

Indian MiG jet crashes

NEW DELHI (INP): Two people died after a MiG-21 military aircraft crashed onto a house in India on Monday, police said. "Pilot has been rescued safely. The MiG crashed on a house. Two people have died. Three people have been injured," police officer Sudhir Chaudhary told after the crash in the western state of Rajasthan. The Indian Air Force (IAF) confirmed the accident and that the pilot ejected.



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Apex Court Practice, Procedure bill case SC directs AGP to submit parliamentary proceedings record

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Supreme Court on Monday directed Attorney General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan to submit the record of parliamentary proceedings pertaining to the Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Bill case by Tuesday.

The eight-member larger bench comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijaz Ul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Sayyad Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi, Justice Muhammad Ali Mazhar, Justice Ayesha A Malik, Justice Syed Hasan Azhar Rizvi and Justice Shahid Waheed heard the case.

During the course of proceedings, AGP Mansoor Usman Awan said the Federal Government and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) had filed separate petitions for the formation of a full court bench. The CJP asked the AGP whether he had submitted the record of parliamentary

proceedings. The AGP replied that his office had contacted the National Assembly Speaker's office formally and informally, and expected to receive the record by tomorrow (Tuesday).

He said only the full court could amend the rules of the apex court. It was all the more necessary as the law would also be directly applicable to the judges who were not hearing the case. Justice Naqvi asked whether such legislation had been passed in the past. The AGP replied that the President's permission was required to make the rules until 1992.

Justice Naqvi asked how could such legislation be made in the presence of Article 91. The AGP said the President's permission was withdrawn while the provision to make the rules in accordance with the Constitution and the law was retained. He stressed that the full

court bench should be formed as such a case had never come in the past. Justice Ayesha Malik said many cases filed in the court were first of their kind. The AGP said the full court did not hear all cases of judicial independence but many cases, including former CJP Iftekhar Chaudhry's case were heard by the full court.

Justice Ayesha Malik asked how could the court regulate its proceedings at the request of the petitioner. Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz counsel Barrister Salahuddin said the implementation of the law had been stopped through an injunction for the first time. He said a full court bench was constituted in the Inspectorate General of Prisons case. Subsequently, the court ordered the Attorney General to submit the record of the parliamentary proceedings by tomorrow and adjourned the case for three weeks.

Alvi okays appointment of Justice Hilali as PHC CJ

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Dr Arif Alvi has accorded his approval to the appointment of Justice Musarrat Hilali as the Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court.

The president approved her appointment under Article 175A (13) of the Constitution, President Secretariat Press Wing said in a press release on Monday. Justice Musarrat Hilali has been working as Acting Chief Justice of Peshawar High Court.

Pak-IMF loan deal delayed

ISLAMABAD (INP): Despite the assurances from friendly countries about external funds to Pakistan, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) still showing a lack of confidence and asking Islamabad to 'do more' to unlock loan programme, source said on Monday.

According to the sources, Pakistan has been asked to present a repayment plan for a \$3.7 billion loan to the IMF in June as well as need to demonstrate stronger support from friendly nations in order to meet the commitment. However, the IMF has reportedly not agreed to a proposal to exchange reserves equal to two months' revenues, which would be valued between \$11 to \$12 billion.

Sources within Ministry of Finance revealed that the government has imposed Rs. 170 billion in taxes through the mini-budget in a bid to secure a staff-level agreement with the IMF, which was originally scheduled for February 9. It is pertinent to mention here that the International Monetary Fund (IMF) issued the schedule of board meetings in which Pakistan is not included in any agenda until May 17.

Funding will also not be available from international financial institutions as the staff-level agreement is not reached, moreover, the budget-making process can be affected if transactions with the IMF are not concluded. Last month, the staff-level agreement between Pakistan and the International Monetary Fund is again 'delayed' as the international lender has put a new demand.

As per details, the meeting of Finance Secretary Hamid Yakoob in the United States remained 'unfruitful' with the International Monetary Fund as the international lender has given the plan to arrange \$1 billion from commercial banks to unlock the loan program. The staff-level agreement was supposed to be signed on February 9 but had been delayed after then over IMF's demands.

Afghan FM asks Pakistan, TTP to hold dialogue

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): As terrorism in Pakistan continues to claim innocent lives, Afghanistan's Acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi has urged Islamabad and banned militant outfit Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) to sit together for a dialogue. "It is requested that Pakistan and TTP sit together for dialogue," the Taliban-led administration's minister said while addressing an event in Islamabad on Monday.

Acknowledging Pakistan's loss while fighting against terrorism, he said: "In the last 20 years, Pakistan has lost 80,000 lives to terrorism." The minister also spoke about Afghanistan successfully achieving peace after 44 years. He added that the challenges faced by neighbouring countries Pakistan and Afghanistan are not different from one another. The minister said both countries have been through various situations and will now work together. "Pakistan and Afghanistan will have to show flexibility and move towards a brighter future," Muttaqi said.

Expressing Afghanistan's interest in maintaining economic ties with Pakistan, the minister stated: "Pakistan has always been our focus. There has been interest in economic ties with the country since the beginning." The Afghan leader said trade between the two nations continued despite political differences and hoped to continue economic relations in the future. Commenting on the significance of trade routes between the two countries, Muttaqi said: "Closure of trade routes eliminates several employment opportunities for ordinary citizens."

Muttaqi suggested that bilateral progress can increase 10 times with Pakistan's investment in Afghanistan's energy reserves. He added that both countries have been facing political and economic challenges for the last two years, but possess potential for growth. "Many problems including livelihood and unemployment can be controlled by working together," he said. The Afghan minister also spoke about maintaining excellent ties with nations including Pakistan

Iran, Turkey, Saudi Arabia and Qatar.

"We want to develop economic relations with Pakistan and Central Asia. Our foreign policy is based on dialogue and mutual relations," he said, adding that their administration's recent visits to Uzbekistan, Samarkand and Pakistan are an example of their good relations. He termed the lack of economic ties with other countries as a "major challenge". He praised Pakistan's efforts for economic prosperity and connectivity in the region. Muttaqi also said that Afghanistan's relations with Pakistan are also on cultural and religious basis. Speaking about the Taliban's government in Afghanistan, the minister said: "It has been 20 months to our government in Afghanistan."

Several problems have been overcome by the grace of Allah." Responding to a question regarding women's participation in the workforce, the Afghan minister said: "Afghan women, 1,000 women health workers, are working in various fields including. They are also currently studying in different madrassahs."

PAC seeks details of SC Justice Mazahar's assets

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) Monday instructed authorities concerned to submit the asset details of Supreme Court Justice Sayyed Mazahar Ali Akbar Naqvi.

The development comes amid the ongoing tug-of-war between parliament and the judiciary after the National Assembly last week asked the PAC to carry out a special audit of Justice Naqvi's accounts and sources of income following corruption allegations against him. Several references have been filed against Naqvi in the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) for alleged misconduct and having assets beyond means, with the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) also blaming him for being "biased" against the party.

The decision was made at a meeting of the PAC, under the chairmanship of Noor Alam Khan, with 13 out of 14 members voting in favour of summoning the details of the judge's assets. Senator Mohsin Aziz — a member of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf — was the only member who opposed the move. During the meeting, the committee chairman said he was not ready to let the allegations slide as they were of corruption. "I will not leave this matter alone as it pertains to corrup-

tion." "I will take action against my sister, daughter, and children if they are involved in corruption," he said, warning all those members who were not present in today's meeting that he would issue summons to ensure their attendance. He also warned the chief secretaries of all the provinces that he would have their warrants issued if they did not appear in the next committee meeting.

The committee chairman asked the Auditor General of Pakistan to investigate the categories of the land that the judge owns and submit a report to him. He directed authorities to submit the travel history of the SC judge. Further, the committee chairman also directed the National Database and Registration Authority to provide a list to him of the family members of the top court's judge.

Not only was the PML-N speaking against the judge, but in March, his name surfaced in connection with the recent audio leaks purportedly involving him, former Punjab chief minister Parvez Elahi, and others. A number of references have been filed to date against the top court's judge for alleged "misconduct" and for allegedly violating "the judicial code of conduct, the Constitution and

the law". Justice Qazi Faez Isa, the senior most judge of the SC after Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial, had also asked the top judge to call a meeting of the SJC to discuss the allegations against Justice Naqvi.

In a statement, former chairman Senate Senator Raza Rabbani said the PAC will be out of jurisdiction if it inquires into the matter of the wealth of an individual judge of the Supreme Court. Other matters related to the finances of the institution of the Supreme Court may be taken up by the PAC, the Pakistan Peoples Party leader suggested. "Parliament ought not to do what the law or the Constitution, 1973, does not permit it to do. It must guard strongly that it has primacy over institutions functioning under the Constitution, 1973, and its right of legislation and control over the purse strings."

The Parliament has for long abdicated its rights to the judiciary and the executive, he said, "it must stand up to defend its territory and guard its constitutional rights". All institutions functioning under the Constitution must adhere to the concept of trichotomy of power, he stressed. "The present intra-institutional crisis requires an institutional dialogue. The Parliament should take the lead."



ISLAMABAD: Minister of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan Bilawal Bhutto Zardari meeting with Ambassador and Head of the delegation of the European Union to Pakistan Dr Riina Kionka.

PM orders urgent action to end KP flour crisis

LONDON (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday ordered an inquiry into the flour crisis in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and directed urgent steps to end the crisis.

The prime minister from London contacted his advisor and President Pakistan Muslim League-N KP Engineer Amir Muqam and spoke to him on the issued relating to unavailability of flour in the province.

He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was an important part of the country like other provinces and stressed resolving the problems of the people on priority.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif also expressed his deep grief and sorrow over the demise of the former Imam (prayer leader) of Masjid-al-Nabawi Al-Sheikh Qari Muhammad Khalil.

In his condolence message, the PM expressed sympathies with the bereaved family and prayed for the high ranks of the departed soul, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

He further said that the services of the late Qari Khalil for Islam would be remembered for a long. The PM prayed for the eternal peace of the departed soul.

Martyred cop laid to rest in Bara

F.P. Report

BARA: A police soldier, martyred in militants firing at Al-Haj checkpoint, Bara district Khyber was laid to rest in his ancestral graveyard with state honor on Monday. It is to be stated that last night unknown militants waged an offense at the police check post, martyred the police troop and in retaliation managed to successfully flee of the site.

Earlier, funeral prayer of the Shaheed police personnel Naseem Khan Afridi was offered at Levies Center, Shahkas, Jamrud with state honor. Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Muhammad Ijaz, District Police Officer (DPO) Khyber Saleem Kulachi, Sector Commander, Commandant Bara Rifles, interim Provincial Minister Taj Muhammad Afridi, administrative officials, relatives of the martyred cop, elders and people from different walks of life attended the funeral rites.

The officials put floral wrath on the coffin and saluted the coffin of the deceased. Condoling with heirs of the late soldier, CCPO Ijaz Khan said that the martyred was a courageous troop who sacrificed his life in the line of duty.

The whole police department stands aside with the griefed family and blood of the deceased soldier will never be wasted, he remarked. He pledged that the culprits will be brought to law. According to reports in the recent target killing wave, scores of police officials have been martyred across Khyber.

ISPR brushes aside PTI chairman's allegations

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) on Monday brushed aside the allegations levelled by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan against a senior military officer without any evidence.

The PTI chairman had levelled highly irresponsible and baseless allegations against a serving senior military officer without any evidence, an ISPR press release said.

"These fabricated and malicious allegations are extremely unfortunate, deplorable and unacceptable. This has been a consistent pattern for the last one year wherein military

and intelligence agencies officials are targeted with insinuations and sensational propaganda for the furtherance of political objectives.

"We ask the political leader concerned to make a recourse to legal avenues and stop making false allegations. The institution reserves the right to take legal course of action against patently false and mala fide statements and propaganda," the ISPR said.

Meanwhile, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf's Secretary-General Asad Umar on Monday concurred with the military's statement asking PTI chief Imran Khan to take legal recourse instead

of levelling "baseless allegations" against the senior military official.

His statement came hours after the army came down hard on the former prime minister for his "irresponsible and fabricated allegations" against a senior serving military officer. "[The] chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has levelled highly irresponsible and baseless allegations against a serving senior military officer without any evidence," Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) Director-General Major General Ahmed Sharif Chaudhry said in a statement, as Khan continues his tirade against the establishment.

Marriyum flays Imran for hurling allegations

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb also said that the solution of the problems being faced by Pakistan lied in Imran Khan's arrest and punishment for conspiracy against the country and for his corruption. In her reaction to Imran Khan's statement, she said it appeared that "the foreign agent has seen the video of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif with the British King Charles III."

The minister opined that Imran Khan's "dirty mentality" was creating intolerance and violence in society. "The country needs food, employment and business, not fraud, mischief, disorder and distraction being promoted Imran." The minister held Imran responsible for the extremist attitudes in the country, due to which people were being killed by mobs.

She said Imran has been doing dirty politics on India and Kashmir and even using Islam for his ulterior motives. Marriyum recalled that it was Imran Khan who prayed for the victory of Modi in 2019 Indian elections. Terming him as a foreign agent, she said Imran has called for agitation and creation of chaos the time the foreign minister of China was on a Pakistan visit.

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Imran had called for riots and anarchy after watching the video of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif with King Charles III. She said when work on CPEC accelerated, the PTI chairman suffered "a bout of insanity". After Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto's successful visit to India in connection with the SCO meeting and his response to the Indian Foreign Minister, Imran Khan has completely lost his cool, she maintained.

She said Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has held meetings with world leaders including the King of Great Britain. Taking a jibe, she said Imran could not see what Shehbaz Sharif was doing because he was wearing a "black bucket" on his head. She said mobs in Pakistan have become violent because Imran had spread intolerance in the country. She said since 2013, Imran had been protesting and would continue to cry and weep on the streets in the future too. The election will definitely be held on time but Imran could not get selected as there neither Faiz nor Khosa, Saqib Nisar or Bajwa were available to facilitate him. She advised Imran to go to the courts and face cases instead of doing agitation on the streets.

LHC dismisses petition seeking Punjab Assembly's restoration

LAHORE (PPD): Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday dismissed a petition filed for the restoration of the Punjab Assembly declaring it non-maintainable. LHC judge Justice Shahid Kareem heard the petition filed earlier on Monday on an urgent basis by a citizen, Sharafat Ali. The judge threw out the petition declaring it non-maintainable. He also imposed Rs100,000 fine on the petitioner for filing a frivolous plea.

At the outset of the hearing, Justice Kareem inquired of the lawyer who was petitioner Sharafat Ali. His lawyer replied that his client was a resident of Faisalabad. The judge

asked him what his interest in the restoration of the Punjab Assembly was. The infuriated judge wondered why such unnecessary petitions were being filed in the court.

"We are dismissing this petition with a Rs100,000 fine," the judge ordered. The court also rejected the lawyer's request for revocation of the fine. Earlier, the Lahore High Court fixed a petition seeking restoration of now dissolved Punjab Assembly for hearing on an urgent basis.

The petitioner made the Government of Punjab respondent through the chief secretary. Former Punjab chief minister

Chaudhry Pervaiz Elahi has also been made party to the case. According to the petition, former CM Elahi sent his advice to the governor without fulfilling the legal requirements.

The former chief minister dropped just one liner advising the governor to dissolve the Punjab Assembly. He did not mention any reasons for the dissolution in his advice. His advice was against the constitutional requirements and the court orders, the petition stated. The petitioner pleaded with the court to declare Elahi's advice for the Punjab Assembly dissolution null and void and restore the house.



7 held for 'hiring on fake documents'

KARACHI (INP): Seven candidates have been booked for using fake documents to secure their recruitment in the Sindh Police, Special Security Unit (SSU) on Monday in Karachi.

According to media reports, the forgery came to light when the concerned officer scrutinized the documents. The Deputy Superintendent Police (DSP) SSU, Iqbal Awan, took action against the candidates and filed a case against them at the Aziz Bhatti Police Station for cheating and forgery.

According to the details, Sindh Police issued advertisement for the recruitment of Constable in SSU, which required the domicile of Sindh PRC as a mandatory condition. The successful candidates were interviewed after passing the test, and they had to submit their documents for verification. As part of the recruitment process, candidates were required to submit their documents for verification, the relevant office after the verification found the domiciles of seven candidates faked.

All of the candidates involved in the forgery have been named in the FIR, and their details have been recorded.

The forgers include Waqas, Akhtar Ali, Naem, Nabeel, Ishrat, Shahzad, and others. They have been accused of using fraudulent means to secure employment in Sindh Police. A case has been registered against the accused, and police officials have initiated an investigation.

PFA held blood donation and nutrition screening camp

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Punjab Food Authority organized a blood collection camp for patients suffering from Thalassemia. It is a genetic blood disorder that results in the production of abnormal hemoglobin, which can cause severe anemia and other health problems. The only cure for thalassemia is regular blood transfusions, which is why blood donations are essential.

On this occasion, Director General Punjab Food Authority Raja Jahangir Anwar inaugurated a blood collection camp along with a nutrition screening camp.

While addressing the Press he said that every year 5000 children suffer from this life-threatening disease.

The only possible solution to prevent the spread of the disease is to get thalassemia tested before marriage. He also met children who are suffering from Thalassemia. The children thanked the Director General of Punjab Food Authority for arranging the blood collection camp.

Officers as well as the employees working at PFA donated blood for patients. Nutritionists provided a complete diet plan to the donors to stay healthy.

Director of Blood Management Sundas Foundation Major Tariq said the donation camp by the Punjab Food Authority for thalassemia children is commendable.

LG poll victory

Murad thanks people for believing in PPP

KARACHI (PPI): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah Monday expressed his gratitude to the people of the province for reposing their confidence in the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) in local bodies elections and said that now the mayors of metropolitan and municipal corporations, including Karachi and chairmanships of other district councils would be 'Jiyalas' of Shaheed Mohterma Benazir Bhutto. "I am thankful to the people of Karachi for acknowledging the services of the PPP government in Sindh by voting it for the local bodies," he said.

Mr Shah in a statement issued from the CM House on Monday said that the people of the province have expressed confidence in Pakistan Peoples Party during the local bodies election for which he thanked them. Murad Ali Shah also extended congratulations to President Asif Ali Zardari, Chairman PPP Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and to party workers for taking a landslide victory in the local bodies election in Sindh. The chief minister said that the people from Kashmore to Karachi and Karachi to Tharparkar have voted for PPP in the local bodies election. "Your confidence in our party is the manifestation of the services our party and the government has been rendering to the people without discrimination," he said.

Mr. Shah said that the first and utmost task was the restoration of law and order in Karachi which had affected all kinds of activities, including social, educational, and business. "After the restoration of law and order, we started the reconstruction of roads, underpasses, flyovers, and stormwater drains," he said.

Murad Ali Shah said that he has been fighting for the rights of the people of the province since the NFC award, water share, census, and development projects in the federal PSDP. "Our leaders have laid their lives for the rights of the people and democracy," he said.

The CM said that during heavy rains and floods, he, his ministers, and elected representatives remained with the affected people and served them.

"We have fulfilled our promise of supporting growers in planting Rabi Crop for which financial assistance has been made for purchasing certified wheat seed," he said and added that financial assistance was being given to the people who lost their houses in the recent floods.

The CM said that Pakistan Peoples Party's 'Jiyalas' would be Mayors of Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur, Larkano, and Mirpurkhas, and the chairmen of all the district councils in the province would also be Shaheed Mohterma Benazir Bhutto's workers.

Sindh govt provides medical treatment to TV artist: Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah has said that prominent TV artist Ms. Shabiran Channa is an asset of the province, and his government would bear all the expenditures of her medical treatment.

It may be noted that Ms. Shabiran Channa sustained multiple injuries in a road accident on April 24, 2023, and the doctors have advised her surgery. The chief minister has directed the health department to make necessary arrangements for her treatment and surgery and report to him.

DC Lahore surprise visits to declare vacant houses during census

F.P. Report

LAHORE: DC Lahore Rafia Haidar is vigilant to complete the target of the census process in additional days. DC Lahore said that an extension of 15 days was extended to count every person in every house of Lahore city in the census.

She expressed these views while visiting GT, Road Manavan areas to evaluate the performance of the census team in Lahore. DC Lahore Rafia Haidar took a detailed briefing from the officials who were deployed on census duty.

DC Lahore Rafia Haidar emphasized for re-checking of houses in two blocks (26001095, 26001906) on not accounting the people in census and showed his displeasure on unsatisfactory work in those two blocks.

In the census campaign, for the first time when 06 houses were reported vacant, DC Lahore Rafia Haidar herself made sure the checking of those houses, during re-checking of houses, presence of 17 people was found in the houses which were reported as vacant. DC Lahore Rafia Haidar directed Supervisor and enumerator to complete the rechecking process in both blocks immediately and submit a report after completion.

DC Lahore Rafia Haidar strictly ordered all ACs to personally monitor the rechecking process of households in their respective areas. She directed that in the census, counting of every person and every household should be made sure. "The best census is the basis for providing the best facilities to the citizens," she further added.

PCATP clarify misinformation surrounding a news article

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Pakistan Council of Architects and Town Planners (PCATP) issued a press release to clarify and rectify the misinformation surrounding a news article published in a newspaper a few days ago.

The article wrongly implicated the Chairman of PCATP, Ar Arif Changezi in an alleged hacking attempt during the online election. Certain individuals misinterpreted and manipulated the information from a preliminary letter submitted by the FIA to the IHC, distorting it to their advantage.

To set the record straight, during the PCATP election, hackers attempted to cast 232 votes in favor of a losing candidate for the Chairman position which was foiled by the IT Co. The hackers used ID and IP addresses traced back to Lahore, which were duly confirmed by the IT Company to the election committee

before the announcement of the results on March 7, 2023.

PCATP intends to take disciplinary action, as per the bylaws, against all those responsible for spreading misinformation and making baseless allegations against the Chairman, thereby bringing disrepute to the Council.

In a letter emailed to its members and uploaded on their website, the Chairman of PCATP has urged the members to reject these false accusations and not pay any attention to the malicious campaign initiated by the losing candidates and their allies. The Chairman assures that the truth will be revealed in the court of law, as the case is currently pending for decision.

PCATP firmly reserves the right to take disciplinary and legal action against any members found to be disseminating or promoting malicious content related to this sub-judice case, whether through print or social media channels.



KARACHI: Students solving papers during the ninth class exams.

'Local body elections phase completed transparently'

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Minister of Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sindh, Sharjeel Inam Memon, addressed a press conference at the Archives Complex Clifton. He announced that the local body elections phase had been completed transparently without any adverse events throughout the province. Memon added that law enforcement agencies along with police personnel were present during the elections.

He stated the people of Sindh had expressed their full confidence in the Pakistan People's Party, which achieved triumph throughout the province. Memon said that Asif Ali Zardari, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, the leadership of the People's Party, and the Sindh government had received the public support.

The citizens of Karachi had expressed their confidence by voting for the People's Party, Memon added. He further said that the development work happening in Karachi is remarkable, featuring the construction of bridges, underpasses, and the removal of garbage, while new buses are operative, along with other development projects. Memon highlighted that it was the result of this performance that the people voted for the Pakistan People's Party.

Furthermore, Sharjeel Inam Memon said that during the SCO summit, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari went to India. Pakistan followed diplomatic values strictly, and Shah Mehmood Qureshi stated that Bilawal should go. Memon said that Bilawal Bhutto raised Pakistan's position on Samjhauta Express terrorism, including the Kashmir issue. Other leaders



of PTI criticized Bilawal Bhutto's visit, while the BJP party established the price of the Foreign Minister's head. Memon appreciated the courage and bravery of Bilawal Bhutto Zardari for presenting Pakistan's position, it was the courage and bravery of Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, who, despite the ruling party BJP putting a price on the head of the foreign minister of a country, went to Goa, India, and presented Pakistan's stance in the land of the Butcher of Gujarat.

The Sindh Information Minister accused PTI of taking funding from India and Israel. He added that PTI members criticized Bilawal Bhutto's visit to India.

