

Bilawal to visit Iraq F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will pay a two-day official visit to Iraq next month, it was learnt on Saturday. According to diplomatic sources, Bilawal Bhutto is visiting Baghdad on the invitation of his Iraqi counterpart. The sources further said that during his visit Bilawal Bhutto will hold meetings with Iraqi leadership including his counterpart.



@thefrontierpost

First national English daily published from Peshawar, Islamabad, Lahore, Quetta, Karachi and Washington D.C

Fazl leaves for London

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The president of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), Maulana Fazlur Rahman, on Saturday left for United Kingdom (UK) as he planned to meet with Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) chief Nawaz Sharif during his one-week stay in London. According to the sources, the JUI president Maulana Fazlur Rahman has scheduled a meeting with PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif.

Vol. XXXIX

No. 130

Regd. No. 241

ZIQA'AD 07 1444 -- SUNDAY, MAY 28 2023

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30

Respectable jobs to youth is top priority

Govt ensuring benefits of oil price slide to common man: PM

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that provision of equal opportunities to the country's youth to excel in different fields and get respectable jobs was among the top priorities of the government.

He said that provision of international standard educational and skills facilities was being ensured for the young people, besides arrangements were also made for holding of different games.

The prime minister expressed these views during a meeting with his Special Assistant on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The prime minister also expressed his pleasure over the youth taking part in the positive activities during the ongoing 34th National Games in Quetta.

Their objective was to provide opportunities to the young segment of society so that they could utilize their complete energies for positive activities and save them from the negative effects of propaganda. SAPM Shaza Fatima Khawaja apprised the prime minister of the progress achieved on the youth programme.

She informed that 60,000 youth had been imparted different professional training in different skill sets under the youth programme which was initiated during the last year. A free training programme to 40,000 young people would be initiated soon, she added. The special assistant further said that a total of Rs 13.5 billion loans on affordable terms had been extended to the young people in business and agriculture sectors while Rs16.5 billion worth loans would be provided in the next few months. The prime minister appreciated the progress on the youth programme.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif said that the government was taking steps to pass on the effects of the reduction in

prices of oil to the common man.

He said that efforts were afoot to ensure public relief in the upcoming fiscal budget. The prime minister was talking to Minister of State for Finance Ayesha Ghous Pasha who called on him, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

The prime minister reiterated that they had steered the country out of the difficult times and appreciated the economic team for striving and continuously making efforts to stabilize country's economy. The government had provided huge relief package to the flood affected people with financial and rehabilitation assistance in the aftermath of historic floods.

Nation sets a red-line against intolerable May 9 attitude: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that together they set a red-line that the attitude reflected on May 9 was intolerable.

"Living nations uphold the honour & dignity of their benefactors and heroes who render the supreme sacrifice of their life so that their countrymen & women can live peacefully," the prime minister posted on his Twitter handle. The prime minister also thanked the people of Pakistan for their active participation in the solemn observance of Youm-e-Takreem Shuhada-e-Pakistan on May 25. The prime minister said that it was a collective outpouring of gratitude for their Shuhada and Ghazis by the whole nation.

Pakistani soldiers rendering excellent services in UN Peacekeeping: Prime Minister (PM) Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said that Pakistani soldiers had rendered excellent services in the UN Peacekeeping, including the sacrifice of life in the most complex and dangerous conflict zones.

In a tweet, the PM said as the eight Pakistani peacekeepers were honoured posthumously on the completion of 75 years of the United Nations (UN) Peacekeeping Mission, Pakistan was proud of being one of

the largest contributors to the peace missions under the UN's umbrella. "We are proud of our peacekeepers for their unprecedented commitment to duty," he added.

On May 25, the UN honoured at a solemn ceremony 103 military, police and civilian personnel from around the world, including eight Pakistani peacekeepers, who lost their lives serving under the UN flag last year. The special ceremony was presided over by Secretary-General (SG) Antonio Guterres which marked the 75th anniversary of UN peacekeeping.

In the ceremony, the Dag Hammarskjold Medal was awarded posthumously to the peacekeepers, who made the ultimate sacrifice for the cause of peace, during the preceding year. According to the Associated Press of Pakistan (APP) foreign correspondent news report, Pakistan's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN Ambassador Aamir Khan accepted the awards on behalf of the families of the fallen Pakistani peacekeepers -- Havildar Muhammad Ismail, Major Faizan Ali, Lt. Col Asif Ali Awan, Naib Subedar Sami Ullah Khan, Major Muhammad Saad Noman, and Lance Havildar Muhammad Jamil Khan -- the six martyred while serving with the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) when their helicopter crashed on March 29, 2022.

Moreover, Havildar Babar Siddique lost his life while also serving in MONUSCO and Corporal Rana Muhammad Tahir Islam, who was working with the UN Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA). It is worth mentioning here that Pakistan is currently the fifth largest contributor to UN peacekeeping with nearly 4,200 military and police personnel serving in Abyei, the Central African Republic, Cyprus, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, South Sudan and Western Sahara.



LAHORE: Leader of Opposition in National Assembly Raja Riaz Ahmad and MNA Nawab Sher Waseer called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Imran says will give a 'surprise' soon F.P. Report

LAHORE: Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan has said that PTI Vice Chairman Shah Mehmood Qureshi would lead the party in case of his disqualification by a court. "If I am disqualified, Shah Mehmood Qureshi will run the party," Khan said Saturday in a meeting with journalists and lawyers at his Zaman Park residence in Lahore.

The statement comes as the PTI chief has been facing a slew of cases ranging from corruption to terrorism since being ousted from power in April last year. Commenting on the mass departure of leaders from his party over the May 9 vandalism, the PTI chief put up a brave face saying the situation is going to change soon. "I will give a big surprise in the coming days," he added.

Imran moves court

LAHORE (Agencies): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan Saturday moved an Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Lahore for the cancellation of the search warrants for his house. Imran Khan made the Lahore commissioner, deputy commissioner and others the respondents in the petition arguing that the police received the search warrant with mala fide intentions.

"On May 18, the police obtained from the terrorism court search warrants based on malicious intent," the petition reads. "The petitioner has no role in the case in which the search warrants were obtained".

PM felicitates nation on Youm-e-Takbeer

ISLAMABAD, (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday said the country's defence, sovereignty, national dignity and freedom were above everything to the nation and no one had the courage to take away its freedom. In a message on the occasion of Youm-Takbir to mark the day of nuclear tests carried out by Pakistan in 1998, the prime minister said the day reminded that for the defence, solidarity and national interests, they would not budge from any sacrifice. He said the historic day was a clear declaration of 'no compromise over country's sovereignty, and defence'. "Twenty-five years ago today, the people of Pakistan announced the invincibility of their defence by detonating five nuclear explosions in response to India's nuclear explosions," he added. The prime minister stressed that they would have to move ahead with the same spirit as manifested in Youm-e-Takbir to attain economic sovereignty and self-dependence. He underlined that it was a day to get united for the solidarity of the country as it was the main

strength of the nation and expressed his determination that with such unity, hard work and staunch faith, they would turn Pakistan into 'an economic power'. The prime minister paid tributes to the patriotism of then-prime minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif who raised the head of Pakistan among the comity of nations with pride, adding the former prime minister had rejected all the pressures and temptations of billions of dollars and made Pakistan, the seventh nuclear world power and the first Islamic country possessing nuclear deterrence. He also lauded Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the founder of Pakistan's nuclear programme and also paid rich tributes to Benazir Bhutto Shaheed who, as an opposition leader backed prime minister Nawaz Sharif's decision of nuclear tests in 1998. "I want to tell the youth that there were deep political differences between the government and Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto but setting aside all the differences for the sake of the country, she supported the government," he

added. The prime minister said the armed forces of the country had rendered valuable services for the country's nuclear programme which had been a golden chapter in its history. He also appreciated Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, (Mohsin e Pakistan), all scientists, engineers and other individuals who contributed to Pakistan's atomic programme. The prime minister also expressed his gratitude to Saudi Arabia and other brotherly and friendly countries that had helped Pakistan during the economic sanctions. The prime minister said the mountains of Chagai still echoed with the same resolve, and Balochistan province still bore distinction with regard to the defence of the country. PM Shehbaz said on May 28 1998, the whole world was on the other side putting pressure, threats and giving temptations, but the leadership of the country, with the support of the nation and the opposition, made the impossible, possible. "We also faced economic difficulties. The unity of the nation is the real nuclear power of Pakistan," he added.

Govt turns down Imran's offer for talks

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Saturday ruled out negotiations with Imran Khan, stating talks could not be held with those who attacked the state, rather were awarded punishment.

In a statement issued here, the minister said Imran Khan was not appealing for negotiations, he was, in fact, seeking an "NRO". Taking a jibe at Imran, she said the foreign agent who committed robbery on Rs 60 billion was to be brought to justice.

She ruled out talks with those who attacked sensitive installations and buildings which were symbols of national pride including General Headquarters, those who desecrated the memorials of martyrs and Ghazis, who attacked ambulances, hospitals and schools and were involved in vandalism. She said talks cannot be held with those who poisoned the minds of the youth.

The minister said that negotiations could not be held with the leaders of the criminals and terrorists. She said

while his party crumbled like a castle of sand, Imran was pleading for talks, recalling how electables were brought in planes to join the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf. Marriyum Aurangzeb opined that parties not formed on any political ideology were disintegrated like the PTI.

The entire leadership of the PML-N including Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz Sharif, Hamza Shahbaz, Maryam Nawaz spent hundreds of days in jails and detention centres, she said adding they faced false cases but stood firm and finally emerged victorious. She said Imran Khan refused to negotiate with his political opponents on the economy, Kashmir and security issues. Imran was not ready to sit with the opposition parties on critical issues like corona pandemic and the FATF issue, she said. She maintained that dialogue could not be held with those who set the country on fire, create chaos and anarchy, fills the minds of masses with hatred, and harbour armed groups.

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb also said the coalition government was actively taking measures to promote

media freedom under the leadership of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif who fully believed in freedom of expression.

"Journalism and freedom of expression are essential constitutional requirements for strengthening democracy," the minister said in a news statement while felicitating newly elected office-bearers of Council of Pakistan Newspaper Editors (CPNE). Marriyum congratulated CPNE President Irshad Arif, Senior Vice President Anwar Sajdi, Secretary General Ejazul Haque and other newly elected officials.

The minister lauded the role playing by the CPNE for strengthening democracy and promoting press freedom in the country. She hoped that the newly elected office-bearers would use their experience and skills to lead the CPNE towards further improvement. The government, she said would continue to cooperate with the CPNE to resolve the issues faced by newspapers and magazines in the country. The minister said the government resolved issues faced by the media on priority.

#یوم تکبیر پاکستان

یوم تکبیر

دفاع ناقابل تسخیر

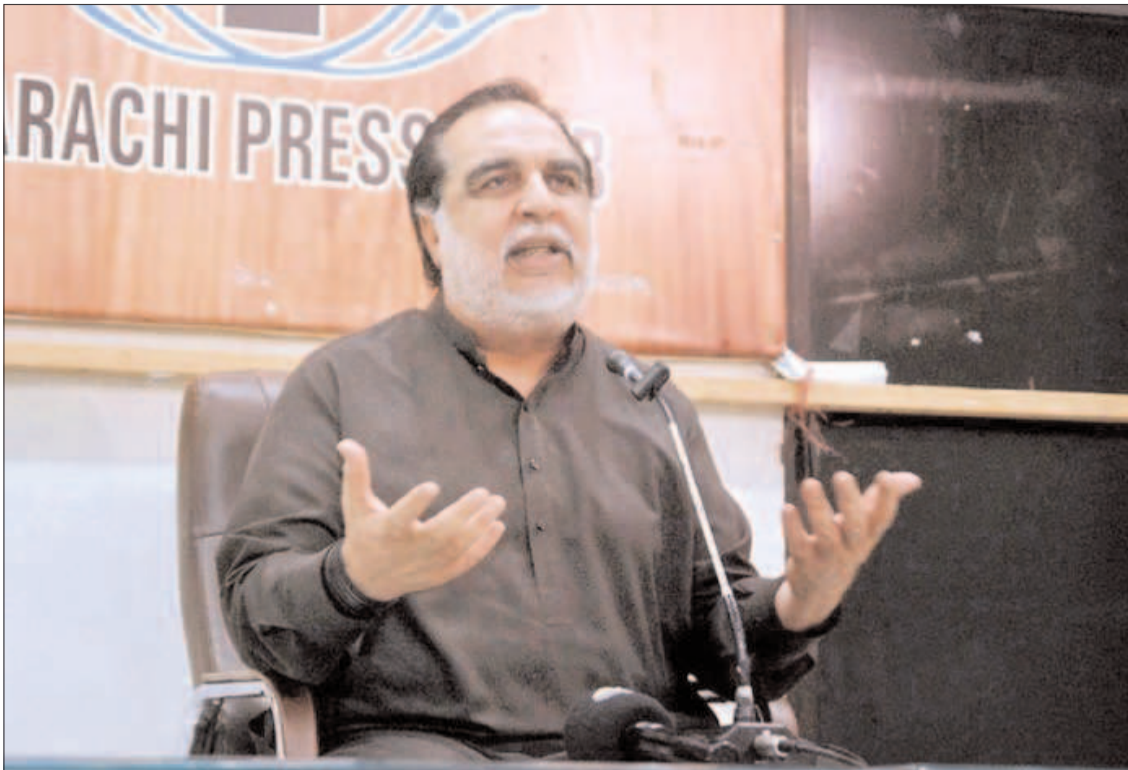
25 Years

28 MAY



حکومت پاکستان

@GovtofPakistan www.moib.gov.pk



KARACHI: Former Governor Sindh, Imran Ismail announce to quit Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) during a press conference at Karachi Press Club. —APP Photo

Avalanche kills 11 in GB

F.P. Report

ASTORE: In a devastating incident on Friday evening, a snow avalanche swept through the Shounter top area of district Astore in Gilgit Baltistan, resulting in the loss of at least 11 lives and leaving 13 others injured.

The Deputy Inspector General of Police for the Diamer-Astore Division, Tufail Mir, confirmed the casualties and informed that a control room has been established in the district to coordinate rescue efforts and aid in the recovery of individuals trapped under the debris.

Rescue teams swiftly mobilized to the site and are currently engaged in the challenging task of extracting people from beneath the snow. As per the latest report from the Gilgit Baltistan Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA), eight bodies have been recovered by Rescue 1122, the district administration, and local volunteers. The search for the remaining victims is still underway. The injured individuals, described as being in critical condition, have been evacuated to DHQ Hospital Astore for urgent medical treatment.

According to the GBDMA, the unfortunate incident occurred when a group of 25 people from the Gujjar family, accompanied by their livestock, were en route from Kashmir to Astore and were caught in the path of the avalanche. The Fore Command Northern Areas (FCNA) has dispatched relief items and para-medical staff via helicopter, but their arrival at the site has been delayed due to inclement weather. The GBDMA, along with the DDMA and other line agencies, has supplied essential relief items such as tents and food packs to assist those affected.

The district administration is closely monitoring the rescue operation, and an emergency has been declared at DHQ Hospital Astore, PHQ & RHQ Gilgit, and CMH Skardu. Local authorities, health departments, and Rescue 1122 are actively involved in the on-site operations. Expressing profound sadness and condolences, Gilgit Baltistan Chief Minister Khalid Khurshid Khan has directed the local authorities to initiate immediate rescue measures.

Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Saturday expressed deep sorrow and grief over the loss of precious lives in an incident of avalanche in Shuntar Top area of Astore.

Ismail, Zaidi, Khusro Hashim, Shaukat and others also quit PTI

F.P. Report

KARACHI / LAHORE/ ISLAMABAD / PESHAWAR: Former Sindh governor Imran Ismail on Saturday announced his departure from the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) following his release from jail.

The PTI leader, condemning the May 9 protests that erupted after PTI Chairman Imran Khan's arrest, spoke in support of the Pakistan Army and criticised the former ruling party's anti-establishment tirade.

Addressing his "last political press conference", Ismail said that his affiliation and ties with Khan were very good. He recalled the time when the PTI was formed, saying he was very young and was part of a group of three to four people who laid the party's foundation.

"I always chased the dream of making Pakistan a better country and we got that chance when our party came into power in 2018. We decided to struggle and take part in the elections once again. We saw a lot of things from public rallies to attack Imran Khan but then we saw a diversion," he added.

He said that a narrative started building that the PTI is against the Pakistan Army, which a lot of leaders were uncomfortable with. "A lot of people advised Imran Khan while many also spoke against it. We used a lot of names 'Mr X', 'Dirty Harry' and hence, the public had a perspective that the PTI is against the army," he continued.

Speaking about the "evil" May 9 riots that erupted after the PTI chief's arrest in the Al-Qadir Trust case, Ismail said that the attacks happened on the General Head Quarters (GHQ), Corps Commander House, and the memories of the martyrs. He said that whoever was a part of these attacks should be inquired whether that person belongs to the PTI or not.

The former Sindh governor spoke in support of the army, saying that he was not a part of the riots and that the FIR against him was "baseless".

"After giving it a lot of thought, I have decided to step down from all PTI positions. I am leaving PTI and I don't know if I will continue to remain active in politics. Today, I say good-

bye to Imran Khan and PTI," he concluded. Another two diehard leaders of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf have turned their back on the party while also announcing quitting politics. An important PTI wicket has fallen as party's Sindh President Ali Zaidi has announced to quit politics. The PTI leader from Sindh proclaimed in a video message on Saturday that he was parting ways with the party, saying that the Pakistan Army was our pride.

He said: "I condemn the May 9 violence. What happened wasn't right. I resign from the post of PTI Sindh president. I have always served Pakistan." The former federal minister said that after a lot of thinking he took the "difficult decision" of leaving politics. He said when he would leave the politics he would also resign from the party position and resign as an MNA. He, however, expressed his resolve to serve Pakistan. He said he used to work for the betterment of Pakistan before and would bring investment to the country. "Now I Will again do the same business of export. I quit politics. I have nothing to do with politics. Pakistan Army Zindabad. Pakistan Zindabad," he concluded.

Another Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leader and former federal minister Khusro Bakhtyar has announced to quit the PTI. In a video message on Saturday, Khusro Bakhtyar said that a year ago he had told the top and frontline leadership of the party that the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's new political plan of confrontation with state institutions would be harmful for the party. Bakhtyar said that due to this policy of the PTI, he distanced himself from the PTI politics. "I have also distanced myself from the membership of the core committee and the presidency of the South Punjab," he added.

The former federal minister said that the heart-wrenching events of May 9 had forced him to adopt aloofness from the political philosophy of the Tehreek-e-Insaf. "I can't go on with this anymore. I am pretty sure that the future of Pakistan is not in the politics of division and partisanship," the ex-minister concluded.

Six more Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leaders from Punjab on Saturday parted their ways with the

party after condemning the May 9 attacks. Leaders include ex-provincial ministers Hashim Dogar, Rai Taimur Bhatti, Chaudhry Ikhlq, and Samiullah, ex-TEVTA chairman Mamoon Tarar, and Sardar Mansab Ali Dogar. They announced the move at a press conference.

Hashim Dogar said May 9 could not be forgotten for life, adding that they condemned the attacks. "It was better if Mr Khan would have been taken a dig at his political opponents," he added. "Pakistan army is our red line," he said. He went on to say that they would formulate future strategy soon, adding that some other party members were also in contact with them. "Whoever was involved in May 9 attacks should be given an exemplary punishment," he added.

He continued by saying that politicians should keep their politics to themselves, adding that they should remember sacrifices rendered by soldiers. "We should stay away from violence," he added. Mr Dogar appealed the law-enforcement authorities to release innocent captives. Rai Taimur Bhatti said times came in politics that one had to choose politics and state, adding that they existed if the state existed. "If attacks like May 9 are not condemned, it will become a trend," he added. "We have chosen state over politics," he said.

Ch Ikhlq a time had come when the nation had to choose between vested interests and the country, adding that May 9 attacks had been condemned. "May 9 attack is akin to Bangladesh tragedy for me," he added. He went on to say that he would like to pay tribute to the army, adding that they would devise a strategy for future soon.

He started off by saying that he was not crying to leave the PTI, adding that May 9 attacks were actually wrong crying. "A drop of soldier's blood is more sacred than all politicians," he added. He said it was a matter of concern for all of them, adding that they had not yet joined any other party. "We are just quitting the PTI," he added. Mr Mansab said he had joined the PTI two months ago, adding that it was not incumbent upon everyone what happened on May 9. "May 9 attacks jolted us," he added.

CM orders completion of projects

LAHORE (PPI): Punjab caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi Saturday visited Poonch House and Samanabad Underpass Project in Lahore and ordered to speed up the pace of work on the project. Mohsin Naqvi reviewed the construction of Samanabad Underpass and said that no sluggishness in the completion of the project would be tolerated.

"There should not be a single-day delay in the completion of the project. The project should be completed within the stipulated period in any case," he ordered.

CM Murad vows to provide equal opportunities to persons with disabilities

KARACHI (PPI) Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah said Saturday that his government is committed to providing equal opportunities to the people, including those with disabilities.

"I announce here that my government would provide job opportunities to the persons with disabilities, particularly the amputees who have gone under treatment and rehabilitation process here at SIP&R," he said while speaking at the Awareness Day program for people with disabilities organized by the Sindh Institute of Physical & Rehabilitation (SIPM&R) at their premises. He was accompanied by his Advisor Murtaza Wahab.

The program was attended by CM Special Assistant for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, Sadiq Memon, Secretary Health Zulfiqar Shah, Secretary Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (DEPD) Taha Farooqi, and others. The CM said that the Sindh Institute of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation (SIPM&R) successfully illuminated the path towards

inclusivity and empowerment with its highly anticipated Awareness Day for people with disabilities. He added that the day also reflected a commitment to improving the lives of people with disabilities with the help.

Mr. Shah said that the momentous occasion offered attendees a plethora of enriching experiences. He added that the cornerstone of the event was the provision of on-the-spot assessments, which were available across various departments, including Physiatry Consultation, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy, Speech Therapy, Psychological Services, and the Prosthetic and Orthotics Department.

Recognizing the importance of joyful engagement, Murad Ali Shah said that SIPM&R thoughtfully arranged a multitude of activities, creating an inclusive environment for all. He also appreciated the children in attendance delighted in the presence of a Jumping Castle, providing endless hours of laughter and excitement.

The CM said the stage hosted the captivating 'Sharing Success Stories' event, where patients and

their family members graciously shared personal accounts of how SIPM&R's transformative services had forever changed their lives or the lives of their loved ones. "These inspiring narratives aimed to instill hope, break down barriers, and inspire others to embrace the power of rehabilitation," he said.

Mr. Shah said that in an unprecedented moment of advancement, SIPM&R proudly unveiled "The Bionic Arm" during this prestigious occasion. He added that the cutting-edge prosthesis symbolized a significant breakthrough in assistive technology. "With the provision of this state-of-the-art arm to deserving amputees, SIPM&R reaffirmed its commitment to facilitating independence, restoring dignity, and transforming lives," he concluded.

Earlier, the CM was received by his special assistant Sadiq Memon, and the Executive Director Dr of the Institute Dr Nabila Soomro. Accompanied by them the Chief Minister visited the stalls and interacted with the person and children with disabilities and their families.

May 28 to be remembered as symbol of national pride

LAHORE (INP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman Saturday said that May 28, 1998 will always be remembered as a symbol of our security, defence and national pride.

Speaking as special guest during a ceremony in connection with silver jubilee ceremony of Takbeer Day held under the auspices of Nazria i Pakistan Trust at Aiwan Quaid-e-Azam Lahore, he said Pakistan came in to being as a result of the struggle of the Pakistan Muslim League and during the tenure of this party, Pakistan became a nuclear power as well.

Baligh ur Rehman said that then Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif made Pakistan the first nuclear power in the Islamic world, and the seventh nuclear power despite all kinds of international pressure and threats.

He said former prime minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif made the

defence of the country impregnable by making a courageous decision of carrying out nuclear tests. He said that Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, the founder of the nuclear program, Chief Scientist Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan and entire team deserve tributes who worked day and night to make this nuclear program a success. The officers and soldiers of Pakistan Army also deserve commendation, who were present in Chagai all the time.

Governor Punjab said that we should remember our benefactors and avoid hate speeches and statements. He said that no one can be a benefactor for any nation than its martyrs. He added that the martyrs of Pakistan Army and the security forces are our pride, desecration of their memorials and undermining their dignity was a deplorable act. He said that a politician incited hatred among the public to divert attention from the bad gov-

ernance of his government and to cover up corruption and spread baseless propaganda and many people fell into his trap. He further said that on May 9, people were misled, they were incited to commit arson.

He said that the enemies of Pakistan are trying to create instability and internal chaos. They are using terrorism as a weapon to achieve their nefarious objectives that include spreading despair among the people about the future of their homeland and creating mistrust between the people and the institutions responsible for national security. We need to create unity in our ranks to foil their nefarious plans, he stressed. He said that except one person, all the politicians have been united on every important national issue.

