and T-Chowk Rawat.

He informed that the DEOs had been directed to organize meetings with local mosque committees and ensure local volunteers' availability in case of any emergency. The meetings with the management of hospitals had also been held for better management of any untoward incident.

The Provincial Monitoring Cell established at Rescue 1122 Headquarters would remain operational round-the-clock to ensure the effective implementation of District Emergency Plans, he added.

District Control Rooms would also be functional round the clock for the provision of effective emergency services to the public while leaves of the rescuers had been restricted in this regard, he informed.

Pakistani students learn about space sciences in live conversation with Chinese astronauts

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Nida Fatima, a 7th-grade Pakistani student, has been studying space and the life of astronauts in space-ship ever since she was told about China's Tiangong space station and the advanced space science technology by her teacher last month.

A student of the Educators Islamabad school, Fatima told Xinhua that she had little knowledge about space. Still, her interest was enhanced when her teacher told her that China has not only made its mark in space technology but is also ready to share its knowledge with other countries like Pakistan.

The 13-year-old and students from different schools in Pakistan as well as other member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) got a chance to interact with Chinese astronauts in space through virtual mode in an event held at the Chinese Embassy in Islamabad on Thursday.

"It also motivated me to dream about being an astronaut. A Chinese astronaut explained his lifestyle in the spaceship and about the Chinese space station in a very detailed way. I will study more about China's space program and make a career in space sciences," Fatima said.

The students hailed the astronaut with warm applause as he appeared on the screen, and some of them slightly jumped from their seats in excitement as it was the first experience for every one of them to talk to and listen to an astronaut in space.

President of the Pakistan Science Foundation Shahid Mahmood Baig told Xinhua that in Pakistan, almost all students study medical sciences or some fields of engineering, but there is almost no other preference for them in other fields of science because of a lack of awareness.

"The objective of today's ceremony was to inspire and motivate the Pakistani students toward science, especially space science, because this is a very special science and very few students go into this discipline in Pakistan," he added.

Baig said Pakistan has good cooperation with China in the field of science, and they have been doing a number of joint projects for the past years. They also seek cooperation from China to help Pakistani students gain more knowledge about space sciences. "Young students had a wonderful experience today, and now they are more inclined to study space science and other cutting-edge scientific disciplines in the future, and we will need China's support to help our students achieve their dream of studying space sciences by letting them study in China," he added.

Alizay, a 7th grader from a state-run school in Islamabad, got a chance to ask a question from the Chinese astronaut and was overwhelmed when he talked to her straight from the Chinese space station. "I asked the astronaut how they breathe in space, and he answered my query in a very detailed way ... it was very memorable that I could talk to him," she told Xinhua.



ISLAMABAD: A deserted view of Srinagar Highway as most of the people leave to their hometown to celebrate Eidul Fitr with their loved ones.

Illegally taken land identified

HERAT (Agenices): The Herat municipality said that nearly 70 percent of land which had been illegally grabbed was identified and some of it has been reclaimed. According to the municipality, the construction of residential towns and gardens have slowed the process of reclaiming this land. "We can say that between 60 to 70 percent of the property which was grabbed has been identified and the investigation is ongoing," said Abdullah Akbari, head of the Herat municipality.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Shawwal 01, 1444 — Saturday, April 22, 2023

Price-control by municipality

KABUL (Pajhwok): A number of shopkeepers in Kabul are unhappy with the prices set by the municipality, while officials say the prices of goods are fixed in the presence of relevant authorities and business representatives. A shopkeeper in Wzair Mohammad Akbar khan area, who declines to be named, said that the market has become less colourful recently, and the municipality strengthened price controls which caused "problems" for shopkeepers.

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

UNICEF is 'Committed to Stay and Deliver' in Afghanistan



KABUL (NNI): Despite all challenges, UNICEF stands with the women and children of Afghanistan, said the organization representative in Afghanistan.

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) said, "Amidst increasing restrictions on women's and girls' rights in Afghanistan, and in a shrinking humanitarian

space, UNICEF is committed to stay and deliver to the best of our ability," quoted by Tolo News.

Fran Equiza, the organization's representative in Afghanistan, declared that despite all the difficulties, UNICEF stands with the women and children of Afghanistan with the help of our donors, governmental organizations, and men

and women worldwide.