Memon also said that Imran Khan's regime caused Pakistan to suffer isolation. He specified that PTI members criticize Bilawal Bhutto's visit because they want chaos in the country. Memon referred to the courts pampering Imran Khan and accused

Saqib Nisar of taking favorable decisions for him.

He said that Saqib Nisar and his son are selling PTI tickets for money. It is clear from Saqib Nisar's action that his decisions were also controversial. They demanded that their decisions should be reversed and a commission should be formed to inquire into their decisions.

He said that NAB issued notices to Imran Khan and his wife in Tosha Khana case. On which Imran Khan went to court, the notice against beloved was declared illegal and said that NAB does not have the authority to call. On this double standard of justice, who will account for those people who were in the custody of NAB for years, remained in remand for ninety days and died during imprisonment. Beloved is not acceptable under any circumstances.

He said that Justice Waqar Seth had said that NAB and FIA should inquire about BRT.

Imran Khan's statements has no credence as he is suffering from 'mental issues': Kundi

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Federal Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday said the statements of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan had no credence as he had been "suffering from mental issues after losing his backers".

Frustration in that regard was also evident from the statements of his party comrades, he said while talking to media persons and speaking at a ceremony of handing over a cheque of Rs 0.8 million grant to Paharpur Bar President Nazir Niazi at the Paharpur Bar Complex.

Referring to the local level politics, Kundi said he felt no problem in having an alliance with other political figures to achieve the socio-economic development of the district which was situated at a key geo-strategic location of the country instead of engaging in political point-scoring.

He said all the state institutions should work within their respective constitutional domains as it would help ensure political stability and promote democracy in the country.

The judiciary's job was to do speedy justice on merit, the Parliament's was to legislate and that of the armed forces to defend the country, while the politicians worked to solve the people's problems, he elaborated. Kundi said the visits of Chinese and Afghan foreign ministers to Pakistan at the invitation of Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari would have a positive impact as far as the region's socio-economic development was concerned. He alleged that Indian media and the Pakistan Tehreek-

e-Insaf (PTI) were pursuing the same anti-Pakistan agenda on the occasion of FM Bilawal's visit to India to participate in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation meeting, which was regrettable.

The minister said effective measures would be taken for the provision of facilities to the Paharpur Tehsil. He would play his due role in establishing a

sub-campus of Gomal University in the area, which was a long-standing demand of the local people, he assured.

He asked the lawyers, Tehsil Nazim and other political leaders of the area to meet the vice chancellor of Gomal University in that regard and he would also take up the matter at the higher forums in Peshawar and Islamabad.

He also highlighted the importance of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which, he said, would bring socio-economic development to the region. Kundi said he would also make efforts for setting up an office of the National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) in Paniyala Tehsil.

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT INVITATION OF BIDS

SINGLE STAGE SINGLE ENVELOPE

Sealed tender/bids on the basis of "Single Stage Single Envelops Procedure" are hereby invited for execution of the following works from eligible contractors/firms duly enlisted/register with Pakistan Engineering council (PEC) in relevant specialization technical category & financial limit Category C-6 & above is required on percentage rates basis on Pak. PWD Schedule of Rates 2022, who possess valid renewal with PEC, having renewal upto 30/06/2023.

S#	Name of Work	Approved Cost	E/Money	Tender Cost
1	Hand/pressure pumps at UCs Kandary Nawakalay, Risalpur, Aman gharh District Nowshera	Rs. 432,480/-	2% of Bid Amount	Rs.2000/-

TERMS & CONDITION FOR ISSUANCE OF TENDER DOCUMENTS:

- > Attested copy of CNIC of Owner/Authorized Representative and Valid/Renewed PEC Registration Certificate in relevant category
- > Firms/Contractors must be an active tax payers list (ATL) of FBR.
- > Valid registration with Tax Authorities i.e. NTN.
- > No litigation certificate on Attested Judicial Paper.
- > The applicant firm should have completed at-least 01-No work of similar nature in last 03-years equal to/or more than NIT amount & 01-No on-going project not less than NIT amount and documentary proof duly verified by the issuing office must be attached with the application.
- > The bidders shall submit copy of annual account/audit reports (satisfactory QCR from will Rating firm) for the last 03 years duly certified by the Chartered Accountant.
- > List of relevant equipment/machinery on judicial stamp paper & list of personnel including PEC registered Civil Engineer having experience 05 years, DAE Engineers, Supervisory staff etc.
- > All Other terms and conditions are contained in the bidding documents.
- > Submitted documents will be scrutinized by the technical/financial committee and result will be conveyed through letters.
- > The eligible/interested firms will be called for issuance of bid and non eligible firm will also be informed through letter.
- > The applicant must submit documents as per term & condition with application upto 24/05/2023.
- > The tender documents will be issued to eligible firms on 29/05/2023 & will be opened on 30/05/2023 at 2.00 PM.

Nazir Ahmad
Executive Engineer

Central Civil Division No.II, Pakistan Public Works Department
Shami road Peshawar

Phone/Fax: 091-9211471/091-9211471 Email: ccdlpwdpsh@gmail.com

PID(P) 141/23



KARACHI: A group photograph during the launching ceremony of "Thalassemia Free Pakistan" at Federation of Pakistan Chambers of commerce and industries (FPCCI) Karachi.



Govt to provide relief to rains, hailstorm affected people in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali has said that the provincial government is taking steps for provision of relief to the residents of rains and hailstorms affected districts and have put all concerned authorities on alert for combating any kind of emergency situation.

He was talking to a representative delegation from the tribal district Bajaur, which called on him under the leadership of Senator Maulana Abdul Rasheed and separate meetings with the provincial ministers Mohammad Ali Shah,

Manzoor Afridi and Rahmat Salam Khattak here in Governor's House on Monday.

During meeting they briefed the Governor regarding losses inflicted by rains and hailstorms in Bajaur, Kalam, Bahrain, Naran and Kaghan areas of the province.

The governor contacted the Caretaker Minister for Relief and Rehabilitation, Taj Mohammad Afridi and directed for taking immediate steps for rehabilitation and relief in the rains and hailstorm affected areas.

The Governor said that

he himself is monitoring the overall situation and making efforts to address all hardships of the people including in the merged districts and provision of relief to them.

Meanwhile talking to a 14-member delegation from Lower Kohistan comprising Tehsil Chairmen, Maulana Fazal Wahab, Rahmatullah and Qari Masoom Khan, the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa assured that the provincial government will allocate hefty amount for the progress and development of the far-flung and backward areas including Kohistan.



PESHAWAR: Delegation of newly elected cabinet members of POWA KP with Chief Justice, Peshawar High Court, Justice Musarrat Hillali.

Fatimid Foundation observes Thalassaemia Day

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Fatimid Foundation has observed International Thalassaemia Day in which patients, their parents and organization working for awareness were present during the ceremony.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Irrigation Haji Fazal Elahi was the chief guest while Arif Yousaf Advocate, Abdur Rauf Rohila Advocate were also present on the occasion.

Chief Guest appreciated Fatimid Foundation for serving humanity since decades.

He added that observance of 8th May as International Thalassaemia Day as solidarity with children suffering from genetic disease.

Screening tests stressed for controlling thalassaemia

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Hamza Welfare Thalassaemia Hospital Peshawar observed World Thalassaemia Day while participant stressed upon screening test to curtail the disease, on Monday. Chairman Hamza foundation Ijaz Ali Khan, medical director Tariq, thalassaemia patients along with parent and large number of civil society members were present on the occasion. The participants stressed that screening and diagnosing tests of thalassaemia is need of hour to control spread of thalassaemia in young generation. The observance of 8th May as International Thalassaemia Day as solidarity with children suffering from genetic disease.

PTI pursuing particular agenda against country

PESHAWAR (INP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi has stated that PTI is pursuing a particular agenda against the national interests, adding, Imran Khan's political agenda stood for

ruining Pakistani society, institutions, and economy. Replying to another question, he said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership now only wished to return to Parliament.

Kundi lauded Young Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's visit to India "more successful than expectation" as he forcefully presented the case of Kashmiris at the international forum.

"FM" insistence on implementation of the United Nations resolutions is encouraging", he said

while talking to a private news channel.

He further said that due to Pakistan's strong stand on the issue of the region, India's negative propaganda has been exposed. Kundi said that the foreign minister not only adopted a firm stand on the key issues of conflict between India and Pakistan but also highlighted the centrality of the Kashmir dispute and his country's demand that the Modi government should revoke all the illegal actions it had taken after 5th August 2019.

Passenger with fake ID offloaded

PESHAWAR (APP): The FIA Immigration on Monday offloaded a passenger with fake identity from a flight bound for Belgium.

According to the FIA, a passenger named Javed who was onboard the flight (QR601) for Belgium was offloaded for having a fake resident card of Belgium. The passenger was also having a fake Croatian passport, identity card and driving license.

The passenger was taken into custody and shifted to Anti-Human Trafficking Circle Peshawar for further interrogation and legal procedure.

Dry weather to prevail in most KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Monday predicted mainly dry and partly cloudy weather is expected over most districts of the province.

However, it said an isolated rain-wind/thunderstorm is likely to occur over Kohistan, Torgar, Battagram, Mansehra and

Abbottabad districts.

During the last 24 hours mainly partly cloudy weather prevailed over most districts of the province. However, rain-wind/thunderstorm occurred in Swat, Chitral, Buner, Lower & Upper Dir, Bajaur, Abbottabad, Mansehra, Kohistan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Kohat, Mohmand and Khyber districts.



PESHAWAR: Traffic police removing black sheets from vehicle windows during crackdown against black glasses.

CJ PHC administer oath from POWA cabinet

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A delegation of newly elected cabinet members of Prosecution Officers Welfare Association (POWA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa called on Chief Justice, Peshawar High Court, Justice Musarrat Hillali on Monday. Chief Justice Peshawar High Court administered the oath to the newly elected body of Association.

Newly elected President (POWA) Sangeen Shah District Public Prosecutor extended his gratitude to her ladyship and thanked for sparing time for the association. He also shared matters of common interest relating to the prosecution department throughout KP.

Chief Justice congratulated to the new office bearers of Prosecution Officers Welfare Association (POWA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and desired their effective role in dispensation of justice system. Her ladyship also assured that issues relating to the prosecution department will be looked after in coordination with all stakeholders.

POWA delegation calls on PHC CJ

PESHAWAR (APP): A delegation of newly elected cabinet members of Prosecution Officers Welfare Association (POWA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa called on Chief Justice, Peshawar High Court, Justice Musarrat Hillali here Monday.

The Chief Justice administered the oath to the newly elected body of Association. Sangeen Shah, District Public Prosecutor newly elected President (POWA) extended his gratitude to her ladyship and thanked for sparing time for the association.

He also shared matters of common interest relating to the prosecution department throughout KP.

The Chief Justice congratulated to the new office bearers of Prosecution Officers Welfare Association Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and desired their effective role in dispensation of justice system.

She also assured that issues relating to the prosecution department will be looked after in coordination with all stockholders.

Surge in prices of chicken irks Peshawarties

PESHAWAR (APP): The recent surge in prices of chicken here Monday irked the residents of Peshawar and demanded the provincial government to control its prices and ensure availability of the commodity to consumers at officially approved rate.

The survey at chickens and broilers market at Bacha Khan Chowk conducted by this scribe revealed that prices of chicken per kilogram have increased to record Rs425 per kilogram today against yesterday's prices of Rs330kg in open markets that displeased customers.

"I came to Peshawar with a hope to purchase 10 chickens for a party at home but was astonished to hear its prices soared to record Rs425kg today," said Professor Ehtisham Qasir of the Wapda Town Nowshera while talking to APP.

He said it was the responsibility of district administration to control prices of chickens, eggs and meat in local markets as the commodities were going beyond reach of the common man.

The consumers urged the provincial government to direct the price magistrates to visit chicken markets and ensure sale and purchase of the commodity at the government's prescribed rate.

Masat Khan, a local chicken dealer, said that shortage of the commodity due to last year devastating flood had caused an increase of chicken in the open market. He said the prices of chicken fodder and other expenses have also contributed to rise of prices of chickens at Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Mardan and Swabi districts.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan leading awareness walk against drug abuse organized by Excise, Taxation and Narcotics Control Department.

PHC orders to implement uniform rate for medical tests

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Shakeel Ahmad ordered to implement uniform fees for different tests at medical laboratories and directed to submit detail report in Contempt of Court (COC) petition, on Monday.

Unfortunately, every laboratory has fixed their own fees for medical tests, Justice Shakeel Ahmad observed. PHC has granted judgement in 2019 to fixed

uniform rates for medical tests and ordered to ensure its implementation but after three years every laboratory charging patients as per their own will without hesitation, Saifullah Mohib Kakakhel advocate argued.

The petitioner further added that laboratories across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa charging patients with different fees for similar tests while several outlets are looting citizen with both hands which has created problems for patients.

The respondents had submitted reply stated that

no actions have been taken in this regard while the petition was placed unnecessary with Drug Regulatory and Kidney Transplant petition and order sheet didn't directed implementation of uniform fees for medical tests, Saifullah Mohib advocate argued.

The petitioner argued to frame charges under COC against respondents while PHC ordered implementation of court's order and directed to submit detail report in this regard, adjourned further hearing till date to be fix by the office.

Faiq calls for unleashing potential of youth

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chairman, Amun Taraqqi Party (ATP) Muhammad Faiq Shah has called for effectively unleashing the potential of youth and abundant natural resources to pull the country out from prevailing economic turmoil and tackle the other challenges.

Shah while speaking at a workers convention organized by the party's youth wing here on Monday termed the youth force as

the major source of the country's development which should be exploited with optimal level.

He said his party has proposed a holistic program to utilize the youth skills for their betterment and prosperous future.

Implementation of the proposal should be made so that it will stop rising 'brain drain' of the skilled-full youth from the country, he stressed.

On the occasion, the ATP central and provincial

leaders, youth activists and students of various educational institutions and others were present in a large number.

He urged the youth and intellectuals to come forward and jointly sort out solutions to the problems that were being faced by the country as whole.

Commenting on the prevailing political scenario, Faiq remarked that the incumbent rulers have put the country at stake to just stay in power.



PESHAWAR: Representatives of Fatimid Foundation presenting a shield to Provincial Minister Haji Fazal Elahi on eve of International Thalassaemia Day.

PDMA finalizing Monsoon Contingency Plan for 2023

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the guidance of the Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Department is finalizing the Monsoon Contingency Plan for 2023 in consultation with all stakeholders to identify potential monsoon hazards, vulnerabilities, risks, and resource mapping to minimize disaster risks.

The stakeholders include the district administration, provincial and federal line departments, and humanitarian partners, said the spokesman on Monday.

The plan takes into account lessons learned from previous incidents and aims to reduce the impact of disasters, protecting the lives and livelihoods of the people in the province.

The contingency plan for 2023 aims to mitigate the potential impact of floods by incorporating lessons learned from the 2022 floods. It includes improved early warning systems, streamlined evacuation procedures, and better communication channels.

Additionally, it emphasizes the importance of community engagement.

A final pre-planning orientation meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Secretary Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Department, Abdul Basit. Representatives from district administration, provincial and Federal line departments and humanitarian partners participated in this meeting and provided feedback to make a comprehensive plan.

On this occasion Secretary Relief Abdul Basit said that the Relief Department is responsible for formulating policies, strategies, and guidelines for Relief, Rehabilitation, and Emergency activities in the province. PDMA, Rescue 1122, and Civil Defense are the attached formations of the RR&S Department to implement the mandate of Disaster Risk Management activities in the province.

The department will ensure the strengthening of the ADC Relief position. Rescue teams will have pre-visits to the vulnerable

areas for community awareness, early warning systems and to identify the vulnerable areas prior to the disaster.

The Director-General PDMA Janat Gul Afridi said that the PDMA has assigned roles and responsibilities for each department in the monsoon plan and developed tools for data collection that have been shared with all stakeholders.

The process of Monsoon Contingency Planning started in mid-March 2023 and the contingency plan is expected to be developed by the end of May, 2023.

Tools for data collection are being developed and shared with all stakeholders, including information regarding district/sector-specific hazards and vulnerability profiles, hazard impact, damages, compensation paid, resource mapping, need assessment and coordination.

Director DRM Muhammad Admin stated that natural hazards and subsequent disasters cause significant losses to people's lives and livelihoods.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

faced substantial financial and human losses due to floods in 2022 which were caused by abnormal monsoon conditions.

The Monsoon in 2022 began with an above-normal forecast, and the situation became similar to that of the 2010 floods. Subsequently, 17 districts were declared calamity-hit due to Floods 2022, resulting in significant loss of life and property. Due to the better strategy and presence of the Disaster Risk Management system in the province, more than 400,000 people were evacuated to safe places.

He added that The Monsoon Contingency Plan will categorize the districts' vulnerability and risk assessment into very high, high, medium, and low categories.

PDMA spokesperson Taimur Ali said that the Authority has installed a flood Early Warning System (EWS) in the upper catchment areas, which has been set up on seven locations on main five rivers and two Nullahs of the province to alert people of any impending danger.



In brief

Donors Conference held F.P. Report

BUNER: The Chief of Tehrek Nounjawan Pakistan Abdullah Gul son of late general Hamed Gul chaired the Al Khidmat donors conference was held here at UoB auditorium in Swari Buner. On the occasion donors donated rupees 50 millions on spot. The donors conference was attended by the organization KPK chief Khalid Waqas 2nd chief Dr. Abdul Malik Buner district chief Shah Room JI Amier Haleem Bacha Dr Fazal Azem Bakht Jihan Khan and others key donors largely. The speakers shared Al Khidmat was providing services to orphan persons with disabilities patients marginalized segments of the society in different sectors and help them bringing into main stream to live with pride like other persons besides supporting families and individuals affected God and man-made disasters. At the end joint pray offered for progress prosperity and peace in Pakistan.

Five employees suspended F.P. Report

MARDAN: A video of hair cutting in the dialysis ward of Mardan Medical Complex Hospital (MMC) went viral on social media. In the video, a barber is allegedly seen cutting the hair of an official while the patients are lying helpless in the ward. After the video went viral, the hospital director suspended five ward officials and set up a four-member committee for investigation. Last night, a barber was cutting the hair of an official in the dialysis ward of Mardan Medical Complex. Someone made a video of it and made it viral on social media and WhatsApp groups. In the video, the official is seen sitting on a chair in the premises adjacent to the ward. And a barber is busy doing his hair. The video also shows the plight of the patients in the ward who are looking helpless. The video went viral. So, the citizens started various comments on it. Director of the hospital, Dr. Tariq Mehmood, took notice of the incident and ordered an investigation into the incident by suspending the two technicians of the said ward, Hamid Rehman, nurse Safia, ward boy Noman and sweeper Wahid Baz. And formed an investigation committee consisting of Admin Manager Dr. Farhan Akram, Dr. Zahid Shah, Dr. Adnan Akhtar and Nurse Director Mehrul Nisaa which will complete the investigation and submit a report within three days.

Arms smuggling bid foiled F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: A bid of smuggling of arms and ammunition from Afghanistan to Pakistan was foiled here at Pak-Afghan sharing border, Torkham last evening. The custom appraisal official, Torkham center said that on tip-off the custom officials stopped a suspected truck loaded import commodity (coal) bearing registration no.C-8782 for examination at terminal. During search 88 12 bore guns made of Turkey and Russia and 600 cartridges were recovered from the vehicles concealed in various cavities of the it. Allegedly arms smugglers, truck driver identified as Abdul Qader, resident of Afghanistan was apprehended and put behind the bars for investigation, the official informed. Case was also lodged against him under the custom Act 1969. On the other hand the custom officials on the direction of their highup further tightened the checking process at the import terminal in Torkham.

BISP providing financial assistance to marginalized families

F.P. Report

MURREE: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety (PA&SS) and Chairperson Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP), Ms. Shazia Marri has said that the BISP is providing financial assistance to the marginalized families of Pakistan.

She stated this while presiding over the three-day first annual National Social Protection Conference organized by the BISP in support of the German cooperation Organization GIZ being held at Murree from 8-10 May, 2023. The conference brought together social protection experts, representatives of international organizations, and other stakeholders to discuss various social protection initiatives and programmes in Pakistan. The World Bank representative and German Ambassador also addressed the conference via video-link.

Addressing the opening session, Ms. Shazia Marri said that the BISP is contributing towards the better health of infants and their mothers belonging from poor households. Moreover, it is also providing educational stipend to needy children, which resulted in an increase in the enrollment of children in schools. The Benazir Income Support Programme continues to be a beacon of hope for millions of underprivileged families across the country, she added.

Ms. Marri also expressed her gratitude to the World Bank, GIZ, ADB, UNICEF, and other development partners for their financial and technical assistance. She informed that BISP is providing financial support to 9 million poorest families, which is around 24% of the total population in Pakistan. She mentioned that despite these efforts there is still a huge gap and a large number of people suffering from poverty are still looking towards the government for financial assistance.

The Chairman of NADRA, along with representatives of other international organizations, also participated in the conference. He commended Benazir Income Support Programme for proving itself as a successful and transparent social protection programme in the world.

Wheat stock in Dir near to end, fear local traders

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Local traders on Monday feared the wheat crisis would worsen if the government, its food department and the administration did not take practical measures to provide enough stock to the district. Majidullah, a local traders' leader, told local journalists that due to shortage of the commodity, its prices had gone to Rs 3500 per 20 kg bag.

He said the existing stock of wheat in the district was enough for only three to five days and the consumers would have no wheat if the matter was not taken seriously. The trader said that hurdles were being created in supply of wheat flour from Punjab while the people were unable to purchase the commodity at exorbitant rates. He said the traders' body would observe a complete shutdown and wheel jam strike if the district was not provided with enough stock within the next three days.

Rain water: Local residents and shopkeepers on Monday complained that

rain water in front of the district headquarters hospital Timergara stood on the main road due to choked drainage system and closure of culverts. Talking to local journalists they pointed out the road from the hospital to the Mian Banda area presented an ugly look as rain water stood on it. They said that eight of the culverts were closed and the tehsil municipal administration did nothing to resolve the issue.

The residents and shopkeepers said that motorists, pedestrians, government employees and students faced misery while passing on the road that looked like a water pond. They said the tehsil chairman Mufti Irfan, TMO Kashif Khan, assistant director local government Nizam Durrani and additional assistant commissioner Tariq Khan had visited the venue after people protested took to the streets a few days ago but the problem was yet to be solved.

The tehsil chairman Mufti Irfan told local journalists that some influential people had blocked the way of rainwater. He said

that it was the responsibility of the district administration and authorities of the national highways authority (NHA) to intervene in the matter and resolve it. He said the TMA staff could only perform cleanliness duties and they could not open the choked drains and culverts.

Hailstorm: The farmers belonging to various localities of Talash on Monday demanded the government and district administration to properly compensate the affected farmers as their standing crops and fruit orchards had been damaged by the hailstorm here the other day.

Talking to local journalists the farmers said that torrential rains coupled with heavy hailstorm destroyed the standing crop of wheat in various parts of the Dushkhel, Noorakhel, Bandagai and Shahikhel union councils. They said the district administration should send its teams to assess the damages while the government should declare the area as a calamity hit and announce a special package for the affected farmers.



HYDERABAD: Students solving papers during annual SSC examination at a school.

JI hold protest against devaluation of currency

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The local chapter of Jamaat-i-Islami on the call of its central chief Sirajul Haq staged a protest rally against the government failure to control inflation and lawlessness in the country. Dozens of the JI workers gathered at the Ahyal Uloom in Balambat and marched on the road on foot.

Carrying banners and placards inscribed with slogans against the current price hike the protesters reached the Gorgorai Chowk. They blocked the road for vehicular traffic for some time and chanted slogans against the government. The rally was addressed by the JI district chief Izazul Mulk Afkari, general secretary engineer Yaqub ur Rehman, JI nominated candidate for PK 15 Shad Nawaz Khan, president Anjuman Tajiran Timergara Haji Anwarud Din and others. They said

the price hike and devaluation of Pakistani currency had forced poor people to commit suicide.

