

FO flays Mosque storming

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Pakistan has condemned storming of Al Aqsa Mosque by a member of the Israeli occupation authority and members of the Knesset under protection of Israeli occupation forces. FO Spokesperson said violation of the sanctity of one of the holiest sites in Islam constitutes yet another reprehensible event in a series of escalatory Israeli actions disrespectful to religious sentiments of over 1.5b Muslims around the world.

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Imran Ismail remanded

KARACHI (INP): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader and former Sindh Governor Imran Ismail was handed over to police on two-day physical remand in a case related to violence on May 9. The police produced former Sindh governor before the court. During the hearing, the investigating officer highlighted allegations of damaging government property and spreading terror against the accused.

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Legal process to try May 9 perpetrators commenced: COAS

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir has said that the legal process of trial against planners, instigators, abettors and perpetrators involved in the May 9 mayhem has commenced under Pakistan Army Act and Official Secret Act as per existing and established legal procedures derived from the Constitution. The army chief's statement came as he visited Jinnah House and an army installation in Lahore, which were blatantly attacked and vandalised by "politically motivated" rioters, the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) said in a handout. The COAS was also given a briefing on events of May 9 dubbed by the military as 'Black Day' — the day when Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf

(PTI) supporters ransacked and torched military installations across the country following the arrest of their leader Imran Khan in a graft case. Addressing the garrison officers and soldiers at Corps Headquarters, Gen Munir emphasised that any action aimed at widening a gulf between people and the military was against the state. "Army draws its strength from people and any effort to create wedge between the Army and the people of Pakistan is an act against the State which is neither tolerable nor condonable under any circumstances," the army chief said. "Hostile and inimical forces and their abettors have been trying hard to create confusion through fake news and propaganda but all such designs of the enemy will be defeat-

ed with the support of the nation, InshAllah," he added. Later, COAS also visited Services Hospital Lahore and inquired about the well-being of Deputy Inspector General (DIG) Ali Nasir Rizvi who was injured by "political miscreants" during the May 9 incident. Gen Munir also visited Qurban Lines and met with police officials. The COAS paid homage to the martyrs of police, appreciated the professionalism and restraint exercised by them during the May 9 riots, and assured the army's full support to the law enforcement agencies for their capacity enhancement, intelligence sharing, and training. The COAS laid a floral wreath at Martyrs' Monument and paid rich tribute to the Shuhada who sacrificed their lives for the motherland, read the statement.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meeting a patient during his visit to Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute.

Trust case is biggest scam of graft, says Maryam

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz chief organizer Maryam Nawaz said on Saturday that Al-Qadir Trust case as the biggest scandal of corruption. Addressing a seminar of Ulema and Mashaikh Punjab, she said the people of Pakistan have a strong association with Islam and it is the duty of the Ulema to snub the elements involved in the fanning of extremism in the society. Taking a jibe at PTI Chairman Imran Khan, she said that Imran Khan inflicted irreparable loss to the vital interests of the country to such an extent as our eternal enemy could not prove successful to harm the country in 75 years.

Terming the Al-Qadir trust case as the biggest scandal of corruption, she said that Imran Khan caused a loss of billions of rupees to the antional exchequer and there was no political vengeance behind Imran Khan's arrest. Condemning the PTI chief Imran Khan for playing religious cards for political gains, Maryam Nawaz said Imran Khan is responsible to tarnish the social and religious fabric of the society.

Maryam further said that she was not in favor of military courts, but facilitation continued in civil courts. She said that lame excuses are being presented in the court of law by PTI leaders to gain leniency whereas PML-N leaders faced their cases with courage and determination.

She said PTI chairman Imran Khan was harboring terrorists in his residence in Zaman Park, Lahore. "Some terrorists have been arrested from his house. The whole world saw the evidence from whom he asked for evidence," she added.

Court orders IGP to produce Imran Riaz

LAHORE (PPI): Lahore High Court (LHC) on Saturday ordered the Inspector General of Punjab (IGP) to produce anchorperson Imran Riaz Khan by May 22. According to the details, Chief Justice heard the case for the recovery of anchorperson Imran Riaz Khan and asked the Inspector General of Punjab (IGP) directed to produce him till May 22.

During the proceedings, the Chief Justice instructed the Inspector General (IG) of Punjab to submit a written response during court hours regarding the raid on Imran Riaz Khan's residence. "It should be told why Imran Riaz's house was raided, what was the purpose and what was wanted to be done," the court said.

PM reviews treatment of poor patients at PKLI

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday here reviewed the ongoing programmes for the medical treatment of poor people at the Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute (PKLI). While chairing a meeting at the Pakistan Kidney and Liver Institute, he said poor patients should be provided uninterrupted modern medical facilities on a priority basis.

He further directed that the administrative processes for acquiring the latest

medical equipment should be completed as soon as possible. A comprehensive strategy should be devised for ensuring international standard technical education at the nursing college, he added. The prime minister further directed that arrangements for maintaining cleanliness in the Institute should be improved. Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi, Provincial Health Minister Dr Javed Akram, Chairman PKLI Dr Saeed Akhtar, Chief Secretary and other offi-

cials attended the meeting. The prime minister also talked to patients and the doctors working at the institute. He said the doctors should sincerely use the available resources for the treatment of poor patients. The institute was set up with a lot of hard work for gaining blessings of Allah and for providing the best medical treatment to the needy patients, he said adding the federal and provincial governments were striving to make the institute fully functional.



LAHORE: Chief of Army Staff General Asim Munir inquired about the well-being of DIG Ali Nasir Rizvi during his visit to Services Hospital.

May 9 darkest day in history, says Marriyum

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Saturday that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Imran Khan generated an image of a woman by artificial intelligence (AI) and shared it on his Twitter handle and ridiculed the security personnel by claiming his female supporters were being targeted by law enforcement agencies.

Addressing a press conference here, she said that in fact no such incident occurred and his lie was exposed by a television channel from France. "On May 19 in a tweet, Imran Khan uploaded pictures of Rangers and police in front of a woman's picture created by artificial intelligence," she said adding Imran Khan and his party tried to give a wrong impression that his party's female supporters were victimized by law enforcement agencies but the French TV channel revealed the truth. It categorically stated that no fundamental rights of anyone were violated during the crackdown on May 9 arsonists, she added.

On the contrary, she said human rights of school children, patients in hospitals and general public were trampled by the PTI goons

who attacked sensitive installations and public property on the behest of Imran Khan. She said that the entire nation was dismayed over the attacks that Imran Khan had planned to avoid the cases of foreign funding, theft of Toshia Khana gifted and paternity issue of his daughter. The minister said that even the enemy could not do in 75 years' history what Imran Khan did on May 9. Marriyum Aurangzeb said for the first time in the history of Pakistan, the uniform was mocked and the memorials of the martyrs were desecrated which caused jubilation in the neighboring country.

Marriyum Aurangzeb said Imran Khan was the mastermind behind the May 9 arson attacks and his so-called condemnation of the tragic incidents would not absolve him of responsibility. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman Imran Khan's dirty antics and tricks were continuing on a daily basis, she added.

Marriyum Aurangzeb said for the first time, Imran Khan had realized what were the consequences of palying with the law. "Imran Khan had been planning such terrorist activities for the past 14 months when he was thrown out of power through the democratic

process of no-confidence motion," she said.

Terming the May 9 arson attacks as the darkest day in the history of Pakistan, she said that Jinnah House which was now Corps Command's House, was burnt and the martyrs' memorials were desecrated by the PTI gangs on the behest of Imran Khan. The minister said that the miscreants of the PTI burnt schools, mosques, ambulances and public property, even they did not spare animals' market. She said that the enemy of Pakistan was pleased with the act of Imran Khan as he did what the enemy could not do during the past 75 years.

Marriyum Aurangzeb said that the PTI's senior leadership continued to infuriate and instigate the party workers during arson attacks. The whole nation was in a shock due to the tragedy of May 9, but on May 19 Imran Khan made "the drama of condemnation" to cover up his own crimes but he could not absolve himself from the responsibility. Moreover, she said Imran Khan had so far not condemned the attacks on memorials of martyrs and Ghazis, sensitive installations and public property.

(Continued on Back Page)

Ashiana case: NAB declares Shehbaz 'innocent'

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) on Saturday declared Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif 'innocent' in the Ashiana Housing Scheme case, holding that no evidence of corruption was found in the contract of the scheme.

This is the second major NAB case against Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in which he was found innocent. "The accountability court should decide on Shehbaz Sharif's plea for acquittal- in the Ashiana Housing Scheme case- according to the law," a report issued by NAB stated. It said there was no loss to the national kitty nor did Prime Minister Shehbaz get any financial benefit from the Ashiana Housing Scheme. "It is proved beyond any doubt that the treasury didn't suffer any loss," the NAB in its report stated.

The report added that, "No evidence of misuse of powers was found against Shehbaz Sharif." The report stated that no aspect of malice was proven against the Prime Minister in the scam in any manner. Kamran Kayani, brother of former army chief General (r) Ashfaq Parvez Kayani, also didn't cause any damage to the treasury, the report stated, adding that Fawad Hasan Fawad- the time Secretary Implementation to then Punjab chief minister Shehbaz- took no bribe to award the contract.

According to the report, Shehbaz Sharif had sent the Ashiana case to the NAB as per the law. Earlier, on May 11, this year, the NAB had declared Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, his son Hamza Shehbaz and others "innocent" in Rs7 billion references against them for assets beyond means and money laundering filed against them by the anti-graft body.

Alleged audio of Imran, US Congresswoman surfaces

ISLAMABAD (INP) Another audio clip purportedly featuring former prime minister Imran Khan and US Congresswoman Maxine Waters has come to light. A purported audio conversation between Imran Khan and US senator has surfaced online in which the PTI chairman can purportedly be heard seeking 'help' from Maxian Moore Waters following amid an ongoing crackdown on his party following May 9 riots.

In the alleged conversation, Imran Khan could be heard telling US congresswoman about the removal of his government by ex-army chief Gen (r) Bajwa. The former premier also reportedly asked US politician to make a statement and raise her voice in support of PTI. "We are going through difficult times in Pakistan right now and my life is also in danger," he said in alleged audio, adding that 99% of Pakistan wanted him in power again.

Investigation of audio leaks

Govt forms judicial commission

ISLAMABAD (APP): The federal government on Saturday formed a three-member judicial commission, led by Supreme Court senior judge Justice Qazi Faez Isa, to probe the veracity of audio leaks and their impact on the independence of the judiciary.

The commission includes Balochistan High Court (BHC) Chief Justice Naem Akhtar Afghan and Islamabad High Court (IHC) Chief Justice Aamer Farooq. The commission was formed under Section 3 of the Inquiry Commission Act 2017. The commission will probe the genuineness of the audio leaks and its impact on the independence of the judiciary.

According to notification issued by the Cabinet Division's Statutory notification (S.R.O.) recently wide circulations of controversial audios have been witnessed on the national electronic, print and social media, allegedly regarding the judiciary and former Chief Justices/judges conversation raising serious apprehensions about the independence, impartiality and uprightness of the Chief Justices/judges of superior courts in the administration of justice.

The notification stated that such audio leakages have eroded public trust and serious concerns have been raised by the general public regarding independence, impartiality and uprightness of the former Chief Justices/judges of superior courts. Under the Constitution, the independence, integrity and character of Chief Justices/judges is of utmost importance for keeping the public trust and confidence in the administration of justice. Judiciary is one of the main pillars under the Constitution and the Society's confidence is shattered when independence of judiciary is tarnished.

The notification further stated that it is imperative to inquire into the authenticity, correctness and veracity of these audio leaks in order to restore not just the credibility of the Judiciary but also the public trust and confidence in the judiciary in the larger public interest, as a matter of definite public importance.

The Terms of Reference (TOR) of the Commission will be as follows:- (i) to inquire into the veracity of audio leaks allegedly concerning including the Judiciary; (a) call between ex-Chief Minister Punjab and an advocate regarding a sitting Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, (b) between ex-Chief Minister, Punjab and an advocate regarding fixation of some cases before a particular Bench of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, (c) between ex-Chief Minister Punjab and a sitting Judge of the Supreme Court of Pakistan, (d) between Retired Chief Justice of Pakistan and a senior lawyer, (e)

between a lawyer and a journalist on the outcome of a case before a particular Bench of Supreme Court of Pakistan, (f) between former Prime Minister of Pakistan and his party colleague about their links in the Supreme Court of Pakistan, (g) between mother in law of the Chief Justice of Pakistan and wife of a lawyer regarding cases in the Supreme Court of Pakistan and hoping for un-constitutional rule (h) between son of a former Chief Justice of Pakistan and his friend mentioning his father in a political role; (ii) to inquire into the correctness of the allegations surfacing on print and electronic media and the social media allegedly regarding son in law of the Chief Justice of the Lahore High Court influencing judicial proceedings before the Lahore High Court, Lahore; (iii) to determine violation, if any, of integrity of the process of administration of justice, independence of Judiciary, right to fair trial and equality of citizens; (iv) to determine the liability incurred by any or all persons named in the alleged audio leaks against or any other person or public office holders including under the Pakistan Penal Code, 1860 or any other law; (v) to determine as to whether any disciplinary proceedings are attracted; (vi) to fix the responsibility of any person or public office holder aiding and abetting by any act in violation of the laws of Pakistan so determined; (vii) to recommend any necessary legal action by any agency, department or person; (viii) if the stated audios are fake or fabricated, to inquire into and fix responsibility with regards, as to who is making these and recommend action to be taken in this regard; and (ix) any matter ancillary and incidental thereto or which the Commission deems fit to inquire into it in the interest of justice.

The Commission will have all the powers that are granted to it under the Act and including those mentioned in section 10 of the Act. It shall be the duty of all executive authorities in the Federation and the Provinces to act in aid of the Commission in discharge of its functions and to comply with any of its directions.

The Commission will be entitled to establish a Secretariat and appoint Secretary for the stated inquiry at the cost of the Federal Government. The Attorney General for Pakistan will assist the Commission and provide the Commission with all documents and material that it requires. The Commission will initiate the inquiry immediately after the notification of its constitution and will conclude the inquiry and submit its report to the Federal Government within thirty days. However, if the Commission requires further time, the federal government will grant it.

Three soldiers martyred in Balochistan shootout

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Three soldiers were martyred, while one terrorist was killed in a heavy exchange of fire between the security forces and militants in Zarghoon, Margat area of Balochistan on Saturday morning. According to a statement issued by the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), a group of terrorists attacked a security forces checkpoint, which had recently been established to prevent extortion efforts targeting coal mines in the area, on Saturday morning. "The troops on the post retaliated readily to the fire raid thereby, pushing back the terrorists. However, in the ensuing heavy exchange of fire three soldiers embraced shahadat while one terror-

ists was sent to hell by the security forces," the statement said. It said the martyred soldiers were identified as Sipahi Zameer Ahmed, Sipahi Mudassar Shaheed, and Lance Naik Abdul Qadeer. It said the forces have identified a likely hideout of fleeing terrorists near the mountains on the basis of a follow-up Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) effort. In response, a deliberate blocking and sanitisation operation has been launched. The statement said the anti-terrorist operation was progressing well and security forces were maintaining pressure to deny the militants a chance to escape from the area. "Security forces, in step with the

nation, remain determined to thwart attempts at sabotaging peace, stability and progress of Balochistan," the ISPR said. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday strongly condemned an attack on the security check post in Zarghoon, Margat area of Balochistan. The prime minister paid tribute to the martyred jawans of Pakistan Army including Sepoy Zameer Ahmad, Sepoy Mudassar and Lance Naik Abdul Qadeer, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. He said that the entire nation saluted the sacrifices of their shuhada. He prayed for the high ranks of shuhada and expressed condolences to the bereaved families.

Govt's policies strengthening country's economy

LAHORE (INP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman has claimed that prudent economic policies of the incumbent government are strengthening the economy of the country.

These views were expressed by him while talking to a delegation led by former president of Gujranwala Chamber of Commerce and Industry (GCCCI) Muhammad Shoaib Butt which called on him in Lahore on Saturday.

Muhammad Baligh Ur Rehman said that trade linkages with the foreign countries were also increasing and the economic condition of the country was now improving.

He was of the view that many problems faced by the country and its people can easily be solved by adopting national thought.

The Governor Punjab said that continuity of policies was imperative for the economic development of the country. He said the government was making great efforts to address the issues being faced by the business community.

Murtaza inaugurates Pele Football Ground

KARACHI (APP): Spokesperson for Sindh government and Advisor to Sindh Chief Minister on Law Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Saturday inaugurated Pele Football Ground in Clifton Block One.

Administrator and Municipal Commissioner of DMC South accompanied the Advisor. President of People's Party District South Khalil Hoot, General Secretary Karamullah Waqasi and other local leaders were also present.

Barrister Murtaza Wahab said that sports activities were very important for a healthy society.

PPP's Sindh government was promoting sports-related development works in the city along with other development works. He said that the Pele Football Ground was a beautiful gift from the government of Sindh to the youth of the area. The establishment of football grounds in the city would not only provide healthy entertainment to the youth but also help them avoid negative things in the society.

US official calls on Faryal Talpur at Zardari House

F.P. Report

KARACHI : The United States Consulate's Political Officer, Ronald Rhinehart called on Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Women Wing's President and Chairperson of Sindh Assembly's Standing Committee on Home Affairs, here on Saturday at Zardari House in Karachi.

She thanked the Government of United States and USAID for the continued support to the Sindh Government mainly in the field of education, health and governance and hoped that such support would be extended to other

sectors with a priority to the climate related interventions - looking at the climate change threats in the aftermath of last year's devastating rains and floods, where the province of Sindh was the worst-hit. She also emphasised on the exponential increase in numbers of children, which are malnourished in the aftermath of floods in Sindh and sought more help from international community for supporting the efforts of the Sindh Government.

While discussing the delivery and effectiveness of the service delivery through Local

Governments, she said that due to the effective performance of Sindh Government; the PPP has achieved the landslide victory in recently held Local Government Elections in the province, and has emerged as the single largest party for the first time in Karachi.

"The next Mayor of Karachi would be a PPP's Jiyala, as already announced by Chairman, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari," she reiterated.

Talking about ongoing Digital Census, she said that for effective planning and providing better services to the people both now



and in the future, the fairness and uniformity on counting the people is very critical and such grievances must be addressed through validation, by using the latest technology. On electoral and gover-

nance related reforms introduced by the PPP Pakistan, she said that under the historic 18th amendment, the roles and timelines for agreeing with consensus over the Caretaker Governments

both at the Federal and Provincial levels are clearly defined, and there's no room left for creating any panic or the anarchy.

The PPP Sindh President Nisar Ahmed Khuhro, Sindh Minister for Labour

Saeed Ghani, Sindh Advisor for Law Murtaza Wahab, Member Sindh Assembly, Sohail Anwar Siyal and Sindh Health Parliamentary Secretary Qasim Soomro also attended the meeting.

PTI to support JI candidate for Karachi mayor slot

KARACHI (PPI): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) has decided to support Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) candidate Hafiz Naemur Rehman in the election for Karachi mayor slot.

A spokesperson for the Imran Khan-led party announced the development, stressing the need for transparent elections. He also accused the Pakistan Peoples Party

(PPP) of pre-poll rigging, claiming that elected local representatives were being abducted through the Sindh police.

Saying the PPP had run away from the local government elections four times, the spokesperson alleged that now they wanted to hold the mayor election in haste due to their vested interests.

The PTI spokesperson

said elected representatives were being abducted before their oath-taking ceremony, adding that the party had approached the court on this matter.

He said the PPP and the MQM-Pakistan did not want to accept the public mandate.

Meanwhile, the PPP has approved the name of Murtaza Wahab for the slot of the Karachi mayor.

No concession to PTI women workers involved in attacks: CM Mohsin

LAHORE (NNI): Punjab Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi has said that female PTI workers and supporters who had attacked military installa-

tions and memorials of the martyrs on May 9 deserved no mercy.

At the same time, however, the chief minister has ordered that PTI women should not be unnecessarily harassed.

Mohsin Naqvi has also directed that it should be ensured that female police officers should accompany

the police teams sent to arrest them.

"They should also be kept at women police stations," he has directed.

Over 500 female PTI workers and supporters are wanted by police in connection with 138 cases registered following incidents of vandalism and arson that took place on May 9.

CTD arrests seven 'terrorists' across Punjab

LAHORE (APP): The Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Punjab has arrested seven alleged terrorists during intelligence-based operations (IBOs) in different areas of the province.

According to a spokesman, the CTD Punjab conducted 52 IBOs in different districts and detained and interrogated 52 suspects. Later on, seven alleged terrorists were arrested with weapons, explosives and other prohibited materials.

The arrested accused include five members of the banned Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan, identified as Salman, Malik Asrar Ahmed, Abdul

Khalid, Ikramullah and Najibullah, and two members of Daesh, identified as Sher Zaman and Sher Muhammad, he added.

The spokesman said that explosives 1010-gram, one improvised explosive device (IED), two rocket shell, seven booster shells RPG, eight detonator, safety fuse wire 13 feet, two prima card, a pistol, six bullets, 26 pamphlets, 37 stickers, five magazines, a cell phone and Rs 44,980 in cash were recovered from the accused.

He said alleged terrorists wanted to carry out terrorist acts across province and target important installations and religious places. The police have

registered cases against the alleged terrorists in Rawalpindi, Sargodha, Sahiwal, Dera Ghazi Khan, Gujranwala and shifted them to an unidentified location for interrogation, he added.

The spokesman said that 472 combing operations were conducted during the week with the help of local police and security agencies, in which 8,034 persons were checked, 75 suspects were arrested, 58 cases were registered and 29 recoveries were made.

The CTD Punjab spokesman said for sharing any information, citizens could call CTD Punjab helpline on 0800 -11111.

Nawaz, Modi's agenda is to make Pakistani people & army fight each other: Ch Parvez

LAHORE (NNI): The Central President of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chaudhry Parvez Elahi has said that when our soldiers were being martyred by the Indian army on borders, Nawaz Sharif was inviting Narendra Modi and Jindal to his house without visa and feeding them.

Should we forget Dawn Leaks, Nawaz Sharif and Modi's agenda is to make Pakistani people and army fight each other. Ch Parvez Elahi said that the incompetent government of Punjab had made so much noise that there are terrorists in Zaman Park, but failed to put a fake action in the presence of international media.

Ch Parvez Elahi said that Imran Khan strengthened the Pakistan Army and Pakistan's defense during his tenure, Imran Khan tried to clear the misunderstandings about the Pakistan Army in the western world.

The puppet caretaker government wants to worsen the situation in Punjab again. Mohsin Naqvi and his gang are on anti-national agenda.

Ch Parvez Elahi said that the decision of the Lahore High Court to restore the membership of PTI members of the National Assembly is welcome. If this process of restoration goes ahead, there can be a peaceful solution to the political crisis in the federation and the provinces. Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa caretaker governments have been constitutionally abolished. In Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, we will approach the judiciary to end the illegal caretaker governments.

Ch Parvez Elahi further said that Tehreek-e-Insaf will

remain united under the leadership of Imran Khan, political nomads who leave the party are of no importance, the party has already rejected them, any attempt to break PTI from inside and outside

will not succeed, Tehreek-e-Insaf is the most popular representative party among overseas Pakistanis.

Imran Khan is not only the most popular leader of Pakistan but also the world of

Islam. The Arab media has declared Imran Khan as the favorite leader of the Arabs in their reviews. Imran Khan has done the most for the promotion of Islam and Pakistan in the western world.