"I can reassure you that UNICEF is committed to staying and delivering to the women and children in Afghanistan. Moreover, we will take any measures to adapt our operation to make sure we can deliver for the people," Equiza said.

According to the UNICEF representative in Afghanistan, 28 million people in Afghanistan require humanitarian aid and protection assistance, including 15 million children. The remarks by the UNICEF representative in Afghanistan came after the UNDP said that the UN is ready to take the "heart-breaking" decision to withdraw from Afghanistan in May if the Taliban does not allow female aid workers for the organizations.

"It is fair to say that where we are right now is the entire United Nations system having to take a step back and re-evaluate its ability to operate there," Mr Steiner said. "But it is not about negotiating fundamental principles, human rights." The de facto government banned the UN aid workers from working, which has backlashed globally.

The organization said that without female aid workers, its humanitarian assistance in the country would go slowly and called upon the Taliban to reverse the ban on women aid workers in humanitarian organizations.

Taliban order women not to take part in Eid celebrations in two Afghan provinces

KABUL (NNI): The Taliban has prohibited women from attending Eid celebrations in two provinces of Afghanistan before the expected large festivities throughout the country. Two similar notifications stated that "it is forbidden for women to go out in groups during the days of Eid ul-Fitr" on Friday in the Takhar in the northeast and the Baghlan province in the north. Only the two provinces, Takhar and Baghlan in Afghanistan, are subject to the orders.

Earlier this month, the Taliban authorities banned the entry of families and women in restaurants with gardens and green spaces in the Herat province of Afghanistan.

The authorities said the curbs were imposed due to not wearing a headscarf (Hijab) and gender mixing. Since the Taliban retook



control of the country in August 2021, women have been prohibited from working in education with local and foreign organizations, gyms, and public places.

Meanwhile, the de facto authorities banned female aid workers from working with the international organization in the Nangarhar province of the country. Despite the mas-

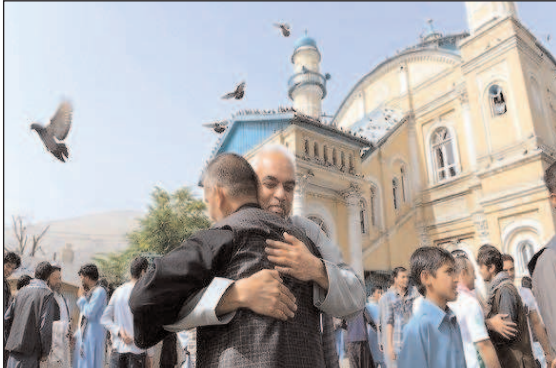
sive condemnation, the restrictions on women's employment with the UN continue, including the ban on girls' education beyond the sixth grade and university.

Eid best opportunity to get rid of grudges, envy, hatred

KABUL (Pajhwok): Eid is the best opportunity to get rid of grudges, envy and hatred and reconcile because Islam praises those who take the lead in this regard. Today is the first day of Eid-ul-Fitr, all Muslims after performing Eid prayers hug each other and exchange greetings.

However, there are some families who are engaged in hostilities and have differences over some issues and do not talk to each other, but the religion of Islam invites such people to reconciliation.

According to the Sharia Law, it is not permissible for a Muslim to forsake his Muslim brother beyond three days, religious scholar Qazi Mohammad Hasan Haqyar told Pajhwok



Afghan News.

"The days of Eid are the days of happiness and celebration for Muslims, the Prophet (PBUH) has called on those who do not talk to each other to reconcile during the days of Eid."

A mediator who reconciles two Muslim brothers gets more blessings,

Haqyar said.

While another scholar, Mufti Shamsur Rahman Frotan says hatred and grudges must not continue beyond three days.

He added: "Eid is the best opportunity to be seized, taking advantage of this day, which is the day of blessings from Allah (swt), people should

avoid hatred and hostilities and everyone should be happy from each other and make peace with each other."

Some families who are upset from each other should seize this opportunity and make peace.

A Kabul resident, Masooma, said: "For several months, I was upset with my sister-in-law because we had fought and today, the first day of Eid, we reconciled and now we are happy."

Meanwhile, Asadullah, a resident of Kabul, also wants people who are at war to reconcile during Eid. Narrating his own story, he said: "I was at war with my brother for many years and we did not reconcile and my brother died and I regret my actions."