They said the customers were unable to purchase wheat flour, sugar, rice, pulses, medicines and petroleum products due to their exorbitant prices. The speakers said that lawlessness reigned the country and no one was secure. They condemned the frequent target killings in parts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and said the government had failed to fulfill its responsibility. The speakers criticized both the Pakistan Democratic Movement and the Pakistan Tehreek Insaf for the mess and said that they had nothing to do for the nation.

The JI leaders said the government had been doing nothing to control inflation and they had left the country on the mercy of the International Monetary Fund and other world financial institutions. They said

the JI would continue its protest against the price hike as no other party dared to raise voice for the poor people.

Moreover, JI nominated candidate for PK 13 and former MNA Sahibzada Yaqub Khan told local journalists that they would launch a protest campaign against the authorities of the irrigation department if water was not released in the Balambat Irrigation Channel soon. The former lawmaker said that standing crops and fruit orchards were drying up as the channel had no irrigation water for the last one year. He said the floods had affected a 50 feet area of the channel but the government and the irrigation department had failed to repair it.

The JI leader said that the water tap under the ground had also lowered due to the closure of this channel and the residents were forced to fetch drinking water from distant places.



MURREE: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety and Chairperson BISP Shazia Marri addressing during a conference.

Four killed including minor girl in two incidents Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: As many as three killed while other 18 injured as passenger van plunges in to the ravine in the far away area of Penori Tehsil Kabal, district Swat.

The passengers of a flying coach from the hilly area of Pinorai in Shah Dherei police station were killed in an accident near Kamiya bridge. Two people, Khan Talab, son of Khan Jan Pinorai, and Shir Zaman, son of Fam Jan, died on the spot while the driver Khizar along with 8 women, 18 people were injured, including children.

According to the source, two of the wounded are in a critical condition. According to a source three people died in the accident and 18 were injured, while Hospital confirmed that two people died and 18 were injured. According to the information source, the accident happened due to brake failure of the flying coach.

As soon as the accident was reported, the rescue team, a volunteer official and police reached the place where they took part in the rescue activities and the injured were rushed to the hospital while in the accident. The wreckage of the vehicle was pulled out of a deep ditch.

While in another incident, a woman was killed when the roof of a house collapsed in Dhiran Pate Tehsil Matta and a girl was injured. According to the police report, a roof collapsed due to heavy rain and killed and four years old daughter were injured. Local people and police arrived on time and the girl was taken to Matta Hospital for treatment.

In another incident the roof collapsed and the wood house of Pir Mohammad collapsed due to the rains, under which a two-year-old girl fell, and the girl died from falling under the debris. The house was completely destroyed.

Pak-Afghan route blocked in protest F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Landi Kotal-Torkham highway was suspended for all kinds of traffic against arrest of former laborers leaders under 3 Maintenance Public Order (MPO) here on Monday.

Carrying black flags, under the banner of Nujawanane Qabail large number of people gathered at Landi Kotal-Torkham road, put stones and organized sit-in on it. Addressing on the occasion those who led the protest including Saeed Shainwari, Islam Shinwari and others categorically condemned the detention of the Farman Shinwari and Akhtar Muhammad under the 3 MPO by the administration and said elites of the laborers were allegedly unfairly teased to confine voice for the rights of manual workers in Torkham.

They added that anti-laborers policies were adopted at the Torkham border to deprive the poor people of earning three times meals for them. The protestors threatened that till release of the detainees and relaxation on laborers movement.

IGP orders community policing to ensure peace

F.P. Report

WANA: Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur visited Lower South Waziristan and addressed Darbar while directed community policing to ensure sustainable peace, on Monday.

IGP was welcomed by senior police officers including DPO South Waziristan Shabbir Hussain Marwat and DC Lower South Waziristan Mohammad Nasir Khan on his arrival. Waziristan Police presented a salute and the officers presented flower bouquets.

SP Investigation Fazal Subhan, DSP HQ Wana Nadir Khan and SP CTD Izhar Shah were also present on the occasion, DSP Nadir Khan wore a traditional tribal turban. IGP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa distributed checks to police heirs under Police Martyrs Package and promised to continue all possible cooperation with them and planted sapling in DPO Wana office in connection with a tree planting campaign.

Earlier, DPO South Waziristan Shabbir Hussain Marwat welcomed IGP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and thanked him for visiting Wana in adverse conditions, the DPO while briefing the IGP PK said that some police stations in Waziristan are in the final stages of completion and work on some is going on

fast.

On this occasion, IGP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Akhtar Hayat Khan Gandapur while addressing a large gathering of police officers and officials in AC Wana Jirga Hall said, that the police of Waziristan bravely fought against terrorism in very difficult situations and made the country proud by sacrificing their lives and work is going on rapidly to bring new reforms in the police of the merged districts, and efforts are being made to provide them with all kinds of facilities. A large number of officers and personnel of various units of the South Waziristan Lower and Upper Police units participated in the Darbar.

Addressing the participants of the Darbar, IGP Akhtar Hayat Khan said that rule of law and justice and the welfare of the police force are our top priorities, Security forces and line forces agencies have sacrificed a lot for the establishment of peace and harmony in the area and their services will always be remembered.

The eternal sacrifices of the police of the tribal districts including South Waziristan will always be remembered, the police of South Waziristan will be equipped with modern facilities, all the work in the police will be done on merit. Chief of Police of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while addressing the police

court/Darbar said that we can never forget the eternal sacrifices of the police of South Waziristan and tribal districts.

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Police Force has made a golden history by sacrificing its present for the bright future of the country and the nation, from the rank of constable to the IG rank in the war against terrorism.

However, patience should not be lost at any point, no lapse in providing services to the public will be tolerated and he said that all his resources will be used for the welfare of the police force personnel. The police department will take steps in every forum to provide the best educational facilities to the children of the police, equal health facilities will be provided to the police personnel and their families.

He said that financial assistance will be given to the daughters of police officers on the occasion of their marriage, providing equal opportunities for advancement to every police officer and officials under the system of service structure and development system prevailing in the force including the merged tribal districts will go. On this occasion officers and officials presented their individual and collective problems in the police court, the IGP after listening to all their problems carefully issued immediate orders to solve the problems.

Research-driven emergency preparedness vital to tackle climatic hazards

F.P. Report

GILGIT: Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA), Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik has termed the scientific and research-driven emergency preparedness modules and mock exercises to strengthen resilience against climatic hazards and tourism security during emergencies in Gilgit Baltistan.

This was stated by him while addressing first-ever workshop of NDMA's National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) held on local needs and gaps analysis in Gilgit on Monday.

The workshop was aimed to assess the region's disaster management needs

and find solutions to its gaps for emergency preparedness. Vice-chancellors of Karakoram International University (KIU) and University of Baltistan, Sakardu (UOBS) along with their head of departments, members of faculty, DG GBDMA, students, NGOs, government departments, and members of the Armed Forces participated in the session.

Lt General Inam Haider Malik also highlighted the role of community awareness, education, and engagement through multiple communication channels, private partners, and regional NGOs. The Chairman NDMA also responded to questions of participants and acknowledged to incorporating the

session's recommendations into national Preparedness and Response System. He also suggested coordination with global universities and think tanks to facilitate knowledge sharing, experiences and best practices related to disaster management.

Inam Haider said that through proactive approaches for disaster preparedness and response planning, we can ensure that every community in Pakistan is equipped to handle any crisis that may arise. He reaffirmed NDMA's commitment to multi-hazard preparedness nationwide and spirit of cooperation among all stakeholders for a disaster-resilient Pakistan.



QUETTA: A view of accumulated sewerage water on double road.



SUV driver hits crowd at Texas bus stop; seven dead

BROWNSVILLE, Texas (AP): An SUV slammed into a crowd of people waiting for a bus outside a migrant shelter in the border city of Brownsville, Texas, killing at least seven people and injuring at least 10, police said as they prepared to arrest the hospitalized driver. With no bench at the unmarked city bus stop, some of the victims were sitting on the curb around 8:30 a.m. when the driver hit them, surveillance video from the Bishop Enrique San Pedro Ozanam Center showed. Brownsville police investigator Martin Sandoval said police did not know whether the collision was intentional.

Shelter director Victor Maldonado said the SUV ran up the curb, flipped and continued moving for about 200 feet (60 meters). Some people walking on the sidewalk about 30 feet (9 meters) from the main group were also hit, Maldonado said. Witnesses detained the driver as he tried to run away and held him until police arrived, he said. "This SUV, a Range Rover, just ran the light that was about 100 feet (30 meters) away and just went through the people who were sitting there in the bus stop," said Maldonado, who reviewed the shelter's surveillance video. Victims struck by the vehicle were waiting for the bus to return to downtown Brownsville after having spent the night at the overnight shelter, said Sister Norma Pimentel, executive director of Catholic Charities of the Rio Grande Valley.

Most of the victims were Venezuelan men, Maldonado said. Brownsville has seen a surge of Venezuelan migrants over the last two weeks for unclear reasons, authorities said. At least 4,000 of about 6,000 migrants in Border Patrol custody in Texas' Rio Grande Valley were Venezuelan. The driver was taken to the hospital for injuries sustained when the car rolled over, Sandoval said. There were no passengers in the car, and police didn't immediately know the driver's name or age, Sandoval said. Sandoval said there are three possible explanations for the collision: "It could be intoxication; it could be an accident; or it could be intentional. In order for us to find out exactly what happened, we have to eliminate the other two. "He's being very uncooperative at the hospital, but he will be transported to our city jail as soon as he gets released," Sandoval said. "Then we'll fingerprint him and (take a) mug shot, and then we can find his true identity." Police retrieved a blood sample and sent it to a Texas Department of Public Safety lab to test for intoxicants.

The surge in the number of migrants this week has prompted Brownsville commissioners to indefinitely extend a declaration

of emergency during a special meeting. "We don't want them wandering around outside," Pedro Cardenas, a city commissioner, said after the crash. "So, we're trying to make sure they're as comfortable as they can be so they don't have to go out and look for anywhere else." Brownsville has long been an epicenter for migration across the US-Mexico border, and it has become a key location of interest for next week's end to pandemic-era border restrictions known as Title 42. The Ozanam shelter is the only overnight shelter in the city and manages the release of thousands of migrants from federal custody. Maldonado said the center had not received any threats before the crash, but they did afterward. "I've had a couple of people come by the gate and tell the security guard that the reason this happened was because of us," Maldonado said. About 2,500 migrants have crossed through the river daily into Brownsville in the past few days, Cardenas said. He said the Border Patrol is aware of the city's capacity of 1,000 at their processing area near the crossing point and a downtown building where city employees and volunteers guide migrants on how to purchase bus or plane tickets to their final destinations. The city is considering expanding services to accommodate needs in the coming days, Cardenas said.

While 80% of people released from federal custody leave the same day, the city's emergency management official said, a bottleneck has formed over the past few days. "Most of the people coming across don't want to stay in Brownsville, but we don't have enough buses for them to buy their ticket to leave," Cardenas said. "Some are waiting for family members." The Ozanam shelter can hold 250, but many who arrive leave the same day. In the last several weeks, an uptick in border crossings prompted the city to declare an emergency as local, state and federal resources coordinated enforcement and humanitarian response. "In the last two months, we've been getting 250 to 380 a day," Maldonado said. While the shelter offers migrants transportation during the week, they also use the city's public transportation. Rochelle Garza, president of the Texas Civil Rights Project, said in a statement shared: "I hope that today serves as a wake up call, and that state officials will begin investing in a humanitarian response that might have helped the people who were impacted by this morning's tragedy." US Rep. Vicente González said that local officials are in communication with the federal government about the crash.

Congo floods: Digging through mud to find relatives

DR CONGO (BBC): Nearly 400 bodies have been retrieved following floods and landslides that hit two villages in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo last week.

The authorities had previously said 200 people had died following torrential rainfall. In several villages close to the shore of Lake Kivu, people have been digging through the mud with their hands in a desperate search for missing relatives.

The Congolese Red Cross volunteers do not have body bags. They are having to pile up the bodies wrapped up in blankets in the villages of Bushushu and Nyamukubi in South Kivu province. It is now three days since the floods hit and the number of dead keeps rising, now standing at 394. One distraught mother in Nyamukubi said her husband had survived and was in hospital but all her children were gone. "It's like the end of the world,"

27-year-old Gentille Ndagijimana, who also lost her parents and two sisters, told the AFP news agency.

Homes made of wooden planks with corrugated iron roofs were swept away. In Bushushu village some of the buildings that are still standing are half buried in the mud. Last week also saw floods across the other side of Lake Kivu in neighbouring Rwanda where more than 130 people were killed. UN chief António Guterres said the floods were another illustration of accelerating climate change.

Sudan residents describe raids, evictions by RSF soldiers

KHARTOUM (Agencies): When two Rapid Support Forces (RSF) soldiers stormed Nadir el-Gadi's home in Khartoum on April 23, they demanded to know which side of the Sudan conflict he supported - the RSF or the Sudanese army. The 77-year-old responded that he wasn't with either side. "I said we are against this war. We are prisoners of this war," el-Gadi told Al Jazeera.

"They were suspicious," el-Gadi said, adding that the soldiers claimed they were there to see if he was hiding enemy soldiers. "They said, 'Are you sure there is nobody in this house?'" The soldiers eventually left, and el-Gadi was unharmed, but others had not been so lucky. The RSF has reportedly raided hundreds of homes, often evicting and assaulting residents or looting their belongings - sometimes both. The raids are part of a broader trend that has seen the RSF embed itself in residential areas by turning apartments and even hospitals into military outposts, according to activists, witnesses and rights groups. Before el-Gadi's home was raided, his nephew had informed him that he was fleeing to Egypt with other relatives. He urged his uncle to come, but el-Gadi, a British-Sudanese national, said he was on a list of evacuees and expected the United Kingdom's government to evacuate him within the week.

Shaken by the RSF soldiers, he called his nephew back to let him know he had changed his mind and wanted to go. "Our nephew told us it wasn't safe for us to stay [at home] anymore," el-Gadi said. "[My nephew] sent us an experienced driver, and we left our house with two small bags." In the first days after the clashes between RSF fighters and the Sudanese army started on April 15, many people fled Sudan's capital of Khartoum and later learned that RSF fighters had looted or occupied their homes. Sara Awad recalled calling her neighbours on the 10th day of the conflict. She was told that RSF fighters looted everything and took control of the apartment building she was living in. The 38-year-old filmmaker's apartment was close to the fighting, so she didn't have time to pack. She grabbed essential documents and a change of clothes and fled - leaving behind the rest of her belongings, including her camera and cat. "I thought the fighting would stop in a couple of days and that it would return back to normal," she said.

Japan leader expresses sympathy for Korean colonial victims

SEOUL (AP): Japan's prime minister expressed sympathy for the suffering of Korean forced laborers during Japan's colonial rule, as he and his South Korean counterpart renewed their resolve to overcome historical grievances and strengthen cooperation in the face of shared challenges such as North Korea's nuclear program.

Comments by Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida during his summit with South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol - their second meeting in less than two months - were closely watched in South Korea, where many still harbor strong resentment against Japan's 1910-45 colonial occupation of the Korean Peninsula. Yoon has faced domestic criticism that he had preemptively made concessions to Tokyo without getting corresponding steps in return. Kishida's statement, which avoided a new, direct apology over the colonization but still sympathized with the Korean victims, suggests he felt pressure to say something to maintain momentum for an effort to improve ties.

"And personally, I have strong pain in my heart as I think of the extreme difficulty and sorrow that many people had to suffer under the severe environment in those days," Kishida told a joint news conference with Yoon, referring to the Japanese colonial period. He said he believes "it is my responsibility as prime minister of Japan to cooperate with" Yoon to forge stronger relations.

Kishida arrived in South Korea for a two-day visit, which reciprocates a mid-March trip to Tokyo by Yoon and marks the first exchange of visits between the leaders of the Asian neighbors in 12 years. The back-to-back summits were largely meant to resolve the countries' bitter disputes caused by the 2018 court rulings in South Korea that ordered two Japanese companies to financially compensate some of their aging former Korean employees for colonial-era forced labor. Japan has refused to abide by the verdicts, arguing that all compensation issues were already settled when the two countries normalized ties in 1965. The wrangling led to the countries downgrading each other's trade status and Seoul's previous liberal government threatening to spike a military intelligence-sharing pact. Their strained ties complicated US efforts to build a stronger regional alliance to better cope with rising Chinese influence and North Korean nuclear threats.

In March, however, Yoon's conservative government took a major step toward mending the ties by announcing it would use local funds to compensate the forced labor victims without demanding contributions from Japanese companies. Later in March, Yoon traveled to Tokyo to meet with



Kishida, and the two agreed to resume leadership-level visits and other talks. Their governments have since taken steps to withdraw their economic retaliatory steps. Yoon's push, however, drew strong backlash from some of the forced labor victims and his liberal rivals at home, who have demanded direct compensation from the Japanese companies. Yoon has defended his move, saying greater cooperation with Japan is required to jointly tackle North Korea's advancing nuclear program, the intensifying US-China strategic rivalry and global supply chain challenges. "We should stay away from a thinking that we must not make a step forward because our history issues aren't settled completely," Yoon said. He said that 10 out of the 15 former forced laborers or their families involved in the 2018 rulings had accepted compensation under Seoul's third-party reimbursement plan.

Kishida said: "I'm struck by the fact that many people, despite their painful memories from the past, opened their hearts for the future as measures by the South Korean government related to (the fund) move forward." Kishida also reaffirmed his government upholds the positions of previous Japanese administrations on the colonization issue, including the landmark 1998 joint declaration by Tokyo and Seoul, but didn't make a new apology. In that declaration, then-Japanese Prime Minister Keizo Obuchi said: "I feel acute remorse and offer an apology from my heart" over the colonial rule. Japanese governments have expressed remorse or apologies over the colonial period numerous times. But some Japanese officials and politicians have occasionally made comments that have been accused of whitewashing Tokyo's wartime aggressions, prompting Seoul to urge Tokyo to make new, more sincere apologies.

Ahead of his summit with Yoon, Kishida and his wife, Yuko Kishida, visited the national cemetery in Seoul, where they burned incense and paid a silent tribute before a memori-

al. Buried or honored in the cemetery are mostly Korean War dead, but include Korean independence fighters during the period of Japanese rule. Kishida was the first Japanese leader to visit the place in 12 years. "Kishida's comments about Koreans who suffered under Japanese colonialism may be criticized for not being more specific about historical perpetrators and more apologetic toward historical victims," Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul, said. "But Kishida did visit South Korea's national cemetery and said that his heartfelt views, respect for the past, and recognition of current global challenges produce a sense of responsibility for improving Seoul-Tokyo relations."

Yoon said talks among Seoul, Tokyo and Washington are underway to implement their earlier agreement on a faster exchange of information on North Korean missile tests. Yoon said he and Kishida reaffirmed that North Korea's nuclear and missile programs pose a grave threat to the two countries and the rest of the world. In late April, Yoon made a state visit to the United States and agreed with President Joe Biden to reinforce deterrence capabilities against North Korea's nuclear threats. During a joint news conference, Biden thanked Yoon "for your political courage and personal commitment to diplomacy with Japan." Yoon, Biden and Kishida are expected to hold a trilateral meeting later this month on the sidelines of the Group of Seven meetings in Hiroshima to discuss North Korea, China's assertiveness and Russia's war on Ukraine. Yoon was invited as one of eight outreach nations. Kishida said he and Yoon would pay respects before a memorial for Korean atomic bomb victims in Hiroshima. In another apparent conciliatory measure, Kishida said Japan will allow South Korean experts to visit and inspect a planned release of treated but still radioactive wastewater from the damaged Fukushima nuclear power plant.

Alberta announces state of emergency over wildfires

TORONTO (Agencies): Alberta has announced a state of emergency as wildfires flare across the Canadian province, forcing 25,000 people to flee their homes in what a top official said was an "unprecedented" crisis. Thousands more have been told to be prepared to leave on a moment's notice, as the number of fires - fanned by strong winds - jumped to 110. One-third of the blazes were listed as out of control.

"We've declared a provincial state of emergency to protect the safety, health and welfare of Albertans," the province's Premier Danielle Smith told a news conference after a meeting of her government's emergency management committee. Earlier, she said the province - one of the world's largest oil-producing regions - "has been experiencing a hot, dry spring, and with so much kindling, all it takes is a few sparks to ignite some truly frightening wildfires". "These conditions have resulted in the unprecedented

ed situation our province is facing today," she said. According to Smith, more than 20 communities have been evacuated and at least 122,000 hectares (301,000 acres) have burned so far.

The state of emergency declaration gives the government of Alberta "greater powers to respond to extreme situations," she said, including mobilising additional resources and unlocking emergency funds. Almost all of Alberta - in the midst of an election - and much of neighbouring Saskatchewan province as well as a large swath of the Northwest Territories face extreme fire risks, according to a federal government fire danger map. Federal Emergency Preparedness Minister Bill Blair tweeted that Ottawa stood ready to provide federal assistance if needed. Oil sands facilities closely monitored the dangers, but none reported production disruptions. Drayton Valley, with 7,000 residents - about 140km (87 miles) west of Edmonton - was among the communities evacuated as firefight-

ers battled an out-of-control blaze. Some 550km (342 miles) north of the provincial capital, a severe fire had consumed 20 homes, a general store and a police station in the community of Fox Lake.

Residents were evacuated by boat and by helicopter. In the town of Edson, which has a population of more than 8,000, residents have also been ordered to "evacuate immediately". In recent years, extreme weather has hit western Canada repeatedly, growing in intensity and frequency due to global warming. Forest fires in Canada's oil sands region in 2016 disrupted production and forced out 100,000 residents from Fort McMurray, pummeling the nation's economy. More recently in 2021, the westernmost British Columbia province suffered record-high temperatures over the summer that killed more than 500 people, as well as wildfires that destroyed an entire town. That was followed by devastating floods and mudslides.

Officer convicted in Iraq killing of frequent militia critic

BAGHDAD (AP): An Iraqi police officer was convicted and sentenced to death in the killing of a prominent security analyst and frequent critic of powerful militias. The ruling came nearly three years after the analyst was gunned down outside his Baghdad home following militia threats.

The family of the victim, Hisham al-Hashimi, said it supported the verdict, but expressed concern it could be overturned on appeal. A relative of al-Hashimi, speaking on condition of anonymity for fear of reprisals, alleged that those who ordered the killing remain at large. The defendant, Ahmed Hamdawi al-Kinani, was convicted on the terrorism charge and sentenced to death by a criminal court, according to Iraq's Supreme Judicial Council. The case was referred to an appeals court. A video of his purported confession was released

after his arrest two years ago.

Al-Hashimi, 47, was gunned down in July 2020 in front of his home in Baghdad by two attackers on a motorcycle after receiving threats from Iran-backed militias. His killing was captured on a surveillance camera. The images stoked a climate of fear among activists who have accused the government of failing to rein in the powerful armed groups. Al-Hashimi had become well-known as an expert on the Islamic State group and advised the US-led coalition during its years-long battle against the extremists. Following the territorial defeat of IS in December 2017, he became an outspoken critic of the growing influence of Iran-backed militias that helped to defeat IS. Al-Hashimi reportedly received multiple threats

from such groups in the period before his death.

Al-Kinani identified himself as a police officer with the rank of first lieutenant in the video aired on state media in 2021. Shortly after his arrest, two security officials speaking on condition of anonymity told The Associated Press that he was connected to a militia but did not specify which one. His purported confession did not acknowledge any links to armed groups. Successive governments have been criticized for allowing militias to operate with impunity. Critics say many government and security officials have ties to such militias. The killings of activists and other critical voices became more frequent in Iraq during a crackdown on a mass protest movement that erupted in 2019, with many blaming Iran-backed militias.

Satellite images show tankers Iran seized off Bandar Abbas

DUBAI (AP): Two oil tankers recently seized by Iran are anchored off the coast of one of its key port cities on the strategic Strait of Hormuz, according to satellite photos analyzed by The Associated Press. The photos from Planet Labs PBC showed the Advantage Sweet and the Niovi being just south of Bandar Abbas near a naval base in the port city in Iran's Hormozgan province. Their capture represents just the latest ship seizure conducted by Iran amid tensions with the West over its rapidly advancing nuclear program, though it appears the two ships may have been taken for different reasons.

