

Speaker GB Assembly quits

GILGIT (INP): Speaker Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) Assembly Amjad Ali Zaidi stepped down on Wednesday amid no confidence motion. The other day, after failure of dialogues among the parliamentary committee, a no-confidence motion was tabled against the speaker. After success of dialogues Amjad Ali Zaidi resigned from the post. Nazeer Ahmed Advocate will be the new Speaker of Gilgit Baltistan Assembly.

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# Record wheat yield achieved: Shehbaz

## — Govt to enhance rural economy through value addition of agri-produce

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday stressed upon taking practical and permanent steps over the agriculture reforms and said that the government would improve the rural economy through the value addition of agri-production.

The prime minister chaired a high-level meeting on the fiscal budget 2023-24 proposals regarding the agriculture sector, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. The prime minister observed that agriculture sector was the backbone of the national economy and the country's progress was not possible without innovations in this sector. He said that due to the incumbent government's Kisan package, a record wheat yield was achieved in the current season.

During the meeting, the prime minister was apprised in details of the agriculture reforms during the previous one year. Due to PM's special Kisan Package, the provision of loans to farmers on affordable terms was not only ensured but due to supply of timely fertilizers and quality seeds, the country also achieved the bumper wheat crop, exceeding the previous production in the last ten years.

Under the prime minister's directive, the best-supporting prices over different crops led to the prosperity of farmers which would also boost the upcoming crops, it was added. The prime minister also directed for direct provision of subsidy to farmers on fertilizers. He said that the provision of quality seeds, latest machinery, extension services and for agriculture research, resources would be allocated in the fiscal budget.

The prime minister said that practical steps should be incorporated in the fiscal budget for complete conversion of agriculture tube wells on solar energy. The prime minister was also informed about the international quality seeds, import of semen for animals breeding, functioning of the agriculture institutions and implementation over Kisan package.

The meeting was briefed over the National Oil Seed Policy whose objective was to reduce dependence over import of edible oil by provision of quality seed. Automatic Seed Certification and Track and Trace

### Pakistan highly values its broad-based ties with Belarus: Premier

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif Wednesday said Pakistan greatly valued its cordial and broad-based relations with Belarus. He also affirmed Pakistan's commitment towards building mutually beneficial cooperation with Belarus in all areas, including economic, agriculture, science and technology, information technology, education, and culture domains.

The prime minister received Foreign Minister of Belarus Sergei Aleinik, the PM Office Media Wing said in a press release. Foreign Minister Aleinik conveyed the warm greetings of President Lukashenko to the prime minister, while highlighting that Belarus regarded Pakistan as an important country in the region and appreciated its efforts to promote regional peace and stability. The prime minister also briefed the foreign minister on the human rights violations by India in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK). Noting that Pakistan and Belarus would be commemorating the 30th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations in 2024, the prime minister welcomed continued high-level exchanges and engagement. In this regard, he also reiterated his invitation to the Belarusian president to undertake a visit to Pakistan, at his earliest convenience.

Meanwhile, Advisor to Prime Minister for Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan Affairs Qamar Zaman Kaira called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday. In the meeting, they discussed the matters pertaining to the ministry as well as the overall political situation in the country, a PM Office press release said.

System were being introduced for the provision of quality seed, it was further added. The prime minister terming the proposals of experts as very useful, directed his Adviser Ahad Khan Cheema to form two sub-committees to give final shape to budget proposals regarding the agriculture sector.

These committees would be tasked to give concrete shape to innovations in this sector, mechanization, provision of quality seeds, direct provision of subsidy to farmers on fertilizers, solarization of tube wells and policy measures. The committees, for the purpose of export in agriculture sector, would also ensure the linking of value addition and agriculture production with the global value chains so that the production of farmers could be timely supplied to the international markets.

The meeting was attended by Federal Ministers Muhammad Ishaq Dar, Rana Sanaullah, Tariq Bashir Cheema, Ahsan Iqbal, Engineer Khurram Dastagir, Makhdoom Murtaza Mahmood, PM's adviser Ahad Khan Cheema, Minister of State Dr Musadiq Malik, Ayesha Ghaus Pasha, PM's Special Assistants Tariq

Bajwa, Jehanzaib Khan, Tariq Pasha, governor State Bank of Pakistan, chairman FBR and other high officials. Besides, different prominent experts and farmers in modern agriculture also attended the meeting.

The prime minister regretted that the previous government had intentionally destroyed the agriculture research institutions which were established by them and directed for the immediate functioning of the Agriculture Policy Institute. He observed that during the current year, they had ensured the prosperity of farmers by extending the best support price on wheat, cotton and sugarcane.

The prime minister also directed to the establishment of small fruit processing and pulping units in the villages. "The government will make the country self-sufficient in edible oil by increasing its production. With autarky in edible oil and other food grains, the dependence on import will decrease, besides it will result in saving of precious foreign reserves," a press release in Urdu language quoted the prime minister as saying. The government would ensure the provision of timely loans to farmers on easy terms, he further added.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif meeting with Foreign Minister of Belarus, Sergei Aleinik.

### Govt slash petrol prices

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar announced on Wednesday that the price of petrol was being reduced by Rs8 and high-speed diesel (HSD) by Rs5 per litre for the next fortnight.

The new prices of petrol and HSD are Rs262 and Rs253 per litre, respectively. The price of light diesel oil (LDO) was also slashed by Rs5 per litre to Rs147.68 while the price for kerosene oil remained unchanged at Rs164.07.

In a video address, he said that there was no substantial change in the international prices of petroleum products in the last 15 days and neither had the rupee appreciated against the dollar. "But the government tried to create as much the country self-sufficient in edible oil by increasing its production. With autarky in edible oil and other food grains, the dependence on import will decrease, besides it will result in saving of precious foreign reserves," a press release in Urdu language quoted the prime minister as saying. The government would ensure the provision of timely loans to farmers on easy terms, he further added.

### ‘Nawaz to return soon’

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Wednesday said that PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif had the right to get relief from the fabricated cases against him and expressed his confidence that Nawaz Sharif will return home soon to lead the party for the general election 2023 campaign. "Innocent Nawaz Sharif should be granted the opportunity to plead his case before a court," he said in an exclusive talk with a private news channel. PML-N would move the court to review on Nawaz Sharif's disqualification as the party chief, he added.

Replying to a question, Sanaullah said that the PML-N leader was not like PTI chief Imran Khan who is hiding behind bail. "We never took bails in our cases because fake cases were registered against us," he added. To another question, the interior minister said, "We have our own committed party leaders and PPP has the right to form the government in Punjab."

### Terrorist killed in IBO

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: A terrorist was killed in an Intelligence-Based Operation (IBO) conducted by the CTD, District police and Intelligence Agencies.

A joint Intelligence-Based Operation was conducted to arrest terrorist namely Mazhar Khan s/o Jahangir Khan, commander of a subgroup of TTP Gandapur Chapter. During operation the terrorist opened indiscriminate firing on security forces, in retaliation the said terrorist was killed. He was wanted in eight cases of target killings of police and other Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) in village Kot Essa, in the jurisdiction of Police Station Daraband, D I Khan. Weapons and other explosive materials were also recovered from the killed terrorist.

## COAS, British CGS discuss various issues

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Wednesday met Chief of General Staff (CGS) UK Army General Sir Patrick Nicholas Yardley Monrad and discussed regional security issues, according to military's media wing. According to Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR), CGS UK Army General Sir Patrick Nicholas Yardley Monrad Sanders called on COAS General Syed Asim Munir at General Headquarters (GHQ) today.

Upon arrival, CGS UK Army laid floral wreath at Yadgar-e-Shuhada. "A smartly turned out contingent of Pakistan Army presented the guard of honour

to the visiting dignity," the statement said.

During the meeting, regional security issues and matters of mutual interest were discussed. The visiting dignity acknowledged the sacrifices and achievements of Pakistan Army in fight against terrorism and efforts for bringing peace and stability in the region.

Earlier, the CGS UK had also called on Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Sahir Shamshad Mirza at Joint Staff Headquarters, Rawalpindi.

It is pertinent to mention here that the British Army's Chief of the General Staff (CGS), General Sir Patrick Sanders arrived in Pakistan on a five-day visit. During his visit, General Sir

Patrick Sanders would meet with Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, alongside other Defence Engagement activities and discussions on bilateral military cooperation in response to climate change related crises would be a key focus of the visit, a news release said.

General Sir Patrick Sanders' visit comes almost one year after Pakistan's devastating floods which left nearly one third of the country submerged and affected an estimated 33 million people. The UK's Ministry of Defence was directly involved in providing assistance for flood relief operations, airlifting in eight boats and ten portable generators at the request of Pakistan's Chief of Army Staff.

## Soldier martyred in North Waziristan attack

F.P. Report

MIRAN SHAH: Terrorists attempted to disrupt the ongoing polio campaign by firing on the members of Polio team, employed in general area Spinwam, North Waziristan District on Wednesday.

According to ISPR, Security forces, deputed to provide protection to the Polio team, effectively engaged terrorists' location ensuring safety of all members of the team and extricated them unharmed. However, during ensuing fire exchange between security forces and the terrorists, Sepoy Saqib Ur Rehman (age 25 years, resident of District Mardan) sacrificed his life in the line of duty, embracing Shahadat.

Sanitization of the area is being carried out to eliminate any terrorists found in the area. Security forces of Pakistan are determined to eliminate the menace of terrorism and such sacrifices of our brave soldiers further strengthen our resolve.

Chairman Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and

Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has strongly condemned the terror attack on the polio team in North Waziristan.

According to the statement issued by Media Cell Bilawal House, Chairman PPP expressed deep sorrow and grief over the martyrdom of the security personnel who was deployed for the security of the polio team in the terrorist attack and also expressed his heartfelt condolences and solidarity with the grieved family.

Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that he was hopeful that the relevant authorities will bring the terrorists involved in the attack to justice soon. "Pakistan is determined to eradicate the polio virus from its soil as well as the elements active against the anti-polio campaign," he vowed.

Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah Khan on Wednesday strongly condemned the attack on a polio vaccination team in North Waziristan and paid tribute to the security personnel for their swift

response in ensuring the safe evacuation of the polio team.

In a press statement, the minister commended the bravery and dedication of the security forces, acknowledging their pivotal role in thwarting the ambitions of the terrorists. He paid rich tribute to Saqib Rahman, who was tragically martyred during the incident, saying that his sacrifice would not be in vain. Rahman's selfless act of valour would be remembered as a testament to the indomitable spirit of the security forces and their commitment to safeguarding the nation, Sanaullah added.

The minister expressed confidence that the scourge of terrorism would soon be eradicated, emphasizing that the collective efforts of the security forces and the government would bring peace and stability to the region. He emphasized that every soldier in the security forces is a source of pride for the nation, and their bravery and sacrifices would never be forgotten.

## Proceeding against ex-CJP's son: IHC stops NA body

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Wednesday suspended the summoning notice issued to Najam Saqib- son of former Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Mian Saqib Nisar- by the special committee formed by National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf to probe audio clips allegedly featuring his voice.

The court asked the federal government to inform it about the elements responsible for recording audios. The court also stopped the special committee from proceeding against Najam Saqib. A single-judge bench of the IHC passed these orders while hearing a petition filed by Najam Saqib against the

special committee to probe audio clips allegedly featuring his voice.

The court also removed the Registrar's Office's objections to the application. The court directed the federal government to apprise it by June 19 on the origins of the audios. During the hearing, Justice Babar Sattar wondered under what authority the special committee of the National Assembly took notice of the matter. Senior advocate Sardar Latif Khan Khosa, appeared for Najam Saqib.

Latif Khosa stated that he only challenged in the plea that the National Assembly Speaker as well as the National Assembly do not have the authority to look into private mat-

ters. He said the plea does not challenge the matter which is pending in the Supreme Court for adjudication. He contended that the audio leak is an alleged conversation between two private individuals that Parliament has no right to examine.

Former CJP's son had filed the petition on Tuesday requesting the IHC to suspend the special committee's proceedings and stop it from taking any punitive action. Najam Saqib contended in his plea that the alleged audio breached his privacy and it was illegal surveillance. He sought declaration of the court that recording a private person's personal conversation was a violation of basic human rights.

### 9 killed as rains batter Sindh areas

HYDERABAD (INP): At least nine people were killed as heavy rains lashed Hyderabad and other Sindh areas in the past 48 hours, with gusts of winds, hailstorm and lightning piling misery on people.

The twin cities of Hyderabad and Kotri received heavy showers and hailstorm. Hailstones the size of golf balls damaged several vehicles and windows in Hyderabad's SITE area. Gusty winds uprooted trees and damaged vehicles. The inclement weather paralyzed life and disrupted the electricity system of the Hyderabad Electric Supply Company (Hesco) in lower parts of Sindh, leaving millions of people without electricity for hours.

The power supply was suspended from 53 feeders of Hesco, and a tower of the 66Kv Mithi-to-Tando Jan Mohammad transmission line was also damaged in New Kot and area. In Kotri city, the heavy rainfall killed three children and seven other people injured. Police said the children, identified as 10-year-old Farhana, 11-year-old Asma and 12-year-old Muhammad Yusuf — were playing when the wall came crashing down, leaving them dead on the spot.

A tragic incident took place in the Tharparkar district, where six people died due to lightning. Among residents of the Sethar village who were killed by lightning were 16-year-old Vivek, 15-year-old Govind, 35-year-old Santosh, 30-year-old Lalu, 30-year-old Velu Kolhi and 20-year-old Pulji Kolhi, while the injured include Jhaman, Vilji, Nihal, Somaar, Basant, Tago, Neja and Willow. It is pertinent to mention here that the Meteorological Department has predicted rain and thunderstorm in different areas in the next 24 hours.



RAWALPINDI: General Sir Patrick Nicholas Yardley Monrad Sanders, Chief of General Staff (CGS) UK Army pay homage to Yadgar-e-Shuhada during his visit to GHQ.

## Ex-PTI members from South Punjab join PPP

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Former Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) members from South Punjab, who have recently parted ways with the party, have formally joined Pakistan People's Party (PPP) on Wednesday.

According to details, the new members joined the party in Lahore in the presence of former president and PPP co-Chairman Asif Ali Zardari, Senator Yousuf Raza Gilani, Nayyar Hussain Bukhari, Makhdoom Ahmad Mahmood, and Hassan Murtaza were also present on this occasion.

Confirming the released list while talking to journalists, Yousuf Raza Gilani said the members were from the PTI and other parties. "The meeting held consultation on the internal and external situation", he added. He also rejected the policy of violence in politics, saying that the entire nation condemned the May 9 events — wherein military installations including Jinnah House in Lahore and General Headquarters

(GHQ) came under attack.

Without naming anyone, Gilani said those were also condemning the riots after 'facing a pressure'. "We are trying to bring political stability in the country", he assured. It is pertinent to mention here that several PTI lawmakers and members have parted their ways with the party following the May 9 violence, wherein military installations including General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi and Corps Commander House Lahore were attacked after the arrest of party chairman Imran Khan.

Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) suffered two huge blows as former human rights minister Shireen Mazari and former Punjab minister Fayyaz ul Hassan Chohan quit the party over May 9 violence. On the other hand, Jahangir Tareen met the former Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf provincial minister Aleem Khan for the formation of a new political alliance.

According to sources,

### Zardari reaches Lahore

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Pakistan People's Party (PPP) co-chairman and former president Asif Ali Zardari has stepped up efforts to poach Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) deserters ahead of general elections.

With more than 70 leaders and former lawmakers parting ways with the Imran Khan-led PTI since May 9, the former president has reached Lahore to win over most of the PTI dissidents.

Jahangir Tareen and Aleem Khan discussed matters related to the future of the people who have resigned and the making of a new party. Sources revealed that participants of the meeting suggested making a new political party instead of a pressure group as the political party will be able to stand for people's rights.





## Police chief visits consulates of Russia, Oman

KARACHI (APP): Additional Inspector General of Police - Karachi Javed Alam Odho on Wednesday visited the consulates of Russia and Oman in Karachi. During his visit to the two consulates, the City Police Chief met Russian Consul General in Karachi Andrey Viktorovich Fedorov and Consul General of Oman in Karachi Engineer Sami Abdullah Salim Al Khanjari.

The meetings discussed security matters, current law and order situation of the megalopolis and measures being taken by Karachi Police in detail.

Consul General of Oman in Karachi Engineer Sami Abdullah presented commemorative shield to Javed Alam Odho.

The Superintendent of Police - Foreigners Security Cell also accompanied the Additional IGP Karachi during his visits to the both consulates.

## PR launches cleanliness campaign

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Railways Lahore Division has launched a special cleanliness campaign in which all big railway stations including Lahore railway station is being cleaned to provide a better environment to the passengers.