More than 100 education centers in Laghman have no buildings

MEHTARLAM (Pajhwok): The Education Department director for eastern Laghman province says 88 schools, 13 religious seminaries and three branches of the Teacher Training Center have no buildings in the province. Maulvi Shah Jehan Sajid told Pajhwok 169 schools had no boundary walls in the province. "There are 277 government schools and 88 of them have no buildings of their own," He said more than a dozen religious seminaries were without buildings as well.

He added that the educational centers lacking buildings were operating in mosques, tents and under trees. Sajid also said nearly 2,000 new teachers were required in Laghman province to meet their shortage. He said: "We need 1,957 new teachers in Laghman to be appointed through open competition. We request the central

administration to pay special attention to Laghman province in this regard in order the existing problems can be solved."

The education director said he had discussed these problems with the Ministry of Education and he had been assured the problems would be resolved.

Students of schools that have no buildings ask the government to solve their problems. Samiullah, a student of Andar High School in Badpakh district, told Pajhwok: "Our school has no building and has 560 students who all study under the open sky in hot summers and cold winters."

He asked the government to construct a building for their school so that they could be protected from the sun and rain during their lessons. Mahboobullah, a 7th grade student at Pothan Middle School in Alishang district, said: "Since years, we have been studying in

the village's mosque, but we often face many problems due to continuous rains. We request the government to provide us with other facilities in addition to a building".

A number of tribal elders and civil society activists also called on the government to pay more attention to the province's education sector. Murad Manali, a teacher at Roshan private university in Laghman, told Pajhwok it was the government's responsibility to provide required facilities to the citizens in area of education. He said no significant work had been done in the field of education in Laghman during the past 20 years and no proper environment for education could be provided in Mehtarlam and remote areas. "We want the current government to find solution to this problem as soon as possible." Tribal elder Malak Abdul Qadir of the

Qala Taki area of Qarghai district, said that there was a school in their area named Sultan Wais Baba, but it had no building.

He added: "Local residents donated money and made wooden shelters for the students of Sultan Wais Baba School to protect them from the summer heat." He asked the government to construct a building for their school.

Obaidullah Niazi, a resident of Sangra area of Aingar district, said no noteworthy work to develop the education in Laghman could be done due the past wars. As peace has been restored, the current government should pay more attention to the education sector's development, he demanded.

Religious scholar Maulvi Abu Bakkar Azizi said knowledge has a special place and value in Islam and governments should pay special attention to educational centers.

He said: "The acquisition of knowledge is compulsory for every man and woman. About 100 educational centers in Laghman have no buildings. The government should pay full attention to this issue and provide all facilities to the students." Civil society activist Engineer Ahmad Riaz told Pajhwok that a society could prosper when its girls and boys were equipped with literacy skills and its educational environment was free from all kinds of challenges. He added good plans could be made for the future generations with the blessing of education.

Panjshir residents say military personnel billeted in civilian areas

Residents of Panjshir have expressed concerns over the settlement of military personnel in residential areas including private houses, educational centers and mosques.

They called on the caretaker government to shift the military departments to different areas.

"They are settled in schools, mosques and seminaries. We call on them to go to the check posts and settle there," said Mohammad Mudeer Mudabir, a resident of Shatal district of Panjshir.

"We have this request: that the military commands should go to the checkpoints and outposts and let the people do their business in calmness," said Imamuddin, a resident of Parian district in Panjshir.



A local official said that distinguished places have been allocated for military personnel and that many of them have been shifted to these outposts.

However, an official said that there are still some military personnel who are settled in residential areas.

"There are some particular areas and due to cold

weather, they were settled in the mosques. Their centers have been built now and we will relocate them," said Rohullah Shahamat, deputy governor of Panjshir. According to the military veterans, the presence of military units in private areas and educational centers has caused panic among the people and the government should provide proper facilities for the military. "The Defense Ministry and other security units should leave the residential areas, schools, mosques and seminaries as soon as possible," said Sadiq Shinwari, a military veteran. The residents of Panjshir also said that many school compounds in Panjshir are being used as military bases and that the students have been deprived of their schools for nearly two years.

Visiting families of deceased on Eid un-Islamic: Scholars

KABUL (Pajhwok): Some people visit relatives who have lost loved ones on Eid days to console them, but religious scholars call this tradition illegal and ask people to avoid it.

Muslims around the world on the first day of the Eid wear new cloths, perform prayers and exchange gifts to celebrate Eid, prepare different dishes and serve and fruits to guests because Eid are the days for happiness of Muslims.