Iran seized the Marshall Islands-flagged Advantage Sweet, staffed by 23 Indians and one Russian, on April 27 as it traveled in the Gulf of Oman. Tehran claimed the vessel had struck another ship, though tracking data for the Advantage Sweet showed no erratic behavior on its trip. Iran has made claims in the past over ship seizures to cover for the vessels being taken to use as pawns in negotiations with the West. The Advantage Sweet carried Kuwaiti crude oil for American energy firm

Chevron Corp. of San Ramon, California, at the time of its capture. And its seizure comes as another tanker believed to be carrying Iranian crude disappeared from anchorage off Singapore a year after being identified as trying to evade US sanctions. The Financial Times, as well as the maritime intelligence firm Ambrey, both have reported that ship named Suez Rajan was seized by order of American authorities. US officials and those associated with the Suez Rajan have not responded to questions about the tanker's disappearance while on a westward path. Satellite images showed a second ship, the Niovi, a Panama-flagged tanker, which was seized by Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard as it left a dry dock in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, bound for Fujairah on the UAE's eastern coast. While not carrying any cargo, data from S&P Global Market Intelligence seen by the AP showed the Niovi in July 2020 received oil from a ship known then as the Oman Pride.

The US Treasury in August 2021 sanctioned the Oman Pride and others associated with the vessel

over it being "involved in an international oil smuggling network" that supported the Quds Force, the expeditionary unit of the Revolutionary Guard that operates across the Mideast. Separately, purported emails published online by Wikiran, a website that solicited leaked documents from the Islamic Republic, suggest that cargo carried by the Niovi was sold on to firms in China without permission. United Against a Nuclear Iran, which has tracked sanctioned crude shipments by Tehran, "strongly suspects the seizure of the Niovi is related to a dispute over a shipment of Iranian oil," said Claire Jungman, the chief of staff of the organization. Iran has said it seized the Niovi over an unspecified court order in Tehran. The managers of the Niovi did not answer repeated telephone calls for comment. The Greek Coast Guard have said the Niovi was staffed by Greek, Filipino and Sri Lankan sailors.

Meanwhile, an internet account describing itself as a group of hackers claimed responsibility for allegedly taking down websites associated with Iran's Foreign Ministry. The claims of the account GhyamSarnegouni,

whose name in Farsi means "Rise to Overthrow," went unaddressed for hours as websites of the Foreign Ministry's remained down over what was initially called "scheduled maintenance and upgrades." Cached versions of the websites of Iranian diplomatic posts in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, Munich, Germany, and Seoul, South Korea, appeared to have been defaced with a message in Farsi reading: "Death to Khamenei, Hail Rajavi." Khamenei refers to Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, while Rajavi likely refers to Massoud Rajavi, the long-missing leader of the Iranian exile group Mujahadeen-e-Khalq, or his wife Maryam, who is now the public face of the group. "There is a great revolution in Iran, the uprising will go until the demolition of the palace of oppression," the message read. Early Monday, Iran's Foreign Ministry websites were back online. The state-run IRNA news agency quoted Foreign Ministry spokesman Nasser Kanaani as acknowledging its websites had been hacked while trying to downplay the incident.

Migrants stranded on Chile-Peru border repatriated to Venezuela

SANTIAGO (Reuters): Chile's government said that 115 Venezuelan migrants who had been stranded on the border with Peru were repatriated to Venezuela on a humanitarian flight. Hundreds of migrants, mostly Venezuelans seeking to return home, had been stranded in the country's northern border after being denied entry into Peru. The incident sparked diplomatic tensions as Peru sent police and soldiers to the border to block

migrants. "It was difficult, I don't wish it on anyone," Carlana Bravo, 27, said after arriving to Venezuela with a child in her arms. "It was 12 days of sleeping in the desert, with cold, a lot of sun during the day and the children got burned and ill." Yuri Gil, a 38-year-old stylist, said that several people weren't able to board the flight because they had foreign children. "Mothers with foreign children didn't get any help, they got left

there," Gil said. "Just because their kids are Ecuadorian, Peruvian, they didn't let them through, they didn't leave on the flight. It was horrible." Chilean and Venezuelan authorities were not immediately available for comment about migrants not allowed to board the flight.

In a statement released, Chile's Foreign Ministry said the flight was the result of diplomatic efforts with the

Venezuelan government and its "Return to the Homeland" plan. "Diplomatic efforts will continue with the goal of establishing future flights from different parts of Chile," the statement said, adding that it would also strengthen regional efforts to deal with the ongoing immigration crisis. "It's only through cooperation that we'll be able to take on the regional migration crisis in the medium and long term," the statement said.

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Pak-Afghan ties and future of the region

CHIEF of Army Staff (COAS) General Asim Munir has stressed the need for enhanced cooperation between Pakistan and Afghanistan to collectively tackle the common challenges of terrorism and extremism in the AfPak region. According to an official press release of the Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), the visiting Afghan Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi called on the Army Chief on Sunday and the two leaders discussed issues of mutual interest including aspects related to regional security, border management, and formalization of bilateral security mechanisms for improvement in the current security environment. The Afghan Acting Foreign Minister appreciated Pakistan's traditional support for the people of Afghanistan and acknowledged the important role that the country continues to play in facilitating peace and development in Afghanistan. Muttaqi also expressed his desire to work closely with Pakistan to promote regional stability and economic prosperity. During the meeting, both sides agreed on the importance of maintaining regular contact to strengthen bilateral ties and address issues of common concern.

Pakistan and Afghanistan have been at odds over the recent months because of an unprecedented upsurge in terrorism inside Pakistan after the proscribed Tahreek-e-Taliban (TTP) called off its ceasefire in late 2022. The banned militant group has a commonality of belief and ideological association with the Afghan Taliban and enjoyed sanctuaries and passive support from Kabul over the past months. The Pakistani authorities had regularly urged Kabul to eliminate terrorist safe havens and take action against the banned terror outfits camped and operate out of Afghanistan. However, a gradual downturned had been witnessed in the bilateral relations of both neighbors after the Afghan interim rulers denied Pakistan's accusations and refused to cooperate with Islamabad over the issue of terrorism.

Realistically, Pak-Afghan ties mostly remained at low par in the past because Pakistan's western neighbor often adopted an animus position in respect of its policies with regard to Pakistan. Starting from opposition to Pakistan's membership in the United Nations and a refusal to respect Pakistan's territorial sovereignty, the Afghan leaders had mostly tried to leverage their influence inside Pakistan. There had been the least cooperation between the militaries of both neighboring nations in the defense and security domains which seriously affected the security interests of both countries throughout history. Interestingly, Pakistani strategists had always sought a strategic depth in Afghanistan and their efforts to install a friendly government in Kabul could not bear fruit so far. The Taliban who are commonly known as a pro-Pakistan militant faction had pursued more hostile policies toward Pakistan than the Afghan Republicans who ruled in Afghanistan. Earlier, the Afghan Republicans raised the slogan of Lar-o-bar Afghans while the Taliban leaders aligned with the banned militant group instead of the state of Pakistan.

At this point in time, the entire world is embattled with severe economic, and energy crises while the menace of terrorism, political unrest, and internal violence pose serious risks to the peace and stability in the AfPak region that reminds the leadership of both countries to pause their political agendas and pursue collective good and wellbeing of their people. The government and the people of Pakistan owe utmost sympathy and brotherhood to their Afghan brethren who suffered unimaginable hardships and miseries due to the persistent conflict and violence in their country over the past decades. Currently, Afghanistan is facing extreme economic, security, and humanitarian challenges that not only need the due attention of Afghan rulers but also demand timely economic and security assistance from the global community and Pakistan. At the same time, there is huge potential for regional cooperation and development between Pakistan, Afghanistan, Central Asian States, and China but lingering violence and instability in Afghanistan is a persistent hurdle in the realization of that potential in the region. A lot has been said and communicated to the Afghan interim government by Pakistan and the rest of the world to align its step with the world that would not only pave the way for its global recognition but also will unleash enormous hidden prospects of goodwill and sustainable economic development. Hence peace and progress await the sane decisions of the leaders that will lead the nations to their destinies, otherwise trading in bloodshed will ruin the whole region.

Swallowing the bitter pill of Syrian rehabilitation

Baria Alamuddin

The Assad clan have flooded the region with tons of narcotics, while becoming notorious for smuggling weapons, people and contraband goods. States such as Jordan and Lebanon have been doubly afflicted - awash with cheap, deadly drugs, and also enmeshed in the transit of these products. Assad has half-heartedly undertaken to "try" to address the narcotics file. That is not good enough. If Damascus desires to benefit from re-established trade relations with Arab nations, it should disabuse itself of the fantasy that its future prosperity is based on the narco-state model. Arab demands that Damascus disassociate itself from Iran apparently haven't borne fruit, with Assad pointedly refusing to abandon his most steadfast ally. In any case, complete severance of ties with Tehran arguably wouldn't be a realistic request, given moves by Arab states to restore diplomatic relations themselves.

Israel has meanwhile been staging regular airstrikes against Iran-associated targets in Syria. Rapprochement should be based on clear-eyed recognition that the Damascus regime does not have a record for honest dealing, and may later seek to disentangle itself from its commitments. Assad furthermore is in only nominal control of a minority of Syrian territory, with other

one of Raisi's top officials boasting that the visit represented "the Islamic Republic of Iran's strategic victory in the region," the visit had a whiff of desperation, given the implications of Damascus's readmission to the Arab fold for ending Iran's Syrian monopoly.

Iran has poured at least \$30 billion into Syria since 2011, and some estimates are even higher. With its own finances in disarray, Tehran will be seeking to

nations are opposed to any outreach to Damascus, and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken warned Arab states that "those engaging with the Assad regime should weigh carefully how those efforts are addressing the needs of the Syrian people." He is correct in the sense that the worst of all worlds would be to let Assad off the hook without fundamentally addressing Syria's myriad security challenges. The burden of proof will be on Arab states to demonstrate the determination and capacity to hold the regime to its promises. Going forward, there must also be genuine efforts to ensure that justice is done regarding horrific crimes against humanity by numerous parties in Syria. Brushing this under the carpet merely sets the stage for the next round of atrocities somewhere else; not least in Sudan, which has the potential to become equally bloody, complex and intractable. There must be a muscular Arab role in the current Jeddah negotiations in preventing Sudan's warring parties from pursuing the Syrian path. Culturally and politically, Syria is one of the Arab world's vital organs. The loss and dismemberment of this organ over the past 12 years has been catastrophic for Arab geostrategic wellbeing.

Consequently, Damascus's rehabilitation into the Arab body is a hugely complex, sensitive and problematic operation. Millions of Syrians will be relying on leading Arab states to ensure that this new agreement is a first step to allowing them to rebuild their lives.

Arab News

Bangladesh's water crisis and the problem of a 'green' solution

Sonia Ahmad & Sonia Ahmad

As the world scrambles to address climate change and build resilience to prepare communities for its destructive impacts, nature-based solutions are being presented as a panacea. These projects, which leverage nature and natural processes to help alleviate the effects of climate change and harmful human activity, are increasing in number and scale.

In the Philippines and India, mangrove forests are being expanded in conjunction with existing breakwaters on coastlines to protect against storms and flooding. Similarly, in South Africa, wetlands are being restored to recharge groundwater and protect from drought water-insecure cities, like Cape Town. Communities globally are encouraged to scale up nature-based solutions and integrate them into modern infrastructure. A 2021 report published by the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) concluded that such an approach could save the world \$248bn annually in construction costs for expanding infrastructure.

Governments around the world are investing in research and development of nature-based solutions, while global financial institutions such as the World Bank are actively involved in funding projects utilising such approaches. As urban planning scholars studying

water, urbanisation, and climate justice in small and medium-sized South Asian cities, we agree that nature-based solutions hold promise. But we also suggest caution. Our work in Khulna, a region in southern Bangladesh facing multiple ecological crises, provides one example of how integrating nature-based solutions can lead to complicated outcomes that help some communities while harming others.

In 2011, Khulna, Bangladesh's third-largest city, was facing severe water scarcity. Along with declining groundwater and pollution, there was rising saltwater intrusion into its freshwater sources. The local government had several options to address the crisis. It could build a desalination plant to treat water from nearby rivers. But such installations are known to be ecologically harmful. For example, a paper from the Canadian-based Institute for Water, Environment, and Health notes that desalination plants discharge 142 million cubic metres of hyper-saline brine every day globally. That is enough to cover the US state of Florida under 30cm (12 inches) of brine, which can be toxic and incredibly harmful to marine life.

Another option the local government had was implementing tougher water controls on residents and businesses. This would mean asking residents to con-

serve water and industries to drop water-intensive practices and invest in rainwater harvesting systems. Such water conservation policies can be hard to implement and politically unpopular. To avoid the negative effects of a desalination plant and potentially unpopular water conservation policies, the local government opted to construct a "climate-proof" water supply system for which it managed to obtain foreign funding from the Asian Development Bank and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

This water supply system was planned to extract water from the Madhumati River in the village of Mollahat, 40km (25 miles) northeast of Khulna, and bring it to the city. During the rainy season, water would be processed directly by a water treatment plant and then provided to consumers. During the dry season, when the salinity of the Madhumati is high, the water would be mixed with low-salt water collected in a reservoir during the rainy season to decrease its salt concentration before being sent to the plant. Policymakers hoped this "nature-based solution" of mixing water would address future problems as rising seas will continue to increase salinity levels in Khulna's water. The framing of the new water infra-

structure as climate- and nature-friendly enabled the local government to justify the construction of the expensive project. The new water infrastructure, which was finished in 2019, indeed benefited Khulna residents. It increased access to piped water from 23 percent of households to 65 percent and provided water access to some informal settlements that did not have any previously.

The popularity of the new water system in Khulna was apparent in the interviews we conducted with the city's residents. They reported that women could now get water from taps at assigned times instead of queuing up for hours to collect water from tube wells. However, the reports from Mollahat were completely different. During our fieldwork in 2018, one of us spoke to a local resident, Mohammad Liton, who said he barely slept through that year. Liton was overcome by worry about the rising salinity and low water levels in the Madhumati River, which had begun to impact his livelihood. Liton argued that the Khulna water project had reduced the availability of water for fishing and rice cultivation in the Mollahat area. In January 2017, Liton and other residents of Mollahat staged a protest against the project, which was impacting the lives of thousands of farm-

ers and fisherfolk living in the village, but the authorities did not address their concerns.

The project's environmental impacts statement, which was required by the government of Bangladesh and the foreign donors and which was completed in 2011, focused narrowly on the water site and accounted for construction as the only impact on Mollahat. According to representatives of the Bangladesh Environmental Lawyers Association (BELA) we interviewed, the scale of the assessment inaccurately accounted for the Madhumati River watershed as existing only in Bangladesh. The river is a tributary in the complex Ganges River system, with flows coming from the Ganges in neighbouring India. The Madhumati River has been heavily affected by the upstream construction of the controversial Farakka Dam in India's state of West Bengal, which diverts its waters. The dam has made the river watershed much more sensitive temporally and ecologically and thus, the additional burden of drawing water for the Khulna project has significantly strained the river resources and affected Mollahat and other communities along its basin.

Khulna's water project should be a cautionary tale - one that can teach policymakers lessons about what they should and should not

do when implementing nature-based solutions. In this case, while industries and households of Khulna reaped the benefits of the projects, residents of Mollahat bore the costs. This could have been avoided if the local authorities had consulted with village dwellers at the construction site and downstream while evaluating the impact of the project. Their feedback could have been used to adjust implementation. The local authorities should have also aimed to distribute benefits equally among the population of the city and the nearby rural communities. For example, they could have asked industries to conserve water, which would have decreased the strain on the Madhumati River and significantly lessened the impact on the Mollahat community.

When green approaches are combined with infrastructure, local authorities must ensure that no harm is done to adjacent communities. Fixing the water problem of a city should not come at the cost of the devastation of rural communities. As nature-based solutions are scaled up, we urge policymakers, donors, and communities to be more cautious. Infrastructure projects, like the one in Khulna, must minimise harmful impacts and help tackle inequalities at the local level and across regions.

Aljazeera

Uncertainty prevails as Turkish election nears

Ysar Yakis

With less than a week left before the crucial May 14 elections in Turkey, there is a wide range of speculation about whether President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and his coalition partners will be able to survive. The public opinion polling companies give contrasting figures about the possible outcomes. The competition will take place between the incumbent president and Kemal Kilicdaroglu, the leader of a coalition of opposition parties.

It looks as if it will be a tight contest, though Kilicdaroglu seems to be ahead by a slight margin. However, there are other complicating factors. There are two additional presidential contenders, Muharem Ince and Sinan Ogan. Neither of them are likely to receive more than 5 or 6 percent of the votes. They have put forward their can-

didacies for the presidency in order to negotiate concessions before the second round of the election with Erdogan or Kilicdaroglu if the first round ends up being inconclusive.

There is also a difference between Ince's attitude and that of Ogan. Ince has publicly announced that he is against Erdogan, but this does not mean that he will support Kilicdaroglu. Ogan is expected to get half of his votes from Erdogan supporters and the other half from the opposition. As the day of the elections approaches, voters may assess their choices more meticulously. Therefore, Ince's support may go further down to 3 or 4 percent and Ogan's to 1.5 or 2 percent.

Support for Kilicdaroglu has never exceeded 53 percent. This is a critical threshold. When the race is too tight, Erdogan may use all potentials of the state to turn the tide to his advantage in the

second round of voting. To complicate the equation even further, we have to bear in mind that the voters will cast their votes in two different ballot boxes - one to elect a president of the republic and the other to elect the members of parliament. For the presidency, 50 percent of the vote plus one would be sufficient. Meanwhile, the parliament will be composed of members of various political parties. This makes the situation more complicated regarding what the breakdown of parties in the parliament will be. Coalitions may be formed by break-away parties or by groups of individual members of various parties, who could be persuaded to change sides.

Such a distribution of the new members of parliament may help promote the culture of conciliation among the political parties. But

this is what could be expected in the longer run. In the short term, a diversification in the ranks of the opposition parties may harm their cohesion, because Erdogan is very much eager to split the opposition parties and persuade some of their factions to join his ranks. One of the peculiarities of the upcoming elections is that almost all opposition parties were able to agree on a common ground, which consists of getting rid of the present government coalition. Another important observation is that Erdogan has built a consolidated unity within his party. We do not know whether the six-party coalition that forms the opposition - plus the support extended by the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party, known as the HDP - will be able to demonstrate the required solidarity if and when they

come to power. Will they end up resorting to a fight for their share of the political prizes? Meral Aksener's Good Party lurched for a brief period at the beginning of March. This will leave a scar in the minds of the public. As for the splinter parties such as former Prime Minister Ahmet Davutoglu's Future Party or former Deputy Prime Minister Ali Babacan's Democracy and Progress Party, their support might not go beyond 2 percent and 3.7 percent, respectively. These two parties have concentrated their efforts on Istanbul. There is little chance for them in the metropolitan constituencies such as Istanbul, Ankara or Izmir. They might also focus their efforts on the small provincial constituencies, where they can identify an outstanding candidate and mobilize all their efforts to get them elected.

It appears that the six-party opposition coalition

could not come up with a common strategy that would guarantee to defeat the ruling AKP party. The AKP decided late on to act together with the Free Cause Party, known as HUDAPAR, which has connections with the Iranian Hezbollah and which committed brutal assassinations in southeast Turkey.

The same AKP fought with HUDAPAR several years ago. Its cooperation with that party today must have cast some shadows on the cooperation between the AKP and the far-right Nationalist Movement Party, which decided not to run on the same list as this Hezbollah-tainted party. This became its most visible disagreement with the ruling AKP. The pro-Kurdish HDP remains the kingmaker, but whether its support will be enough to save the opposition from defeat is a question that is full of uncertainties.

Ukraine war may be critical for the future of Biden’s presidency

THE escalation in tensions between Ukraine and Russia following last week's attack on the Kremlin has brought the conflict to a new level of intensity. The situation is highly complex and has significant implications for the region and beyond. The US has accused Russia of faking the attack, leading to heightened concerns about the future of the war. CIA Director Leon Panetta told CNN that the Russians might have faked the attack, prompting Moscow to deny this allegation and assert that Ukraine was responsible.

There is evidence from both sides regarding the alleged drone attack. Therefore, the international community must approach the situation critically and avoid jumping to conclusions based on partisan interests. In this regard, the US should support an independent investigation. Such an investigation could help shed light on the situation and provide a basis for resolving the war. One significant development in the conflict is Russia's increased frequency of thwarting US-made mobile rocket systems in Ukraine. Recent months have seen an uptick in such incidents. This trend is concerning, as it indicates a growing escalation of the conflict and highlights the need for international efforts to de-escalate tensions. On the other hand, Ukraine has been stepping up its defensive measures in response to these threats. Ukrainian Air Force Commander Mykola Oleschchuk on Saturday reported that a Kinzhal-type ballistic missile had been intercepted in an overnight attack on Kyiv. This was the Ukrainians' first known use of the US Patriot missile defense system. While such measures may help to deter further attacks, they also raise concerns about where the conflict is

going.

While Washington has been a vocal supporter of Kyiv since the conflict began, it is essential to recognize the situation's complexity. The Biden administration needs to take a balanced and constructive approach to the problem. The US should encourage both Ukraine and Russia to engage in a meaningful dialogue to find a peaceful solution to their brutal war. As a major global power, the US has significant influence in the region and it must use this influence to encourage all parties involved to engage in dialogue. US President Joe Biden should play a decisive role in de-escalating the dangerous tensions. He must work with his allies in Europe and the wider international community to promote an immediate solution. The ongoing war has had far-reaching consequences for the US and its allies. It has highlighted the need for a firm and proactive foreign policy that puts American interests first.

America has learned some important lessons from the ongoing war in Europe. Firstly, it has exposed the weakness of the Obama administration's foreign policy, which Biden helped carry out, as it was characterized by a reluctance to engage in conflicts abroad. The decision to draw a "red line" in Syria and not follow through with military action when the line was crossed sent a clear message to America's allies that it was unwilling to take a firm stand on important issues. This lack of resolve emboldened Russian President Vladimir Putin, who saw an opportunity to expand Russia's influence in Eastern Europe. Secondly, the war has highlighted the importance of NATO and the need for the US to maintain its commitment to the alliance. As

Daila Al-Aqidi

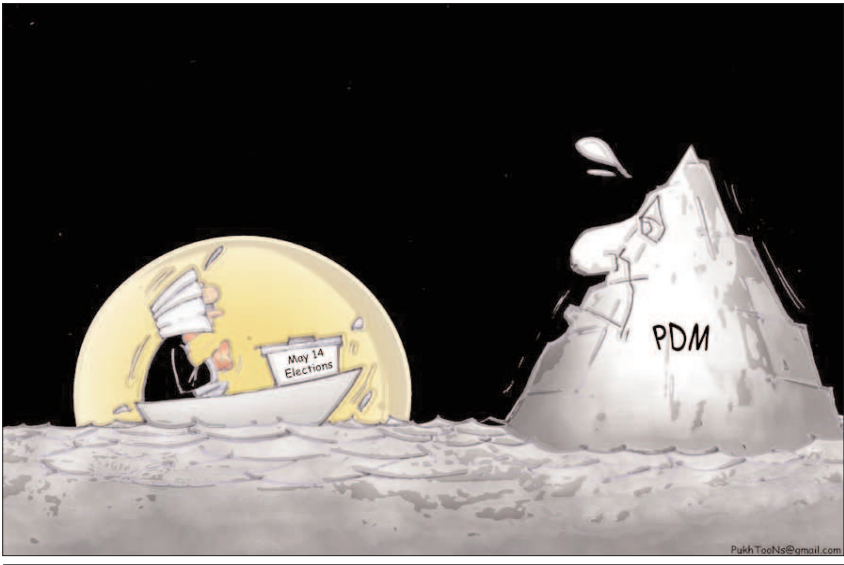
Russia has become increasingly aggressive in the region, NATO has been instrumental in deterring this aggression and protecting the sovereignty of its member states. This highlights the importance of maintaining solid military alliances to promote stability and prevent aggression in regions of strategic importance. Thirdly, the conflict has brought the need for energy independence to the forefront. Russia has used its control over energy supplies as a tool of political coercion, particularly in Eastern Europe. By reducing reliance on foreign energy sources, the US can limit the ability of hostile regimes to manipulate global energy markets and undermine the security of its allies. Finally, the war has underscored the need for a strong military and robust defense spending. Russia has modernized its military and is willing to use force to achieve its objectives. The US is also facing challenges from regimes such as the one in North Korea. Therefore, the US must ensure its military is equipped to meet these challenges and its troops have the necessary resources to carry out their missions.