Baligh ur Rahman while appreciating the services of Nazria Pakistan Trust said that it is working day and night to highlight the real causes and objectives of

Pakistan. "I am well aware of the activities of this national ideological organization. This institution is constantly reminding the people, especially the new generation, of the statement of the father of the nation that the purpose of creating Pakistan is not merely to acquire a piece of land, but to make it a laboratory of Islam," he added.

Saifullah Chaudhry, Secretary Tehreek Pakistan Workers Trust, Mian Farooq Altaf, Senior Vice President Nazria i Pakistan Trust, Senator Mushahid Hussain Syed, Mujibur Rahman Shami, Sultan Ahmad Ali, Majeeda Wayan, Mian Ziaur Rahman, Mian Salman Farooq, Professor, Dr. Ghazala Shaheen Wayan, teachers, students and other people from different walks of life attended the ceremony. On this occasion, a commemorative shield of Takbeer Day was also presented to Governor Punjab Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman.

Sindh to introduce separate force in transport department

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Sindh government has decided to establish a force within the transport department, based on the model of the motorway force.

An important meeting of the Sindh Mass Transit Authority Board took place in Karachi, chaired by Sharjeel Inam Memon, the Minister of Information, Transport, and Mass Transit.

Secretary Transport Saleem Rajput, Managing Director of Sindh Mass Transit Authority Kamal Dayo, and other board members participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, a decision was reached to appoint inspectors from the transport department across the province. These inspectors will have the responsibility of ensuring passenger safety and conducting vehicle inspections.

It was decided in the meeting to undertake measures for capacity building of drivers, conductors of the People's Bus Service, and



inspectors from the Transport Department. Specifically, the training of drivers and conductors of the People's Bus Service will be modeled as air stewards, emphasizing professionalism and customer service. In order to facilitate this, a training school will be established dedi-

cated to this purpose.

Information Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon expressed that the employees of the People's Bus Service will undergo comprehensive training at the dedicated training school to provide them with the necessary skills for delivering the best services.

Teachers will have to pass exam to obtain license like doctors

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh's Education and Culture Minister, Syed Sardar Ali Shah, has stated that the Sindh government is taking revolutionary steps for reforms in the field of education.

After the approval of the Teaching License Policy, teachers will now also have to pass an exam and obtain a license, similar to doctors and engineers. This will benefit the entire education system, not just teachers and students.

He mentioned this during a press conference held today in Committee Room-1 of the Sindh Assembly. Secretary School Education Sindh, Ghulam Akbar Laghari, renowned social figure Shahzad Rai from Zindagi Trust, Dean Farid Panjwani from Agha Khan University's Institute of Education Development, and others were also present.

The Provincial Education Minister, Syed Sardar Ali Shah, said that hiring over 60,000 teachers on merit in Sindh was a significant challenge, which was successfully accomplished due to the serious efforts of the Pakistan Peoples Party's provincial

government. He stated that Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has provided complete confidence by giving a free hand to maintain merit. He mentioned that the training and continuous learning process for the recruited teachers will greatly benefit from the Licensing Policy. Provincial Minister Sardar Shah said that the Sindh Teachers Education Development Authority (STEDA), Agha Khan, and collaboration with Durbeen are working together to continue the efforts related to teacher education, teacher training, and licensing.

He emphasized that Sindh has always played a prominent role in exemplary legislation, and Sindh is the first province in Pakistan to develop the Teaching Policy for the betterment of education. He urged other provinces to also work on the Licensing Policy. Sardar Shah stated that it is essential for a child to have a competent teacher who can educate children in any challenging environment.

He mentioned that due to the shortage of teachers after the recruitments, more than 5,000 closed schools have

been reopened, and over 400,000 new children have enrolled in government schools. He pointed out that currently, the number of out-of-school children in Sindh is much lower than in other provinces.

The Provincial Education Minister stated that the Sindh Teaching Board is not only being run by the government but also by social and private representatives. The board is empowered to make its own decisions to enhance the quality of teachers and maintain merit. He further stated that the Licensing Policy will be made applicable in both government and private sectors.

On this occasion, Shahzad Rai, the head of Zindagi Trust, and social figure, stated that teaching is a science when it comes to understanding a child's mind, and teaching education will make it easier to comprehend.

He emphasized that other provinces should also implement the Teaching License as long as government schools are not in proper condition, the public cannot receive quality education.

Police establish community school in Kacha area

LAHORE (INP): Punjab police have established a community school for local children in the vacated locality of Chak Moro and Kuchi Jamal, an area considered as a no-go area, and the school had been named after police commando Rao Rahat Saleem, who was martyred during an operation, he added.

The DPO Rajanpur said that the community school is being run under the infrastructure and manpower provided by the Punjab police, while the children studying in the school have been provided free books, bags, uniforms, lunch by the

police, he maintained. Teams of Punjab police are engaged in action against criminals, terrorists and bandits in Kacha areas of Rahim Yar Khan and Rajanpur districts under the directions of Inspector General Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, said a spokesperson for the Punjab Police.

The police teams have eliminated several hide-outs of criminals in Kacha area by conducting targeted operations, he added. Rajanpur police have done public service in Kacha area by restoring law and order through revolutionary measures.

police, he maintained.

Teams of Punjab police are engaged in action against criminals, terrorists and bandits in Kacha areas of Rahim Yar Khan and Rajanpur districts under the directions of Inspector General Police (IGP) Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, said a spokesperson for the Punjab Police.

The police teams have eliminated several hide-outs of criminals in Kacha area by conducting targeted operations, he added. Rajanpur police have done public service in Kacha area by restoring law and order through revolutionary measures.

Documents lost

I had lost my Nursing and Midwifery diplomas. If anyone found it please contact

Head Nurse Bilal Contact No# 0310-4623978

Secretary education to launch cleanliness drive in schools

PESHAWAR (APP): Secretary Education, Mohtasim Billah Shah, is set to launch a province-wide cleanliness drive on Sunday, targeting over 34,000 schools, as well as the Education Directorate (DCTE), DPD, and RPDCs.

The primary objective of this campaign is to foster cleanliness and hygiene in educational institutions, considering them as sacred spaces akin to our own homes.

The initiative has garnered support from administrative officers, hundreds of teachers, and staff members from the Department of Education, who will actively participate in the drive.

In an official statement issued on Saturday, it was emphasized that schools and institutions hold a prestigious status similar to our homes, necessitating the maintenance of cleanliness, tidiness, and aesthetic appeal without compromise.

Furthermore, a stern warning was issued that any teaching faculty or staff member associated with the Department of Education found spreading false or derogatory posts on social media against this noble cause will face legal consequences.

Instead, all teachers and staff members are encouraged to support and contribute to the campaign by

organizing various events and activities.

The Secretary of Education, along with the Special Secretary, Additional Secretaries, Deputy Secretaries, Section Officers, and other key officials from the Department of Education, will actively participate in the drive, underscoring their commitment to providing students with a conducive and hygienic learning environment.

The statement highlights that this initiative not only emphasizes the importance of cleanliness in educational settings but also demonstrates the education department's dedication to fostering a suitable environment for learning.

ANP chief pays tribute to martyrs of Takakr incident

PESHAWAR (APP): The Central President Awami National Party (ANP), Asfandiyar Wali Khan here Saturday paid tribute to Pashtuns who lost their lives on May 28, 1930 in Takkar incident and said that their sacrifices are beacon light that teach us about endurance and dedication to a cause.

In a message issued here from Bacha Khan Markaz in connection with the 93 anniversary of Takkar incident, he said that these incidents teach us that one should not budge from resolve to upheld truth. He said that the incident is still serving as a guiding principle to our workers.

Paying tribute to martyrs of Takkar incident, he reiterated that we should not let go patience and abide by the principle of non-violence in struggle for our rights. He said that our people are still unaware of the sacrifices of people on May 28, 1930 as the incident has not been mentioned in history books.

He said that we would not desist from offering any sacrifice for our rights following golden principle and policies of our leaders.



PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to Chief Minister Pir Haroon Shah offering dua for departed soul of mother of Syed Sabir Shah's mother. — F.P. photo

PIC dominates KP's first cardiac thoracic grand round conference

PESHAWAR (APP): The Peshawar Institute of Cardiology emerged as the leading institution on Saturday in Cardiac Thoracic Grand Round Conference, supported by the Pakistan Society of Cardiovascular and Thoracic Surgeries in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The conference, hosted by the PIC, witnessed enthusiastic participation from renowned medical institutions across the region.

Northwest Hospital Peshawar claimed the second position, while Rehman Medical Institute (RMI) Peshawar secured the third position, showcasing their expertise in presenting articles and cases related to complex heart surgeries.

As the guest of honour, Riaz Anwar, Special Advisor to the Chief Minister for Health, emphasised that the establishment of PIC is a valuable asset for the people of KP.

He acknowledged the tremendous efforts and hard work invested in the development of the insti-

tute, which has rapidly achieved significant national and international successes in the field of cardiology and cardiac surgery.

A notable milestone was reached during this conference as PIC initiated a research program encompassing both junior and senior doctors, marking the first of its kind within the institution.

Research articles on intricate surgeries were thoughtfully presented in public and private hospitals, fostering a competitive and learning environment that significantly boosts the morale of junior doctors.

Dr. Riaz Anwar expressed immense pride in the fact that the first-ever Cardiac Surgery Grand Round was held at PIC. He highlighted the institute's commitment to providing exceptional healthcare services to the people of the province.

During his address at the conference, Professor Dr. Shahkar Ahmed Shah, the Medical Director of PIC, emphasized the insti-

tute's role in nurturing a new generation of talented surgeons specializing in cardiac surgery.

Dr. Shahkar expressed deep gratitude for hosting such an esteemed Grand Round Conference, considering it a tremendous honor for PIC. The Cardiac Surgery Grand Round showcased a diverse array of exceptional cardiac procedures conducted in KP and throughout Pakistan.

The conference served as a platform for exchanging knowledge, experiences, and best practices, further elevating the standards of cardiac care in the province.

showcased a diverse array of exceptional cardiac procedures conducted in KP and throughout Pakistan.

The conference served as a platform for exchanging knowledge, experiences, and best practices, further elevating the standards of cardiac care in the province.

PFVA presents budgetary proposals

PESHAWAR (APP): All Pakistan Fruits and Vegetables Exporters, Importers and Merchants Association (PFVA) in its budget proposals submitted with federal government to improve trade in horticulture products, has demanded reservation of Rs. 100 million for extensive Research and Development to explore new varieties of Kinnow.

The kinnow industry's worth is of Rs. 130 billion and its export from USD 220 million has declined to USD 110 million (50 percent), since the variety of Kinnow in Pakistan is 60 years old while the global practice is to change variety after 25 years, said Waheed Ahmad Patron in Chief of PFVA on Saturday.

In the budgetary proposals of PFVA, Waheed Ahmad submitted that the existing variety of Kinnow was engulfed with various diseases leading to reduction in its shelf life and therefore it could not withstand longer transit time of 15 to 45 days. Of the total export of fruits and vegetables, the kinnow contributes 30%, he added.

Currently, there are 250 kinnow factories and 0.25 Million workforce is employed and If we can manage to develop new varieties then our export can be enhanced to USD 350 million within four years, Waheed estimates, he said and added, the PFVA proposals also included withdrawal of 10 percent Federal Excise Duty (FED)

on juice industries to increase its sale from Rs. 43 billion to projected Rs. 70 billion.

"The decline in sale after enforcement of 10 percent FED has led to the industry being unable to utilize its installed production capacity, with no new investment made or planned for 2023-2024," Waheed added.

This shrinking business size, he said will have an unfavorable impact on sales tax revenue and the overall allied industry, leading to unemployment while also negatively impacting fruit farmers linked with it, he continued.

The imposition of 10 percent FED is impacting affordability of the products produced by documented players, resulting in a large proportion of consumers shifting to low-priced, low quality and possibly unsafe alternatives offered by the undocumented sector, which is almost 20 percent of the industry size, he expressed.

"In an other proposal, PFVA demanded exemption of mushrooms including fresh, frozen, preserved in bottle, canned or packaged from sales tax".

Currently, 75-80 percent Mushrooms are being imported from China and other countries for our consumption so in order to encourage local grower sales of local mushrooms either fresh, frozen or otherwise preserved be exempted from tax to discourage the imports and

save foreign exchange, he added.

The PFVA also proposed exemption of import duty for Aseptic bags used in pulp industry.

Waheed Ahmad said that to enhance shelf life of the products, aseptic packaging bags were used and these bags were not locally manufactured and hence the processing units had no other choice but to import the bags which ultimately adds to the cost of products.

Similarly, he told spare parts used in the processing and manufacturing of juice industries may be exempted from import duty.

The industrial units installed for production of mango pulp, apple concentrate, Kinnow concert, Guava Pulp, Carrot Pulp beetroot concentrate and peach pulp, Banana purry, Tomato Paste, etc. are imported from different countries and their parts are not locally manufactured consequently spare parts are imported against 3 percent to 35 percent import duty, 2 percent to 6 percent additional custom duty 18 percent sales tax and 5.5 percent income tax for smooth running of the industry.

It is increasing the production cost and very difficult for manufacturer and processing units to compete in the international as well as in local market. The PFVA also demanded downward revision of high cost of Phyto-Sanitary Certificates to a reasonable level.

KP police arrest 2788 people after May 9 protests

PESHAWAR (INP): KP Police have arrested as many as 2788 people after May 09 violent protests in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, according to Police report on Saturday.

According to the police report "Police has arrested 1070 accused in terrorism cases, while 1239 persons have been detained in other cases." The report mentioned that over 100 terrorism cases has been registered after violent incidents in the province.

According to the police report, "KP police has detained 479 persons under the Maintenance of Public Order 3 (MPO 3)."

Police said, "those arrested under terrorism charges also included former ministers and assembly members," the report mentioned that KP Police has arrested 15 from 20 accused of the military court cases.

A police crackdown has been underway against May 09 violent protests including identification and arrest of the accused involved in violence. Violent incidents reported across Pakistan after former prime minister and PTI Chief Imran Khan was arrested from the premises of Islamabad High Court (IHC) 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, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Balochistan provinces and Islamabad summoned the armed forces to ensure law and order.

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Education Rahmat Salam Khattak stressed on maximum enrollment at government schools while personally monitoring the success of the drive.

According to details, Rahmat Salam Khattak has stressed that upon government school's principals and other administrative staff to enroll maximum students. He had focused on his native area as role model for rest of the province while strength of Government High School Manezai reached to 553 a record high of students in which 170 were newly enrolled in the drive.

Government High

School Manezai has enrolled more students than target of 80 students set by department of elementary and secondary department.

The double number of enrollment was ensure due to commitment of faculty and civil society members participation in the drive and secured first position in the district.

Moreover, Government Centennial School also enrolled more students than target as 120, government primary Chokara also enrolled 100 students and government primary school Toor Dhand enrolled 30 to 60 new students while the strength reached to 500 students in the school.

Principal Government High School Mezanai Sadiq Khattak along with

teachers took Ulema, civil society and local elder in confidence for enrolment drive which has bear fruits

for larger interest of nation while appreciated caretaker minister commitment in this regard.

Successful PhD defense of Dr. Amir Iqbal

PESHAWAR (APP): Dr. Amir Iqbal, Ph.D scholar of Institute of Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering, University of Agriculture, Peshawar, completed his Ph.D in Biotechnology under the supervision of Associate Professor Dr. Sajid Ali. He wrote his research paper "Diversity in Pathogen Genetic Lineages Prevalent in Response to HOST DIVERSITY IN EUROPEAN Wheat Germplasm in the Himalayan and Hindukush Region of Pakistan." Presented under the title of his research topic was on genetic varieties of European imported wheat with resistance to wheat diseases including this year's rust epidemic under Pakistan conditions. His thesis was endorsed by eminent scientists from Pakistan, Italy and Australia. In the defense seminar, Dr. Aamir Iqbal successfully defended his research paper by answering the questions posed by the participants and qualified him for the Ph.D.

Students of PMC visits Hamza Foundation



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A delegation of Peshawar Medical College (PMC) comprised of teachers and students visited Hamza Thalassemia Hospital and Welfare Foundation and inspected its various sections, on Saturday.

Medical Director of the hospital, Dr. Tariq Khan briefed the students about

facilities being provided to patients suffering from various blood related disorders.

He told that 1457 patients are registered in the hospital and being provided screened blood on regular basis.

On the occasion, he also urged affluent and government to support the foundation in its efforts to provide relief to ailing

community suffering from life threatening blood disorders.

Students witnessed provision of facilities and appreciated the working of state-of-the-art blood bank and laboratory.

Ejaz Afridi appointed as acting president

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Ejaz Khan Afridi, Vice President of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry has been appointed as acting president of the chamber.

He took charge as acting president of the SCCI and started performing duties and activities at the chamber level, according to a press release issued on Saturday.

Fire erupted in bushes of cemetery

PESHAWAR (APP): A fire broke out in the bushes in Chamkani cemetery due to unknown reasons, officials of the Rescue 1122 said here Saturday.

As soon as the information was received, 2 fire vehicles of Rescue 1122 were dispatched to the acci-

dent site and the Rescue 1122 officials reached the spot and started extinguishing the fire.

Firefighters completely controlled the fire within 55 minutes in a professional manner, Rescue 1122 officials informed the media men.

Govt stressed to keep girls' edu among top priorities in upcoming fiscal year

PESHAWAR (APP): A pre-budget seminar on girls' education has laid stress on Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government to keep the education sector among its top priorities in preparation of plans for the upcoming fiscal year 2023-24.

The seminar was organized by Blue Veins, a non-governmental organization, in collaboration with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Commission on the Status of Women (KPCSW) and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission.

The objective of the seminar was to engage all governmental and non-governmental stakeholders to expand their agendas for girls' education and gather inputs and demands regarding education financing priorities.

"The recent floods in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan have had a significant impact on public sectors including education while the socio-economic and political crises have exacerbated the problems and caused widespread challenges to many areas with an additional

burden on education," observed Amina Durrani, Director Programme KPCSW.

In her welcome address Amina Durrani said the state of girls' education in KP is dismal as out of 4.7 million out-of-school children in the province around 66 per cent are girls.

Around 23 per cent of girls cannot reach the level of 10 grade (Metric) due to different reasons including lack of schools in their respective areas, lack of basic facilities in schools and early marriages etc, Amina added.

We cannot achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) unless we cover important sectors of education, especially girls' education, Amina opined.

Programme Manager Blue Veins, Qamar Naseem said early marriages are a big hurdle for girls to become properly educated. He suggested for adoption of a Public-Private model adopted in Sindh province for providing opportunities to maximum number of girls in getting education.

Speaking on the occasion, Sher Azam Khan,

Chief Planning Officer Elementary and Secondary Education KP apprised participants that the provincial government is giving due consideration to girls' education and for the last four years all new schools have been established with a ratio of 30:70, 30 per cent boys and 70 per cent girls schools.

In KP, he continued, there are around 34780 schools out of which 20447 are for girls and 14333 for boys.

In last year's fiscal budget, the developmental budget for the education sector was around 227.1 billion, 17 per cent of the total budget of Rs. 1332 billion, Sher Azam told the participants.

Shahab Uallah, Senior Planning Officer E&SE KP observed that gender parity is a challenging task in education sector, but despite all difficulties, the department is fully focusing on the promotion of female education.

In the outgoing fiscal year, the department has so far received 20.4 billion developmental allocations which has been utilized

with the ratio of 70 per cent (Rs. 14.2 billion) for girls' education and 30 per cent 6.12 for boys.

In the Annual Development Programme (ADP) 110 schemes are ongoing for provision of 5424 facilities with a distribution of 3797 for girl's education institutes and 1627 for boys, he added.

The Education Department has set up Girls' Community Schools in rural areas of all the districts with focus on areas which lack facilities of government girls' schools. Similarly, 209 Literacy For All centers has been established which are functional since 2018.

The education department has also chalked out a scheme of Rs 3.7 billion for providing stipends for girls in merged areas from six to twelve years of age.

Noor Alam Khan, Senior Planning Officer also informed the participants of the pre-budget seminar that the education department has planned a mega scheme of bringing around three million out-of-school children back to school.

The programme estimat-

ed cost is calculated at around Rs. 94 billion and will be presented in an inter-provincial meeting of Education Departments to be held in Islamabad in the near future.

Noor Alam informed that solarization of 9200 schools in settled areas has been completed while installation process is in the final states in 1100 schools in merged districts.

Solarization will also improve presence of teaching staff in schools because of full-time operation of bio-metric machines and will help in improving education standards, he hoped.

Noor Khan said challenges exist in the province to ensure proper education, especially of girls, and these difficulties are increased manifold due to the prevailing socio-economic crisis, but the department is fully committed and focusing on the achievement of its goal of education for all.

Later the participants of the seminar formally handed over their recommendations to officials of the education department.



In brief

Young girl burnt alive 'for honour'

JHANG (INP): A young girl was burnt to death in the name of honour by her family in Basti Dabwala, Garh Maharaj of district Jhang, police confirmed on Saturday. According to the police officials, District Police Officer (DPO) Tariq Mehboob acted promptly after receiving information about the crime and arrested all six members of the victim's family. The police said that the arrested persons included the victim's father, Rajab Ali, two brothers, Jaber and Aamir, and sisters Kausar, Sameera and Aasia. The girl was taken to a medical facility for treatment but succumbed to her injuries. While recording her statement, the victim said she had left her house since she wanted to marry the person of her choice. Reacting to this, her vengeful father, brothers and sisters threw petrol and burned her, she said before breathing her last. The DPO ordered the investigation team to arrest all others involved in the heinous crime after examining the incident from all aspects.

Principal booked

BHAKKAR (PPI): A case has been registered against the principal of a private school for harassing a girl student in Jandanwala area of Bhakkar on Saturday. The case of harassment was registered on the order of Deputy Commissioner Dr Noor Ahmad Awan after a video went viral on social media showing school Principal Abdul Razzaq indulging in indecent activities with a 16-year-old girl student on the school premises. Someone secretly filmed the principal who was harassing the student and uploaded the clip on social media. Taking notice of the incident, the deputy commissioner also ordered the revocation of the school registration. The police, however, could not arrest the pervert principal of the school. Meanwhile, a driver and gunmen of former MPA Irfanullah Khan Niazi, a cousin of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan, were booked over firing shots at Bhakkar police on Khansar Road. The policemen had narrowly escaped the shots fired at them. The accused were identified as Falak Sher, Akram and Bilal. They were personal employees of Irfanullah Khan Niazi. The police registered a case against the accused at Bhakkar Saddr police station and recovered arms from them.

Man kills brother's wife

LARKANA (INP): A man allegedly killed his brother's wife over marital issue as the woman was asking for divorce in Larkana district. Police confirmed on Saturday. According to the media reports, the deceased victim was identified as Tehmina Sangro, a resident of Dokri area. Tehmina reportedly came to court in order to get divorce from her husband. The younger brother of her husband killed her inside the court premises and fled the scene. The police arrived at the scene later and started collecting evidence. Police claims that special teams have been formulated in order to ensure the expeditious arrest of the suspect.

Two dacoits killed encounter

CHINIOT (PPI): Two suspected robbers were killed in the Chiniot district of Punjab province in the wee hours of Saturday night. The incident happened in the Chak-185 area within the jurisdiction of Langrana police station.

May 9 riots expose PTI's negative agenda: Muqam

Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: Adviser to the Prime Minister (PM) for Political and Public Affairs and National Heritage Engr Amir Muqam here on Saturday said that May 9 riots had exposed the negative agenda of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). He said, "PTI government has deprived the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) of development during its nine years of rule and failed to deliver on all fronts."

Addressing a public gathering on occasion of inauguration of sui gas network to different villages here, Engr Amir Muqam said that gas projects started by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government during 2013-18 in Swat, were halted by the PTI's government which resulted in the suffering of people. He said the development process in KP was badly affected during nine years of the rule of PTI while the entire Malakand division including Swat was also deprived of economic progress and people welfare programs.

Engr Amir Muqam said that attacks on civil, and government buildings and defence installations on May 9-10 exposed barbaric mindsets of the attackers. He said destruction to public, government and defence installations caused by May 9-10 vandalism was beyond imagination and culprits could not escape from the clutches of law.

Engr Amir Muqam claimed that a horde of the



so-called champions of "change" did so much colossal damage to public and private properties on May 9-10 that could not do by the enemy during the country's 75 years of history. The PM's adviser said, "PML-N's agenda is to serve the masses, the party and would work day and night to address the old and core issues of people of KP."

He said the development of halted gas projects was restarted in Swat and would be completed within the stipulated time frame. Engr Amir Muqam said that Pakistan Muslim League N has made the country's defence impregnable after making successful nuclear explosions at Chagai Balochistan on May 28, 1998.