People in different provinces of Afghanistan have different traditions. One of the traditions is that they visit the houses of relatives who have lost family members and pay condolences. A resident of Kabul city, Shamsul Huda, told

Pajhwok Afghan News that they traditionally visited relatives of a deceased family member on the first day of Eid. "It's a tradition, if you don't visit such relatives they get sad and complain that it was the first Eid of their deceased family members and our relatives did not come, so when we offer the Eid prayers, we try our best to visit our relatives whose family members had died before Eid." He said the purpose of this visit was to offer condolences to the family of the deceased.

Muhibullah, another resident of Qarabagh district of Kabul province, said this tradition was followed in their area and people used to visit the houses of the deceased persons on the first day of

Eid and offer condolences to the family. "This tradition is very common. We don't visit all villagers, but with whom we have good relations, but we certainly visit those whose family members have died before Eid."

But religious scholars consider this tradition as un-Islamic. Religious scholar and university teacher Noorullah Kausar told Pajhwok that visiting the houses of relatives who had lost family members during Eid was forbidden and illegal tradition.

He added: "It is rejected in the light of the religion of Islam to pay condolences to the family of the deceased." He added that people should not change the joys of Eid into sadness

for a family who had lost relatives by visiting them and they should not visit the house of the deceased person for this tradition.

He said that it is the duty of all the people, the media, and scholars to inform the people in this regard so that they avoid such wrong practices. Another religious scholar, Qari Abdul Mubeen Maher, also considers this tradition illegal and says that it has negative effects on the society, which turns the happiness of a house into sadness.

He says: "The Messenger of Allah (PBUH) did not grant Fatihah to any dead person after three days, so it is necessary that people do not renew the forgotten grief of the families."



Sudan RSF fighters agree to 72-hour truce for Eid holiday

KHARTOUM (Agencies): Sudan’s paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) said it had agreed to a 72-hour truce on humanitarian grounds from 6 a.m. (0400 GMT) on Friday, to coincide with the Muslim holiday of Eidul Fitr.

The capital, Khartoum, was rocked by bombing and shelling earlier on Friday. There was no immediate comment from the army and its chief, General Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, did not mention a ceasefire in a pre-recorded speech posted on the army’s Facebook page. “The truce coincides with the blessed Eidul Fitr ... to open humanitarian corridors to evacuate citizens and give them the opportunity to greet their families,” the RSF said in a statement.

Fighting between the RSF and Sudan’s army erupted on Saturday, derailing an internationally backed plan for a transition to a civilian democracy four years after the fall of Islamist autocrat Omar al-Bashir to mass protests and two years after a military coup. The RSF said it had to act in “self-defense” to repel what it described as a coup attempt, adding that it is committed to a “complete ceasefire” during the armistice period.

At least 350 people have been killed in the power struggle between two previously allied leaders of the ruling military junta, army chief Burhan and RSF leader General Mohamed Hamdan Dagalo. The conflict has dashed hopes for progress towards democracy in Sudan, risks drawing in its neighbours and could play into regional competition between Russia and the United States. The RSF had earlier condemned the military for what it said was new assaults.

“At this moment, when citizens are preparing to receive the first day of Eidul Fitr, the neighbourhoods of Khartoum are waking up to the bombings of aircrafts and heavy artillery in a sweeping attack that is directly targeting residential neighbourhoods,” the RSF said early on Friday. U.N. Secretary-General Antonio Guterres on Thursday appealed for a ceasefire to allow civilians to reach safety.

Thousands of civilians streamed out of Khartoum as gunfire and explosions sounded on Thursday. Large numbers also crossed into Chad to flee fighting in the western region of Darfur. A doctors’ group said at least 26 people were killed and 33 were injured in El-Obeid, a city west of Khartoum, on Thursday. Witnesses there described clashes between the army and RSF troops and widespread looting.

Guterres, speaking to reporters after meeting virtually with the heads of the African Union, the Arab League and other organizations on Thursday, said: “There was a strong consensus on condemning ongoing fighting in Sudan and calling for

cessation of hostilities as an immediate priority”. Urging a three-day ceasefire, he said civilians trapped in conflict zones should be allowed to escape and to seek medical treatment, food and other supplies. The United States endorsed the ceasefire proposal.