The million-dollar question is what should the US do to end the war? The US must be cautious not to engage in actions that could further escalate the situation, such as provocative military maneuvers. It also needs to recognize that the conflict has a significant human toll and it should work to provide humanitarian aid to those who need it.

The US should promote confidence-building measures between Ukraine and Russia. These could include measures to reduce military tensions, such as the two sides withdrawing troops from border regions. Washington could also promote eco-

nomic cooperation between Ukraine and Russia, which could help build trust and promote dialogue between the two countries. Ultimately, the key to resolving the conflict is for both Ukraine and Russia to engage in meaningful dialogue to find a peaceful solution. The US can play a constructive role in promoting such dialogue and encouraging both sides to engage in the process. The White House must also recognize the situation's complexity and work to promote a balanced approach that considers the interests of all parties involved. The war in Ukraine has been a major foreign policy challenge for the Biden administration and it is likely to have significant implications for the 2024 presidential election. While foreign policy issues typically do not dominate US elections, they can play a decisive role in shaping the debate and influencing voter sentiment.

The conflict in Ukraine is likely to be a vital issue, particularly if it continues to escalate. Biden's supporters and opponents alike will closely scrutinize the president's handling of the war. Biden's decision to provide military aid to Ukraine and his commitment to supporting Kyiv's sovereignty and territorial integrity has been praised by many in the international community, including some of his political allies. However, his critics argue that he has not done enough to deter Russian aggression in the region. It is clear that the escalation of the war could become a significant political liability for Biden and the Democratic Party. Republicans could use the conflict to criticize Biden's foreign policy record and paint him as weak on Russia. Some Republican candidates could even use the conflict as a wedge issue to appeal to voters who prioritize national security and foreign policy issues.



Putin’s anxious time

Richard Galant

KING Henry IV comes on stage in a nightgown, wondering why sleep eludes him. He imagines a boy sitting "upon the high and giddy mast" of a ship tossed by wind and waves. Why can that "sea-boy" sleep through the storm while in the "calmest and most stillest" night, a king cannot doze in his bed? "Uneasy lies the head that wears a crown," concludes the king in Shakespeare's play.

The week ended with the crowning of King Charles III - the UK's first coronation in 70 years. Despite the pageantry, he and many of the world's other royals have been reduced to figureheads, with today's great powers mostly ruled by a mix of democratically elected and authoritarian officials. With that power, comes anxiety - and for some it was a particularly tense week. In Ukraine, leaders prepared for their long-anticipated spring offensive, seeking to drive out the invaders. Russia said that President Vladimir Putin

was the intended target of a foiled Ukrainian drone attack on the Kremlin, an allegation Ukraine denied. To add to Putin's woes, warlord Yevgeny Prigozhin threatened to pull his Wagner Group forces out of the killing field of Bakhmut, blaming the Russian military establishment for denying them support. "The dead and wounded - and that's tens of thousands of men - lie on the conscience of those who did not give us ammunition," he said.

In the US, President Joe Biden and House Speaker Kevin McCarthy are bracing for a crucial meeting Tuesday as the country stares down the threat of a financially devastating default in just a few weeks. Biden is battling low approval ratings as he seeks reelection in a country that, according to the polls, doesn't want a rematch between Biden and former President Donald Trump and has a sour view of the economy. The US saw the second largest bank failure in its history last week. "The announcement was dramatic and the images breathtaking," Frida Ghitis observed. "The Kremlin declared that it had come under attack on Wednesday night, targeted by two drones whose objective it claimed was to assassinate Russian President Vladimir Putin, who was unharmed..." Whatever happened, the Ukraine war is heading toward "a major escalation," Ghitis added. "The ground is still muddy as the winter snow melts; the temperature is rising. Ukraine has announced repeatedly that it's planning a large-scale counteroffensive, a push to retake Ukrainian territory captured by the Russian occupiers."

"Russia is nervous about this new imminent stage of the war. And, frankly, Ukraine's allies are, as well." The war has taken a fearsome toll on children, according to a report Thursday from the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. A "large number" of children - estimated by Ukrainian officials to be from 200,000 to 300,000 - have been "displaced" to Russia or to territory the Russians have occupied in Ukraine. Writing for CNN Opinion, Kristina Hook and Oleksandra Gaidai noted that "callous crimes against children have resulted in the International Criminal Court issuing arrest warrants for Russia's so-called 'Children's Rights' Commissioner Maria Lvova-Belova and President Vladimir Putin - only the third-serving president in history to be issued one."

"While the forced deportations have stunned global observers, from a historical perspective Russia's policy against Ukrainian civilians is terribly logical and consistent." "Moscow has regularly used mass trafficking of citizens, including minors, over two centuries: to punish resisters, weaken community ties that could threaten the state and solve their own demographic problems." Former Arkansas Gov. Asa Hutchinson was named a US attorney during the Ronald Reagan administration and held high-profile posts in George W. Bush's administration. Now he is running for the GOP nomination for president and calling for a return to the kind of conservatism that has been in eclipse since Donald Trump won the presidency in 2016. "Over the last eight years, we - as a party and as a nation - have forgotten the type of individual our forefathers intended the president of the United States of America to be," he wrote for CNN Opinion. "We have forgotten what it's like to live under the leadership of a president who looks forward, leads by example, instinctively puts the country before the party and has no issue setting ego aside to get things done."

On the Democratic side, wrote Dean Obeidallah, "recent polls tell us that many Americans have questions about the age of the 80-year-old Biden heading into the 2024 election. ... That's why it was an inspired move by Biden to address the issue head-on at the White House Correspondents' Association Dinner - but with a delightfully comedic touch." Biden faces a major challenge Thursday with the expiration of Title 42, a Trump-era policy that has clamped down on immigration along the southern border. Patrick T. Brown wrote that "Border personnel will likely be faced with either operating the kinds of overcrowded facilities that the Trump administration was repeatedly criticized for, or potentially releasing migrants into the country with no court date and no guarantee they'll be found again. Either option spells political trouble."

Will debates be among the highlights of the 2024 campaign, as in past elections? Julian Zelizer noted that Trump has said he might skip some of the early encounters, and Democrats are not scheduling any primary debates. "Trump has very little incentive to debate, especially since he can command plenty of attention with his campaign events and social media outbursts. And if he continues to poll well above his opponents, he won't feel the need to grant them opportunities to gain more exposure," wrote Zelizer. "Biden, meanwhile, would rather focus on showing he can govern, as opposed to engaging in verbal combat, which has never been his forte."

In Wisconsin's election last month for a pivotal state Supreme Court seat, Debra Cleaver's nonprofit VoteAmerica reached out to students on 24 campuses, placing ads, tacking up posters and partnering with student influencers. "All these communications channels combined to share a simple message: Election Day was April 4." Youth turnout soared, Cleaver wrote. "The city of Eau Claire's Ward 20, which covers the upper campus of the University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire, saw the highest turnout in all of Eau Claire's 77 voting wards, with votes up more than 400% over a state Supreme Court election just four years earlier. ... For VoteAmerica, this seemed like a clear win for democracy."

Not everyone has been pleased by the rise in student voting, with some taking action to make it harder for young people to cast their ballots. "Around the country, Republican-controlled states are targeting the youth vote, with a particular focus on college voters - even though voting, and voting access, should not be seen as partisan issues," Cleaver observed. A

mass shooting in Cleveland, Texas, led to a four-day manhunt that ended Tuesday. As Sara Stewart wrote, the alleged shooter "was taken into custody on charges of fatally shooting five people. The killings allegedly took place after the suspect was asked to stop firing his gun outside near a neighbor's home to avoid waking a child." "The entirety of our culture now seems increasingly like the Wild West, where the answer to 'could you please stop doing that?' or even just 'could you help me?' might turn out to be a bullet..."

Stewart recalled "the time my husband and I asked our then-next-door neighbors to stop shooting at songbirds in the backyard. What happened next? Well, they stopped. That evening, one of them even surprised us by coming by to apologize." "But when the response to asking someone not to shoot an AR-15 at 11 at night, near other people's houses, while a baby is sleeping, might be mass murder? I'm not sure how we move forward from that."

The leaders of the Church of England saw it as an egalitarian move - replacing the traditional pledge of allegiance that only a select few make to a new king with an invitation allowing anyone to swear fealty to King Charles III. It didn't come across as intended, wrote Laura Beers. "To many of the King's subjects in Britain and abroad, the invitation (no one will be required to give the pledge) has struck a tone-deaf chord." The notion wasn't viewed in the same way as the US pledge of allegiance recited by children every school day. That pledge "is to a republic. For British spectators, and particularly for younger viewers whose views about the future of the monarchy are uncertain or conflicted, the significance of the coronation is more complex."

"That complexity cannot simply be smoothed away by inviting people to pledge allegiance to the crown." (Responding to the outcry, the Church of England gave people the option of saying instead, "God save King Charles.") The oil that was used to anoint the king has an ingredient that harks back to a little-known part of his family history - the role played by his paternal grandmother Princess Alice in hiding a Jewish family from the Nazis during the German occupation of Greece in World War II. As Richard Hurowitz wrote, some of the olives used to produce the oil were harvested from the Monastery of Mary Magdalene, where Princess Alice is buried. "In 1993, Alice was given the high honor of being named a Righteous Among the Nations by the Yad Vashem Holocaust memorial in Israel for her heroism. The fate of the Greek Jews was among the worst in Europe, with more than 90% perishing. Were it not for Alice, the Cohens would surely have been among them."

The jeweled gold crown that was placed on the head of King Charles III Saturday traces its history back to 1661. It was modeled on an even older one, which was melted down when the monarchy was briefly abolished during the English Civil War. The unfortunate monarch who was the last to own the original St. Edward's Crown, King Charles I, was convicted of treason and beheaded on January 30, 1649. Moments before he was executed, he told the crowd, "I go from a corruptible to an incorruptible crown; where no disturbance can be, no disturbance in the world." Well-wishers at yesterday's coronation cheered Charles, who can anticipate a much less tumultuous reign than that of the first king of his name.

CNN

Britain is changing - the idea of Tories and royals as our natural rulers is gone

John Harris

THE ardent crowds gathered in the London drizzle presumably got exactly what they had come for, but among the coronation's garish costumes, impenetrable rituals and perfectly timed salutes and processions, there lurked an unavoidable sense of anticlimax. There he was, hanging on to his orb and sceptre: a very familiar, remarkably glum-looking 74-year-old man, sitting atop a very damaged institution, honoured with a ceremony based on a national religion that no one really follows any more, in a country whose collective mood is not exactly cheerful.

No one needs any reminders of why this is: living costs remain impossible, more strikes loom and the cliché of a country where nothing works perpetually rings true. It is easy to think of the UK - or, more specifically, England - as somewhere that is simply stuck. In that context, as royal rituals always do, the coronation spectacularly served its purpose, presenting nostalgia, continuity and deference as virtues rather than vices.

But the events of the past few days have also provided reminders that this may not be the hidebound, small-c conservative country that its elites and establishment still imagine it to be. By their very nature, societies are always changing - and underneath its outward sullenness and stalemate, ours seems to be entering a very interesting phase indeed. Woven into the coverage of the crowning of Charles III, let us not forget, there have been acknowledgments of drastically altered circumstances. Among 18- to 24-year-olds, only 36% want to keep the monarchy,

down from more than 70% 10 years ago. Nearly 60% of us are either "not very interested" or "not at all interested" in the royal family. According to the National Centre for Social Research, the belief that that the monarchy is "very important" has reached its lowest levels since data collection began 40 years ago.

The most telling signs of change, perhaps, are the widespread - and, as ever, underreported - indifference that greeted the coronation, and a rising sense that the monarchy's delusions and denials can no longer be sustained. Even those who watched the ceremony would have been well aware of those tensions: TV coverage may have stuck to the kind of dutiful scripts it perfected in the 20th century, but people's phones were surely full of posts and comments about Harry and Meghan, and the odorous presence of the Duke of York. And then there is what happened last week at England's polling stations, many of which were draped in union jack bunting in preparation for the crowning of the king. The story of the local elections had two distinct halves: Labour's gains in and around the so-called red wall and in such bell-wether places as Swindon - and startling anti-Tory revolts across what was once called middle England.

On East Hertfordshire district council - which serves such radical hotbeds as Ware, Buntingford and Bishop's Stortford - the largest party is now the Greens. The same party now has outright control of Mid Suffolk, where the number of Tory councillors fell from 16 to

six. Among the councils the Tories lost to the Liberal Democrats were the royal borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Stratford-upon-Avon and Surrey Heath, the political back yard of Michael Gove. Some of this, self-evidently, is down to the Tory disgrace and chaos of the past few years, and the continuing crises that bite into people's everyday lives. With wins for the Lib Dems, that party's shameless habit of trading on whatever local complaints are available - such as housebuilding in the green belt - should not be discounted. But many of last week's results also highlighted a backlash against Brexit from remain-supporting voters agast at the Tories' journey to the hard right, and a deeper story about how much England is changing, with potential consequences that go way beyond politics.

I first wrote about all this five years ago, when the Lib Dems beat the Tories in Kingston upon Thames and Richmond, and there were sudden Conservative losses to Labour in the affluent(ish) Manchester borough of Trafford. Since then, the Conservatives' fortunes have faded in such places as Tunbridge Wells, St Albans, the counties of Surrey and Oxfordshire, and more. The idea of shires, suburbs, county towns and cathedral cities as largely Tory areas is weakening fast - something self-styled Conservative modernisers were starting to understand back in the days of David Cameron and George Osborne, but which their party has since completely forgotten. This highlights a misapprehension that sits at the heart of not just our politics, but of

our culture. We still have an idea of a great chunk of the middle class that is at least 40 years out of date - as reflex Tories, with often brazen prejudices, royal memorabilia in a corner cabinet, a love of golf, and a lovingly tended Rover saloon parked in the drive. But the reality is now rather different. Suburbia in particular has seen what my Guardian colleague Hugh Muir has called "the growing movement of visible minorities into the heartlands of Englishness".

As Tory MPs crowed on to the channel, it suggests that Conservatives are part of the same political family: the kind of people who hate the Sussexes, loathe "globalists" and dream of a monocultural England that is long gone. Many probably are, but this will not play terribly well in many of the places the Tories are losing. The royal family, I dare say, has a slightly better idea of how to ensure its own survival. But this is a turbulent time for the UK's ruling-class institutions, and both the monarchy and England's natural party of government share a handful of obvious problems. Both depend on networks of power and privilege that are increasingly exposed. They are estranged from the young, and have a common air of pomposity and entitlement that sits awkwardly with the new middle class, along with a seeming inability - or refusal - to understand big social changes and what they demand. Their visions of a backward-looking, deferential country, moreover, are fading fast. The past few days have made those failings even more vivid - and amid our endless national problems, that realisation feels like a real ray of hope.

The Guardian

Lessons of the Second World War remain relevant today

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

IT was on May 7, 1945 - 78 years ago on Sunday - that Nazi Germany signed an unconditional surrender, bringing an end to the tragedy of the Second World War in Europe. Nearly 85 million people died in all theaters of this war, either due to the direct results of conflict or because of related factors such as starvation or disease. Victory in Europe Day was proclaimed on May 8 and V-E Day has been celebrated on this date every year since (although Russia and some Eastern European countries use May 9). Keeping in mind the lessons of the Second World War, which was the deadliest conflict in the history of humanity, is critical.

Whenever discussing and examining the Second World War, one prominent and important political figure ought to always be remembered and mentioned: Winston Churchill. Without doubt, Churchill shaped the Allies' strategy and helped lead Britain and Europe through the devastating war. The UK prime minister gave his famous victory speech on May 8, declaring: "My dear friends, this is your hour. This is not a victory of a party or of any class. It's a victory of the great British nation as a whole. We were the first, in this ancient island, to draw the sword against tyranny. After a while we were left all alone against the most tremendous military power that has been seen. We were all alone for a whole year."

One of the most important lessons to remember from this deadly war is that tensions between countries should not be underestimated, since

they can easily spiral out of control and lead to a full-fledged war, which can have devastating effects on all parties involved. Between the beginning of the war in September 1939 and its end, more than "100 million (and possibly as many as 300 million) combatants entered the fray. Many never returned ... The most up-to-date estimates calculate that between 70 million and 85 people died in the Second World War. That estimate equates to roughly 3 percent to 3.7 percent of Earth's population at the time ... The following countries have the highest estimated Second World War casualties: the Soviet Union (20 to 27 million), China (15 to 20 million), Germany (6 to 7.4 million), Poland (5.9 to 6 million), Dutch East Indies/Indonesia (3 to 4 million), Japan (2.5 to 3.1 million), India (2.2 to 3 million), Yugoslavia (1 to 1.7 million), French Indochina (Laos, Cambodia, part of Vietnam) (1 to 2.2 million), and France (600,000)," according to the World Population Review.

It is important to point out that, in almost any war, civilians bear the brunt of the conflict. Another important lesson is that diplomatic initiatives, dialogue and negotiations are crucial in order to reach an agreement and resolve disagreements and tensions. And if diplomacy fails and aggression from a particular party persists, it is incumbent on the international community to stand firmly against the aggressor. From the perspective of the leaders of a country

that acts with aggression and rejects dialogue or negotiations to resolve tensions, appeasement policies and conciliation may be viewed as a sign of weakness. In fact, appeasing the aggressor often further emboldens and empowers it to commit more violence in order to achieve its ideological, hegemonic, political or economic objectives.

As Churchill pointed out "I say that in the long years to come, not only will the people of this island but of the world, wherever the bird of freedom chirps in human hearts, look back to what we've done and they will say 'do not despair, do not yield to violence and tyranny, march straightforward and die if need be - unconquered.'" Now we have emerged from one deadly struggle - a terrible foe has been cast on the ground and awaits our judgment and our mercy." The third important lesson to be learned from the Second World War is that establishing and promoting intergovernmental and international organizations for more effective global governance is significant in preventing wars and promoting peace. These international organizations can evolve over time.

For example, one of the most critical organizations created at the end of the Second World War was the UN, whose primary missions were to maintain peace and security, resolve conflicts between nations and build amicable relationships between countries. Gradually, the work of the UN has expanded to, as it states,

touch "every corner of the globe and (focus) on a broad range of fundamental issues, like sustainable development, protection of the environment and refugees, disaster relief and mitigation, counterterrorism, as well as disarmament and nonproliferation." Establishing and strengthening other global institutions in the economic and financial landscapes is also key in preventing conflicts between countries. Some crucial examples are the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the World Trade Organization. Multilateral agreements make conflicts less likely to occur. They are also likely to be firm and durable because they have been accepted by many states.

The role that global financial institutions play in resolving trade disputes should not be disregarded or underestimated. If not resolved properly, trade disputes can lead to political conflicts or to countries increasing tariffs or adopting protectionist policies that only harm their own economic growth. This was witnessed during the Great Depression of the 1930s. The WTO points out that it has "one of the most active interest dispute settlement mechanisms in the world. Since 1995, 616 disputes have been brought to the WTO and over 350 rulings have been issued." In a nutshell, the Second World War has taught humanity many lessons, including the importance of employing diplomacy to avoid full-fledged wars and the significance of setting up international and intergovernmental organizations.

Important Notice

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

PSX loses 412.49 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) declined by 412.49 points on Monday, showing a negative change of 0.98 per cent, closing at 41,829.49 points against 42,241.98 points the previous day.

A total of 179,050,431 shares were traded during the day as compared to 178,164,179 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 4.761 billion against Rs 5.768 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 365 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 92 of them recorded gains and 247 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 26 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 20,924,808 shares at Rs 1.20 per share, TPL Properties with 19,753,354 shares at Rs 13.30 per share, and Pak Refinery with 11,367,786 shares at Rs 14.16 per share.

Bhanero Tex, witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 56.50 per share price, closing at Rs 1200.00, whereas the runner-up was Pak Tobacco with a Rs 30.30 rise in its per share price to Rs 691.00.

Unilever Foods witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 1137.88 per share closing at Rs 20999.62, followed by Nestle Pakistan with a Rs 113.28 decline to close at Rs 5776.72.

The launch of direct flights by Kazakhstan with Pakistan and urged the government to expedite its work for their early start.

He said the Pakistani ports provided the shortest route to the land-locked Kazakhstan to the Arabian Sea and emphasized that both countries should also establish land and railways links to enhance business relations.

ICCI Senior Vice President Faad Waheed said Pakistan and Kazakhstan were gateways for each other to get easy access to their respective regional markets and called for developing close cooperation to take advantage of that potential.

ICCI Vice President Engineer Azhar ul Islam

Zafar, Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader, Zafar Bakhtawari, Dr Muhammad Usman and Ameer Hamza also spoke on the occasion and termed the launch of direct flights a historic development between the two countries.

Kazakhstan keen to strengthen trade ties with Pakistan: Envoy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Kazakhstan Yerzhan Kistafin on Monday said his country was keen to strengthen and deepen trade ties with Pakistan as the two countries had good potential to trade with each other in multiple sectors.

The envoy was talking to a delegation of the Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) that called on him led by its President Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari.

Ambassador Yerzhan Kistafin spoke about the opportunities for doing business in Kazakhstan and the advantages of his country as a regional hub.

He welcomed the ICCI's plan to take a delegation to Kazakhstan and assured the provision of all necessary

organizational and logistical support from the Kazakh side to make the visit a successful one.

ICCI President Bakhtawari said Pakistan and Kazakhstan could cooperate in many fields, including construction, agriculture, energy, textiles, pharmaceuticals, tourism, engineering equipment, machinery, banking and finance for mutual benefits.

He said the ICCI had planned to take a big delegation to Kazakhstan in July to interact with Kazakh counterparts and develop strong business linkages with them in order to explore all untapped areas of mutual cooperation.

He thanked the ambassador for his assurance to provide all possible support to the delegation.

Bakhtawari welcomed the launch of direct flights by Kazakhstan with Pakistan and urged the government to expedite its work for their early start.

He said the Pakistani ports provided the shortest route to the land-locked Kazakhstan to the Arabian Sea and emphasized that both countries should also establish land and railways links to enhance business relations.

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Zafar, Khalid Iqbal Malik Group Leader, Zafar Bakhtawari, Dr Muhammad Usman and Ameer Hamza also spoke on the occasion and termed the launch of direct flights a historic development between the two countries.



KASUR: GMSS PPL Brig (Retd) Syed Mahmood ul Hassan and Chairman Akhuwat Dr. Muhammad Amjad Saqib unveil plaque of PPL-funded Biology Laboratory at Akhuwat College Kasur.

Efforts on to provide IT compliant eco-system to startups: FCCI chief

FAISALABAD (APP): President Faisalabad Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FCCI) Dr. Khurram Tariq said on Monday that efforts were being intensified to provide favourable IT compliant eco-system to the young startups, which would play a key role in transforming the city from a textile hub to a cyber centre.

Addressing a function, organised by the National Incubation Centre (NIC), he said the local entrepreneurs played a key role in promoting Faisalabad at the

global level as a city of textile. He said "now we are living in the age of diversification and we must divert our attention towards more profitable businesses including IT".

He said Pakistan had been blessed with the most competent IT youth, who had the potential to exploit IT in all segments of trade, industry and economy. He said if the existing industrialists divert only 33 per cent of their investment to the IT sector, they could earn billions of dollars in addition to upgrading their

units on modern scientific lines. He expressed satisfaction that the NIC was playing a proactive role and work had been started to provide a favourable IT ecosystem in Faisalabad. He was optimistic that the business community of Faisalabad had expertise and could prove their mettle in the expanding IT field.