According to the PR spokesperson on Wednesday, big and crowded railway stations are being focused in the campaign. At the Lahore railway station, main porch, all platforms, waiting rooms and halls, railway yard, overhead pedestrian bridges and stairs are being specially cleaned and washed with water and detergent. The PR DS M Sufyan Sarfaraz Dogar has constituted a monitoring team headed by Divisional Medical Officer Dr Saima Mumtaz and Station Manager Zafar Iqbal.

## UHS decides to reduce MS Nursing completion period

LAHORE (APP): The University of Health Sciences has decided to reduce the period of MS Nursing under the fast track policy.

This was informed by UHS Vice Chancellor Professor Ahsan Waheed Rathore while presiding over the meeting of the teaching and administrative heads held at the university here on Wednesday.

He said that on the direction of Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Syed Mohsin Naqvi, the degree programme would now be completed in 18 months instead of 24 months.

He said that to reduce the period of the degree programme study hours were being increased from 8 hours to 10 and 20 hours.

He also directed to open the UHS library for 24 hours to facilitate the students. He said that teaching and clinical tracks would be introduced for the MS Nursing programme.

A 7-member committee was constituted to organize the condensed programme of the Nursing while the meeting gave approval of formation of the Student Welfare Society in the university.

# Pakistan Navy War College holds 52nd Convocation

F.P. Report

LAHORE: The Convocation ceremony of 52nd Pakistan Navy Staff Course was held at Pakistan Navy War College (PNWC), Lahore. Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi graced the graduation ceremony as Chief Guest.

During the Convocation Ceremony Degrees were conferred upon 95 graduates, comprising 54 officers from Pakistan Navy, Army & Pakistan Air Force and 41 officers from friendly countries including Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Iraq, Jordan, Malaysia, Myanmar, Nigeria, Oman, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, Sri Lanka and Yemen. While addressing the ceremony, Chief Guest highlighted the complexities and wide variety of threats and challenges confronting the world impacting almost all regions. He underlined that the wide ranging challenges in 21st century coupled with

advancements in disruptive technology, proliferation of weapons and artificial intelligence place a cumulative premium on minds of practitioners of war at sea. The traditional manner or one-dimensional study of war is accordingly outdated and it is no longer applicable.

The Admiral appreciated the efforts of Pakistan Navy War College in providing meritorious professional education to students and lauded the endeavour of the College in integrating with local academia for proliferation of maritime knowledge and increasing awareness on maritime security matters.

Earlier, Commandant Pakistan Navy War College apprised the audience about various professional and academic activities undertaken during the Staff Course. The Chief Guest later conferred degrees upon successful graduates.

The ceremony was attended by senior military officers, civil dignitaries and families of graduating officers.

## UN delegation called on Faryal Talpur

F.P. Report

KARACHI: A delegation of United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) consisting of Jeremy Milsom, Country Head of UNODC and Arsalan Malik, Regional Head of UNODC Sindh and Baluchistan called on Pakistan Peoples Party's Women Wing President and Chairperson Sindh Assembly's Standing Committee on Home, Faryal Talpur, at Zardari House.

The delegation discussed with her UNODC's Technical Assistance to Government of Sindh on tackling challenges of drugs, crime and terrorism through integrated, stable and sustainable responses.

The delegation thanked the cooperation by Sindh Government to the UNODC on border management, drug demand



reduction and criminal justice system in the province, with special emphasis on various initiatives, which are effectively and successfully run by the Sindh Government on drug detoxification at rehabilitation centers in Sindh.

She particularly appreciated the UNODC's gender-responsive programming for achieving the rule of law and promoting human rights in Sindh and elsewhere in the country,

adding that Pakistan Peoples Party always prioritizes the policies that encourage to strengthen and mainstream the women in every field. Sindh Minister for Excise and Taxation Mukesh Chawla and Advisor to Law Murtaza Wahab, former Law Minister Ziaul Hasan Lanjar and Parliamentary Secretary on Health Qasim Soomro were also present during the meeting.

## DG PDMA visits Rescue office, meets World Bank delegation

LAHORE (APP): Director-General Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Imran Qureshi paid a visit to the Rescue Emergency Services Department to assess the equipment used during floods and emergencies.

During his visit, he also toured the Rescue Academy to inspect the emergency training simulator. Additionally, he had discussions with Dr Rizwan Naseer, the Secretary of Emergency Services, regarding flood response and preparedness.

The DG PDMA appreciated the professional response and capabilities of Rescue 1122 and reaffirmed PDMA's commitment to continue cooperation with Rescue 1122.

Later, a delegation comprising of five members from the World Bank visited the PDMA headquarters.

During their visit, DG Imran Qureshi provided a comprehensive briefing to the delegation about the responsibilities and capabilities of PDMA. He emphasized that PDMA is equipped with modern systems and possesses the capacity to effectively handle any natural disasters. He further mentioned the establishment of District Emergency Operation Centers in all districts, ensuring prompt response and efficient reporting. Moreover, over 4,000 Rural Reporting Centers have been established at the grassroots level.

## Prizes, certificates distributed among successful students

KARACHI (APP): A prizes and certificates distribution ceremony among successful students in annual examinations of schools of the Education Department of the DMC South (Lyari and Saddar Zone) was held at Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Lyari and Jamshed Ahmad Khan

School Hijrat Colony.

Sindh Minister for Women Development Shehla Raza was the chief guest on the occasion. Administrator South Hammad ND Khan, President of PPP District South Khalil Hot, Director Education South Mohammad Raeesi gave

away awards and shields to position holders in exams of various classes. Speaking on the occasion of the distribution, Sindh Minister for Women Development Shehla Raza said it was the dream of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto that education should be free and accessible for all children in the country.



LAHORE: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi in a group photo with course participants on the occasion of 52nd PN Staff Course convocation at PN War College.

## Memon announced the immediate removal of public transports that have CNG kits installed in them

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sharjeel Inam Memon, the Minister of Information, Transport, and Mass Transit Sindh, has announced the immediate removal of public transports that have CNG kits installed in them. Speaking at a press conference held at Archives Complex Clifton today, Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that as per the decisions taken during the transport department's meeting, the illegal encroachments and occupations on bus stands across the province will be cleared.

He announced that the Sindh Mass Transit Authority plans to establish a force modeled after the Motorway Police. This force will be responsible for overseeing road transport operations in accordance with traffic rules and regulations, as well as monitoring government transportation.



He stated that the proposal to allocate 500 buses in the upcoming budget is currently being considered in response to a request from the transport department. The transport department is making significant progress and efforts to enhance its operations. Plans are underway to expand the bus service of the transport department to cover all districts of Sindh.

During the press conference, Sharjeel Inam Memon emphasized that

the Parliament is a democratic institution elected by the people and any form of disrespect towards it cannot be tolerated under any circumstances.

Regarding the issue of Saqib Nisar's son allegedly selling tickets to any political party, Sharjeel Inam Memon stated that this matter should not be considered a private affair. He pointed out that Saqib Nisar had previously served as the Chief Justice of the country and during his

tenure, he declared Imran Khan as truthful and trustworthy (Sadiq and Ameen), regularized the Bani Gala property, and imprisoned opposition politicians.

Sharjeel Inam Memon emphasized that the disrespect of any institution, including the Parliament, is unacceptable and cannot be tolerated. He said that the decisions made by Saqib Nisar, which exceeded his powers, are clear and straightforward evidence against him.

Sharjeel Inam Memon clarified that the issue at hand is not whether Imran Khan is involved in money laundering or not. Rather, the question is whether action should be taken against Imran Khan based on the Election Commission's decision or not. Sharjeel Inam Memon said that Imran Khan was granted a stay order in the BRT Peshawar case.

## Staff protest against police torture of doctor

LAHORE (INP): The medical and paramedical staff at Lahore's Children Hospital protested on road Wednesday against the alleged police torture on duty doctor and nurses over the death of a child in the hospital. The doctors and the paramedical staff blocked the road in front of the hospital, disrupting the flow of traffic on Ferozepur Road. Due to the protest by the hospital staff, the treatment of patients in the outdoor and indoor wards of the hospital was interrupted.

"Strict action should be taken against those who assaulted Dr Saad and the nurses. They should be severely punished," the Young Doctors Association (YDA) demanded. It is to be noted here that some policemen had subjected the duty doctor and nurses to torture over the death of a child in Children Hospital, Lahore.

## KU VC pays courtesy call to Chinese CG

KARACHI (APP): The Vice-Chancellor (VC) of the University of Karachi Professor Dr Khalid Mahmood Iraqi, Pakistani Director of the Confucius Institute (CI) Professor Dr Muhammad Nasiruddin Khan along with CI faculty visited the Chinese Consulate here and paid a courtesy call to Consul

General (CG) Yang Yundong on Thursday.

During the meeting, the Chinese CG Yang Yundong expressed his gratitude to the University of Karachi for its strong support for the development of the CI at the University of Karachi and fully affirmed the positive contributions made by the Confucius Institute on the campus in promoting international Chinese education and

strengthening cultural exchanges between China and Pakistan. He said, "The CG will continue to firmly support the development of the Confucius Institute at the University of Karachi."

He hoped that the Institute would cultivate strong friendly exchanges and cooperation between Pakistan and China and people-to-people contact between both countries.

### Lost & Found

The original transfer letter of Plot No. 30 Block-F Naval Anchory Islamabad in the name of Mrs. Anwar Jan W/o Lt. Lal Khan has been lost anywhere. Finder or anyone having objection/claim may please contact me or director Naval Anchorage Islamabad within 15 days after publication on expiry of notice no objection/claim will be accepted. Farrukh Shahzad Khan S/O Muhammad Iqbal Khan 0322-2239577



Dear Customers,

UBL Schedule of Bank Charges, July to December 2023, has been issued. Please visit our website or contact your nearest UBL branch.

For further information, you can call UBL 24/7 Contact Centre.



LAHORE: Delhi Gate's renovation work is in progress, this is one of the six remaining historic gates of the city.

### PAKISTAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY (PCAA)

#### INVITATION TO BID

Sealed bids (in accordance with PPRA Rule No. 36(b)) are invited by below mentioned office for the following requirements in Pak Rs:-

Sr. No.	Description and Bid No.	Bid Fee (PKR)	Fixed Bid Security (PKR)	Bid Submission Date/Time	Bid Opening Date/Time/Place	Last date for Issuance of Bidding Documents	Basis PKR (Price)
01.	Procurement of Computer Systems, Scanners & Printers HQCAA/1992/196/XXLN	1,000/-	As Mentioned in Bidding Documents	20-06-2023 1030 Hours	20-06-2023 1100 Hours Log. Center (S) (Log. ANS)	19-06-2023	F.O.R
02.	Procurement of X-Ray Generators & Consumables Plo Scanning Machines Installed at IAP Islamabad Airport HQCAA/1992/197/XXLN	1,500/-	As Mentioned in Bidding Documents	20-06-2023 1100 Hours	20-06-2023 1130 Hours Log. Center (S) (Log. ANS Branch)	19-06-2023	F.O.R
03.	Procurement of X-Ray Generators & Consumables Plo Scanning Machines Installed at IAP Islamabad Airport HQCAA/1992/197/XXLN	1,000/-	Rs. 600,000/-	20-06-2023 1130 Hours	20-06-2023 1200 Hours Log. Center (S) (Log. ANS Branch)	19-06-2023	F.O.R

Bids may be submitted as per conditions set out in Bidding documents downloadable from the website [www.caapakistan.com.pk](http://www.caapakistan.com.pk) (visible / downloadable within two (02) working days after publication/uploading of invitation to bid notice) and obtainable physically from the address given below on any working day between 0900 Hrs to 1230 Hrs by paying Bid Fee (non-refundable) through deposit slip in Account No. 6-1-2-20614-714-115525 (Title of account "Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority") in Habib Metropolitan Bank Ltd. Star Gate Branch Karachi and submitting the request letter along with bank deposit slip, proof of Active Taxpayer, GST/NTN certificates of the bidder. No Bidding Documents would be issued on the Bid opening date. Bids must be dropped in Bid drop Box placed at under mentioned office on or before bid submission date / time as per schedule.

**Note:** All bidders downloading the bidding document from website shall immediately inform PCAA through request letter (along with proof of active taxpayer list [ATL for sales tax and income tax] of FBR) at the address below for inclusion in subsequent communication. PCAA will not be responsible for any lack of communication or non-receipt of information by bidders due to ignorance / violation of this instruction.

Time period for performance of contract: Till the satisfactory completion of contract and warranty period.

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# Governor inaugurates road, developmental projects

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali along with Provincial Minister Sawak Nazir Wednesday inaugurated Detour Road Hayatabad besides planting trees and street lights on the road for the convenience of the local population.

Provincial Ministers Haji Manzoor Afridi, Abdul Halim Kasuria, Hamid Shah, Fazl Elahi, Muhammad Shafiullah, Advisor to Prisons Haji Hidayatullah were also present. With the construction of Detour Road, the heavy transport will have easy access to Afghanistan, and the local population will also be facilitated in transportation, said Governor Haji Ghulam Ali in his speech soon after the inauguration ceremony.

Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) officials in their briefing about the project said that the two-way Detour Road with a length of three kilometers.



It was told in the briefing by PDA that the construction of the road will not only facilitate heavy goods vehicles going to Afghanistan, but this road will also be helpful for commercial traffic.

In the briefing, it was stated that the construction of this road will relieve the local population of Hayatabad from traffic problems and the local population living on the sides of this road will also get convenience in transportation and the quality of life of the local population will also improve.

Describing the construction of Detour Road as a good initiative of the Peshawar Development Authority, the Governor directed that shade trees should be planted on the sides of the road.

This will not only increase the beauty of the road but also provide a green environment, the Governor said. He also

directed to install street lights on the road for the convenience of the local population.

Haji Ghulam Ali said that the construction of the two-lane road consisting of four lanes will ensure that the local population of Hayatabad will not have to suffer from heavy traffic problems.

Apart from this, trade traffic to Afghanistan will also be facilitated through this road. The Governor KP said: "We all have a common responsibility for the construction and beauty of the roads of Peshawar city and I wish that open and paved roads and shade trees

are available in every place in Peshawar and for this purpose I have been taking all possible efforts and steps on my behalf for the last 40 years."

He said practical steps have been taken to extend the roads of Peshawar city. He said that like in foreign countries, there should be such a system here that one or two shade trees should be made mandatory for the construction of houses, because shade trees play a fundamental role in the atmosphere. The Governor said that the task of all of us is to improve and the caretaker provincial government is providing relief to the people according to its policies and powers.

"I would also like to ask the provincial ministers to take steps to immediately remove any problems related to public roads and highways. The federal government is also taking steps to help and cooperate with the provincial government, he said.

Funds of Rs. 333 billion will be released by the federation to solve the economic problems of the province while Rs. 10 billion out of Rs. 20 billion have been released for tribal districts.

The Governor regretted that the former provincial

## Special Jirga held in Fort Balahisar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A special jirga was organized by the Security Forces at Fort Balahisar Peshawar with the aim of honouring tribal traditions. The jirga was attended by Inspector General Frontier Corps North Major General Noor Wali Khan and elders from different tribes of Khyber district. In his opening remarks, Inspector General Frontier Corps welcomed

the distinguished participants and expressed his gratitude to the elders for their efforts in maintaining peace in Khyber district along with the security forces.

Maj. General Noor Wali Khan emphasised the historical significance of the Khyber tribal district and praised the tribes for their pivotal role in ensuring peace in Pakistan, while paying tribute to their sacrifices. The security forces,

in collaboration with various government organizations, have successfully completed numerous significant projects.

Furthermore, he stressed the importance of providing employment opportunities for the tribal youth, emphasizing ongoing efforts to empower them. Major General Noor Wali Khan emphasized that peace has been restored in Khyber district as a result of immense sacrifices, and it



PESHAWAR: Inspector General Frontier Corps North Major General Noor Wali Khan in a group with elders from different tribes of Khyber district.

## Faisal Kundi accuses PTI for May 9 vandalism

PESHAWAR (APP): The Minister of State for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi here Wednesday accused the Pakistan Tahrik e Insaaf (PTI) for ransacking of the government and public properties during May 9-10 vandalism and Imran Khan for downing the arrested party workers.

Talking to media persons after visiting the burnt Radio Pakistan's building here to express solidarity with the employees of the national broadcaster and Associated Press of Pakistan, Faisal Kundi deplored that the horde of Pakistan Tahrik e Insaaf have ransacked and put on fire the government and people's properties including Radio Pakistan's building and has allegedly stolen its expensive computers, electronic appliances, furniture, sound system, vehicles engines and other expensive items.

He said the attacks on government and defense installations was a pre-planned conspiracy, and that attackers, planners and

abetters could not escape from law.