سوی ناردرن گیس
Sui Northern Gas



حکومت پاکستان کے توانائی پلان کے مطابق
اوگرا نہ گیزمیں
گیس سیورکون
کی تنصیب لازمی قرار دے دی



اوگرا کے احکامات کے تحت
سوی ناردرن کی میٹر نے گیس سیورکون
کی گھر گھر تنصیب کا آغاز کر دیا ہے
یاد رکھیں!
سیورکون نصب نہ کرنے کی صورت میں
گیس فراہمی میں دشواری ممکن ہے

آؤ گیس کی تنصیب 1199 روپے میں
بل کے ذریعے 12 ماہ کی اسٹانڈرڈ میں داخلگی

PID/LJ3352-D

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

NOTICE INVITING TENDER

Sealed tenders on percentage rate basis (not on individual items) are hereby invited for the works mentioned below from the approved PEC registered Firms/ Contractors having valid PEC registration, provided the license fulfill all qualification requirements prescribed herein and PEC by laws in "Single stage One Envelope" comprising of separate technical and financial proposal as per PPRA rule 36 (a). Tender documents can be received from the office of the undersigned during office hours on any working day on payment of tender cost (Non-Refundable) up to 05/06/2023 with written request on letter pad accompanied with attested copy of CNIC, Income tax Registration Certificate as active taxpayer (filer) Tenders will be issued to the proprietor of the Firm / Company or their legally authorized representatives having registered power of attorney (July attested). The tenders in sealed cover should be received in the office of undersigned on 06/06/2023 up to 12.00 PM and the respective tenders will be opened on the same day at 12:30 PM in the presence of contractors or their authorized representatives, having registered power of attorney. Technical proposal shall comprise of documents given in qualification criteria of tender documents Evaluation committee will determine responsiveness of each technical bid. The financial bid of only responsive bidders will be considered. Firms are not allowed to quote their rate other than specified column and blank financial proposal shall be declared as non responsive by the evaluation committee.

The following instructions may be read and understood carefully in true letter and spirit, as in case of violation of any of these, the tender forms will not be issued. The documents under mentioned must be accompanied with the application, failing which no tender forms will be issued.

TERMS & CONDITIONS

- No tender will be sold / issued on the date of opening of tenders.
- No tender will be issued / received thorough post, telegraph or E-Mail.
- According to PPRA Rule-25, Bid Security, as stated below against each work in the shape of CDR/Call deposit shall be furnished from any scheduled Bank in the name of the Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division, Pak PWD, Bannu. No tender will be entertained without bid security as stated below against each work or less amount.
- Tenders can be purchased on the prescribed cost (Non-refundable) in Cash mentioned against the below noted works from the office of the undersigned during office hours up to 05/06/2023.
- All CDRs once received may be credited into the Government Account and will be refunded through Government Cheque.
- 1st, 2nd, 3rd, lowest bidders CDR will be retained till acceptance of tender.
- The documents provided by the bidders if found ambiguous will be verified and in case of fake one, the firm will face immediate / appropriate penal action as per rules and law.
- Tender Notice is also available at PPRA Website (www.ppra.org.pk)
- Under Rule 33(1) of public Procurement Rules, 2004, the competent authority reserves the right to reject all bids or proposals at any time prior to the acceptance of bid or proposal.
- The submission of tenders by the contractor implies that he is fully conversant with the site of work, scope of work and terms and conditions as laid down in the tender documents.

Note:-In case of any public holiday or surprise engagement of the undersigned the schedule of closing opening will be on 07-05-2023 on same day.

S. No.	Name of Works	Cost of Tender Rs.	Period of Completion	Earnest Money / Bid Security in Rs.
1.	Construction of Solar Tube Wells Surface Water Tank/ Pipe Line and Pump Room with Boundary wall at various places of Lower and Uper Kurram District Kurram	2000	As per work order	250,000/-
2.	Construction of Solar Tube Wells and Pump Room with Boundary wall at various places of Lower and Uper Kurram District Kurram	2000	As per work order	184,400/-
3.	Construction of Community Centre (Jirga Hall) at various places of Lower and Uper Kurram District Kurram	2000	As per work order	250,500/-
4.	Construction of irrigation channels at Upper Kurram District Kurram.	2000	As per work order	175450/-
5.	Construction of Block Top Road at Upper Kurram District Kurram	2000	As per work order	325350/-
6.	Construction of PCC Road / Streets at Various places of New merged area of Upper and Lower Kurram District Kurram	2000	As per work order	1878150/-
7.	Construction of Pipe Line / RCC Surface water tank for Soft Drinking water at Various places/ Various Villages of Upper and Lower Kurram District Kurram	2000	As per work order	2485900/-

Executive Engineer
Central Civil Division Pak. PWD, Bannu.

PID (P) No. 167/23



Governor distribute fee waiver certificates

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali Saturday paid a surprise visit to Khyber Medical University (KMU) Hayatabad and distributed fee waiver certificates to 60 Persons with Different Abilities (PWDA) students of the Medical colleges affiliated with it.

During his visit, Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali also distributed certificates to 19 female students who received scholarships from USAID and instead of calling the Persons with

Different Abilities on the stage, the Governor himself went and presented fee waiver certificates to them sitting on their seats.

The Governor also inaugurated the newly constructed administration block of the KMU. Health Advisor to the Caretaker Chief Minister Professor Dr. Riaz Anwar, former Provincial Minister Amanullah Haqqani, former Member of the Provincial Assembly Atifur Rehman, Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Ziaul Haq, faculty members and stu-

dents participated.

Governor KP Haji Ghulam Ali in his speech on this occasion paid tribute to KMU Vice-Chancellor, faculty members and university administration for complete fee waiver for the Persons with Different Abilities students. Special focus on Persons with Different Abilities students is a commendable initiative of KMU, Haji Ghulam Ali said.

Haji Ghulam Ali, the Chancellor has given clear instructions to all universities to admit Persons with

Different Abilities children and waive fees. Persons with Different Abilities with parents consider me as their guardian, do not leave them alone, Haji Ghulam Ali said.

“Persons with Different Abilities are being provided full opportunities to come forward in other educational fields including medical,” said Haji Ghulam Ali. Haji Ghulam Ali said that he held two-day meetings of 7 hours each with the Vice-Chancellors and provided them with guidelines for the improvement of the Universities.



PESHAWAR: Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali addressing during scholarship distribution ceremony at Khyber Medical University.



PESHAWAR: Adviser to Prime Minister Engineer Amir Muqam meeting with Pesco officials at Wapda's House.

Farewell ceremony for retired professors held

PESHAWAR (APP): Agriculture University Teachers Association (AUTA) Saturday hold a farewell reception in the honor of the retired professors with Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Jahan Bakht of the Agriculture University Peshawar, former Dean Meritorious Professor (retd) Dr. Fida Muhammad, Dr. Naqibullah, Dr. Nowshad Khan, Dr. Iftikharuddin, Dr. Mansoor Khattak, Dr. Saleem Khan attended.

Former Deputy Provost Abdul Basit also participated in the event. On this occasion, Pro Vice Chancellor and Dean Prof. Dr. Dawood Jan, Dean Faculty of Crop Protection Sciences Prof. Dr. Ahmad Rahman, Director Vice Chancellor Secretariat Prof. Dr. Muhammad Zulfiqar along with faculty members, administrative officers and presidents of vari-

ous associations of the university participated.

AUTA President Dr. Bashir Ahmed and General Secretary Muhammad Ashfaq welcomed the retired professors and other participants and congratulated the retired professors for their excellent service. Vice-Chancellor Prof Dr. Jahan Bakht while speaking said that the teacher is the architect of the nation, the position of teachers is very high, the teachers and administration of our university are very professional who have brightened the future of thousands of students, our students are not only in the province.

The teachers and professors are performing their services in different fields across the country. Retired employees are our best asset, they are valuable services for the develop-

ment and welfare of the University, and their suggestions for the development and welfare of the University will be valued in the future, he added.

He said that we prefer teamwork to further develop quality education and research. President AUTA Dr. Bashir Ahmed along with Pro Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Dawood Jan, Dean Prof. Dr. Ahmadur Rahman Saljuqi and General Secretary Muhammad Ashfaq presented shields and bouquets to the retired professors in recognition of their services.

Retired professors including Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Jahan Bakht thanked the cabinet and members of the Agriculture University Teachers Association and expressed their desire to offer their services to the university at all times in the future.

Muqam briefed by Pesco officials

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Prime Minister Engineer Amir Muqam said that the work on ongoing development projects, grid system and towers in PESCO should be accelerated and completed within the stipulated period. He made a detailed review of various development projects across the province.

The Adviser was given a detailed briefing on the progress on projects of Malakand Division, Southern Districts, Hazara, Peshawar and Swabi. Besides PESCO officials, Deputy Commissioner Shangla and PEDO officials were also present in the meeting.

JUI appoints Deputy GS

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Jamiat-e-Ulema Islam (JUI) PK-79 Emir Sadiq-u-Rehman Paracha appointed Dr. Islam-u-Din as Deputy Secretary General of the constituency.

In this regard, JUI PK-79 General Secretary Sadat Khan issued notification on directive Emir Sadiq-u-Rehman.

Deputy General Secretary Dr. Islam-u-Din paid thanks to party leadership especially Sadiq-u-Rehman and Sadat Khan while committed to mobilize public. He argued party's activists to propagate party narrative to every nook and corner.

Kundi condemned attack

PESHAWAR (APP): Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Security, Faisal Karim Kundi Saturday said attack at Zargoon market's check post was highly condemnable, saying people and security forces of Pakistan were united to frustrate the nefarious designs of the anti-state elements in Balochistan.

In a statement issued here, the state minister held sacrifices of martyrs of Zargoon market attack in high esteem.

He said the Jawan (soldiers) of security forces were rendering great sacrifices for ensuring peace for people.



PESHAWAR: Former provincial minister and PTI's leader Dr. Hisham Inamullah addressing a press conference. — F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

CNG Association hold solidarity rally with Pak Army

PESHAWAR (APP): The CNG Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa took a solidarity rally in favor of Pak Army outside Peshawar Press Club with people from different walks of life enthusiastically participated and chanting slogans Pakistan Zindabad, Pakistan Army Paindabad.

The marchers of the rally went through main Sunari Masjid Road, holding banners and placards inscribed with different slogans in favour of the Pakistan Army.

First of all Pakistan, Pakistan Army is our pride, the participants said during the rally.

The army is our protector, and those speaking against them are not loyal to the country, the participants of the rally said. “We

are standing by the side of the Pakistan Army and the martyrs and ghazi are our foreheads,” the participants added.

People from different walks of life including workers expressed solidarity with the Pakistan Army and condemned the PTI-violent protesters for damaging public and private properties and attacking military installations.

“We are here expressing solidarity with the Pakistan Army and for a stabilized Pakistan,” the leaders of the rally said in their speeches. The participants of the rally shouted slogans in favor of the Pakistan Army. The rally was attended by a large number of people from different walks of life who were holding banners and

placards and expressed solidarity with the Pakistan Army.

“We will support the Pakistan Army to protect our Pakistan,” participants of the rally said. “We will not hesitate to make any sacrifice for the safety of the country,” participants of the rally said in their addresses.

The civil society and people belonging to all walks of life joined the rally and condemned the May 9 incident and expressed solidarity with the Pakistan Army. The people strongly condemned anti-state protests of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf in which state buildings were stormed including Radio Pakistan and Associated Press of Pakistan Office in

Peshawar and all across the country.

The participants of the rally said Pak Army was a lifeline for patriotic Pakistanis and no one will be allowed to defame our armed forces. PTI leadership must refrain from maligning state institutions failing which they would not be allowed to move freely in society, they warned.

The participants also shower flowers on the personnel of armed forces performing their duties near the Peshawar Press Club.

The local leaders in the rallies acknowledged the sacrifices of soldiers who were protecting the motherland by defending the country's borders with bravery.

QWP condemns attack on army installation — demands exemplary punishment

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Chairman Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao on Saturday condemned the attacks on the army installations during the protests of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf on May 9 and demanded exemplary punishment for those involved in vandalism.

He said this while speaking at a meeting of party leaders from Mardan and Swabi districts.

The meeting, which took place at Watan Kor in

Peshawar, discussed organisational matters and took stock of the overall political situation in the country.

Aftab Sherpao said the attacks on the army installations were carried out under a well-planned and organised conspiracy to undermine the image of the Pak Army.

Condemning the May 9 mayhem in the strongest possible terms, the QWP leader said the ones, who were behind this episode, should be brought to justice and punished in accordance with the law of the land.

The QWP leader said that enough evidence was available so the perpetrators of violence should be identified and brought to justice at the earliest in order to avoid the occurrence of such incidents in the future.

He said that former prime minister Imran Khan did not care about the national interests and was hell-bent upon returning to power by hook or by crook.

Aftab Sherpao also questioned the role of the superior judiciary in the prevailing political impasse and said that a particular person

was being given preferential treatment, which was sheer injustice.

The judiciary, he maintained, had lost its credibility. He said the judiciary was supposed to administer justice, not to take sides or become a party in a political dispute.

He said the state institutions should work within the ambit of constitution and must not overstep their authority. He also condemned the suicide attack on the convoy of Jamaat-e-Islami chief Sirajul Haq in Balochistan.

Excise authorities to focus on 100% targets achievement, says Minister

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Minister for Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control Haji Manzoor Khan Afridi Saturday said that it is the need of the hour to adapt the government machinery to the day today requirements of the modern era, while the performance and role of the Excise & Taxation Department in serving the masses should be clearly visible.

He was talking to the new Excise Secretary Ehsanullah at his office Civil Secretariat Peshawar, who took guidance from the provincial minister regarding his new assignment and had a detailed discussion to deal with the problems and challenges faced by the department.

Haji Manzoor Afridi said that the litmus paper of the importance of any government department is to see whether its efficiency and effectiveness is visible at the public level. He directed that if all the concerned authorities of the Excise

Department should pay full attention to achieving 100% of their set targets, then there is no reason that this department will get public recognition and popularity on the one hand and the revenue of the province will also increase substantially on the other hand.

He said that the impor-

tance of the Excise Department in terms of vehicles registration, properties taxation and anti-narcotics is above board both at the provincial and the national levels and if the authorities ensure the achievement of their goals, then only this department will be sufficient to contribute to the revenue and economic stability of the province.

The Secretary Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control assured that the instructions of the minister in-charge would be properly implemented and 100 percent targets would be achieved accordingly.



PESHAWAR: Members of All Pakistan CNG Association chanting slogans in favour of Pak Armed Forces. — F.P. photo

Four accused involved in violence arrested

PESHAWAR (INP): Four key accused involved in disparaging military memorials including the statue of martyred Col. Sher Khan, have been arrested police said on Saturday.

A police crackdown has been underway against vio-

lent protests on July 09 including identification and arrest of the accused involved in violence.

Police has detained 49 involved in violence and chanting slogans against state institutions, police said. “Arrested accused have been involved in vandalizing statues of the national heroes,” police authorities said. “The accused being identified with various footages of the incidents,” according to police.

The accused were arrested from various areas of Mardan district, police said.

Violent incidents reported across Pakistan after PTI Chairman was arrested on May 09. Protests were held in major cities of the country as the party workers were agitated over arrest of the PTI chairman, with Punjab, KP, Balochistan provinces and Islamabad summoned the armed forces to ensure law and order.

Army installations and Corps Commander's house in Lahore and the military memorials in various parts of the country came under attack during protest of PTI workers.

Rescue 1122 covers 121 incidents

PESHAWAR, MAY 20 (APP): Emergency service Rescue 1122 covered 121 incidents of different nature in metropolis during the last 24 hours, said spokesman on Saturday.

The District Emergency Officer Engineer Naveed Akhtar led the operations responding to 89 medical emergencies, 21 traffic accidents, and one fire incident.

During the traffic accidents, 27 individuals were injured and provided first aid treatment and then shifted to hospitals.

7 held for renting out smartphones to children

PESHAWAR (INP): The capital city police arrested seven people for allegedly renting out smartphones to children in Faqirabad area of Peshawar on Saturday and seized about four dozen smartphones.

Police said that taking notice of public complaints, crackdown was conducted against culprits involved in renting out smartphones to children who play PUBG game and watch obscene videos.

During operation, seven accused were held and police took into custody 47 smartphones.

FIR against the detainees was registered at Faqirabad police stations and further investigation was underway.



PESHAWAR: Provincial Minister Irshad Qaiser with others cutting cake during celebrations at China Study Center.



In brief

CTD nabs seven terrorists

SAHIWAL (PPI): The Punjab Counter Terrorism Department (CTD) Saturday arrested seven terrorists from Sahiwal. According to the CTD sources, the accused were planning to target sensitive installations and leading personalities. Arms and explosives were also recovered from the possession of the accused. As many as 472 combing operations have been carried out during the current week, the sources said.

Three brothers killed in mishap

KOT ADDU (INP): Three school going young brothers were killed after an over speeding passenger bus knocked down a motorcycle near Kali Pul in Kot Addu. Police said that the accident took place when the brother aged between 8 to 17 years heading to school riding a bike were hit by a reckless driven passenger bus. Two brothers died on the spot while another succumbed to his wounds while being shifted to hospital. The driver managed to escape from the scene. The bodies were shifted to hospital where they were handed over to heirs after post-mortem. The police impounded the vehicle and after registering a case against driver at large started raids for his arrest.

Man killed, three injured

FAISALABAD (INP): A man was killed and three people injured when two groups traded fire during a wedding ceremony in Sidhpura 123/B on Saturday. Police said that the incident took place during a wedding ceremony of Imran s/o Waseem in G h u l a m Muhammadabad police station jurisdiction where two groups exchanged hot words. The verbal clash took violent after which they exchanged fire resulting in death of Ijaz and leaving three others including Ramzan, Ahsan and a neighbour injured. The body and injured were shifted to hospital for medico-legal formalities and police after registering a case against armed men of both groups started investigation.

Dacoit killed in encounter

MULTAN (INP): A dacoit in police custody was killed with the firing of his own accomplices during a police encounter. According to a police spokesperson, Makhdoom Rasheed police were bringing two accused namely Muhammad Shahzad s/o Muhammad Arif resident of Durana Lagana and Khalil s/o Muhammad Shafi for recovery when their three armed accomplices attacked on police party to get them released near Chah Bhawli Wala canal last night. The accused in police custody managed to escape from there. In retaliation, Khalil was killed with the firing of his own accomplices. While the accused Shahzad and other outlaws managed to escape from there. The police cordoned off the area for the arrest of the fleeing dacoits. The deceased accused was involved in over 30 heinous crime cases including dacoity, robbery, rape during a dacoity bid and others. Special teams have been formed to trace and arrest the fleeing robbers.

One killed

JHELUM (INP): One person was killed and three including two women were injured in clash between two rival groups in Deena city, police confirmed on Saturday. The incident occurred in Ranjha Mera village within jurisdictions of Mangla Police station.

JI Buner stages demos against life attack on Siraj

F.P. Report

BUNER: The Jamaat e Islami activists late night on Friday were staged district wide demonstrations against life attack on party Amier Sirajul Haq on way to Quetta Baluchistan.

The district chapter leaders Halem Bacha Alam Khan Abdul Ghafar Khan Tajbar Khan Amjad Khan Engineer Nasar Khan Mohamad Hanif Khan lead protest demonstrations at different stations. Despite late night the party activists were participated in large number.

The speakers expressed sympathy with killed and injured workers and sought Almighty Allah bless for them. The speakers were happy over Almighty Allah best protected Sirajul Haq from Suicide attack. They hailed Siraj for visiting hos-

pitals with the body and injured activists and showed his party sincerity for activists at time of dire need.

The speakers praised Siraj for his speech to the gathering despite narrowly escaping from a suicide attack on way to venue. They branded him brave and attributed it to the training and discipline of the JI. They condemned the attack and termed cowardly act of those wanted eliminate JI Amier to clear their way for fulfilling nefarious designs of turning Pakistan into a secular state and vowed JI would never let such negative elements to succeed. They praised activists too for making sure joining the protest late night which showed their ultimate love and loyalty for leadership.

DPO distributes wel-

fare cheques among police personnel: The DPO Shah Hasan on Saturday distributed welfare cheques among deserving police personnel for daughters mirages, education, medical treatment and other facilitations to let help them meet their requirements.

On the occasion the DPO said welfare fund was utilized to help the deserving police personnel who were applied and their cases were decided on merit. He continued it was due right of the deserving police officers to apply and due respect responsibility of the concerned officers to proper investigate and approve the cases for payment. However, the deserving police personnel handed over cross cheques for making sure transparency.

Secy plant sapling to create green awareness

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Secretary Elementary and Secondary Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Mohtasim Billah Shah on Saturday attended the annual prize distribution ceremony at Fazlehaq Men's College Mardan. The Secretary inspected various classes and planted a sapling to create awareness among students about clean and green environment.

During his address at the ceremony, the Education Secretary delivered an enlightening lecture on

"The role of teachers in social reform and access of Pakistani students to International institutions." He emphasized that no society can progress without education.

He said we should not compete merely with the children from different districts or provinces but to compete on a global scale. He stressed the importance of providing our children with education of international standards so that they can showcase their abilities not only within the country but also contribute to the development of the world.

On this occasion, the Secretary distributed awards and certificates of appreciation among the high-achieving students who demonstrated outstanding performance. He also praised the principal and the entire staff of the College for their exemplary dedication and contributions to the institution. In response, Principal Fazlehaq expressed gratitude to the Education Secretary for taking time out of his busy schedule to visit the College and boost the morale of the students.

55.86 kg hashish recovered in D I Khan

D I KHAN (INP): The Dera Police on Saturday foiled a drug smuggling bid and recovered 55.86-kilogram hashish from a car and arrested two accused in the limits of Daraban Police Station.

According to a police spokesman, a team from Daraban Police Station led by Kulachi Circle SDPO and SHO Abdul Ghaffar Khan took action on a tip off about the smuggling of

drugs from Quetta to Dera Ismail Khan.

The police created a special blockade on Darazinda road and stopped a car bearing registration number (ANX-837) that was coming from Quetta to Dera Ismail Khan for checking. The two persons traveling on the car introduced themselves as Muhammad Rafiq son of Muhammad Bashir resident of Okara,

Punjab and Tariq Abbas son of Dost Muhammad resident of Chichawatni.

During the checking of the car, the police team found 45 packets of hashish weighing 55.86 kg from the hidden cavities under the back seat. Both the accused smugglers were arrested and the car was also taken into custody. The police started a further investigation after registering a case.

Rallies held to express solidarity with Pak Army

F.P. Report

SWABI / TIMERGARA: Civil Society Organizations and locals on Saturday carried out a rally in Shewa Adda to express solidarity with Pakistan Army.

The rally was also participated in by traders, transporters and civil society members. People chanted slogans in support of Pakistan Army and express resolve to support security forces. They paid tribute to Pakistan Army for their services and sacrifices to defend and protect the motherland.

Condemning violence of PTI workers on May 9, they said that day would be remembered as a black day in history of the country when a political party damaged public and private party to fulfill their nefarious designs.

Meanwhile, the rally of various political parties, business leaders, lawyers, civil society, and students for solidarity with the Pakistan Army, the rally left from Balambat and reached Timaegaa Shaheed Chowk.

According to details, Timergara bazar traders President Haji Anwaruddin,

Chamber of Commerce President Mian Noor Alam Bacha, Ex-Vice President Imran Nazir, Ex-President of District Bar Timergara Jehan Bahadar advocate, JUI Provincial Leader Qazi Ayazuddin, People's Party Lower Dir Secretary Information Alamzeb Advocate, General Secretary of traders Taimargarh Haji Laiq zada announced full support to Pakistan Army and said that Pakistan Army is the guarantor of security and survival of the country but anti-national elements are negative against Pakistan Army.

Police arrests two alleged murders

Syed Waliullah Shah

NEWSHERA: Police has arrested two alleged culprits in blind murder case in the premises of Masri Banda police station within hours after registration of case.

According to details, one Badshah Zada filed First Information Report (FIR) stated that his son Amreez was missing from one day while his dead body recovered on Friday at hilly area of Masri Banda area.

Police has constituted teams for collection of evidences and arrest of culprits involved in the offense under the supervision of Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Akora Khattak and Station House Officer Masri Banda. The alleged murders identified as Saad and Danyal while confessed their crime during interrogation, claimed that deceased had pressurizing them regularly for friendship.

Cash snatched on gun point

F.P. Report

LARKANA: Last day, unknown armed men snatched away two lakh rupees from a chicken seller Fahim Jalbani, in the suburbs of Larkana, Dakhn city, at gun point.