He said an IT focused approach would also create new job opportunities in addition to facilitating investors to get hefty profit from their investment. He

said industrialists should prefer projects of national importance which could also ensure industrial modernisation, progress and growth in the economic sector.

The function was arranged at the Expo Centre of the University of Agriculture, which was attended by leading business tycoons including Mian Muhammad Idrees, Mian Javed Iqbal, Senior Vice President FCCI Dr. Sajjad Arshad, Abdullah Qadri and Mujtaba Hassan of Chenab Engineering, etc.

PCJCCI keen to boost agri-ties between Pak, China

ISLAMABAD (INP): Moazzam Ghurki, President Pakistan China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) stated during a think tank session held at PCJCCI Secretariat that, the China-Pakistan Agricultural Corridor (CPAC) project would bring socio-economic development for farmers in Pakistan and further pave the way for a new era of collaboration between the two all-weather strategic partners.

He said that CPAC was a

project of highly significance and would serve as a model for other countries in the region to emulate and reinforce the belief that cooperation and partnership could lead to significant achievements and benefits for all. China pledged to open up its markets for Pakistani agriculture products like rice, fish, facilitate Pakistan in the marketing of its Halal food products, also to provide modern agricultural technologies.

Fang Yulong, Senior Vice President PCJCCI said that the agriculture, in the South Asian countries, was

struggling with low productivity, supply shortfalls, low returns to farmers, lack of advanced technology and trained professionals and thus threatening food security in the region. Addressing these issues will have a significant impact on people's lives, particularly in Pakistan, as it is an agro-economic country with immense potential for crop production and research in agricultural sciences. He said that we are actively pursuing research on plant biotechnology, environmental sciences, agri-technology and agribusiness with emphasis

on precision agriculture, multi-spectral sensing of crop fields, 3D printing and scanning applications, early detection of pathogens and effective plant disease management.

Hamza Khalid, Vice President PCJCCI said that we have signed memorandum of understanding with various Chinese companies to boost agriculture productivity in Pakistan. He added that such collaborations would enable to share resources, expertise and knowledge between China and Pakistan, and work together towards common goals of improving and promoting sustainable method-



PESHAWAR: President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry and Director the Institute of Management Sciences Usman Ghani exchanging documents after signing MoU.

SCCI, IMSciences sign MoU

— to strengthen industry-academia linkages

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) and the Institute of Management Sciences (IMSciences) Peshawar.

In this regard, a signing ceremony was held at the IMSciences Hayatabad Peshawar on Monday wherein SCCI president Muhammad Ishaq and Director of the IMSciences Usman Ghani signed on the MoU.

Ejaz Khan Afridi, vice president of the SCCI

accompanied the president Muhammad Ishaq during the signing event.

Head of Career Development Centre, the IMSciences Peshawar Asad Ashfaq, faculty members and others were present on the occasion.

Ishaq while terming the signing MoU with IMSciences Peshawar as a milestone step toward strengthening industry-academia linkages said SCCI has started a series of MoUs with public and private sector universities.

He elaborated that the MoU aims at equipping graduates and young stu-

dents' technical skills besides completion of their academic career so that it will enable them to get instant employment opportunities in markets.

The SCCI chief said there's a lack of entrepreneurship, saying that our youth are highly skillful and capable to excel in their fields.

He, however, said there is a need to provide youth a proper platform to utilize their abilities efficiently and continue playing a role in the country's economic prosperity and progress.

Director Usman Ghani also spoke on the occasion.

Oil up on subdued recession fears from positive US data

ANKARA (APP): Oil prices increased on Monday with the release of positive economic indicators from the US, the declining value of the US dollar, and a supply cut forecast from OPEC+ countries.

International benchmark Brent crude traded at \$75.97 per barrel at 9.51 a.m. local time (0651 GMT), a 0.89% increase from the closing price of \$75.30 a barrel in the previous trading session.

The American benchmark West Texas Intermediate (WTI) traded at the same time at \$72.02 per barrel, up 0.95% from the previous session's close of \$71.34 per barrel.

The US Labor Department's data showed a 53-year low in its unemployment rate on Friday at 3.4%, easing recession concerns.

The US dollar index, which measures the value of the American dollar against a basket of currencies, including the Japanese yen, British pound, Canadian dollar, Swedish krona and Swiss franc, declined 0.13% to 100.865 early Monday. A weaker dollar makes dollar-indexed crude oil cheaper for buyers using other currencies.

On the supply side, expectations of an agreement by the OPEC+ group on output cuts during its June meeting aided the price rise. The group is set to meet on June 4. The OPEC+ group, led by Saudi Arabia and Russia, decided to make voluntary cuts of approximately 1.6 million barrels per day as of May, in addition to a production cut of 2 million barrels per day that has been in place since October.

100,000+ online OPD consultations: Jubilee Life Insurance, Sehat Kahani holds celebrations

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Jubilee Life Insurance, one of the country's largest private sector life insurance company in collaboration with Sehat Kahani, a leading one-stop telemedicine solution recently surpassed 100,000+ consultations for policyholders with world class doctors.

A celebratory event was held at Jubilee Life's Head Office attended by Mr. Javed Ahmed, Managing Director and CEO, Jubilee Life Insurance, Mr. Farhan Akhtar Faridi, Group Head - Retail Operations, Marketing and Administration, Jubilee Life Insurance, Dr. Sara Saeed Khurram, Co-Founder and CEO, Sehat Kahani along with other representatives from both

companies.

With both general physicians and specialists on the roster the joint initiative of Sehat Kahani and Jubilee Life Insurance is providing a free and unlimited OPD consultations 24/7 to policyholders nationwide. Besides consultation fees, policyholders can avoid the hassle of waiting in long queues and commuting to a medical facility which incurs traveling costs and saves time as well. The doctors under this partnership have 90% female doctors which also paves the way for our policyholders to get consultations for their female family members.

Speaking at the occasion, Mr. Faridi, stated: "Healthcare and wellbeing are the most essential

necessities, and providing access to timely medical care to our policyholders is of paramount importance to us at Jubilee Life. Through this partnership with Sehat Kahani, we are utilizing digital technology to bring quality healthcare solutions in the form of OPD consultations to our policyholders at their fingertips. We are thankful to our corporate clients, banking partners and colleagues for making this initiative a resounding success."

Jubilee Life and Sehat Kahani continue to support the objective of bringing the best and most affordable healthcare to policyholders no matter where they are in the country.

MEDICAID as a recognized ADR Center notified

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Federal Government notifies Musaliha International Center for Arbitration and Dispute Resolution (MICADR) as a Government-Recognized ADR Center for expeditious provision of dispute resolution services.

Musaliha International Center for Arbitration and Dispute Resolution (MICADR), an ADR center established under the umbrella of the Legal Aid Society in 2022, has achieved a significant milestone. After its notification by the Sindh-High Court in December of 2022 as a Court-Recognized ADR Center, the MICADR has now been officially notified by the Government of Pakistan as a recognized ADR center under the Islamabad ADR Act 2017, thereby becoming Pakistan's first private ADR center to receive such prestigious recognition in two jurisdictions.

The Accreditation Committee for the recognition of ADR Centers and Neutrals was established by the Government of Pakistan, consisting of the Registrar of the Islamabad High Court, Federal Secretary Law and Justice, and a representation of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (Senior Vice President). The Committee is responsible for setting minimum criteria and the

process for the accreditation of neutrals and recognition of ADR centers that meet global standards of ADR practice. The "Mediation Accreditation and Eligibility Rules" were published by the Government on the 1st of March, 2023, which outlined the requirements for accreditation and recognition of mediators and ADR centers. The committee is playing a vital role in the institutionalization of ADR in Pakistan, which will help to provide a more efficient and cost-effective alternative to traditional dispute resolution methods.

The recognition of MICADR by Government of Pakistan comes after the highly successful "Dispute Resolution through Mediation; Dispute Resolution and Opportunities for the Industry" conference organized on the 9th of March, 2023, which aimed to promote mediation as a premier means of dispute resolution in Pakistan. This recognition is a testament to the Government's and the Judiciary's efforts to institutionalize Alternative Dispute Resolution, but also to the standards of ADR service delivery adopted by MICADR. As per the Islamabad ADR Act 2017, Courts in Islamabad as well as Government regulatory bodies will be able to refer cases for Mediation to recognized Mediators and Mediation centers.

Court Notice

In the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge-II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar, Case No. 79/1, institution 11/3/2023, date of hearing 22/5/2023, Abdullah Shah Vs Ashraf Ali etc. Notice No 2. Ahmed Ali s/o Ranja 6. Minhaj Bar s/o Jaben. 8. Farman Ali s/o Qadray resident of Daggar Tehsil Daggar District Buner. Whereas, in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants cannot 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 22/5/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte, given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Court Notice

In the Court of Abdul Halem Civil Judge-V/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar, Case No. 138/1, institution 5/4/2022, date of hearing, 24/5/2023, Gul Sher Vs Mst. Serwesa. Notice No 8. Mst. Qadray widow of Lalay 9. Hazrat Bilal s/o Lalay 1/3. Jamel s/o Mst. Serwesa resident of Hisar Tangy Daggar Buner. Whereas, in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants cannot 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 24/5/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte, given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Court Notice

In the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge-II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar, Case No. 4/1, institution 13/3/2021, date of hearing 10/5/2023, Abdul Raj Vs Sultan Zaman, Notice to No. 6/3, Mera Khan son of Fazal Rabi resident of Topai Tehsil Chaghoezai District Buner. Whereas, in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant cannot be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8:30 am dated 10/5/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex-parte, given under my hand and seal of this Court.

Court Notice

In the Court of Mr. Kaleem Ullah-II/Elaga Qazi Malakad at Bathkela, Case No. 23/6 of 2023, next date 12/05/2023, Mr. Darbar Ali Shah Versus Mr. Hazrat Jamal proclamation against legal heirs (13) Farhad s/o Naik Muhammad resident of Amandara Tehsil Bathkela District Malakand. In the above title case the service of above named defendants is not possible with ordinary means, hence, you are hereby informed through this proclamation to attend this Court on 12/05/2023 at 8:30 am in person or through appointed agent/attorney or through counsel, otherwise, you shall be place and proceed against ex-parte.



In brief

Nadal missing French Open

LONDON (Reuters): Roger Federer said he hopes Rafa Nadal will recover in time for the French Open and that it would be a "brutal" blow for tennis if the 14-time Roland Garros champion is absent this year. Nadal has been dealing with a hip injury he suffered at the Australian Open in January, and fears that the Spaniard may miss the Paris Grand Slam grew after he pulled out of this week's Italian Open. Nadal skipped last week's Madrid Open and also missed tournaments at Indian Wells, Miami, Monte Carlo and Barcelona. "It would be brutal, it would be tough for tennis if Rafa isn't going to be there," 20-times Grand Slam winner Federer told Sky Sports on Sunday at Formula One's Miami Grand Prix. "I still hope so, I saw he pulled out of Rome so I wish him the best. "Obviously Novak (Djokovic) hasn't been playing that much so I hope he's going to be strong as well and then all the young guys coming through as well," added Federer, who retired from tennis last year. Nadal has competed at the French Open every year since winning the first of his men's record 22 major titles in Paris in 2005. The claycourt major begins on May 28.

Babar Masih opens Snooker Academy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Former World Champion Babar Masih has established an academy at Satellite Town, Rawalpindi to promote snooker talent in the country and expose the young talented youth of the twin cities. Babar Masih said there was love for the game of snooker in the country among youth, therefore this was the reason I decided to establish a snooker academy 'Babri Snooker Academy'. "I am sure through this academy, the best snooker players will emerge in future, who will make the nation proud at the international level," he said speaking at the inauguration ceremony of the academy. He was of the view that the academy would promote healthy activities among the youth of the twin cities. Babar's top international performances include the 2019 Asian Championship in Doha, Qatar (gold, silver, bronze medal); Asian Championship 2018 in Doha Qatar (gold medal); World Championship Egypt 2017 (gold medal bronze); Asian Snooker Championship 2017 at Kyrgyzstan (silver medal); 2016 Asian Billiard Sports Championship (gold medal) and 2015 World Team Event Pakistan (gold medal). His national pinnacle performances comprise the 2013 Punjab Champion, 2016 Punjab Ranking Champion and 2018 Punjab Ranking Champion. On the occasion, Babu Sajid Amin Khokhar, in charge of Holy Family Catholic Church and a member of the District Peace Committee, said sports play a key role in the physical and mental development of a person. The academy was the need of the hour to promote and encourage the snooker talent of the twin cities. Young people should benefit from the academy. Just like Babar, they should also make the country proud at the international level through sports. Christian social worker Haris Ghori said there was a lot of talent in the youth of the country. There is a need for the district administration to encourage healthy activities like sports for the youth, he said.

Azan Awaits century leads Pakistan U19 to 78-run win



C H A T T O G R A M (Monitoring Desk): A century from Azan Awaiz and an all-round bowling per-

formance headed by Mohammad Ismail helped Pakistan U19 beat Bangladesh U19 by 78

runs at the Zahur Ahmed Chowdhury Stadium in Chattogram on Monday. The win gives Pakistan U19 a 2-0 lead in the five-match one-day series against Bangladesh U19. After being asked to bat first, Pakistan U19 were dismissed for 271 on the last ball of the 50th over. Azan, who returned undefeated on 69 in Pakistan U19's nine-wicket win over Bangladesh in the first one-day, scored 105 today. His innings included 15 fours which came off 125 deliveries. After the departure of Shahzaib Khan (6, 13b, 1x4), Azan was involved in a 57-run partnership with Shamiyl Hussain (33, 49b, 4x4s, 1x6) for the second wicket and later stitched 126 runs for the third wicket with captain Saad Baig (51, 64b, 4x4s, 1x6). Saad's dismissal with the score at 193 was then followed by a batting wobble that saw the tourists

lose six wickets for 42 runs, leaving them in a spot of bother at 235 for nine in 46.5 overs. Amir Hassan was then joined by Aimal Khan and the pair knitted 36-run partnership for the 10th wicket. Amir scored 29 off 18 deliveries, which included two fours and as many sixes. Aimal struck two fours in a seven-ball 13. For Bangladesh U19, Iqbal Hossain Emmon was the most successful bowler, taking four wickets for 72 runs. Mahfuzur Rahman Rabby bagged three wickets for 52 from nine overs. In turn, the visitors never allowed the hosts to score freely as the latter were bundled out for 193 in 47 overs. Only Shihab James (42, 63b, 5x4s) and Adil Bin Siddik (40, 61b, 6x4s) were the notable run-getters for the losing team. For Pakistan U19, right-arm fast Ismail took three wickets for 46, while Ali Asfand, Arafat Minhas and

Aimal Khan snapped two wickets each. After taking a 2-0 lead in the five-match one-day series, both sides will travel to Rajshahi to take part in the remaining matches scheduled on 11, 13 and 15 May at the Shahid Kamruzzaman Stadium in Rajshahi. The solitary T20 will also be played at the same venue on 17 May. **Scores in brief:** Pakistan U19 beat Bangladesh U19 by 78 runs Pakistan U19 271 all out, 50 overs (Azan Awaiz 105, Saad Baig 51, Shamiyl Hussain 33, Amir Hassan 29; Iqbal Hossain Emmon 4-72, Mahfuzur Rahman Rabby 3-52) Bangladesh U19 193 all out, 47 overs (Shihab James 42, Adil Bin Siddik 40; Mohammad Ismail 3-46, Ali Asfand 2-18, Arafat Minhas 2-44, Aimal Khan 2-50) Player of the match – Azan Awaiz (Pakistan U19).



T-Ten Global Sports chairman Nawab Shaji Ul Mulk, co-organiser Amit Patel, former Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq, Spencer Dinwiddie and former New Zealand bowler Corey Anderson.

Misbah-ul-Haq joins US Master T10

ISLAMABAD (APP): The T Ten Global Sports, organizer of the Abu Dhabi T10 and US-based SAMP Army Cricket Franchise announced the inaugural season of the US Masters T10 league in the United States in Dallas, Texas. The thrilling 10-over format matches will have legendary cricketers who have retired from the international format as well as young stars who will begin their careers in the sport, said a press release issued by the organisers. Ritesh Patel, the owner of SAMP Army Cricket Franchise - one of the main organisers of the American edition & League partner said, "Excited to bring this fast explosive cricket format to the USA. Players participating in this tournament have huge following all over the globe and this is a great opportunity for American fans to witness this for the first time on American soil." After six momentous editions of the Abu Dhabi T10, and an upcoming Indian Masters League, T Ten Global sports are thrilled to announce the inaugural edition of US Masters T10 League in USA. "T10 was founded in 2017 to bring to the format of a fast game like football and we are in the US now after 6 years. Since this is a fast, energetic and action-based sport we thought US would be great destination for a format like this." The launch of the US Masters T10 League saw in attendance cricketers like Corey Anderson, Misbah Ul Haq, Shiv Narain Chanderpaul and other USA National and Domestic players. "It's a great honour to be a part of this format in the US, especially at this age. Everyone wants the older players to play again and so US Masters T10 will be a success", said former Pakistan captain Misbah-ul-Haq. To embed the sport of cricket within the audience of America, other US sporting stars are also joining by buying ownership within teams. NBA Superstar Spencer Dinwiddie is joining the Morrisville Unity team. "I am super excited to be a part of the US Masters T10 League and working alongside Shaji Ul Mulk and Ritesh Patel that are introducing this growing international sport of Cricket to America." Kayvon Thibodeaux of the NY Giants NFL team said, "I'm excited to be a part of a growing international sport of Cricket coming to America." The league will see six teams competing in the new fastest Cricket format.

Alcaraz wins Madrid Open title for second year



MADRID (Agencies): World number two Carlos Alcaraz retained his Madrid Open title with a three-set victory over Germany's Jan-Lennard Struff. The 20-year-old Spaniard won 6-4 3-6 6-3 for his fourth trophy on the ATP Tour this season, and 10th overall. Alcaraz is the second man to defend his title in Madrid, after compatriot Rafael Nadal did so in 2014. He will replace Novak Djokovic at the top of the world rankings by simply playing in Rome next week. Alcaraz's victory in Madrid means he has won back-to-back tournaments, having won the Barcelona Open in April, and demonstrates why he is among the favourites for the French Open, which begins on 28 May. After he broke lucky loser Struff's serve in the opening game in Caja Magica, his opponent fought back to remove Alcaraz's advantage in the fourth. But after Struff held serve, US Open champion Alcaraz reeled off three straight games, later saving three break points before making the most of his first set point. Struff, the world number 65, raced into a 3-0 lead at the start of the second set before saving five break points to go 4-1 up. Despite failing to convert a break point, the 33-year-old went on to serve out the set to take the final into a decider - at which point Alcaraz found another gear. He broke to take a 3-1 lead and, while missing out on two further break points, never relinquished his advantage and served out the match to love. Alcaraz, who like women's champion Aryna Sabalenka celebrated his birthday on Friday, has lost just two matches in 2023.

Squash to be in World Games 2025

ISLAMABAD (APP): Squash would be present at The World Games in 2025, Chengdu, following the confirmation of sports at The World Games AGM in Madrid last week. The World Games was an international multi-sport competition comprising sports that were not contested in the Olympic Games and would be held in Chengdu, the capital of China's Sichuan province, from August 7 to 17, 2025, said a press release. Squash was a mainstay of The World Games and has been a part of every edition since Lahti 1997, with the exception of Akita in 2001. In 2021, Malaysian squash legend Nicol David was named as The World Games Greatest Athlete of All Time, while last year's men's winner Victor Crouin of France finished 8/23 in the race for The World Games Athlete of The Year and women's champion Tinne Gilis of Belgium was named The World Games Athlete of the Month for April 2023. Both Crouin, who upset compatriot and top seed Gregoire Marche to win the men's title in Birmingham, Alabama last year, and Gilis, who got the better of England's Lucy Beecroft in the women's final, will no doubt be eager to defend their titles in Chengdu. Squash was on the rise in China, with prestigious events such as the 2018 WSF Women's World Team Championship taking place in Dalian. Speaking on squash's inclusion in The World Games 2025, WSF President Zena Wooldridge said, "We are delighted at World Squash to see squash as part of the programme for Chengdu 2025. The World Games is such an important part of squash's global calendar, providing the very special experience of multi-sport games." "The growth of squash in China is sure to be energised over the next few years with valuable exposure during the Asian Games later this year followed by the World Games in Chengdu in 2025. We are grateful to the IWGA and to Chengdu for giving squash and its top players this opportunity to be part of major multi-sport games."

Messi back in training with PSG after club lifts suspension

PARIS (Agencies): Lionel Messi returned to training Monday with his Paris Saint-Germain teammates after the club lifted his suspension. The French team announced Messi's return on its website, posting a picture of the former Barcelona player running with a ball at the club's training ground. PSG did not officially say whether Messi's disciplinary punishment had been revoked, but a person with knowledge of the situation told The Associated Press that the Argentina star resumed his training after the suspension was lifted. The person spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to publicly discuss the matter. The move suggests that the World Cup winner will be available for PSG's next league game against Ajaccio on Saturday, barring an injury. With four games left to play, PSG tops the league standings with a



six-point lead over Lens. PSG had not specified the length of the suspension, though French media reported it to be two weeks. Messi missed practice last Monday while he was on a promotional trip to Saudi Arabia, and the French club announced his suspension a day later. Messi apologized to the

club and his teammates for traveling without PSG's permission. Messi, who joined PSG in August 2021, is not expected to extend his contract with PSG beyond this season. PSG fans hoped his arrival would result in an elusive Champions League title. Instead, the Qatari-backed club was eliminated in the round of 16 in consecutive seasons. After a good start to the season, Messi has failed to replicate that form since returning from the World Cup. Still, he has scored 15 league goals and leads the French league with 15 assists. Reports have linked him to Inter Miami in Major League Soccer, a return to Barcelona, and a lucrative move to Saudi Arabia. Messi joined PSG after winning every major title with Barcelona. The Catalan club that Messi called home from the age of 13 couldn't afford to keep him because of large debts and the Spanish league's financial regulations.

Babar Azam says Pakistan 'in good position' for World Cup



KARACHI (AFP): Captain Babar Azam says the "dominant" one-day series win over New Zealand sets Pakistan up nicely for the World Cup, despite doubts over their participation. The hosts beat a depleted New Zealand 4-1 in the five-match series and on their way briefly reached the top of the one-day rankings for the first time. Pakistan scored 337 in the second match — their second-highest successful chase in one-day internationals — and Azam became the fastest player to 5,000 ODI runs en route to his 18th century in the format.

Opener Fakhar Zaman meanwhile achieved the distinction of hitting hundreds in three successive ODIs, firmly establishing his place in Pakistan's top three, which also includes opener Imam-ul-Haq. Uncertainty looms over Pakistan's participation in the World Cup in October-November because of tensions with hosts India. Despite that and defeat in the final match on Sunday, Azam was in buoyant mood. "Winning the series is great and so is achieving number one ranking that has set us in a good position for the World Cup," said the skipper. Asked if the uncertainty was worrying for the Pakistan team, Azam said: "We can't say anything about that, but wherever we get a chance to play, we will play." The stand-off started last year when India announced it would not send a team to Pakistan for the Asia Cup in September, a month before the World Cup. In response, the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has threatened to pull out of the World Cup. There are signs of a thaw, however. Last week Pakistan Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari visited India to attend the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation in Goa —

the first visit by a senior Pakistani official in years. — No easy win — Azam refused to accept that in missing eight of their top players — mostly due to Indian Premier League duty — New Zealand were easy to beat. "You don't play an international team thinking that they are a junior team," said Azam. "You have to give 100 percent to win against an international team, so we played better and dominated." Pakistan won the first two matches by five and seven wickets in Rawalpindi before clinching the next two by 26 and 102 runs in Karachi. New Zealand took the final game by 47 runs, also in Karachi. Stand-in New Zealand skipper Tim Latham said the series was useful despite the results. "We wanted to expose players to different roles and I think it was a great opportunity for all of them to experience these conditions," he said. New Zealand are sweating on the fitness of regular skipper Kane Williamson, who injured his knee during the IPL and looks likely to miss the World Cup. New Zealand were runners-up in the last two World Cups, in 2015 and 2019.