Faisal Kundi said it was highly deplorable that Imran Khan has disowned its party workers, who were put behind the bar in the May 9 vandalism cases and had hardly talked about them. He said Imran Khan has talked about beauty and visit of the Northern Areas of Pakistan but it was unfortunate that he never talked to meet jailed workers.

Faisal Kundi said PPP leadership had never afraid of jails as former President Asif Ali Zardari had spent about 4000 days and Faryal Talpur nearly 170 days in jails in harsh weather.

The state minister demanded that compensation of all the ransacked and burnt buildings including Radio Pakistan Peshawar may be recovered from the PTI leadership and strict punishment should be awarded to elements for the late response that resulted burning of the Radio Pakistan building.

Faisal Kundi said due to stubbornness of Imran Niazi and irresponsible attitude of

### Meeting discuss Remodeling of Warsak Canal System Project

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Irrigation Haji Fazal Elahi on Wednesday presided over a meeting Project Directorate of Remodeling of Warsak Canal Stem Project to discuss matter relating to remodeling of the project.

During meeting, minister was told that water flow from Warsak Dam is 500 cusecs which would increase to 1250 cusecs after completion of the Remodeling of Warsak Canal System Project.

He was informed about the construction work and development of the project and statistics regarding efficiency, cost, expenses and difficulties.

Speaking on the occasion, caretaker minister said that thousands of acres of land in Peshawar and Nowshera would be irrigated through Remodeling of Warsak Canal System Project. He said that appreciated work of the directorate and directed to complete the project within stipulated time ensuring quality of work.

## IGP awards officers of Peshawar, Haripur and Tank Police

PESHAWAR (APP): The Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Akhtar Hayat Khan has said that police officers and jawans who excel in line of duty would be generously awarded and encouraged at every forum.

This, he said, while distributing cash and commendation certificates amongst the Peshawar, Haripur and Tank police officers and jawans at a ceremony held at Central Police Office (CPO) here on Wednesday.

It is worth recalling that Peshawar police during a crackdown had successfully traced and arrested several car-lifters, mobile snatchers, dacoits and recovered stolen items from their possession.

Similarly, Haripur police has also shown their best performance and exhibited exemplary bravery in a raid on proclaimed offenders involved in murders, attempted murders and kidnapping cases while Tank police have also exhibited extraordinary performance

more success and laurels for the KP police.

The IGP awarded police officers and jawans with cash prizes and commendation certificates. They included Peshawar police SSP Operation Haroon-ur-Rasheed, SP Faqir Abad Circle Dr. Muhammad Umar, SP Cantt Peshawar Waqas Rafiq, SP Faqir Abad Syed Talal Ahmad Shah, SDPO Cantt Inspector Sajjad Hussain Khan, SHO East Cantt Inspector NaemHaider, SHO Police Station Town Sub Inspector Ibrahim Khan, PASI Salman Latif, Ababeel Squad constables Sadaqat Shah, Muhammad Umair, Imran and Tariq Ahmad, District Haripur police SHO Kot Najeab Ullah Inspector Arif Khan, SHO Srai Saleh Inspector Imtiaz Khan, ASI Tariq Saleem, Constables Zubair, Qadeer and Bilal, District Tank police Constables Kalemullah Jan, Jehanzeb, Eid-ur-Rahman, Muhammad Zubair, Shaukat Ullah and Latif Khan.



PESHAWAR: State Minister for Social Security and Poverty Alleviation Faisal Karim Kundi talking to media after visiting Radio Pakistan Peshawar.

## ‘Peshawar to be made a city of flowers in true sense’

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar will be made a city of flowers in the true sense as the Mayor Capital Metropolitan Government of Peshawar has started development projects in the length and breadth of Peshawar.

With the completion of the projects, Peshawar will be recognized as the capital of the province as Peshawar has been turned into ruins and no significant development project could be started. For the first time in history, tuff tiles are being installed in the streets, while street lights are being spread in all areas of Peshawar through elected local government representatives.

Speaking on this occasion, Mayor Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali during the ceremony organized on the occasion of the inauguration of Gulbahar Lakki Dheri Road, Haji Zubair Ali said that from Lakki Dheri to Afridi Garhi Bridge in Gulbar area, sewer and drain will be repaired, while the roads of Bukhari Colony No. 2 and Bukhari Colony No. 2 will be constructed and rehabilitated.

A dispensary and a sewing and embroidery center will also be built in the area, he assured. It should be noted that Mayor Peshawar Haji Zubair Ali along with Governor KP Haji Ghulam

### Minister seeks everyone role for child rights protection

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Zakat Ushr, Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Salma Begum on Wednesday said that everyone must perform their role for child rights protection and eradicating social issues and challenges facing by children.

She urged the parents to pay special attention in provision of their children basic rights.

She expressed these views in closing ceremony of a two days training workshop on "Child Protection Information Management System (CP-IMS)" organized by Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child and Welfare Commission in Peshawar. This event, CP-IMS, signifies a significant milestone in our joint efforts to protect and promote the rights of children.

She added that she commend all the participants from CPWC, Child Protection Units, Zamung Kor, Police Department, and Newly Merged Districts for their dedication and commitment to the cause of child protection in their respective roles.

### KPCPWC concluded training F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Commission, established by the Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the KP Child Protection and Welfare Act 2010, is dedicated to ensuring the care, protection, maintenance, welfare, training, education, rehabilitation, and reintegration of children at risk in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. In line with our commitment to coordinating and providing necessary services to children in need of protection and their caregivers, KPCPWC, in collaboration with UNICEF, organized a two-day Child Protection Information Management System Training. The training was chaired by Ms. Salama Begum, Special Assistant to the Chief Minister for Social Welfare, SE and WE Department, and took place on 30th and 31st May 2023 at Shelton's Rezidor Hotel on University Road, Peshawar.

Sohail Ahmad, a Child Protection Specialist from UNICEF, highlighted the objectives of the workshop. He mentioned that UNICEF, in collaboration with KPCPWC, recently handed over a well-functioning Child Protection Case Management and Referral System to the Child Protection Units established across KP, including the Newly Merged Districts.

## PHC rejects bail plea of alleged kidnapper

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Justice Sahibzada Asadullah of Peshawar High Court (PHC) has rejected bail petition of alleged harasser of Afghan woman and abductor of her daughter, on Wednesday.

The counsel for complainant Mian Zakir Hussain Advocate appeared before court and argued that alleged culprit Nasim had made friendship with Afghan national Arzo and called to Pakistan on social media platform.

According to prosecution, the alleged culprit has stayed Afghan woman at

his relative's home and sexually harassed her for 20 days while latterly Arzoo has leave to bring her sister for release of her daughter kidnapped by Nasim and also demanded ransom in this regard.

The counsel argued that on 7th March 2023 First Information Report (FIR) registered against Nasim under forced intercourse, kidnapping and child protection Act in Pahari Pura police station.

Police has arrested Nasim and recovered Afghan girl from his residence during raid on his home while trial court turn-down bail plea of the

alleged culprit, the prosecution claimed.

The counsel argued that kidnapped child was recovered from possession of alleged culprit while social media chat is also available on the record, on the other hand, the counsel for accused argued that co-accused already obtained bail from court.

Peshawar High Court (PHC) has turn-down bail petition of alleged kidnapper and harasser while declared that the accused has been directly charged along with evidences and added that co-accused obtained relief due to difference in the role.



PESHAWAR: Leaders of minorities meeting with Caretaker Provincial Minister for Information Barrister Feroz Jamal Shah Kakakhel.





## In brief

### Khulli Kachehri held in Daggar F.P. Report

BUNER: The Public in Khulli Kachehri here was held in Daggar on Tuesday complained of drastic errors in land computerization record and illegal occupation of public thorough fares and demanded actions by the administration prior it leads to erupt clashes among locals. The Khuli Kachehri was held at the lawn of tehsel Daggar where in the ADC Latief Khan AC Mehir Ali Shah AAC Faisal Khan TMO Afsar Ali Tehseldar Rashed Ahmed DHO Dr Qazi Anwar Girdawar SDC Ihsan Khan Girdawar Sahgar Younas Khan DFC Zafar Ali SDO roads Arif Khan Engineer Subhan Khan In charge SDC Zafar Khan ADEO Farooq Khan and Forest Officer keenly and patiently heard the complainants and assured the taking appropriate steps for addressing these issues soon. They assured actions soon and sharing positive feedback with them within a month period. On the occasion Mian Bakht Wali of Daggar Darvesh Khan of Torwarsak and many more people registered complaints against drastic errors in land computerization record and demanded correction by the department itself sans charges. They complained of public thorough fares occupation by elements due to which general people were facing hardships and the issue may lead to clash among them if administration did not intervene, they expressed fear.

### Man gunned down

DERA MURAD JAMALI (PPT): One man was gunned down by unidentified armed man in Maweshe Madi area in the precincts of Police Station Sadr, Dera Murad Jamali in Balochistan province on Wednesday. The assailant managed to escape after consuming the crime. According to rescue sources, unidentified gunman shot dead one man namely Allah Bakhsh in Maweshe Mandi area of Dera Murad Jamali within the jurisdiction of Police Station Sadr, Dera Murad Jamali. The attacker fled the scene after committing the crime. The body was shifted to Dera Murad Jamali hospital and later handed over to the heirs after fulfilling necessary medico-legal formalities. The incident has created a mourning atmosphere in the victim's home. Further investigation was being conducted by the authorities of Police Station Sadr, Dera Murad Jamali.

### Six youth abducted

FAISALABAD (INP): Six youth including three brothers were alleged abducted from different localities of Faisalabad on Wednesday. A resident of Rizwan Town of Faisalabad informed police that his three sons Abdul Rehman 12, Ali Hassan 8, and Hamza 7, went to a religious seminary but not return back. He feared that his sons have been kidnapped. Hassan Faisal s/o Faisal Gulzar hailing from Sunnatpura, 16-year old Talha Shehzad s/o Kashif Shehzad, a resident of Sheraz Park Sargodha road and 15-year old Abdullah s/o Nadeem Abbas hailing from Millat Town, left their houses for different reasons but didn't returned back. Families of missing youth claimed that they have been abducted. The police after registering separate cases in all incidents at concerned police stations have started search for the abducted youth. Meanwhile, armed culprits shot injured owner of a tikka shop located in Adam Chowk of Ghulam Muhammadabad for demanding bill on Wednesday.

# Martyrs of police dept heroes of nation: AIG

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Additional Inspector General of Police (AIG) Welfare Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Hameedullah has said that the martyrs of police department are the heroes of nation and the supreme sacrifices they rendered in the line of duty will be remembered for a long time. During a visit to Lakki Marwat district, Mr Hameedullah met the family members of martyred policemen including inspector Javed Iqbal and constables Waqar, Kiramatullah and Ali Marjan.

He shared condolences with the family members of deceased cops and handed over national flags and shields to them on behalf of Inspector General of Police Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The AIG police said that peace and tranquility prevailed in the province due to the sacrifices of martyrs. "The sacrifices offered by police officials for maintenance of peace and protection of their soil will not go in vain but it will be written with golden words in the history", he maintained.

Conveying the message of IGP Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ahtar Hayat Khan to the families of martyrs, he said that the entire police department stood along them and would not leave them alone. Meanwhile, elders of Sulemankhel and local police authorities have agreed to launch joint efforts for maintenance of peace in the region. The resolve was shown at a meeting held at the police lines in the District Headquarters Complex Tajazai, said an official on Wednesday.

DPO Muhammad Ashfaq Khan and other police officials also participated. Matters pertaining to law and order and problems faced by the residents if remote rural areas were discussed in the meeting. Mr Ashfaq appreciated the elders for their role in repulsing militants' attacks on police installations and improving law and order situation in the area bordering the merged tribal subdivisions. He acknowledged the sacrifices of local residents and said that they always stood side by side with police, army and other law enforcement agencies in the war against terrorism.

The district police chief said that full support by elders and area people would prove helpful to promote peace and bring back normalcy to the region. Elders said that joint efforts by people and police were inevitable to maintain lasting peace in the area and foil the malicious designs of anti-peace elements. They said that

local residents would also cooperate with police to eliminate crimes and social and moral vices and tighten noose around the criminals' gangs. Also in the day, police arrested a drug peddler identified as Arifullah in Ghaznikhel area and seized 822 gram hashish and 572 gram ice drug from him. The arrested suspect was shifted to the police station where a case was registered against him under relevant sections of law.

**ANP forms body to supervise intra party elections:** The local chapter of Awami National Party has formed a two member team to hold and supervise intra party elections in the district. The committee headed by Riaz Marwat was formed at a meeting held in the party's district office in Naurang town on Wednesday.

ANP's provincial council members including Malik Riaz Khan, engineer Latifullah Khan, Malik Haji Hamidullah Khan, member of provincial election committee Malik Ali Sarwar Khan and other leaders and workers were in attendance. Other members of the election committee are Malik Haji Saleh Khan Bitanni, Akhtar Gul Bitanni, Tahir Bacha, Dr Bashir, Imran Khan Begukhel and Abdul Baseer. Mr Ali Sarwar shed light on the importance of the election committee and called upon workers to launch a membership drive in the district with full enthusiasm.

He said that the committee would fulfill its constitutional responsibility to hold intra party elections in a transparent manner. He said that the party elections would infuse a new spirit in the masses contact campaign, thus paving the way for the ANP's victory in the coming general elections. Other leaders said that though facing the brunt of militancy the Awami National Party served the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during its five years tenure.

They said that the previous PTI government ruled the province for over nine years but it failed to bring any development to the province. They said that poor performance of the former rulers had exposed the real face of so-called champions of change and people would reject them in the upcoming polls. "The Awami National Party (ANP) has the vision to steer the militancy-hit province out of crisis and put it on the track to sustainable development", they claimed. They asked the people to gather under the red flag and strengthen the hands of Aimal Wali Khan so that their due rights could be secured.



HYDERABAD: Locals filling their water cans with drinking water from a hand pump.

## Crackdown against outlaw activities ordered

Hafiz Aziz-ur-Rehman

HAFIZABAD: Sub Divisional Police Officer Hafizabad Rana Jameel Qaisar has said that special measures are being taken to ensure protection of lives, property and honour of people and elimination of drug trafficking is top priority of the police to save new generation from drug addiction. He expressed these views while talking to a delegation of journalists and social workers led by former Chairman Press Club Hafizabad Rana Muhammad Arshad and Chairman Anjuman-e-Islah-e-Muashra Hafizabad Haji Imtiaz Ahmad Taj. Rana Jameel Qaisar said that special instructions have been conveyed to all SHO's of police stations to deal with people politely and to ensure registration of cases without any delay only on merit under the policy of the DPO Dr. Fahad Ahmad. He said that crackdown of anti-social elements including drug peddlers, dacoits, grabbers and other law breakers. He said that concept of community policing was being promoted to bridge gap between people and police as well as to seek cooperation of people to identify anti-social elements.

**Protection studs to be build on Chenab:** Deputy Commissioner, Hafizabad, Umar Farooq Warriach has

said that 21 protective bunds/studs with the cost of Rs.560 million will be built alongside the Rive Chenab in the district to save agriculture land and population of different villages situated at the bank the river.

DC stated this while talking to people while visiting villages Behak Ahmad Yar, Mehmoopur, Kot Khameer and Bhone Fazal, on Monday. ADCR Imtiaz Ali Baig, Deputy Director Development Hafiz Mubashar-ul-Hassan and officers of Irrigation Department also accompanied by DC. He said that 21 studs would be erected at the bank of the River Chenab to overcome erosion for protecting agriculture land and population of different villages in the district. He said that hundreds of acres agriculture land had been eroded during some years and many villages partially affected by the erosion. He said that the scheme to build/erect studs with the cost of Rs.560 million was submitted to the government of the Punjab for approval.

Meanwhile, on the directions of the Chief Minister of the Punjab, computerized/E-Registration of land and property have been launched in the district Hafizabad. DC Umer Farooq Warriach inaugurated E-Registration System. ADCR Imtiaz Ali Baig and other Revenue Officers were

also present on this occasion. DC said that people could get registered their land and property without visiting different offices and this system would also be helpful to eliminate bribery, fraud, forgery and other irregularly.

**AGEGA nominates chairman:** A meeting of government employees of different departments held under Chairmanship of President Muthada Mahaz Aasatzah District Hafizabad Riaz Ahmad Tarrar. President APCA (Zafar Ali Khan) Hafizabad Muhammad Nasir Amin nominated as Chairman (AGEGA) All Government Employees Grand Alliance Hafizabad district.

Qamar Zaman Kambooh, Syed Shafiq Hussain Shah, Faisal Imran, Ifthikhar Ahmad, Chairmen Punjab IT Teachers Association Aqeel Azad and other representatives of employees union attended the meeting. The meeting decided to hold sit-in in front of District Press Club Hafizabad on June, 2 at 10 AM to stress the government to fulfill justifi demands of government employees who were grinding in mill of increasing inflation and depreciation of rupee.