He said that former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had overlooked international pressure and made Pakistan atomic power. He said Pakistan is the first Muslim country in world that achieved status of nuclear power. On their hands, he

said that horde of PTI brought on the instructions of Imran Niazi have put on fire the Chaghi Mountains model constructed in memory of May 28, 1998 explosions in the premises of Radio Pakistan Peshawar on May 10.

He said attacks on government properties and defence installations on May 9-10 exposed the negative policies of PTI. Amir Muqam claimed that Imran Niazi's corrupt practices were exposed before masses as evident of PTI Foreign Funding Case, Tosha Khana and Al Qadar Trust cases. He said PML-N after coming into power in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would address the nine years long sense of deprivation of the people and will provide relief to masses.

Earlier, he inaugurated gas network for different villages including Kokari, Mashoki, Mera Gari, Shangu Ganori, Garasa in Swat. The residents showers flowers petals on Amir Muqam and raised full throated slogans in favour of Pakistan Muslim League N.

Civil society hold rally in favour of Pakistan Army

F.P. Report

BUNER: The Ulema, civil Society and common populace staged demonstration followed a walk under the banner of Yumi Mu-zamat Ghadar e Pakistan, on Saturday. The Civil Society figure Mohamad Yar Khan was leading the protest and walk.

The Ulema civil societies figures and locals were largely participated. The participants were carried banners inscribed slogans in support of Pakistan Pak Army KP Police and against those were involved in the 9 May ransacking in the country.

The participants were also carried the banner against national traitors and demanded establishment of rule of law. The participants during protest and walk were full throats raising slogans Pakistan Pak Army KP police Zindabad and Ghadar Pakistan Murdabad.

Addressing the protesters and post media talks the Ulema representative Mufti Noor Bahadur the Civil Society representative Mohamad Yar the Chairman Human Welfare & Justice Organization Buner Hastamand Khan bitterly condemned those were behind and those

were involved in the 9 May ransacking and attacking Army Head Quarter the Pak Amy installations the statues of Martyred Army and ransacking states assets and private properties.

The speakers branded such acts of the PTI leadership and activist's agenda of enemies and demanded of the state agencies the garage government to trace arrest and punish all of them as anti-state elements so as to best protect motherland and let Pakistan grow develop and its patriotic citizens to live happy in peaceful.

Ant-polio vaccination drive drive kicks-off

F.P. Report

WANA: In South Waziristan Lower, Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Nasir Khan and Assistant Commissioner Wana Yasir Salman Kundi officially kicks-off the polio campaign drive, on Saturday.

So, 8-day anti-polio campaign will start from May 29 to June 5, 2023 in South Waziristan Lower District. Out of a total of 73,462 children, 69,059 children between the ages of 4 months and 5 years will be given polio vaccination as well as fIPV vac-

cination. In this regard, Deputy Commissioner Muhammad Nasir Khan told the public about the polio awareness campaign that the entire world is free of polio, while unfortunately the polio virus is still present in Afghanistan and Pakistan and for which measures have to be taken on an emergency basis, and every member of the society has to play his role to defeat this epidemic. So that this deadly virus can be defeated in Pakistan as well, 720 social mobilizers, 199

scale persons, 60 first level supervisors, 37 union council medical officers, 36 union councils will serve in this polio campaign.

However, in the end Deputy Commissioner South Waziristan Lower Muhammad Nasir Khan has emphasized on all sections of the society, to protect the future of their children from the lifelong disability of polio and to actively participate in this polio campaign to create a healthy society, and play their full role in Polio Free Pakistan.

and reliable phone connections, as significant challenges. Moreover, the dwindling student population, with only 10 to 15 students attending schools in most villages, has resulted in an unnecessary surplus of teachers. The surplus, in turn, hampers the quality of education being provided.

Adding to the challenges, some schools have been forced to close due to ongoing law and order issues. To meet enrollment targets, teachers are compelled to fabricate student numbers, while district education department officials turn a blind eye to the situation. The plight of female education is especially alarming, with female teachers having to reside in the homes of school owners due to the absence of separate female hostels. Tribal customs and the reluctance of tribal elders to send their female family mem-

bers to unfamiliar accommodations exacerbate the issue, leading to compromised learning opportunities for girls.

Although the male and female heads of the District Education Office in South Waziristan are striving for change, they face resistance from long-serving subordinate staff members who possess influential connections. This impedes any meaningful action against the responsible individuals. Shockingly, these subordinate staff members have been involved in fraudulent activities, including the illicit hiring of over 2,200 teachers and misappropriation of approximately 15 crores in PTC funds.

A teacher from the Servaki division revealed that funds allocated for the construction of washrooms and play areas have vanished, benefiting only the office administration and school owners. Furthermore, it

has become a trend for school owners to extort money from teachers, often amounting to 1000 to 12000 rupees per teacher per month. These unscrupulous practices allow school owners to amass significant wealth, while the quality of education suffers.

Additionally, teachers who refuse to comply with such demands are subjected to false reports filed against them, resulting in inquiries initiated by the District Education Office. Those who attempt to fulfill their duties are met with intimidation and forced eviction from their accommodations, as school owners often misuse the school premises for personal purposes.

The intermingling of school ownership with tribal power dynamics exacerbates the situation. Prominent tribal elders, who hold positions as school owners, often occupy menial

roles such as guards or sweepers within their own schools. Holding such influential positions makes it nearly impossible to demand their active involvement in their designated roles, as they consider it beneath their status. This scenario is just one among many instances where influential school owners prioritize their personal interests over their educational responsibilities.

Furthermore, attempts to address the corruption within the District Education Office have faced opposition. District Education Officer, Ghulam Fatima, who championed the cause, faced backlash from tribal elders who filed baseless complaints to higher authorities, alleging her lack of understanding of local culture and traditions. The entrenched mafia within the male-dominated District Education Office has

proved resilient, preventing any genuine reform.

Even the brief tenure of an honest management cadre officer, Malik Khan, appointed as Deputy District Education Officer, South Waziristan, was cut short due to his refusal to tolerate corruption. Instead, a teacher from the cadre was reinstated, further perpetuating the system of malpractice.

The deteriorating situation in South Waziristan's education system demands immediate attention and action. Urgent measures are needed to address the challenges faced by teachers, ensure access to quality education for all, eliminate corruption, and encourage genuine reforms. The future of South Waziristan's children hangs in the balance, and it is crucial that steps are taken to restore hope and educational opportunities in this war-torn region.



FAISALABAD: Prof. Dr Imtiaz Ahmad Dogar Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences along with faculty members, doctors and paramedics are participating in Schizophrenia awareness walk at Department of Psychiatry & Behavioral Sciences Faisalabad Medical University.

Residents to compels to purchase drinking water

F.P. Report

TAKHTBHAI: Residents of urban areas of Takhtbhai including Mazdoor Abad facing serve shortage of drinking water while compelled to purchase water from tankers, Saturday.

The residents claimed that several projects were initiated in the premises but to no veil due to corruption, embezzlement and malpractices in the Public Health Engineering Department Mardan Zone. The residents claimed posting and appointment are made nepotism and corruption which has adversely impacted livelihood of labourers.

A land owner granted land for water supply scheme claimed that malpractices and corruption is its peak in public health engineering while added that posting has been made on financial corruption which has led to the collapse of water supply schemes in the premises.

Marwat alliance to clean sweep polls: Anwar

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Former federal minister Anwar Saifullah Khan has said that Marwat National Alliance will once again ready to clean sweep the upcoming general elections due to national unity.

The services of the Saifullah brothers are not hidden from anyone in the southern districts. At the level of southern districts including Lakki Marwat district, only the candidates supported by them will be successful. He expressed these views while talking to the media representatives.

Former minister said that the districts included in the southern districts are considered as his native constituencies. It is clear as day that Saifullah brothers have taken decisive steps for the welfare and development of the people of these districts. This is the reason why even today the people have remained in the way of Saifullah brothers and want them to contest elections from their districts. He said that Saifullah brothers will actively participate in the upcoming general elections and will field themselves or their candidates in all the national and provincial seats of the southern districts.

Commissioner kicks off anti-polio drive

F.P. Report

BANNU: Commissioner Bannu Parwaiz Sabatkhel kicks-off the anti-polio drive by administering oral polio vaccine to a child. The child was also inoculated with a fractional dose of the inactivated polio virus vaccine (IPV) at a ceremony held in the commissioner's office attended by deputy commissioner Manzoor Afridi, deputy coordinator Eid Nawaz Sherani and officials of health department and partners' organisations, on Saturday.

The five-day polio eradication campaign will commence from May 29. Speaking on the occasion, the divisional commissioner asked the parents to vaccinate their children against the deadly crippling disease. "The region is in an endemic zone and concerted efforts are the need of the day to free the region of polio", he maintained. He said that the divisional and

district administrations would extend full support to the health department and partners' organisation to make efforts aiming to eradicate polio a success.

In Bannu, the health department has constituted 736 teams to immunize 244834 children below the age of five against polio. Each team is composed of four members including two community mobilisers and one each a skilled person and team assistant. A total of 577 teams have been tasked with field assignment to administer anti-polio vaccine to children, 74 fixed teams to vaccinate kids in hospitals and health centres and 85 transit teams with immunization assignment at bus stands, busy public places and roads. Also in the day, additional deputy commissioner Ishaquddin and district health officer Dr Muhammad Rehman Afridi asked the media personnel to play their role in educating people about the useful-

ness of anti-polio vaccine for kids' health.

Speaking at an orientation session, they said that more than 242000 children under the age of five were at risk due to the polio virus circulation in Bannu district. Dr Junaid from provincial emergency operation centre and Dr Arsalan of expanded programme on immunization (EPI) were also present. Officials said that the country would have been freed from polio had people cooperated with health workers in routine immunisation.

"The routine immunization is helpful to save children from fourteen deadly diseases including polio", they maintained. They asked the journalists to tell people, especially parents, not to link solutions to their problems with vaccination of their children. They also asked the parents not to put the life and health of their children at risk by refusing vaccination.

MMCI signs MoU to facilitate traders at home

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Memory of Understanding (MOU) on International Organization on Standardization (ISO) Certification among Mardan Chamber of Commerce & Industry (MCCI) and Vertical Registrar Company Limited (VRCL) concluded.

Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Vertical Registrar Company Limited organized a joint session on ISO certification which was presided over by Zahir Shah, (MCCI) President. Chief Executive Officer of Vertical Registrar Laeeq Khan, Miss Sophia Jamal Manager, Miss Hiba Noor Sales and Marketing Executive, Miss Sadia Sales and Marketing Executive, besides members of the Executive Committee of Mardan Chamber, Cabinet Members of various sectors including Flour Mills Association, Private Schools Association Mardan, Private Hospitals Mardan, Wedding Halls Association Mardan, Light Engineering Gujar Garhi and TahitBhai, Mega

Marts, Hotels and Restaurants Mardan Press and Media representatives participated in a large numbers.

MCCI president Zahir Shah said in his address that Mardan is the second largest city of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, where there is extensive work in various sectors, but unfortunately, there is not enough development in the business of our area. The main reason is the absence of standardization due to which our business and products do not get any acceptance in the foreign markets. He said that the main objective of this session is to register the various sectors of this area according to international standards and to introduce them to foreign markets.

He added that Mardan Chamber has been providing services to its members for long time, in honor of which the International Organization for Standardization (ISO) quality management certificate was awarded to Mardan Chamber, which is a clear proof that Mardan Chamber Of Commerce is providing the best services

to its members. Laeeq Khan, Chief Executive Officer of Vertical Registrar Company Limited, gave a detailed briefing to the participants on the aims and objectives of ISO.

Laeeq Khan said that our company is providing various types of certification in different sectors, in which ISO 9001:2015, ISO 14001:2015, ISO 45001:2018 & ISO 27001:2013 are noteworthy. It helps a lot to introduce at foreign level because all these standards are same all over the world. Addressing the participants, Laeeq Khan said that those members, firms or companies who are interested in getting ISO certification should contact through Mardan chamber and benefit from this facility. To the effect to provide fruitful services a Memorandum of Understanding was signed between Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Vertical Registrar Company. At the end of the session, Mardan Chamber President Zahir Shah thanked all the distinguished guests.

Education crisis grips South Waziristan: Militancy and corruption perpetuate deteriorating conditions

F.P. Report

WANA: Once ravaged by a decade-long military operation, Rah-e-Nijat, is now facing a new battle - a deteriorating education system. The area, which witnessed a mass exodus during the operation, has struggled to recover from the scars left by militancy. As the region attempted to rebuild, the return of militants has hindered progress, leaving the people of South Waziristan grappling with dire circumstances.

The effects of the operation and subsequent displacement have been devastating for the education sector. Many teachers have sought refuge in settled areas like Tank, Dera Ismail Khan, and other regions, refusing to return to South Waziristan. They cite the lack of basic amenities, such as hotels, access to the internet, electricity,

and reliable phone connections, as significant challenges. Moreover, the dwindling student population, with only 10 to 15 students attending schools in most villages, has resulted in an unnecessary surplus of teachers. The surplus, in turn, hampers the quality of education being provided.

Adding to the challenges, some schools have been forced to close due to ongoing law and order issues. To meet enrollment targets, teachers are compelled to fabricate student numbers, while district education department officials turn a blind eye to the situation. The plight of female education is especially alarming, with female teachers having to reside in the homes of school owners due to the absence of separate female hostels. Tribal customs and the reluctance of tribal elders to send their female family mem-

bers to unfamiliar accommodations exacerbate the issue, leading to compromised learning opportunities for girls.

Although the male and female heads of the District Education Office in South Waziristan are striving for change, they face resistance from long-serving subordinate staff members who possess influential connections. This impedes any meaningful action against the responsible individuals. Shockingly, these subordinate staff members have been involved in fraudulent activities, including the illicit hiring of over 2,200 teachers and misappropriation of approximately 15 crores in PTC funds.

A teacher from the Servaki division revealed that funds allocated for the construction of washrooms and play areas have vanished, benefiting only the office administration and school owners. Furthermore, it

has become a trend for school owners to extort money from teachers, often amounting to 1000 to 12000 rupees per teacher per month. These unscrupulous practices allow school owners to amass significant wealth, while the quality of education suffers.

Additionally, teachers who refuse to comply with such demands are subjected to false reports filed against them, resulting in inquiries initiated by the District Education Office. Those who attempt to fulfill their duties are met with intimidation and forced eviction from their accommodations, as school owners often misuse the school premises for personal purposes.

The intermingling of school ownership with tribal power dynamics exacerbates the situation. Prominent tribal elders, who hold positions as school owners, often occupy menial

roles such as guards or sweepers within their own schools. Holding such influential positions makes it nearly impossible to demand their active involvement in their designated roles, as they consider it beneath their status. This scenario is just one among many instances where influential school owners prioritize their personal interests over their educational responsibilities.

Furthermore, attempts to address the corruption within the District Education Office have faced opposition. District Education Officer, Ghulam Fatima, who championed the cause, faced backlash from tribal elders who filed baseless complaints to higher authorities, alleging her lack of understanding of local culture and traditions. The entrenched mafia within the male-dominated District Education Office has



Belgian aid worker held in Iran returns home

BELGIUM (AFP): Belgian aid worker Olivier Vandecasteele, who was detained for almost 15 months in Iran, landed in Belgium, according to images broadcast on television, after being freed in a prisoner exchange.

The 42-year-old Belgian was greeted by his parents, sister and other family members on the tarmac of the Melsbroek military base near Brussels following his release. The military plane bringing him back from Oman landed shortly after 9:30pm (1930 GMT), according to the images shown on RTL-TVI channel.

Earlier, Iran freed Vandecasteele in a prisoner exchange for an Iranian diplomat convicted of terrorism. Iran announced that the freed Iranian is diplomat Assadollah Assadi, who was jailed in Belgium over a 2018 plot to bomb an Iranian opposition rally outside Paris.

Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian tweeted that Assadi, "the innocent diplomat of our country... is now on his way back to his homeland and will soon enter our beloved Iran." Both Belgium and Iran thanked Oman for its role in securing the release. Belgium has always insisted that Vandecasteele was innocent and his trial rigged.

He was sentenced in January to 40 years in prison and 74 lashes for "espionage", Tehran's judiciary said at the time. "Olivier spent 455 days in prison in Tehran in unbearable conditions. Innocent," Belgium's Prime Minister Alexander De Croo said, following news of his release. "For me, the choice has always been clear. Olivier's life has always come first. It's a responsibility that I take upon myself, that I accept. In Belgium, we do not abandon anyone," he added, without mentioning the prisoner swap.

Last year, Belgium and Iran signed a treaty to enable prisoner swaps. Wearing a dark suit and trainers, visibly slimmed down but smiling, Vandecasteele emerged from the plane and was hugged at length by his waiting relatives. He was not expected to make any immediate public statements.

Critics of the pact have alleged that the prisoner swap deal would only encourage Tehran to take Belgians hostage for use as bargaining chips to seek the return of agents like Assadi arrested for terror

offences in the West. An exiled Iranian opposition group, the National Council of Resistance in Iran (NCRI), which was the target of the 2018 bomb plot, challenged the treaty in Belgium's constitutional court. The NCRI reacted furiously to Belgium's decision on Assadi and claimed it violated the court's order that the intended victims of the bomb plot should be consulted before any prisoner exchange took place under the treaty.

"The release of the terrorist... is a shameful ransom to terrorism and hostage-taking," the group said. Amnesty International also said the return of Assadi would foster a climate of impunity. But De Croo's government said that, to win Vandecasteele's release, they opted for another route: invoking a constitutional clause stipulating that the government, acting under the authority of the king, is in charge of international relations.

That meant that for "the Iranian opposition... we didn't warn them beforehand," one government official said. Belgian officials denied that any ransom was paid. Assadi was an Iranian diplomat based in Vienna, who was arrested after passing explosives to a Belgian-based Iranian couple who were supposed to travel to France to bomb an NCRI rally. He was arrested in Germany as he tried to return to Austria and extradited to Belgium where he did not enjoy diplomatic immunity.

He was convicted of attempted "terrorist" murder and membership of a "terrorist group". Tehran angrily protested, but his sentence was upheld in May 2021 when Assadi opted not to appeal. Belgian officials said they had no choice but to hand over Assadi to get Vandecasteele released, saying that since the Iranian diplomat's arrest on July 1, 2018, Belgium and its interests abroad were confronted with "an increased threat" from Iran.

"Let there be no mistake about that: the arrest of our compatriot (in Iran) on February 24, 2022 is a direct result, a direct result of what the Belgian judiciary did to the alleged Iranian diplomat and nothing else," one official said. Earlier this month, Iran released a Frenchman, Benjamin Briere, and a French-Irish citizen Bernard Phelan. But it continues to hold two dozen foreigners, whom Western capitals and families regard as hostages.

Six migrant traffickers arrested

TIRANA (AP): Albanian police said they have arrested six migrant traffickers for allegedly organizing an illegal border crossing for people from Arab countries and opening fire on border police. No injuries were reported.

A police statement said that the traffickers were operating in Morine village, close to the Kosovo border, 165 kilometers (around 100 miles) north of the capital, Tirana, where they were conducting "criminal activity assisting emigrants from third countries to cross the border illegally ... in exchange for financial compensation." The traffickers responded with gunfire when they were asked to stop, police said.

Following hours of pursuit in coordination with neighboring Kosovo counterparts, five Syrians and one Algerian were arrested, police said, adding that another Algerian suspect is still at large. They are accused of assisting migrants from Arab or Asian countries to illegally cross from Greece to Albania, Kosovo and Serbia, who then try to make their way to a Western European country. They also face charges of attempted murder for opening fire on border agents and illegal weapons possession. If convicted on all charges, they face up to life in prison. Albania isn't a preferred route for migrants, but some try to use the tiny Western Balkan country to move toward Western Europe.

US curbs boss of mercenary group in Mali

WASHINGTON (BBC): The US has announced sanctions on the local boss of the Wagner private military group in Mali, Ivan Maslov. The Russian mercenary group could be secretly trying to obtain military equipment for the war in Ukraine through its operations in Mali and other African countries, the US says.

The Treasury Department said Wagner employees could be trying to procure mines, drones and radar equipment. Wagner is known to be operating in some African countries, including Mali. The group has been providing Mali's military government with assistance in the fight against Islamist insurgents.

Mr Maslov is seen as a key figure in Wagner, working with Malian officials to build Wagner's presence. The US accusations suggest the group might be trying to exploit the abundance of arms in Mali. The country saw an influx of weaponry after the fall of Muammar Gaddafi in Libya in 2011, as mercenaries fighting for the former leader returned home.

The group's overall boss, Yevgeny Prigozhin, has accused Russia's defence ministry of failing to provide his personnel with weapons and ammunition for operations in Ukraine. Wagner has led Russia's offensive in the Ukrainian city of Bakhmut, although it began withdrawing in order to hand control over to the Russian military. Earlier this year, the US designated Wagner as a transnational criminal organisation. Prigozhin and other Wagner leaders are already subject to sanctions.

"The Wagner Group's presence on the African continent is a destabilising force for any country that allows for the deployment of the group's resources into their sovereign territory," the US Treasury Department statement said. Wagner committed widespread human rights abuses and appropriated natural resources, it added. The Treasury also suggested Wagner might be "seeking to transit material acquisitions for Ukraine through Mali" and was "willing to use false paperwork for these transactions."

The statement also accused Wagner of supplying Sudan's Rapid Support Forces with missiles for its conflict with the Sudanese army. Russia has been seeking to expand its influence in Africa as it seeks new allies in the war with Ukraine.

Russia says its border regions attacked

Moscow's forces hit clinic in central Ukrainian city

KYIV (AP): Russia's southern Belgorod region bordering Ukraine came under attack from Ukrainian artillery fire, mortar shells and drones, authorities said, hours after two drones struck a Russian city in an area next to the annexed Crimea Peninsula. Moscow's forces, meanwhile, struck a building containing psychology and veterinary clinics in the city of Dnipro, in central Ukraine, killing two people and wounding 30, including two children, Ukrainian officials said. Video released by regional Gov. Serhiy Lysak showed fire engulfing the three-story building that appeared almost destroyed, with only parts of a wall standing, as firefighters battled the flames.

A Russian S-300 missile hit a dam in the Karlivka district of Donetsk province in eastern Ukraine, threatening nearby settlements with flooding. The town of Graivoron in Russia's Belgorod region, about 7 kilometers (more than 4 miles) from the Ukrainian border, came under fire for several hours, damaging four houses, a store, a car, a gas pipeline and a power line, Gov. Vyacheslav Gladkov reported.

Closer to the frontier, a recreation center, a shop and an empty house were damaged in the village of Glotovo. One woman was wounded when nearby Novaya Tavolzhanka was shelled, Gladkov said. Earlier this week, the Belgorod region was the target of one of the most serious cross-border attacks from Ukraine since the war began 15 months ago. Details of the raid were murky. Russia blamed the Ukrainian armed forces, but two Russian groups said they were involved, with the aim of bringing down Russian President Vladimir Putin.

Officials in Russia's southern city of Krasnodar, in the region of the same name bordering Crimea, said two drones struck there. Witnesses told local media they heard something like the sound of a moped and then two explosions. The blasts smashed a hole in the roof of one building and blew out windows in an apartment building.

"We just went to bed and then there was such a strong, terrible boom," said resident Tatiana Safonova. "We ran outside. There were people running, but nothing else was going on." She said described the sound beforehand "like a growling, noisy moped driving by." Krasnodar regional Gov. Veniamin Kondratyev



wrote on Telegram that there were no casualties and that some buildings were damaged but essential infrastructure was unharmed.

Krasnodar Mayor Yevgeny Naumov said a residential building and an office building were damaged. Drone attacks against Russian border regions have been a regular occurrence since the start of the invasion in February 2022, with attacks increasing last month. Earlier this month, an oil refinery in Krasnodar was attacked by drones on two straight days.

At a meeting in Estonia, German and Baltic leaders played down concerns about fighting spilling over into Russia. "Russia attacked Ukraine, and so Ukraine can defend itself," said German Chancellor Olaf Scholz. "It is clear that the weapons we have delivered will only be used on Ukrainian territory." Estonian Prime Minister Kaja Kallas noted that "Ukraine does not have any wish to invade Russia," and Lithuanian Prime Minister Ingrida Simonyte added: "I'm somewhat puzzled by the worry of Russia, because Russia is at war — so it's quite strange to think that the war can only be in that other territory that you invaded."

Ukraine's Defense Ministry published video that appeared to show a marine drone heading for Russia's Ivan Khurs reconnaissance ship in the Black Sea. The video didn't show the drone hitting the ship. The video followed reports by Russia's Defense Ministry that Ukraine had launched an unsuccessful attack on the Ivan

Khurs using three unmanned speedboats, with all three destroyed prior to reaching the ship. Moscow released video allegedly showing the destruction of one of the marine drones. At least two civilians were killed and three others wounded in Russian attacks on Ukraine in the previous 24 hours, the Ukrainian president's office reported.