A sit-in was held on road, on which all traffic was suspended, while addressing the sit-in, Faheem, Amir Mohel and others said that three motorcycle-riding armed men took two hundred and twenty-five thousand rupees from the affected youth, Faheem Jalbani, while the Dakhn police being nearby, they did not help, while the Dakhn police, when contacted, said that only 30,000 was looted from the affected shopkeeper, for which we taken efforts are being made to arrest the accused persons.

Free seeds and fertilizers distributed: A seminar was organized by SARSO in Naseerabad Taluka of Qamber Shahdaddock district at union council Dhamrah near Naseerabad in which various types of seeds and fertilizers provided by the European Union were used for agriculture.

Bid to smuggle flour foiled

ATTOCK (INP): The food department Attock, in collaboration with law enforcement agencies, has foiled six different bids to smuggle flour from Punjab to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and confiscated six trucks carrying 7,200 flour bags weighing up to 20 kilograms.

District Food Controller Muhammad Ramzan Sial said that acting on a tip-off, the food department with the assistance of district administration as well as motorway police foiled the attempt to smuggle flour in six ten-wheeler trucks through Islamabad-Peshawar motorway (M-1) near Burhan interchange and seized the trucks that were carrying a total of 7,200 bags of flour from different cities of Punjab.

All set to carry out anti-polio drive in Khyber



F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: All arrangements have been finalized to carry out a seven days anti-polio campaign successfully to be scheduled on Monday, May 22, 2023 here in all three tehsils of district Khyber.

In this connection a simple gathering was organized in Khyber Deputy Commissioner (DC) office, Peshawar where the DC Khyber Abdunadir in the presence of health officials administered polio drops to one of the children to formally open the drive.

Sharing details District Health Officer Dr Zafar said that approximately 0.228000 million children below five years to be vaccinated in the seven days anti-polio campaign to be carried out across the Khyber. Almost 950 fixed, transit and mobile teams of vaccinators had been constituted to facilitate the masses at health centers, taxi stands and door to door campaigns.

The polio campaign has scheduled from May 22, 2023 and will continue till May 28, 2023 in Khyber besides other districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. DC

Abdunadir urged the parents to feed anti-polio vaccine to their children and assist the health staff to make Pakistan free of the crippling disease.

According to the health department, because of successful anti-polio drives carried out by the health officials with support of other stakeholders, no polio case has been detected in Khyber for the last one and half years. It is to be mentioned here that due to effective campaigns the rating of Khyber from high risk areas was lowered to risk reduction.

Protest against increase in wheat price held in Chitral

F.P. Report

CHITRAL: The all political and religious parties and civil societies held a walk and public meeting in Ataleeq square Chitral. This protest agitation and public meeting was held On the call of all parties, a protest meeting was also held in Ataliq Chowk, which was presided over by Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami Maulvi Jamshed. On this occasion, the protestors walked in Ataliq Bazar and later it took the form of a huge rally. Representatives of all political and religious parties, traders union, drivers union, representatives of civil society and a large number of people also participated in the meeting.

On this occasion there was a complete shutter down strike in Chitral Bazar while I was on the Peshawar highway. was also blocked. Addressing the protest, the speakers said that the people of Chitral are also Pakistanis and are very peaceful citizens, but the government treats them like a stepmother. They said that the provincial government issued a notification and allowed non-locals to open flour mills by closing all the water mills across the district.

They said that from these four mills, very poor and substandard quality flour providing to the people which is not suitable for human consumption, while the supply of wheat at subsidize rates to the people has been banned. They said that the people have also tolerated this but now During the interim govern-

ment, the price of wheat was increased by 100% and instead of 6,000, a bag of 100 kg of wheat is now available for 12,000 rupees, while the same wheat is available for only 4,000 rupees in Gilgit-Baltistan.

On this occasion, they also display banners of flour mills, mafia murder etc. They demanded that all the flour mills in Chitral should be closed and wheat should be supplied to the people from the sale point under the old system so that these people can buy it of their own free will. It should be used in water mills because from the wheat that is crushing in the mill, fine flour is separated, white flour is separated, bran is separated and flour of very poor quality is separated which is sold to the public. According to the government policy, the mill operating in Chitral will sell 70% of the flour to the public at a cheap rate, while it is bound to sell 30% of the flour at its own discretion.

They said that the subsidized flour sold to the public is not even edible and often the mill owners smuggle the flour from here to other districts. A unanimous resolution was also passed in the meeting. Through the resolution, it was demanded that the sudden increase in the price of wheat by Rs. 6,000 per bag is a cruel decision. All parties and civil society demand that the government should withdraw this decision immediately.

Through the unanimous resolution they also demanded that wheat

should be provided to the people of Chitral at the rate of Gilgit-Baltistan because the people of Chitral and Gilgit are facing the same problems. Owners of flour mills are buying the quota wheat of Chitral and selling the flour made from it to the public at double rate which is not even of standard and they are also smuggling the flour from Chitral outside the district.

Through the resolution, the Food department was demanded to provide wheat to the people from the warehouses by banning the flour mills in Chitral and to stop harassing the people in the warehouses and arrange for the supply of wheat according to the needs of the people. They warned that if our demands were not fulfilled, the people will be forced to go on a shutter down and wheel jam strike and all the responsibility for the tension of the law and order situation will fall on the government.

They also alleged that on the day when the notification to stop the supply of wheat to the grain warehouses and give it to flour mill, there was one month's stock in these warehouses but it suddenly disappeared and there should be an investigation in this regard.

District Food Controller office Rehmat Wali Khan to take his version for balance reporting. He said that the supply of wheat to the flour mills was stopped for nine days on the demand of the people, later this process was resumed on the direction of the provincial government.

Stubbornness on anti-national narrative lead to May 9

Samina Mumtaz Zehri

THERE is a saying that the recognition of nations is shown by their attitudes, behavior and lifestyles. Pakistan came into existence under a theory whose purpose was to establish a separate Nation for Muslims in the region. Where Muslims can live in peace and tranquility and have their own. In the last 75 years, the Pakistani nation has seen many ups and downs and faced many difficulties. We faced wars against India; we also fought against the scourge of terrorism inside the country and established peace with the help of Armed forces.

During the Afghan and USSR war, Pakistan hosted millions of Afghans and this task created more difficulties for Pakistan. The drug and weapons culture in the country grew only after the Afghan war and the country faced irreparable losses. These were the factors that the enemies imposed on us and Alhamdulillah the Pakistani nation fought against all these

difficulties and don't let the moves succeed. If seen in this context, the role of Pakistan's forces has always been important. Be it peace or war, Pakistan's forces are always alert to protect the homeland. The forces of Pakistan have sacrificed a lot of lives to protect Pakistan so that the Pakistani nation can live in peace and tranquility.

It is the Pakistan Army which, along with the security of the country's borders, along with the Pakistani people, fought against the scourge of terrorism inside the country and established peace. For the past few years, negative propaganda has been started against high institutions and personalities, which is feared to create national security problems. Based on fabricated allegations are being made which are not acceptable in any way and the Pakistani nation has completely rejected these allegations. It is a matter of great regret that on the one hand Imran Khan says that we have nothing to do with all these incidents while on the other hand It is known that if I am

arrested again, then such incidents may happen.

The tragic events of May 9 and the subsequent situation have made it clear that this whole game was orchestrated against Pakistan, the Pakistani forces and the higher institutions of the country under a well-thought-out plan and was a big conspiracy against the country. Imran Khan and his followers had started planning for this day long ago. From the day Imran Khan left power on the basis of his poor performance, this false person started making accusations against high institutions and personalities and the mindset of PTI workers against high national institutions, especially the Pakistan Army, which we have seen in the last few days in the form of violence and arson and attacks on sensitive installations.

Such incidents are less to be condemned. Imran Khan seduced the party workers through his speeches and poisoned the raw minds against the higher institutions to shine his politics which is a dangerous practice. These negative tactics

cannot be called a part of politics in any way. Imran Khan and his followers used the youth and patriotic citizens to spread disorder and chaos in the country. Imran Khan was never a politician. He created all this drama to save his politics and corruption in which the country had to suffer a serious loss.

PTI workers should now understand that Imran Khan is only working on the agenda of personal interests and enemies. One such work should be mentioned in which the good of the country has been done. What are the reasons that were once a favorite for this person has now become the worst for this lying and deceitful person? This person has given importance only to himself. After the arrest of PTI workers in the May 9 incidents and riots, this man and his followers once again left the emotional PTI workers alone and showed indifference to them.

This is the politics of this person to incite the poor and common workers against the institutions and get their own interests. The people of Pakistan have

recognized this liar and now they will not listen to anything he says. PTI workers should also think that the person who leaves their side in difficult times, can that person be their leader! Such a person cannot be called a leader who shows indifference to the workers in difficult times.

The Pakistani nation especially the workers of Tehreek-e-Insaf should also understand now that false and fabricated allegations are being made for their own personal gratification and the agenda of the enemies. Where is the justice of putting the country at stake through? Where is Pakistani? Imran Khan named the party Tehreek-e-Insaf, but nothing called Insaf is seen in his party. Perhaps this is the reason why sensible people have understood Imran Khan's anti-national statements after these violent and anti-army incidents and they are avoiding the party. More patriotic citizens who had been supporting PTI till now are showing shame and disassociation from the party which is a negation of Imran Khan's narra-

tive. After the PTI leadership's indifference to those arrested after the tragic events of May 9, the zealous people who vandalized and participated in these activities must have come to their senses and must be wondering what we are going to do. False and self-interested leaders who are not ready to accept us as their workers. Patriotic Pakistanis should do a complete social boycott of such elements and identify them for arrest who is involved in anti-national activities so that they can be called real and can be punished. Those planning to damage sensitive places and national heritage, inciting and reasoning PTI workers for all these riots do not deserve any concession. These people have made a joke of Pakistan all over the world. People belonging to any party should be severely punished by military courts and the perpetrators and those who were part of such heinous conspiracy should be made a lesson so that no one who thinks of doing such act in future should be punished.



US and allied naval commanders in show of force against Ira

ABOARD THE USS PAUL HAMILTON IN THE STRAIT OF HORMUZ (AP): The Mideast-based commanders of the US, British and French navies transited the Strait of Hormuz aboard an American warship, a sign of their unified approach to keep the crucial waterway open after Iran seized two oil tankers.

Tensions in the Persian Gulf have been volatile since Iran's nuclear deal with world powers collapsed, following the US' unilateral withdrawal five years ago. The incredibly rare, joint trip by the three navy chiefs aboard the USS Paul Hamilton, an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer, saw three fast boats of the Iranian Revolutionary Guard approach the vessel at one point. Guardsmen stood by uncovered machine guns on their decks, while sailors aboard the Paul Hamilton similarly stood by loaded machine guns as others shot photographs and video of the vessels. An Associated Press journalist also accompanied the allied naval commanders.

While the Guard kept its distance from both the Paul Hamilton and the passing British frigate HMS Lancaster, their presence showed just how tense passage for vessels can be in the Strait of Hormuz, the narrow mouth of the Persian Gulf through which a fifth of global oil supplies passes. "Iran has seized or attacked 15 ships in the last two years. Eight seizures and seven attacks," Vice Adm. Brad Cooper, who oversees the US Navy's Mideast-based 5th Fleet,

told the AP. "So the shipping industry is mindful of what the security posture looks like in the region. We have the ability to positively impact that influence and that's what we're doing now."

Cooper said Iran's Guard ships came within 1,000 yards (915 meters) of the Paul Hamilton, which is based out of San Diego. The US has viewed securing the Middle East's waterways, particularly the Strait of Hormuz, as key since then-President Jimmy Carter's 1980 speech vowing to use military force to protect American interests in the wider Persian Gulf. While focused then on the Soviet Union's invasion of Afghanistan, the Carter Doctrine's vow to allow "the free movement of Middle East oil" now pits the US against Iran, which has seized a series of oil tankers since the collapse of its nuclear deal with world powers.

Last week, White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby told journalists that America planned to make "a series of moves to bolster our defensive posture" in the Persian Gulf, while criticizing Iran's recent seizures of tankers. Cooper said the joint trip on the Paul Hamilton represented part of that push, with the aim of having more coalition ships passing through the strait on a regular basis. "The volume of commerce that flows through the Strait of Hormuz — it is critical to the world's economy," he said.

For its part, Iran long has bristled at the American presence in the region. After Kirby's remarks,

Iranian Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani issued a lengthy statement accusing the US of "creating and intensifying instability and insecurity in the Persian Gulf region for decades with its interventionist and destructive policies." However, Kanaani also specifically mentioned the US "seizing and confiscating some Iranian oil cargoes in international waters." The suspected American seizure of the Suez Rajan, a tanker linked to a US private equity firm believed to have been carrying sanctioned Iranian crude oil off Singapore, likely sparked Tehran to recently take the Marshall Islands-flagged tanker Advantage Sweet. That ship carried Kuwaiti crude oil for energy firm Chevron Corp. of San Ramon, California.

There was no immediate reaction in Iranian state media nor from the Guard about the Paul Hamilton's trip from the Persian Gulf out through the strait to the Gulf of Oman. However, it was unlikely the Iranians immediately knew that the American, British and French commanders had been aboard the vessel, though at least one Guard member aboard the fast boats was studying the Paul Hamilton with a pair of binoculars. Iran's mission to the United Nations did not immediately respond to a request for comment about the trip.

On the trip through the Strait of Hormuz, at least one Iranian drone watched the Paul Hamilton. Meanwhile, an US Navy Boeing P-8 Poseidon also was overhead.

Italy's deadly floods an example of climate change

ROME (AP): The floods that sent rivers of mud tearing through towns in Italy's northeast are another drenching dose of climate change's all-or-nothing weather extremes, something that has been happening around the globe, scientists say.

The coastal region of Emilia-Romagna was twice struck, first by heavy rain two weeks ago on drought-parched ground that could not absorb it, overflowing riverbanks overnight, followed by this week's deluge that killed 13 and caused billions in damages. In a changing climate, more rain is coming, but it's falling on fewer days in less useful and more dangerous downpours.

The hard-hit Emilia-Romagna region was particularly vulnerable. Its location between the Apennine mountains and the Adriatic Sea trapped the weather system this week that dumped half the average annual amount of rain in 36 hours. Antonello Pasini, a climate scientist at Italy's National Research Council, said a trend has been establishing itself: "An increase in rain-fall overall per year, for example, but a decrease in the number of rainy days and an increase in the intensity of the rain in those few days when it rains," he said.

Italy's north has been parched by two years of drought, thanks to less-than-average snowfall during the

winter months. Melting snow from the Alps, Dolomites and Apennines normally provides the steady runoff through spring and summer that fills Italy's lakes, irrigates the agricultural heartland and keeps the Po and other key rivers and tributaries flowing. Without that normal snowfall in the mountains, plains have gone dry and riverbeds, lakes and reservoirs have receded. They cannot recover even when it rains because the ground is essentially "impermeable" and the rain just washes over the topsoil and out to the sea, Pasini said.

"So the drought is not necessarily compensated for by these extreme rains," he said, "Because in northern Italy, the drought depends more on snow being stored in the Alps than on rain. And in the last two years, we have had very little snow." Civil Protection Minister Nello Musumeci said the new normal of extreme weather events in the Mediterranean requires Italians to adapt and Italy to rethink its flood protections nationwide. He cited a fierce storm-triggered landslide last fall on the southern island of Ischia, off Naples, that left 12 dead.

"We can't just pretend that nothing is happening," he said. "Everything must change: the programming in hydraulic infrastructures must change, the engineering approach must change."

He said those changes are necessary to prevent the types of floods that have left entire towns swamped with mud after two dozen rivers burst their banks. The key going forward is prevention, he said, acknowledging that's not an easy sell due to costs.

"We are not a nation inclined to prevention. We like to rebuild more than to prevent," he told Sky TG24. Italy is far from alone in lurching from dry to deluge. California and the United States West sloshed its way from a record-setting megadrought to at least a dozen atmospheric rivers dousing the state with so much rain that a long-dormant lake reappeared. "The rainiest events seem to be in many places getting rainier," Princeton University climate scientist Gabe Vecchi said.

In 2021, the United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change scientific panel said it was "established fact" that humans' greenhouse gas emissions had made for more frequent and intense weather extremes. The panel called heat waves the most obvious, but said heavy precipitation events had also likely increased over most of the world. The UN report said "there is robust evidence" that record rainfall and one-in-five, one-in-ten and one-in-twenty year type rainfall "became more common since the 1950s."

Russian PM to visit Beijing

BEIJING (AP): Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin will visit Beijing next week for talks, China's Foreign Ministry said, marking the latest exchange in a relationship in which Russia is becoming increasingly reliant on China for economic and diplomatic support.

"During the visit, the two sides will have an in-depth exchange of views on practical cooperation in bilateral relations and issues of common concern," ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin said at a daily briefing. "We look forward to further strengthening cooperation between the two sides, deepening people-to-people and local exchanges (and) injecting strong momentum into the recovery of the world economy," Wang added.

Meanwhile, China's Deputy Permanent UN Representative Geng Shuang again criticized Western arms sales to Ukraine, saying it would only lead to escalation, more civilian casualties and displacement, and make it harder to obtain a ceasefire and start peace negotiations. China says it does not and will not provide arms to either side in the Ukraine conflict, a point Geng reiterated at a Security Council meeting.

"The constant feeding of weapons to the battlefield will ... also pose serious challenges to post-war reconstruction and, if such weapons are diverted to terrorists or armed groups, likely cause new turmoil in a wider geographic area," Geng was cited as saying on the UN's website. "All parties should promote a political settlement with sincerity and urgency and create conditions conducive to a ceasefire," Geng added.

China says it is a neutral party and wants to help broker an end to the 15-month-old conflict, but has refused to criticize the invasion and blamed the West for provoking Moscow. China is now seen as the senior partner in the relationship, helping Moscow deflect condemnation at the United Nations and maintaining what it calls "normal trade" with Russia, providing a market for Russian oil and other resources and selling the country needed manufactured goods. At the same time, Beijing is making inroads into what has traditionally been Russia's strategic backyard, this week hosting a summit of five former Soviet Central Asian republics.

China's special envoy met with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and other government officials during talks in Kyiv earlier this week. The visit followed a phone call last month between the Ukrainian leader and his Chinese counterpart Xi Jinping that Zelenskyy described as "long and meaningful" and which marked the first known contact between the two since the Russian invasion began. Beijing released a peace plan in February but Ukraine's allies largely dismissed it, insisting that Russian President Vladimir Putin must withdraw his forces. Zelenskyy's own 10-point peace plan includes a tribunal to prosecute war crimes committed by Russia.

Tunisian leader calls meeting with Assad 'historic'

JEDDAH (AP): Smiles, a handshake and what Tunisian President Kais Saied called a "historic meeting" with the long-ostracized Syrian leader Bashar Assad. The talks between the two presidents, held before the start of the Arab League summit in Saudi Arabia, buried memories, and perhaps the legacy, of the Arab Spring which started in Tunisia 12 years ago. That series of uprisings gave the North African country its first taste of democracy as protests rolled across the region, including in Syria.

"Today, I am absolutely convinced of Tunisian support for Syria," a statement from Saied's office said after what it called the "historic" meeting. Tunisia, reborn after its 2011 revolution which toppled autocratic ruler Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, was among the fiercest critics of Assad. But Saied has largely trampled the gains of Tunisia's revolution since his 2019 election, notably by assuming near full powers after suspending the legislature in 2021 then dissolving it in his crackdown on corruption and dissent.

Tunisia resumed diplomatic relations with Syria in April, and Assad's presence at the Arab League summit sealed Syria's return to the club of Arab nations. The official TAP news agency showed photos of him and Assad greeting each other with smiles, a warm hand shake and a sit-down for serious talks. Assad was invited to the residence where the Tunisian president was staying in Jeddah, the Saudi Arabian city hosting the summit.

Syria was kicked out of the club of



Arab nations in 2011 at the start of its brutal civil war. That was months after Tunisia's revolution. "We stand together against the movement of darkness," Assad said, apparently referring to extremist groups that came to dominate the Syrian opposition as his country's war ground on, and militants groups there drew a large number of recruits from Tunisia. In an interview with Tunisian television, Assad said that the North African country "used to be a platform to propagate the (Islamist)

mindset." "After my meeting with Kais Saied, I am now convinced that the Arab people hasn't changed and Tunisia is the same," he was quoted as saying by the Radio Mosaïque. Among numerous figures jailed in Saied's crackdown is Rached Ghannouchi, head of the moderate Islamist party that triumphed in Tunisia's first free elections in October 2011. Ghannouchi was also speaker of the parliament that Saied dissolved.

Lebanon receives Interpol notice for its central bank governor

BEIRUT (AP): Lebanon received an Interpol notice for the country's embattled central bank governor who failed to show up in Paris earlier in the week for questioning in a key corruption case, officials said.

France, Germany, and Luxembourg are investigating the governor, Riad Salameh, and his associates over myriad financial crimes, including illicit enrichment and the laundering of \$330 million. A French investigative judge issued an international arrest warrant for Salameh after he did not answer summons for questioning in Paris. However, Lebanon is unlikely to comply with the Interpol notice and arrest and hand over Salameh to French authorities. Under the country's laws, Lebanon does not extradite its own

citizens. In 2020, it received two Interpol red notices for tycoon Carlos Ghosn, who faced financial misconduct charges in Japan. Ghosn remains in Lebanon.

Interpol listed Salameh's notice on its website, adding that he is wanted by France for "criminal conspiracy with intent to commit offenses punishable by ten years of prison," "organized money laundering," and aggravated tax fraud. The Lebanese Interior Ministry confirmed receiving the Interpol Red Notice, but did not comment on possible actions against Salameh. The judicial officials who spoke to The Associated Press about the notice did so on condition of anonymity to discuss the case.

Salameh denies allegations of corruption, and maintains that he amassed his wealth through his previous job as an investment banker at Merrill Lynch, inherited properties, and investments. He said he would only resign if convicted of a crime. Salameh reiterated that he intends to appeal the Interpol notice because he did not receive the summons for questioning in Paris in person, "according to the rules and laws." The Central Bank returned the summons, which had arrived while Salameh was absent from the bank, according to judicial officials.

"I am introducing an appeal to cancel the notice," Salameh told the AP. The 72-year-old governor has held his post for almost 30 years, but says he intends to step down after

his current term ends in July. The three European governments in March 2022 froze over \$130 million in assets linked to the probe. During a visit to Lebanon in March, the European delegation questioned Salameh about the Lebanese central bank's assets and investments outside the country, a Paris apartment which the governor owns and his brother Raja Salameh's brokerage firm Forry Associates Ltd.

Once hailed as the guardian of Lebanon's financial stability, Salameh since late 2019 has been heavily blamed for Lebanon's financial meltdown. Many say he precipitated the economic crisis, which has plunged three-quarters of Lebanon's population of 6 million into poverty.

Putin ally accuses US of involvement in deadly attacks inside Russia

MOSCOW (Reuters): A powerful ally of President Vladimir Putin accused the United States of coordinating with Ukraine to kill two pro-war nationalists in Russia and to carry out attacks on critical national infrastructure in an effort to undermine stability.

There was no immediate US response to the allegations from Nikolai Patrushev, secretary of Russia's Security Council, which is chaired by Putin. Washington has previously denied involvement in at least one of the killings he mentioned. Putin has accused the West of unleashing a proxy war aimed at toppling him and carving up Russia's vast natural resources following Russia's invasion of Ukraine last year, something Moscow calls "a special military operation".

A series of showcase attacks and mysterious assassinations inside Russia,

far from the front lines in Ukraine, have raised concerns over domestic security, even more so after a drone attack on the Kremlin itself. Darya Dugina, the daughter of a prominent Russian nationalist, was killed in a car bomb in August; pro-war blogger Vladlen Tatarsky, whose real name was Maxim Fomin, was killed in a bomb last month; and nationalist writer, Zakhar Prilepin, was wounded in a car bomb earlier this month.

Russia also accused Ukraine of attacking the Crimean Bridge last October and accused the West of being behind blasts on the Nord Stream gas pipelines in September. Patrushev was cited by the state TASS news agency as saying all the attacks "were planned and carried out with the coordination of the US special services".