AGEGA demanded the government to increase 100 percent salaries, allowance and pension of employees in view of proportion of inflation.



QUETTA: First lady Begum Samina Alvi being apprised about the vocational training, rehabilitation and therapy facilities for persons with disabilities, at Balochistan Disabled Complex.

## Corruption in Education Department disclosed

F.P. Report

LARKANA: According to information received FROM reliable educational sources that 600 benches, 90 chairs and 250 steel chairs were found for the primary schools of Warah taluk for teachers. They criticize the journalists who write against the corruption, they are asked if the above-mentioned equipment is available in any school, will they also inform us, and when the same equipment was found for Nasirabad taluk, the same question was asked by the residents of Nasirabad.

It is also asked whether the above-mentioned equipment has been received by the schools of Nasirabad. We, through this writing, request the honest officials of NAB anti-corruption and other accountable institutions and the higher authorities to inform the taluk and taluk of district Qamber Shahdad Kot. Investigation and action should be taken against the corrupt officials who embezzled the materials for the schools of Naseerabad, because despite having a budget of billions of rupees, education in district Qamber Shahdad Kot is in ruins, most of them are deprived of basic facilities and innocent children are sitting on the ground to get education. are forced to.

## Armed attack on shop leaves four injured

MULTAN (INP): Rivals opened fire on a shop incited by old rivalry, injuring four people in Multan, police confirmed on Wednesday.

The incident occurred on a shop situated in Ghanta Ghar chowk of Multan when rivals opened indiscriminate firing on the shop instantly after arriving at scene. The firing incident left four people injured who were transported to Nishtar Hospital for medical aid.

The police upon being informed about the incident reached the crime scene and started gathering evidence. Police further added that they have initiated the investigation regarding this incident and steps are underway to arrest the culprits soon.

Meanwhile, two police constables were injured when a suspect attacked during raid in the jurisdiction of Shujabad police station, police told on Wednesday. The police launched the raid near Adda Pull Kharan situated in jurisdiction of Shujabad Khakhi police station.

On seeing the police, the suspect opened straight fire on police injuring two constables Kaleem and Anslan. The accused escaped while police surrounded the area and started the search operation. The wounded police officials were shifted to the hospital for medical aids. Police search operation for the accused was underway while police hoped that the outlaws would be arrested soon.

## Involvement in May 9 mayhem

# First govt employee of KP suspended

Fazal Haq

MARDAN: First government employee of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was suspended on Wednesday over involvement in May 9 vandalism and notification in this connection was also issued.

According to the notification, Vice Chancellor University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Mardan suspended the services of Muhammad Ismail, Assistant Controller Examination UET. The notification read: "Vice Chancellor UET Mardan is pleased to suspend Muhammad Ismail in anticipation of the approval of the Syndicate under the rules in vogue with immediate effect till further orders."

A case was registered against the suspended UET employee at City police station Mardan over involvement in violent protest on May 9 in reaction of the arrest of Chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Imran Khan.

**Library and Readers Club inaugurated:** The establishment of Library and Readers Club in Government Centennial Model High School No. 3 Mardan was inaugurated by Assistant Commissioner Mardan Ayesha Tahir along with District Education Officer Zahid Muhammad.

According to the details, with the efforts of Commissioner Mardan Division Yousuf Rahim and

## Two teachers involved in torching toll plaza suspended

F.P. Report

MALAKAND: Two school teachers from Malakand district were suspended from service on Wednesday for their participation in the violent riots of 9th May.

According to the Education Department Malakand, the teachers were involved in setting the Chakdara Expressway Toll Plaza on fire. The department said both the teachers were identified through CCTV footage of different areas.

District Education Officer Madrar Ullah on Wednesday issued letters of suspension to both the teachers. One of the teachers is from Totakan area while the other belongs to Dargai area of Malakand.

Four injured in accident: At least four people were injured when a passenger coach collided with a truck on Malakand top on Wednesday. Local police said the passenger van was on its way to Batkhel when it collided with a truck coming from the opposite side. Police said the mishap was a result of wrong overtaking by the passenger van. Rescue workers shifted four injured passengers of the van to District Headquarters Hospital Batkhela.

Deputy Commissioner Mardan Captain Retired Abdul Rehman, until now Readers Club has been inaugurated in Public Library Mardan and Fazal Haq College Mardan to improve the reading skills of students.

However, in order to widen the scope of the Readers Club, a formal inauguration was also held today in Government Centennial Model High School No.3. Apart from the teachers, the in-charge public library Mardan and the officers of the education department participated in the inauguration ceremony. They said that in the

present era, when children are unnecessarily engaged in social media and their relationship with books has almost been cut off, the district administration, with the cooperation of the education department, has promoted book literacy in various schools. The school library has been established in a modern style. On this occasion, the principal of the school said that the Centennial Readers Club was formally established to achieve this great goal. In which there is a strong representation of teachers and students who will be continuously committed to achieve this goal.

## Rehabilitation work on Varsity Bridge to start soon

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Following the directives of the caretaker minister for Communication and Works Muhammad Ali Shah, the provincial secretary C&W department Imtiaz Hussain Shah along with concerned officials visited the damaged bridge linking the Thana Malakand and University of Malakand at Chakdara here on Wednesday.

The visiting secretary examined the damaged portion of the bridge and said that legal action would be taken against the contractor concerned for using substandard materials during the construction. The bridge over the River Swat at Chakdara was closed to all vehicular traffic some eight months ago when one of the bridge's pillars caved in and large cracks appeared in its beams. The bridge according to the C&W officials was built at a cost of millions of rupees.

The students of University of Malakand (UoM) from Thana, Batkhela and Swat often used this bridge as it was a shortcut for reaching the University. The UoM students have raised voices for the early rehabilitation of the bridge but work on it could not be started despite the passage of eight months. Talking to local journalists, male and female students said they had been facing difficulties while reaching the varsity.

They said that the majority of the students from Malakand and Swat districts used this route but they had to go on foot after the bridge closure.

Meanwhile the Pakistan Muslim League Adenzai executive committee chairman engineer Faizullah Khan, who is also the chairman board of directors PESCO Khyber Pakhtunkhwa contacted the caretaker minister and informed him about the miseries faced by students, motorists and local residents. Only bikers are allowed to pass through the bridge while cars and coaches are not allowed due to risks.

The C&W secretary Imtiaz Shah informed the PML-N local leadership that rehabilitation work on the bridge would start soon. He said that legal actions would also be taken against the contractor who had used substandard materials in the project. The PML-N leaders thanked the caretaker government and provincial secretary for taking notice of the issue and said the party workers would fully cooperate with the government.

Meanwhile the Lower Dir deputy commissioner Ifthikhar Ahmad along with assistant commissioner Adenzai Muhammad Daud Saleemi, additional deputy commissioner finance Jan Muhammad, AAC Nasir Ali and other officials visited the site of the under-construction Sanam Dam in

Asbanr and checked the work in progress. The AC briefed him about the progress and said that work on the project was in full swing and the project would be completed within its due time.

The DC also visited the under-construction Chakdara family park and sports' ground and expressed his satisfaction at the pace of the work. The DC directed the contractor to expedite the work on both the projects. He also directed the AC Adenzai to install sign boards on borders of the state land in the area.

## BHU Khankot made functional

F.P. Report

WANA: In District South Waziristan, Basic Health Unit Khankot has been made functional on the special instructions of IGFC South Major General Haroon Hameed.

A medical team of Security Forces will be visiting BHU Khankot for three days a week (Friday to Sunday). In this regard a free Medical Camp was organised in BHU Khankot. A total of 300 patients including Male and Female were treated in the medical camp. The locals of the area appreciated the efforts of FC KP South for arranging the medical camp and thanked IG FCKP South for restoration of BHU.





## UN nuclear chief urges Russia and Ukraine to ban attacks

UNITED NATIONS (AP): The UN nuclear chief stressed that the world is fortunate a nuclear accident hasn't happened in Ukraine and asked Moscow and Kyiv to commit to preventing any attack on Europe's largest nuclear power plant and make other pledges "to avoid the danger of a catastrophic incident." Rafael Grossi reiterated to the UN Security Council what he told the International Atomic Energy Agency's board of governors in March: "We are rolling a dice and if this continues then one day our luck will run out."

The IAEA director general said avoiding a nuclear accident is possible if five principles are observed at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, where fighting on seven occasions, most recently last week, disrupted critical power supplies, "the last line of defense against a nuclear accident." Grossi "respectfully and solemnly" asked Ukraine and Russia to observe the principles, saying IAEA experts at Zaporizhzhia will start monitoring and he will publicly report on any violations: Ban attacks from or against the plant, especially targeting reactors and spent fuel storage areas. Ban the storage of heavy weapons or presence of military personnel that could be used for an attack. Ensure the security of an uninterrupted off-site power supply to the plant. Protect "all structures, systems and components" essential to the plant's operation from attacks or acts of sabotage. Take no action to undermine these principles. Grossi asked the 15 Security Council members to support the five principles, stressing that they are "to no one's detriment and to everyone's benefit."

The Kremlin's forces took over the plant after Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy opposes any proposal that would legitimize Russia's control. Neither the Russian nor Ukrainian ambassador gave a commitment to support the principles. Ukraine's UN Ambassador Sergiy Kyslytsya accused Russia of continuing "to actively use the nuclear plant for military purposes." He said Russia has mined its perimeter and is responsible for shelling that has inflicted "serious damage" on parts of the plant, undermining its safety. He claimed 500 Russian military personnel are at the plant along with heavy weapons, munitions and explosives. "The threat of dangerous accident as a result of these irresponsible and criminal actions hangs over us," he said. Kyslytsya said Ukraine takes "note" of

Grossi's five principles but urges him to add several more, starting with the withdrawal of all Russian personnel from the Zaporizhzhia plant, guarantees of uninterrupted power to the plant from Ukraine, and a humanitarian corridor to ensure that Ukrainian and IAEA personnel at the plant can be rotated safely. Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia denied that Russia has ever attacked the Zaporizhzhia plant, placed heavy weapons there or stationed military personnel at the plant to carry out an attack from its territory. He accused Ukraine of shelling the plant and said "Russia will take the most severe measures" to respond to any Ukraine attack. Nebenzia insisted that nuclear safety remains a priority for Russia and urged the IAEA to "openly condemn Ukraine's actions, which have repeatedly brought the world to the brink of a nuclear catastrophe." Britain's UN Ambassador Barbara Woodward said an IAEA report in February confirmed the continuing presence of Russian military troops, equipment and land mines.

"New imagery shows Russian forces have established sandbag fighting positions on the roofs of several of the six reactor buildings," she said. "This indicates that they have integrated the actual reactor buildings of Europe's largest nuclear power plant into tactical defense planning." US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield urged council members to support the five principles, but accused Russia of demonstrating "flagrant disregard" for them. "To make matters worse, recent news reports indicate that Moscow has disconnected Zaporizhzhia's vital radiation monitoring sensors, which means the plant's data is now being sent to the Russian nuclear regulator," she said. "This is a clear escalation of Russia's efforts to undermine Ukrainian sovereignty and authority over the Zaporizhzhia plant." Thomas-Greenfield said. "And this undermines our ability to have confidence in the level of nuclear safety at the plant." Grossi, asked whether he felt he had received commitments from Russia and Ukraine to the five principles, replied that the council meeting showed "there is a consensus on the fact that no nuclear accident should happen." "The important thing is that the minimum common denominator, which are these basic five principles, have been widely supported and there was no voice opposing them," he said. "This indicates that what we are saying is something no one has a contradictory view upon."

## S Africa law change over Putin ICC arrest warrant

JOHANNESBURG (BBC): South Africa plans to change its law so that it has the power to decide whether or not to arrest a leader wanted by the International Criminal Court (ICC), a deputy minister has told the BBC. Obed Bapela's remarks come amid intense speculation over whether South Africa stands by its invitation to Russia's President Putin to visit in August.

The ICC has issued an arrest warrant for Mr Putin over the Ukraine war. South Africa had earlier invited him to attend a summit of Brics leaders. Russia has not said whether Mr Putin plans to attend the summit. Meanwhile Pretoria has also granted diplomatic immunity to Russian officials attending, something that its foreign affairs department described as standard procedure. Brics is intended to strengthen ties between the nations that make it up - Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. "In June we'll be submitting the law in parliament," Obed Bapela, a deputy minister in the South African presidency, told the BBC World Service's Newshour pro-

gramme.

Through the law, South Africa "will give itself exemptions of who to arrest and who not to arrest," Mr Bapela said. Under its current laws, South Africa is obliged to arrest Mr Putin if he arrives on its shores, as it is a member of the ICC. But South Africa has refused to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine, insisting it wants to remain neutral.

The ICC issued its warrant for Mr Putin in March, accusing him of being responsible for war crimes - though Moscow has rejected such allegations. South Africa's main opposition party, the Democratic Alliance (DA), has launched a court application to compel the authorities to arrest Mr Putin should he arrive in August. Mr Bapela said that South Africa was also writing to the ICC about a waiver. This refers to article 98 of the Rome Statue, the treaty which established the court in 2002. While article 27 says no-one is immune from prosecution by the ICC, article 98 appears to suggest that the ICC could not ask South Africa to arrest the Russian leader unless Russia agreed to

waive Mr Putin's immunity from prosecution.

The deputy minister also lashed out at the ICC for its "double standards", saying the late Nelson Mandela, South Africa's first democratically elected president, would have been disappeared by the war crimes court. "We never thought that the ICC that we have today will be what it is. They never indicted Tony Blair, they never indicted [George W] Bush for their killings of Iraq people," he said, referring to the former UK and US leaders and their invasion of Iraq in 2003. "Mandela would have said [that] the inequality, the inconsistency by the ICC, is a problem." Mr Bapela also pointed to past examples of exemptions of international justice, like the UK's decision not to extradite General Augusto Pinochet in 1998. The former Chilean dictator was arrested in London at the request of a Spanish judge seeking to put him on trial for human rights abuses during his 17-year rule, but the UK government freed him after 16 months on the advice of medical experts who said he was unfit to stand trial. He died back home in 2006.

## US denounces China's 'maneuver' over South China Sea

BEIJING (Agencies): The United States has accused a Chinese fighter jet of performing an "unnecessarily aggressive maneuver" against one of its aircraft during a flight over the South China Sea, a disputed region of significant strategic importance. In a written statement, the US Indo-Pacific Command the armed forces branch overseeing the region - said its aircraft was conducting "safe and routine operations" in "international airspace" when it was intercepted by the Chinese J-16 jet.

Its pilot "flew directly in front of the nose of the RC-135, forcing the US aircraft to fly through its wake turbulence", according to the press release. "We expect all countries in the Indo-Pacific region to use international airspace safely and in accordance with international law," the statement added. A

video released with the statement shows the inside of the US Air Force plane's cockpit, as a fighter jet approaches from one side, soaring over the clouds. As it turns and passes in front of the nose of the Air Force plane, the video wobbles from the force of its airflow. The narrow fly-by and the US's subsequent statement are the latest tit-for-tat over the South China Sea, where China has made broad territorial claims, covering much of the region. The US, however, has argued such claims could violate the sovereignty of other countries in the region. One of those countries, the Philippines, brought a petition in 2013 to the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, Netherlands, to adjudicate the matter. While China refused to participate in the proceedings, the court ultimately found in 2016 that its claims over the South China

Sea had no basis in international law. In the wake of that ruling, the US has called on China to "cease its provocative behavior" in the South China Sea and confirm "that it is committed to the rules-based maritime order that respects the rights of all countries, big and small". But China, the US and its allies continue to patrol the contested waterway and its airspace, which has led to numerous interceptions and near-miss collisions. In April, for instance, US State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller called on China to "desist from its provocative and unsafe conduct" after a Philippine Coast Guard boat and a Chinese vessel nearly struck one another. China's foreign ministry responded that the Philippine boat had "intruded" on its territory in a "premeditated and provocative action".

## Iran resolves one of UN N-watchdog's concerns

TEHRAN (AFP): Iran has "resolved" one of three cases raised by the UN watchdog as possible evidence it had not declared all its past nuclear activities, Iranian media reported. The reports came just days before the board of governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency is due to meet to review progress in addressing the watchdog's remaining concerns.