Officials in the Russian-held sector of Donetsk reported two missile strikes on the city of Mariupol, where a monthslong siege early in the war left much of the city in ruins. Russia's state news agency Tass cited an unnamed official as saying the missiles were long-range Storm Shadows, which the United Kingdom delivered to Ukraine this month.

In Moscow, China's special envoy Li Hui met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, and they exchanged "opinions on the situation around Ukraine and prospects for resolving the conflict," according to the Russian Foreign Ministry. Lavrov cited "serious obstacles to the resumption of peace talks created by the Ukrainian side and its Western handlers," the statement said, but it did not disclose what Li said or proposed. Li visited Kyiv earlier this month. Chinese leader Xi Jinping's government says it's neutral and wants to serve as mediator in the conflict, but has supported Moscow politically. Beijing released a proposed peace plan in February, but Ukraine's allies largely dismissed it, insisting that Russian President Vladimir Putin must first withdraw his forces.

Sudan conflict: Hospital attacks potential war crimes

KHARTOUM (BBC): Both sides in Sudan's conflict could be carrying out war crimes on medical facilities and staff, according to evidence seen by BBC News Arabic.

Hospitals have been hit by airstrikes and artillery fire while patients were still in the building and doctors have also been singled out for attack - all of which are potential war crimes. Only a handful of the 88 hospitals in the capital, Khartoum, remain open after weeks of fighting, according to Sudan's Doctors Union.

The BBC team used satellite data and mapping tools, analysed user-generated content on a huge scale, and spoke to dozens of doctors, to build a picture of how hospitals and clinics are being affected. The World Health Organization (WHO) called the attacks "a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law" adding that they "must stop now". The fighting in Sudan began on 15 April and was triggered by a power struggle between former allies - the leaders of the regular army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces

(RSF). Khartoum's Ibn Sina hospital is one of a number the BBC has identified as having been targeted in an airstrike or by artillery fire when medics were treating civilian patients. Dr Alaa is a surgeon at the hospital and was present when the attack happened on 19 April. "There wasn't any warning. Ibn Sina hospital where I worked was hit by three bombs, while a fourth bomb hit the nurses' house which was entirely set on fire," he said.

Christian de Vos, an international criminal law expert with NGO Physicians for Human Rights, says this could be classed as a war crime. "The duty to warn of any impending airstrike to ensure... that all civilians are able to evacuate a hospital prior to an airstrike - that is very clear under the laws of war," he said. Looking at the images of the attack, forensic weapons expert Chris Cobb-Smith said it could have been caused by artillery fire.

Uncertainty over the kind of weapon used means it is hard to be sure which

side was responsible, or whether this was a targeted attack. Another medical facility hit was the East Nile hospital - one of the last operating in that part of the capital. The BBC has seen evidence of RSF fighters surrounding it with their vehicles and anti-aircraft weapons.

There have been reports of patients being forcibly evacuated from the building. But we have also spoken to witnesses who say civilians continued to be treated alongside the RSF soldiers. On 1 May, a public area next to the East Nile hospital was hit by a Sudanese army airstrike. There was no warning, according to sources the BBC has spoken to.

Five civilians died in that attack. There was a further airstrike two weeks later but there has been no independent confirmation of the number of injured. The WHO has reported that nine hospitals have been taken over by fighters from one side or the other.

"The preferential treatment of soldiers over civilians [is] not an appropriate use of a medical facility and it may well constitute a

Scarred by war, Ukrainian children carry on after losing parents, homes and innocence

LVIV, Ukraine (AP): The two children squinted to see through the thick smoke that hung in the air after a deafening blast shook their small home in Ukraine's eastern Donetsk region. The pair, ages 9 and 10, called out for their father. Only eerie silence followed.

Then Olha Hinkina and her brother, Andrii, rushed to the bomb shelter, as they had been taught. When the booms stopped and the smoke cleared, they found their father on the porch — motionless and covered in blood after being struck by a Russian projectile. "Father was killed at seven in the morning," said Andrii, who now lives in the safer western city of Lviv, near the border with Poland.

The two siblings join a generation of Ukrainian children whose lives have been upended by the war. Russia's full-scale invasion has subjected them to constant bombardment, uprooted millions from their homes and turned many into orphans. Hundreds of kids have been killed. For the survivors, the wide-ranging trauma is certain to leave psychological scars that will follow them into adolescence and adulthood.

"Even if children fled to a safer area, it doesn't mean they forgot everything that happened to them," said psychologist Oleksandra Volokhova, who works with children who escaped the violence. At least 483 children have lost their lives and nearly 1,000 have been wounded,

according to figures from Ukraine's general prosecutor's office. Meanwhile, UNICEF says an estimated 1.5 million Ukrainian children are at risk of depression, anxiety, post-traumatic stress disorder and other mental health issues, with potentially lasting effects.

Nearly 1,500 Ukrainian children have been orphaned, the National Social Service of Ukraine said. The largest number of child casualties comes from Donetsk, the epicenter of many battles, where 462 children have been killed or wounded, according to Ukrainian officials. That figure does not include casualties from the Russian-occupied city of Mariupol, which is also part of Donetsk province, where

Ukrainian officials have found it difficult to track the dead and wounded. Before the war tore them apart, the Hinkin family was like any other living in the village of Torske, which today is just 35 kilometers (22 miles) from the front. With the death of their father in October, the children were orphaned. Their mother died years before the war. Six months later, the siblings appear to be moving past the worst of their ordeal.

Police and volunteers evacuated them to a safer area in western Zakarpattia region, where they were cared for by government social services and a Ukrainian charity organization called SOS Children's Villages, which provided housing and counseling.

Brazil to host COP30 climate summit

BRASILIA (Agencies): The United Nations has chosen Brazil to host the international climate meeting, COP30, in the Amazonian city of Belém do Pará in 2025, the country's President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva announced.

"I've participated in COPs in Egypt, Paris, Copenhagen and all people talk about is the Amazon. So why not have the COP in the Amazon so [people] can get to know the Amazon, see its rivers, its forests, its fauna," Lula said in a video posted on Twitter. Foreign Affairs Minister, Mauro Vieira, said the UN approved Brazil's bid to host COP30 on May 18 after Lula's request during last year's COP27 meeting in Egypt.

Belém do Pará is a northern Brazilian city located in the fringes of the Amazon forest. It's the capital city of the state of Pará located on the coast of the Amazon river estuary. The

governor of Pará, Helder Barbalho, said in the same video that it is a "great privilege for the whole country" to host the event, saying it "increases the responsibility" of Brazil's climate agenda regarding the rights of indigenous people and the environment. Lula has promised to tackle Amazon deforestation and repair the damage to the Amazon caused by his predecessor, Jair Bolsonaro, under whose presidency deforestation surged.

But Lula's government has come under fire for seemingly backtracking on its climate-related electoral promises in recent days. His administration helped Congress pass a draft law that strips the environment and indigenous people ministries of some powers, weakening their oversight of environmental protections and the demarcation of indigenous lands in the Amazon. COP is the yearly

United Nations Climate Change Conference, in which states discuss and agree on measures to deal with the environment. This year the 28th edition of the conference will be held in Dubai, according to the UN. The UN's calendar does not include anything after that yet.

Last year's climate summit saw negotiators from nearly 200 countries take the historic step of agreeing to set up a "loss and damage" fund meant to help vulnerable countries cope with climate disasters and agreed the globe needs to cut greenhouse gas emissions nearly in half by 2030. However, an attempt to address the biggest source of the planet warming emissions that are causing the climate crisis ended in a fiasco after a number of nations, including China and Saudi Arabia, blocked a key proposal to phase out all fossil fuels, not just coal.

World Bank approves \$300 million for Lebanon

BEIRUT (AP): The World Bank approved a \$300 million additional financing to Lebanon's poor, providing cash payments to help families struggling through the country's historic economic meltdown, the institution said in a statement.

The new financing comes two years after the World Bank approved a \$246 million loan to Lebanon to provide emergency cash assistance to hundreds of thousands in the tiny Mediterranean nation of 6 million people. Lebanon is in the throes of the worst economic and financial crisis in its modern history. The meltdown, rooted in decades of corruption and mismanagement by Lebanon's ruling class, began in October 2019 and has left more than three quarters of Lebanon's population in poverty.

"The additional financing will enable the government of Lebanon to continue to respond to the growing needs of poor and vulnerable households suffering under the severe economic and financial crisis," said Jean-Christophe Carret, World Bank's director for Mideast. The World Bank said the additional financ-

ing will provide cash transfers to 160,000 households for 24 months, including current beneficiaries. Eligible households will receive up to \$145 per household, the bank said. The project is jointly handled by Lebanon's ministry of social affairs and the World Food Program.

The Lebanese pound has lost more than 95% of its value at the start of the economic crisis, leaving many of the country's residents, including 1 million Syrian refugees, in need for help. The World Bank announcement came after a separate announcement by the UN refugee agency and the WFP that they will start making aid payments to refugees in Lebanon in dollars, rather than in Lebanese pounds, with a maximum of \$125 per family per month. Since the collapse of Lebanon's currency, UN agencies had been paying assistance to refugees in Lebanese pounds. Before the change announced this week, refugee households received a maximum of 8 million pounds per month, worth about \$80 at the current exchange rate.

However, "the rapid depreciation of the pound, increased fluctuations of the exchange rate, and the

strain on the financial provider in supplying large volumes of cash in Lebanese pounds" led to the change, UNHCR and WFP officials said in a statement. UN officials said the change had been made in consultation with the Lebanese government. But Lebanon's caretaker Social Affairs Minister Hector Hajjar said that Beirut opposes paying Syrian refugees in dollars. "We rejected this because paying Syrian refugees in dollars would make them stay in Lebanon," Hajjar said. He added that most of the Syrian refugees in Lebanon are "economic refugees and not refugees who fled because of security and political reasons."

Sentiments against Syrian refugees in Lebanon have been on the rise since the economic crisis began and since government forces took control of much of the neighboring country. Some Lebanese now say that it is safe for many of the Syrian refugees to return home. In recent weeks, the Lebanese army launched a series of raids on refugee settlements, arresting and in many cases deporting those found not to have legal residency documents.

The Frontier Post

JALIL AFRIDI
Managing Editor

Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at
Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town,
Peshawar.
Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001
Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573
E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com
Lahore Office: 0335-4026284
Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com
Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253
Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com
Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907
Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com
“USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

Pak prespective on US dereliction in Afghanistan

THE US military's withdrawal from Afghanistan along with the hurriedly planned and badly executed so-called Operation Allies Refuge (OAR) and Operation Allies Welcome (OAC) got tremendous criticism from Americans and people around the globe. The Biden administration recklessly airlifted over one hundred twenty thousand Afghan citizens and their families who previously worked for the US military and Intelligence Services on an urgent basis and dropped them in multiple military bases at various destinations in the Middle East, Europe, and the United States. The reports suggest that thousands of Afghan families are still stranded at multiple locations and waiting for the completion of their background checks, immigration formalities, and other essential arrangements for their ultimate settlement in the United States. Interestingly, a humanitarian crisis had been created solely to show the world that the US does not leave its partners behind at the mercy of its staunch rival. In fact, the US government hurriedly brought thousands of Afghan refugees to its country without necessary verification or credentials check, therefore, the settlement of the significant numbers of Afghan refugees still in question, and their migration formalities had struck a dedelayedue to unforeseen reasons.

The US officials and media commonly hail Biden's decision regarding the troops' evacuation and celebrate the smooth and safe withdrawal of US troops from Afghanistan, but at the same time American strategists contradict the reality that a premature and hasty pull of the American troops practically pushed the South Asian nation into a pre-9/11 situation and encouraged terror outfits, transnational criminals and warlords to regain their grip over ungoverned regions in Taliban ruled Afghanistan. Nearly two years after the US unilaterally wiwithdrewom Afghanistan, the country has again turned into a hub for transnational terrorism, fertile land for criminals, drdrugroducers, and human traffickers, that pose an equal risk to regional as well as global peace and security. Meanwhile, the Biden administration caused serious security risks to the mainland United States by importing thousands of unverified Afghans as there are genuine concerns that several Taliban fighters and members/ sympathizers of other terrorist outfits might have landed in America during the so-called opOperationllies Refuge accomplish their long term strategic plans in the future.

Historically, the two decades-long US military campaign in Afghanistan could not achieve its stated objectives except for tearing down the OBL-led terror outfit Al-Qaeda which could be possible only due to the crucial support of Pakistani LEAs. Similarly, the US has practically pushed the entire South Asian region into an unceasing political and strategic instability through its unilateral and hasty pullback, leaving behind billions of dollars of modern weapons that directly fell into the hands of terrorist groups including the Taliban, the TTP and Baloch insurgent groups. Thus the so-called Biden doctrine caused great havoc in the AfPak as the IS-K is taking a boom in an economically fragile and politically weak Afghanistan while the TTP and Baloch insurgent groups are waging terrorist activities against inside Pakistan from Afghanistan.

Historically, Pakistan has suffered a lot from persistent instability that prevailed in Afghanistan over the past decades while the people of Pakistan particularly the Pashtun belt alongside the Pak-Afghan border paid heavy prices for the unrestricted hostility in neighboring Afghanistan. The similarity of ethnicity, language, color, and creed had not only cemented strong bonds between the Pashtuns across the Durand line, but it has caused multiple administrative and security issues for Pakistan as terror outfits like TTP take advantage of these historic bonds for the accomplishment of their nefarious agenda against the state of Pakistan. Meanwhile, Pakistani state institutions face difficulties in curbing terrorism because of millions of Afghan refugees residing in the country, and whom majority are involved in illegal activities including terrorism and crimes. The Pakistani media particularly the Frontier Post has time and again brings this fact to the notice of US authorities that the US has created havoc for itself and the entire South Asian region, thus Pakistan must not be blamed for any appalling incidents in the future.

ANY form of warfare is destructive to the state. But, with the advancement in technology and developments in political ideologies, the forms and shapes of war have changed. The latest term of 'hybrid warfare' has been invented. Hybrid warfare is a complex and evolving concept that involves the use of non-military and military tactics, including information warfare, cyber-attacks, political subversion, and conventional warfare. It is a hidden form of warfare that affects the long-term existence of the state without letting people realize what's happening.

"To fight and conquer in all battles is not supreme excellence; supreme excellence consists in breaking one's resistance without fighting."Sun Tzu Hybrid war is a type of warfare that uses many different tools, both conventional and unconventional. When these tools are used together in an organized way, the impact can be very bad, causing chaos and disorder in a short time. In traditional wars, non-military targets are not attacked, but in hybrid warfare, both military and non-military targets can be attacked at the same time, causing damage to the state, politics, and society. Hybrid warfare is not just about military actions but also includes political and diplomatic actions. One dangerous tool of hybrid warfare is information

exploitation. This means that information can be used in a way that disrupts society and makes it hard to make good decisions. Social media plays a big role in this type of warfare, where false information and propaganda can be spread to achieve political goals.

As for Pakistan, the country has been facing various hybrid threats from its adversaries, particularly India. Hybrid warfare in Pakistan dates back to the period of 1970s and 1980s when Indians promoted Shaikh Mujib's six points agenda. Secondly, the guerrilla resistance movement the Mukti Bahini was also supported by India especially by their secret agency RAW, even Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi himself confess this in a statement. Hybrid Warfare emerged because of the global dislike of the use of Nuclear Weapons e.g.: when border tensions between Pakistan and India increased after the Pulwama attack, the whole world asked to solve this issue through dialogue because if a war started, there was a danger that the whole world suffers from it.

At present, Pakistan is facing nontraditional security threats mainly from India, Israel, and the United States, in the shape of poverty, education, global warming, climate change, and non-state actors such as Multinational cooperation, Non-governmental organizations. Nontraditional security

Farzad Ahmad Cheema & Nazar Ahmad Niazi

threats are done through the controlling of narratives, cyber-attacks, secret use of irregular forces, and by providing diplomatic support to the rebels. The best example is Kalbhushan Yadav, he said that I am involved in providing diplomatic support to the rebels in the areas of Balochistan and Sindh. Second example: in a 2019 cricket world cup match a plane flies over on the ground with a banner, "Justice for Balochistan." Third example: Narendra Modi said that he condemned the human rights violation in Balochistan, in his statement he threatens the sovereignty of Pakistan because this is an internal matter of Pakistan. Fourth example: In May 2019, a brutal attack took place at a luxurious hotel in the port city of Gwadar. The Prime minister of Pakistan, Imran Khan, strongly condemned the deadly incident. Stating that it was a deliberate attempt to undermine the country's economic project and prosperity. He added that such actions, particularly in Balochistan, are aimed at sabotaging Pakistan's economic growth, and the government will not allow these agendas to succeed. The Balochistan liberation army (BLA), a banned militant group, claimed responsibility for the attack. India is also imposing economic pain on Pakistan through the platform of FATF. India is trying its level best to include Pakistan in Black-list.

Pakistan is facing a hybrid war in the shapes of political warfare, diplomacy warfare, and unconventional threats. Instruments of hybrid warfare in Pakistan are mainly, Separatist movements, Insurgents in the Tribal Belt, Social Media Propagators of fake News, Target Killers in Karachi, etc. The separatist movements exploit the local people against the state and government. These movements are backed by foreign hands causing a disturbance in a region or the whole country. The insurgents in the Tribal areas of Pakistan use the techniques like suicidal bombing, conventional shootings, and bombings across various public areas of the country to create deterrence and violate the peace of the country. Social media propagators use the techniques like spreading fake news to provoke people against each other. Pakistan's largest city Karachi almost from a decade facing target killings and attacks on common people. This was the clearest shape of hybrid warfare imposed by the enemy on Pakistan. Such killers destroyed the peace of the whole city. It's being claimed by scholars that the Chinese (white colonists) physical appearance in Pakistan has complete resonance with Britishers (brown colonists) in the subcontinent. At present, the main targeted areas of Pakistan's enemies are Gilgit-Baltistan, Balochistan,

former FATA, and CPEC.

Most recent campaigns against Pakistan includes: India declared that Pakistan's nuclear program is not in safe hands, they also declared Kashmir's freedom fighters as terrorists, and America blamed Pakistan for its failure in Afghanistan, America, and India saying that CPEC is a debt trap, India is also funding the Bloch Liberation army, Pakistan Tahafuz movement, and Pakistan Tahrir Taliban and Finally the enemies propaganda against the Army and ISI through the use of Social Media. The enemies of Pakistan are blaming Pakistan for providing safe haven to terrorists to prove their claim wrong Pakistan take many initiatives, the most prominent of these are, Operation Zarb-e-Azab, Operation Radd-ul-Fasad and the National Action Plan after the alarming incident of APS.

Conclusion: Wars have always been fought with all the resources available to a nation such as money, politics, and diplomacy to achieve political objectives. A weaker nation always remains at the mercy of a stronger opponent. It does not mean that only having a top-class military equipped with the latest weapons of war is not enough to ensure survival. It means actually that the nation should be at peace with itself. The nation should have trust in its leadership and the capacity and capability of the state institutions to be responsible for its good. To achieve this country

must be peaceful within itself. People should be given basic rights like food, shelter, education, and healthcare. The children should be in schools instead of on the streets begging. There should also be a quick and fair justice system. The government should be able to provide basic facilities like hospitals, water, and gas. The state should be caring towards its citizens and be in a position to be helpful to the needy. The police should safeguard the citizens from criminals and the army should be able to protect the borders.

Pakistan needs to develop a national policy plan to effectively handle the hybrid threats throughout the complete set of hybrid warfare doctrine, which includes cyber information warfare to physical kinetic operations, and political and diplomatic warfare. Pakistan should work with international organizations and economic groups which can help combat hybrid warfare at the international level. Media can play an important role in destroying the aggressor state's agenda by giving correct information, Pakistan has been dominated by coercive diplomacy too. In Pakistan, there is a need to educate the people about coercive diplomacy and hybrid war. This only can be done by opening debates and addressing the youth through social media. Pakistan needs to analyze its foreign policy, and economic and domestic policies if they have to align with the current situation.

Tories should be proud of Britain's migration numbers - and they have Boris to thank

Gaby Hinsliff

IT feels like a lifetime ago that a Rochdale pensioner button-holed Gordon Brown over what she called eastern Europeans "flocking" to Britain. Even then Gillian Duffy might not have made the headlines, except that later Brown was caught on mic calling her a "bigoted woman", thus putting a memorable name and face to the endless debate about whether it's racist to worry about immigration.

At the time, annual net movement to Britain was about 252,000, and Labour was starting to worry about a backlash. By the time David Cameron - who took office promising to reduce it to the "tens of thousands" - called his Brexit referendum in 2016, net annual migration was 335,000, and Vote Leave was vowing to take back control of Britain's borders (though carefully it never specified what "control" meant). It had fallen back almost to Brown-era levels when Boris Johnson succeeded Theresa May, and while he went into an election casually promising that overall numbers would fall, May's former chief of staff, Nick Timothy, disclosed this week that ministers were told not to repeat that pledge since their laid-

back new leader didn't actually believe in it.

Sure enough, annual immigration had hit 504,000 by the time Rishi Sunak took office, and this week the Office for National Statistics reported a rise to 606,000 (though that may partly reflect a change this year in the way it compiles the figures). The really interesting twist in the tale? All those numbers bear surprisingly little resemblance to what people actually think.

Back in the febrile Brexit summer of 2016, 70% of Britons told the pollster YouGov that immigration was too high. By last December, only 57% agreed, even though immigration itself had clearly shot up. "Too high" isn't really a number but a feeling: a mood almost certainly influenced by lurid headlines about dinghies crossing the Channel - whose poor occupants have somehow become the public face of anxiety about immigration, although until this week they weren't even included in the annual figures - or things heard down the pub, but perhaps also by a sense of whether the government is generally on top of things or mired in chaos. Which brings us, inevitably, to Boris Johnson. For all the

hard rhetoric of his government, not to mention the crowd-pleasing casual racism that occasionally littered his newspaper columns, it was Johnson who ended up offering sanctuary to anywhere up to 3 million citizens of Hong Kong fleeing a Chinese crackdown, plus hundreds of thousands of refugees from Ukraine and as many Afghans working with British forces as could be rescued before Kabul fell to the Taliban. (Such humanitarian schemes accounted for more than a quarter of net immigration in 2022.)

It was Johnson's government, too, that actively recruited foreign master's students by promising they could stay and work for up to three years after graduating, a ploy to attract bright minds to Britain (and use their tuition fees to bolster higher education funding). If immigration feels "too high" to Tory voters - those most obviously driving that sentiment now - it's largely the result of Tory governments actively pursuing policies that pushed it up despite promising to do the opposite, as Labour MPs have been quick to point out.

What few politicians are willing to say, however, is that - at least in a par-

allel universe where politicians were actually honest about what they were doing and why, instead of making promises they can't deliver and then running away - those figures would more accurately be deemed a success than a failure. Why isn't it a matter for national pride, not embarrassment, that British universities are still such an extraordinary draw for the brightest minds in the world? Why can't we just be open about the fact that growth would almost certainly have been even lower, taxes even higher and the NHS even more broken than it is today had Johnson stuck to that empty promise? But instead of making the argument for policies agreed when he himself was chancellor, Rishi Sunak now boasts of making study visas less attractive by ending the right to bring dependents.

Meanwhile, Suella Braverman claims - without offering any evidence - that master's students' families have been putting "untenable pressure on public services". How terribly convenient, to have something other than a shortage of GPs to blame for the shortage of GP appointments. But the truth is, you're probably

more likely to be treated by a migrant worker than queue behind one, given four of the top five occupations granted skilled worker visas last year involved health or social care. Any debate about whether immigration is too high, too low or just right ought to start by asking: right for what, exactly? Right for economic growth, social cohesion, the general human good, or for sustainable public services in a rapidly ageing country with an alarmingly shrunken tax base? (To the Canadian government, now actively aiming to attract half a million migrants a year to protect its economy from the consequences of a low birthrate and shrinking tax base, our numbers must look like a dream.) But in Britain, it seems to start with nervously trying to second-guess a public that is itself now confused.

According to YouGov, a majority do still want immigration to come down but even bigger majorities simultaneously say they're happy with the current number or more of skilled migrants, students and refugees fleeing war and persecution. That leaves low-skilled migrants, mostly doing the jobs that Britons don't want to do themselves, as

the obvious target. However, the fruit pickers and poultry packers hired as cheap temporary labour aren't even included in this week's ONS stats, but without them we would probably have even higher food prices and empty supermarket shelves. Try that, and see how fast the voters (and newspaper editors) who clamoured for this turn on you. A cynic might argue that in saying immigration must fall, both Sunak and Keir Starmer are merely playing for time: they can see they're likely to get their wish without inflicting this kind of self-harm. This week's headline number looks dramatic but is actually lower than predicted, with the ONS noting signs of immigration slowing towards the end of the year - unsurprisingly, given the British economy was doing the same.

An end to the war in Ukraine, allowing refugees to go home, would also bring numbers down dramatically. The peak, in short, may already have passed and the long-term trend is towards voters being more relaxed about immigration. It's just that on the evidence of the past few jittery days, it may take politicians a depressingly long time to catch up.