"The terrorist attacks committed in Russia are accompanied by an information campaign pre-

pared in advance in Washington and London, designed to destabilise the socio-political situation, and to undermine the constitutional foundations and sovereignty of Russia," TASS quoted Patrushev as saying.

The United States and its allies, who cast the invasion as an imperial-style land grab, say they want Ukraine to defeat Russia, the world's biggest nuclear power. The State Department did not immediately reply to a request for comment on Patrushev's remarks. US intelligence agencies believe parts of the Ukrainian government authorised the attack that killed Dugina, the New York Times reported in October.

Although President Joe Biden has warned that a direct military confrontation between the NATO military alliance and Russia would trigger World War Three, the Kremlin says the West is already fighting against

Russia. The United States and Britain have denied Russian claims they were involved in the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipelines. Ukraine has never claimed responsibility for the attack on the Crimean Bridge.

Washington said earlier this month it was a lie that the United States was behind the drone attack on the Kremlin. As a former Soviet spy who has known Putin since the 1970s, Patrushev - who has accused the "Anglo-Saxons" of sabotaging Nord Stream in what he has called a terrorist attack - is seen by Western diplomats as having a major influence on the Russian leader. Patrushev's pronouncements give an insight into thinking at the Kremlin's top levels, they say. "The risks of terrorist acts, including the use of unmanned aerial vehicles, at critical and potentially dangerous facilities have increased significantly," Patrushev said.

Diplomatic tour by Zelenskyy highlights Putin's stark isolation

TALLINN (AP): While the world awaits Ukraine's spring battlefield offensive, its leader, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has launched a diplomatic one. In the span of a week, he's dashed to Italy, the Vatican, Germany, France and Britain to shore up support for defending his country.

He was in Saudi Arabia to meet with Arab leaders, some of whom are allies with Moscow. President Vladimir Putin, meanwhile, was in the southern Russian city of Pyatigorsk, chairing a meeting with local officials, sitting at a large table at a distance from the other attendees. The Russian president has faced unprecedented international isolation, with an International Criminal Court arrest warrant hanging over his head and clouding the prospects of traveling to many destinations, including those viewed as Moscow's allies.

With his invasion of Ukraine, "Putin took a gamble and lost really, really big time," said Theresa Fallon, director of the Brussels-based Centre for Russia Europe Asia Studies. "He is an international pariah, really." It was

only 10 years ago when Putin stood proudly among his peers at the time — Barack Obama, Angela Merkel and Shinzo Abe — at a Group of Eight summit in Northern Ireland. Russia has since been kicked out of the group, which consists of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Britain and the United States, for illegally annexing Crimea in 2014.

Now it appears to be Ukraine's turn in the spotlight. There were conflicting messages from Kyiv whether Zelenskyy would attend the G7 in Japan. The secretary of Ukraine's National Security and Defense Council said on national television the president would be there, but the council later walked back those remarks, saying Zelenskyy would join via video link. The president's office would not confirm either way for security reasons.

But whether in person or via video, it would be of great symbolic and geopolitical significance. "It conveys the fact that the G7 continues to strongly support Ukraine," said Nigel Gould-Davies, senior fellow for Russia and Eurasia at the International

Institute for Strategic Studies. "It's a visible marker of the continued commitment of the most highly industrialized and highly developed countries in the world."

It also comes at a time when the optics are just not in the Kremlin's favor. There's uncertainty over whether Putin can travel to South Africa in August for a summit of the BRICS nations of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Moscow has long showcased the alliance as an alternative to the West's global dominance, but this year it is already proving awkward for the Kremlin. South Africa, the host of the summit, is a signatory to the ICC and is obligated to comply with the arrest warrant on war crimes charges.

South Africa has not announced that Putin will definitely come to the summit but has been planning for his possible arrival. South African President Cyril Ramaphosa has appointed an inter-ministerial committee, led by Deputy President Paul Mashatile, to consider South Africa's options with regard to its ICC commit-

ment over Putin's possible trip. While it is highly unlikely the Russian president would be arrested there if he decides to go, the public debate about whether he can is in itself "an unwelcome development whose impact should not be underestimated," according to Gould-Davies.

Then there are Moscow's complicated relations with its own neighbors. Ten days ago, Putin projected the image of solidarity, with leaders of Armenia, Belarus and Central Asian states standing beside him at a Victory Day military parade on Red Square. This week, however, the leaders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan flocked to China and met with leader Xi Jinping at a summit that highlighted the erosion of Russia's influence in the region as Beijing seeks to make economic inroads into Central Asia.

Xi is using the opportunity "of a weakened Russia, a distracted Russia, almost a pariah-state Russia to increase (China's) influence in the region," Fallon said. Putin's effort this month to shore up more friends in the

South Caucasus by scrapping visa requirements for Georgian nationals and lifting a four-year ban on direct flights to the country also didn't appear to go as smoothly as the Kremlin may have hoped.

The first flight that landed in Georgia was met with protests, and the country's pro-Western president has decried the move as a provocation. Zelenskyy's ongoing world tour can be seen as a success on many levels. Invitations from other world leaders is a sign they think Ukraine is "going to come out of the war in good shape," said Phillips P. O'Brien, professor of strategic studies at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

Otherwise, "it simply wouldn't be happening," he said. "No one would want to be around a leader they think is going to be defeated and a country that's going to collapse." By contrast, the ICC warrant might make it harder for leaders even to visit Putin in Moscow because "it's not a good look to visit an indicted war criminal," Gould-Davies said.

European leaders promised him an

arsenal of missiles, tanks and drones, and even though no commitment has been made on fighter jets — something Kyiv has wanted for months — a conversation about finding ways to do it has begun. His appearance at the Arab League summit in Jeddah, a Saudi Arabian port on the Red Sea, highlighted Kyiv's effort to spread its plight for support far and wide, including in some countries whose sympathies are with Russia.

In addition to Zelenskyy, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman also welcomed Syrian President Bashar Assad at the summit after a 12-year suspension — something analysts say aligns with Moscow's interests. Anna Borshchevskaya, a senior fellow at the Washington Institute who focuses on Russia's policy in the Middle East, called it "another testament to the fact that Russia is not isolated globally for its invasion of Ukraine, that the Middle East is one part of the world where Russia is able to find avenues to avoid global isolation — both ideological isolation but also economic isolation."

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Public representation and political narcissism

RECENTLY, the Lahore High Court (LHC) overturned the resignations of 70 Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) MNAs including top-tier PTI leaders Fawad Chaudhry, Shah Mehmood Qureshi, Pervaiz Khattak, and others, who previously challenged the acceptance of their resignations as MNAs from their respective constituencies by Speaker National Assembly. During the hearing of the pleas submitted by the PTI lawmakers, the court nullified the notifications of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) and the National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf regarding the acceptance of the resignations. The court directed the concerned MNAs to appear before the Speaker to convince him regarding the reversal of their walk-outs.

The issue of the PTI's resignations from the National Assembly as well as the suicidal attacks on its own provincial governments in the two important federating units including Punjab and the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) has become an interesting topic for talk shows and Scholarly debates in the country and abroad. After its ouster from power as the result of a successful no-confidence motion against former Prime Minister Imran Khan in April last year, the PTI Chairman refused to play the role of opposition in the lower house and ordered his MNAs to submit resignations to the Speaker National Assembly. Apparently, it was a fatal attack to smash the newly installed coalition government in its early days to clear the way for an early general election in the country that failed. Later, Khan dissolved the PTI's governments in Punjab and the KP in a bid to create a constitutional crisis that might lead to countrywide general elections but that recipe also proved futile and disastrous for the group itself. The coalition government, Speaker, and independent political analysts urged the PTI to return to the Assembly and play its constitutional role of the opposition until the house completes its 5-years term in 2023. As for the PTI's political strategy, the group sought the court's assistance in the approval of the resignations that linked it to the in-person verification and satisfaction of the House custodian. During the ongoing tussle between the coalition government and the PTI, Speaker National Assembly okayed the resignations of dozens of the PTI MNAs but then, the Party and its leader changed their mind and urged the court to help them in undoing their self-created catastrophe through the reversal of their resignations. Fortunately, the Lahore High Court agreed with the PTI's MNAs regarding the withdrawal of their resigns with Speaker's permission.

A question arises worth a hundred thousand dollars, what was the core objective of the PTI's resignations from Assemblies, and how much has the party itself, the public, the country, and democracy benefited from this strategy over the past year? The answer is no, in fact, the PTI cut its hands, disarmed itself, and turned into a paralyzed and maimed political group, that is currently seeking assistance from the courts as well as its staunch enemies to reequip itself against its competitors. Historically, resignation from the parliament and dissolution of provincial assemblies was a mistaken and biased strategy that proved to be counterproductive for its architects. The PTI Chairman Imran Khan himself disrespected the public mandate and quit the Assemblies for a gratuitous quest for power. Seemingly, the PTI has admitted its political misdemeanors, and struggling hard to regain the parliamentary status that it relinquished voluntarily in the past. The judiciary once again threw the ball in the Speaker's court, which will surely pursue his party policy by means of delaying tactics, so-called verification, and the confirmation of the concerned MNAs.

Realistically, the PTI is a major party at the national level but the group has ruined itself through the politics of hate, ego, and antagonism. The philosophy of so-called pure and fake populism incited the party to initiate a witch hunt against the national institutions for political reasons that have surely damaged its politics and affected its public rating. After the recent unrest, the group is currently intentionally shedding off responsibility for the recent violence but still hesitates to condemn and stop its campaign against the military and other national institutions. There is a dire need for responsible politics and a unified national approach that respects public mandate, upholds parliamentary traditions, and creates a balance of power between the pillars of the state. There is no space for hate and rigidity in politics, leaders and parties must respect others, exhibit the rule of the law, and never fall prey to emotions as fake narcissism is poisonous for political stability, democracy, and national unity. Hopefully, the PDM government and Speaker National Assembly will respond to the call of time by resorting to dialogue and negotiation that facilitates the PTI's return to the parliament and broader consensus over electoral reforms and a lasting charter of democracy among all stakeholders in the country.

War is everywhere, so why are G7 leaders not investing in peace?

Jonathan Cohen

ON May 19, the leaders of the world's richest nations will meet at the G7 summit in Hiroshima, the largest of two cities devastated by atomic bombs in 1945. The Japanese government hopes that by "showing the world the strength of Hiroshima's recovery ... Japan can once again emphasise [the] preciousness of peace".

With a bloody conflict in Ethiopia just behind us, the Russian invasion still grinding on in Ukraine and Sudan on the precipice of civil war, peace has rarely appeared so fragile. Yet it is not lost on the diplomats and the peace workers of the world that in times of conflict and turmoil, support for diplomacy and conflict resolution fades.

Granted, wars are expensive and often justified by those that fight them as the best way to bring about lasting peace. They promise that "terrorists" will be defeated, "homelands" will be created, and that will be that. But, of course, it never is. As we are seeing in Ukraine, conflict causes lasting devastation to buildings, communities, bodies and minds. Ending violence through some kind of surrender, or more likely, an arduously negotiated peace agree-

ment, is the start rather than the end of a long, intensive and restorative process of building a functioning, cohesive society and addressing the grievances that led to war in the first place. Preventing conflict requires the same level of investment.

Yet, despite global peacefulness declining for 10 of the past 14 years (PDF), institutional funding for peacebuilding is in decline in many countries. A recent briefing by Saferworld and Mercy Corps shows UK spending on civilian peacebuilding, conflict prevention and resolution plummeted by \$300m between 2016 and 2021. Earlier this year, the Swedish government, which provides significant core funding to many peacebuilding organisations, announced a 40 percent cut to its strategy for sustainable peace despite the country's economy growing 2.4 percent in 2022.

But where is all this money going? Where it is not being redirected to house refugees within donor countries, much of this money is going towards defence budgets, which reached their highest-ever level in 2022 and are set to rise further even in real terms. In March, the United Kingdom announced increased

defence spending of \$13.7bn over the next five years. Defence spending in Central and Western Europe has surged to reach levels not seen since the Cold War. Sweden, having already boosted its defence spending by 17 percent to \$8.7bn in 2023, is planning to spend as much as \$13.4bn annually by 2028, and Japan has pledged to double its military expenditure to the NATO target of 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP).

These spending shifts reflect a change in political calculation among the countries that in previous years have been the biggest proponents and funders of peacebuilding programmes and conflict prevention.

Much of this stems from growing concern about the real and perceived threats Russia and China might pose to global security. The invasion of Ukraine was a shock to the global system. Many Western countries have placed heavy economic sanctions on Russia. Meanwhile, China's military manoeuvres around Taiwan and the South China Sea have raised fears of violent confrontation. These geopolitical security concerns cannot be overstated. Yet, neither should they define how the world understands every other

conflict or crisis or draw attention away from other urgent global priorities like conflict prevention, gender equality or climate change. When these bigger issues are viewed solely through a geopolitical lens, governments reach for military and security tools, which have limited application and all too often, counterproductive impacts. Populations living in the midst of conflict bear the brunt of its impact, but they also hold the keys to future peace. Individuals, groups, networks and communities help to de-escalate and avert conflict on a daily basis in places such as the Central African Republic, the Philippines and the South Caucasus. Reducing the meagre resources available to them and those supporting them is short-sighted and reckless.

We simply cannot afford for this to happen. In 2019, the World Economic Forum estimated that violent conflict cost the world \$14.4 trillion, with 10 percent of global GDP being spent on causing and then repairing the damage caused. Much of the cost is on military expenditure, which topped \$2 trillion for the first time last year. At the same time, the World Bank estimates that violent conflict causes 80 percent

of all humanitarian needs. Preventing conflict and building peace is a bargain in comparison, though it is hardly a predictable or easy line of work. As the G7 meetings begin in Hiroshima, leaders must do everything in their power to ensure this new age of geopolitics also does not become an age remembered primarily for violence.

First off, they must make peace a political priority for their governments and on the global stage. This means investing properly in the global peacebuilding arsenal. The number and skills of conflict experts in embassies and in capitals need to be bolstered to ensure long-term peacebuilding partnerships with local and international civil society can deliver lasting and decisive impacts for affected communities. Yet it also requires governments to work together to support and shape an ambitious, unifying "New Agenda for Peace" at the United Nations.

Second, in preparation for COP28 this November, G7 countries must make sure that the global response to climate change is harnessed in a way that helps mitigate rather than fuel violent conflict. Climate change and biodiversity loss are closely

linked to conflict and also gender inequalities. Yet responses to it, which are often radical by necessity, can uproot and transform economies, places and societies in ways that can fuel tensions and reopen old wounds and divisions. But most importantly, politicians across the G7 must make the case for building peace and investing in international development among their own constituencies. The UK minister for development claimed last week that politicians would not "mess around" with aid funding if 70 percent of the public supported it. Yet, in a survey conducted by Conciliation Resources in 2017, 71 percent of the sample agreed that "peacebuilding plays a vital role" in ending violent conflicts. That pattern of opinion was reflected in other countries' surveys: 74 percent in the US, 77 percent in Japan and 82 percent in Germany.

Peacebuilding commands popular support and works when given patient support and attention. We have seen this in Colombia, the Philippines, South Africa and in Northern Ireland, which celebrates 25 years of the Good Friday/Belfast Agreement this year. In times of war, it is about time we took peace more seriously.

Aljazeera

In a contest between Tory MPs and reality, Rishi Sunak is refusing to pick a side

Rafael Behr

CONSERVATIVE leaders fail in one of two ways. Either they resist the demands of their most fanatical MPs or they don't. Ignoring the zealots provokes rebellion, making the party unmanageable. Indulging them leads to policies that are unworkable. Rishi Sunak is combining both mistakes. The prime minister is giving the right of his party most of what it wants, which is not enough. Everything would not be enough.

Britain has left the European Union on terms more drastic than anything promised by the leave campaign, but the demand for separation is unsatisfied. Euroscepticism is an itch that spreads faster than every effort to scratch it. And so Sunak flies to Reykjavik this week for a summit of the Council of Europe to explain to the president of the European court of human rights (not an EU institution) why the rules must be changed so Britain can deport refugees to Rwanda. The Brexit promise was that control of the border would be taken back. From whom? Bureaucrats in Brussels first. Still the frontier is porous. Attention turns to judges in Strasbourg whose overreaching fingers must be peeled off national sov-

ereignty. But meddling foreigners never act alone. The quest for control inevitably turns inward. It becomes a pursuit of fifth columnists and a cleansing of unsound minds in the culture. The trajectory is intrinsic to a doctrine that the Tory right embraced before daring to name it - nationalism.

Many Eurosceptics are still squeamish about the label. Some recognise the brand limitations of a word that comes historically associated with autocracy and war. Others insist that Brexit is a project for the advancement of free trade and therefore liberal, from a certain angle. In that view, the pattern of xenophobic rhetoric - the Brexit campaign posters depicting dark-skinned interlopers massing at the border; Home Office ministers warning against invading hordes - is a figment of the hysterical remainer imagination. The pretence got harder to sustain this week. Leading figures on the Tory right have mustered for a "National Conservatism" jamboree. They swapped laments about falling birthrates, subjugation by globalised elites and the demoralisation of youth by godlessness and Marxism. The home secretary, Suella Braverman, rehearsed her next bid for the Tory leader-

ship, complaining about the unchecked advance of multiculturalism and calling for British workers to fill vacancies where migrant workers are in short supply. That is a swerve away from government policy, which is quietly more permissive of legal immigration, by way of work visas, while noisily hostile to anyone who turns up uninvited. Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, understands that a tight labour market is constraining economic growth. So does Sunak, but he won't say it aloud. The prime minister's spokesperson rejected any suggestion that Braverman was freelancing, or that the cabinet is divided on migration matters.

The text of her speech was cleared by Downing Street. That doesn't mean it was welcome. But nor should it be assumed that Sunak stifles liberal qualms when issuing licences to bang the hard right drum. The prime minister is a social conservative by conviction, much more so than his recent predecessors. Liz Truss was a libertarian in all things. She thought government should stay out of people's private moral choices as well as their bank accounts. Boris Johnson shared that inclina-

tion, to the extent that he believed in anything beyond his own ambition. But Johnson also had an interventionist streak that verged on egalitarian when it came to levelling up. Or at least he understood that former Labour voters who had supported him on Brexit wanted tangible payback in public investment, even if he didn't admit that higher spending meant that either taxes or borrowing must rise. Sunak's economics are more typically Thatcherite. He hung an icon of Nigel Lawson in his office at the Treasury. The pandemic forced him to override those instincts, subsidising the nation's wages through lockdowns, but bowing to expediency in a crisis didn't dent the underlying faith. Likewise, the prime minister's refusal to cut taxes is not, as some of his Tory critics allege, symptomatic of some socialist mind virus contracted in the Treasury. It is orthodox fiscal conservatism, given a disciplinary edge by last year's market backlash against Truss's wild adventures in budget incontinence.

For Conservatives to be led by such a prime minister, one so pious in adherence to the tenets of their creed, yet still feel betrayed

goes beyond ideological monomania. It is a kind of childish ingratitude, mixed with weariness at the dull burden of grownup government. That is why a hard-core still hankers for Johnson. They praise his unique electioneering talent, forgetting his ignominious downfall, because the "Boris" show was a delightful deferral of hard choices. They can't muster any affection for Sunak for the same reason that an alcoholic can't like the hangover as much as the binge. But sobriety in style is not the same as moderation of belief. Downing Street is now better organised under a prime minister who pays attention to detail and sustains strategic focus. There are plans that don't change from one hour to the next. Whitehall officials are grateful for the restoration of functional administration, but the underlying tension between ideological obsession and practical government has not gone away. Where Johnson would bluff and bluster, Sunak prefers tactical discretion.

Last week's U-turn on a December deadline for the automatic vapourisation of retained EU law is a case in point. Erasing thousands of statutes without knowing what purpose they serve is an obviously reckless, stu-

pid idea. It was opposed even by the businesses for whose benefit the indiscriminate regulatory purge was intended.

The climbdown prompted a predictable backlash from Brexit ultras, mostly directed at Kemi Badenoch, business and trade secretary. She passed the blame - or credit, as it should rightly have been recorded - on to her civil servants. Downing Street made it clear that Sunak was hardly involved in defusing a legislative bomb ticking down in Whitehall, in case anyone might suspect him of losing faith in the doctrine of encouraging enterprise by pointlessly blowing things up. He was all for it during last summer's leadership contest. What the prime minister believes these days is hard to discern. He indulges his party's most fanatical tendencies without full-throated endorsement. In return he is tolerated as a caretaker, not trusted as a believer. He is not blind to the practical limitations of Brexit ideology, but nor he does he see beyond them. He has not picked a side between reality and dogma, but stands awkwardly between them, in the churned-up bog of a political no man's land, sinking.

The Guardian

Patriots nailed Putin's hypersonic Kinzhal missile

Lewis Page

THERE'S much excitement around the world following the events of Monday night, in which Ukrainian air defences armed with US-made weapons reportedly neutralised a heavy Russian missile attack against Kyiv. In particular the attack apparently included six KH-47M2 Kinzhal ("Dagger") air-launched missiles, which are often described as "hypersonic", frequently with the added assertion that there is no defence against such weapons. All six were reportedly stopped by US-made Patriot air defence interceptors, though a Patriot installation was apparently damaged - perhaps by debris from a downed Russian weapon.

Another Kinzhal (referred to by Nato organisations, including the British defence ministry, using the reporting code name "Killjoy") was also shot down by a Patriot earlier this month. Monday's interceptions would seem to have confirmed that this was not simply a lucky shot, and the Patriot does indeed offer a strong defence against the Kinzhal and similar weapons. So, is the world different today? Can any nation in possession of Patriots or similar interceptors rest easy, unworried by the thought of hypersonic weapons - perhaps even, hypersonic nuclear weapons - in enemy

hands? The answer is yes and no: yes, the world is a little different today; and no, even if you have Patriot or similar you are not safe from enemy nukes or true hypersonics.

First let's take a look at the Kinzhal. It's really not much more than a modified air-launched version of the ground-launched Iskander short-range ballistic missile, which was developed in the 1980s and 1990s. The Iskander's rocket propulsion boosts it to speeds of around Mach 6 or 2,000 metres per second. It's been suggested that the Kinzhal is faster still at Mach 10 or 3,400 m/s. Hypersonic speed is generally said to begin from Mach 5 upwards so yes, technically these are indeed hypersonic weapons. It's very difficult to intercept and knock down an object travelling at this kind of speed, so the Patriot has indeed shown itself to be very capable. However when people in recent times speak of hypersonic weapons they generally mean ones which do not just travel at hypersonic speeds, but which can swerve and jink about while doing so, making themselves still harder to intercept. This class of weapon is often referred to as a "boost-glide" system, as it is often fired atop a booster rocket, possibly out of the atmosphere altogether, before making its manoeuvrable hypersonic descent to the target. Again,

there's nothing all that new about hypersonic boost-glide. The Nazis had drawing-boards plans to use related ideas to bomb the USA during WWII, and various boost-glide projects were set up during the early Cold War. The now-retired Space Shuttle, and subsequent unmanned spaceplanes now in operation by the US and China, are all examples of successful hypersonic boost-glide systems.

Boost-glide for delivering nukes fell out of favour, however, in the mid Cold War with the arrival of Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), whose warheads fall into the atmosphere to reach their targets travelling at Mach 20, perhaps 7,000 m/s. This was deemed to be so fast that nothing could possibly stop such a weapon. Once ICBMs began to be put on nuclear powered submarines, meaning that it would be impossible to locate them in order to knock them out in a sudden pre-emptive strike, the balance of terror seemed to be assured.