The IAEA had reported the discovery of traces of radioactive material at three sites not declared by Iran as having hosted past nuclear activity in a blow to efforts to restore a landmark 2015 deal between Tehran and major powers. "With the improvement of interactions between Iran and the IAEA... the case related to one of the agency's alleged sites -- Abadeh -- has been resolved," Iran's Fars news agency reported. "This concludes the agency's inquiry into one of the three alleged locations raised," it added. The Marivan site in Abadeh county in the southern province of Fars is the first of the three sites to be addressed under a work plan agreed by Iran and the IAEA in March last year. The other two sites are Varamin and Turqzabad. The IAEA's concerns about the sites are one of the remaining obstacles to the revival of the 2015 nuclear deal, which was left in tatters by the unilateral withdrawal of the United States in 2018. Fars also reported that Iran had addressed IAEA concerns about the discovery of uranium enriched to close to the level required for a nuclear warhead. Iran said the enrichment of the sample to 83.7 percent was likely due to "unintended fluctuations" in the enrichment process as it had never set out to enrich uranium to more than 60 percent, still well short of the 90 percent needed for a warhead. Iran has always denied any ambition to develop a nuclear weapons capability, insisting its activities are entirely peaceful.

## Malaysia seizes Chinese ship

KUALA LUMPUR (Agencies): Malaysian authorities have seized a Chinese registered dredger suspected of looting the wrecks of British warships that sunk off the east coast of the peninsula during World War II. The Fuzhou-registered Chuan Hong 68 was detained off the coast of the Malaysian state of Johor on May 28, the Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency said in a statement on Facebook. In a joint operation with police, officers found 100 unexploded artillery shells on board. Photos released by the agency showed piles of rusted metal on the boat's deck as well as cranes and cutting equipment. "Maritime Malaysia (Malaysian Maritime Enforcement Agency) does not rule out the possibility that this vessel is involved in the theft of old British warship wrecks," the statement said.

The HMS Repulse and HMS Prince of Wales sank in the South China Sea after being attacked by Japanese fighter aircraft in December 1941. Nearly 850 sailors were killed in one of the worst disasters in British naval history. The wrecks are designated war graves and are not supposed to be disturbed. "We are distressed and concerned at the apparent vandalism for personal profit," Dominic Tweddle, the director general of the National Museum of the Royal Navy, said in a statement after Malaysian media-tipped off by local fishermen - reported suspicious activity around the wrecks. The Chuan Hong was initially detained for anchoring without a permit. Its crew of 32, including 21 Chinese nationals, 10 Bangladeshis and a Malaysian, were being questioned, officials said. In Beijing, Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesperson Mao Ning told reporters that the government was aware of the case. The Chinese Embassy in Kuala Lumpur was in touch with the Malaysian authorities and had asked them to "handle the case justly in accordance with law", she said, adding that Chinese citizens' "security and lawful rights and interests" must also be protected.

## North Korea spy satellite crashes into sea

SEOUL (AFP): North Korea attempted to launch a military spy satellite on Wednesday that would monitor the United States, but it crashed into the sea with Pyongyang conceding there had been "serious defects". North Korea does not have a functioning satellite in space and leader Kim Jong Un has made developing a military spy satellite a top priority for his regime, personally overseeing some launch preparations.

North Korean space authorities said they had "launched a military reconnaissance satellite, 'Malligyong-1', mounted on a new-type carrier rocket, 'Chollima-1'," early Wednesday, the official Korean Central News Agency reported. But the rocket crashed into the sea "after losing thrust due to the abnormal starting of the second-stage engine after the separation of the first stage during the normal flight," it said. Authorities will "thoroughly investigate the serious defects revealed in the satellite launch," it said, adding a second test would be conducted as soon as possible.

The South Korean military had earlier detected the launch of the purported satellite, which it confirmed had disappeared from radar and fallen into the sea due to "abnormal flight". It later salvaged a portion of debris, releasing images showing a large barrel-like metal structure with thin pipes and wires at the bottom, which experts said might be a liquid fuel tank. Seoul, Tokyo and Washington all slammed the launch, which they said violated a raft of UN resolutions barring Pyongyang from any tests using ballistic missile technology. Seoul's National Security Council said the launch "whether successful or not (was) a grave violation of UN Security Council resolutions and a serious provocation."

Because long-range missiles and rockets used for space launches share the same technology, analysts say developing the ability to put a satellite in orbit would provide Pyongyang with cover for testing



banned intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBMs). Soon after the launch, Seoul city authorities sent an emergency evacuation alert to residents, prompting widespread consternation and confusion online, before the interior ministry clarified minutes later it had been "incorrectly issued". The recovery of the debris would be very useful for South Korea, experts said. "Technical experts will be able to gain tremendous insight into North Korea's proficiency with large, multi-stage boosters from the recovered debris," US-based analyst Ankit Panda told AFP.

Prior to Wednesday's launch, Pyongyang had launched five satellites since 1998, three of which failed immediately and two of which appeared to have been put into orbit - though signals from those launches have never been independently detected, indicating they may have malfunctioned. North Korea said its new spy satellite would be "indispensable to tracking, monitoring... and coping with in advance in real time the dangerous military acts of the US and its vassal forces". Criticising US-South Korea joint military exercises, including large ongoing live-fire drills, a top North Korean military official said Pyongyang felt "the need to expand reconnaissance and information means and improve various

defensive and offensive weapons", state media reported.

In 2012 and 2016, Pyongyang tested ballistic missiles that it called satellite launches. Both flew over Japan's southern Okinawa region. Japan briefly activated its missile alert warning system for the Okinawa region early Wednesday, lifting it after about 30 minutes. "Kim stayed true to his word and launched the spy satellite today," Soo Kim, policy practice area lead at LMI Consulting and a former CIA analyst, told AFP. "We know that Kim's determination does not end with this recent activity," she said, adding that the launch could be a "foreshadowing of greater provocations, including the nuclear test." Since diplomatic efforts collapsed in 2019, North Korea has doubled down on military development, conducting a string of banned weapons tests, including test-firing multiple ICBMs. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un last year declared his country an "irreversible" nuclear power and called for an "exponential" increase in weapons production, including tactical nukes. "Whether or not North Korea's current satellite mission is a success, Pyongyang can be expected to issue political propaganda about its space capabilities," Leif-Eric Easley, a professor at Ewha University in Seoul.

## Staggering 15.3 million Syrians, nearly 70% of population, need aid

UNITED NATIONS (AP): For the first time in Syria's 12-year war, people in every district are experiencing some degree of "humanitarian stress," and a staggering 15.3 million - nearly 70% of the population - need humanitarian aid, the United Nations said. A UN appeal for \$5.4 billion to help over 14 million people in Syria is less than 10% funded and the UN World Food Program has warned that without additional money, 2.5 million people are at risk of losing food or cash assistance from July.

The dire humanitarian situation, compounded by the February earthquake that devastated the rebel-held northwest, was spelled out to the Security Council by the UN humanitarian office's deputy operations director Ghada Mudawi. The Syrian people "are more and more reliant on humanitarian assistance as basic services and critical infrastructure are on the brink of collapse," she said. Mudawi urged generous pledges and the swift release of funds at a

European Union hosted conference in Brussels on June 14-15. She said "Syrians need the support of the international community now more than at any time in the past 12 years." She said the need to maintain the delivery of humanitarian aid to the northwest is even more critical after the earthquake. She said UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres has called for a 12-month extension of the UN mandate, which expires in July, saying the assistance is "indispensable" and "a matter of life and death for millions of people" in the region. Russia's UN Ambassador Vassily Nebenzia, whose country is a close ally of Syria, said Moscow shares concerns about the deteriorating humanitarian situation. But he said cross-border aid delivery "has outlived its usefulness" and "we see no reason at all to extend it." Nebenzia expressed concern that while cross-border aid was flowing and funded, the appeal to help millions of others in acute need in Syria is only 9% funded.

It's "a very odd moral imperative," if aid "only applies to the terrorists in Idlib and it does not apply to the country as a whole."

US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield said the United States will seek a council resolution to extend aid deliveries through the three border crossings currently operating: Bab Al-Hawa, which was the single crossing Russia would allow to remain open in January, as well as Bab Al-Salam and Al Ra'ee, which Syria's President Bashar Assad agreed to open after the quake, which killed over 6,000 in Syria and has displaced over 330,000. Assad has agreed to keep the two additional crossings open through Aug. 13. The US envoy accused Assad of "cynically" trying "to seize on the outpouring of international support following the earthquakes to reclaim its place on the world stage," stressing that "merely sitting at the same table as other regional leaders does nothing to help the people of Syria." "If the Assad regime wants to help

the Syrian people, it should act immediately and announce that it will keep the Bab Al-Salam and Al Ra'ee crossings open through at least August 2024, or as long as it takes," Thomas-Greenfield said. "And even if the Assad regime does the right thing, it is frankly no substitute for actions by this council, which has a responsibility to respond to the dire humanitarian needs of the Syrian people." Assad was welcomed back to the Arab League this month after a 12-year suspension. Geir Pedersen, the UN special envoy for Syria, told the Security Council that this meeting in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia along with others in Moscow and Amman that included Syrian officials could create new momentum in long-stalled efforts to end the conflict. He reiterated that new diplomatic activity "could act as a circuit breaker in the search for a political solution in Syria - if there is constructive Syria engagement, and indeed if key regional and international groups and players can work together."

## Artificial intelligence raises risk of extinction, experts say in new warning

LONDON (AP): Scientists and tech industry leaders, including high-level executives at Microsoft and Google, issued a new warning about the perils that artificial intelligence poses to humankind. "Mitigating the risk of extinction from AI should be a global priority alongside other societal-scale risks such as pandemics and nuclear war," the statement said.

Sam Altman, CEO of ChatGPT maker OpenAI, and Geoffrey Hinton, a computer scientist known as the godfather of artificial intelligence, were among the hundreds of leading figures who signed the statement, which was posted on the Center for AI Safety's website. Worries about artificial intelligence systems outsmarting humans and running wild have intensified with the rise of a new generation of highly capable AI chatbots such as ChatGPT. It has sent countries around the world scrambling to come up with regulations for the developing technology, with the European Union blazing the trail with its AI Act expected to be approved later this year. The latest warning was intentionally succinct - just a single sentence - to encompass a broad coalition of scientists who might not agree

on the most likely risks or the best solutions to prevent them, said Dan Hendrycks, executive director of the San Francisco-based nonprofit Center for AI Safety, which organized the move. "There's a variety of people from all top universities in various different fields who are concerned by this and think that this is a global priority," Hendrycks said. "So we had to get people to sort of come out of the closet, so to speak, on this issue because many were sort of silently speaking among each other." More than 1,000 researchers and technologists, including Elon Musk, had signed a much longer letter earlier this year calling for a six-month pause on AI development, saying it poses "profound risks to society and humanity."

That letter was a response to OpenAI's release of a new AI model, GPT-4, but leaders at OpenAI, its partner Microsoft and rival Google didn't sign on and rejected the call for a voluntary industry pause. By contrast, the latest statement was endorsed by Microsoft's chief technology and science officers, as well as Demis Hassabis, CEO of Google's AI research lab DeepMind, and two Google executives who lead its AI policy

efforts. The statement doesn't propose specific remedies but some, including Altman, have proposed an international regulator along the lines of the UN nuclear agency. Some critics have complained that dire warnings about existential risks voiced by makers of AI have contributed to hyping up the capabilities of their products and distracting from calls for more immediate regulations to rein in their real-world problems. Hendrycks said there's no reason why society can't manage the "urgent, ongoing harms" of products that generate new text or images, while also starting to address the "potential catastrophes around the corner." He compared it to nuclear scientists in the 1930s warning people to be careful even though "we haven't quite developed the bomb yet." "Nobody is saying that GPT-4 or ChatGPT today is causing these sorts of concerns," Hendrycks said. "We're trying to address these risks before they happen rather than try and address catastrophes after the fact." The letter also was signed by experts in nuclear science, pandemics and climate change. Among the signatories is the writer Bill McKibben, who sounded the alarm on global

warming in his 1989 book "The End of Nature" and warned about AI and companion technologies two decades ago in another book.

"Given our failure to heed the early warnings about climate change 35 years ago, it feels to me as if it would be smart to actually think this one through before it's all a done deal," he said by email. An academic who helped push for the letter said he used to be mocked for his concerns about AI existential risks, even as rapid advancements in machine-learning research over the past decade have exceeded many people's expectations. David Krueger, an assistant computer science professor at the University of Cambridge, said some of the hesitation in speaking out is that scientists don't want to be seen as suggesting AI "consciousness or AI doing something magic," but he said AI systems don't need to be self-aware or setting their own goals to pose a threat to humanity. "I'm not wedded to some particular kind of risk. I think there's a lot of different ways for things to go badly," Krueger said. "But I think the one that is historically the most controversial is risk of extinction, specifically by AI systems that get out of control."



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# Combative politics and need for unity

PRIME Minister Shehbaz Sharif has said that dialogue was a key to evolving democracy, however, it could not be held with anarchists and arsonists in the garb of politicians. The Premier agreed that dialogue is deeply embedded in the political process, which helps democracy mature and evolve. In contrast, many political and constitutional breakthroughs occurred when political leaders sat across the table to craft a consensus. Shehbaz stressed that there is a major difference between the anarchists and arsonists who wear the garb of politicians and attack the symbols of the State, such people do not qualify for dialogue rather they should be held to account for their militant actions. The Premier's statement came after the former Prime Minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan expressed his willingness to dialogue with the ruling coalition government after a years-long refusal to any engagement with his self-defined thieves and corrupts.

Pakistan has been struck by narcissistic political wrangling between determined political groups, who are blatantly pursuing their party agendas at the price of national interests together with offering hurdles to the public's well-being and prosperity. In recent months, the inter-party struggle for power badly hurt the political and social values of our society and promoted hatred, and racism across the political spectrum. At the same time, this ongoing dogfight badly affects the core fabric of our country by instilling poisonous politics in the ranks and files of the country's bureaucracy and lower staff of the national institutions including the judiciary, civil administration, Police, and others that seriously marred the functioning of the government hierarchy at all levels.

Interestingly, while being Primer Minister and after his ouster from power, the PTI Chairman Imran Khan had always refused to shake hands and sit with his political opponents at the negotiation table to conceive consensus on all contentious matters about the future electoral code, use of EVMs, accountability regime, and other irksome policies relating to the national economy. Meanwhile, the opposing PDM's leaders had been calling shots for a national dialogue to end the deadlock and forge a charter of democracy along with a charter of the economy. Although the dialogue was the only way forward to steer the country out of the prevailing political and economic chaos, the invitation for talks had been used as a political tactic by either side in the past. The political landscape of the country had been largely changed after the May 9 violence, followed by the massive exodus of dozens of PTIs leaders that not only weaken the party but also pushed Imran Khan into a defensive mode. Thus this time, the coalition government turned down the PTI's quest for talks by terming the group an arsonist.

Realistically, Pakistani politicians had always upheld party politics and never bother about national unity, state interests as well as the well-being of the public. Thus the combatant leaders have turned politics into personal enmity and changed the entire country into an arena by implementing their biased and violent political strategies in the garb of civic rights and civil liberties that not only defamed the nation, ruined national politics, and also destroyed the economy. Currently, social media platforms have become favorite sites for Pakistani political groups to launch advertisements and propaganda campaigns against each other as well as state institutions.

Earlier, PTI Chairman committed a serious political mistake by not engaging with the opposition which led him to this day that he begs talks from his adversary, while Prime Minister Shehbaz and his colleagues are repeating the same mistake and doing blunders with the nation through refusal from negotiations. Ostensibly, Tokyo negotiated with Washington which bombed its nation and the Taliban held talks with the United States that invaded their nation and occupied it for two decades. Hence, the PTI and PML-N have no dispute about the property and inheritance of their forerunners. Both groups had played a role in the creation of political and economic havoc in the past and their combative politics is further adding to the gravity of those issues. The nation is not ready to pay the price for the selfish politics of its leaders. It is high time that an All Parties Conference (APC) should be convened to frame a code of conduct and create consensus over the national issues, so the country could be steered out of the current challenges through unity, joint work, and cooperation.

# Israel's war on Gaza: Collateral damage by name, murder by nature

IT is an imperative that any fighting force that would like to be regarded as moral and ethical should refrain from targeting civilians. Under certain circumstances, it is actually a war crime to harm civilians, certainly when deliberate. Yet, there has not been a single war in which civilians did not pay a heavy price by either losing their lives, being badly injured or having their property damaged - and such deeds are usually inflicted with complete impunity, both for those who sanction them and those who execute them.

Only this month, in the latest round of hostilities between Israel and Palestinian Islamic Jihad in Gaza, at least 13 Palestinian civilians were killed by the Israel Defense Forces, including women and children, while two - a Palestinian laborer working in Israel and an elderly Israeli woman - were killed by Palestinian Islamic Jihad's rockets. The killing of these innocent people is infuriating enough but, to add insult to injury, such acts are habitually followed by a collective shrug of the shoulders and the dreaded utterance of the euphemism that the victims merely represent

"collateral damage," thus dehumanizing them and trivializing the suffering inflicted on their families. In Israel, use of the term collateral damage has become some sort of justification, even a way of blaming those killed by the IDF merely for being in the wrong place at the wrong time, thus exonerating the killers. In my view, this is another indication that Israeli society is becoming not only insensitive, but utterly desensitized to the suffering of their Palestinian neighbors, who are occupied and blockaded and deprived of basic human rights, not to mention political and civil rights.