The Guardian

Controlled legal migration is fairer and better for everyone

Rishi Sunak

I have a very clear view on immigration. It must be legal, it must be controlled and it must be fair. And fundamentally net migration needs to come down. My starting point is simple. It should be this country - and our Government - that decides who comes here. That's why I have made stopping the boats one of my five priorities. We cannot allow people to come here illegally at the whim of criminal gangs. It's not fair on those who have played by the rules. It's not fair on those who desperately need our help but can't get it because our asylum system is overwhelmed by people travelling here through safe countries. And it's not fair on the British people who are having to spend nearly £6 million a day to put up illegal migrants in hotels.

But it's not just a question of legality. We can't have uncontrolled legal migration

either. That's unfair too. It leads to unmanageable pressures on housing, schools and hospitals in many of our communities. And when it is too high and too fast, it can make it difficult for communities to integrate new arrivals. That's why in our 2019 manifesto the Government committed to bringing down net migration. And it is why when we left the European Union, we ended decades of uncontrolled migration under free movement within the EU and introduced a new points-based system to give us full control of our borders.

This means we can now control the numbers who come here while ensuring we access the skills and talent needed by our businesses and our NHS. Indeed, more than half of the skilled workers who have arrived in the past year are working in health and social care. But this new approach has also given us the ability to

adjust our system to meet the changing needs of our economy and society or to respond to evidence of abuse or unintended consequences. And the change we need now is very clear. The Office for National Statistics figures published at the end of 2022 show that net migration has risen significantly and is higher than it was before the pandemic.

Some of this increase is a result of temporary factors, including a post-Covid surge and our resettlement schemes for those fleeing war and persecution. More than 174,000 have come from Ukraine alone. It was right that we opened our hearts and our homes to the Ukrainian people - and this paper was right to call for it. But part of the increase in net migration is a staggering rise in the number of dependents coming to the UK alongside international students. We have seen a

more than eight-fold increase between 2019 and 2022, from 16,000 to 136,000 - the vast majority of which accompany taught masters students. The fact that we attract so many international students is a fantastic tribute to the strength of our world-leading universities. This is not just a source of pride for our country, it's also a source of economic strength because those students make a vital economic contribution through their student fees and ultimately their wages. That's why we set a target to host 600,000 international students here and we've met it almost a decade early. But this cannot come at the expense of our commitment to lower net migration.

So on Tuesday we set out a plan to bring down net migration with steps to reform the visa system for international students. We will remove the right to

bring dependents on the student visa route unless you are on a postgraduate research programme. The numbers suggest this might be being used by some as a loophole so we will close it. We will remove the ability to switch out of the student route into work routes until studies have been completed. We will clamp down on unscrupulous international student agents who may be supporting inappropriate applications. And we will improve targeted enforcement activity including an intelligence-led review of remittances by those on student visas. We will also look to explore alternative options for eligibility, including a system which differentiates between the quality of institutions. In time we could still allow our very best and brightest students to bring some dependents when studying at our universities while preventing institutions from selling immigration rather

than education.

This is the fair way to balance the economic benefit of continuing to support our higher education sector while reducing the number of dependents who inevitably make a much more limited economic contribution than students or those coming under the skilled worker route. Let me be clear. These changes are not about being anti-immigrant. We should never allow anyone to make that charge against us. No one could be prouder of our history of legal migration - from our place in the world as a sanctuary for the most in need to the generations of families who have come here, contributed here and made their home here. It's a basic question of fairness and control. And I will always do what is fair and right. To me it is clear and unarguable: net migration is simply too high. I will bring it down.

The Telegraph

How stability and security can be improved in Iraq

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

THROUGHOUT the two decades since the US invasion of 2003, Iraq has experienced instability and significant challenges. Although domestic armed conflicts have been reduced in recent years, the country still encounters other critical issues, which need to be resolved for the good of the stability and security of the country. Increasing cooperation between the Iraqi government and the Gulf nations is key.

One of the issues that Baghdad faces is the country's security, since some groups may still seek to use a sectarian agenda as a means to divide the nation and ultimately gain power. It is worth noting that Iraq has a multiethnic and multireligious society that comprises Shiite Arabs, Sunni Arabs, Kurds, Turkmen, Christians, Assyrians, Yazidis and Armenians. In such a vibrant society, it is crucial for the political establishment to promote inclusive governance and a system of government that rejects any project or plan that is anchored in a sectarian agenda or a divide and rule philosophy.

In addition, it is important for the Iraqi government to promote programs that aim to increase interfaith dialogue in order to help reduce tensions and the potential for conflict. The more the government attempts to set up such programs, the more peace and stability it will likely bring. There are several countries in the region that Iraq can take lessons from and replicate their projects on a domestic level. One is Saudi Arabia. Over the past few years, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman has placed significant

emphasis on interfaith dialogue, playing a key role in advancing and promoting his mission. Under his leadership, Saudi Arabia has been assertively embarking on outreach to other religious groups and faiths.

For example, in 2020, Saudi Arabia presided over an interfaith forum with the participation of Muslim clerics, Jewish rabbis, Christian priests and other religious leaders. And a multifaith conference was held in Riyadh in 2022, with the title "Common Values Among the Followers of Religions." The conference was the first of its kind and about 100 religious leaders, including more than 15 rabbis, attended. Another example in the region is the UAE, which in March opened the Abrahamic Family House in Abu Dhabi to bring together the three Abrahamic religions: Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

At the same time, extremist ideologies, which aim to sow division and tension in Iraq, as well as recruit young people, must be confronted. The Iraqi government can advance and set up more organizations to track and monitor extremists' activities online, including via social media platforms, blogs and websites. It is also critical to establish institutions that will promote an alternative and moderate ideology, while educating people and raising awareness of extremist ideologies. Again, Iraq can follow in the footsteps of some Gulf nations. For example, Saudi Arabia's model has proven to be successful in fighting extremist ideologies. The Kingdom has established

several organizations for this goal, including the Ideological Warfare Center, the Digital Extremism Observatory, the King Abdulaziz Center for National Dialogue, and the Global Center for Combating Extremist Ideology. The Iraqi government can challenge the messages of extremist groups by pursuing similar initiatives.

It should be noted that the Iraqi government has recently taken several important steps. One move was the recent action plan signed by Iraq's Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and the UN, which aims to prevent the recruitment and use of children by extremist groups and armed forces. Labor and Social Affairs Minister Ahmed Jassim Al-Asadi pointed out: "The Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, as representatives of the government of Iraq, along with the National Committee for the Monitoring and Reporting Mechanism, would like to express its commitment to implement the plan to serve children exposed to recruitment in armed conflict, in order to ensure Iraq's compliance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child as well as with the protocols signed by the Iraqi government. While we continue to work on implementing the national child protection policy as part of the government program, we are also supporting the Child Protection Law, pending parliament ratification."

It is also important to point out that stability and security relies on a healthy and stable economy. Iraq, OPEC's second-largest pro-

ducer after Saudi Arabia, unfortunately heavily relies on oil exports for its revenues. Oil exports account for nearly 95 percent of Iraq's federal budget revenue. Such dependence on oil puts the country at great risk when oil prices plummet, such as occurred in 2020. According to the International Monetary Fund, "Iraq's economy remains in the grip of a self-perpetuating cycle of fragility ... The absence of meaningful reforms, in turn, has held back economic development and reinforced dependence on oil - a critical vulnerability in a world that is fighting climate change." Iraq also heavily relies on imported gas, particularly from Iran, in order to meet the demands of its population. Baghdad this month agreed to repay \$1.6 billion of debt to the Iranian government in order to ensure a steady gas supply through the summer. Iraq itself holds about 111 trillion cubic feet of proven gas reserves, ranking it 12th in the world. However, years of conflict have prevented the Arab country from investing in its gas industry. Baghdad should prioritize attracting foreign investments in order to process gas from its reserves.

This is why it is vital for the Iraqi government to diversify its economy. This can be done by strengthening the private sector, investing in infrastructure and other industries, investing in renewable energy and promoting tourism. In a nutshell, Iraq faces several challenges, but these can be partially addressed by diversifying the country's economy, promoting an inclusive system of governance and further cooperating with the Gulf nations.



Food Insecurity: A growing threat to global stability

Jose Andres

THREATS to security are not just measured in missiles, armies and terrorists. Political and economic turmoil can also be overwhelming. That's why fighting hunger and thirst is no longer just a challenge for aid workers. The scale of the global crisis is so great that hunger now represents a threat.

Don't take a chef's word for it. Over the past decade or so, the US intelligence community assessed the likely impact of global food and water insecurity. The agencies predicted a world, right around now, when water shortages and floods would "risk instability and state failure, increase regional tensions." The time has come for us all to prioritise food in our public policy - at home and internationally.

Consider one of the most divisive factors in politics today, both in the United States and in Europe: immigration from the Global South. What is driving so many families to risk their lives on perilous journeys through the jungle, across rivers or on the open seas? Violence and lack of opportunity are nothing new in the Western Hemisphere. Though they are clearly factors in the surge to the US southern border, there is something new about what is moving so many people today. That is food. To be precise: malnutrition, hunger and food price inflation.

Three years ago, the

majority of migrants came from the Northern Triangle countries: Honduras, Guatemala and El Salvador. Now, most migrants at our border come from other countries, including Venezuela, Colombia, Nicaragua and Cuba. Cuba is suffering extraordinary food shortages and price hikes. About three-quarters of Venezuelans live on less than \$1.90 a day, which, economists say, is nowhere near enough to feed one person, never mind a family. In some regions of Nicaragua, almost 1 in 4 children under the age of 5 has chronic malnutrition. I could tell you the same stories about the Northern Triangle countries a few years ago. Or I could tell you about the Honduran family we fed as they sheltered under a bridge in McAllen, Texas. They recognised the logo of World Central Kitchen, the non-profit, because it had fed them in Honduras the year before, when back-to-back hurricanes wiped out their farm. As severe drought devastates crops across South America, the World Food Programme recently warned that "the whole continent is on the move."

We cannot build a wall high enough to stop the army of mothers with hungry children in their arms. Our problem is not that we lack the resources or know-how to relieve these unbearable pressures. Our problem is that we lack focus. The United States spends around \$25 billion a year on Customs and Border Protection and Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Texas alone wants to spend \$4 billion on the border. That's what the United States spends on feeding the whole planet through the World Food Programme in a normal year. It's four times what the administration proposes to spend on stabilising the democracies and economies of Central America to help stop migration. Food is not just an existential challenge beyond our borders. In the United States, about half of the adult population either has diabetes or is prediabetic. Two in five adults are obese. Last year, supplies of baby formula collapsed because of contamination at one factory, and the shortages endure.

The Government Accountability Office recently found that the federal government leads 200 different efforts across 21 different agencies to improve our diets. Yet US still cannot match the farming subsidies to its nutritional needs. Everybody and nobody is in charge of food. Food can be the solution to multiple crises: from our health to our climate, from immigration to global security. But only if we think differently and prioritise our food. The global food systems are broken, and it urgently needs structural change.

The Washington Post

Trump has good reason to fear DeSantis

Scott Jennings

AS Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis launches his presidential campaign, he immediately becomes the most formidable contender to dethrone former President Donald Trump from atop the Republican Party. Trump's fear of DeSantis is quite apparent. When other candidates have entered the race, Trump has practically welcomed them in. When former Ambassador Nikki Haley declared her candidacy, Trump responded, "the more the merrier." When South Carolina Sen. Tim Scott launched his campaign on Monday, Trump wrote on Truth Social that "Tim is a big step up from Ron DeSantimonious." With DeSantis, however, he has unleashed a constant string of invective, attacks and criticisms of the governor and his policies.

But Trump's not the only one concerned about the DeSantis' campaign. There are three groups who would benefit tremendously from hastening Trump's return: Trump's campaign, the Democrats who believe Biden can beat Trump again and those in the political media who benefit from the "Trump bump." DeSantis is indeed a formidable challenger to Trump. While polling in the GOP primary has moved decisively toward Trump in the last several months, DeSantis is light years ahead of the other GOP challengers in the primary. He has a massive war chest - over \$100 million, according to Politico - and a rock solid conser-

vative governing record.

While today's politics are less dependent on adhering to any sort of policy orthodoxy, for the voters who wonder if a DeSantis presidency would be conservative, he's got bushels of Tallahassee policy wins to prove it (universal school choice, the elimination of automatic public-employee union dues and a crackdown on ESG policies, just to name a few) - and he could easily move the party past the Trump era. But DeSantis is selling more than a set of conservative policy wins; he has an entirely different attitude from Trump. When it comes to the media, for instance, DeSantis will argue that while Trump talks the talk, the 44-year-old governor actually walks the walk. While Trump continues to crave the attention of outlets like CNN and the New York Times, DeSantis does not care what mainstream media thinks of him. His decision to bypass the mainstream media by launching his campaign in a Twitter conversation with Elon Musk shows that DeSantis is serious about channeling the disdain that many Republicans have for traditional media outlets. In running for president by stifling the normal political journalists who orbit these campaigns, DeSantis will attempt something that has never really been done.

Can he fully communicate with GOP primary voters by employing a strategy of total mainstream media disengagement? We are

about to find out. While this is sure to frustrate many journalists, DeSantis is taking a calculated risk - he knows he gained popularity when many in the media criticized his policies during the pandemic. DeSantis rose to prominence as a national Republican figure by preaching against Covid-19 lockdowns and masking, decisions that earned him criticism from many in the media, who often contrasted his policies with then-New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's stricter lockdown and masking ones. But a fundamental truth of today's Republican Party is that if you become the victim of a national media onslaught, GOP voters will rally to your defense - and rally they did.

Though the attempted shaming of DeSantis was widespread (remember the ridiculous slogan "DeathSantis"?), Republican voters found a conservative fighter who wouldn't back down when the liberal mob came for him. DeSantis now uses his conservative Covid-19 halo to contrast himself to Trump, who has oddly aligned himself with Dr. Anthony Fauci and Democratic governors, as he tries to falsely redefine DeSantis's Covid-19 record. "Leaders take the bull by the horns and make the decisions for themselves. They don't subcontract out their leadership to health bureaucrats like Dr. Fauci," DeSantis said recently, foreshadowing a Covid-19 throwdown with the former

president. Trump is undoubtedly the GOP frontrunner and has all the trappings of the establishment - party loyalty, a war chest of his own and a top-notch campaign team led by Chris LaCivita, a seasoned operative who knows the dark arts of how to destroy an opponent perhaps better than any active GOP operative.

What DeSantis has is the energy of a conservative insurgent, reminiscent of the pre-Trump "Tea Party vs. establishment" battles that defined the 2010 to 2016 era of Republican politics. To that end, DeSantis has attracted several former Ted Cruz-aligned operatives - including Jeff Roe - to run his operation, perhaps a recognition by DeSantis that he will face a long primary battle. The hopes and dreams of many Republicans who want to move on from Trump are wrapped up in DeSantis, who, in this moment, appears to be Trump's strongest challenger. But it won't just be Tea Partiers who line up with DeSantis; several traditional Republicans will be with him, too, believing DeSantis to be the best chance to defeat Trump. Still, questions remain. Can he reset the narrative that Trump cannot be dethroned? Can he further marginalize the political media? Can he set up the generational challenge to Biden that so many Republicans crave (and that Trump, because of his own age, cannot)? DeSantis will begin to answer some of those questions today.

CNN

‘A diplomatic charade.’ An eye-opening account of US negotiations with Russia

John J. Sullivan

ALMOST exactly one year ago, I sat in my office at the US Embassy in Moscow, reading reports of Russia's brutal military assault on Ukraine. I was numb - but not surprised - by the gravity of what was unfolding. For weeks, I had been telling everyone I could reach that Russian President Vladimir Putin was going to launch a war on the continent of Europe, the scale of which had not been seen since World War II.

Although confident in my pre-war assessment, I was disconsolate. For two years, I had worked hard as US ambassador to make even modest progress in the few areas in which any dialogue was possible with the Russians. My approach was reaffirmed following President Joe Biden's meeting in Geneva with Putin in June 2021. No one in our US delegation at Geneva had any illusion that we would certainly make progress on any particular issue, but all agreed it was in the interests of the United States to try.

Engagement with the Russians following the summit had barely begun when there was a seismic shift. The bloody history of Russia's seizure of territory from Ukraine in 2014-2015 had cast a pall over our relationship with Moscow but had not broken it. While relations were dire, we were still looking for ways to stabilize our engagement with the world's only other nuclear superpower. What US intelligence officials told senior policymakers in late 2021 about Russia's preparations for an invasion of Ukraine, however, changed everything on which we had been working. Immediately, our engagement was reduced to the grave Russian threat to Ukraine and the "security guarantees" Russia sought from the United States and NATO. It was apparent to

me that the Russians had no intention of negotiating in good faith. Russian interlocutors read from their talking points and would not engage in a real dialogue. Minders from the Russian security services monitored every meeting and phone call. The Russians were going through a diplomatic charade to lay the groundwork for an invasion that Putin had already decided to launch. The only question was when.

Once it began, Russia's aggressive war completely upended what little was left of its relationship with the United States - and many other countries. We learned that history had not ended and, indeed, that February 24 changed history. This was not just a brutal war on Ukraine, it was a war on Europe. The war changed things great and small, from where I lived in Moscow to Russia's standing in the world. I had to move onto the Embassy compound because the pace of telecommunications with Washington, combined with an eight-hour time difference, meant I had to be immediately available at all hours. More significantly, the invasion roiled the global economy, including energy and grain markets. And most tragically, it slaughtered thousands of innocents and caused unspeakable suffering for millions of Ukrainians because of a policy choice by Putin in his quest for empire.

To try to defend the indefensible, Putin propagated a false narrative that the invasion was necessary to "de-Nazify" and demilitarize Ukraine. He claimed that Ukraine was engaged in a "genocide" against Russians and Russian-speakers and was on the verge of attacking Russia itself - hence Moscow's "Special Military

Operation."

This justification for Russia's aggressive war against Ukraine is absurd on its face and has been rejected by overwhelming majorities in the UN General Assembly and the International Court of Justice. Yet the merciless Russian violence (which has forced almost 15 million Ukrainians to become refugees or internally displaced), the catastrophic missile strikes on civilian targets and the unlawful occupation of sovereign Ukrainian territory continue. And all by a country, Russia, that is a permanent member of the UN Security Council, whose mission is to preserve and defend world peace. The war is an existential threat to Ukraine and a grievous security challenge for Europe, the United States and our allies and partners around the world. But it is more than that. Putin's war threatens to put a stake through the heart of the international system created after World War II, which so far has prevented another world war, and should be opposed by any nation that rejects archaic notions of empire and wars of conquest.

This is a menacing global problem that will only get worse-the economic toll alone is staggering-until it is stopped and reversed on terms acceptable to Ukraine that will protect its sovereignty and security. That is a tall order as Putin's Special Military Operation grinds on with a subtext of nuclear blackmail. Putin's government will not negotiate or compromise on its war aims, which seek the elimination of the government in Kyiv and the subjugation of the Ukrainian people. The Russians did not negotiate in good faith before the war,

and they will not do so now. There is no "off ramp" until Putin achieves his longstanding goals. I say this with a heavy heart, as a person who was an advocate for continued negotiations with the Russian government even as the downward spiral of our relationship accelerated. I left a comfortable perch on Mahogany Row at the State Department as the Deputy Secretary State to serve as the US ambassador in Moscow and take the lead in those negotiations.

But my view, like the views of so many others, changed when massive swarms of Russian soldiers, tanks, aircraft, and missiles crossed the international border on February 24 to bludgeon Ukraine and its people. Now is not the time for negotiations. On the other hand, President Biden correctly has made clear that the United States does not want a war with Russia. This raises Lenin's famous question: what is to be done? I believe the way forward for the United States is, first, to double down on diplomacy to convince those nations that have not joined in stoutly supporting the defense of Ukraine of the moral, political, legal and military necessity of doing so. Second, to enforce vigorously existing sanctions and export controls to starve the Russian military but not the Russian people. Third, to provide Ukraine with all the equipment and supplies, military and otherwise, needed to expel the invaders from its sovereign territory. Fourth, to have patience and the courage of our collective (with allies, partners and others) convictions. Only then will the Russian government realize that the goals of its Special Military Operation cannot and will not be achieved. Only then will the Russian government negotiate in good faith. And only then will peace return to Europe.

Rishi can't compromise his protocol deal

Simon Jenkins

RISHI Sunak knows what he must do in Northern Ireland. He cannot cringe any longer before that region's backwoodsmen and their cheerleaders in his own party. Unlike his predecessors, he has nothing to lose, with probably just two years in office. He clearly has a deal on a revised Irish trade protocol with the EU on the table, and he has the parliamentary votes to push it through. His reputation has no time for error.

The partition of Ireland was born a century ago to appease northern Protestant sentiment. That sentiment has ever since abused self-rule - under licence from London - with blatantly sectarian government. This was sustainable as long as trade and citizenship were left fluid across Ireland, with both sides of the border still partners in the European single market.

Brexit crashed that sustainability. Boris Johnson's (largely personal) fixation that Brexit meant leaving the single market required a trade protocol to keep Irish economic unity intact. Though temporary and a mess, this rescued the Brexit deal. Now Johnson is plotting to undermine Sunak's clearing of that

mess. Red and green lanes will separate internal and "external" Irish commerce, aided by digital technology. Regulatory disputes will be handled by a two-tier process under the European court of justice. This is perfectly sensible, given the nature of Ireland's geography. All trade is a compromise of sovereignty.

The Protestant DUP was born of objection. It was formed to oppose the cooperative unionism of the 1980s and the Good Friday peace agreement. Its members were political primitives who divided their cities with walls and called for creationism to be taught in schools. Dusted with the covenant of unionism, they have held the Tory right - and Johnson - in thrall, a toxin on the party's Westminster backbenches. They represent just a quarter of the region's population.

Northern Ireland is desperate for a settlement, especially its young people, and for the return of self-government, which the DUP denies in opposing the protocol. The region voted against Brexit and barely half its voters are still firmly committed to the union with Britain. A poll a year

ago showed a majority expects Irish reunification within a decade. Perhaps most significant is that declared Catholics now outnumber Protestants. Things are clearly changing.

Yet one concession for resolving the DUP impasse this week is said to be a strengthening of the minority veto in the Stormont assembly. This entrenchment of sectarian "power-sharing" is precisely what has frozen the region's government for most of a quarter of a century. It should be unthinkable that one party should be free to veto not just facets of Britain's overseas trade policy but, in effect, any improvement in the UK's absurdly ill-judged dealings with the EU over Brexit. If the DUP continues to oppose power-sharing, that sharing should be revised, not the protocol.

The dire history of British rule over Ireland merits the "reparation" of some London sympathy for eventual reunion. One day this will come. Protocol revision offers the glue of restored economic unity. Letting the DUP block such a joining would be outrageous. Sunak must know this - and know what he should now do.

The Guardian

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.

Portuguese keen to explore business opportunities in Pakistan, says envoy

LAHORE (APP): Ambassador of Portugal Manuel Frederico Pinheiro Silva said on Saturday that business-people of his country were keen to explore business opportunities in Pakistan.

During his visit to Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Saturday, he quoted a Portuguese saying that ‘the best parts should be visited at the end’, and that was why he concluded his tour by visiting Punjab and Lahore.

The ambassador expressed his intention to introduce Portugal’s contributions to global culture, economy and international relations.

LCCI President Kashif Anwar, Senior Vice President Zafar Mahmood Chaudhry, Vice President Adnan Khalid Butt, Honorary Consul of Portugal Iftikhar Firoz and Executive Committee Members also spoke on the occasion.

Drawing attention towards Portugal’s remarkable history, the ambassador highlighted the 15th-century voyages of Portuguese explorers, which left lasting influences in Gwadar, India and other parts of Asia, where Portuguese families continue to reside. He emphasised Portugal’s strong maritime tradition and extensive maritime jurisdiction, portraying the sea as an integral part of their identity.

The ambassador provided an overview of Portugal’s population of 11 million, making it the 40th largest economy in the world with a per capita GDP of \$14,000. He high-

lighted Portugal’s active role in the Community of Portuguese Language Countries (CPLP), stressing the potential for shared learning and cooperation between Portugal and Pakistan, particularly in overcoming financial challenges based on Portugal’s experiences from 2010 to 2014.

Portugal’s impressive economic growth was also discussed, with the Ambassador noting that it is currently the second fastest-growing economy in the European Union. He attributed this success to the country’s strong export sector, which serves as a major driver of the economy.

Moreover, the Ambassador pointed out Portugal’s exceptional tourism industry, ranking 10th globally in terms of tourist arrivals. He highlighted the allure of Portugal’s rich cultural heritage, attracting visitors from around the world.

Addressing Portugal’s commitment to sustainability, the Ambassador shared that the country relies on 70 percent renewable energy sources, showcasing its dedication to combating climate change and fostering a greener future. He mentioned Portugal’s possession of the largest GPS system, demonstrating the nation’s technological advancements.