The world could rest safe in the knowledge that no nation would launch a nuclear first strike, as the enemy's ICBMs would respond and nothing could stop them. This balance began to be somewhat upset, however, as long ago as the 1980s. The US in particular began making

somewhat serious efforts at defence against inbound ICBMs. This had various effects, one of which was to stimulate the Soviets and then the Russians into looking at ways of making their ICBMs harder to stop. In particular they began working to replace the warheads with manoeuvrable hypersonic glide versions which would be harder to intercept. This work took a very long time due to the financial and political troubles that beset Russia through the 1990s and 2000s, but at last in 2018 Vladimir Putin (at the same time he introduced the Kinzhal and other supposedly "new" Cold War era weapons) announced that the "Avangard" hypersonic glide vehicle was in production and ready to go into service atop Russian ICBMs. Avangards reportedly descend at Mach 20, swerving and jinking as they come, which should mean they can beat any interceptors they might face. China has also carried out work and flight tests aimed at deployment of such weapons.

Another effect of the US missile-defence aspirations of the 1980s and 1990s was to greatly alarm the kind of people who would really like to ban all nuclear weapons but have reluctantly accepted that isn't going to happen. People like that were very worried

that missile-defence would upset the safe balance of terror: they thought that an America with working defences might be tempted to eliminate Russia, or that the prospect of such defences might push Russia into making a first strike while it still could. Missile defence technology had its first trial as early Patriots were used to defend against Scud ballistic missiles launched by Saddam Hussein in 1991. This led to a massive disagreement about the Patriot's effectiveness in which then US President George H W Bush claimed it was 97 per cent effective, the US Army claimed rates between 40 and 80 per cent, and the famous anti-missile-defence activist Theodore Postol claimed it had not worked at all. Postol and members of his school of thought have since then been very effective in limiting how much money and effort the US has put into missile defences, helped by the fact that various missile-defence projects and programmes have indeed been prone to exaggerate the effectiveness of their equipment. Today the US National Missile Defence effort is explicitly limited to defence against the sort of attack that might be mounted by a rogue state such as North Korea: it is specifically forbidden to work on things which might be able to stop Russia's vast ICBM force,

to avoid panicking Vladimir Putin.

This has meant that to be quite honest, Putin doesn't really need the Avangard or its like: he can blow up America and its allies whenever he wants, as long as he's willing to accept Russia becoming a lake of molten glass in its turn. Putin will still be unpleasantly surprised to find, however, that today's Patriots can knock down Kinzhals.

The Kinzhal may not be a true swerving-and-jinking Mach 20 Avangard, but it is Mach 10 and it is claimed to have some manoeuvrability: it would need at least a bit to make precise strikes, of course. One of the things which might turn the Ukraine war around for Putin would be the ability to suppress Ukrainian air defences, so permitting his powerful air force to dominate Ukrainian skies as it has so far completely failed to do. It now seems clear that even Russia's best standoff weapons have little chance of achieving this.

And it won't just be Vladimir finding Monday night's events upsetting. Taiwan has the Patriot too. It seems likely that Xi Jinping will be setting up a talk with the head of the People's Liberation Army Rocket Forces to find out just which of his weapons now seem likely to be effective in any future invasion attempt.

The Tories should embrace national conservatism

YOU can't have missed this week's National Conservatism (NatCon) conference in London. If you spend any time on social media, and regrettably many of us must, you will have seen that it sent the Left into a frenzy of a quite ludicrous nature. This gathering of conservative intellectuals and politicians left our opponents wailing and gnashing their teeth, with more steam coming out of their ears than the Flying Scotsman at full pelt.

That is not, of course, surprising. The Left, especially the online Left, seem to enjoy hating their enemies much more than they enjoy generating a positive vision for the future of the country. For them, anything out of their political comfort zone is "far-Right", especially if there are any Americans involved. Their ignorant, humourless bigotry should not be taken too seriously except as something to laugh at, for which purpose they provide plenty of material. Still, all this stigmatisation has its effect, and some of the non-British participants seemed a bit shaken by the degree of hostility. It may also have encouraged the Conservative Party leadership to keep its distance. Current Conservative parliamentary politics does not seem, shall we say, to be heavily characterised by the vigorous seeking out of new ideas to help us solve

Britain's problems. Indeed, any suggestion of an "ideology" or of fundamental principles seems to make many nervous. That may be why the messaging from Downing Street was of caution, even suspicion, effectively letting ministers who spoke know that on their own head be it.

That is a pity. Look beyond all this, as I hope most Telegraph readers will. The conference gathered together almost anyone who is anyone in the conservative intellectual world today. We had serious discussions about family policy, history and heritage, foreign policy, economics and much more - yes, including religion. The names of St Thomas Aquinas, Edmund Burke, or Sir Roger Scruton were much more in evidence in discussion than those of Viktor Orbán or Donald Trump. Indeed, the stronger critique of the conference might be, not that it was a rally, but that its rarified intellectual atmosphere was a long way from voters' concerns about the cost of living or the NHS. That may be true. But all the same there is a close connection between ideas and principles on the one hand, and the ability to deliver effective policy on the other. If you have no policy lodestar or sense of direction, then what you do in government will be dictated by tactics not strategy. The best

David Frost

way to get good ideas is to debate them - and what this conference showed was that there is a huge suppressed appetite for debate within conservatism more broadly. NatCon has tapped into that and it won't now go back into the box.

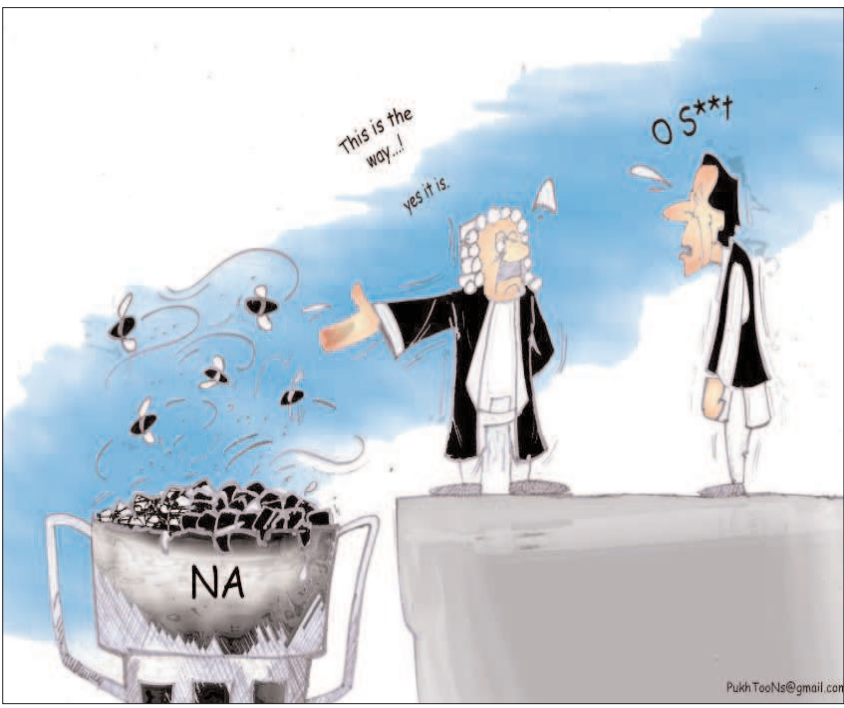
There were some differences of view, for example on the right balance between free markets on the one hand and industrial policy on the other, but they certainly weren't dominant. In fact, I think any interested but not particularly informed visitor would have come away thinking: "These people agree on most things." In particular, almost every speaker agreed on one big thing: that nation states mean something, indeed that they are the best way we have found for free peoples to govern their own affairs, and that not only their economic and productive strength but also their traditions and history matter in whether they succeed. The word "national" has tricky associations in Europe, but it is in this sense that we should understand it: about governing our own nation state effectively and creating a renewed sense of nationhood.

Certain policy consequences flow from this and were much spoken of at the conference. There was not much sympathy for the idea that Britain was best gov-

erned from outside our borders or that international institutions should have more influence on policy-making. Most agreed that current levels of migration were far too high. Many thought that current policies were driving disaffection and making it too hard for younger people to form families, have children and generally get on with their lives. And there was also a wish that our education and culture should put more emphasis on the history and achievements of this country, and less on the more bizarre fringes of modern ideology on race, sex, and gender, much of which is totally disconnected from any objective reality. I don't find any of these ideas to be unconservative, still less imports from the badlands of US Republicanism. Indeed my experience is that they are widely shared not only within the Conservative Party's membership but very broadly within the country, even if many people fear admitting it publicly lest the demons of cancel culture descend upon them.

National conservatism is not the whole story. But it can be an important part of conservatism for post-Brexit Britain - helping us govern our nation in a tried and tested conservative way. The Conservative Party should embrace it, and draw strength from it, not push it aside.

The Telegraph



It's time to confront

THE relationship between the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, long a contentious backdrop to the history of civil rights and anti-racist activism in America, is under new scrutiny after the bombshell news that a quote denigrating Malcolm X, published in Playboy and attributed to King, is apparently fraudulent.

In addition to forcing the world to confront its understanding of these defining leaders, this news, first reported by The Washington Post, also calls into question the credulity within which scholars and journalists have examined archival materials and other sources that make up the historical record.

This new information adds to the ongoing rethinking of the relationship between King and Malcolm X. Changing the way we consider their relationship helps us to reconsider the era that shaped both men as well as our own. For if King and Malcolm X were not on opposite sides of the political fence as is popularly remembered, what new insights and possibilities does that offer for contemporary America to navigate a path away from racial division toward truth, justice and reconciliation?

The quote in question comes from a 1965 article in Playboy, an interview with King conducted by journalist and author Alex Haley, best known for "The Autobiography of Malcolm X" and "Roots." In the Playboy interview, after asking King for his thoughts about Malcolm X, the following quote appeared: "And in his litany of articulating the despair of the Negro without offering any positive, creative alternative, I feel that Malcolm has done himself and our people a great disservice." King purportedly continued, "Fiery, demagogic oratory in the Black ghettos, urging Negroes to arm themselves and prepare to engage in violence, as he has done, can reap nothing but grief."

The revelation that this quotation - which was interpreted at the time and for years to come as evidence of a fissure between the two men and their approaches to civil rights - was fabricated by Haley comes from Jonathan Eig, author of "King: A Life," the first major biography of King in a generation (a book for which I offered advance praise). Eig's work makes great use of newly surfaced archival materials, dozens of interviews and a close reading of sources to offer a more nuanced portrait of King and the historical and material context that shaped him. Eig, through investigating what appeared to be an unedited 84-page transcript of the interview in the archives, found a different quote: "I have met Malcolm X, but circumstances didn't enable me to talk with him for more than a minute. I totally disagree with many of his political and philosophical views, as I understand them. He is very articulate, as you say. I don't want to seem to sound as if I feel so self-righteous, or absolutist, that I think I have the only truth, the only way. Maybe he does have some of the answer. But I know that I have so often felt that I wished that he would talk less of violence, because I don't think that violence can solve our problem. And in his litany of expressing the despair of the Negro,

Peniel E. Joseph

without offering a positive, creative approach, I think that he falls into a rut sometimes." Eig also noted that Malcolm X had on multiple occasions criticized King and his commitment to nonviolence (even going so far as to call him a "modern Uncle Tom") but said that his words often had "strategic purposes." As Eig told the Post, nowhere in the transcript does King dismiss Malcolm X as "fiery" or "demagogic" - these words were apparently Haley's, and their publication appears to be an extreme case of what Eig described as "journalistic malpractice" and a violation of ethics. This should not come as a complete shock. Haley had been accused of plagiarism after the publication of "Roots" - and his biographer later found that Haley's chronic search for financial stability as a freelance journalist affected his ethical compass.

The image of two Black men in opposition that the "Playboy" interview projected fit conveniently into a larger, deeply consequential historical narrative of the 1960s that pitted King and Malcolm X as combatants in an epochal struggle to be considered the true representative of the Black freedom struggle. In this version of the story, King is America's apostle of nonviolence, a moral exemplar whose "I Have a Dream" speech at the 1963 March on Washington helped usher in the Civil Rights and Voting Rights acts, climactic legislative achievements of the nation's Second Reconstruction.

Standing in opposition was Malcolm X, Harlem's hero and prophet of Black rage, who vowed to fight racist terror with anti-racist self-defense that journalists (apparently including his own biographer Haley) twisted into a full-throated embrace of violent revolution. This narrative made good copy, as Haley (who died in 1992) surely knew: page-turning gossip and great television. Except for the fact that it wasn't true. Haley helped to tell the world the story it wanted to read, at King and Malcolm X's expense. It wasn't the truth the world needed to hear. As Eig put it to the Post, "King was much more open-minded about Malcolm than we've tended to portray him." The fact that Haley, a moderate Black Republican during the civil rights era, seems to have misrepresented King's words, also forces us to question aspects of the authenticity of Malcolm X's "Autobiography," something that the Pulitzer Prize-winning historian Manning Marable did already in his important biography, "Malcolm X: A Life of Reinvention."

Marable's discovery that Haley had taken out three chapters that Malcolm X insisted on - which better explained his vision of Black nationalism, Pan-Africanism and political self-determination - helped to better contextualize the mainstream success of Haley's book. Of course, this is not to suggest that we stop teaching "The Autobiography of Malcolm X" since all memoir and autobiography is an act of literary creation. Eig's biography makes several crucial interventions in our understanding of King, in particular giving Coretta Scott King her due as a serious intellectual, thinker, strategist and political partner with her husband. In refusing to make King's many rough parts smooth, the new biography enables us to better appreciate his strength to love, moral courage, strategic use of nonviolence as a muscular, powerful and coercive force for good. We get the local, regional, national and global King - a figure shaped much more by the movement than previously considered. The complexity of his relationship to Malcolm X is handled judiciously.

My own recent dual biography of King and Malcolm X argued that much of the contemporary depiction of these two activists as diametrically opposed to one another missed the larger convergences, symmetries and influence upon one another. Eig's archival discovery offers further proof of the evolution of the relationship these men shared. This scholarship is rooted in the important work of thinkers and writers such as James Cone, Michael Eric Dyson, Farah Jasmine Griffin and Ula Taylor. The distorted narrative of King and Malcolm X extended even after their own deaths; Malcolm was assassinated in New York City in 1965 and King struck down in Memphis, Tennessee, three years later.

The stereotypes fed by Haley's false quote set in motion a legacy for both men that continues to this day - King as depicted by the annual (sanitized) celebrations that imagine him as many White Americans wish him to be, Malcolm X as the embodiment of Black radical violence, to be feared and stymied by the same White Americans who might quote King every year. The reality of these two men is, as Eig is the latest to reveal, far richer, more complex and necessary to understand. Revising our understanding of this past changes the way we comprehend the present, from the contemporary Black Lives Matter movement to the ongoing legacies of a more creatively disruptive Martin Luther King Jr. and a surprisingly vulnerable and humane Malcolm X. Balancing the bitter and beautiful parts of the relationship between King and Malcolm X helps us come to terms with past and contemporary historical traumas. Malcolm X is the most important Black working-class activist the US has ever produced; despite efforts by some to portray him as such, he was never a conventional racial separatist or anti-White activist. He embraced Black dignity as a universal struggle, told through the story of Black folk. He loved us unconditionally.

Over time, King embodied a quest for radical Black citizenship - one that went beyond civil and voting rights to include economic equality, decent housing, a guaranteed income and a living wage. He came to recognize that dignity and citizenship were dual sides of the same revolutionary coin, just as these two activists were. The historical Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X, while never the best of friends, found common ground through a mutual embrace of radical Black dignity and citizenship based on an unapologetic love for the global Black community. In this sense, theirs was a shared vision that ultimately transcended petty disagreement, personal egos and efforts to cast them as political combatants.

CNN

Thai PM candidate faces disqualification bid

THAILAND'S Election Commission is weighing a last-minute legal challenge to the pro-democracy front-runner in the country's race for prime minister in a case that could derail the political career of one of the military-backed government's fiercest critics. The complaint against Move Forward Party leader Pita Limjaroenrat bears strong echoes of the case that brought down another rising star of Thailand's gaining pro-democracy movement four years ago and set the stage for a wave of anti-government protests.

In both cases "it's the same legal provision," said Jade Donavanik, president of the law faculty at Thailand's College of Asian Scholars. That provision bars candidates for public office from holding shares in a mass media company. Days before Sunday's vote to fill Thailand's House of Representatives, a candidate for the ruling, pro-military Palang Pracharath party filed a case with the commission accusing Pita of holding shares in the inactive broadcaster iTV and of failing to disclose them among his assets.

Pita's party had been surging in opinion polls heading into Sunday's vote on a wave of mounting frustration with the government of Prayut Chan-ocha, an ex-army chief who seized power in a 2014 coup. Move Forward vowed to end military conscription, slash the defense budget and curb royal defamation laws that were landing hundreds of government critics in court or jail. Come election day, it won 152 of the 500 House seats up for grabs, the most of any party. And while Pita himself has topped opinion polls of whom the public wants for prime minister, the post will be filled, per Thai law, by an upcoming joint vote of the House and military-appointed Senate, which holds another 250 seats.

Zsombor Peter

Negotiations are ongoing among the parties that won seats in the House for a coalition that could win that vote. A decision by the Election Commission against Pita, and a subsequent conviction by the Constitutional Court, would force him out of parliament and out of the running.

Move Forward declined VOA's request for comment on the complaint, though Pita has previously denied wrongdoing. According to local media reports, he says he inherited the shares when his father died in 2006 and had tried but failed to find a buyer. He also denied failing to declare the shares. Khemthong Tonsakulrungrang, a legal scholar at Thailand's Chulalongkorn University, says the case seems to have little legal merit. He says the fact that iTV has been off the air for years renders moot the law's intended aim of denying candidates undue influence over public opinion, and that Pita's holdings, less than 1% of the company's total shares, fall well short of a controlling stake. Transferring inherited shares in a company going through a legal dispute, he added, as iTV still is, was also "almost impossible" in practice.

Still, Khemthong says the case does hold risk for Pita. "In a normal circumstance I would say it's low, but given Thailand's context I would say moderate," he said. "Unfortunately, the [Constitutional] Court and the Election Commission have already lost their credibility so much in Thai society," he added. "People [have] suspected for years, maybe over a decade, that the court has been compromised, has been politicized and become just a tool for the establishment faction to suppress the masses. And unfortunately, both the Election Commission and the Constitutional Court played into that narrative." Khemthong pointed to the case against former

lawmaker and Future Forward Party leader Thanathorn Juangroongruangkit as a prime example.

Future Forward had come out of virtually nowhere to score a surprise third-place finish in Thailand's 2019 elections. Like its successor, Move Forward, it was the loudest and sharpest voice in parliament demanding checks on the political sway of the country's powerful military and monarchy. As the party's charismatic young leader, Thanathorn was the beacon of a new generation of voters tired of the status quo. That November, following a probe by the Election Commission, the Constitutional Court convicted Thanathorn of holding shares in a media company, V-Luck. Though Thanathorn claimed to have transferred the shares to his mother before registering as a candidate, the court said he had failed to offload them in time and stripped him of his seat in the House. Public protests soon followed, and they swelled the next year as the court prosecuted, and ultimately dissolved, Future Forward itself over an illegal campaign loan, banning Thanathorn and other party leaders from politics for the next decade. It was the third pro-democracy party the court had dissolved in the past 12 years.

The complaint against Pita could potentially ensnare Move Forward as well. It asks the Election Commission to consider whether all the party's candidates for Sunday's poll were even eligible to run, given that Pita was the one who, as party leader, legally certified them. Jade, of the College of Asian Scholars, said the broader case against Move Forward seems weak, and would hinge on whether Pita knew he was unqualified to endorse the candidates, which he added, seemed a stretch. But he believes the case against Pita himself is more complicated.

Pita does seem to be holding the shares in some capacity, Jade said, but whether he was holding them all nominally for his father's heirs or some for himself could make a difference.

"No one can raise this issue if there is no fact and there is no reality that they really hold on to the shares. If someone raised this issue and the EC said, 'I don't care about it,' then the EC would be under [suspicion] themselves, so they have to do it," he said, meaning investigate the claims. That the timing of the case could work in the government's favor by knocking Pita out of the race for prime minister, Jade added, does not mean it has no merit. "When the time comes, and when it's an advantageous step for them, then they can do it. Yes, of course I would also say that it's quite political, but it's also legal. They use the legal provision at a time that is politically advantageous for them," he said.

The Election Commission did not reply to VOA's request for comment. According to local media, commission Chair Ittiporn Boonpracong told reporters Monday that the claims against Pita had been investigated. He did not say whether the commission had reached a decision, or whether the case would be sent on to the Constitutional Court. Khemthong believes Move Forward's election success actually could work in its favor. If prosecuting Thanathorn and Future Forward while in opposition could set off more than a year of unrest that drew tens of thousands of angry protesters to the streets, he said, any ruling to block Pita or Move Forward while on the cusp of seizing power could do even more. "The clash, the tension would be much worse. I think that factors ... in the court's calculation," he said. "After this election it becomes very clear that the party is hugely popular and to do anything to tamper with the party or its leader has consequence."

VOA

Japan, S Korea aim to strengthen ties at G7

THE top leaders of Japan and South Korea will try to maintain momentum toward improved relations when they meet on the sidelines of a Group of Seven summit that begins Friday in Hiroshima. Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida will meet South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol on Sunday, the final day of the three-day gathering, according to South Korean officials. South Korea is not a member of the G-7 group of advanced democracies but was invited by Kishida as an observer, along with the leaders of several other non-G-7 states.

It will be the third recent meeting between Yoon and Kishida, who are charging ahead with expanded security and economic cooperation despite domestic pushback in each country. Japan-South Korea ties have long been strained by disagreements related to Japan's brutal 1910-45 occupation of Korea. The stakes are high. Strong ties between Japan and South Korea, both key US allies, could reshape the security landscape in Northeast Asia at a time of rising concern over China's more assertive behavior and North Korea's expanding nuclear arsenal. Yoon and Kishida have chosen to focus on shared challenges first, rather than wait for contentious historical disputes to be resolved. A senior official in the Japanese Prime Minister's Office defended the approach, saying cooperation on defense and economic issues will ideally "create

a more positive atmosphere" in both countries that could eventually allow for progress in other more sensitive areas. Tokyo is optimistic, in part because Yoon is only one year through his five-year presidential term, said the Japanese official, who spoke to a small group of reporters on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to speak publicly on the matter. Yoon has pushed ahead with his Japan outreach, despite it being broadly unpopular with South Koreans.

South Korean critics say the relationship cannot be mended without more steps by Japan to address past abuses. But many Japanese conservatives oppose any further conciliatory measures, saying Tokyo should not be forced to continue apologizing for its history. Ties plummeted in 2018 after South Korea's Supreme Court ordered Japanese companies to pay reparations to South Koreans forced to work as slave laborers during the colonial era. Japan rejected the ruling, insisting all compensation issues were resolved when the two countries established relations in 1965. Each country then imposed a series of retaliatory measures that affected trade and military cooperation, ultimately driving Japan-South Korea relations to their lowest level in decades.

Ties were stagnant until March, when Yoon unveiled a plan to compensate forced labor victims via a private foundation funded by South Korean - not Japanese - companies. Almost

immediately, both sides began lifting trade and other restrictions. Yoon and Kishida restored the practice of making regular visits to each other's countries. Trilateral cooperation among Japan, South Korea, and the United States has also expanded - especially on issues related to North Korea. According to multiple reports, Japan and South Korea are nearing an agreement to connect their radars via a US system to more effectively share information during North Korean missile launches. Much depends on Yoon's political troubles at home. Opinion polls suggest about 60% of South Koreans oppose the Japan outreach. That means added pressure for Yoon, whose approval rating is hovering in the low 30% range.

A key test for Yoon will come next April, when South Korea holds a legislative election widely expected to serve as a referendum on his presidency. Though South Korean presidents cannot run for reelection, some analysts think Yoon may have less foreign policy flexibility if he cannot deliver a victory for his ruling conservative party. Many South Korean commentators say public opinion could change if Kishida showed more contrition about the past.

During a visit to Seoul earlier this month, Kishida said his "heart hurts" when he thinks of the suffering and pain experienced by Koreans during Japanese colonial rule, but stopped short of issuing a fresh

apology. Yoon and Kishida will have an opportunity to address historical issues when they visit a Hiroshima memorial that honors Korean victims of the 1945 US atomic bomb attack. More than 30,000 Koreans - many of them forced laborers - are estimated to have died in the attack.