Burhan told Al Jazeera he would support a truce on condition it allowed citizens to move freely – something he said the RSF had prevented. He also said he saw no partner for negotiations, and “no other option but the military solution”. His rival, Dagalo, widely known as Hemedti, told Al Jazeera he was ready to implement a three-day truce. Dagalo has said several times he supports short ceasefires but each has quickly collapsed.

“We are talking about a humanitarian truce, we are talking about safe passages ... we are not talking about sitting down with a criminal,” Dagalo said, referring to Burhan. Burhan accused Dagalo, until last week his deputy on the council that has ruled since a coup two years ago, of “a power grab”.

An alliance between the two men had mostly held since the overthrow of strongman Bashir, whose rule saw Sudan become an international pariah that was on the U.S. terrorism list. The latest violence was triggered by disagreement over an internationally backed plan to form a new civilian government. Both sides accuse the other of thwarting the transition. Much of the fighting has focused on the Khartoum compound housing the army headquarters and Burhan’s residence. The embassy district and airport have also been the scene of clashes. In Khartoum and sister cities Omdurman and Bahri, residents gathered on Thursday at bus terminals with suitcases.

“There’s no food. Supermarkets are empty. The situation isn’t safe,” said a resident who gave only his first name, Abdelmalek. Many people remain trapped, along with thousands of foreigners in a city that has become a war zone. Burnt-out vehicles littered the streets and buildings had gaping holes from shells. Hospitals, where bodies lie unburied, were closed.

About 10,000 to 20,000 people have taken refuge in villages along the border inside Chad. U.N. refugee agency UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) said. Even before the conflict, about a quarter of Sudan’s people were facing acute hunger, but the WFP halted one of its largest global operations in the country on Saturday after three of its workers were killed. Sudan borders seven countries and sits strategically between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia and Africa’s volatile Sahel region, so the hostilities risk fanning regional tensions.

Rescue operation continues in Khyber Pass

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: The rescue and relief operation to clear the road of debris and take out all the containers buried under the landslide in the Khyber Pass is under way on the fourth consecutive day on Friday.

According to details, rescue teams have recovered five bodies and taken out a total of 25 containers from the rubble of the mountainous landslide. Teams of Pak Army and Rescue 1122 teams from district Khyber, Peshawar, Nowshera and Mardan are actively participating in the ongoing search operation.

Meanwhile, the Emergency Service Rescue 1122 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has cancelled holidays of its employees on the occasion of Eid-ul-Fitr. Rescue 1122 has set up special camps at the tourists’ sites for public service. Besides, the Rescue diver teams have also been directed to stay alert alongside rivers, dams and other waterways. The rescue helpline 1122 will remain operational round the clock to address emergency situations.

‘Karachi’s population around 35m’

KARACHI (INP): The Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P), insisting that Karachi’s population is around 35 million, has appealed to all the ethnic groups living in the metropolis to take to the street against “injustice with them by resorting to unfair digital census.”

MQM-P convener Khaliq Maqbool Siddiqui said it was a national consensus that under this unfair digital census the actual population of the city could never be counted. While the census in Karachi, like other parts of the country, is continuing, the key partner of the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government at the Centre still sounds dissatisfied. It warned that it would not accept any “manipulated number” of the city population.

Dr Siddiqui also referred to “serious flaws” in the design of the digital census which suggested “ill intention” of the authorities from the day one. He also questioned the role of parties criticising the digital census, saying that practically they were “doing only politics” as they were making no credible practical moves.

“How can one justify the higher number of blocks, set for the digital census, in rural Sindh than in Karachi and other urban areas of the province?” he argued. “Then in Karachi and Hyderabad, one block represents a total of 187 households but in rural Sindh a single block represents 250 households. In a rough calculation, more than five million population of Karachi has been compromised through this design. This is absolutely unjust and unfair count of population.”

The MQM-P leader said that before 1970s, the total population of Hyderabad and Sukkur was not even 40 percent of the Karachi’s population. After the 1970s, he added, the city witnessed a “massive influx” of people due to different local, regional and economic issues. “Can this be possible that after facing such an influx and immigration of people from different parts of the country and neighbouring countries, the city population started declining? Now we firmly believe that there’s a national consensus that populations of Karachi could not be counted correctly under this design of digital census,” he said.

Dr Siddiqui said that it was MQM-P which pushed the authorities to go for another census after serious flaws in the National Census 2017 and if the numbers of urban areas of Sindh are “manipulated” through “maneuvering”, then his party would put up a stiff resistance.