Speaking on the occasion, LCCI President Kashif Anwar said that Pakistan and Portugal have been keeping excellent diplomatic relations for more than seven decades. There are a number of MoUs and agreements

already signed between two countries to further deepen the mutual ties.

He said that they take Portugal as an important trading partner in Europe and fortunately Pakistan is having favourable balance of trade with Portugal. He said that Portugal comes at 11th place among the top exporting destinations and at 19th place among the top importing member states from Europe. It is good to observe that overall trade is following a growing trend for the last few years but we are keen to acquire better share in bilateral trade. Last year, Portugal’s global imports were to the tune of 115 billion dollars and total exports were more than 82 billion dollars.

He said that according to the trade data sought from State Bank of Pakistan, the value of total trade between Pakistan and Portugal stood around 284 million dollars in 2021-22. Pakistan’s exports to Portugal were around 271 million dollars while the imports from Portugal were around 13 million dollars in the same period. During the first ten months of current financial year, the imports from Portugal amounted to 9 million dollars while Pakistan’s exports to Portugal were nearly 186 million dollars. “You will agree with me that we need to make concerted efforts to enhance the present volume of trade to at least 1 billion dollars.”

He said that textile items are mostly exported from Pakistan to Portugal followed by rice and raw hides & skins. Both the countries

need to identify more tradable items to enhance the current level of trade.

“I am pleased to know that you are interested to explore trade and investment opportunities between Pakistan & Portugal in sectors like informational technology, renewable energy, surgical instruments, footwear, leather goods and electrical equipment etc.,” he said and assured the Ambassador that Pakistan has tremendous potential to fulfill the demand of Portugal in these sectors. Furthermore, Pakistan also has great potential to enhance economic cooperation in tourism, agriculture and education sectors.

He mentioned that recently an understanding was reached during the 3rd Round of Bilateral Political Consultations between two countries held in Lisbon. He said that as agreed in these sessions, Pakistan and Portugal would enhance cooperation in areas like water management, blue economy, green technologies and employment opportunities for Pakistani workforce.

The LCCI president said that best way to materialise these objectives is to increase private to private contacts. He said that through exchanging timely information about trade and business opportunities through chambers of commerce, they can bring noticeable change in current state of affairs. Moreover, exchange of trade delegations along with holding single country exhibitions can also help in attaining the desirable results.



ISLAMABAD: Workers off-load fresh Bananas from a delivery truck in fruits and vegetables market.

Gold prices increase by Rs450

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs450 and was sold at Rs236,200 on Saturday against its sale at Rs. 235,750 the previous day, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs385 to Rs202,503 from Rs202,118, whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs185,628 from Rs185,274.

The price of per tola silve and that of ten-gram silver remained unchanged to close at Rs2900 and Rs2486.28 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by US\$ 6 to \$1946 against its sale at \$1952, the association reported.

Global stocks climb on debt deal hopes

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): Global stock markets advanced on hopes of progress in negotiations to avert a calamitous US debt default and a continued rally in tech stocks over enthusiasm for firms involved in artificial intelligence.

On Wall Street, the broad-based S&P 500 rose 1.3 percent to 4,205.45, while the Dow Jones Industrial Average posted a more modest 1.0 percent gain to finish the week at 33,093.34.

“The market is rising on the hope that they probably will be announcing very soon that we avert the default,” Peter Cardillo from Spartan Capital Securities told AFP, referring to the negotiations between the White House and Republicans in Congress.

The Nasdaq soared to finish the day up 2.2 percent at 12,975.69, fueled by a continued rally in stocks like Nvidia which stand to benefit from the widespread adoption of AI tools. European stocks closed with solid gains and most Asian markets finishing the day higher.

According to unconfirmed US media reports, the debt limit would be suspended for two years, while limits would be placed on social spending.

On Thursday, the US president reiterated his pledge that “there will be no default” despite the wrangling, adding that talks with McCarthy, who leads the Republican negotiators, had been “productive”.

Pressure for a deal was ramped up after Fitch placed the country’s AAA-ranked credit on “rating watch negative” owing to the standoff.

Tanners team meets Industries Minister

LAHORE (APP): The Caretaker Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce SM Tanveer and a delegation of tanners from Deen Garh Kasur discussed ways and means on Saturday to solve problems of tanneries.

During the meeting held here in the committee room of Environmental Protection Department here, the delegation provided updates on the latest water treatment systems in the industry and highlighted the current challenges being faced by them.

The provincial minister emphasised the importance

of developing a comprehensive plan for treating waste water of tanneries, promising that the Environmental Protection Department would offer technical assistance in this regard.

He also stressed the need for taking effective measures to address environmental concerns in compliance with the court orders. He reiterated that it was the collective responsibility of everyone to ensure a pollution-free environment for future generations. He advised tanners to adhere to the guidelines, provided by the EPD for waste water

treatment and environmental pollution control.

SM Tanveer promised to oversee repair work of the road leading to Technical Education and Vocational Training Authority (TEVTA) Kasur. He said the interim government was committed to infrastructure improvement.

The tanners’ delegation comprised Mian Shan Elahi, Haji Maqsood Ahmad, Mian Yousaf Saqlain, Fazal Rahman Sheikh, Mian Ali Arshad, and others. EPD Secretary Dr Sajid Mahmood Chohan, director general and other official concerned were also present.

Russian trade delegation visits TEXPO-2023

Terms price, quality of products satisfactory

KARACHI (APP): A business delegation from Russia on Saturday visited the 4th International Textile Exhibition (TEXPO)- 2023 at the Expo Centre Karachi and expressed its satisfaction over the price and quality of the Pakistani products.

The delegation is visiting the TEXPO for the first time and lauded the quality and price of the products put on the display.

While speaking to APP, Head of Business Development Department of the Sima Land Company of Russia, Katrina Tissen said that it was her fifth visit to Pakistan and first to the TEXPO.

She said that the number of manufacturers in the exhibition was magnificent. She said, ‘Inshah Allah, we will have really a good business and good relationship between our two countries, Russia and Pakistan.’

Replying to a question on reaching agreements with Pakistani companies in TEXPO, Tissen said that they would be working on that after the expo and after getting quotations and all technical details.

Replying to another question, she said that it was really pleasure to be here in Pakistan and all people were very hospitable. She further said,

‘What we might know from media about Pakistan, lots of the things are not true, once you come here and you experience everything yourself.’

She hoped that Russian and Pakistan business communities could grow together and met the expectations.

Other members of the delegation said that they were glad to be here in Pakistan and intend to visit her next time too.

They also stressed the need for further highlighting the efforts for increasing the business and trade activities between the two countries.

Chinese visitors get groove on Pakistan cultural feast

BEIJING (INP): To celebrate the China-Pakistan Year of Tourism and Exchanges, a two-day Pakistan cultural feast was held here on Saturday by the Embassy of Pakistan, China Economic Net (CEN) reported.

Hosted by the Embassy and organized by Jinshang Group, the event - depicting Pakistan and showcasing Pakistan’s beauty, landscapes, culture, food, cuisine, art - attracted a great many Chinese visitors to enjoy the exotic flavour of the neighbouring country.

Speaking on the occasion, Pakistani Ambassador to China Moin ul Haque pinpointed that Pakistan is an ancient civilization and a young nation boasting rich diversity and history.

Over the course of millennia, Pakistan’s cultural tapestry has been embellished by multifarious streams of ideas and movements shaping its present progressive and pluralistic outlook.

“The event features Pakistani vendors offering traditional food, drinks, and goods for purchase, as well as traditional music, dance performances,” Haque noted, adding that he warmly welcomed Chinese visitors to get their jollies.

“They’re very new to me,” a Chinese college student on site told the reporter, adding that through such events he got the chance to know more about the country he has been longing for travelling to. “I wish I could visit there in person one day.”

Lilian Tian, Founder and President, Jinshang Group, hailed that Pakistan is a country with ancient Oriental civilization and diversified culture. “We are honored to participate in this feast,” she added.

The year 2023 is marked as the year of the China-Pakistan Year of Tourism and Exchange.

The two countries held various activities to celebrate the event including the Gandhara Art Exhibition held at the Palace Museum in Beijing, a Pakistani Truck Art Debut Exhibition, and so on.

With the gradual resumption of direct flights with more frequency, people-to-people exchanges between the two countries are getting more active.

Businessmen greet as Anjum Nisar elected SAARC CCI VP

E.P. Report

LAHORE: The Pakistan Industrial and Traders Associations Front (PIAF) Chairman Fahimur Rehman Saigal has greeted Pattern-in-Chief of PIAF and Businessmen Panel (BMP) Chairman Mian Anjum Nisar for being elected Vice President of SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry. He said that Mian Anjum Nisar, who is also FPCCI former president, is entitled to this position in the true sense due to his long services for the cause of business community.

In recognition of his 25 years of service to the business community, he has been honoured with the post of Vice President of

the SAARC Chamber of Commerce, he added.

It is to be noted that Mian Anjum Nisar was elected as the Vice President in the meeting of SAARC Chamber of Commerce, which consists of eight countries of South Asia, including Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal, Maldives and Afghanistan, held in Dhaka recently.

Fahimur Rahman Sehgal, along with Chairman PIAF Nasrullah Mughal and Vice Chairman PIAF Tahir Manzoor Chaudhary, said that the appointment of Mian Anjum Nisar to the position of Vice-President is an honor for PIAF, Lahore Chamber, Federation of Pakistan Chambers of com-

merce and industry and the entire business community of Pakistan. He has spent his entire life serving the business community.

Faheem Saigol said that the credit of this historic achievement goes to the top leadership of PIAF Group who have worked day and night for the welfare of the business community and are still active in solving the problems.

The entire industrialist and business community of Pakistan is always with Anjum Nisar, which clearly reflects the confidence of business community in judicious policies being followed by this group leadership.

He said that it is imperative for all countries of the SAARCH to draw lessons

from the successes achieved by other regional agreements, and channel their experiences of regional identity and solidarity into our efforts to propel SAARC towards new heights.

It is our responsibility to find innovative and sustainable solutions to these challenges, and to work together to create a brighter future for the people of our region, he opined.

He hoped that the PIAF and BMP would continue to push the government to initiate long-term economic planning for the betterment of business community of Pakistan, as they have the ability to change the fate of Pakistan and transform it into a prosperous country.

Long-term policies indispensable to get out of difficult economic situations

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) Ahsan Zafar Baktawari has said that the budget 2023-24 is very important in the current economic situation, the government should focus on the formulation of long-term and sustainable policies instead of short-term ones.

The business community is the biggest stakeholder in Pakistan’s economy, said a press release issued here.

The proposals of the country’s Chamber of Commerce and FPCCI should be given ample space in the budget. He expressed these views in a meeting with President Lahore Chamber of Commerce Kashif Anwar, who visited the Islamabad Chamber along with his delegation.

The cooperation between the two chambers, Budget 2023-24, the current economic situation of the country and the problems of the business community were discussed in the meeting. It was empha-

sized that the government should include the suggestions of the business community in the budget.

In difficult economic conditions, policies should be formulated by taking the business community into confidence.

President ICCI said on this occasion that the business community is facing many difficulties in the current situation.

Cities like Islamabad and Lahore should be given a prominent place in the formulation of economic policies. He said that the

government should clarify the situation regarding the IMF program.

Speaking on this occasion, President Lahore Chamber Kashif Anwar said that Islamabad Chamber has a prominent role in the country’s business community. Lahore and Islamabad Chambers should take advantage of opportunities to cooperate on various issues. He said that in the current economic situation, the business community needs to move forward with greater unity and solidarity.

Court Notice

In the Court of Senior Civil Judge /Ala Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Case No. 16/1, Institution 5/9/2022, 21/3/2023. Date of hearing, 12/6/2023. Ahmed Ali etc VS Qamar Said etc. Notice to No. 15, Said Zaman s/o Khan Zaman. 16. Hamza Khan s/o Noor Mohammad. 18. Masal Dad s/o Jafar. 20. Asli Gil s/o Bakht Shahzada resident of Wara Kalay teshel Gagra district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8.30 am dated 12/6/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Pakistan moves firmly towards economic stability: Spokesman

ISLAMABAD (APP): A spokesman for the Ministry of Finance on Saturday said Pakistan’s economy was moving firmly in the right direction to achieve stability and sustainable growth under a rigorous reforms policy.

“...the country is surviving economically and will continue to survive... what Pakistan has done is decisive and courageous: we will continue to walk the road to reforms to stabilize our economy and in the course of time to steer it toward the path of sustainable growth,” he said.

Refuting the negative remarks uttered by an economist Atif Mian about Pakistan’s economic policy and its comparison with Ghana and Sri Lanka, the

spokesman termed it a “misplaced criticism made from a purely theoretical point of view.”

Responding to a tweet of the economist in which he criticized Pakistan’s economic policy and suggested Pakistan take decisive actions, aggressively restructuring and take courageous actions; the spokesman said “This is a veiled suggestion to declare default.”

He said “The gentleman has no idea how practical economics operates in practice. His comparison with Ghana and Sri Lanka, is also misplaced given the incomparably small size of their economies and populations relative to Pakistan.”

Fundamentally, the spokesman said the economist did not care to analyze

the structure of Pakistan’s debt which had less than a 10% share in commercial bonds/sukus, with the next maturity falling due in April 2024.

“The rest of the debt is owed to the multilateral and bilateral creditors. Both these classes of creditors are engaged with Pakistan and none has assessed that Pakistan should default.”

The spokesman regretted that the author had completely ignored the deep-rooted reforms Pakistan had undertaken during the last nine months, including market exchange rate, and interest rate adjustments, mid-year taxation to improve fiscal position, imposition of levy on petroleum products and non-monetization of fiscal deficit.

“All these actions were undertaken under an IMF programme which was unprecedented as never in the country’s history such front-loaded conditionality was imposed. However, we accomplished it through heroic efforts.”

He said “It is unfortunate that despite such actions, the staff level agreement (SLA) has still not been reached delaying the release of the 90 review tranche. The country is surviving economically and will continue to survive.”

The spokesman said what Pakistan had done was “decisive and courageous: we would continue to walk the road to reforms to stabilize our economy and in the course of time to steer it toward the path of

sustainable growth.”

He said the comparison of the nominal exchange rate was also unwarranted, adding “Pakistan’s real exchange rate is currently estimated to be 15% undervalued. The nominal rate is the result of speculation, market manipulation and general distraught from political instability.”

The spokesman explained the undervalued exchange rate was reflective of the fact that underlying fundamentals were improving. “Pakistan has historically sold petroleum products at significantly lower prices than regional countries. With the petroleum levy of Rs.50 achieved, this doesn’t involve any subsidy from the government.”

He said it would be unwise to levy additional tax on consumers on top of prices that had doubled in less than a year, especially when they were facing rising inflation. “The author has cited this as an example of nonsensical policies,” the spokesman said, declaring it “simply a misplaced example.”

He said Pakistan’s economy had suffered because of international shocks of COVID, the Russia-Ukraine war and devastating floods of last summer. “The challenges that resulted from an overly heated economy, bequeathed to us in April 2022, and the breach of IMF conditionality on the eve of the departure of the PTI government, have been overcome by the

present government.”

The spokesman said the current account deficit, the primary indicator of the balance of payments imbalance, had firmly been brought down from a high of \$17.5 billion to around \$3.2 billion. “This achievement is a reflection of bringing the economy to within its latent strengths and not on borrowed resources.”

“The author is also oblivious to the unprecedented political challenges faced by the country. We are not living in calm and serene times. The present situation has major repercussions for the economy. With political stability likely to emerge soon, there would be a major economic turnaround,” the spokesman remarked.



In brief

M Bilal passes away at 38

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's international snooker player Muhammad Bilal passed away on Saturday. The 38-year-old international snooker player died due to cardiac arrest. His funeral was offered in Mandi Bahauddin after Zuhr prayers on Saturday. Muhammad Bilal won the Asian 10 Ball Snooker Championship in 2018. Bilal was the runner-up in the 2018 Asian 6 Red Ball Championship. In 2019, Bilal won the World Team Championship with Asjad Iqbal. Muhammad Bilal also won the National Snooker Championship in 2016 and 2019. PBSA Chairman Alamgir Shaikh expressed grief over the death of Muhammad Bilal.

Dynamites beat Challengers

K A R A C H I (Monitoring Desk): Dynamites recorded their second win of the one-day phase with a thumping eight-wicket win over Challengers in the Pakistan Cup Women's Cricket Tournament. Challengers were bowled out for 119 in 40.3 overs and Dynamites chased the target in 28.1 overs at the State Bank Ground on Saturday. Left-arm orthodox Nashra Sundhu took three wickets for 19 in seven overs and was named player of the match. She accounted for Javeria Rauf, who top-scored with 44, Noreen Yaqub (16) and Maham Tariq (0). Waheeda Akhtar, Aliya Riaz and Ghulam Fatima took two wickets each, and Maham Manzoor got one wicket. Dynamites openers Khadija Chishty and Sidra Amin provided a solid start to the run chase with an 80-run stand. Khadija made 33 and Sidra, the captain, scored 42. Bismah Maroof and Aliya Riaz were unbeaten on 16 and 14 when Dynamites chased down the total. This was Challengers' second defeat in as many matches.

Djokovic says 'part of me will leave' when Nadal quits

PARIS (Agencies): Novak Djokovic admitted Saturday that when career-long rival Rafael Nadal retires next year "part of me will be leaving too". Djokovic shares the all-time men's record of 22 Grand Slam titles with Nadal but can break that tie by winning the French Open for a third time. Nadal, the 14-time champion in Paris, is sitting out Roland Garros with a hip injury. With his 37th birthday fast approaching, the Spaniard has admitted that 2024 will likely be his final year on tour. "When he announced that he's going to have his last season of his career, I felt part of me is leaving with him too," said Djokovic. "It made me think about my career and how long I'm going to play. I'm not going to make any announcement today, but just reflecting on it. I felt also a little bit emotional about what he was saying." Djokovic holds a 30-29 career edge over Nadal but the Spanish star has been the superior force at Roland Garros with eight wins in the pair's 10 meetings. "I don't like seeing him in the draw of Roland Garros, to be honest," added Djokovic. "I have had not so much success against him in our head-to-head. I have managed to beat him twice, but I had to leave my heart and my guts out on the court to achieve that."



Mubasir Khan's century in vain as Zimbabwe Select take series

HARARE (Agencies): Mubasir Khan's century goes in vain as Zimbabwe Select beat Pakistan Shaheens by 32 runs in the sixth and final one-day of the six-match series at the Harare Sports Club in Harare.

The win means the hosts take the series 4-2. Earlier, on the tour, Pakistan Shaheens swept the four-dayers 2-0.

Chasing a daunting task of 386 to win, Shaheens got off to a shaky start as they lost three wickets inside 10 overs with 50 runs on the board. At that point, Rohail Nazir and captain Kamran Ghulam got together and the pair knitted a 108-run partnership for the fourth wicket. After the departure of right-handed Kamran (56, 47b, 6x4s, 1x6), Rohail was joined by Mubasir and both batters added 98 runs for the fifth wicket. Rohail's 91-ball 87 came to an end in the 39th over when the right-handed batter was dismissed by left-arm spinner Sean Williams.

His innings included six fours and three sixes.

At the other end, Mubasir continued to play shots and kept the required run-rate in check, but he fell short of partners as Shaheens eventually fell short of the target by 32 runs. Mubasir was the last batter to get out, scoring a 77-ball 115, hitting six fours and eight sixes.

For Zimbabwe Select, Sikandar Raza was the most successful bowler, taking three wickets for 66 runs in 10 overs.

Earlier, after being put into bat, Zimbabwe Select lost their opening batter Joylord Gumbie on the second ball of the match to right-arm fast Mohammad Ali. Innocent Kaia and Craig Ervine then added 187 runs for the second wicket. Kaia (92, 79b, 10x4s, 3x6s) was the next to go, getting out to Ali in the 28th over.

Left-handed Ervine conjured a brilliant exhibition

of batting as he scored 195 off 148 deliveries, hitting 22 fours and six sixes along the way as Zimbabwe Select amassed a mammoth 385 for seven in 50 overs.

For Shaheens, Aamir Jamal and Ali bagged two wickets apiece. Aamir ended-up taking 16 wickets in the series and was declared the best bowler of the series.

Scores in brief: Zimbabwe Select beat Pakistan Shaheens by 32 runs

Zimbabwe Select 385-7, 50 overs (Craig Ervine 195, Innocent Kaia 92; Mohammad Ali 2-32, Aamir Jamal 2-89)

Pakistan Shaheens 353 all out, 49.2 overs (Mubasir Khan 115, Rohail Nazir 87, Kamran Ghulam 56, Haseebullah 35; Sikandar Raza 3-66, Luke Jongwe 2-54, Blessing Muzarabani 2-55, Tanaka Chivanga 2-73)

Player of the match – Craig Ervine (Zimbabwe Select)

Peshawar, Swat Greens, Bannu record wins in Men Hockey League

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar, Swat Green and Bannu registered victories against their respective rivals in the Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Men Hockey League being played at Islamia College Hockey Ground on Saturday.

Peshawar recorded a 6-1 victory against Mardan in the thrill-packed match witnessed by a capacity crowd present on this occasion. Mardan first took the lead through center striker Kashif Khan on the field attempt. The early goal lead taken by Mardan created a panic like situation in the rank of Peshawar but they played with determination and stamped their superiority in every field. Mardan after taking the lead kept up pressure to double the lead and they got three penalty corners in the first quarter but failed to click due to poor drilling.

It was in the 11th minute when Peshawar's star forward inside right Ihsan Ullah gave his team a timely equalizer on the field

attempt. Taking the ball from out-side right Jibran Hamza, Ihsan Ullah quickly moved toward the rival goal-post and netted a fine goal from the D circle to make the tally 1-1.

After leveling the tally 1-1 Peshawar managed their position accordingly and made some incisive rallies of attacks as a result Peshawar succeeded in scoring five more goals but thanks to Ihsan Ullah who slammed in four goals including a hat-trick, the second of the League. Muhammad Farooq and Jiran Hamza were the other scorers.

In the second match Swat Greens defeated Hazara by 6-1 in another one-sided match. Mukhtiar Ahmad, the right winger of Hazara slammed in a beautiful goal in the 5th minute through a field goal. Mukhtiar Ahmad got the ball from his center half Adil and zoomed quickly by reaching at the D area where he dispatched a beautiful and timely goal and gave no room to goal-keeper to stop.

After taking the lead Hazara made some inroads but failed to score any goal. On the other hands Swat Greens scored 6 goals when Zeeshan Abbas, the center striker, made a key hat-trick by scoring goals in the 13th, 19th, 43rd, and 49th minutes while Yasir Ali and Nouman Ali scored one goal each in the 58th and 66th minute to make the tally 6-1.

In the third match of the day's proceedings, Bannu defeated Swat White by 5-0. Uzair Ahmad scored two goals in the 17th and 33rd minute while Faizan Sami, Saqib in the 37th and 46th minute and Muhammad Zubair in the 69th minute scored one goal each. The Hazara forwards including Sher Zaman, Sohail, Ijaz, Tahir, Shahan Sami and Hamza played well but they failed to materialize their chances. Shahid Ali, Murad, Subhan, and Muhammad Niaz supervised the matches while Sajid Khan, Zia Ur Rehman, and Manzoor Khan acted as field judges.

Bayern Munich win 11th straight Bundesliga title



BERLIN (AP): Jamal Musiala scored in the 89th minute to fire Bayern Munich to the Bundesliga title with a 2-1 victory in Cologne after Borussia Dortmund could only draw on the final day of the season.

Dortmund, which was leading by two points before the last round, was held 2-2 at home by Mainz on Saturday, allowing Bayern to finish in first place because of its better goal difference.

Dortmund needed to win to be sure of ending Bayern's 10-year reign as champion. It's just the third time Bayern managed to jump to first place on the last day of the season after it edged Werder Bremen to the title in 1986 and Bayer Leverkusen in 2000.

Dortmund fans were celebrating when Cologne's Dejan Ljubicic scored a penalty in the 81st minute against Bayern – which needed to win – but Musiala came on as a substitute four minutes later and scored four minutes after that to send the title Bayern's way.

Dortmund had started in pole position, but Sébastien Haller had a first-half penalty saved after Andreas Hanchel-Olsen heading the home fans by stunning the home fans in the 15th minute. Karim Onisiwo then got Mainz's second goal in the 24th with another header and the visitors looked capable of scoring more against the mistake-prone Dortmund defense. There was nothing but pride at stake for Mainz.

Raphaël Guerreiro pulled one back in the 69th for Dortmund, but by the time Niklas Süle equalized in the sixth minute of injury time, it was far too late for the "black and yellows."

Rani Khedira fired Union Berlin into the Champions League with a late winner over Werder Bremen for 1-0. Union finished fourth, ahead of Freiburg, which lost 2-1 at Eintracht Frankfurt.