One of the most debunked arguments frequently employed by the apologists for collateral damage is that Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad are also targeting civilians, and deliberately so. There is no denying this, but those are movements that are internationally proscribed as terrorist groups, while Israel is a state that is held to a different standard of behavior and should act accordingly, unless it would prefer to be regarded and treated similarly to organizations such as Palestinian Islamic Jihad and Hezbollah. Admittedly, Israel is not the only country to have

such a laissez-faire approach to this dreadful and infuriating term and its twin notion of "proportionality."

Collateral damage came into use during the Vietnam War and, over several decades, became entrenched not only in military jargon, but also in the political discourse of too many countries, while Russia has taken things a step further by treating the entire Ukrainian population as a legitimate war target. In 1999, German linguists selected collateral damage as the "un-word of the year" for its trivializing of civilian casualties. The term has two main objectives - to justify past atrocities and legitimize future ones. But it is not the only euphemism used in relation to military situations. What are "enhanced interrogation techniques" if not techniques of torture, which is prohibited by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights? What is "targeted killing" if not assassination? What is "extraordinary rendition" if not kidnapping with no legal basis? When these terms enter into common usage, they serve to ease the conscience of those who use them; to help them sleep at night while

their governments are destroying innocent lives, allegedly on our behalf.

Let us consider for a moment the first night of Israel's "Operation Shield and Arrow." The names of "military operations" - in other words, acts of war - are also there to shield and belittle their destructive and deadly nature. In this case, where Israel targeted three Palestinian Islamic Jihad commanders, claiming that they were involved in recent attacks on Israeli civilians, we see the use of collateral damage in its sheer ugliness. Could targeting militants justify this air raid, in which 10 civilians were killed, among them four children and four women, and many more injured?

How can Israel justify the killing, for instance, of Dr. Jamal Khaswan, a well-known dentist and the director of Gaza City's Al-Wafa hospital, who was slain together with his wife Mervat and son Youssef? Is being a neighbor of a commander of Palestinian Islamic Jihad a crime that comes with a death penalty? Then there is the case of Mayar and Ali Izzeldeen, who were 12 and eight-year-old siblings killed by an Israeli air raid and were, in the eyes of Israel, a "legiti-

mate" target simply by accident of birth, as they were the children of Tareq Izzeldeen, a senior Palestinian Islamic Jihad militant, who was targeted and also killed in this attack.

There has been no apology or expression of sorrow by officials in Israel. And, what is more, we should not bother waiting on one either. But analysts and commentators, who are supposed to represent the more sane and humane among Israeli society, also preferred to speak about how Israel, with these killings, had "restored deterrence" and badly damaged Palestinian Islamic Jihad's chain of command and infrastructure, while almost entirely ignoring the innocent victims of these hostilities. What they are reluctant to speak about is how a country that loses its sensitivity to the killing of innocent children is one that is losing its humanity, its morality and its soul, and will eventually lose international support. To state the very obvious, civilians - including those who happen to be born into what Israeli perceives as the wrong families - should be immune from drone attacks or precision guided ammunition, because nobody has the right to cut their life short.

Other Israeli politicians and analysts were roaming TV studios, explaining how Israel's military operation in Gaza was "proportionate." But who is the arbiter of this? Is it about prevention, deterrence or proportionate revenge? Israel's referring to the killing of innocent people as "deterrence" leaves it blind to how it is losing its moral fabric, as well as being blind to any future solution in which the country's security does not depend on extrajudicial killings that result in children never becoming adults. In Israel's security paradigm, the entire Palestinian population is one collective item of collateral damage. The occupation of the West Bank and the blockade of Gaza kills Palestinians every single day, directly or indirectly, due to being shot, not allowed or delayed for a hospital appointment or as a result of the extreme poverty inflicted on them by Israel for decades. While the daily damage, death and destruction being dealt out to the Palestinians is all too clear, a quick glance at what is currently taking place within Israeli society and the turn to authoritarianism by its bellicose government demonstrates how this is contributing to changing the country - and for the worse.

# How sanctions have changed the face of Chinese companies in Russia

THE latest sanctions under discussion in the European Commission since May 8 would target several Chinese companies involved in supplying dual-use components to Russia. Those companies include several semiconductor producers that have already been sanctioned by the United States, such as 3HC Semiconductors and King-Pai Technology.

International sanctions regulators are likely to increase scrutiny this year, in particular of Chinese companies, many of which continue to operate in Russia, unlike their Western counterparts. The exodus of over 1,000 multinationals since Feb. 2022 in protest against Moscow's invasion of Ukraine was prompted mainly by reputational rather than sanctions-related concerns. While some high-profile Chinese businesses that are facing sanctions pressure have limited their exposure to Russia, most Chinese companies that were already working in Russia have remained silent about the war, and some have even increased their presence. Chinese business seems to be following the same pattern it learned during the previous eight years of working under Russian sanctions. Wherever possible, Chinese companies are taking advantage of the short-term benefits of the Russian market, while striving to comply with international sanctions.

In some unsanctioned sectors of the Russian market, Chinese brands are taking advantage of the reduced competition. Unlike companies from the West, Chinese businesses do not face significant reputational pressure to withdraw. On the contrary, at least two Chinese tech giants - Lenovo and DiDi - faced a

backlash on Chinese social media after it was reported that they planned to leave Russia in 2022. As a result, certain segments of the Russian consumer market saw a distinct increase in the proportion of Chinese goods in 2022. The Russian car market is dominated by Chinese brands as of last year, when only fourteen out of sixty car brands remained on the Russian market: eleven Chinese and three local. In March 2023, the creation of an Association of Chinese Automakers was announced to help systematize their entry onto the Russian market. According to Boris Titov, chairman of the China-Russia Friendship Committee, the association is also expected to help reduce nontariff import barriers for Chinese producers and facilitate the localization of their production in Russia. In 2022, Chinese models accounted for 20% of new car sales (in terms of units) in Russia: a major increase from about 6% in 2021. By some estimates, the share of Chinese car sales on the Russian market could reach 40% in 2023, despite their rising prices for Russian consumers. At least two new Chinese car brands - Hongqi, a luxury brand of cars originally produced only for the Chinese nomenklatura, and Omoda, a subsidiary of the Chery car brand created specifically for the Russian market - are set to arrive in Russia this year.

At the end of 2022, major Russian retailers reported that Chinese household appliance producers were now leading the washing machine, refrigerator, personal laptop and smartphone segments. These reports are consistent with Chinese export data, which shows a 35.5% increase in washing machine exports and a 6.4%

increase in refrigerator exports to Russia in 2022 compared with the previous year. Some Chinese companies are continuing with localization plans in Russia. Haier, a leading producer of household appliances, has confirmed its intention to complete the delayed construction of its fourth factory in Russia. In June 2022, Haier received concessional financing worth 250 million rubles (about \$3.1 million) from VEB, a Russian state-owned development bank that was sanctioned in February-March 2022. In the meantime, the existing Haier refrigerator factory in Russia appears to have met demand, as the brand accounted for over 20% of the refrigerator market in Russia last year. After Apple and Samsung withdrew from the Russian market, Chinese smartphones became the dominant force in single-gadget sales there, accounting for 70% of the market in 2022. According to data from the biggest retailers, the leaders were Xiaomi, Realme, and Tecno - though not Huawei, one of China's biggest tech producers.

Like other Chinese companies, Huawei has stayed silent on the war in Ukraine. Yet some reports suggest that the company effectively quit the Russian market as early as in March 2022, shortly after the first sanctions were imposed on Moscow. Without making any statements on the matter, Huawei simply stopped fulfilling its supply contracts with Russia. In May 2022, Russia's Digital Development Ministry expressed concern that Huawei - one of the biggest suppliers of base stations to Russia, with a market share of about 30% - had stopped communicating with its clients in Russia. By that summer, Russian media

Vita Spivak

reported that Huawei had begun closing its retail stores in Russia, both offline and online. Some mall operators filed lawsuits against the Chinese giant, alleging violations of rental agreements. Huawei said it had closed the stores due to a lack of products, but did not provide any official explanation for having halted supplies to Russia. At the same time, Huawei tried to take advantage of the situation on the Russian job market. With many skilled professionals having become available after their employers' exits from Russia, Huawei increased its talent acquisition efforts there in mid-2022, in particular for its R&D department. In other words, although Huawei is no longer commercially exposed to Russia, it continues to benefit from a pool of engineering talent that will likely contribute to its innovative development worldwide.

The main difference between Huawei and other Chinese tech brands that continue to do business in Russia is that Huawei has long been subject to trade restrictions and sanctions on the global market. In 2019, Washington banned Huawei from buying components and technology in the United States, which limited the company's access to semiconductors. In addition, major economies including the United States, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Japan, Taiwan, the UK, Germany, and France have introduced various levels of restrictions on Huawei's access to their 5G markets. Huawei appears reluctant to increase international scrutiny by staying in the Russian market, which constituted about 2% of the company's global revenue in 2021. The Chinese drone producer DJI, which has been

subject to US export and investment bans since 2020, also came under international scrutiny in March 2022 when Ukrainian Deputy Prime Minister Mykhailo Fedorov said that DJI's products were being used by the Russian army in Ukraine. At first, the drone maker rejected those claims, but less than a month later, it announced the suspension of its Russian operations. Global Chinese financial businesses face similar challenges. UnionPay, a Chinese payment system that was considered a lifeline for many Russians following the exit of Visa and MasterCard in March 2022, curtailed its exposure to sanctioned banks in Russia. Two leading Chinese banks - ICBC and Bank of China - stopped operations entirely in Russia and Belarus in the spring of 2022, while two China-led development institutions - the New Development Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Development Bank - also curtailed Russia's access to their financing in 2022.

Sanctions are also preventing some Chinese companies from continuing partnerships in Russia. In September 2022, Weichai Group, a state-owned producer of diesel engines, halted supplies to its Russian truck maker partner Kamaz, which had been sanctioned by the US and EU in June 2022. Reuters reported that the supply restrictions followed a warning over secondary sanctions issued by the Chinese government to all state-owned enterprises working with Russia. In September 2022, the two companies' joint venture, Kamaz Weichai LLC, was renamed Volzhskiy Industrial Engines LLC, excluding any mention of the Chinese involvement. Sanctions risks also appear to have deterred the already

limited number of Chinese investors in Russia - even the state companies that had previously led the way. In 2022, Russia saw no major new Chinese investment, despite Beijing's increased financing of Belt and Road projects in other countries. In March 2022, Sinopec, one of the biggest investors in the Russian energy sector, froze negotiations on its planned \$500 million investment in a petrochemical factory in Russia. Once again, Reuters reported that Sinopec's decision had been prompted by the Chinese government's instructions to state-owned companies over the risks of cooperation with Russia. Sinopec's partner in the planned project was due to be Sibur, whose minority shareholder, Gennady Timchenko, has been under US sanctions since 2014, and was added to the EU and UK sanctions lists in 2022.

With pressure from sanctions building for Russia, and Beijing's own tensions with the West growing, it is going to be increasingly difficult for Chinese businesses to keep flying under the sanctions radar. The trend of some high-profile Chinese companies limiting their exposure to Russia appears to be spilling over to state-owned enterprises, which have traditionally been seen as less vulnerable to sanctions risks and more willing to invest in Russia. Others, however, are learning to adjust. In the first quarter of 2023, China's exports to Russia grew by an astonishing 67.2%. Before 2022, Chinese state-owned energy companies dominated Beijing's economic engagement with Moscow. Today, private consumer-oriented companies and regional producers with limited international exposure appear to be taking the lead.

The Moscow Times

# Tunisia was the hope of the Arab spring

‘Historic’ - that is how Tunisia's president, Kais Saied, described his meeting with Syria's Bashar al-Assad on the eve of the Arab League summit in Jeddah earlier this month. Snaps of him standing alongside al-Assad and Egypt's Abdel Fatah al-Sisi during the summit were widely shared around the region, signalling Tunisia's return to the grand old club of Arab dictatorships.

For all their internecine conflicts and rivalries, hidden and visible, Arab leaders are again united around one sacred goal: aborting their people's aspirations for change. Muammar Gaddafi, Hosni Mubarak and Zine al-Abidine Ben Ali may no longer be on the stage, but their spirit lives on in a new generation. But let us focus on Tunisia - once seen as the last democratic hope of the Arab world. Since the era of the Arab spring, which in Tunisia saw Ben Ali

deposed, the country has resisted the dark fates of its sisters such as Egypt, Yemen, Libya or Syria. Democratization seemed to be in train. But no longer - as the experience of my 81-year-old father, Rached Ghannouchi, attests.

My father, the leader of the moderate Islamist party Ennahdha and the former elected speaker of Tunisia's parliament, was arrested in April, as the family prepared to break its fast at the end of Ramadan. About 100 security officers raided our home. My sister says my father was taken to a military barrack, where he spent almost 48 hours, waiting to be allowed access to his lawyers, before he was charged with "conspiring against state security". The reason - I should say, pretext - are the following comments he made: "There is a paralysis, intellectual and ideological, which, in reality, lays the ground for civil war. Because imagining Tunisia

without this or that side, Tunisia without Ennahdha, Tunisia without political Islam, without the Left, without any of its components, is a civil war project. It is a crime. That is why those who welcomed this coup with celebrations cannot be democrats."

The ludicrous charge against him carries the possibility of the death penalty. How did we get here? In the years after the revolution, Tunisia managed to adopt a consensual progressive constitution and lay down the foundations for local governance. It was on the verge of completing its democratic transition, ready to focus on confronting its mighty socioeconomic challenges, having devoted much of its energy to political rebuilding. Then it was dismantled from within. Kais Saied, a relatively unknown assistant university lecturer, was in 2019 voted president, using

Soumaya Ghannouchi

pro-revolutionary and ultra-conservative rhetoric. But as soon as he set foot in the presidential Carthage palace, he pulled up the democratic ladder upon which he had climbed to power. In 2021, he barricaded parliament with military vehicles and started running the country through presidential decrees, before dissolving the legislature in 2022. He moved to overthrow the constitution, writing his own instead, which was passed after a referendum with a 30% turnout, giving him immense power over his subjects' bodies and souls. After his de facto coup, Saied directed his firepower at two targets: judges and the security services. He dissolved the independent Supreme Judicial Council, appointing his own, and dismissed 57 judges by a single presidential decree, accusing them of corruption.

Saied also restored Ben Ali's old legacy in the security apparatus, reversing post-revolution reforms aimed at curbing police brutality. This is how he prepared the ground for the current crackdown against dissidents. The targets include not only political leaders of all tendencies, but civil society activists, journalists, solicitors, even people simply writing critical Facebook posts. Opponents are called everything from "enemies" to "cancer cells". The list grows by the day, from "agents of foreign powers" to vulnerable African migrants accused of being part of a conspiracy to change the country's demography, echoing the far-right "great replacement" theory. Tunisia has turned from a fragile democracy into a country resembling a full-fledged dictatorship. It is a cocktail of failures, robbed of its hard-won freedoms, and thrust into a deep economic

crisis. People stand in long queues every day, hoping to get bread, some sugar, flour or oil. This all unfolds in full sight of Europe, whose major capitals look the other way, confining themselves to the odd statement of concern, which are openly mocked by Tunisia's despot, who retorts: "I, too, am concerned by your concern!" As tanks blocked parliament, destroying Tunisia's nascent democracy, these countries would not even call what was happening a coup.

As my father, who has dedicated his life to reconciling Islam with democracy, in word and action, finds himself behind bars today, the message to the people of the region is loud and clear: democracy is not for them, and anyone who thinks otherwise is a naive idealist. But if change through peaceful means is not attainable, what is the way out of this Arab abyss?

The Guardian



# What Erdogan’s win might mean for the rest of the world

AS many pundits expected, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan won a historic third term as he overcame his opponent in Türkiye's presidential runoff on Sunday. His triumph, after a tough first round, is being celebrated by his supporters both at home and abroad, but at 69 the populist Islamist leader, who has ruled for two decades, has plenty to contend with as he begins a new five-year term.

His opponent, Kemal Kilicdaroglu, may have failed to play his cards right in the last round. Xenophobic rhetoric, primarily against the more than 3.5 million Syrian refugees in the country, may have backfired and limited his chances. At least 200,000 Syrians now have Turkish nationality and, for the business sector, their contribution to the economy is important. As of 2020, it was estimated that Syrians had invested more than \$500 million in capital into the country through the establishment of commercial activities, especially small and medium-sized enterprises. Kilicdaroglu's fealty to the West has also not worked for him. Erdogan is admired for his maverick nature when dealing with what many Turks see as a patronizing and pretentious Europe. Still, Kilicdaroglu got more than 47 percent of the votes, which means that millions of voters turned their back on the incumbent.