LAHORE: An empty Railway Station presenting deserted view after a lot of hustle and bustle passengers.

Russia’s air force accidentally bombs own city of Belgorod

MOSCOW (AP): Russia’s military acknowledged that a bomb accidentally dropped by one of its warplanes caused a powerful blast in a Russian city not far from Ukraine’s border, injuring two and scaring local residents.

Belgorod, a city of 340,000 located about 40 kilometers (25 miles) east of the Russia-Ukraine border, has faced regular drone attacks during Russia’s current military operation in Ukraine. Russian authorities blamed the earlier strikes on the Ukrainian military, which refrained from directly claiming responsibility for the attacks. The explosion was far more powerful than anything Belgorod residents had experienced before. Witnesses reported a low hissing sound followed by a blast that made nearby apartment buildings tremble and shattered their windows.

It left a 20-meter (66-foot) -wide crater in the middle of a tree-lined boulevard flanked by apartments,

damaged several cars and threw one vehicle onto a store roof. Two people were injured, and a third person was later hospitalized with hypertension, authorities said. Immediately after the explosion, Russian commentators and military bloggers were abuzz with theories about what weapon Ukraine had used for the attack. Many of them called for strong retribution.

But about an hour later, the Russian Defense Ministry acknowledged that a weapon accidentally released by one of its own Su-34 bombers caused the blast. The ministry did not provide any further details, but military experts said the weapon likely was a powerful 500-kilogram (1,100-pound) bomb. Military experts charged that the weapon appeared to have been set to explode with a small delay after impact that would allow it to hit underground facilities.

Belgorod Gov. Vyacheslav

Gladkov said local authorities decided to temporarily resettle residents of a nine-story apartment building while it was inspected to make sure it hadn’t suffered structural damage that rendered it unsafe to live in. Russian commentators questioned why the warplane flew over Belgorod and urged the military to avoid such risky overflights in the future.

In October, a Russian warplane crashed next to a residential building in the port city of Yeysk on the Sea of Azov, killing 15 people. Yeysk hosts a big Russian air base with warplanes that fly missions over Ukraine. Military experts have noted that as the number of Russian military flights have increased sharply during the fighting, so have crashes and misfires. In another deadly incident in the Belgorod region, two volunteer soldiers fired at Russian troops at a military firing range, killing 11 and wounding 15 others before being shot dead.

SpaceX starship, world’s biggest rocket, explodes

BOCA CHICA (Agencies): Starship, the most powerful rocket ever built, exploded during its first flight on Thursday, but Elon Musk congratulated his SpaceX team on an “exciting” test of the spacecraft designed to send astronauts to the Moon, Mars and beyond.

The uncured rocket disintegrated minutes after successfully blasting off at 8:33am Central Time (1333 GMT) from Starbase, the SpaceX spaceport in Boca Chica, Texas. The Starship spacecraft that will eventually carry crew and cargo had been scheduled to separate from the first-stage rocket booster three minutes into the flight, but separation failed to occur and the rocket blew up in a ball of fire over the Gulf of Mexico.

Despite the failure to complete the full 90-minute flight test and reach orbit, Elon Musk, the founder and CEO of the private space company, declared it a success. “Congrats SpaceX team on an exciting test launch of Starship!” Musk tweeted. “Learned a lot for next test launch in a few months.”

SpaceX said that “with a test like this, success comes from what we learn, and today’s test will help us improve Starship’s reliability as SpaceX seeks to make life multi-planetary”. “We cleared the tower which was our only hope,” said Kate Tice, a SpaceX quality systems engineer.

The US space agency NASA has picked the Starship spacecraft to ferry astronauts to the Moon in late 2025 — a mission known as Artemis III — for the first time since the Apollo programme ended in 1972. NASA chief Bill Nelson congratulated SpaceX, saying “every great achievement throughout history has demanded some level of calculated risk, because with great risk comes great reward”.

Starship consists of a 164-foot tall spacecraft designed to carry crew and cargo that sits atop a 230-foot tall first-stage Super Heavy booster rocket. SpaceX conducted a successful test-firing of the 33 massive Raptor engines on the first-stage booster in February but the Starship spacecraft and the Super

Heavy rocket were being flown together for the first time.