Schalke was relegated after a 4-2 loss at Leipzig, and Stuttgart will contest the relegation/promotion playoff against the team that finishes third in the second division. Stuttgart drew with Hoffenheim 1-1. Bochum secured survival with a 3-0 win over 10-man Bayer Leverkusen.

Punjab athletes win 2 more gold medals at 34th National Games

LAHORE (APP): Expanding their medals tally, the Punjab athletes won two more gold medals at the 34th National Games on Saturday. Overall Punjab athletes have won 44 medals including three gold medals so far in the ongoing National Games.

According to information made available here by the Sports board Punjab, Punjab's wrestler Abdullah annexed a gold medal in the men's 65kg weight category. He defeated experienced players from HEC, Wapda and Railways team on his way to win the coveted gold medal.

Punjab's Samreen stunned Army's Naureen to bag another gold medal in women's wushu Tai-Chi event making it three gold medals in just two days'



time. Earlier, Punjab's 14-year-old swimmer Mohid Sadiq Lone clinched the gold medal in men's 200m backstroke at Punjab International Swimming Complex on Friday.

Meanwhile, Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail congratulated Punjab's medal winners and urged them to do extra hard

work and win more medals in the remaining sports competitions of National Games.

According to details, Punjab's swimmers won three bronze medals on Saturday. Rayyan Sadiq Lone and Daud Nawaz won bronze medals in 100m backstroke and 100m butterfly heats respectively while Mohid Sadiq Lone, Rayyan

Sadiq Lone, Amman Rehman Khawar and Aryan Rehman Khawar won bronze medal in 4x200 freestyle relay event in the National Games swimming event being staged here at Punjab Swimming Complex.

In wushu men's Tai-Chi event, Punjab's Asad Ali won silver medal while Abdul Raheem secured a bronze medal in men's wushu Chan-Quan competition. Punjab's Maham also clinched the bronze medal for her team in women's wushu Chan-Quan contest.

In weightlifting, Punjab's Wafia Khalid won bronze medal in 87kg weight category while, in wrestling, Punjab's Abu Ubaida and Sharjeel added two more bronze medals in 57kg and 79kg weight categories respectively.

Pak-Argentina agrees to work for promotion of football in Pakistan

PESHAWAR (APP): Former prominent national footballer and sports organizer Shahid Khan Shinwari Saturday offered to the Normalization Committee formed by FIFA for running the affairs of the Pakistan Football Federation to conduct the Pakistan Football Super League (PFSL) with the help of the Argentinian Ambassador to Pakistan.

Talking to media men, Shahid Khan Shinwari, who organized numerous sports activities in the past, came up with a grand challenge of holding the PFSL in all four provinces including Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP).

He said with the Pakistan Football League, the Game of Football would once again be revived in Pakistan wherein hundreds of players from the four provinces including a team each from Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) would be facilitated. "Our youth badly needs the Game of Football in Pakistan and holding of Pakistan Super Football League means football to be promoted in every nook and corner of Pakistan," Shahid Khan said.

He said, "Due to internal politics

the game of football has been badly damaged and the players since long have no option but to leave football, which is causing great damage to the overall status of this game."

Shahid Khan, who also remained as Secretary General (SG) of the FAIA Olympic Association with former Governor Engr. Shoukat Ullah who worked as President of the Association before being merged into KP, organized scores of sporting activities in the past including four KP Governor Leagues, an International Football Cup wherein for the first time in history, foreign football players from Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Nepal visited Peshawar and participated in the KP Governor Football Super League.

He said, "There will be football league matches in Peshawar, Lahore, Karachi and Quetta, for which the normalization committee is planning, if the normalization committee gives a green signal, further work can be done on it." "The purpose of this initiative is to provide opportunities for the players to come forward," Shahid Khan said. "It is hoped that the committee authorities will definitely think in this

regard and ensure the organization of the football league in Pakistan."

He said meetings have already been held with the Argentinian Ambassador to Pakistan and he agreed to support Pakistan Football by providing us with coaches, and trainers before ensuring an opportunity for our young footballers to visit Argentina for the Football League."

He said, "The program with Pak-Argentina will be started by a series between the footballers of the two countries in Pakistan and then in Argentina."

He said, "By June 1, he is going to meet with the Argentinian Football Officials in Islamabad and Lahore to discuss the exchange of football players' visits to Pakistan and Argentina."

He disclosed, "An invitation from the Argentinian Ambassador to Pakistan has already been received in this connection."

"I want to promote football as football and Pakistani players have a lot of potential for the Game of football that is why such an initiative was taken to FIFA Normalization Committee for Pakistan Football to allow us to hold the PFSL," Shahid Khan concluded.

Dominant Chelsea retain Women's Super League title

READING (Agencies): Chelsea secured a fourth consecutive Women's Super League title after a 3-0 win at Reading on Saturday held off Manchester United's fight to win the English top flight for the first time.

Sam Kerr scored twice, while Guro Reiten was also on target, to secure the victory the Blues needed and which relegated Reading in the process. Victory completed a league and FA Cup double for Chelsea after they beat United 1-0 at Wembley earlier this month.

And they came close to a treble after missing out narrowly to Barcelona in the Champions League semi-finals.

But Chelsea's reign of domestic dominance has been seriously challenged this season as United, Arsenal and Manchester City pushed them in a four-way title race until the final weeks of the season.

The champions, though,



showed their quality when it mattered most with a seven-game winning run to finish the league season.

Fittingly, it was Chelsea's two star performers this season in Kerr and Reiten who took centre stage to seal the title.

"We've played so many games, you have to go again every third or fourth day," said Reiten.

"But we keep doing it again and again, digging deep, finding that special moment to win games and yeah, we're good!"

The two combined for the opening goal after just 18 minutes when Kerr headed in Retien's cross.

The Norwegian midfielder then slotted through the legs of goalkeeper Grace Moloney to make it 2-0 before half-time.

Pakistan's boxing champion aims for OPBF heavyweight glory

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani professional boxer Taimoor Khan, who is currently the World Boxing Council (WBC) Continental Champion, has set his sights on winning the Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation (OPBF) heavyweight title this year for Pakistan.

In an interview with APP, Khan expressed his desire to defeat top-notch boxers and stated that the OPBF title is a crucial stepping stone towards the world heavyweight title. However, he mentioned that the main obstacle in accomplishing his goals is securing sponsorship.

Khan had a scheduled fight with Justis Huni, an Australian professional boxer ranked 54th in the world, in August. Unfortunately, due to visa issues, he was unable to seize that opportunity. Nevertheless, Khan remains determined to become the first Pakistani to win the OPBF heavyweight title.

When discussing his boxing idols, Khan mentioned Ukrainian professional boxer Oleksandr Usyk and British

professional boxer Anthony Joshua. He admired their exceptional skills, movements, stamina, and cardio.

Regarding his training regimen, Khan revealed that he undergoes two to three months of rigorous exercise, and strength training, and adheres to a focused and healthy diet before stepping into the ring. He emphasized the need for even more intense training for his upcoming challenging fights.

If he were not a boxer, Khan stated that he would have chosen to be a Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) fighter or a rugby player. Recounting his favourite victory against Vedant Agarwal, where he won the Asian Heavyweight title for the first time, Khan praised his opponent's experience and toughness but expressed his satisfaction with knocking him out easily. He added that defeating an Indian boxer on Pakistan's Independence Day was a particularly joyous moment for him.

Khan believes that Pakistani sportsmen should be given opportunities similar to neighbouring countries

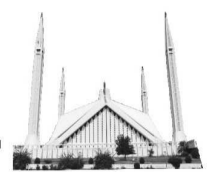
such as Iran, India, and Thailand in order to uplift sports in the country.

Reflecting on his boxing career, he revealed that his initial dream was to obtain the World Boxing Council (WBC) belt, but now he aims even higher, aspiring to achieve success similar to Tyson Fury. Khan also expressed confidence in the extensive talent present in Pakistani boxers, stating that with the right support, they can bring Olympic medals to the country.

He advised young boxers to step out of their comfort zones and work harder to achieve their goals.

In April of this year, Taimoor Khan won the WBC Continental Championship title by knocking out Thai boxer Panya Chomphopphuang in the sixth round, bringing his overall fight record to eight wins, including seven knockouts.

Earlier in the year, he successfully defended his Asian Boxing Federation Heavyweight Championship title against Aekaphob Auraiwan in a highly-anticipated bout in Bangkok.



In brief

Timely assistance hallmarks of NHMP

ISLAMABAD (APP): Deputy Inspector General National Highways and Motorway Police, North Zone Muhammad Yusuf Malik said on Saturday that good manners, timely assistance and law enforcement without discrimination were hallmarks of the Motorway Police. On the occasion of his visit to sector M-2 North, operational issues were discussed, inspection of patrolling vehicles and residential facilities of officers were reviewed. DIG Motorway instructed the Sector Commander and DSP to ensure all possible assistance to the road users without any delay by utilizing all the resources. He took notice of the problems being faced by the NHMP staff and issued orders for their resolution. The problems of the officers and employees are closely monitored and practical steps have been taken for their timely solution, he said.

5,000 umbrellas distributed among visitors

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Arabia's General Presidency for the Affairs of the Grand Holy Mosque and the Prophet's Holy Mosque distributed 5,000 umbrellas for the visitors to the Grand Mosque under the "Your Umbrella is in Your Hands" initiative. The presidency handed the umbrellas to the Grand Mosque visitors as part of numerous social initiatives that its social-affairs agency has launched to serve the visitors of the two holy mosques and attain the best social services, Saudi Press Agency reported. Within its initiatives, the agency also distributes gifts and provides all services and facilitates procedures for the visitors so that they can perform their rituals with ease and comfort.

IRSA releases 180,100 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Saturday released 180,100 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 209,600 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1428.84 feet and was 30.84 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 76,100 cusecs and 68,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1121.50 feet, which was 71.50 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 56,400 cusecs and 35,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 79,500, 64,100, 41,700 and 14,200 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 41,400 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 18,100 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

Six gamblers arrested during raid

RAWALPINDI (INP): Police have arrested six gamblers and recovered a stake of Rs 22,660 and 6 mobile phones from their possession during a crackdown here on Saturday. Police also seized cock and motorcycle from the spot. According to a police spokesman, Gujjar Khan police conducted a raid and arrested gamblers identified as Mansoor, Aftab, Younis, Khuram, Taimur and Abdul Qadoos. Police have registered separate cases against all of them and further investigation was in progress.

May 28, a red-letter day in Pakistan's history which ensures invincible defence

ISLAMABAD (APP): The nation is fervently celebrating the 25th anniversary of Pakistan's nuclear tests conducted on May 28, 1998 which was a historic day that led to the achievement of invincible defence capabilities and ensured regional stability through power equilibrium.

The day brought a revival for the entire Pakistani nation and became a moment of pride for the Muslim Ummah. The day, now remembered as Youm-e-Takbeer is being celebrated every year across the country as a day of national pride and thanksgivings which made Pakistan the seventh nuclear nation of the world and the first Muslim state, having the nuclear arsenal in its defense stockpile to exercise maximum deterrence for peaceful purposes.

The tests not only demonstrated the resolve of the Pakistani nation to safeguard Pakistan's territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty, but also the desire to preserve strategic balance in South Asia.

The historic statement of former Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto that they would starve but transform

the country into a nuclear power, led to the achievement of this milestone.

On that day, the Pakistani leadership, notwithstanding external pressures and Indian hegemonic designs to tilt power balance through its nuclear tests, opted courageously in 1998 to respond and restored the power balance in South Asia by conducting nuclear tests.

With such a tactical and sagacious response by Pakistan on May 28, 1998, it became "a red-letter day" in the country's history, silencing the belligerent ruling junta in its neighbourhood that was clamouring with ill-conceived expansionist designs.

Youm-e-Takbeer, which literally means "the day when Allah's name was exalted" regularly infuses new nerve into the high soaring spirits of a nation which refused to cower down by the repeated threats of war-mongering mindset in its neighbourhood.

The history of acquiring modern nuclear technology for exercising maximum restraint and for purely peaceful purposes, entails commitment, patriotism and strong obligation on the part of Pakistani leadership, for the territorial integrity of the

country.

India had tested its "device" for the first time in 1974 which compelled Pakistan to expedite its nuclear programme with renewed commitment.

Amid slogans of "Allah-o-Akbar", Pakistan conducted its first test on May 28, 1998, at the Ras Koh hills in the Chaghai District of Balochistan.

But resisting the mounting external pressures to restrain and not to respond in kind, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Muhammad Nawaz Sharif went for the bold decision to test the Pakistani nukes and thus balancing the strategic slanting power in the region.

Pakistan is committed to the promotion of an environment of peace and stability in South Asia while preserving its capability to ward off aggression or adventurism in any form. It is a partner in international efforts to strengthen the global non-proliferation regime based on the principles of non-discrimination and equal security for all states. It adheres to the latest international standards on export controls and maintains highest standards of nuclear safety and security.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor waiting for customers sitting on his handcart in fruits and vegetables market. —APP Photo

Banners containing anti-PTI, anti-Imran slogans displayed at Murree Road

RAWALPINDI (NNI): The anti-Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and its leaders containing harsh slogans have been displayed at the on Murree Road Rawalpindi Saturday.

Slogans condemning the PTI leaders were plastered on the banners.

As per details, the banners containing the slogans of anti-Imran and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf have been placed on different chowks and roads in Rawalpindi city.

The banners which were put on display carried the slogans of 'Traitors of Pakistan'. More anti-PTI and

Imran Khan. One of the banners containing the senior PTI leadership which have attracted the attention of people is inscribed with the slogan "Wall of Shame".

These banners containing the pictures of PTI leadership including party chairman Imran Khan have been displayed at Murree Road and other adjacent areas with several anti-party and pro-Pakistan slogans.

These banners are also surfacing on the social media. The pictures of Imran Khan, former Sindh Governor Imran Ismail,

Farrukh Habib, Murad Saeed and Dr Yasmin Rashid and other PTI high ups have been affixed on the banners.

The other writing contains against the PTI leadership for provoking the workers to destroy and target several installations and government institutions.

The banners also contain the writing of Criticism Day, Traitor Pakistan.

Near the Kutchery Chowk, a big banner also contains 'Wall of Shame' writing on which the pictures of 21 PTI leaders have also been affixed.

Three children burnt to death

RAWALPINDI (INP): Three children were burnt to death while two others were scorched as a house caught fire after gas cylinder explosion in Shamasabad area of Rawalpindi on Saturday. A family was using gas cylinder due to gas loadshedding. When woman lit flame to turn on the stove, the gas cylinder went off with big bang due to leakage and fire spread to entire house. Two minor children were burnt to death on the spot while mother among three were scorched. The rescue teams reached the scene, extinguished the blaze and shifted the injured to Holy Family Hospital where another child succumbed to his wounds.

11 held, huge quantity of drugs recovered during seven different operations countryside

RAWALPINDI (INP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations in different areas across the country, arrested 11 accused including two women and recovered 170 kg of drugs from their possession, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Saturday.

He informed that in an operation near Islamabad Motorway Toll Plaza, one kg of heroin was recovered from the possession of a drug smuggler, a resident of Khyber.

In another operation in E-11 Islamabad, 70 intoxicated tablets were recovered from the possession of an accused, resident of Lahore.

In the third operation at Karachi International Airport, five kg of heroin was recovered from the possession of an Abu-Dhabi-bound female passenger, a resident of Karachi, going on flight no EY-201.

In the fourth operation near Karachi Super Highway, four kg of hashish was recovered from the possession of a female drug smuggler resident of Karachi.

The spokesman informed that a bid to smuggle drugs from Afghanistan to

Pakistan was foiled as ANF and Frontier Corps (FC) managed to recover 111 kg hashish from the possession of five accused residents of Khyber, rounded up at Pak-Afghan Border check post.

In the sixth operation at Bacha Khan International Airport Peshawar, 7640 intoxicated tablets were recovered from the possession of a London-bound passenger, resident of Birmingham, going on flight no EK-637.

In the seventh operation, 49 kg of hashish was recovered from an abandoned house near the Quetta-Kuchlak bypass.

"Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process," he added.

17 outlaws arrested; drugs and weapons with ammunition recovered

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad capital police apprehended 17 outlaws from different areas of the city and recovered drugs and weapons with ammunition from their possession, a police public relations officer said.

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

(IGP) Islamabad Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Islamabad capital police has intensified crackdown against the criminal elements in order to eliminate the crime from the city.

Following these directives, the Karachi Company police team arrested an accused named Akash and recovered 20 liters liquor from his possession. Likewise, the Tarnol police team arrested two accused named Saddam Hussain and Syedan and recovered two 30 bore pistols with ammunition from their possession.

Similarly, the Sangjani police team arrested an accused named Shahmeer and recovered one 30 bore pistol from his possession. The Sumbal police team arrested an accused named Muhammad Rizwan and Sohail and recovered two 30 bore pistols from their possession.

Moreover, the Nilore police team arrested an accused named Waqas and recovered one 12 bore gun from his possession. The Sihala police team arrested an accused named Mazhar and recovered 25 gram Ice from his possession. The Noon police team arrested

six accused namely Luqman, Mir Khan, Farman Ullah, Muhammad Naeem, Abdul Ghafar and Kashif Mehmood involved in illegal gas filling.

Furthermore, the Lohi Bher police team arrested an accused named Asad Umer and recovered 1513 gram heroin from his possession. The Sabzi Mandi police team arrested an accused named Nabi Gul and recovered 110 gram heroin from his possession. The Humak police team arrested an accused named Ali Naseem and recovered one 223 bore rifle from his possession.

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

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

Political leadership needs to play role to eradicate uncertainty: Shahzad Waseem

ISLAMABAD (INP): Opposition Leader in Senate, Senator Dr. Shahzad Waseem has urged the political leadership for playing due role to eradicate the prevailing uncertainty in the country saying one cannot illuminate his house by setting it on fire.

During conversation with media in Islamabad on Saturday, he said that May 9 incidents are condemnable and unacceptable. He termed May 9 as darkest day of the country's history.

Senator Dr. Shahzad

Waseem said that four clans of his predecessors had endowed their lives for defence of country. He said that it was his responsibility to play parliamentary role for the countrymen and expressed his hope that his companion Senators would extend all out support for this national cause.

Commending the role of Pakistan army in defence of the country, he said that a strong army was vital to save the country of foreign assaults and sovereignty of

country.

The opposition leader in Senate further stated that enemy of Pakistan considered Balakot attack to be its victory but Pakistan army gave it benefiting replying forcing it to flee.

Shahzad Waseem said that he was PTI's Senator therefore was Opposition Leader in Senate and being Opposition Leader, has key responsibilities. He called for tackling the challenges confronting the country diplomatically.

Sheikh Rashid says he hasn't fled country like Nawaz and Zardari

RAWALPINDI (NNI): Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid said on Saturday he was miles away from corruption thanks to the prayers of his mother and the masses.

He said he didn't run away from the country like

Nawaz Sharif, Asif Zardari and Ishaq Dar had done.

He was commenting on the move under which the interior ministry had cancelled the diplomatic passports of 10 leaders associated with the former PTI government.

Using microblogging

website Twitter, the seasoned politician said he had served as federal minister 16 times, addressed the United Nations and also worked for the country's nuclear technology. But, he added, that his "citizenship" and passport were cancelled.

WMDC organises Blood donation camp for thalassemia patients

RAWALPINDI (APP): A medical camp for Thalassemia patients was arranged at Watim Medical and Dental College in collaboration of Rawalpindi Medical University and Jamila Sultana Foundation.

The camp aimed to raise awareness about blood donation and address the constant demand for blood in medical emergencies.

On the occasion, Prof. Dr. Abdul Rasheed Mian,

Patron of PMA Islamabad, said Blood is the key to saving the lives of critically ill patients. Many thalassemia patients depend on blood transfusions (as often as twice monthly) to survive and thrive.

He further informed that the purpose of setting up the Blood Donation Unit Camp is to help distressed people by providing free blood donation to thalassemia patients or in case of any

emergency. Every philanthropist and caring person should play their role in blood donation camp to save precious lives.

He said the college looks forward to organizing similar events in the future, continuing its mission to save lives through blood donation. The event witnessed an overwhelming response from students, faculty members, and community members.

RDA issues notice to Moreno Enclave, illegal housing scheme

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Development Authority (RDA) on the directives of Director General, Muhammad Saif Anwar Jappa here on Saturday issued a notice to an illegal housing scheme namely Moreno Enclave.

According to a RDA spokesman, the Metropolitan Planning and Traffic Engineering (MP&TE) Directorate RDA issued notice to the owner of

illegal private housing located near M-1 Motorway.

He informed that the sponsors had also been warned of strict action and directed to immediately stop the marketing of unapproved and illegal housing schemes.

They had been asked to contact RDA for getting NOC and approval of the scheme as per law, otherwise, strict legal action would be taken, he added.

He said the DG had

directed the Director MP&TE to take strict action against illegal advertisements and marketing of illegal housing projects besides lodging FIRs against the rules violators.

He said that on the directives of the DG, the citizens had also been advised not to invest in illegal housing schemes and check status of the housing projects before investment at RDA's official website www.rda.gop.pk.

Over 43,000 bikers fined for not wearing helmet

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad Capital Police issued 43,594 fine tickets to motorcyclists driving bikes without helmets during the ongoing year, a police public relations officer said.

He said that the Islamabad Capital Police is endeavoring to maintain an exemplary traffic system in the city and check those involved in negligence on roads.

Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad said that a vigorous campaign of

Islamabad capital police had been launched as per the directions of Inspector General of Police (IGP) Islamabad Dr Akbar Nasir Khan, in order to create awareness among citizens about the traffic rules.

He said that all the officials have been directed to ensure the implementation of traffic rules and regulation irrespective of status and rank and demonstrate patience and politeness while issuing traffic violation tickets to the road users.

Islamabad capital police is utilizing all available resources to facilitate the general public adding that the parents are also requested not to allow their underage children to drive bikes or cars till age of maturity, CTO maintained.

The Chief Traffic Officer said that issuing traffic violation tickets is not as a punitive measure but the purpose is to ensure a safe road environment in the Capital and secure the lives of the people.

Death anniversary of renowned film actress Rani observed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The death anniversary of renowned film actress Nasira Begum known as Rani was observed on Saturday.

Born on December 8, 1946 in Lahore, Rani made her screen debut in the film Mehboob in 1962. For the next few years, Rani appeared in supporting roles. She obtained tremendous success in the late 1960s, when she was paired with renowned actor Waheed Murad.

She remained one of the most successful actresses in Pakistan in the next decade and acted in both Urdu and Punjabi films.

However, after the success of Hazar Dastan and Dever Bhabhi, Rani became a leading actress in Pakistani cinema.

Some of more notable films of Rani included Dewar Bhabhi, Hazar Dastan, Dil Mera Dharkan Teri, Anjuman, Tehzeeb, Umrao Jan Ada, Diya Aur Toofan,

Suriya Bhopali, Baharo Phool Barsao, Naag Muni, Seeta Mariam Margaret and Ik Gunah Aur Sahi.

She also acted in two TV serials "Khwahish" and "Faraib" in the early 90's.

She won a Nigar Award for the film 'Mera Ghar Meri Jannat' in 1968. She also won another Nigar Award for best actress for her role in the film 'Sona Chandi' in 1986. Rani died of cancer at the age of 46 in Lahore on May 27, 1993.

More youths joined army

KABUL (Agencies): National Defense Ministry (NDM) says that process of recruiting a number of youths from Panjshir to the ranks of army forces has been finalized. Newly 59 more youths in Panjshir have been recruited in the ranks of army forces. Meanwhile, the head of recruiting command of MoND, Mawlawi Sahar Gul Haqbeen, expressed hope that the freshly recruited youths do their best in defending the Islamic sanctities, upholding independency, and obeying their leaders.

Students received textbooks

FARAH (Agencies): Local officials at the Education Department of Farah say that textbooks, stationery items, and health bags have been delivered to nearly 800 students of 12 schools in the Gulastan district of this province. The provincial head of Education of Farah, Mawlawi Akhtar Mohammad Zaeem said that 767 students in 12 schools have received textbooks, stationery items, and health bags, which include medical supplies in this province.

Commercial attaché appointed at Afghan Embassy in Ashgabat

KABUL (Khaama Press): Ministry of Commerce and Industry of Afghanistan has announced that Mohammad Haroon Sayedi has been appointed as the new commercial attaché at the Afghan Embassy in Ashgabat, the capital of Turkmenistan.

The ministry in a series of tweets on Saturday said that Fazal Mohammad Sabir, the acting charge de affairs of Afghanistan Embassy in Ashgabat attended the ceremony to introduce the new commercial attaché.

Mr. Sabir stressed the role of the Afghan diplomat to boost trade and investment and the development of economic relations and

cooperation between Afghanistan and Turkmenistan in the years ahead.