One challenge facing Erdogan at home is dealing with Türkiye's 14 million Kurds, who make up about 18 percent of the population. The issue of Kurdish rights was central in this month's elections and it was interesting that the pro-Kurdish parties voted for his rival. Will

Osam Al-Sharif

Erdogan, who lifted linguistic and cultural restrictions on the community, be in the mood for revenge? The Turkish elections got much international media coverage, especially in the West, simply because the outcome of the poll will decide what this important country, with vast influence across the Middle East and Central Asia, will look like in the coming years. It is no secret that a majority of

neighbors" philosophy, but he soon steered away from that path and Türkiye began to make trouble in northern Syria, Iraq's Kurdistan, Armenia, Libya, Egypt and Israel. He later shifted again, at least on Syria, Israel and Egypt, and is now showing a more pragmatic approach toward the Gulf countries. His alliance with Moscow is also paying off as he tries to make his country a global hub for lique-

*The issue of Kurdish rights was central in this month's elections and it was interesting that the pro-Kurdish parties voted for his rival. Will Erdogan, who lifted linguistic and cultural restrictions on the community, be in the mood for revenge? The Turkish elections got much international media coverage, especially in the West, simply because the outcome of the poll will decide what this important country, with vast influence across the Middle East and Central Asia, will look like in the coming years.*

leaders in Europe and the US would have liked to see the demise of Erdogan, but not for the obvious reasons. It is not because of his brand of political Islam. Rather, it is because of his politics; the fact that, under Erdogan, Türkiye has become not only a rising economic power, but also a regional and a geopolitical player with controversial ties and alliances. As Türkiye is a founding member of NATO, Erdogan has raised eyebrows because of his special relations with Russia's Vladimir Putin, especially over Syria and Ukraine. Ankara is also yet to give the green light to Sweden's admittance to the North Atlantic military alliance. Early in his tenure, Erdogan embraced the "zero problems with

fied gas distribution. The amazing thing is that, despite his closeness to Russia and Iran, he has managed to keep relations with the US alive despite periods of tension.

Erdogan also has a complex relationship with Iran. While the two have cooperated in areas such as trade and infrastructure development, tensions over their differing views on Syria have also surfaced. One thing that is for sure is that he will not turn against his friend in the Kremlin any time soon. It will be interesting to see if he is willing to change course on Syria and make up with the now-rehabilitated - at least within the Arab League - Bashar Assad. He is expected to push for a final reconciliation with Egypt's Abdel Fattah El-Sisi. He

has already distanced himself from Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood leadership in exile, but Ankara's backing of the Islamists in Libya remains an issue.

In fact, despite showing signs of adopting a more moderate line, Erdogan's brand of conservative Islamist politics continues to attract supporters and loyalists from outside Türkiye as well. His victory was celebrated with much fanfare in Libya's Tripoli and in Gaza City. But all is not well in Türkiye's relations with its Arab neighbors. Aside from Erdogan's support for anti-regime rebel groups in Syria, relations with Baghdad are not good either. Türkiye has made several incursions into Iraqi territory and its ambitious policy of building several dams across the Euphrates and its tributaries has created an environmental catastrophe for Iraq and many parts of Syria.

Erdogan is a strict nationalist with ambitions of resurrecting the glories of the Ottoman sultanate. It is important to see the world from his perspective in order to begin to understand him. With this latest victory, Erdogan is likely to continue his signature policies, which could further strain Türkiye's relations with Western democracies. Even then, he has become a crucial geopolitical player, which means that neither the US nor Europe can afford to confront him head-on.

Domestically, Erdogan has to reckon with the fact that almost half the voters turned against him. A polarized country, with a deepening economic crisis, will not be easy to rule. Again, for the rest of the world, what matters is how Erdogan's foreign policy will look and if it is likely to change.



## Biden’s five mistakes in Ukraine

SINCE Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine last year, much has been said about Russian President Vladimir Putin's miscalculations. Last October, I wrote about Putin's vanity and megalomania which led him to overestimate Russian military capabilities, underestimate Ukrainian capacity for resistance, and miscalculate NATO's unity and America's strategic resolve.

But the Russian president is not the only one making bad judgements with devastating consequences in Ukraine and beyond. As the war drags on with no end in sight, it is important to address US President Joe Biden's - and his Western allies' - miscalculations in Ukraine as well. These, unsurprisingly, mirror Russia's own failures, as both leaders prove incapable of learning the lessons of imperial hubris. From the start, Biden took the moral high ground, framing the conflict in Ukraine as a global one between democracy and autocracy, between respect for international law and national sovereignty and the scourge of Russian aggression. Yet, he pleaded with world autocrats to join the crusade and disregarded America's own illegal wars.

He underestimated the power of Russian nationalism and rejected Moscow's fears of NATO expansion towards its borders as baseless excuses for Russian imperialism. In the months leading up to the war, Biden undermined efforts to implement the Minsk agreements signed in 2014 and 2015 to end the conflict in the Donbas region. They were meant to pave the way for the creation of two autonomous Russian areas in eastern Ukraine and stave off the expansion of Russian intervention in the country. Both Ukraine and Russia had signed on, but France and Germany, which helped conclude and refine these agreements, failed to push hard enough for their implementation. Despite having much to lose from a devastating European war, European powers did little to stop the escalation.

Biden also underestimated Russia's military endurance, betting on Ukrainians defeating it just as the Afghans defeated the Soviet Union with help from the United States. But for Moscow, Ukraine is far more important and strategic than Afghanistan, considering its shared history and geographic proximity. From Putin's perspective, Ukraine is vital for Russia's national security and his regime's survival. Clearly, he would rather have it destroyed than see it join a Western alliance. During the first year of the war, Russian setbacks from Kyiv to Kharkiv demonstrated Ukraine's resolve and resilience. But the tide of war began to change this year. As the fall of Bakhmut after months of vicious fighting has shown, Russia is no less resilient or determined to win. That is a recipe for a devastating stalemate.

Biden has also overestimated Ukraine's capacity for war. This is not to be confused with courage and steadfastness, of which the Ukrainians have demonstrated plenty, and which

Marwan Bishara

allowed them to launch a successful counter-offensive last year. But the war has thus far been fought conventionally on Ukrainian territory, allowing the greater Russian firepower to overwhelm Ukraine's smaller military and destroy much of its economy. These setbacks have not deterred the US and its allies from doubling down. On May 19, the US-led G7 countries meeting in Hiroshima vowed to renew their "commitment to provide the financial, humanitarian, military and diplomatic support Ukraine

ed. Some in the US administration consider the Russian threats of nuclear retaliation as no more than a bluff to deter further Western intervention. I hope they are right. I think they are wrong. Since 2000, the Kremlin has lowered the threshold for the use of nuclear weapons, stating that they may be used not only in case of a threat to the country's very existence, but also "to repel armed aggression if all other means of resolving a crisis situation have been exhausted or turn out to be ineffective". Lastly, just as Putin underestimated

*From Putin's perspective, Ukraine is vital for Russia's national security and his regime's survival. Clearly, he would rather have it destroyed than see it join a Western alliance. During the first year of the war, Russian setbacks from Kyiv to Kharkiv demonstrated Ukraine's resolve and resilience. But the tide of war began to change this year. As the fall of Bakhmut after months of vicious fighting has shown, Russia is no less resilient or determined to win. That is a recipe for a devastating stalemate. Biden has also overestimated Ukraine's capacity for war. This is not to be confused with courage and steadfastness, of which the Ukrainians have demonstrated plenty, and which allowed them to launch a successful counter-offensive last year. But the war has thus far been fought conventionally on Ukrainian territory, allowing the greater Russian firepower to overwhelm Ukraine's smaller military and destroy much of its economy.*

requires for as long as it takes". This is yet another indication that the US and its allies are getting bogged down in "mission creep". What began with sending ammunition to Ukraine, expanded to supplying artillery and American and German tanks, Patriot defence systems, and drones, which allow Ukraine to take the fight into Russian territory.

Most recently, the US has agreed to the transfer of F-16 fighter jets to Ukraine to challenge Russia's air superiority. Moscow has warned that providing Kyiv with this aircraft will lead to a dangerous escalation, while experts have questioned its immediate utility for the Ukrainian army without outside help manning it. From the looks of it, any future victory on the battlefield may prove to be a pyrrhic one, with the costs by far outweighing the gains. If the much-awaited Ukrainian counteroffensive somehow succeeds in extracting a dramatic victory from the jaws of defeat, this could push Russia to use nuclear weapons in response, wreaking havoc in Ukraine and the rest of Europe. Even if Moscow resorts to deploying tactical nuclear weapons, which have smaller explosive power and are meant for use on the battlefield against enemy bases and troops, the ramification of such a move for European - indeed world - security and peace, cannot be overstated.

Western unity in their support of Ukraine, Biden underestimated the rest of the world's indifference to what appears - from the perspective of the Global South - as a protracted European conflict that is Europe's problem. As the rest of the world continues to trade with Russia, Western sanctions are failing to change Moscow's calculus.

In sum, both Russia and the West have failed to pursue diplomacy as purposefully and stubbornly as they have pursued war. Both sides are digging in for the long haul, stacking the decks, stoking fears of nuclear annihilation, and framing the conflict as a "win or die" situation. Considering the irreconcilable differences between Russia and the West, the war is not likely to end in a peace agreement, at least not in the foreseeable future. Ultimately, the conflict may reach a stalemate and a long-term cessation of hostilities, similar to the 70-year-long ceasefire between North and South Korea, in which Russia may insist on a demilitarised zone that cuts through Ukraine from Kharkiv in the north to Kherson in the south. Meanwhile, as the war takes its toll on Russian and Western security and stability, China emerges unscathed. And to US displeasure, it is becoming a more powerful and credible world leader than ever before.

## Third-party US presidential campaigns extremely unlikely to win

THE No Labels group is gaining attention in the US as it takes steps to potentially mount a third-party presidential campaign. The group is considering a "unity ticket" that includes a Democratic and a Republican candidate for president and vice president, though it is not yet clear who the candidates would be. However, the No Labels movement faces blistering criticism from political scientists, strategists and Democrats, who argue that a third party has no chance of winning the presidential election and would likely benefit the Republican candidate.

The structure of the US political system makes it very difficult for a third party to successfully compete for the presidency. The US president is not elected by a majority of the nationwide vote (known as the popular vote). Rather, the president is chosen through the Electoral College process. Each state receives a specific number of "electors" in the Electoral College, based on that state's number of representatives and senators in Congress. All the states except for two allocate all of their votes in the Electoral College to whichever candidate wins the most votes in that state's election. For example, Virginia has 13 electoral votes; in 2020, Joe Biden won a majority of votes in Virginia, so he received all 13 of Virginia's votes in the Electoral College. Whichever candidate wins a majority in the Electoral College becomes president.

This system has many implications, including that a candidate

Kerry Boyd Anderson

can lose the popular vote and still win the presidency through the Electoral College. Another consequence is that the system naturally benefits a two-party structure. Third-party candidates have run for president many times, but no third party has won a presidential election in the post-Civil War era. Alternative candidates often have little impact. However, in some elections, third-party candidates played a significant role by siphoning off votes from the Republican or Democratic candidate. In the very tight 2000 election, left-wing candidate Ralph Nader won votes from Democratic candidate Al Gore in the crucial state of Florida, thus helping to hand the presidency to Republican George W. Bush. In 1992, third-party candidate Ross Perot arguably chipped away at votes for Republican George H.W. Bush to the benefit of Democrat Bill Clinton. In 1912, former Republican President Theodore Roosevelt formed a third party to challenge Republican President William Taft; his campaign split the Republican vote, allowing Democrat Woodrow Wilson to win.

Critics of third-party efforts point to this history. The Electoral College makes it extremely difficult for a third party to win. For example, in 1992, Perot won 19 percent of the popular vote but did not win any Electoral College votes. A successful third party would have to win the most votes in enough states to win a majority in the Electoral College - an

extremely tall order. Furthermore, many voters are aware that the odds are against a third party and would rather use their vote to support a candidate who might win, so even many voters who might prefer the third-party candidate will vote for a Republican or a Democrat. Some political figures argue that now is the time to challenge the two-party trend. Polls show that many Americans are disillusioned with their options. A 2021 Gallup poll found that 62 percent of respondents said that "parties do such a poor job representing the American people that a third party is needed." Recent polling has found that a majority of Americans do not want Biden or Donald Trump to run again.

The No Labels group and other third-party advocates point to these views and argue that there is room for a third party to win the presidency. No Labels adds that a centrist candidate would take votes away from both parties rather than acting as a spoiler. However, many critics - including many associated with centrist movements - argue that a No Labels campaign would benefit the Republican candidate. Historical precedent provides much of the evidence that a third party cannot win but can damage one of the primary party candidates, often the candidate that is politically closest to the third party.

No Labels is also far too optimistic about the number of Americans who would abandon the Republicans or Democrats.

Third-party advocates often note that many Americans identify as independent voters, but polling experts counter that most of those independents lean heavily toward Republicans or Democrats when voting. For example, the Pew Research Center has reported that 38 percent of Americans say they are independents, but only 7 percent actually do not lean toward a party when voting. Furthermore, not all independents are centrists. Critics of No Labels' potential campaign point to other problems, including questions about the group's strategy. Many of the critics argue that No Labels is presenting a false equivalency by suggesting that a second Biden or Trump presidency is equally concerning and warn that a No Labels campaign would aid Trump, should he win the Republican nomination. Indeed, given today's makeup of the Republican and Democratic parties and Electoral College realities, a No Labels campaign would likely pull votes away from Biden. Modern presidential races tend to be tight, so damaging Biden in only one or two key states could be very consequential.

A while ago, some Republican leaders were concerned that Trump might launch his own third-party bid. If he did, it would likely divide the Republican constituency to the Democrats' benefit. The reality is that any third-party presidential campaign is extremely unlikely to win and very likely to damage one of the primary candidates. It would be a huge gamble with incredibly deep consequences.

## Arab states cannot whitewash Syria’s human rights record

Diana Semaan

‘I fled the conflict in Syria to seek refuge in Lebanon... Now Lebanon deported me back to Syria where the same government I fled from continues to rule with an iron fist. I will either be arrested, conscripted, tortured, or starve to death. But it doesn't matter [which one] because the result is the same - I am doomed,’ Ashraf told me.

His despair echoes the sentiments of Syrian refugees across the world as they watch Arab states welcome back Syrian President Bashar al-Assad to the Arab League. Ashraf considers recent developments as the Arab world's "grand betrayal" of the Syrian uprising. Indeed, the rapprochement of Arab states with Syria is hypocritical, to say the least. After a decade of condemning the Syrian government's crimes and violations against its own people, Arab leaders are welcoming it back, disregarding the criminal responsibility it still holds.

The speech of Jordan's King Abdullah at the Arab League summit on May 19 is quite indicative of what Arab states seek to achieve. "The brotherly Syrian people paid a high cost [during the Syrian conflict] which had repercussions on us all. Today we welcome the return of Syria to the Arab League as an important step we hope will contribute to the efforts toward ending the crisis," he said. But no matter how much Arab leaders invest in rehabilitating the Syrian government's image

through invitations to global conferences and diplomatic overtures, they will not be able to erase 12 years of war crimes and crimes against humanity it committed.

It might seem naive to suggest that Arab states should be invested in the protection of human rights in Syria given that many have abysmal rights records at home. However, they do have a responsibility to ensure that the recent thaw in relations does not embolden the Syrian government to further trample on human rights. Some Arab states, such as Jordan and Lebanon, have already started exploiting Syria's return to the Arab fold to push for the return of refugees. Jordan is looking to garner regional support for its "voluntary return" scheme, while Lebanon has ramped up forced deportations. Meanwhile, it does not seem that the Syrian government is interested in making serious political concessions or improving its rights record in order to "end the crisis". Instead of taking steps to ensure refugees' voluntary, safe and dignified return, Syrian authorities are using the refugee card to press Arab states for financial aid and support for reconstruction while continuing to inflict terror on returnees.

One refugee who had been sent back from Lebanon recently told me that he was arrested by the Syrian army and had to pay all his

savings - about \$1,500 - to be released. His friends who had also been deported with him are still being held by the Syrian army's Fourth Division as they are unable to pay for their release. I also heard about Lebanon's recent arrest and deportation of four men, who had deserted from the Syrian army. Once on Syrian soil, they were transferred to the Palestine Branch, an intelligence division notorious for its use of torture and other ill-treatment towards detainees. The detention and mistreatment of returnees are part of the Syrian government's systematic violations, including arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, torture and other ill-treatment, deaths in detention and extrajudicial executions following sham trials, which constitute crimes against humanity.