NBA play-offs: James Harden stars as Philadelphia 76ers level series with Boston Celtics

PHILADELPHIA (Agencies): James Harden scored 42 points as the Philadelphia 76ers beat the Boston Celtics in overtime to level their play-off series at 2-2. Harden scored to send the game into overtime then made the decisive three-pointer to clinch a 116-115 win. Philadelphia led for much of the game before a late Boston surge helped them move into the lead. The Phoenix Suns beat the Denver Nuggets 129-124 to ensure their series is also level going into game five. Devin Booker and Kevin Durant scored 36 points apiece

while Landry Shamet was a surprise hero off the bench, scoring 14 of his 19 points in the fourth quarter. Booker shot 14-for-18 and registered 12 assists while Durant added 11 rebounds and six assists as fourth-seeded Phoenix won their second straight game. A career-best 53-point display by Nikola Jokic, who was succeeded as the league's Most Valuable Player this season by 76ers star Joel Embiid, came in vain for top-seeded Denver. Jokic was given an unsportsmanlike technical foul just before half-time after an incident involving Mat Ishbia, who

became the Suns owner in February. The ball went out of bounds and ended up in the hands of Ishbia, sitting in the front row. As Jokic tried to get the ball back, Ishbia held onto it and after it came loose, the Serb pushed Ishbia with the outside of his forearm, sending the 43-year-old back into his seat. "The fan put their hand on me first," said Jokic, 28. "I thought the league was supposed to protect us." Nuggets coach Michael Malone added: "Some fan is holding onto the ball who wants be a part of the game. Just give the ball up, man."

For the third-seeded 76ers, Embiid supported Harden with 34 points while Jayson Tatum (24), Jaylen Brown (23) and Marcus Smart (21) had helped to keep the Celtics in the game until the dying seconds. Smart thought he had won it for Boston, the second seed in the Eastern Conference, but his last-ditch three-pointer came after the buzzer. "I put the work in and it was all about being aggressive. Tonight it was really do or die," Harden said. Game five in their best-of-seven series is on Tuesday in Boston, while the Suns and Nuggets meet again in Denver



on Tuesday. So far the home team has won each game in their Western Conference semi-final series.



In brief

16 girl students injured

RAWALPINDI (INP): As many as 16 girl students were injured after attacked by honey bees in the Cantonment area of Rawalpindi Saddar on Monday. A spokesman of the school said that honey bees attacked the girl students after a student hit the honeybee comb. As a result, 16 students were injured who were shifted to the local hospital of Saddar Cantt area of Rawalpindi for treatment.

AIOU to conduct MA, MSc exams

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is conducting examinations of MA, M.Sc, M.Com, MBA/MPA (Commonwealth of Learning), MLIS, M.Ed, and Postgraduate diplomas offered in the autumn 2022 semester from May 22. The date sheet is available on the university website (www.aiou.edu.pk). Roll number slips have been uploaded to students' CMS portal and dispatched to the students at their addresses as well. According to Controller Examinations, Mian Muhammad Riaz, "Students can apply for a change of examination centers till May 17, university administration will process the applications as per eligibility, rules, and regulations. Moreover, admissions for the second phase of the semester of spring 2023 are open till May 25. The admission form and prospectus are available on the university website."

Sufi night leaves audience spellbound

ISLAMABAD (APP): A large number of Sufi music enthusiasts from the twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad on Sunday night flocked to the Pakistan National Council of the Arts (PNCA) to witness the magical Sufi performance of Ustad Shabih Sen. In a bid to convey the profound message of Sufism through the universal language of music and to celebrate the country's vibrant cultural heritage, the Society of Asian Civilizations Pakistan orchestrated the enchanting show. Addressing the audience as chief guest, Chairperson National Commission on the Status of Women, Nilofar Bakhtiar said that there was a great need to organize cultural events as hate was spreading in every nook and corner of the country. "As an ardent admirer of peace and a devoted patron of the arts, I firmly believe that art has the unique ability to bring about positivity and promote tolerance in society. In light of this, I am convinced that events of this nature are an absolute necessity in our current time, as they have the power to foster a culture of acceptance and understanding in our beloved country," she said. As the evening progressed, acclaimed Sufi artist Ustad Shabih Sen took to the stage, delivering a soul-stirring performance in Urdu, Persian and Punjabi languages that left the audience spellbound. The Sufi singer's enchanting voice, coupled with his skillful command over various musical mantras created a magical ambience that transported the audience into a world of pure bliss. Shumaila Anjum, a student from Chakwal talking to APP, said that the Sufi genre of music had the ability to captivate its audience, unlike any other music. "Ustad Shabih Sen's magical performance has created a breathtaking atmosphere at PNCA and has pushed everyone into a world of spirituality," she remarked.



ISLAMABAD: A beautiful view of clouds hovering over Faisal Masjid.

NDMA conducts first ever NIDM workshop in GB on disaster management

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA)'s National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM) conducted its first-ever workshop on local needs and gaps analysis in Gilgit Baltistan disaster management on Monday. The workshop was aimed to assess the region's disaster management needs and find solutions to its gaps in emergency preparedness, a news release said.

Vice-chancellors of Karakoram International University (KIU) and the University of Baltistan, Sakardu (UOBS) along with their head of departments, members of faculty, DG GBDMA, students, NGOs, government departments, and mem-

bers of the Armed Forces participated in the session.

Chairman NDMA, Lieutenant General Inam Haider Malik virtually addressed the workshop and emphasized the need for scientific and research-driven emergency preparedness modules and mock exercises to strengthen resilience against climatic hazards and tourism security during emergencies in GB.

He also highlighted the role of community awareness, education, and engagement through multiple communication channels, private partners, and regional NGOs.

Chairman The National Disaster Management Authority also responded to questions of participants and acknowledged

incorporating the session's recommendations into the National Preparedness and Response System.

He also suggested coordination with global universities and think tanks to facilitate knowledge sharing, experiences and best practices related to disaster management.

Chairman NDMA said that through proactive approaches for disaster preparedness and response planning, we can ensure that every community in Pakistan is equipped to handle any crisis that may arise.

He reaffirmed NDMA's commitment to multi-hazard preparedness nationwide and the spirit of cooperation among all stakeholders for a disaster-resilient Pakistan.

Vesak Day event showcases rich Gandhara Heritage of Pakistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Tourism Development Corporation (PTDC), in collaboration with the Gandhara Resource Center Pakistan (GRCP), Guangdong Guangji Foundation, Paper Miracle, Center for Culture and Development, and the Department of Archeology and Tourism Punjab, successfully organized a grand Vesak Day event to showcase the country's rich heritage of Gandhara civilization.

Distinguished participants, including the ambassadors and high commissioners of Sri Lanka and Nepal, as well as federal and provincial government officials, scholars, and philanthropists, gathered to celebrate and honor the ancient Buddhist heritage of Gandhara, a news release said.

The event commenced at Taxila Museum, where the esteemed attendees were warmly welcomed by Rana Aftab, Managing Director of PTDC. Dr. Nadeem Omar Tarar, Gandhara Chair at the University of Wah, led the group to the Dharamrajika Stupa in

Taxila, a site renowned for its relics of Lord Buddha, graciously deposited by King Ashoka.

This standing ceremony served as a symbolic homage to the spiritual significance of the region.

Following the ceremonial proceedings, the participants proceeded to the Gandhara Art Village Taxila, facilitated by the Punjab Small Industries Development Corporation, for an enlightening seminar titled "Gandhara: The Second Home of Buddhism." Dr. Nadeem Omar Tarar moderated the seminar, ensuring a fruitful exchange of ideas and insights.

During the seminar, the High Commissioner of Sri Lanka emphasized the profound importance of the Gandhara heritage of Pakistan for Buddhists around the world. The Ambassador of Nepal echoed this sentiment, highlighting the cultural significance of Gandhara for Nepal, as the birthplace of Buddha.

Notable guest speakers shared their perspectives on the occasion. Imran Shaukat, CEO of Jobs

International, reflected on the potential for cultural diplomacy through Buddhism between Thailand and Pakistan. Rana Aftab, MD of PTDC, expressed his optimism for the growth of religious tourism in Pakistan. The Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Religious Affairs updated the audience on the ministry's efforts to promote religious tourism in the country.

Kim Hor ToH, Chief Architect of Surbana Jurong and a patron of GRCP, highlighted the significance of international support from Buddhist countries in assisting local Buddhist communities in Pakistan. Amber Tajwar, CEO of Guangdong Guangji Foundation, provided an overview of the invaluable contributions of Chinese Buddhist charities in advancing healthcare and education in Pakistan. Dr. Zafar Mirza, former SAPM, commended the Gandhara Resource Center Pakistan for raising awareness and promoting Buddhist religious tourism in Taxila.

CTP starts campaign against PSVs vehicles with substandard CNG cylinders

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi on the directive of DIG Traffic Punjab Mirza Farhan Baig on Monday launched crackdown against Public Service Vehicles (PSVs) plying on roads having substandard CNG cylinders.

According to a CTP spokesman, strict action in accordance with the law would be taken against the violators.

He informed that the Chief Traffic Officer CTO Taimoor Khan had directed all the Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs) and Sector Incharges of CTP to take action against the rules violators without any discrimination.

He directed the CTP officers to impound vehicles on violation of the rules and remove low quality and substandard CNG cylinders installed in unsafe and

dangerous manner.

He said adding, in order to ensure safety of the citizens and to bring down the mishaps due to substandard CNG cylinders, the operation had been accelerated. Action in accordance with the law was also being taken against PSVs plying on roads without fitness certificates, he added. He said, the drivers and owners of the vehicles would not be allowed to put the lives of the citizens into danger and install illegal and low quality cylinders in their vehicles. The crackdowns would continue and the rules violators would be penalized, he added. During the campaign, CTP issued 36 challan slips to the violators. CTP also impounded 05 vehicles in different police station.

Imran's popularity limited to social media: Uzma

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) senior leader Uzma Bukhari on Monday said Imran Khan's popularity was limited to social media as the public got to know that he was all talk and no action.

Talking to a private news channel, she said in terms of negotiations with PTI, she believed that it was pointless to negotiate with a person who lacked credibility, as Imran Khan was prone to making decisions but then reversing them due to his indecisive mindset. The election should take place at its scheduled time in October 2023, neither earlier nor later, she added.

As for the demand for elections within 90 days, Uzma questioned why this requirement applied solely to the Punjab province.

Upgradation of Skardu-Jaglot Road continues

ISLAMABAD (APP): Improvement, upgradation and expansion project of the 167 km strategic road Skardu-Jaglot Road (S-1) is continuing at a good pace and so far over 83 per cent progress has been achieved.

An official of the National Highway Authority told on Monday that its upgradation would enhance the comfortable road ride for locals as well as tourists by increasing the width of the road from 3.6 to 7.3 meters and reducing the sharp turns.

He said that the Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) had given the approval of the project on July 10, 2017, and its revised cost would be established as 32.325 billion. During the present fiscal year, Rs 2 billion have been allocated for the project, he said.

The official said the project has been assigned to Frontier Works Organization (FWO) which had laid the initial track in 1984. Jaglot-Skardu road, the official said, a major link between Karakoram Highway and Skardu has 3.66-meter width of blacktop.

The difficult terrain has intense snowfall and major rock sliding, the NHA official added.

Zardari congrats party workers on winning local body polls in Sindh

ISLAMABAD (APP): President Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians (PPPP) Asif Ali Zardari has congratulated the party workers on their success in local body elections in Sindh.

Asif Zardari has also congratulated the Sindh Chief Minister, his cabinet and party workers, said a press release issued here by the party secretariat.

He while congratulating the party of Karachi said that they have performed brilliantly. The victory of PPP candidates across the province is the result of the hard work of the workers, Asif Zardari said.

He said that the Jiyalas all over the country should prepare now for the gener-

al elections. The future belongs to the Jiyalas, Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's strength is the activists and supporters of PPP. "We will contest the elections with full preparation. He said that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has mastered his skills as the Foreign Minister. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari is the chain of four provinces like his great mother," he added.

He said Bilawal Bhutto went to India despite threats from Indian extremists.

Asif Zardari said that Quaid-e-Awam Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's political successors are continuing their legacy through demonstrating sheer courage.

Senate Body briefed regarding role, working of EOBI

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senator Anwar ul Haq Kakar chaired that meeting of Senate Standing Committee on Overseas Pakistanis and Human Resource Development was held here at Parliament House on Monday.

The Senate Committee was briefed by Chairperson Employees Old Age Benefits Institution (EOBI) regarding the role and working of the institution. Naheed Shah Durrani, Chairperson EOBI, apprised that EOBI is a leading institution which provides social security to its citizens to enhance the quality of their lives.

She informed that EOBI has received a contribution of Rs.180 Billion during the last ten years. Moreover, during the financial year 2022-23, EOBI is expected to receive a contribution revenue of Rs. 38 billion against an approved target of Rs.33

Billion, she added. However, despite the importance of EOBI, no attention has been given over strengthening the administrative structure and Board of EOBI, she stated.

Sensor Shahadat Awan lamented that why the members of Board have not been change since 2013. In reply to that, She maintained that since the devolution, both the Punjab and Sindh Province has refused to accept EOBI as a Federal subject and that is why its members have not been replaced in all these years.

While deliberating on the current status of 18 criminal cases, Senator Shahadat Awan questioned as to whether the challan have been filed against the accused or not and as to why the inquiry has not been initiated in all these years. Chairperson EOBI commented that filing challan against the accused

have been filed and the process was delayed due to indifferent attitude of FIA as filling charged or challan is prerogative of FIA not EOBI. However, she requested the Chairman committee to invite FIA in the next meeting.

Sensor Anwar ul Haq Kakar directed the EOBI to submit copies of challan and decided to take briefing from FIA on the subject matter in the next meeting.

The meeting was attended by Senator Manzoor Ahmed Kakar, State Minister for Law and Justice Senator Shahadat Awan, Senator Shaheen Khalid Butt, Senator Muhammad Asad Ali Khan Junejo, Senator Prince Ahmed Omer Ahmed Zai, Secretary for MOPHRD Zulfikar Haider. Chairperson EOBI Naheed Shah Durrani and other senior officers of relevant departments were also in attendance.

Sherry Rehman felicitates PPP leadership, workers

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change, Senator Sherry Rehman on Monday felicitated the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leadership and party workers on the victory in the local body by-elections.

In a series of tweets, the federal minister extended her congratulations for achieving a landslide victory in the local body polls. Senator Rehman said, "Once again in Karachi PPP's arrow bagged maximum votes."

"I congratulate the leadership of the People's Party, elected candidates, voters and workers for the success in the local body by-elections."

She added that success in 7 out of 11 Union Councils was proof of the popularity and public confidence of the People's Party. She extended her gratitude to the

voters for their trust.

"The People's Party is engaged in public service throughout Sindh, that is the reason why the People's Party has emerged as the largest party in the provincial local elections," Sherry Rehman said.

The credit for this success and popularity of PPP goes to Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, Asif Ali Zardari and Faryal Talpur, she said, adding, "We are equally excited for the general elections."

Under the leadership of Chairman Bilawal, the People's Party was ready to contest the general elections across the country, Sherry Rehman said. "We prove our popularity by votes, not social media trends. We are hopeful that the People's Party will once again emerge as the largest party in the federation," she vowed.

Kundi lauds Bilawal for highlighting Kashmir issue at Int'l forum

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the

Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi Monday lauded Young Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's visit to India "more successful than expectation" as he forcefully presented the case of Kashmiris at the international forum.

"FM' insistence on implementation of the United Nations resolutions is encouraging", he said

while talking to a private news channel.

He further said that due to Pakistan's strong stand on the issue of the region, India's negative propaganda has been exposed.

Kundi said that the foreign minister not only adopted a firm stand on the key issues of conflict between India and Pakistan but also highlighted the centrality of the Kashmir dispute and his country's demand that the Modi government

should revoke all the illegal actions it had taken after 5th August 2019.

Replying to a question, Kundi regretted that the PTI is pursuing a particular agenda against the national interests, adding, Imran Khan's political agenda stood for ruining Pakistani society, institutions, and economy.

Replying to another question, he said that Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf leadership now only wished to return to Parliament.



ISLAMABAD: Children playing with glass balls on the green belt near Sitara Market.

Two artifacts handed over

KABUL (Agencies): Two historical artifacts were handed over to the Badghis Directorate of Information and Culture. The provincial Director of Information and Culture Akhundzada Mutiullah Muttaqi, said that a person handed over two historical relics, the historical background is shown before the Islamic era. Dozens of historical artifacts were handed over to the provincial Directorates of Information and Culture by people in different provinces of the country.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Shawwal 18, 1444 — Tuesday, May 09, 2023

Military vehicles repaired

KABUL (Agencies): A total of 60 Various military vehicles which had earlier been destroyed and were unusable during the former governments have been repaired by the technical teams of 207th Al-Farooq Army Corps. The repaired vehicles include Hamvee and armored tanks, internationals, cranes, and ambulances. Efforts are underway to repair all destroyed and unusable military vehicles and return all illegally kept vehicles from irresponsible individuals country-wide.

Recent Chinese investment, contracts worth \$2b: MoIC

KABUL (TOLONews): The Ministry of Industry and Commerce said that China has signed investment contracts in various areas worth around \$2 billion after the collapse of the former government in Afghanistan.

A spokesman for the MoIC, Akhundzada Abdul Salam Jawad, said that there has been Chinese investment in the extraction of mines, services at airports, as well as in industrial parks.

"The contracts have been signed for the extraction of mines, in areas of

providing services at the airports, and the formation of industrial parks. Practical work has begun and total investment is reaching \$2 billion. There will be contracts for the modernization of customs offices and other areas with foreign companies," he said.

This comes as the head of a union of Chinese companies, Yu ming hui, said that more than 20 companies are active in Afghanistan currently.

"There are... 21 companies active in various parts of Kabul," he said.

A number of Chinese

investors on Saturday held a meeting with the deputy Minister of Industry and Mines.

"I think that China wants to influence the politics of Afghanistan through a window of economic cooperation and undermine the role of its major rivals in Afghanistan's politics," said Shakir Yaqobi, political analyst.

China has signed contracts for major projects in Afghanistan within the last decade including with the Mes Aynak copper mines and Amu Darya oil projects.

37 criminals arrested by police in Kabul

KABUL (Agencies): Police have arrested at least 37 individuals, in connection with murder, robbery, money trafficking, and other crimes in the capital Kabul and other provinces of the country, the Ministry of Interior Affairs of the IEA, said in a statement Monday.

The police personnel of the ministry have arrested at least 37 people who were involved in stealing, murdering, and illegally transferring foreign currencies to the neighboring countries, the statement said.

A group of ten members, in connection with murder and robbery have been arrested in the country's northern province of Takhar, ten individuals charged with various crimes in Kunduz, seven in Balkh, and three others in connection with moral corruption in Kabul, the statement said.

In the country's northern provinces of Kunduz and Badakhshan and two others on charge of murder and armed theft in Herat and Uruzgan provinces," the statement said.

Meanwhile, the border forces of the Islamic Emirate have also arrested one in connection with the trafficking of 100,000 Dirham and 25,000 Ethe outside of the country in the Kabul International Airport, the statement further said.

The detainees have been taken to the justice and judiciary organs for further investigation in their files, the statement added.

Also, security forces of the IEA have earlier arrested dozens of people on charges of murdering, stealing, trafficking, and illegally keeping military weapons and ammunition across the country.

Since the resumption of power by the Islamic Emirate, criminal activities are being tracked down all over the country, with the related organs committed to pursuing criminals everywhere, arresting them, and bringing them to law.

Envoy reiterates continued support

KANDAHAR (Agencies): The ambassador of Japan in Afghanistan said during a trip to Kandahar province that the political representation of his country will remain in Afghanistan and that Tokyo will continue to support this country.

In a tweet, the embassy confirmed Takashi Okada's visit to Kandahar and to UN projects in the province. Okada also met with some locals and listened to their problems, the embassy tweeted.

He also met with children, at school in a tent, and promised them that they will get a new school building by next year.

Okada also visited a health center in Panjwayi district and said that Japan and the UNHCR are building a hospital in the district.

Japan is a key financial sponsor of UN humanitarian projects in Afghanistan and has provided large-scale assistance over the years. Although no country has recognized the new government of Afghanistan so far, several countries have kept or reopened their embassies in Kabul and actively engage with the IE.

Minister calls on int'l investor in invest in Afghanistan



KABUL (Khaama Press): Acting Rural Rehabilitation and Development Minister, Mohammad Younus Akhundzada in a meeting with the Afghan Aid organization called on foreign investors to invest in different sectors in Afghanistan.

The Acting Rural Rehabilitation and Development Minister met with the head of the Afghan Aid organization, Charles Davy, the ministry said in a statement.

"Humanitarian aid is vital for the people of Afghanistan during these difficult times, however, work must be done in the basic sectors," Akhundzada said.

For his part, Charles Davy, head of the Afghan Aid humanitarian aid organization, expressed his optimism about the provision of national aid in Afghanistan – adding that national and international aid groups should stand with the people of Afghanistan and continue delivering vital aid.

Minister Akhundzada

praised the Afghan Aid Organization for its continued services in Afghanistan and said that humanitarian aid is not helping Afghans.

He called on national and international investors to invest in the infrastructure sectors of the country.

Since the overthrow of the previous regime in August 2021, foreign investment has shrunk to an absolute zero according to sources. Several development projects managed by international organizations

and donors remained incomplete.

On the contrary, China and Iran are the only regional countries that have shown interest in investing in mining and construction projects in Afghanistan.

Afghan Aid, a UK-based organization has been serving in Afghanistan for 40 years in different sectors by conducting long-term and short-term projects, combating accidents, livelihood programs, and agriculture and development projects.

Turkish companies to invest in wind power plants



KABUL (Khaama Press): The Ministry of Water and Energy reported that a Turkish company is interested in contributing to a 200 MW wind power project in Afghanistan.

According to the Ministry of Water and Energy, the acting Water and Energy Minister, Abdul Latif Mansour, met with the President of Turkish 77 construction company Suliman Ciliv and discussed energy production from various sources.

"Both parties agreed to sign a cooperation agree-

ment to invest in a 200 megawatts wind power generation project as soon as possible so that based on this agreement, the practical works of this project will start in the future," the Ministry said.

On the other hand, the second phase of the Kajaki hydroelectric project was completed by the 77 Turkish companies, which Mansour referred to as "a valuable achievement for the people of Afghanistan."

Mansour also praised the investment in the energy industry and reaffirmed the

Ministry's leadership's commitment to collaboration.

Afghanistan's primary energy sources are hydropower, fossil fuels, and solar power. However, at the moment, more than half of the country's electricity is imported from its neighbours.

Afghanistan has much potential for developing wind power as it is a plentiful renewable energy source. However, the country still needs to fully realise this potential due to a lack of infrastructure and investment.

Tehran asked to help doctors increase skills

KABUL (TOLONews): The Islamic Emirate acting minister of public health, Qalandar Ibad, in the "G5 meeting," asked Tehran to help Afghanistan raise the capacity of its physicians.

Sharafat Zaman Amar-khil, the spokesman for the Ministry of Public Health, said that Afghanistan needs more in terms of increasing the capacity of doctors in the treatment of cancer.

"Our goal at these meetings is to provide the foundation for the diagnostic and treatment fields in Afghanistan, as well as to build medical facilities in

the country's unpopulated areas and lay a foundation for enhancing the skills of Afghan physicians," the spokesman said.

Some doctors said that the conditions for increasing the capability of doctors—especially female doctors—should be provided inside the country.

"It will be good if the acting public health minister takes inspiration from a country like Iran and comes back to the country and creates a good system for women to increase their capacity in the country," said Sayed Abdullah Ahmadi,

the former head of Wazir Akbar Khan Hospital.