Mohammad Haroon Sayedi was officially introduced as the commercial attaché of the Afghan embassy in Ashgabat during a special ceremony, in which the acting Afghan Ambassador and a number of investors attended the gathering.

The commercial attaché is obliged to work in economic areas and attract foreign investment as well as coordinate between the ministries of commerce and industry of both countries.

In his new role, Mr. Sayedi will also have to work on certain gatherings aimed at conducting

research and holding capacity-building programs in the host country.

Turkmenistan holds close ties with the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan and has shown interest in investing in the war-torn country and improving mutual economic and trade relations.

Since the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021, the Central Asian state has already dispatched life-saving aid to the people of Afghanistan and has repeatedly called on the de facto authorities to build an inclusive government and respect the rights of women, girls, religious minorities and ethnic groups.

IEA supports genuine investment in country



KABUL (Agencies): Deputy Prime Minister, Mawlawi Abdul Salam Hanafi, in a meeting with a number of economic activists and influential figures, said: “The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan supports and welcomes any kind of businesses and genuine investment in the country”.

During the meeting, with Deputy Prime Minister, Hanafi, Haji Mohammad Asif spoke on behalf of others, thanked the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan for ensuring the security of investors and businessmen in the country, and called security one crucial element for investments, which has been maintained in the country, since the Islamic Emirate’s sovereignty, a statement said released by Deputy PM’s office.

The businessmen in this meeting asked the Islamic Emirate for providing them marketing grounds for their products, the statement added.

For his part, Deputy PM Hanafi called their business activities important for the economic development of the country and said that the Islamic Emirate supports and welcomes any kind of business and genuine investments in the country.

Afghan acting FM meets Iranian Ambassador

— discusses Iran’s water rights and bilateral relations



KABUL (Khaama Press): Afghan Acting Foreign Affairs Minister met with Iran’s Ambassador Hassan Kazemi Qomi in Kabul to discuss strengthening bilateral relations between the neighbouring countries, including water issues.

The Deputy Spokesperson of the Ministry, Hafiz Zia Ahmad, said about the meeting in a series of tweets on Saturday. He said the meeting aims to discuss important topics, including Iran’s water rights from the Helmand River, Afghan

prisoners in Iran, Visa issues and several others.

On Iran’s water Rights from the Helmand River, Muttaqi stressed the issue’s significance and said it should be resolved through “dialogue and understanding.”

Meanwhile, resolving the long-standing dispute between the two countries over water management and rights is essential for preserving goodwill and stable relations.

In addition, the meeting also touched upon the issue

of Afghan prisoners in Iran and their return to their home country. Both sides

expressed their commitment to addressing the issue and ensuring the safe return of these prisoners to Kabul.

On the other hand, the issuance of visas for Afghan nationals was discussed during the meeting. The easy process of the visa for Afghan citizens would boost people-to-people relations, trade and tourism between the two brotherly nations.

The meeting came after the tensions raised over

Iran’s water rights from the Helmand River in the last week.

Earlier, Iranian officials warned the de facto authorities to resolve the issue of Iran’s water rights based on the 1973 water treaty between the two countries.

While the Taliban authorities said they abide by the water treaty signed half a century ago. Still, the water will not reach Iran due to drought and lack of water availability in the Helmand River and Kajaki Dam.

Locusts invade northern Afghan provinces

KABUL (TOLOnews): The invasion of locusts has caused huge losses to farmers in some northern provinces.

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations said that the invasion of locusts has caused more than 6,000 hectares of agricultural land to be destroyed in some northern provinces of the country.

“The Moroccan locust is regarded as the world’s most economically impactful plant pest, it eats more than 150 plant pests and more than 50 food crops,”

said Richard Trenchard, FAO Representative in Afghanistan.

According to the FAO representative, considering the current situation it’s necessary to help farmers immediately.

“We need to pre-position to ensure households who could lose everything can receive the food assistance they may need. Most of the agriculture support, emergency assistance, they may need... it’s another thing about the Moroccan locust, it can multiply year to year one hundred times. We need to make sure that next

year we don’t see a far worse outbreak,” said Richard Trenchard.

Meanwhile, farmers said that they do not have the means to destroy locusts, and aid organizations should help the farmers.

“The Moroccan locust has destroyed 300 acres of my wheat field and 31,000 acres of land in this area where ten villages are located,” said Najibullah, a farmer.

Badakhshan, Badghis, Baghlan, Balkh, Sur e Pul, Samangan, and Takhar are provinces facing huge losses due to locusts.

WHO to help health system

KABUL (Agencies): The World Health Organization (WHO) says it is ready to fully support the health system in Afghanistan and has encouraged fifty of its partners to help provide health services to the country.

“Global partnership plays a key role in helping the Afghan people in the health sector. Also, the World Health Organization is ready to lead the care of the needy in the health sector,” the statement said.

“The World Health Organization has already encouraged more than 50 partners of this organization to provide health assistance to the people of Afghanistan.”

Meanwhile, the spokesperson of the Ministry of Public Health has said that WHO’s assistance is important in Afghanistan, but it is not so extensive that it can permanently remove the country’s health system problems.

Some experts meanwhile also said that while the health problems in the country have increased and people in remote areas and provinces do not have access to health services, it is the responsibility of the international community to direct the majority of humanitarian aid to health services.

Earlier, WHO said that about 17.6 million people in Afghanistan need health services and more than \$188 million dollars is needed to resolve the issue.

College graduates turn to driving taxis in Balkh



BALKH (TOLOnews): Young people in Balkh province of Afghanistan who have graduated from various faculties say that due to lack of work, they have to drive taxis.

These young people called on the Islamic Emirate to make opportunities for them to work in government departments.

Zia Rahman, 30, is a graduate student of the English language and literature faculty and said he worked for five years in the information and culture department in Balkh and was interested in continuing his education, so he traveled to India to pursue his master’s degree. But due to economic challenges, he could not con-

tinue his education and now he is driving a taxi on the roads of Mazar-e-Sharif.

“I was interested in pursuing my education so I traveled to India but due to economic challenges I couldn’t finish my master’s degree,” said Zia Rahman.

“It has been five years since I graduated from the journalist faculty and due to financial challenges I am driving a taxi now,” said Ghulam Sakhi, who studied journalism.

“I studied two years in my department and because of the changes and challenges I drive a taxi,” said Hashmat Ullah, who studied economics.

The labor and social

affairs department in Balkh acknowledged the unemployment among the educated youth in this province and spoke of efforts to create job opportunities for them.

“Our educated youth really need jobs, they have the ability to work in government departments, in the offices of the Islamic Emirate, if there is an empty post, we will hire them there,” said Naseer Ahmad Abu Khalid, head of the Labor and Social Affairs Department in Balkh.

After the return of the Islamic Emirate to power, most educated young people went abroad due to the lack of work in order to support their families.

Int’l outrage over repressive policies on women in Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): International organizations and human rights groups have repeatedly warned about the consequences of misogyny and the execution of gender-based policies in Afghanistan under the Taliban regime.

Amnesty International has described the placement of strict restrictions as a “war against women” in Afghanistan and stressed that perpetrators should be prosecuted.

In its latest report, Amnesty International has documented several cases in Afghanistan under the Taliban

regime, indicating gender-based and discriminatory measures aimed at removing women from the spheres of collective life, which can clear examples of “crime against humanity”.

As per the reports of Amnesty International, the harassment campaign of the Taliban to systematically repress Afghan women from the public sphere is a misogyny and the policy to remove women and girls from public life is ongoing throughout the country under the Taliban’s de facto

regime.

This report shows Afghan women have been silenced and will completely disappear.

Taliban’s actions reflect that the group’s policies are discriminatory and aimed at removing women and girls from all aspects of public life.

Agnès Callamard, Amnesty International Secretary General said the Taliban’s actions are organized, extensive and systematic.

Amnesty International’s findings show that the Taliban’s strict restrictions

on women and girls violate many international treaties, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the Convention on the Rights of Children.

Human rights experts have called that perpetrators of ‘crime against humanity’ should be prosecuted and necessary steps should be taken to protect the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan under the Taliban rule.

At least 16 injured as explosion rocks northern Afghanistan

BAGHLAN (Khaama Press): At least 16 people were injured in a heavy explosion in Baghlan province in the north of the country, officials reported on Saturday.

According to the report, 16 people were injured in the explosion, which was taken place in Pole-Khomri city of Baghlan province in the north of Afghanistan.

The injured people were taken to the nearby hospital for medical treatment.

So far, the Taliban authorities have not commented on the explosion and no individual or group have not claimed responsibility for the explosion.

Further details are awaited. Meanwhile, similar incidents have occurred in the country, and Daesh has previously taken responsibility.

The IS-Khorasan is the main current-led Taliban government adversary, killing Taliban members, foreign nationals and ordinary people in the country.

Despite the current regime’s claims that there is security in the country, the de facto government still



faces security challenges. Since the Taliban took control of the country, the extremist Daesh group has violently attacked several places, particularly Kabul city.

Recently, the Taliban forces have increased their operations against the group hideouts in the country to eliminate the militants from the country.

Lead exposure: Experts urge use of good quality cookware

KABUL (Pajhwok): Medical experts after a scientific research found elevated blood lead levels in Afghan refugee children resettled in the US and advised families to stop using low quality aluminum cook pots.

The study’s findings are now public and published in “Journal of Exposure Science and Environmental Epidemiology”. The researchers found that the lead level in blood of those who used pressure cookers exceeded the childhood limit.

The researchers through using an X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analyzer

found that stainless steel cookpots were safer alternatives to aluminum cookpots.

The research indicates children are particularly susceptible to adverse health outcomes from lead exposures. Of special concern is that even low-level exposures can affect a child’s neurological development, with severe impacts on learning, intelligence and behavior.

Meanwhile, medical experts in Afghanistan said Afghan immigrants children in the US might be facing such a problem.

Doctor Sayed Farid Shah Rafiee, specialist of internal diseases at Wazir

Mohammad Akbar Khan Hospital, did not deny the result of this research but said: “It is possible that it is reality because most use pressure cookers in Afghanistan while sometimes leftover food is stored in such pots for a long time”.

He said the use of low quality pressure cookers and pots could transfer lead especially to the bodies of children.

Rafiee told Pajhwok Afghan News: “When food is cooked in an aluminum cook pot and if the food is given more heat pressure, small particles of metal can be departed from the wall of the pot and mixed

with food, especially if the food is spicier or if vinegar or tomatoes are used a lot in the food”.

He said if lead entered the blood of human it caused serious neurological problems, headache, poor mental growth, abdominal pains and loss of appetite.

Doctor Rafiee advised families that instead of contaminated pots with lead, other good quality pots should be used.

He added: “We must wash the aluminum pot well before cooking food in it and we must not leave the food in such pots for a long time”.

Doctor Sayed Murtaza

Hofiani, a professor in French Medical Institute, said, the lead is transferred from the wall of the cookpot while the food is being cooked in it and then it is mixed with the food. Once eaten, the particles of lead are absorbed by the body and enter the blood circulation system of the human.

He said the absorbed lead in the body caused laziness and created problems to the memory and learning in children. The lead also causes kidney, heart, nervous system diseases and even it causes cancer, he adds.

He advised instead of aluminum cookware, peo-

ple must use cookpots of cast iron, stainless steel pots or any other good quality cookpots.

Doctor Mohammad Sharif Seddiqi, pediatrics internal medicine specialist, also accepted the outcome of the research and said the use of aluminum and some other cookware caused lead transfer to the blood system.

He added high level of lead in blood had horrible impacts such as delayed growth of nerves, anemia and some mental problems in children.

He advised families to prevent such horrible impacts of lead by removing appliances or toys that

contained lead from their houses.

However, Doctor Faridullah Omari, a specialist of the infectious diseases hospital in Kabul, said: “The research is possibly accurate, lead can enter the blood circulation system through some Greek medicines, cosmetics, cigarettes and some prepared foods in metal cans and even through breast milk”.

He said contaminated air also contained high level of lead particles and children were up to four or five folds more vulnerable than adults to the lead in environment, Omari added.

Omari said high levels of lead can cause kidney, heart diseases and cancer, additional to some other problems.

He suggested some methods to avoid lead poisoning. “We must stay away from places where jewelries or other metals are being repaired, we should wear mask if the air is polluted, serve foods that contain vitamin C and use garlic on a daily basis in our food recipe”.

Medical experts emphasize that the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) and media outlets must increase awareness about the harms of lead exposure.

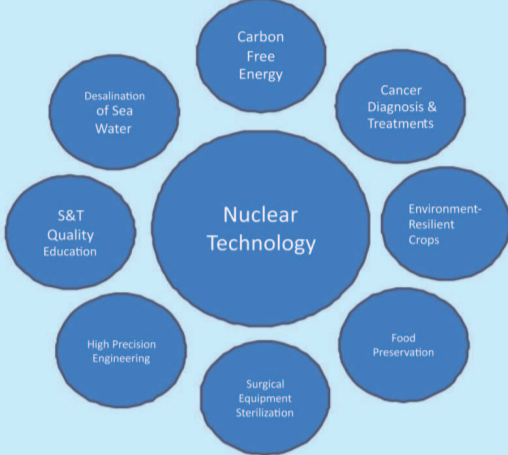
Celeberating Youm-e-Takbeer

25 Years of Pakistan’s Successful NUCLEAR TESTS

**Nuclear science & technology:
A powerful tool for national development**
By Saima Durrani

A commemorative day for a nation, besides being an occasion of celebration, gives an opportunity to take stock of achievements, and acknowledge those who brought the laurels for the motherland. It also allows for becoming cognizant of the future challenges and to find solutions for them by further course correcting and prioritizing strategies thus paving the way for national development.

Pakistan since its inception had to face the challenge of establishing institutes that would set the ball rolling for its national development. Institution building was inevitable if Pakistan was to prosper and move ahead. Credits must be given to those who, inspired by the atoms for peace initiative of American president Eisenhower, thought it fit to establish and benefit from the use of nuclear science and technology and utilize it for socio-economic development of the country.



Not with standing the shortage of resources, an S&T set up; the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission PAEC was established in 1956 to make use of this international trend of atoms for peace. That humble beginning was to encompass a whole gambit of national development goals viz Agriculture, Health, followed by Power Generation, industrial design and manufacture and their required human resource. Few organizations would claim to serve the nation in so many versatile and high-tech fields as PAEC has and as if today is fully committed and equipped to do so in future as well.

Nuclear technology plays a pivotal role in addressing the world's energy, health, and agricultural needs. Nuclear innovation is also a key tool used to support the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) . After committing to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, Pakistan became the first country in the world to adopt the SDGs as its own national development goals through a National Assembly Resolution in February 2016. For each major application of nuclear technology PAEC has a dedicated setup of labs to utilize it. Out of the 17 goals of this agenda, PAEC contributes to 11 of them directly or indirectly.

According to FAO some of the most innovative ways being used to improve agriculture practices involve nuclear technology. PAEC has given considerable importance to the promotion of the use of nuclear techniques for the development of agriculture in the country. This is evident from the fact that PAEC recruited its first biologist way back in 1958 which was followed by the establishment of Radiobiology Division in early 60's at Atomic Energy Centre, Lahore. Subsequently, first Atomic Energy

Agriculture Research Center was established in 1962 at Tandojam which was followed by one institute established each in Punjab and KPK namely Nuclear Institute for Agriculture and Biology (NIAB) in 1972, Nuclear Institute for Food and Agriculture (NIFA) at Peshawar in 1982 and National Institute of Biotechnology and Genetic Engineering (NIBGE) at Faisalabad in 1994. The research in all these centers has been primarily focused on the utilization of nuclear techniques to produce important crop varieties, development of better methods of conservation of inputs and products which provides food security in environment friendly manner by being sustainable by improving land and water productivity and integrated management of pests and diseases. So far these centers have produced 148 high yield, weather tolerant & highly adapted varieties of crops. Recently the Nuclear Institute for Agriculture and Biology (NIAB) has been designated as an IAEA Collaborating Centre in agriculture and biotechnology. NIAB is also a national laboratory under the IAEA's ZODIAC initiative.

Nuclear medicine is an integral part of diagnostic and sometimes therapeutic health management. organ imaging relies heavily on radioisotopic techniques also.

Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) started its journey of establishing cancer diagnosis & treatment facilities from 1960 in Pakistan. Recently, 19th cancer hospital completed and started operation in 2022. 20th cancer treatment facility is under construction at Muzaffarabad, AJ&K. These facilities are testimonials to PAEC unwavering support to cancer care services and peaceful use of nuclear technologies. It is worth mentioning that PAEC's 19 cancer hospitals established in all provinces of Pakistan are shouldering the responsibility of diagnosing and treating over 80% of the country's cancer-affected patients . more than 1.8 million patients got treated at PAEC cancer care hospitals this year.

lately, Cyberknife, a new cancer treatment facility was inaugurated at the flagship cancer care hospital , Nuclear Medicine Oncology and Radiotherapy Institute (NORI) Islamabad by DG IAEA through which Pakistan would be able to support its neighbors for cancer treatment access by becoming a regional centre under 'Rays of Hope' — an IAEA initiative seeking to increase cancer care access in low- and middle-income countries by helping to introduce and improve radiation medicine capacities and build the cancer care workforce.

Pakistan, under the aegis of PAEC currently operates six nuclear power plants at two sites generating 10 percent of electricity through nuclear of the country's total and almost a quarter of its low-carbon electricity. The history of Pakistan's nuclear power generation program goes back to 1965 when PAEC started construction of the first Nuclear Power Plant namely KANUPP of 137 MW capacity commenced in Karachi. Since then, PAEC has constructed four Nuclear Power Plants at Chashma. The first Generation-III technology plant, the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-2 (K-2) went into commercial operation on 21st May, 2021 while Pakistan's second Generation-III nuclear power plant named K-3 of 1100MW capacity got inaugurated this year. With induction of this unit, Karachi nuclear power generation site alone has started providing 2200 MW of much needed electricity to the national grid and as a whole the nuclear power generation capacity of Pakistan has reached more than 3500 MW. Currently, preparations for embarking upon another similar plant named C-5 at Chashma are in the final stage.

An elaborate and diversified engineering set up of PAEC successfully caters to design, manufacturing & testing of mechanical equipment for medium and heavy industries in accordance with the International Codes and Standards especially for Power Plants, Chemical and Petrochemical Plants and other Industrial Projects for itself and the national industry. These setups are well equipped with modern engineering manufacturing and fabrication facilities geared toward attaining

excellence. A set up of PAEC, viz Heavy mechanical complex-3, HMC-3 is one of the largest industrial projects in the heavy engineering sector of Pakistan.

Moreover, as safe operation of NPPs and other industries is strongly dependent on the reliable non-destructive inspection during their pre-service and in-service, one of PAEC entity National Centre for Non-Destructive Testing (NCNDT) is providing, inspection, testing, training, calibration, qualification, certification, condition assessment and root cause analysis services to PAEC and national industry to meet the requirements in accordance with local and international standards.

From its inception realizing the importance of manpower development PAEC imitated a proactive and systematic program for indigenous human resource development. As early as 1967, a small training facility called training school, later called Centre for Nuclear Studies which eventually acquired university status named PIEAS was established. Where under bachelors and master and PhD programs education is being imparted in nuclear engineering, radiation physics, chemical engineering along with so many.

While summarizing some of the services PAEC renders for nation utilizing nuclear technology, let us all remember on this Yaum-e- Takbeer that patriotism is not short frenzied outbursts of emotion, but the tranquil and steady dedication of life time to one's country. Following this tradition we all should be fully determined in letter and spirit and pledge to serve the nation through hard work and dedication for achieving the cherished goals of national development.

PAEC: In the Quest for Socioeconomic Development of Pakistan
By Hafiz Abdul Nasir

Socioeconomic development deals with the transformation of a society on social and economic fronts. The ultimate goal of socioeconomic development is to achieve sustainability at the highest possible level of human development and translate it into the lives of people. Among these, food security, healthcare and education are of prime importance as they play a pivotal role in the socioeconomic uplift of a country.

Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) is a leading Research and Development organisation of the country. Since its inception, the organisation has been committed to serve the nation in various fields with the peaceful use of nuclear technology for socioeconomic betterment of Pakistan. The organisation is also proactively involved in pursuing 11 out of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations and adopted by IAEA programme, to be achieved by 2030.

Since Pakistan is an agrarian economy, therefore sustainable growth of this sector is of paramount importance for food security and rural development. Agriculture sector has also multiple interconnections with the overall economy. Besides providing employment opportunities to 37.4 per cent of the labour force and contributing 22.7 per cent to the country's GDP, it is also a major contributor towards foreign exchange earnings. But unfortunately, loss of agricultural land poses a serious threat to this sector. Each year plenty of land becomes unusable due to soil degradation and rampant urbanisation. Also, agricultural land has deteriorated and became uncultivable due to torrential rains causing catastrophic floods last year that submerged almost one-third of the country. According to World Bank, total agricultural land of Pakistan was once 50 per cent of the total land area in 1980 that has been reduced to 47 per cent in 2018. On the other hand, a comparison of population growth of Pakistan for the same period shows that it increased almost threefold since 1980. So, the bottom line is that the country needs more mouths to feed by increasing per acre yield with the help of modern science and technology.

The history of PAEC in the field of agriculture dates back to '60s

of the last century, when Atomic Energy Agricultural Research Centre was established in Tando Jam, Sindh. The Centre introduced nuclear techniques in the field of agriculture, for better survivability and yield of various crops. The centre later renamed as Nuclear Institute of Agriculture. In addition to this, there are three more agriculture centres being run under the aegis of PAEC, NIAB and NIBGE in Faisalabad; and NIFA in Peshawar.

These agricultural institutes serve the nation in the fields such as biotechnology & genetic engineering, plant breeding, enhancement of crop production & protection, plant physiology, soil fertility, water conservation & management, and value addition to the food products by using nuclear and other contemporary techniques for sustainable agricultural growth. These centres also organize Farmer's Day on regular basis as part of awareness programmes. Furthermore, these centres are also striving hard to achieve 'Zero Hunger' SDG as they have produced 147 high-yield, pest-tolerant and climate-resilient crop varieties. During his maiden visit to Pakistan in February this year, DG IAEA, Rafael Mariano Grossi inaugurated ZODIAC Lab at NIAB and declared the centre as IAEA Collaborating Centre for capacity building in agricultural research.

PAEC is also playing an indispensable role in achieving 'Good Health and Well-being' SDG. According to WHO, cancer is amongst the leading cause of death around the world, representing almost 10 million deaths in 2020. PAEC has established 19 Atomic Energy Cancer Hospitals (AECs) across the length and breadth of the country. In line with the IAEA's slogan, 'Cancer Care for All', these hospitals share the major burden of cancer patients and serve around a million patients each year. AECs are also making all-out efforts in lessening the miseries of cancer patients by providing state-of-the-art diagnostic and treatment facilities. AECs have also introduced Theranostics in Pakistan, which is an advanced mode of treatment for prostate cancer and Multiple Endocrine Neoplasia. The most important attribute of AECs is that they don't refuse treatment to any cancer patient based on the progression of the disease or due to financial constraints. So, the poor cancer patients get free/subsidized treatment facilities through Pakistan Bait-ul-Mal and Patients Welfare Societies.

With the inauguration of CyberKnife facility at AEC-NORI by the DG IAEA on February 15, 2023, PAEC achieved a historical landmark and became the first-ever public sector cancer hospital of the country to provide cancer patients with this ultra-modern mode of treatment. PAEC has put another feather in its cap with the inauguration of Diagnostic Center Narowal – a satellite centre to provide diagnostic services to the countrymen of north-eastern Punjab. The facility was inaugurated by Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives, Ahsan Iqbal on March 18, 2023.

Apropos to 'Quality Education' SDG, PAEC has established several high-ranking educational institutes like PIEAS, KINPOE, CHASCENT and a number of schools and colleges. On top of that, PAEC's agricultural centres are also contributing in human resource development in the field of agricultural research by offering internships and training courses as well as by conducting workshops. NIAB and NIBGE offer M.Phil and PhD programmes in the field of Biology and Biotechnology. Moreover, NIBGE is also an affiliate centre of International Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology. These institutes are contributing remarkably in human resource and socioeconomic development by imparting quality education to achieve the above SDG. Hopefully, PAEC will continue its legacy of public service through innovation and hard work. Other state institutions should also follow in PAEC's footsteps for socioeconomic development of Pakistan.

The writer is a freelance columnist. He can be reached at abdulnasir1144@gmail.com.

Achieving Sustainable Development Goals

19 Atomic Energy Cancer Hospitals

Agriculture & Biotechnology
Over 150 new crop varieties

Human Resource Development
PIEAS & Other Institutes

6 Nuclear Power Plants
Over 3550 MWh electricity to National Grid

Industrial Production & Design Support Engineering

State of the art Research Facilities
Research & Development

Celeberating Youm-e-Takbeer

25 Years of Pakistan’s Successful

Nuclear Tests



Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission
Committed to Serve the Nation