This will be the first time South Korean and Japanese leaders have jointly visited the memorial, lending the move symbolic significance. "I think it represents a sincere gesture related to the suffering of the Hiroshima atomic bomb victims, as well as the forced labor victims," said a South Korean foreign ministry official who was not authorized to speak publicly about the matter. However, all public evidence suggests Kishida will move cautiously on historical issues. That approach could partly be explained by his past experience with attempts to improve relations with Seoul. As foreign minister in 2015, Kishida played a major role in negotiating a settlement related to Japan's wartime sexual slavery of women - a deal that was effectively nullified by South Korea when a liberal president later took office. But despite proceeding slowly on history, Yoon and Kishida may be able to sustain diplomatic momentum based on the "imperatives of geopolitics," said Daniel Snider, a lecturer at Stanford University and specialist in Korea-Japan relations. But, he said: "That leaves historical issues like buried landmines, not far from the surface and ready to be set off."

Important Notice

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

Exponential surge in illicit cigarettes may lead to business shutdown: PTC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Tobacco Company (PTC) on Saturday said that an exponential increase in illicit cigarettes may lead to a business shutdown.

The official of PTC told the media in Jhelum that a steep decline in the volumes of the legitimate industry and a sharp increase in the sales of illicit cigarettes are being witnessed. "The impact of rising excise rates is now becoming evident in the market", he added.

The excise increase in February 2023 coupled with the lack of enforcement has amplified the sale of illicit cigarettes including Duty Not Paid (DNP) and smuggled cigarettes.

Sharing the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) recent data, he said volumes produced by the legitimate Tobacco Industry had declined by 50 percent in March 2023, which is the first month of sales after the exponential excise rate increase in February, whereas the total Large-Scale Manufacturing decline was half of the tobacco industry at 25 percent.

The impact has also been witnessed throughout the year whereas during the

period June 2022 to March 2023, the legitimate tobacco industry suffered a huge loss in production of 24%, three times the size of what the LSM sector witnessed.

This impact has led to the down-trading of consumers from legitimate cigarette brands to tax-evaded cheaper options, which are locally manufactured DNP cigarettes and undocumented, smuggled cigarettes.

Since January 2023, the volumes of DNP cigarettes and smuggled cigarettes have shot up by 32.5% and 67% respectively. This has led to the illicit sector growing to upwards of 42.5% of the total market.

In 2022-23, the share of the legitimate tobacco sector was 41.4 billion sticks while the illicit sector's share was 41.6 billion sticks.

However, after a recent irrational hike in FED on the tobacco industry, it is projected that the share of the legitimate tobacco sector in 2023-24 will be 29.6 billion sticks while the illicit cigarette share will reach 53.4 billion sticks in 2023-24. This means that 11.8 billion sticks will shift to illicit cigarettes.

Dispelling the impression created by so-called

NGOs that the illicit cigarette industry share is only 9-18 percent, PTC officials said that the figures of such non-existent NGOs have no relevance. All these figures are neither authentic nor backed by any actual market research.

Senior Business Development Manager, PTC Qasim Tariq shared that because of a more than 200% increase in excise in February 2023, it will be the first time in the history of the country that the tax loss caused by the illicit sector in the fiscal year will be more than the legitimate industry's contribution to the national exchequer.

If the current fiscal regime prevails, damage to the national exchequer, as well as the legitimate industry, will be immense and hard decisions will have to be taken.

A key initiative to curb illicit trade was the implementation of Track & Trace in the tobacco industry, however, despite multiple directives by the Prime Minister for across-the-board implementation of Track and Trace nationwide, it remains a distant dream.

Local manufacturers continue to flout the rules

and regulations of the country with impunity.

This is further fuelled by advertising and promotion campaigns by illicit manufacturers by offering cash prizes, giveaways, and merchandise to consumers, which is prohibited. An aggressive and effective enforcement campaign must be undertaken to curb this menace.

Tariq shared that the company has informed the FBR that it is exploring the option of re-exporting four of its machines in its manufacturing units owing to the loss of sales volume by the legitimate industry. Fiscal interventions and enforcement must go hand-in-hand to control the growing menace of the illicit sector.

As per the latest industry standards, if all conditions remain the same, the illicit sector will approximately double in comparison to the legitimate sector by next year. This will not only have irreconcilable losses for the legitimate industry but also for the country due to job losses and reduced investment at a time when the country is already facing intense financial constraints.



PESHAWAR: Members of Local Honey Beekeepers and Honey Traders Association hold placards during a walk at Tarnab Honey Market to mark World Bee Day. — F.P. photo by Ghual Murtaza

Gold prices increase by Rs2700

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs2700 and was sold at Rs235,300 on Saturday against its sale at Rs232,600 the previous day, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs2,315 to Rs201,732 from Rs199,417, whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs184,920 from Rs182,800.

The price of per tola silver and that of ten-gram silver remained unchanged to close at Rs2850 and Rs2443.41 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by US\$ 13 to \$1977 against its sale at \$1964, the association reported.

Rehan congratulates Riazuddin

SIALKOT (APP): Chairman Board of Governors (BoGs) University of Sialkot (USKT) Faisal Manzoor and Executive Director Muhammad Rehan Younas congratulated the Sialkot business community leader, Riazuddin Sheikh, on receiving 'Sitara-e-Imtiaz' from the Government of Pakistan during a special ceremony.

President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry and industrialist Abdul Ghafoor Malik, Senior Vice President SCICI Wahub Jahangir, Chairman Sialkot International Airport Limited Khawaja Masood Akhtar, former SCICI presidents, SVPs, VPs, Dean University of Sialkot Dr Muhammad Aslam Dar and a large number of business personalities attended the ceremony.

The SCICI president told the ceremony that Riazuddin Sheikh receiving Sitara-e-Imtiaz award was an acknowledgment of his 40 years of selfless services for the business community and regional development.

Honey traders observe World Bee Day

PESHAWAR (APP): Local Honey Beekeepers and Honey Traders Association organized a walk at Tarnab Honey Market here to mark World Bee Day here on Saturday.

The theme of the World Bee Day 2023 was "Bee engaged in pollinator-friendly agricultural production", which calls for global action to support pollinator-friendly agricultural production and highlights the importance of protecting bees and other pollinators, particularly through evidence-based agricultural production practices.

Talking on the occasion,

president of the Honey Beekeepers & Honey Traders Association Naem Qasmi demanded of the government to cultivate honey captive plants in maximum numbers to increase honey production in the country.

He further called for the cultivation of such plants on the tracks along motorways and China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) routes to bring a manifold increase in honey production to export them and earn precious foreign exchange for the country.

He said that last year, the honey dealers bore huge

losses due to a decrease in demand in the international market.

He said presently, they are exporting honey to only Gulf States particularly Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and urged the government to make efforts to get access to European and US markets and turn their business profitable.

Qasmi further called for the imposition of a ban on the cutting of berry and Palosa plants and encouragement of the plantation of other trees and flowers bearing plants to increase the production of honey.

ThinkPVC making waves in construction industry

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The thinkPVC, a unique concept store and one-stop solution for sustainable construction products in Pakistan, is creating momentum in the industry with its innovative and eco-friendly products. The Company recently participated as a Conference Sponsor of the 18th International IAPEX Exhibition 2023 in Karachi, where it showcased latest products and solutions for the construction sector.

The exhibition was attended by some of the most renowned architects

in the country, including A. Shahid Abdullah, Ali Naqvi, Aziz, Zehra, as well as young students from the Indus Valley School of Architecture. Together, they showcased a range of PVC-inclusive sustainable structures, designed to provide flood resilience housing.

One of the highlights of the exhibition was thinkPVC's SPC (Stone Plastic Composite) flooring, which proved to be an indulgent experience for the architects. They were enticed by the product's utility and characteristics and praised its durability,

water resistance, and eco-friendliness.

PVC is a versatile material that offers a wide range of sustainable solutions for the construction industry, thinkPVC is leading the way by offering innovative, made-in-Pakistan products that are both eco-friendly and affordable.

"We are proud to be at the forefront of the sustainable construction movement in Pakistan," said Muhammad Idrees, Director thinkPVC and Chief Commercial Officer of Engro Polymer & Chemicals. "Our products are not

only environmentally friendly, but also designed to withstand the toughest conditions. We are committed to providing our customers with the best quality products that will stand the test of time," he added.

The participation of thinkPVC in the 18th International IAPEX Exhibition 2023 is a testament to the Company's commitment to innovation and sustainability. With its cutting-edge products and solutions, thinkPVC is poised to make a significant impact in the construction industry in Pakistan and beyond.

Next federal budget must encourage businesses: PBF

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) Saturday suggested the government to take effective austerity measures in the public sectors and prepare the next federal budget in a way that encourages business activities in the country.

PBF President Mian M Usman Zulfiqar stated this while sharing the budget proposals with the media here. Forum's Vice Presidents Jahanara Wattoo, Chaudhry Ahmad Jawad and core committee members also accompanied him.

Mian Usman stressed the need for establishing export warehouses at the borders to uplift trade with neighboring countries and incorporating the agriculture and service sectors into the tax net.

In an effort to increase

the GDP growth up to six per cent, the budget makers would have to broaden the tax base and reduce tax rates enabling Pakistani products to have a competitive edge in the global market, he added. "We want jobs creation by strengthening industry; broadening of tax base through lowering rate; and introducing viable policies to attract foreign investment," he added.

During the last three decades, he said, it was only three times when Pakistan's economy grew by more than five per cent i.e. during 2003-2006, 2016-2018 and 2021-22. The industrial production could be increased by realising the full potential of information technology, he said, citing that digital finance potential of Pakistan could be US\$36 billion in next four years thus giving a seven per cent boost to GDP and generating four million new jobs.

The PBF president was of the view that real fact was a lack of realisation as the

world business patterns had changed and Pakistan had made no efforts to adjust to those realities. "If the country wants to have a higher growth rate, it would have to adopt new innovative ways in the post-pandemic world as is being done by other countries, which are expecting a fast V-shaped recovery. We need to bring our digital infrastructure at par with other fast developing

countries, besides adopting new technologies and implementing e-government solutions," he suggested.

Similarly, PBF recommended the government to abolish the Super Tax, which was imposed on companies earning more than Rs150 million last year and the cement, steel, sugar, oil, gas, fertilizers, textiles, automobiles, tobacco, and other industries were among them.

Court Notice

In the Court of Fazzal Gul ADJ-IV Kohat, Appeal No. 83/14.MCA, date of hearing 10-06-2023, titled "Akhter Munir Vs. Shoaib (etc)" Notice against: - (19) Ibrahim Khan Husband Mst. Shabnam Akhter (20) Noor Rehman (21) Noor Shahid (22) Janghir Khan Shons of Shahzad Mir Lrs Takmila (Lrs. Yahyah Khan) (28) Muhammad Jan (29) Muhammad Iqbal Khan Shons of Zakria Khan R/o Dhok Zakria Khan Dakhli Shadi Khel District Kohat, presently R/o now in Abroad Saudi Arabia (Respondents) whereas the above plaintiff has instituted a Appeal against you Respondents in which date of hearing 10-06-2023 is fixed for your appearance since your intimation/service is not possible through ordinary means/mode, therefore you Respondents is intimated through this publication to appear before this court by person or by pleader on date fixed 10-06-2023 otherwise court shall be proceeded in accordance with law. Order Issued on 17-05-2023 (Court of ADJ-IV Kohat).

Court Notice

In the Court of Fazzal Gul ADJ-IV Kohat, Appeal No. 74/13.CA, date of hearing 31-05-2023, titled "Said Malang Vs. Akhter Gul", Notice against: - (5) Khoga Jan S/o Malik Jan R/o Jarma Kohat, presently R/o now in Bahrain (6) Sabir S/o Khoga Jan R/o Jamma Kohat, presently R/o now in Dubai UAE (Respondents) whereas the above plaintiff has instituted a Appeal against you Respondents in which date of hearing 31-05-2023 is fixed for your appearance since your intimation/service is not possible through ordinary means/mode, therefore, you Respondents is intimated through this publication to appear before this court by person or by pleader on date fixed 31-05-2023 otherwise Court shall be proceeded in accordance with law. Order issued on 04-05-2023 (Court of ADJ-IV Kohat).

Khawaja Wajih-u-Din

There is no universally agreed international definition of the youth age group. For statistical purposes, however, the United Nations—without prejudice to any other definitions made by Member States—defines 'youth' as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years. In 2010 the figure for those aged 24 or less was 62.19%. In Pakistan more than 64 percent of the country's population is below the age of 30 while 29 percent is between 15 to 29 years.

Due to endemic poverty, the majority of youth in Pakistan do not have the opportunity to experience a childhood. Male youth literacy rate is estimated to be 53 per cent and female youth literacy rate is even lower at 42 per cent, while 15 per cent of the youth is unemployed. Pakistan has one of the lowest literacy rates in the world and the second largest out of school population (22.8 million children) after Nigeria. Only 68% of Pakistani children finish primary school education.

Every person on the street acts like an angry young man. Anger is a normal response to frustration. In addition to frustration, Carefree and casual attitude, lack of balance and not taking things seriously are other traits common in the society. I don't think

that there are a lot of people in the country who read books. These are the classic characteristics of a young man in Pakistan.

Despite having a lot of energy and natural abilities, Pakistan's youth seem to have no way to channelize that energy positively. The youth is loaded with brilliance without any guidance. In view of no guidance available to them, both at home or any institution, youth of today in Pakistan is like an unguided missile.

Typically, children in Pakistan are brought up in a manner which is detrimental to positive personality development. Not many of them get to choose what they want to become in life. Instead parents resort to pressure tactics to force the child to choose a career as per the parent's choice. Mostly Parents don't spend quality time with their children. Everyone seems to be occupied with the mobile set.

The ability to differentiate between right and wrong is an essence to a fair and just society. Majority of the parents are unable to teach the youth the basic lessons of social justice, humanity, ethics, morality and the difference between right and wrong. Hence the trend of extremism in the society. Moral and ethical principles are the basics which are always taught at home. There are many questions which erupt in a person's mind after

being exposed to the social media. In most of the cases, the quarries remain unanswered. Unanswered childhood queries stop a person's intellectual growth.

There is apparent trust deficit. The goods and services of the Jewish lobby get promoted because we do not trust our own brands. Despite using the title for a soft drink as "Makhacola" "could not find market amongst the youth or click with the people. According to the youth the reason is simple. The quality provided by the above stated lobby is never compromised. It is always hygienic, pure and non-adulterated. The youth strongly feel that the society is unjust. Rich and powerful people get away with anything. It is also felt on the streets that delay defeat equity. The youth suffer from learned helplessness. Everyone feels that he cannot change anything so why try.

We as a society suffer from scarcity mentality. The Youth are no exception. Those who are at the helm of affairs think that they are entitled to more and more facilities without actually doing what they should be doing as per law. The youth also feels that people who indulge into flattery get respect and resources. In comparison the one who is straight and honest is not rewarded for his hard work.

One young boy in one of

the schools told me that we teach our poor class to be patient and give them no opportunity to excel. He further stated that nobody cares two hoots if you are poor and under privileged. He elaborated that only selective portion of the belief system is followed by everybody. The youth only does those things which are fine for them and ignore those which are not.

It seems we have a dual sense of judgment, that is double criteria. The youth has different thought process for males and females. The most difficult observation is seems to be that the youth is not proud of their country. In fact it is fact it is very alarming.

The youth feels that they are not responsible not answerable to anyone. Naturally there are expectations of the parents associated with their children but if a good job is not landed by a young man he is not prepared to start with a small one. We also lack willing workers in the youth and professionalism is missing. Similarly, the will to work hard is missing, it seems that the youth believe in cult followings. They are highly emotional and lack sense of purpose. 3 in 4 Pakistanis (75%) claim not to read any books at all; only 9% are avid readers.

According to a survey available online 3 in 4 Pakistanis (75%) claim not to read any books at all;

only 9% are avid readers. Excessive use of mobiles phones and internet have resulted into a lot of Unnecessary, undesirable and useless information. In fact vulgarity has spread amongst the youth beyond expectations. Social media has caused more harm to the youth than any other segment of the society.

Lack of proper sexual education has resulted into frustration. It's a taboo in Pakistan to talk about sex. Very rarely parents talk to the children on such a sensitive issue. Mostly on trial and error methods this education is acquired. Excessive and unguided use of social and electronic media results into mental and physical unrest. This unrest is translated into sexual crimes where even young children are not spared.

On the other hand, the lucky ones who get a chance to be educated are faced with a Redundant curriculum. It is not meant to enhance skills nor it outshines natural abilities. Due to inessential syllabus employment opportunities are very rare. Hence unemployment is all time high. Drug Use along with use of banned substances is one of the dilemmas faced by the younger generation. Other common teenage problems that youth face today are usually related to: Stress, Depression, Drinking and Smoking.

Now the question is

what are the ways through which an ordinary person can help improve young people's life. You can start by Mentoring a young person. Everybody can chip in if he or she starts to teach at your local school or online. If you can't do anything you can always volunteer at a local school for the time that you can afford. I have seen and observed retired people as volunteers doing the basic duties of discipline maintenance and administration etc in the developed world. If they can do it we can do it too.

It would always be preferable if you do the Vountier work in the school for the underprivileged. By doing so you are giving them a chance to compete with the privileged class. I will especially be requesting the retired officers to please dedicate some time to pay back the Society which has given them so much. Please try and spread a ray of hope. Try to promote ethics and morality.

We need to follow Merit to ensure that positive conducive environment is created in every working place. If working environment is provided Pakistan's youth can flourish as they do when they go abroad. What we Should be more worried about is the despair and despondency of the youth of our beloved nation. All of us should be ready to play our part. Be It very small.



In brief

Imran Khan Cricket Ground sealed

KARACHI (INP): The district administration on Saturday sealed a cricket ground in Karachi's Gulshan-e-Iqbal area, named after Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan. According to details, the district administration sealed the Imran Khan cricket ground — which was established by former PTI MNA Alamgir Khan. In a statement, the district administration said that the construction was carried out through MNA's development fund as the cricket ground is owned by District Municipal Corporations (DMC). "The ground authorities have not taken district administration's approval for the name," it said, adding that the boards will also be demolished in this regard.

Dar reveals best modern-day captain

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Renowned Pakistan-based umpire Aleem Dar picked wicketkeeper batter Sarfaraz Ahmed as the best modern-day Pakistan captain. Dar, while speaking on ARY News' show Bouncer, was asked to pick the best Pakistan captain during his prolonged umpiring career. He, in response, acknowledged all of Pakistan's modern-day captains which included Shahid Afridi, Misbah-ul-Haq, Mohammad Hafeez, Sarfaraz Ahmed and Babar Azam but revealed that the wicketkeeper batter had the edge over the rest due to his decision-making abilities. "I believe every one of them had different qualities but if someone had superior game awareness and better captaincy skills then it was Sarfaraz," shared Dar. "I think a wicketkeeper is a better decision-maker because he is well aware of what the bowler is bowling and that is why I think it is very important that a wicketkeeper should be the captain," he added. Aleem Dar further shared his opinion regarding Babar Azam's captaincy and claimed that he is also performing well but highlighted the importance of having a good team performance. "Babar is also performing well but if there is no teamwork and you are performing well [individually] or doing captaincy [is not that important] and hence I believe having a good team [performance] is the most important thing," stated Dar. It is worth mentioning here that Sarfaraz Ahmed is considered one of the most successful Pakistan captains as the side won the ICC Champions Trophy 2017 under his leadership. He also led Pakistan to 11 successive T20I series victories amid his tenure.

Halep charged with second anti-doping breach

LONDON (Agencies): Two-time Grand Slam champion Simona Halep has been charged with a second doping offence over "irregularities in her athlete biological passport". The Romanian, 31, has been suspended since October after testing positive for a banned substance at the US Open. Her additional charge is separate to the one she is already suspended for. Halep said on Instagram she feels "helpless facing such harassment" and denies the charges, suggesting she has been "a victim of a contamination". The athlete biological passport programme collects and compares biological data to spot discrepancies over time that suggest possible doping.



LONDON: Tottenham Hotspur's Harry Kane, celebrates with a teammate after scoring his side's first goal of the game during the English Premier League soccer match between Tottenham Hotspur and Brentford.

34th National Games: Pak Army wins title of baseball event

QUETTA (APP): The Pak Army defeated Pak Wapda by 15 to 0 runs in the 5th innings, to secure 1st position and win Gold Medal in the baseball event of the ongoing 34th National Games being held in Quetta on Saturday.

Pak Wapda fetched 2nd Position with Silver Medal while HEC secured 3rd Position with Bronze Medal in the Tournament.

Earlier, the Chief guest, Chaudhary Yaqoob, Vice President of the Pakistan Olympic Association, lauded the Balochistan Govt, especially its Sports

Department, for getting assembled athletes from across the country including the far-flung areas in Balochistan under one platform for the mega National Event.

"It is an excellent effort in the current situation when the nation is faced with a tense situation due to unprecedented economic issues and other challenges.

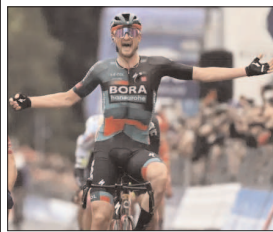
"It will help promote brotherhood among the people of all provinces and bring them closer and unite them, he said. The Pakistan Olympic

Association Secretary General Khalid Mahmood said that currently the event is being held in peaceful and relaxed atmospheres due to best coordination efforts and due to the excellent security arrangements for the mega-events, which has enabled the athletes to focus on the game and performance at their best.

He was all praise for the Balochistan govt for the provision of the best arrangements and excellent security to the sports persons who are in Quetta for the National Games.

Denz wins another Giro stage

CASSANO MAGNAGO (AP): Nico Denz sprinted to his second victory in the Giro d'Italia after almost celebrating too early, while Bruno Armirail became the first Frenchman to wear the pink jersey in this century.



Denz lifted his arms in celebration as he crossed the line at the end of the 14th stage on Saturday but he appeared not to have spotted Derek Gee on his right. However, the German cyclist managed to pip Gee by half a wheel.

Denz, who rides for Bora-Hansgrohe, won Thursday's 12th stage for his first victory in a Grand Tour, in his sixth Giro. "I was satisfied already after the first one and I told people to wake me up because this can't be true, this must be a dream," Denz said. "I don't understand really what's going on right now to be honest."

Alberto Bettiol was third, while the general classification riders rolled across the line more than 21 minutes behind Denz at the end of another cold and rainy stage.

That moved Armirail into pink and gave previous leader Geraint Thomas a night off from podium celebrations and news conferences, and an early recovery ahead of a tough day in the mountains.

Armairail became the first French cyclist to wear the maglia rosa since Laurent Jalabert in 1999. The Groupama-FDJ rider has an advantage of 1 minute, 41 seconds over Thomas, and Primo Roglic was two seconds further back.

"The plan this morning was more about the stage win," Armairail said. "We thought one day the maglia rosa could be up for grabs. But we didn't think it would be today. "I had tried on the fourth stage and I was disappointed that I wasn't on a good day. Only once Thomas crossed the line it became a reality in my mind but it's hard to realize ... it's a dream, I can't believe it."

There was one top-category climb near the start at Sierre as the race headed from Switzerland back across to Italy and an almost entirely flat rest of the 193-kilometer (120-mile) route to Cassano Magnago.

A large breakaway of 29 riders eventually escaped on the approach to the climb. Four riders got away from that bunch with about 60 kilometers remaining but they were caught by the chasing group shortly before the line.

"We put in a massive, massive effort to come back in the last 10K," Denz said. "Everyone was going full, everyone wanted to go for the victory and not for fourth place. Everyone was looking at each other.

"But I thought, I already have a win so I don't want to do fourth — either I win or I don't care. Then I just go all in to the line and here I am again." Armairail was 53 seconds behind and faced an anxious wait for the general classification group.

Kane scores again but future at Tottenham uncertain

LONDON (AP): Harry Kane scored a goal and lost the game in perhaps his final home appearance for Tottenham.