"Our specialists should be sent to Iran on scholarships for training, or Iranian specialists should be invited to conduct trainings for the specialists of each of our departments inside the country," said Omid, a physician.

The "G5" meeting, which included representatives from Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Afghanistan, and the World Health Organization (WHO), is held in Iran with the aim of strengthening cooperation between these countries.

IEA to provide support for media raises concerns

KABUL (Khaama Press): Acting Minister of Information and Culture, Mullah Khairullah Khairkhal, has said the ministry plans to provide financial support for the media.

The prospect of the plan being implemented has raised concerns about the loss of media freedom under the Taliban administration.

Minister Khaikhal, in a meeting with journalists in Ghazni province said the interim government has considered providing financial support for media. The Ministry of Information and Culture is working on a plan so that the media should receive financial support and continue serving the Afghan community.

Free speech experts and media-supporting institutions are not very optimistic about the implementation of this plan. They believe that Islamic Emirate is trying to control media and enforce censorship.

In response to this plan,

Nai-Supporting Open Media in Afghanistan has said that the Taliban's financial support should not undermine the independence of the media.

Nai has emphasized that the financial support should be in good deeds and does not affect the independence, operation and content of the media—adding it should not enforce censorship.

A university lecturer in journalism and media

expert told to Khaama Press that the allocation of financial support to media from the Taliban administration is worrisome.

He believes the economic challenges of the media and journalists have positioned the media community in a dire situation, and the Taliban are trying to increase their influence over media and change the content of media to their advantage.

DAB to auction 14m USD

KABUL (Agencies): Da Afghanistan Bank (DAB) said that it will put in auction 14 million US dollars as part of efforts to keep the local currency afghani stable by Tuesday. The Central Bank has asked eligible banks and money changer services to participate in the tender, adding that the winners of the auction are obliged to settle their accounts by the end of the day. Partial settlement of transactions is not allowed and the winners of the auction are obliged to deliver the money owed to Da Afghanistan Bank in cash once, within a certain time, the bank added. Lately, the central bank auctioned 14 million US dollars to further strengthen the value of the Afghani currency. The exchange rate of one US dollar has been announced at 87.60 afghanis Monday.

EU: Afghanistan's vulnerability to climate change discussed at conference

KABUL (TOLONews): The European Union delegation in Afghanistan said that Afghanistan is the 4th most at-risk country from humanitarian crises and disasters.

The EU Delegation hosted a discussion on climate change in Afghanistan, the EU Delegation to Afghanistan said in a statement, adding that the meeting was chaired by Raffaella Iodice, Chargée d'Affaires a.i. to Afghanistan, and Melinda Good, World Bank Country Director Afghanistan, with

EU Special Envoy to Afghanistan Tomas Niklasson attending.

"Looking ahead, the consequences of climate change have the potential to unleash a level of destruction on Afghan society that is comparable to the devastation wrought by the decades of war. With several severe droughts over the last decade alone, the impact of climate change is already having a disastrous impact on the lives of the Afghan people. Therefore I feel there is an urgency for

everybody to take these signs seriously and to take action," Iodice said.

Niklasson said "our discussion today is meant to re-start a conversation on climate change in Afghanistan. Together, we can make a difference in the lives of Afghan people and forge a more sustainable, resilient, and prosperous future for all."

The EU delegation also on Twitter said that "climate change affects us all, but Afghanistan is one of the world's most vulnerable

nations to its impacts, ranked 176th out of 181 countries."

The Afghanistan Chamber of Agriculture and Livestock said that in recent years drought and floods have inflicted heavy damage on the farmers.

"Afghanistan is an agricultural land. Every year our farmers have damage from climate change and floods.

We propose to the Agriculture Ministry to provide treatments to protect crops," said Mirwais Hajizada, deputy of

ACAL.Economists said that there is an need for investment to eliminate the humanitarian crisis and cope with economic challenges.

"If the work is being implemented on standardization and marketing for agriculture products, it will undoubtedly create jobs," said Abdul Naseer Rishtia, an economist.

This comes as the Ministry of Economy said that efforts are underway to alleviate the existing challenges in the country through investment.

4000 hectares of poppy fields destroyed: Ministry of Interior

KABUL (TOLONews): The counter-narcotics department of the Ministry of Interior (MoI) said that so far it has destroyed 4,000 hectares of poppy fields in the country.

Hasiullah Ahmadi, head of the MoI, added that the process of destroying poppy fields is ongoing in Badakhshan, Kunduz, Takhar and Faryab provinces.

"About 4000 thousand hectares of land have been cleared of drug cultivation in the center and provinces of the country," Ahmadi noted. The Kabul Security Command reported that after the Islamic Emirate returned to power, more than 1,000 people were arrested in connection with drug trafficking and its sales in the capital.

"1000 suspects have been arrested and turned over to the law in Kabul. These were the narcotics sellers and smugglers," said Kabul security department



spokesman Khalid Zadrán.

Some farmers whose poppy fields have been destroyed asked the current government to provide them with alternative crops.

"We ask the current government to provide us with

an alternative to opium cultivation and help us because our children are dying of hunger," said Wali Mohammad, a resident of Uruzgan.

The counter-narcotics department of the Ministry

of Interior (MoI), said that based on the surveys of recent years, there are between 3.5 million and 4 million drug users in the nation. The MoI has recently begun a new survey on the matter.

Sudanese pin hopes on Jeddah talks between warring factions

KHARTOUM (Agencies): Sudanese are pinning their hopes on talks in Saudi Arabia between envoys of warring factions to end bloodshed that has killed hundreds and triggered a mass exodus, but there is no sign lasting relief will come anytime soon. There has been no word on the progress of the talks which began on Saturday between the army and the rival paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) in the Saudi Red Sea city of Jeddah.

The combatants have said they would only try to tackle humanitarian issues like safe passage, not an end to the war. Numerous ceasefires have been violated since the conflict erupted on April 15. The sound of air strikes and clashes echoed anew across the capital Khartoum on Monday, witnesses said. "If the Jeddah negotiations fail to stop the war this would mean that we won't be able to return to our homes and our lives," said Tamader Ibrahim, a 35-year-old government employee in Bahri, across the Blue Nile river from Khartoum.

"We're waiting on these negotiations because they're our only hope," Mahjoub Salah, a 28-year-old doctor, said the areas of the capital hit by violence changed from day to day. Salah witnessed heavy fighting and a neighbour getting shot in the abdomen in his central Khartoum district of Al Amarat last month, before renting a flat for his family southeast of the capital.

"We're still waiting for our passports to get issued, but we don't know how long this will take," Salah said. "Then our plan is to travel from Port Sudan to Saudi Arabia." The US-

Saudi initiative is the first serious attempt to end fighting that has turned parts of Khartoum into war zones, stymied an internationally backed plan to usher in civilian rule after years of unrest, and touched off a humanitarian crisis. A Saudi Foreign Ministry statement said "pre-negotiation" talks began on Saturday and "will continue in the coming days in the expectation of reaching an effective short-term ceasefire to facilitate humanitarian assistance."

However, the scope of talks is limited. "We are not for negotiation right now with (RSF chief) General Hemedti," Dafallah Alhaj, an envoy to the armed forces chief, General Abdel-Fattah al-Burhan, said in South Sudan on Monday. "What we are doing now is just looking for a ceasefire so that we are able to provide a conducive situation for a humanitarian corridor, but for direct peace talks we are not ready," he added.

Sudan's Forces of Freedom and Change, a political grouping leading the plan to transition to a civilian democracy after decades of military-dominated authoritarianism, welcomed the Jeddah talks on Saturday. However, analysts have advised caution on the outcome, noting the presence of hardliners in the delegations and recent RSF territorial gains that may dissuade the powerful militia from concessions now. "Key domestic and international stakeholders are not there like Egypt and the UAE, who are the only ones so far who have proven that they can guarantee a ceasefire," said Kholood Khair, director of Confluence Advisory, a Sudanese think-tank.

"That no civilians are present recreates failings of previous political negotiations," she said, adding that African states that support civilian rule in Sudan were also not present. Battles since mid-April have killed hundreds of people and wounded thousands of others, disrupted aid supplies and sent 100,000 people fleeing abroad. United Nations aid chief Martin Griffiths is in Jeddah for the talks to engage on humanitarian issues in Sudan, his spokesperson said.

The RSF released what it said was a video of Sudanese army soldiers who surrendered. As one of them started to speak, shooting could be heard in the background. Thousands of people are seeking to leave from Port Sudan on boats to Saudi Arabia, paying for expensive commercial flights via Sudan's only working airport, or using evacuation flights. Conflicts are not new to Sudan, a country that sits at a strategic crossroads between Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Ethiopia and the volatile Sahel region.

But most of them occurred in remote areas. This time intense fighting in Khartoum, one of Africa's biggest cities, has made the conflict far more alarming for Sudanese. Since the fighting erupted, the UN refugee agency has registered more than 30,000 people crossing into South Sudan, more than 90 per cent of them South Sudanese. The true number is likely much higher, it says. Aid agencies fear the influx will worsen an already dire humanitarian crisis in South Sudan, which won independence from Khartoum in 2011 after decades of civil war.



ISLAMABAD: Ameer of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Maulana Hamid-Ul-Haq Haqqani meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Amir Khan Muttaqi.

Govt passes landmark Act, 2022: NA told

Hygienic condition in one prison bad from another

Humayun Khan

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Human Rights Mian Riaz Hussain Pirzada on Monday informed the National Assembly that the present regime passed landmark legislation "Torture and Custodial Death (Prevention and Punishment) Act, 2022 aimed at providing protection to a person during custody from all acts of torture perpetrated by public officials.

Responding to a question during Question Hour, the minister said the government was committed to ensuring safety and protection of human rights in the country by adopting legal measures. The latest legislation was beneficial for the public as it ensured safeguard against custodial torture and the conduct of humiliating citizens in custody while depriving them of their basic fundamental rights.

In written reply to another question, the house was informed that the Human Rights Ministry has taken up 23,173 cases/complaints of human rights violation through its four Regional Offices located at Lahore, Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta and Islamabad during the last three years. The National Assembly was informed on Monday that the government is providing a subsidy of 92 billion rupees to agricultural tubewells to facilitate the farming community across Pakistan. Responding to a question during Question Hour, Parliamentary Secretary on Energy Rana Iradat Sharif said the government is utilizing all resources to provide cheap electricity to consumers. He said a subsidy of 7.86 rupees per unit is being provided on agricultural connections of electricity.

Responding to another question, the Parliamentary Secretary said crude oil is being imported on deferred payment basis only from Saudi Arabia. Responding to a calling attention notice, Parliamentary Secretary for Communication Shahida Akhtar Ali informed the House that work on Chitral, Buni-Shandoor road will be restored as soon as the Finance and Planning Divisions release funds. She said neither this project has been closed nor abolished. She said there were many reasons behind the temporary halt in the construction work on this project.

PESHAWAR: Chief Justice Peshawar High Court (PHC) Justice Musart Hilali observed that she has found during her visits to different jails worsen hygienic condition of prison from another jail while 80% inmates are undertrial accused while only 20% are convicted culprits, on Monday.

Chief Justice continued that concrete steps are taking to improve facilities for inmates and that She has found prison clean during her visit on advance notice while in surprise visits deteriorating condition cleanliness was observed founded which is also creating problems for prisoners.

Chief Justice PHC Justice Musart Hilali observed this during hearing of bail petition of Shamsheer-u-Din while Additional Advocate General Danyal Asad Chamkani appeared on behalf of prosecution. According to prosecution, Shamsheer-u-Din has alleged killed Samiullah in the premises Nizampur police station on 27th March 2020 over old rivalry while he was arrested on 25th September 2020.

The counsel argued that petitioner is behind the bar for more than two years while trial didn't completed after stipulated timeframe

and accused has right to obtain bail due to delay and on 9th January 2023 PHC has directed to conclude trial within two months but it is still pending.

Additional Advocate General Danyal Chamkani informed that statement of 9 witnesses had been recorded including principal witness Investigation Officer while argued that delay has occurred due to complication in the murder case. Chief Justice PHC Justice Musart Hilali ordered lower court to conclude the case within 30 days and declared that petitioner may approach court for bail after completion of 30 days after conclusion of arguments.

Parliament has all rights to legislate: Atta Tarar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Interior and Legal Affairs Attaullah Tarar on Monday said being the supreme legislative authority and creator of the Constitution, the Parliament had all rights to legislate.

Speaking to the media outside the Supreme Court, he said the apex court was hearing a case regarding a law which had not yet been adopted by the Parliament. "The Parliament is the supreme law-making authority and all other state institutions derive their power from it. It is unconstitutional to stop it from framing the law," he added.

"As a student of law, I think that the Supreme Court cannot hear a case against a law which curtails its suzerainty powers," he stressed.

Atta Tarar called for the formation of a full court bench to hear the matter which would affect all the judges of the apex court. "All judges have the same rank and status, and the chief justice performs administrative affairs only because of seniority," he added.

He claimed that the Supreme Court had been ignoring Article 209. "Political cases are scheduled for hearing in just 10 minutes, while we are standing in the court giving legal arguments that to whom we should request to schedule the pending references for hearing," Atta Tarar expressed the hope that justice would be served and that "also without any discrimination", and the purpose of the Constitution would be fulfilled. He said the Public Accounts Committee had scheduled a meeting to discuss assets in excess of income, tax matters, and other allegations.

Upholding the Constitution vital for stability: President

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Monday said upholding the country's Constitution was the responsibility of all segments of society because the document not only guaranteed political stability but also ensured the citizens' fundamental rights.

"In addition to the administrative authority, it is the duty of the State and its organs to bring improvement to the society through a system based on welfare," he said in his address at a ceremony to recognize public contribution towards social welfare, held here at Aiwan-e-Sadr. The event, organized by Network for Human and Social Development (NHS), acknowledged the services of departments and individuals in the field of humanitarian service and philanthropy. President Alvi stressed that the Constitution vested its power in citizens which led to realizing a welfare State with a political system based on social justice.

He said supremacy of the Constitution was vital as its pillars set out the goals for basic rights in various areas including education, health, employment, and social and economic justice. "A Constitution does not belong to a politician or an institution, but to every individual of the country," he said. The president emphasized the importance of social welfare and philanthropy to address the problems amid the growing population, particularly in the shape of poverty, illiteracy, and unemployment.

As per UNICEF data, he said the 27 million out-of-school children of Pakistan were a serious challenge that required urgent steps

for their inclusion in the educational and skill-set system. Also, the country's 10 percent population of persons with disabilities needs mainstreaming, he added.

President Alvi highlighted the importance of adopting a preventive approach to health rather than a curative one to cope with the costly treatment of several diseases including Hepatitis, AIDS, and communicable ailments. He said national progress was linked with the implementation of the system of social caring and improving the lives of the people. President NHS Dr Amir Ikram Ameen said his organization was serving vulnerable communities of Pakistan through disaster management and mitigating disaster risk through poverty alleviation and ensuring educational and health facilities to women and children in remote villages.

Vice Chairman Standing Committee Akhuwat Foundation Badar Haroon said the welfare organization in 20 years empowered the people through microfinance loans worth Rs 200 billion with a 99.9 percent return rate. He mentioned that 2,000 transgressors above 50 years of age were registered with Akhuwat Foundation, which was catering to their medical facilities in a respectable way. Chief Executive Office ACT International Syed Mubashir Ali Shah Banoori said the organization in close coordination with government departments rolled out several projects during the recent flood emergency by providing the affected communities with food and shelter. Also, the provision of seeds, fertilizers, livelihood training, and restoration of

agriculture at large is also being carried out, he added. President Alvi on the occasion gave away acknowledgment shields to organizations and individuals who contributed towards social welfare in their respective areas.

Body to summon ex-CJP, son

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former chief justice (CJP) Saqib Nisar and his son Najam will be summoned by a special committee probing the purported audio of the latter with a prospective candidate seeking Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) ticket. This was stated by an MNA from Balochistan, Aslam Bhootani, who is the chairman of the committee constituted to investigate the audio.

The audio tape surfaced on April 29 in which Najam could be heard demanding a reward for a job done for an enthusiast seeking PTI ticket for upcoming general elections in Punjab. In the audio, Najam can be heard informing the person on the other end that his father had worked very hard to get the job done. The man on the other side, presumed to be PTI ticket hopeful Abuzar Chaddhar, said he would come to meet Najam's father after getting the ticket.

Najam can also be heard asking Chaddhar to meet his father the same day. Meanwhile, in conversation with another caller, identified as Mian Uzair, Najam can be heard asking for delivery of the goods, not less than 120.

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa launched an anti-narcotics campaign titled "Drugs Free Khyber Pakhtunkhwa" across the province with the aim to eradicate drug abuse on Monday.

In this connection, an awareness walk against drug abuse was organized in provincial capital by excise, taxation and narcotics control department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa led by Caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan which started from Chief Minister's House and culminated at Chief Minister's Secretariat Peshawar.

Besides provincial caretaker cabinet members Manzoor Afridi, Justice retired Irshad Qaisar, Rehmat Salam Khattak, Sawal Nazeer Advocate, Fazal-E-Elahi, Salma Begum, Senior Officials, representatives of civil society and a large number of students participated in the awareness walk.

Talking to media persons at the end of awareness walk, the chief minister said that the motive behind holding awareness walk was to create awareness among the public particularly youth against drug abuse. He added that under the newly launched anti-narcotics campaign, steps would be taken for the rehabilitation of drug addicts besides steps to be taken for the eradication of

source and supply of narcotics while special drives would also be carried out against narcotics in educational institutions of the province so as to safeguard the youth from drug abuse. The chief minister felicitated the provincial excise department on launching drug free Khyber Pakhtunkhwa campaign and said that similar awareness walks against narcotics would also be carried out in other parts of the province as well.

Touching upon the statistics of drug addicts, Muhammad Azam Khan said that, according to a survey 11 percent population of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is affected with drug abuse while six percent population of the whole country affected with drug abuse adding that out of total 6.7 million of drugs addicts 22 percent are female drug addicts.

Azam Khan said that the increasing tendency of narcotics' use among youth is of grave concern and it is the need of the hour to take pragmatic steps at public and private level in order to protect the upcoming generations from drug abuse adding that massive anti-narcotics campaigns are imperative for eradicating drug abuse from province in particular and country in general. Appreciating the role of philanthropists and welfare organizations in rehabilitation of drug addicts, the chief minister said that caretaker government is committed for the

rehabilitation of drug addicts and to root out the menace of drug abuse. The chief minister made an appeal to parents and teachers to play their important role in keeping the young lot safe and free of drug abuse.

PPP wins seven seats, JI four

KARACHI (PPI): The candidates of Pakistan People's Party (PPP) have won seven out of 11 union council (UC) seats in the local government (LG) by-polls in Karachi while Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) secured four seats.

According to unofficial results announced received on Monday, Israr Ahmed of PPP was elected chairman from UC-2 Korangi by obtaining 2,647 votes while JI candidate got 1,804 votes and remained second. Abdul Qadir of the PPP won the UC-2 Lyari Town seat by securing 3,243 votes. The PPP candidate Arshad Khan emerged victorious from UC-8 District West by getting 2,664 votes while PTI candidate Sahir Hussain obtained 1,380 votes and remained second.

Faisal Naseem of JI won the UC-6 North Nazimabad seat from District Central by getting 4,055 votes, Abid Shah of PPP remained second by securing 1,169 votes.

Trilateral FMs dialogue calls for urgent support to Afghanistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The trilateral dialogue of the foreign ministers of Afghanistan, China and Pakistan has called upon the international community for sustained and urgent humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, reiterating resolve to fully harness country's potential for regional connectivity.

The 5th China Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue was held here on Saturday (May 6) attended by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, State Councillor and Foreign Minister Qin Gang of China and the Acting Foreign Minister Mawlawi Amir Khan Muttaqi of Afghanistan, according to the joint statement issued here by the Foreign Office.

The three foreign ministers stressed the importance of sustained and urgent humanitarian support to the people of Afghanistan including the imperative to bridge funding gaps for humanitarian operations. Emphasising for exploring realistic pathways towards the revival of the Afghan economy, the three sides reaffirmed their resolve to fully harness Afghanistan's potential as a hub for regional connectivity.

They underscored the need to refrain from intervening into internal affairs of Afghanistan, and to promote Afghan peace, stability and reconstruction. The three sides urged the relevant countries lift their unilateral sanctions against Afghanistan and return the assets overseas for the benefit of the Afghan people, and create opportunities for economic development and prosperity in Afghanistan.

Stressing that a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan served the common interest of the region, the foreign ministers underscored the critical importance of trilateral cooperation in promoting this objective. The three sides resolved to further deepen and expand their cooperation in the security, development and political domains based on the principles of mutual respect, equal-footed consultation and mutual benefit.

They underscored the need to tackle security challenges posing a serious threat to regional and global security, and directly impacting the stability and economic prosperity of the entire region. They agreed to coordinate and cooperate on security,

organized crimes, drugs smuggling etc. and called on the international community to strengthen bilateral and multilateral cooperation, and provide necessary supplies, equipment and technical assistance in this regard to the relevant countries.

The foreign ministers stressed on the need of not allowing any individual, group or party, including the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement (ETIM) etc., to use their territories to harm and threaten regional security and interests, or conduct terrorist actions and activities. Underscoring the imperative to generate economic activity within Afghanistan, the ministers stressed the importance of exploring realistic pathways towards the revival of the Afghan economy.

To this end, the ministers agreed to consider further supporting the reconstruction of Afghanistan and exploring trilateral investment possibilities aimed at industrialization and job creation. Expressing solidarity with the people of Afghanistan, the foreign ministers underlined that humanitarian support to the people

of Afghanistan must remain delinked from any political considerations.

They reaffirmed their resolve to fully harness Afghanistan's potential as a hub for regional connectivity. They also reaffirmed their commitment to further the trilateral cooperation under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), and to jointly extend the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor to Afghanistan. The three foreign ministers stressed that the importance of existing projects including CASA-1000, TAPI, Trans-Afghan Railways etc. would enhance regional connectivity as well as ensure economic uplift and prosperity for the peoples of this region.

They emphasized to push forward the "hard connectivity" in infrastructure and "soft connectivity" in norms and standards, further explore the facilitating measures for the movement of people and trade activities between the three countries. They also agreed to enhance transit trade through Gwadar Port. Expressing satisfaction at the existing trilateral cooperation, the three sides agreed to carry out exchange and training programmes and to strengthen people-to-people exchanges by conducting the trilateral programs in line with the List of China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Trilateral Practical Cooperation Projects, adopted by foreign ministers in this dialogue.

The ministers reaffirmed to continue cooperation in areas of mutual interest like economic development, capacity building, and improving livelihoods. They agreed to strengthen cooperation in the fields such as agriculture, trade, energy, capacity building, border management etc. They called upon the international community to engage constructively with the Afghan side. In this regard, they acknowledged the efforts made under the aegis of various mechanisms and formats, including in particular, the Neighbouring Countries of Afghanistan, to promote dialogue and constructive engagement with the Interim Afghan Government.

The three sides also urged the international community to assist Afghanistan in countering narcotics effectively and develop alternative crops to enhance its capacity for independent and sustainable development. Taking note of the Afghan Interim Government's repeated

assurances to respect and protect women's rights and interests, the foreign ministers called on the international community to support the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan, and help Afghanistan to improve governance and strengthen the capacity building, so as to effectively protect the basic rights and interests of all segments of the Afghan society, including women and children.

They expressed appreciation to the neighbouring countries, in particular, Pakistan, for the generous hospitality in hosting millions of Afghan refugees, and called on the international community to provide necessary support and assistance to these countries and Afghanistan for the dignified return and reintegration of refugees into the Afghan society. The three sides resolved to continue with the trilateral cooperation mechanism, including the Director-General Level Practical Cooperation Dialogue, and forge closer-good neighborly relations and partnership. China and Afghanistan thanked Pakistan for the successful organization of the 5th China-Afghanistan-Pakistan Foreign Ministers' Dialogue and its warm hospitality.