The integrated test flight was intended to assess their performance in combination. Musk had warned ahead of the test that technical issues were likely and sought to play down expectations for the inaugural flight.

“It’s the first launch of a very complicated, gigantic rocket. There’s a million ways this rocket could fail,” he said. NASA will take astronauts to lunar orbit itself in November 2024 using its own heavy rocket called the Space Launch System (SLS), which has been in development for more than a decade. Starship is both bigger and more powerful than SLS and capable of lifting a payload of more than 100 metric tonnes into orbit. It generates 17 million pounds of thrust, more than twice that of the Saturn V rockets used to send Apollo astronauts to the Moon. The plan for the integrated test flight was for the Super Heavy booster to separate from Starship after launch and splash down in the Gulf of Mexico.

Biden to announce re-election bid next week

WASHINGTON (Agencies): President Joe Biden could announce his long-awaited bid for a second term as early as next week, US media reports said. According to reports in outlets including The Washington Post and CNN, citing unnamed sources, Biden is set to launch his re-election campaign with a video release.

The Post reported that this could be on Tuesday, the anniversary of the day in 2019 when Biden joined the race to take on then incumbent Donald Trump in 2020. However, the report underlined that the plans were not finalized and could be postponed.

Already the oldest US president in history at 80, Biden would be 86 by the time he completed a second term. The current frontrunner for the Republicans is Trump, raising the growing possibility of a rematch of one of the most divisive elections in US history.

In 2019, Biden opened his bid with a video address. Although many initially saw him as a has-been, out of politics since finishing his term as vice president under Barack Obama, he went on to win the Democratic nomination, then defeat Trump in a tempestuous contest that the Republican attempted to overturn. Biden has dropped

repeated hints that he will run, including last week during a trip to Ireland when he said: “I told you my plan is to run again.”

However, Biden backers have pointed out that he is not necessarily in a hurry. Republicans are lurching toward a likely ugly nomination battle, while Biden has the advantages of having no serious challenger in his party. Washington is also entering a prolonged and high-stakes political struggle over extending the US borrowing limit, a dispute that risks ending in a US debt default and serious economic upheaval some time over the coming weeks.

Govt fails to appoint FPSC Chairman

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) has been continuing without its chairperson for the past four months, officials said Friday.

The seat has been vacant since December 16, 2022, after Capt (ret) Zahid Saeed resigned. The FPSC is a country’s top body that is responsible for making recruitment of civil servants to run government administrative affairs.

The delay in the posting of a new chairman of FPSC is hampering the way for the promotion of officers, waiting for their promotion for months. Many important matters are also being delayed due to the absence of the administrative head. FPSC Chairman also chairs the Central Selection Board meeting held for the promotion of federal officers from BS-19 to BS-20 and from BS-20 to BS-21. Absence of the head, the body is not properly functioning.

The Public Service Commission was set up for the first time in British India in 1926. After independence, the Commission was established in Pakistan in 1947 under the provision of the government of India Act, of 1935. At present, the commission is functioning under Article 242 of the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan. It has been provided autonomy under the Rules of Business, 1973, and FPSC Regulations, 1978 in its working. The Commission has also been given administrative as well as, to some extent, financial autonomy to perform its functions independently.

The Commission consists of a Chairman and Members. The Chairman is appointed by the President, at his discretion, under Article 242 (IA) of the Constitution of Pakistan, 1973. The members are appointed by the President on the advice of the Prime Minister of Pakistan. The Commission is assisted by the Secretary who provides a link between the Commission, its Secretariat, and the Government Agencies.

Multiplying excise duty on cigarette PHC orders to enlist stock before 23rd Feb

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) has ordered Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) to enlist Sarhad Cigarette Industries stock before 23rd February 2023 in First Schedule while stopped receiving of duties under SRO in cases regarding increase in Excise Duty on cigarette production.

The counsel Ishtiaq Ahmad (senior) Advocate appeared on behalf of petitioner company while federal government, FBR, Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue, Regional Tax Office Peshawar and Commissioner Inland

Revenue Peshawar have been respondents in the writ petition.

The counsel argued that on 14th February FBR has issued notification for multiplying Excise Duty twice on cigarette production beyond its jurisdiction and by violating Article 77 of Constitution under which only Federation has the authority to change rates.

The counsel added that company was cost at earlier Rs2050 per one thousand cigarettes but after 14th February notification it reached up to Rs5050 per thousand. The counsel argued that FBR can charge fixed excise duty on different items but the board has

no jurisdiction to amend Charge of Duty which is clear from the first schedule of concerned Act.