The England captain, who again has been linked with an off-season move away from Tottenham, curled home after an indirect free kick in the eighth minute only for Bryan Mbeumo to score twice and set up another goal in the second half for Brentford in its 3-1 win in the Premier League on Saturday.

Tottenham might now struggle to qualify for any European competition for next season, having come into the game in seventh place — the division's only qualifying spot for the third-tier Europa Conference League.

Brentford stayed in ninth place but is only one point behind Tottenham ahead of the teams' final games of the season next weekend.

Kane's 28th league goal this season was perhaps his best of the campaign as he picked out the top corner with a 25-meter shot after Dejan Kulusevski rolled the ball backward with the sole of his foot at a free kick. It put Kane eight goals behind the league's top scorer, Erling Haaland.

Kane will be 30 years old by the time next season

starts. With only one year left on his contract, he and Tottenham might decide this summer is the time to part ways to give the club a chance to get some money for its star player and for him to get a better opportunity for trophies.

"Speculation is speculation," said interim Tottenham manager Ryan Mason, whose latest short-term stint in charge is likely to end after the trip to Leeds on May 28. "We do have an important game against Leeds and there will be conversations. There are massive decisions to make but we can't look too far ahead. That's after the last game of the season and those conversations will definitely happen."

Kane was joined by the rest of the squad in coming back out onto the field at Tottenham Hotspur Stadium for the end-of-season lap of appreciation, when he was also awarded the club's player of the season award from fans.

By then, the majority of home supporters had left, with Tottenham having slipped to a fifth loss in its last seven games. Mbeumo cut in from the left for both of his goals, in the 50th and 62nd minutes, and then led a counterattack before setting up Yoane Wissa for a composed finish to seal victory

for Brentford in the 88th.

Manchester United in sight of Champions League return after 1-0 win at Bournemouth: Manchester United is in touching distance of a return to the Champions League after beating Bournemouth 1-0 on Saturday to strengthen its place in the top four of the Premier League.

The win — sealed by Casemiro's close-range overhead kick in the ninth minute — moved United three points clear of fifth-place Liverpool, which drew 1-1 with Aston Villa and only has one game left to play.

United only requires a point from its final two games, at home to Chelsea and Fulham, to get back into the Champions League after a one-season absence. That would be yet another positive for United in a strong first season under Dutch coach Erik ten Hag, who has already guided the team to the English League Cup trophy as well as a spot in the FA Cup final against Manchester City on June 3. Being in the Champions League should see United attract bigger names in the off-season transfer window, while adding more value to a club that is up for sale and the subject of offers from Qatar and British billionaire Jim Ratcliffe.

8 Pakistani cricketers to feature in UK's T20 Vitality Blast

BIRMINGHAM (Monitoring Desk): As many as eight Pakistani players will feature in this year's edition of the Vitality Blast that is set to commence from Saturday (today) at Birmingham's Edgbaston stadium.

This will be the 21st edition of the tournament which was the first precision T20 league when it started in June 2003 as the Twenty20 Cup.

Pakistan's ace fast bowler Shaheen Shah Afridi, experienced pacer Hasan Ali, stylish left-hand opening batsman Shan Masood, all-rounder Shadab Khan, left-arm spinner Zafar Gohar, leg-spinner Usama Mir, young guns Haider Ali and Zaman Khan will be in action in the tournament which will last for nine weeks.

Shaheen Shah Afridi, Shaheen Shah Afridi has signed for Nottinghamshire Outlaws for this year's Blast. In the 2020 edition of the tournament, Shaheen briefly represented Hampshire Hawks. In a match against Middlesex, he took four wickets on four deliveries.

Shan Masood, Left-handed opening batter Shan Masood is leading

Yorkshire Vikings this year. Masood also featured in last year's Vitality Blast and was the highest run scorer for the Derbyshire Falcons. He scored 547 runs and led Falcons to quarter finals.

Hasan Ali, Experienced Test cricketer Hasan Ali who's signed a contract with Warwickshire CCC for this season will feature in the T20 tournament as well.

Right-arm pacer Hasan will be in action for Birmingham Bears and is likely to lead the pace attack along with Chris Woakes.

Shadab Khan, All-rounder Shadab Khan has signed a deal with Sussex Sharks and will be representing them for the entirety of the tournament.

Right-arm leg spinner Shadab who leads Islamabad United in the Pakistan Super League (PSL) played for Yorkshire the last season.

Haider Ali, Derbyshire have signed explosive batsman Haider Ali for this county season. Haider will also play for Derbyshire Falcons in the T20 Blast tournament.

The 22-year-old has played 33 T20Is for

Pakistan. He has played for Peshawar Zalmi and Karachi Kings in the PSL.

Haider was drafted by Derbyshire coach Mickey Arthur who is also the director of the Pakistan men's cricket team.

Zafar Gohar, Left-arm spinner Zafar Gohar will be in action again for Gloucestershire CCC. Zafar who's cemented his place in the Gloucestershire fold with his all-round performance in the last three seasons will be in action for Gloucester Gorillas in the blast.

Zaman Khan, The 21-year-old pacer has been drafted by Derbyshire Falcons for the tournament along with Haider Ali.

The young pace sensation is a product of Lahore Qalandars' players development program and recently made his international debut for Pakistan in the T20I series against Afghanistan.

Usama Mir, Leg spinner Usama Mir will represent Worcestershire Rapids in the blast. Mir has played six ODIs for Pakistan and has featured for Karachi Kings and recently Multan Sultans in the PSL.

‘Pakistan has strong chance to win World Cup in India’: Ex-captain



KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan cricket team, under the captaincy of Babar Azam, has a strong chance to clinch the upcoming International Cricket Council (ICC) Men's one-day International (ODI) World Cup scheduled to be held in India this year, expressed former skipper Misbah-ul-Haq.

During an interaction with journalists in Lahore on Saturday, Misbah said the Pakistan team management should devise a strategy for the mega event.

"Pakistan has a strong chance to win the World Cup in India this year," said the former player, who captained the national team in ICC World Cup

2015 in Australia.

"Three of our batters are in the top ICC rankings. We have good bowling options. There is a need to just make the right plans at the right time. Select a competitive team and make your way in the World Cup strongly," the ex-cricketer suggested.

The Green Shirts last won the 50-over format World Cup in 1992 under the captaincy of Imran Khan.

Misbah also thinks that batting would be a key to victory in India.

"Batters take complete advantage on Indian wickets. Our batters need to work hard and make solid plans before going into the World Cup," he reiterated.

PRU awarded hosting of Asia Rugby DIV 1 C'ship in Lahore

LAHORE (APP): Pakistan Rugby Union (PRU) has been awarded the esteemed opportunity by the Asia Rugby to host the upcoming Asia Rugby DIV 1 Championship here from July 4 to 8.

The announcement, made by Asia Rugby, comes as a testament to the tremendous success of the tournament hosted by Pakistan last year, showcasing their exceptional organizational capabilities.

The premier championship promises to be a remarkable showcase of rugby talent and sportsmanship in the region.

Pakistan Rugby Union (PRU) expressed their delight at being chosen as the host for this prestigious

event, emphasizing the confidence that Asia Rugby has placed in their ability to execute such high-profile competitions.

With the confirmation of Lahore as the tournament's venue, the rugby community in Pakistan is eagerly preparing to deliver an outstanding championship experience. Teams from across Asia will converge on Lahore to battle it out on the field, demonstrating their skills and determination.

The tournament promises to be an exhilarating spectacle, showcasing the sport's growing popularity in Pakistan and the Asian region. Pakistan Rugby, in collaboration with Asia Rugby, is determined to set new standards for hosting

sporting events while fostering camaraderie and cultural exchange among participating nations.

Pakistan Rugby and its partners are ready to welcome teams and fans from across Asia, providing them with an unparalleled experience both on and off the field. The upcoming championship is set to leave an indelible mark on Pakistan's sporting landscape, further solidifying the country's position as a vibrant hub for international sporting events.

All eyes are now on Lahore as it prepares to host the Asia Rugby DIV 1 championship, ready to write a new chapter in the annals of rugby history in the region.



In brief

Two die in cylinder explosion

RAWALPINDI (APP): At least two people were killed and one injured in a cylinder blast in Chah Sultan area here on Saturday. According to Rescue 1122, the blast occurred when a fire broke out in a house in the Chah Sultan area. As a result, two persons identified as 18-year-old Faiza and 6-year-old Muhammad Asif died on the spot while 50-year-old Farzana received critical injuries. Rescue 1122 teams immediately rushed to the scene and shifted to Holy Family Hospital (HFH). According to the family members, there was gas leakage from the cylinder, the fire broke out by burning matches. Three fire tenders, three emergency ambulances and special rescue vehicles participated in the operation.

Two held for offering bribe

RAWALPINDI (APP): Ganjmandi Police arrested two accused allegedly offering bribes to a station house officer to run fireworks businesses here on Saturday. According to the police spokesman, the accused identified as Javed and Iqbal offered a Rs198,000 bribe to the officer for the purpose. The bribe money was also recovered. The police registered cases against both the accused and started an investigation. Superintendent of Police Rawal Faisal Saleem appreciated the police officer saying that the accused will be challaned to the court with solid evidence. There is a zero-tolerance policy against corruption and bribery, he added. It may be mentioned here that the illegal business of fireworks has caused the country huge losses in terms of human lives and finance.

Man gets life imprisonment

RAWALPINDI (APP): A District and Sessions Court on Saturday awarded life imprisonment to an accused involved in the murder case. Additional District and Sessions Judge Raja Faisal Rashid announced the verdict after hearing the arguments from both sides. The Court also imposed a Rs 700,000 fine on the accused. According to the prosecution, the convict Qudrat Ullah had killed the victim Muhammad Rafique over a minor dispute. A case was registered against the convict at the Pirwadahi Police Station in 2020.

IRSA releases 159,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 159,300 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 150,800 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1426.04 feet and was 28.04 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 44,900 cusecs and 50,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1115.70 feet, 65.70 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water were recorded as 44,600 cusecs and 48,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 69,200, 59,700, 41,900 and 13,400 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 36,200 cusecs of water was released at Nowshera and 15,900 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.



ISLAMABAD: CDA Fire fighters estinguishing fire erupted at the greenbelt area near Zeropoint due to sizzling weather in the city. —APP Photo

ANF seizes over 202 kg drugs, 67,500 intoxicated tablets; arrests four

RAWALPINDI (APP): The Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF), in their ongoing operations, conducted nine raids in different areas of the country and managed to recover over 202 kg of drugs, 67,500 intoxicated tablets besides netting four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Saturday.

He informed that two accused residents of Peshawar were arrested from the Rawalpindi's Misrial Road area on recovery of 100 intoxicated tablets.

Whereas, ANF in a raid near Nowshera Wali Interchange recovered 144

kg charras and 30 kg opium besides arresting an accused, a resident of Peshawar.

In two separate operations near Torkham Border Nadra Chowk area, ANF recovered 65,000 intoxicated tablets.

The spokesman informed that in a joint operation, ANF and FC conducted a raid in Khyber and seized 13 kg charras.

In the sixth operation conducted at Karachi International Airport, a Colombo-bound passenger resident of Karachi, going on flight no UL-189, was arrested on recovery of

2,400 intoxicated tablets.

In an operation at a private courier company office at Karachi International Airport, 780 grams of suspicious material was recovered from a parcel booked for Australia.

During routine checking at Chaman Friendship Gate Check Post, ANF recovered 900 grams of ice drug from a parcel while in the ninth operation conducted near Quetta Western Bypass, 15 kg heroin concealed in bushes was recovered.

Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations were underway.

Sherry condemns terrorists' attack

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Saturday strongly condemned the terrorist attack on the post of security forces in Zarghoon, Balochistan.

In a statement here, the federal minister expressed deep sorrow and condolence over the martyrdom of three soldiers of Pakistan Army in the attack.

Senator Sherry Rehman expressed her heartfelt solidarity with the families of the soldiers who were martyred in the attack.

She also extended her sympathies with the families of the martyrs in this hour of sorrow. "I am proud of the soldiers of Pakistan Armed Forces standing in the front line against terrorists," Sherry Rehman said.

Pakistan reports fourth monkeypox case

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan on Saturday reported another case of monkeypox, originating from Saudi Arabia, taking the total infections to four.

Media reports said that the country reported its fourth monkeypox case as another passenger who arrived in the country from Saudi Arabia tested positive for the disease. It claimed that the patient, who landed at Islamabad airport from Makkah, was diagnosed with the disease.

Meanwhile, the National Institute of Health (NIH) has also confirmed the development, saying that the patient had been shifted to the isolation ward of the Pakistan Institute of Medical Sciences (PIMS) in Islamabad.

Sufi festival kicked off at PAC

RAWALPINDI (APP): Punjab Arts Council (PAC) on Saturday organized a two-day Sufi festival titled "Sufi Rung".

Assistant Commissioner Cantt Qandeel Fatima Memon was the chief guest at the inauguration ceremony of the festival, while Naheed Manzoor and Director of Arts Council Waqar Ahmed were also present.

On the first day of the festival, the Sultan-ul-Qadri Qawal group performed in the Mahfil-e-Samaa and received a standing ovation from the audience. Speaking on the occasion, Qandeel Fatima said that Sufis like Rumi, Omar Khayyam and Ghazali did a lot of work regarding Islamic literature over the centuries.

The Sufi sages not only influenced the Muslim world but also Western philosophers and writers. She said that Punjab was a fortress of civilization, flowers, fragrances, literature, culture, songs, music, dances, fairs and festivals, films theatres and were also the cradle of the loving message of the Sufis.

Naheed Manzoor on the occasion said that Bulleh Shah, Data Ganj Baksh, Pir Waris Shah, Shah Rukn Alam, Pir Meher Ali Shah, Mian Mir Sahib and hundreds of Sufis were resting in the land of Punjab and PAC organized the Sufi Festival to carry forward the message of the Sufis.

Mushaal urges G20 countries to boycott summit on tourism in IIOJK

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Chairperson of Peace and Culture Organization Mushaal Hussein Mullick has urged G20 countries to boycott summit on tourism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) on May 22 to 24.

In a letter to G20 countries with the subject Addressing rising human rights violations in IIOJK, Mushaal has urged G20 countries not only to boycott this meeting but to condemn the situation in Jammu and Kashmir and play your due role to ensure resolution of the decades-long dispute as per the UN agreed formula so as Kashmiri people could be able to live a life as per their free will.

"I want to bring your kind attention to the prevailing unabated and rising human rights violations in IIOJK, she further added that the occupied region has been turned into a killing field and garrison city.

Police and security personnel are carrying out raids and search operations

on various pretexts to harass and terrify innocent Kashmiri youth and women, she explained.

She informed that since Narendra Modi-led government seized the power, his government further escalates the miseries of the Kashmiri people.

Mushaal in her letter said that Kashmiri people are facing worst human right crisis at present. "As now India is all-set to host a G20 meeting of tourism in the disputed area on May 22 to 24 in a bid to hoodwink the world to give a false message of normalcy to the participants of the moot", she added.

She mentioned in her letter about genocide of Kashmiri innocent people as well as worst Human Rights violations being committed by the Indian occupational forces in the occupied valley.

As many as 96,186 innocent Kashmiris have been martyred by Indian forces since January 1989 and after August 6, 2019 when the government of India

revoked the special status of the region, massive rights violations, illegal and arbitrary arrests, political persecutions, restrictions and even suppression of free media and human rights defenders continue to escalate, she added.

The political leadership of Indian occupied Kashmir especially my Husband Yasin Malik, Masarrat Aalam Butt, Asiya Andrabi have been languishing in Jails for years and Modi government is not providing them with opportunity of fair trial to defend themselves against the fake and fabricated cases lodged against them to silence them for raising voice for their birth right of right to self-determination, she further explained.

She also mentioned in her letter that Indian government is rigorously working on a plan of Hindus settlements in IIOJK under its nefarious designs to change the demography of the scenic valley to turn the Muslim majority into a minority in their native land.

First Hajj flight to take off from Karachi at wee hours on Sunday: Talha

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Senator Muhammad Talha Mahmood on Saturday informed that the first Hajj flight would take off from Jinnah International Airport, Karachi at 0450 hours on Sunday.

Addressing a press conference here, he said almost 175,000 people would proceed for spiritual journey to perform Hajj rites this year on both government and private schemes.

The minister further informed that the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony had refunded Rs55,000 as 'Qurbani amount' to both regular and sponsorship scheme pilgrims in their bank accounts.

He explained that earlier it was decided that the ministry would arrange Qurbani (sacrifice) for the pilgrims but due to delay in the decision, the majority of pilgrims had arranged this sacred rite on their own.

Talha advised the pilgrims of both regular and sponsorship schemes to collect Rs55,000 from their respective banks before their departure for Hajj as the same

would not be reimbursed to them in Saudi Arabia. He said the Saudi government-run Qurbani booths would be available near government residences, providing a hassle-free process for purchasing the coupons.

"In the event of any issues or difficulties in acquiring the Qurbani amount, the complaint could be lodged with the accounts officer of the ministry directly at 0519208552," he added.

The minister said this year more than 26,000 pilgrims would benefit from the 'Road to Makkah' project from the Islamabad International Airport, a notable increase from the 16,000 pilgrims served last year.

He said this efficient facility aimed at streamlining the immigration and customs procedures for the intending pilgrims departing from the federal capital, enabling them to swiftly embark on their spiritual journey. He explained that the initiative would expedite the processing of pilgrims at the Saudi airport in order to minimize wait times, allowing them to proceed directly to their designated buses upon arrival.

Talha further emphasized the government's commit-

ment to expanding the 'Road to Makkah' project to other airports in Pakistan, stating that plan was underway to extend this convenient service to additional cities, Lahore and Karachi next year. The recent visit of the Saudi Deputy Interior Minister to Pakistan had been instrumental in strengthening bilateral cooperation, he added.

Anticipating a record-breaking number of pilgrims, he affirmed that meticulous arrangements had been made to ensure a smooth Hajj experience for the estimated 175,000 Pakistanis who would perform the pilgrimage this year.

He clarified that the provision of free Hajj would not be permitted, and instead, efforts were being made to provide comprehensive assistance to the pilgrims, including dedicated Hajj assistants to guide them throughout their journey.

The minister also conveyed gratitude of 250 million Pakistani people towards Saudi King Salman bin Abdulaziz and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman, underscoring the deep-rooted connection between the Pakistani populace and the holy cities of Makkah and Madina.

Federal Ombudsman directs payment of pending dues

ISLAMABAD (APP): In response to a suo moto notice taken by the Federal Ombudsman regarding non-payment of dues to retired teachers, widespread praise from the teaching community particularly from the retired teachers has been observed.

The retired teachers, who have been grappling with severe financial difficulties due to the non-payment of their dues, have found hope in the Federal Ombudsman's intervention.

Numerous teachers and professors who retired from educational institutions under the Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) in Islamabad have been waiting for their dues for a substantial period.

These dues include leave encashment, house rental ceiling, and traveling allowance to their native home after retirement. The prolonged delay in disbursing these payments has resulted in financial hardships for retirees.

Acknowledging the plight of retired teachers, the Federal Ombudsman has promptly directed the Ministry of Finance to allocate funds in the new budget. Additionally, the FDE has been directed to pay

the pending dues of retired teachers promptly from the available resources in the current financial year. If the required funds are not fully available, the remaining amount is to be included in the upcoming budget.

Many retirees have expressed their gratitude for the intervention of the Federal Ombudsman, who has come as a beacon of hope during their time of distress.

A female teacher on the condition of anonymity shared her ordeal with APP, explaining how she had tirelessly pursued her pending dues, only to encounter a callous and indifferent attitude from the Federal Directorate of Education.

She commended the Federal Ombudsman's actions and expressed her happiness at the resolution of the long-standing issue of retired teachers. She demanded for a fair and supportive system that caters to the needs of both retired and working teachers.

A retired Associate Professor informed this news agency, "The Federal Ombudsman's proactive involvement in addressing the grievances of retired teachers has shed light on the pressing need for

improved administrative practices within educational institutions. The timely intervention and directives from the Federal Ombudsman have brought much-needed relief to the retired teachers, offering a glimmer of hope that their long-overdue dues will finally be paid. A serving teacher voiced concerns not only about the pending dues of retired teachers but also about the pending rental ceiling issues faced by working teachers".

She lamented the failure of the Federal Directorate of Education to address the concerns of the teaching staff, forcing them to seek relief through legal means. She told that the officers of FDE were enjoying timely payment of their rental ceiling.

They got the rental ceiling in advance and left the teachers deprived. She further criticized the biased approach of the authorities and called for a change in administration, emphasizing the need for efficient and supportive leadership.

The teacher further emphasized the need for sensible leadership within the FDE to prevent such issues from arising in the first place.



ISLAMABAD: Secretary Senate, Mohammad Qasim Samad Khan presenting a shield to Malik Arshad Iqbal, Joint Secretary Senate on his retirement from Senate Secretariat at Parliament House. —APP Photo

2,000 Afghans returned home

NIMROZ (Agencies): About 2,731 Afghan refugees have returned from Iran the other day, the provincial Refugees and Returnees Department of Nimruz said. "2,731 Afghan refugees have voluntarily returned from Iran Islam Qala port of the country's western Herat province," a statement said. Of 2,731 returnees 547 of them have been identified to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to receive cash and food assistance, said the statement.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Shawwal 30, 1444 — Sunday, May 21, 2023

Ranger, Ammunitions seized

KABUL (Agencies): A Ranger and a heavy amount of ammunition have been discovered and seized in the provinces of Herat and Badghis. During a series of clearance operations by personnel of the 207th Al-Farooq Army Corps a Ranger and 15 bullets of D-30-122 mm which had illegally been kept in a residential unit, were discovered and seized in the Zawal district of Herat province, Defense Ministry said in a statement.

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

Building a solid system requires time, patience: Baradar



KABUL (Agencies): Speaking at the Farah Bakhsh Abad Dam launching ceremony, Deputy Prime Minister Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund said that developing a solid system takes time and that the Islamic Emirate's leadership is working hard to designate qualified people for accomplishments in good governance.

Deputy Prime Minister Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar Akhund, said that infrastructural development of the country needs to be developed with great efforts and significant steps

have already been taken for the economic boost of the homeland.

He stressed that their commitment extended beyond mere words, and they would earnestly carry out the necessary tasks.

Mullah Baradar, expressing the commitment of the Islamic Emirate, highlighted their responsibility to address the challenges faced by the people of Farah.

He acknowledged that while they should have tried last year to have the water controlled this year, the Islamic Emirate has inherited a multitude of

long-standing issues that cannot be instantly resolved.

The reconstruction of Afghanistan's economic infrastructure demands extensive efforts, and he assured that he has earnestly begun working towards witnessing positive developments in the economic domain.

During his address, Deputy PM for Economic Affairs acknowledged the sacrifices made by the people of Farah for the establishment of the Islamic system.

He underscored the importance of addressing their concerns and executing major projects that would alleviate their economic hardships.

Utilizing available resources, he pledged to complete the remaining tasks of the Bakhshabad Dam and urged the contractor to demonstrate trustworthiness and dedication in their responsibilities.

In conclusion, Baradar assured the entire nation that the officials of the Islamic Emirate were dedicated and honest, committed to the country's development and prosperity, and asked them to stand shoulder-by-shoulder with the government in the reconstruction of the country.

The Bakhshabad Dam, with its forthcoming completion, holds the capacity to irrigate 68,590 hectares of agricultural land through a 50 km canal on the right side and a 52 km canal on the left side.

Help develop Afghan oilfields, Azizi asks Russian firm

KABUL (Pajhwok): The commerce and industry minister has urged a leading Russian oil producer to participate in the development of oilfields in Afghanistan. Nooruddin Azizi met Nail Ulfatovich Maganov, chief executive officer of Tatneft — an oil and gas company headquartered in the Republic of Tatarstan.

The Ministry of Commerce tweeted that Azizi his interlocutor on oil reserves in Afghanistan and invited the firm to take part in the development and oil processing. Maganov voiced readiness to take practical steps in the direction, the ministry wrote, without giving further details.