Deputy Attorney General Sana Ullah appeared on behalf of federation before PHC while the divisional bench ordered FBR to declare production earlier from 23rd February as per First Schedule.

The divisional bench of PHC comprising of Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Syed Arshad Ali issued notices to respondents while ordered to submit reply within one month and adjourned further hearing after conclusion of initial arguments.

Holding Punjab polls will lead to civil war: Siraj

LAHORE (PPI): Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) emir Sirajul Haq said on Friday that holding only the Punjab Assembly elections will lead to protests and civil war. Speaking to media, Mr Haq said, “Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) chief Maulana Fazlur Rahman had also been contacted. He also wanted the country to improve. It will take time to reach the scheduled date of the elections”.

Siraj-ul-Haq said, “Right now, there is a political crisis in the country. Along with the political crisis, there is also an economic and constitutional crisis. There is no case of common people in the National Assembly, Senate and Supreme Court.” Stressing

the need for holding simultaneous elections, Mr Haq said, “The issue of elections is not only for one or two parties. But the 230 million people are concerned about the elections.”

Speaking about Gwadar, Mr Haq lamented, “Gwadar has been made a spectacle for the whole world. Gwadar is a sensitive city regarding CPEC. There is a dire need for complete peace in this area. In terms of solidarity with Gwadar fishermen, the JI is protesting across the country on May 1”.

“We do not want our country to become Libya. It has become difficult for the poor to breathe due to the severe economic hardships,” he maintained. Mr Haq claimed, “The

judges of the court are not on the same page. They are also having a tussle among themselves. We do not want conflict. In connection with getting on the same page about holding transparent polls, we are in constant contact with political parties”.

He added, “The talks have been held with the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), Awami National Party (ANP). The prime minister wanted us to leave this closed street. Imran Khan also gave a positive response”. “The Supreme Court itself said that the political parties should find a way by themselves until April 27. After Eid, we will speed up this process,” Mr Haq added.

Pakistan and world at risk as climate change continue to accelerate

Fatima Safyan Khan

CLIMATE change is causing a range of environmental and social impacts, including water scarcity, crop failures, and increased frequency and intensity of natural disasters such as floods and droughts. Pakistan is particularly vulnerable due to its geographical location, high population density, and dependence on agriculture.

One of the most significant impacts of climate change in Pakistan

is water scarcity. The country is already experiencing water shortages due to increasing demand and decreasing supply, with many areas facing a water crisis. Climate change is exacerbating this situation, with changing precipitation patterns and melting glaciers leading to decreased water availability in many regions.

Global warming is one of the primary causes of climate change, which is the long-term shift in global weather patterns that is attributed largely to human activity, including the burning of fossil fuels and deforestation. The

emissions of greenhouse gas trap more heat in the atmosphere, and the earth’s average surface temperature is increasing which is leading to higher temperatures across the globe, including more frequent and severe heatwaves.

Leading to more frequent and heavier rainfall and flooding in some areas. Pakistan is vulnerable to floods due to its location in a region that is prone to extreme weather events, such as monsoons and tropical cyclones. Last year, the country experienced devastating floods, which

caused widespread damage and loss of life depreciation in the economy.

Another impact of climate change in Pakistan is on agriculture. Many farmers are experiencing reduced crop yields and loss of livestock due to changing weather patterns, such as irregular rainfall and longer periods of drought. This is leading to increased food insecurity and economic hardship in rural areas. The impacts of climate change are not limited to Pakistan, as the phenomenon is a global issue. Across the world, countries are experiencing a

range of climate change impacts, including rising sea levels, increased frequency of extreme weather events, and ocean acidification. These impacts are having a significant impact on ecosystems and human societies, including food security, public health, and economic stability.

Globally, countries are taking action to address climate change through initiatives such as reducing greenhouse gas emissions and investing in renewable energy sources. However, there is still a need for

stronger and more coordinated efforts to mitigate the impacts of climate change and to adapt to its effects.

In 2023, it is likely that climate change will continue to be a major issue in Pakistan and across the world. It is important for individuals, communities, and governments to take action to address this issue and to work towards a sustainable and resilient future vulnerable to climate change due to its location in a region that is already prone to extreme weather events, such as floods, droughts, and heatwaves.