Currently in Russia to attend the 14th in Tatarstan's capital, Azizi earlier met Turkmen minister of railways on facilitating transit cargo to Afghanistan. Afghanistan's oil reserves are estimated at around 1.6 billion barrels and natural gas at 440 billion cubic metres.

IEA flays desecration of Al-Aqsa Mosque

KABUL (Agencies): The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan strongly condemned Israeli settlers' latest violation of the sanctity of the al-Aqsa Mosque's compound in the occupied city of al-Quds. "The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan strongly condemns the desecration of the holy places and calls for an end to this as soon as possible," IEA said in a statement.

"Attacks on defenseless people and places of worship are against humanitarian and international principles. Such actions show that the oppressed and defenseless Palestinian are spending days and nights under the oppression of the Israeli occupied regime," the statement added.

Thousands of Jewish nationalists stormed Jerusalem on Thursday, carrying the Israeli flag and shouting anti-Arab slogans.

While Israeli officials claim the march commemorates "Jerusalem Day," the annual event often witnesses attacks against local Palestinians by some of the marchers and racist chants inciting violence against Arabs.

Afghan envoy demands int'l cooperation in edu sector



KABUL (Khaama Press): Taliban's Deputy Minister of Higher Education Lutfullah Khairkhwa in a visit to the Russian Republic of Tatarstan asked participants to cooperate with Afghanistan's education sector.

While speaking at Kazan Forum, Mr. Khairkhwa said political unrest and prolonged war in recent decades have been the driving obstacles in improving Afghanistan's education system.

This comes as the Taliban's de facto authorities

have banned secondary school and university education for female students in Afghanistan, which prompted worldwide condemnations.

Deputy Minister Khairkhwa described Kazan Forum as a great platform to increase cooperation between participating countries in the areas of education, economy and bilateral trade. However, he did not speak about the resumption of girls' schools and universities in Afghanistan.

Mr. Khairkhwa was part of the Afghan delegation who were officially invited by Russian officials to attend the Russia-Muslim World Conference held from May 18-19 in Kazan, the capital city of Tatarstan. Representatives from some 85 countries including Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) member states participated in this meeting according to Interfax news agency reported.

On the sidelines of the Kazan Forum, the Taliban's

envoy met with representatives of Russia, China, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Pakistan and Indonesia.

In a separate meeting, Lutfullah Khairkhwa met with Katriatov Irat, Deputy Minister of Higher Education in Russia. The two sides discussed joint cooperation and the Taliban's Ministry of Higher Education announced that Russia had promised to cooperate in Afghanistan's education system.

Scientific, research experiences discussed in Tataristan: MoHE

KABUL (Agencies): The Deputy Minister of Higher Education of the Islamic Emirate Dr. Lutfullah Khairkhwa in his trip to Moscow, has met with the Education and Science Minister of Tataristan, the ministry said in a statement Saturday.

The Academic Deputy Minister of Higher Education Dr. Khairkhwa has visited the Russian Federation to actively participate in the 14th Economic Conference titled "Russia and the Islamic World," the statement said.

During his stay, he also visited the Kazan Islamic University of the Republic of Tataristan of the Russian Federation, according to the statement.

Both sides discussed

mutual academic issues including scientific and research experiences, fostering

bilateral scientific cooperation, scholarship, and organization seminars

exploring other mutually beneficial areas of interest, the statement further said.



Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan reacts to remarks of Iranian president

KABUL (TOLOnews): The Islamic Emirate's spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said that Iran President Emrahim Raisi's remarks regarding the Helmand water treaty will affect the political relations between Kabul and Tehran.

"The Iranian officials should first gather facts about the water of Helmand

and then mention their demands with the appropriate words. If reality is not considered, and such statements are made, the political status between the people of the two Muslim countries could be harmed," Mujahid said in an earlier statement in reaction to Raisi's remarks.

The Islamic Emirate is

committed to the water treaty of Helmand signed in 1973 between Afghanistan and Iran, Mujahid said.

Mujahid said that the amount of water has dropped in the Helmand river.

"The words which the Islamic Emirate uses are based on reality. You see the level of the water, and this should be acknowledged... anyway, we still prefer negotiation in this regard, but threats and using inappropriate words is not benefitting either side," Mujahid said.

Meanwhile, Iran's foreign minister, Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, referring to the Helmand water treaty, said on Twitter that

he asked the Islamic Emirate's acting foreign minister Amir Khan Muttu-aqi to provide an opportunity for a visit of a technical team to measure the amount of water, but the Islamic Emirate has yet to facilitate it.

He said the measuring of water is a technical visit not a political statement.

"Our immediate demand is that our technical team should visit Kajaki dam and then a decision will be made based on whether water exists in the dam or not. The President instructed us with extraordinary orders, particularly in recent months," Abdollahian said.

According to the treaty,

Afghanistan is committed to sharing water from the Helmand River with Iran at the rate of 26 cubic meters of water per second, or 850 million cubic meters per annum.

"Whenever a normal year is disrupted by lack of rainfall and there is an imbalanced situation in the amount of water in the Helmand river, the right of water of Iran also decreases," said Najib Aqa Fahim, water analyst.

The Helmand water treaty has recently become a controversial issue amid a La Niña phenomenon that has been threatening Afghanistan for three consecutive years.

Work on power supply project kicked off in Khost



KHOST (TOLOnews): Work on the construction of a 4.5 megawatts imported electricity station in Sabari Wa Yaqubi districts of Khost province was inaugurated on Saturday.

The cost of the project is estimated 159 million Afs, and a large amount will be paid by the Interior Ministry.

"Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat also participates in this project and a large amount will pay by acting Interior Minister Sirajuddin Haqqani," said

Zayenullah Abir, head of the media office of the Interior Ministry.

Local residents welcomed the inauguration of the project and called on the government to work on delivering electricity to other areas of the province.

"We are so happy that after twenty years for the first time this year, a ceremony for such a project is held here," said a Khost resident. It's a good step and we are thankful for those who cooperate in this project," said Hekmat, a

Khost resident.

"We have a plan and design for this project, and we are at the area and have started work. We also asked for the cooperation of Da Breshna Sherkat," said Foad, Maweya, head of the Breshna Sherkat in Khost.

Sabari Wa Yaqubi district in Khost witnessed intense battles during the previous government, impeding development projects in the district.

Work on the project is estimated to be completed in six months.

Contaminated water cause health problems for Lashkargah residents

LASHKARGAH (TOLOnews): A number of residents of Lashkargah City, the center of Helmand province, said on Saturday

that many people in the southern city have been infected with various diseases due to a lack of access to clean drinking

water and the existence of contaminated water.

The residents said unplanned septic wells in most parts of Lashkargah

have caused water pollution. Mohibullah, a resident of Lashkargah, said he is suffering from kidney disease, which doctors have diagnosed that it is due to the use of contaminated water.

"I was feeling ill and I had pain in my kidney. I visited the doctor and he said I have a kidney abscess and it is because of contaminated water," he said.

Doctors said that such types of diseases are due to the use of contaminated water.

"He has kidney abscess and this pus is because of contaminated water," said Mirza Khan, a doctor in Helmand.

Other residents of the city criticized the continued creation of unplanned septic wells in Lashkargah and said it has damaged water resources in the region.

"Deep wells collect unhealthy water from septic wells, and it causes diseases," said Azizullah a resident of Lashkargah.

Meanwhile, the public health director in Helmand acknowledged the issue and said that people need to be informed about the harms of using contaminated water.

"Our effort to make people aware is that wells should not be absorbed from below, and wells should be covered from above so that germs do not enter from above," said Sayed Ahmad Sayed, head of the Public Health Directorate in Helmand.

Besides the lack of drinking water in Helmand, farmers in many districts of the province are facing severe lack of irrigation water.

Afghan-American journalist released

KABUL (Khaama Press): Taliban released Ali Latifi, an Afghan-American journalist after he was detained in Kabul on charge of "suspicious behavior" according to police officials.

Khalid Zadrar, a spokesperson for the Taliban's security command in Kabul wrote on Twitter on May 19 that Latifi was arrested late on May 18 in the capital on charges of suspicious behavior, but released late Friday night.

Hashmat Ghani, the

brother of former Afghan President Ashraf Ghani, wrote in a tweet that Latifi was arrested after leaving his home on "false allegations of drinking alcohol."

US-based Amu TV, an association of Afghan journalists, reported that friends and relatives had been unable to reach him since his detention.

Since the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021, the group has threatened, detained and tortured scores of local and foreign journalists in Kabul and

other parts of Afghanistan. Afghanistan's de facto regime has imposed tough restrictions on Media and journalists to strictly abide by to avoid possible arrest by the Taliban group.

These restrictions and economic challenges have led to the closure of nearly half of one media outlet and new agencies in Afghanistan.

Media and journalists have been repeatedly warned to avoid criticizing the ruling regime and speaking or writing against the Taliban members.



PHC moved for restoring KP assembly

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) was on Saturday moved for annulling the notification of dissolving Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Assembly. The KP assembly had earlier been dissolved by the PTI-led government to mount pressure on the incumbent government.

Muhammad Furqan Qazi petitioned the court via Advocate Muhib Kakakhel, which stated that it was unlawful to dissolve the assembly as former KP CM Mehmood Khan, on the directions of PTI chief Imran Khan, sent the summary of dissolution to Governor KP Haji Ghulam Ali without giving any thought. The plea further stated that later Mr Khan contended that he had been instructed by someone else to dissolve Punjab and KP assemblies. The petition requested the court to annul the notification of dissolution on the grounds that former KP CM did this in violation of the constitution. The petitioner also pleaded the court to order the ruling party to nominate CM and provincial cabinet.

PHC orders EPA, Agriculture to appoint officers: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice Abdul Shakoor and Justice Syed Arshad Ali

extended status quo against a notification issued deputy commissioner Swabi for establishment of small industrial estate by acquiring 'fertile' land while Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Department of Agriculture are made respondents in the case.

The petition was filed by Zahirullah and Ifitahullah Khan against the imposition of Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act by the DC in his capacity as land acquisition collector while PHC ordered EPA and Agriculture department to appoint officer in this regard for submission of report before court.

However, Agriculture department should submit report regarding fertility of land while EPA has been directed to submit report on environment issue that can be raise following establishment of small industrial estate. The petitioners claimed that the land being acquired by the administration for the establishment of an industrial zone by the Small Industries Development Board (SIDB), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, was mostly agricultural land and not barren.

The petitioners claim that the DC had imposed Section 4 on fertile agricultural land by declaring it barren, which would badly affect agricultural activities

in the district. The counsel argued that establishment of small industrial estate will further deepen the food security because Pakistan is already importing edible items because housing societies have been established on fertile land since long.

The requisition of SIDB, the Swabi deputy commissioner had issued the impugned notification imposing Section 4 of the Land Acquisition Act for acquiring over 1,000 kanals of agricultural land for an industrial estate and declared the same as barren. The counsel added that PHC has constituted a Commission under retired Judge which also declared that most of the land is fertile while argued that report is part the court's file while agriculture department has revealed regarding cultivation on the land before court.

PHC observed that production of agricultural items will be disturb from such initiative and added that agriculture's department as well as EPA should submit reports in their respective domains because nation facing sinking of agriculture land. PHC made EPA and Agriculture's department as respondents in the case while directed appointment of officers in this to prepare report in this and extended status quo in this regarding.

Resignations once accepted can not be withdrawn, says Dastgir

F.P. Report

GURJIRANWALA: Federal Minister for Energy Khurram Dastgir Khan said Saturday that once the resignations are accepted by the National Assembly, there is no clause in the constitution to withdraw them.

Addressing a press conference in Gujranwala, the minister said that it is the privilege of the National Assembly speaker to either accept or reject the resignations of house members. The energy minister said that they always performed their democratic role. He denounced vandalism displayed by the PTI supporters following the arrest of their leader Imran Khan on May 9. He said that the PTI rioters vandalized and torched civil and military installations.

He said 'everybody has seen the difference between those who have made Pakistan and those who have torched Pakistan'. He was of the view that political instability was harming country's economy. He lamented that the PTI mobs set to fire motorcycles of common citizens. He rued that Imran was not ready to accept the responsibility of May 9-10 violent incidents.

The minister said that in the past only terrorists would burn schools, but this time the political miscreants torched a school in Dir. The Lahore High Court on Friday set aside decisions of the Election Commission of Pakistan and the speaker of National Assembly to accept the resignation of 72 PTI lawmakers from Punjab. The judgement was announced by Justice Shahid Karim on the petitions filed by PTI leaders Shafqat Mahmood and Riaz Ahmad Fatyana.

The court ordered the PTI MNAs to personally appear before the speaker to withdraw their resignations and also directed the speaker to decide the matter after personally hearing each member. The PTI lawmakers resigned en masse from the National assembly following the ouster of Imran Khan from power as a result of a no-confidence motion in April 2022.

LHC orders release of 123 PTI detainees

LAHORE (Agencies): Announcing its decision in response to a plea of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Farrukh Habib on Saturday, the Lahore High Court (LHC) has suspended detention orders of as many as 123 party workers from Faisalabad under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) with directives to their immediate release.

Former minister of state for information and broadcasting Farrukh Habib has invoked jurisdiction of the LHC and challenged legality of detention of PTI's leaders and workers in Faisalabad under MPO. He prayed the court to release the detainees under MPO in his city Faisalabad and requested the court to suspend the executive orders in the matter. After hearing arguments of both the sides in the case, a single-member bench of the LHC comprising Justice Anwarul Haq Pannu issued suspension orders of detention of party workers who were arrested in result of a crackdown against involved to quell the law and order situation that resulted after the arrest of party chief Imran Khan on May 09.

Earlier, the Peshawar High Court suspended the orders of authorities to detain around 150 leaders and workers of the PTI in the province under the MPO. A bench consisting of Justice Ishaq Ibrahim and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah declared that the petitioners, who had been kept in different prisons, should be freed if they're not required in any other cases and that each of them should produce two surety bonds each of Rs200,000 for their release before the concerned deputy commissioner.

It is pertinent to mention that violent clashes broke out across Pakistan after the former prime minister and PTI chairman Imran Khan was arrested from the premises of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on May 9. The protests were held in remote and major cities as the party workers agitated due to their chairman's arrest, with Balochistan, Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, and Islamabad summoning the armed forces to ensure law and order.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Marriyum Aurangzeb addressing a press conference.

As exodus continues, PTI leaders walk out from party over riots

Ishaq Khan

PESHAWAR: The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) faced another blow on Saturday when its senior leaders, former Provincial Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) Dr. Hisham Inamullah and KP CM spokesperson Ajmal Wazir announced quitting the party over the May 9 events.

They announced their resignation from the party in different press conferences and strongly condemned the attacks on public properties including military installations after the arrest of former premier Imran Khan in Al-Qadir Trust case on May 9.

Hisham Inamullah blamed the PTI senior leadership for turning the party against the state institutions and using the innocent public sentiments in their own favor without caring of damaging the national interest. The former minister of KP termed the May 9 incident 'disgraceful' as martyrs' pictures were burned and their statues were demolished by miscreants. While announcing his resignation, Hisham Inamullah said "It's a personal insult to continue being associated with the PTI and will be equivalent to disloyalty to the country". Former KP minister said that there is no pressure on him to leave the party. My decision is based on my conscience. This country and its

armed forces are mine, and I cannot go against them for the benefits of some party individuals. In his presser, the former minister said that he cannot stay with those who are hostile to the country, adding that there is no pressure on him to leave PTI but solely his decision. "Our youth sacrificed their lives for the country, adding that his decision would be different if Imran Khan condemned the May 9 events and should have visited the memorials of the martyrs after his release" he said.

Meanwhile, former KP CM spokesperson Ajmal Wazir also announced quitting the PTI over the recent attacks on the public properties and institutions. During a press conference, Wazir showed displeasure over the attacks on the military installations and sculpture of our heroes. "What was done to the sculpture of Colonel Sher Khan who sacrificed his life for Pakistan", Wazir lamented. The political leadership needs to focus on finding the way of solving the problems that people are facing such as inflation and other issues rather than destabilizing the country by attacking the institutions and inciting the workers for their own benefits, Wazir said.

Mr Wazir had joined the PTI in July, 2018 and was elected to the provincial assembly in August, 2019.

Sources claimed that more than 30 lawmakers of the PTI from KP are ready to quit the party and they were in contact with different political parties to join them in near future.

It seems that the position of the PTI would become extremely weak in the upcoming general elections after a large number of its electables leave the party. On Friday, Former Khyber Pakhtunkhwa minister Muhammad Iqbal Wazir and Balochistan minister Mubeen Khilji also announced to quit the party over the May 9 incidents and termed it horrific.

Earlier, PTI Additional Secretary General Amir Kiyani on Wednesday condemned the violent attacks on May 9 and announced quitting politics and the party after 27 years of struggle. Similarly, PTI ticket-holder from PP-148 Lahore, Ibad Farooq, also announced to part ways with the PTI and blamed party's Central Punjab President Dr Yasmeen Rashid and Mian Mehmoodur Rashid for arson attack on the Corps Commander House in Lahore. He also returned a party ticket and decided not to contest the poll from PP-148. On Thursday, PTI additional secretary and former advisor to Prime Minister Malik Amin Aslam also announced to quit his party after 13 years of affiliation.

External forces are interfering in Pakistan

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Federal Minister Mian Javed Latif said Saturday that external forces are interfering in Pakistan as the want that the nation does not get relief. "Imran Khan is being facilitated from outside Pakistan. Are the financial institutions of the world not playing politics with Pakistan?" he said while addressing a news conference in Lahore.

Javed declared "Those who are acting as a tool of global conspiracies do not deserve any concession." "No one was worried when the RTS was closed in 2018. Can our loss be resolved through regret and condemnation? It cannot happen that the country is damaged by those who are playing the economy," he stated.

"Those who damaged the public property will not be forgiven. Did the world powers write such letters before? The hands of those extending damage to Pakistan should be cut off," he added.

Sana flays attack on security men

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Saturday strongly condemned the terrorist attack on a security forces checkpoint in Zarghoun area of Balochistan.

In a condemnations statement issued here, he expressed deep grief over the loss of three officials in the attack and extended his condolences to the families of the martyrs. Rana Sanaullah offered special prayers for the martyrs, emphasising their sacrifice and the bravery of the security forces in the ongoing fight against terrorism. He affirmed that the sacrifices made by the martyrs would not be in vain and reassured the nation that the scourge of terrorism would be completely eradicated in the near future.

8 Pakistanis died, 6 hurt in fire incident in Makkah

MAKKAH (PPD): Eight Pakistanis have died and six others injured in a fire incident at a hotel in Makkah. According to Foreign Office, Pakistan's Mission in Jeddah is in contact with local authorities to provide relief to the victims and their families.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has expressed deep grief and sorrow over the death of eight Pakistanis pilgrims in an unfortunate fire incident in a hotel in Makkah. In a statement on Saturday, he expressed his condolence and sympathy

with the bereaved families.

The Prime Minister directed the Ministry of Religious Affairs to provide the best possible medical facilities to the injured. He also directed the Ministry to facilitate the families of the deceased.

The Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday expressed deep grief and sorrow over demise of eight Pakistan pilgrims who lost their lives in a hotel blaze in Makkah Mukarna. The prime minister expressed sympathies with the bereaved families and offered condolences,

PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He also prayed for the departed souls to rest in peace and courage for the bereaved families to bear this irreparable loss with fortitude. Premier Shehbaz Sharif directed the Ministry of Religious Affairs to look after the health of injured pilgrims and provide all possible facilities to the bereaved families. According to the Foreign Office, eight Pakistanis were dead and six others injured in an unfortunate fire incident in a hotel in Makkah.

May 9 darkest day

(Continued from Page 1)

The information minister said that whenever Imran was asked to be accountable for his corruption, he instigated the children of the people to attack sensitive installations. She said if he had not committed any crime, Imran Khan should defend himself in the courts. She said if there were no terrorists in Zaman Park, Imran Khan should allow the Punjab government to search the building. The minister said the fundamental and human rights of school children whose schools were burnt and patients whose hospitals and ambulances were set on fire were badly violated.

She posed a question that if throwing petrol bombs on the police by the PTI protesters was not a violation of human rights. She also asked if the imprisonment of Imran's political opponents in death cells during the PTI regime was not a violation of human rights.

Marriyum Aurangzeb said that the PTI miscreants hurt the sentiments of the families of martyrs and Ghazis by desecrating their memorials. She said that Imran Khan could not be fool the masses any more through his fake narrative based on deceit and lies.

The minister regretted that Imran Khan and his party used the name of the Holy Prophet Hazrat Muhammad (PBUH), the state of Madina and Islamic

touch for petty political gains which was a shameful act. The minister said that many PTI leaders were quitting the party on the voice of their conscience as any patriotic person could not support arson and terrorism in the name of politics. She said they were also saying that they could not defend the actions of May 9 in their constituencies.

She said that Imran could never have been imposed as the Prime Minister in 2018, if many electables were not asked to join the PTI. The minister remarked that Imran Khan disgraced the country by waving a cipher and by selling the Toshakhana watch gifted by Saudi Arabia. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had restored the honor and dignity of Pakistan after coming into power last year, she maintained.

Had the PTI miscreants been punished in the PTV attack case in 2014, Radio Pakistan building would not have burnt on May 9, she remarked. She said that the entire building of Radio Pakistan Peshawar was burned including its entire archive. The minister said that the facilitation of armed groups and terrorists cannot be given the name of justice.

She said that the video and audio messages of PTI leadership were on the record encouraging attacks on state and military properties. She expressed the resolve that these miscre-

ants would be punished according to the law so that no one could dare to repeat such acts in the future. The federal minister said that it was the responsibility of the government to protect the lives and property of the people and bringing to book those involved in attacks on public property was by no means the violation of human rights. She reminded that those who attacked Capitol Hill in the United States were still in jails.

Replying to a question, Marriyum Aurangzeb said that elections would be held after completion of the constitutional terms of the assemblies and rumors of delay in elections were being spread by the fascist elements. She said that PTV Sports had earned record profit during the ongoing fiscal year. She said that the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting would open the Media University by merging PTV Academy, Radio Pakistan Academy and Information Service Academy soon.

She said that the previous regime also looted the resources of PTV and the FIA was conducting an inquiry into the matter and those involved would be brought to book. To a question, she said that the federal government had constituted a three-member commission led by Justice Qazi Faez Isa of the Supreme Court which would investigate the authenticity of the recent audio leaks.

16-Canadian MPs pen letter to PM Trudeau over worst HR crisis in Pak

ISLAMABAD (INP): As the reign of terror unleashed by the imported government reached its climax, Canadian members of parliament urged their Prime Minister Trudeau to help address the escalating human rights violations in the country by reaffirming Ottawa's commitment to justice, democracy, and human rights, both within Pakistan and globally.

A group of Canadian lawmakers expressed "grave concern over the worst human right situation unfolding in Pakistan" and sent a letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. Salma Zahid, a chair of the Canada-Pakistan Parliamentary Friendship Group, penned a letter signed by 16 MPs to PM Trudeau regarding the

ongoing crackdown by the PDM government on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's (PTI) leaders and workers. The letter from the Canadian lawmakers clearly reflected the growing global concern over the worst human rights situation in Pakistan.

The lawmakers' concerns come amidst an ongoing crackdown by the PDM government on leaders and workers of PTI. It is to mention here that PTI chairman Imran Khan's residence in Lahore's Zaman Park was violently raided twice, besides detaining unlawfully over 7,500 party workers, including women and children. Moreover, PTI top leadership was put in the jail in false and fabricated cases and party leaders were being pressurized

and subjected worst oppression to change their loyalties.

The letter, signed by 16 Canadian lawmakers who are members of the Canada-Pakistan Parliamentary Friendship Group, highlighted the importance of the right to peaceful protest and strongly condemned all acts of violence, arbitrary arrests, and the urgent need for fair trials in the country's civilian courts. As representatives of their constituents, particularly thousands of Pakistani-Canadians, the lawmakers stressed the fundamental nature of democracy, the rule of law, and freedom of expression in any society, underscoring the importance of upholding these principles without compromise in Pakistan.