The scale of these atrocities, committed with full impunity, escalated after the onset of the uprising in 2011, but the Syrian authorities had been perpetrating them for several decades before that to stifle dissent. These crimes have not only devastated the Syrian population but have also produced multiple human rights crises, including the one with Syria's more than 100,000 disappeared. Since 2011, I have spoken to scores of women whose sons, husbands, brothers or other relatives have been forcibly disappeared for exercising their rights to freedom of

expression and peaceful assembly, conducting humanitarian work or simply for being perceived as opposition sympathisers. These women told me about the immense psychological toll that living in perpetual uncertainty about the fate of their loved ones has taken on them, as they have struggled with government denials and insufficient support from the international community. They - and Syrians in general - deserve better.

Arab countries have a responsibility towards the people of Syria they cannot continue to avoid. They need to publicly acknowledge the Syrian government's terrible human rights record, end refoulement of Syrian refugees and call for accountability, an end to the use of torture and other ill-treatment and enforced disappearances. They should use their leverage over the Syrian government to ensure the safe voluntary return of refugees. Further, the families of the missing and survivors are pushing the UN General Assembly to establish an independent body tasked with investigating the fate and whereabouts of the disappeared. They need the support of Arab states; it is crucial that, when the time comes, all Arab states vote in favour of creating this institution. Anything short of that will be a message to the Syrian government - and to others in the region - that committing atrocity crimes on a mass scale carries no consequences on the world stage.

Aljazeera

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# SCCI demands pragmatic steps to boost up Auto industry in KP

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry demanded of the government to take pragmatic steps to promote the Auto industry in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

This demand was made by acting president of the SCCI Ejaz Khan Afridi while talking to a delegation led by CEO MG Khyber Motors Peshawar Naem Afridi and General Manager Sheikh Abdul Karim here at the chamber house on Wednesday.

The SCCI acting chief said vast investment opportunities were available in

various sectors in K-P.

He was of the view that setting up new industries would not only stabilize the national economy but it would also create new employment opportunities for locals. He emphasized that promotion of the Auto industry is the dire need of the hour.

He, however, said that initiatives should be made to provide facilities and special incentives to investors attached with the Auto industry to boost it to an optimal level. Ejaz went on to say that allied industries would also be promoted with Auto that could create employment opportuni-

ties in the province.

The SCCI acting president said the business community has confronted difficulties owing to present depressing economic conditions. He asked to resolve issues of the business community on priority grounds to stabilize the ailing national economy and put it on a path of sustainable growth.

Earlier, Ejaz Khan Afridi talking to a social worker belonging from Waziristan district, Jalat Khan Wazir called for launching of new schemes to generate economic activities and bring economic prosperity and development in the newly merged tribal districts of

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He noted abundant natural resources were available in merged tribal districts in which local and foreign investments can be attracted.

On the occasion, the SCCI acting president assured the visiting delegations that he will take every possible step to provide relief to the business community and raise their issues at every forum for amical resolution.

Members of the delegations expressed hope that the acting president would raise the business community effectively at every forum and resolve them on priority basis.



ISLAMABAD: President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce Malik Abdul Ghaffoor during a meeting with Federal Secretary Ministry of Housing and Works Ifukhar Ali Shalhwani.

## SCCI delegation meets Dar

ISLAMABAD (APP): A delegation from Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) held a meeting with Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar and Defence Minister Khawaja Mohammad Asif on Budget 2023-24 proposals.

SAPM on Finance Tariq Bajwa, SAPM on Revenue Tariq Mehmood Pasha, Chairman RPMC Ashfaq Yousif Tola, Chairman FBR, and senior officers from Finance Division and FBR attended the meeting, said a press release issued here.

The delegation thanked the finance minister for inviting the budgetary proposals from the SCCI.

They discussed the current economic condition of the country with the finance minister and informed him about the range of issues being faced by them. To this end, they presented suggestions to those issues in

the form of budgetary proposals to the finance minister to be considered in the upcoming federal budget.

They also guaranteed the finance minister of their continuous assistance to the government to improve the situation of economic and business activities in Pakistan.

Finance Minister Sen-

ator Mohammad Ishaq Dar appreciated the budgetary proposals of the delegation and expressed the resolve of the government in overcoming the issues being faced by the business community to ensure the economic growth of the country.

He also assured the business leaders that the gov-

ernment will provide all possible assistance to the business community for economic stability and growth by bringing forward a business and people-friendly budget for Fiscal Year 2023-24.

The delegation thanked the finance minister for considering their budget proposals.

## PSX loses 341 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) shed 341.10 points on Wednesday, a negative change of 0.82 per cent, closing at 41,330.56 points against 41,671.66 points the previous day.

A total of 158,102,664 shares were traded during the day as compared to 197,681,397 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 6.167 billion against Rs 6.403 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 332 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 87 of them recorded gains and 224 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 21 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 20,723,393 shares at Rs1.18 per share;

Maple Leaf with 8,728,086 shares at Rs.28.17 per share and Fujii Cement with 6,478,000 shares at Rs.11.78 per share.

Bhanero Tex witnessed a maximum increase of Rs.44.12 per share price, closing at Rs.1,200.00, whereas the runner-up was Khyber Textile with an Rs.40.61 rise in its per share price to Rs.588.50.

Unilever Foods witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs.901.00 per share closing at Rs.22,499; followed by Colgate Palm with Rs.38.61 decline to close at Rs.1,506.61.

**Rupee sheds 11 paisas against US Dollar**

Pakistani rupee witnessed 11 paisas devaluation against the US Dollar (USD) in the interbank trading on Wednesday as it closed at Rs285.46 against the previous day's closing

of Rs2285.35.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market stood at Rs 311 and Rs 314, respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 54 paisas to close at Rs 304.48 against the last day's closing of Rs 305.02, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese Yen went up by 01 paisa and closed at Rs2.04, whereas an increase of 02 paisas was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 352.60 as compared to its last day's closing of Rs 352.58.

The exchange rate of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 03 paisas each to close at Rs77.72 and Rs76.11 respectively.

## Gold prices increase by Rs1,600/tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs1,600 and was sold at Rs234,400 on Wednesday against its sale at Rs232,800 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs1,372 to Rs100,960 from Rs199,588, whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went down to Rs184,214 from Rs182,956, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola silver decreased by Rs50 to Rs2,800 whereas that of ten-gram silver went down by Rs42.87 to Rs2,400.54.

The price of gold in the international market increased by US\$4 to \$1960 against its sale at \$1954, the association reported.

## TEDxKIETPakistan held at Karachi Institute of Economics & Technology



## F.P. Report

KARACHI: TEDxKIETPakistan, an independently organized TEDx event was held at KIET Main Campus, PAF Airmen Academy, Korangi Creek on 30 May 2023, on the theme of 'Our Collective Resilience' aimed to showcase the remarkable ideas and achievements of individuals who made a significant impact in their respective fields.

The theme highlighted the need for being resilient in the face of odds and continue to galvanize others urging them to overcome challenges and hardships.

By bringing together thought leaders, change-makers, and visionaries, TEDxKIETPakistan sought to inspire, educate, and empower the audience to think differently and take action for a better collective future.

The distinguished speakers who graced the stage at TEDxKIETPakistan included:

**Dr. Abdul Bari:** With a wealth of expertise in the field of medicine, Dr. Abdul Bari had dedicated his life to improving healthcare systems and providing quality medical care to underserved populations.

**Abdul Waheed Punjwani:** An accomplished social entrepreneur,

Abdul Waheed Punjwani was committed to empowering marginalized communities through innovative projects that created sustainable solutions.

**M. Jawwad Paracha:** As an influential advocate for digital transformation, M. Jawwad Paracha had played a pivotal role in revolutionizing the technology landscape, providing opportunities for third-world countries to thrive in the digital age.

**M. Iftekhar Yezdani:** With his profound insights into the power of storytelling, M. Iftekhar Yezdani had captivated the audience, highlighting the significance of space science.

**Zunaira Waheed:** A young author who has written several books published on Amazon.

**Aysal Waheed:** A young, passionate equestrian who is also an author and public speaker.

**Kamran Ali Khan:** Engineer and associate professor at KIET with avast experience of conducting talk shows and motivational programmes on electronic media.

**Noosha Zuberi:** A Student of KIET who talked about her journey as a student and artist. She used

her creativity to challenge societal norms.

Another outstanding speaker who also was present at the occasion was Mr. Ashraf Habibullah, an accomplished Structural Engineer, President and Founder of CSI.

He delivered a motivational talk inspiring the youth to devote their time and energy in an effective manner by staying healthy and happy yet channelizing their efforts to pursue ones goals in life.

Each speaker brought a unique perspective and wealth of knowledge to the TEDxKIETPakistan stage, ensuring an enriching and transformative experience for attendees.

Through their captivating talks, they addressed a wide range of topics, from engineering to entrepreneurship, technology, and social change.

TEDxKIETPakistan aimed to provide a platform for these inspiring individuals to share their groundbreaking ideas, inspire change, and ignite conversations that had the potential to shape our collective future.

## Challenges for provision of meritorious, expeditious justice for all children

### Khawaja Wajih-u-Din

I was horrified to see a documentary on the plight of children in Pakistan (reference was made therein to the sexual abuse of kids). The areas around the bus terminals were mentioned to be the most affected ones. Children for as low as Rs.50or 100 and are a victim of sexual abuse at the hands of bus drivers or employees there.

According to the National Commission on the Rights of Child (NCRC) statistics, there are more than 1.5 million street children in Pakistan. Pakistan has been ranked 149th out of 185 countries in the Kid's Rights Index 2022. The Pakistan Labour Force Survey 2017-18 reported 13.7 per cent of children aged 10-17 years as being engaged in child labour. Of them, around 5.4 per cent were involved in hazardous child labour.

As per NCRC report, Pakistan has 22.8 million children between 5 and 16 years old - world's second highest number of out-of-school children. Small children either begging or selling some stuff is a routine observation.

Any good psychologist

would have existential concerns. The trauma children go through in the streets often leads to precocious (mental) aging. The precocious psychological aging renders many kids harder to mend as they become psychologically inflexible, with very poor ability to handle frustration (hence the growing rage and violence) and then admixed with poverty the tragedy is doubled. No wonder we see extremism in the society and rapid decline of the wise sentiment. The existence of Behavioral problem including aggression and violence, stealing, begging, scavenging, commercial sex, illicit drug trafficking or substance use is a natural consequence in such eventualities.

Those who have read my last article on the establishment of the child courts, titled "we have a dream" would agree that the experience of creation of child courts was indeed a step forward. The existence of the child court provided a specialized forum to all the children of the society.

Without prejudice to the above but in addition thereto it may be observed here that more and more use of technology would reduce discretionary powers plagu-

ing the system. Reference is invited to my article titled, "technology and the Justice sector".

The National Judicial Policy (Making) Committee (NJPMC) having considered all the factors mentioned above, in its meeting dated 24-06-2019 approved the establishment of Child Courts. Government of KPK considering the statutory requirement and to fulfill the international obligations issued notification conferring the jurisdiction of Child Protection Court and Juvenile Justice Court on the Court exclusively established and equipped with digital paraphernalia via which evidence of witness/victim could be recorded to deal with the cases of Juveniles. Hence the creation of child courts was based on contemporaneous law.

The will to establish a child Justice Regime by all the stake holders very much existed which reflected in the shape of pro children legislation. Effective and smart methodology for reposting cases to the police and Courts was intended envisaging awareness to the parents about the rights of the children in contact with law and in conflict with law. Use of modern technology in trial

of children in a well-equipped child court with child responsive atmosphere in all the divisions of KPK was the result.

The original plan was to provide justice to children under one roof. The Child Court exercises jurisdiction in dual spheres under two separate statutes, i.e. as a Child Protection Court under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Child Protection and Welfare Act and as a Juvenile Court under the Juvenile Justice System Act (JJSA). Instead of going into the technicalities more emphasis should be laid on the welfare of the children by all the stakeholders. This can be done by implementing the law for the benefit of the children. Technicalities should not defeat the ends of justice. The child courts also need to be more proactive in their approach while exercising their jurisdiction. The concept of diversion be taken up with more vigor.

Having said that it is also necessary to amend the child protection Act of 2010, so as to include a comprehensive definition to include child in contact with Law and child in conflict with law being the exclusive domain of the child courts. Amendment in

section 2E of the child protection and welfare act 2010 be made where child at risk has been defined. It shall include child in conflict with law and child in contact with law to remove the possible legal objection. Child courts should be given more powers to act when infringement of child rights is pointed out or is noticed through media. Something like inherent powers of the child-court on the lines of section 151 of the civil procedure code can be done. The child protection act of 2010 can be amended to add such powers.

It is learned that in a few places in the name of equalization of pendency cases and technical interpretations of law, matters have been transferred-in and transferred-out of the child court which has reduced the child court from a court of special jurisdiction to a court of ordinary jurisdiction. Be as it may, in KP in accordance with the law of the land every court has been authorized to act as juvenile court including the child courts presiding officer.

The Purpose of Child protection and welfare Act is to provide for the care, protection, maintenance, welfare, training, education, rehabilitation and

reintegration of Children at risk in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The primary goals of the juvenile justice system, in addition to maintaining public safety, are skill development, habilitation, rehabilitation, addressing treatment needs, and successful reintegration of youth into the community. The former is a provincial legislation and the later is a federal legislation. Both are applicable.

It is also noticed with concern that some cruel elements of the society have started using children for serious offenses, knowing about the pro children legislations. This is a very big challenge for the child courts. It may not be completely eradicated, but it can be curtailed if the man behind the offense is traced out and punished in accordance with law.

In the last about 15 months I conducted a survey. I wanted to know how many people are aware about the existence of the child courts and whether they knew about the duties and functions of the child courts. 10% were aware about the existence of the child-court. However only 5% knew about its functions and duties. This is another challenge is to

make people aware of the existence of such courts. In this world of social media, Short clips explaining the law and the function of the court would do the job. The print, electronic and social media can play a very important role in this regard. Printed materials can also be distributed in the streets. Schools are the best places for education in this regard. The child protection unit needs to play its role more proactively.

The child courts are required to be established in every district for the convenience of the children in accordance with the original plan. Child courts seem to be a very good investment in the future generation of the country despite the economic crunch. Edifice can be built on the foundation already laid.

As per the original plan we need to bring all the matters relation to children under one roof. By doing so we would reduce the agony of the kids having to appear in different forums. It would also reduce chances of protracted litigation. Not only we will be able to facilitate the children, at the same time it would also help in adjudication swiftly. By keeping the cases on Foss track we will avoid

delay.

It is also necessary to amend law (child protection act civil procedure code and all other enactments like family laws alike) specifying an overriding effect to the cases relating to children to be exclusively dealt with in the child courts. By doing so we will ensure that all the matters relating to children are the exclusive domain of the child courts.

The statistics show that 18,984 live births average per day (791.00 in an hour) in Pakistan. With the ever-increasing population the biggest challenge for the state is to cater for the basics. One of the main domains is the child related justice sector. The figures mentioned above necessitates that special attention be paid to justice for children. Insufficient resources for provision of justice are plaguing our society and threaten the future of millions of children. We also need to implement laws relating to abolition of child labor, forced labor and all the laws for the welfare of the children. If nothing else we can try to provide justice to the children which are our future.

(The writer is Ex-Registrar Peshawar High Court)





In brief

World wrestling body condemns

NEW DELHI (Agencies): The United World Wrestling (UWW) has condemned the arrest and temporary detention of Indian wrestlers during a protest march. "UWW firmly condemns the treatment and detention of the wrestlers. It expresses its disappointment over the lack of results of the investigations so far. UWW urges the relevant authorities to conduct a thorough and impartial investigation into the allegations," it said in a statement Tuesday. "The 45-day deadline that was initially set to hold this elective assembly shall be respected. Failing to do so may lead UWW to suspend the federation, thereby forcing the athletes to compete under a neutral flag," it added. Wrestlers, including Olympic medalists Bajrang Punia and Sakshi Malik, have been taking part in a protest for nearly two weeks in New Delhi against the President of India Wrestling Federation Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh, who they have accused of unwelcome sexual advances. Vinesh Phogat, one of India's top wrestlers, previously said 10 female wrestlers accused Singh of sexual abuse and they indicated they would not compete in international tournaments unless he was removed from his post.

Kosovo Olympic Committee

PARIS (Agencies): The Kosovo Olympic Committee (KOK) on Wednesday called on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to take disciplinary action against Serbian tennis star Novak Djokovic. This came after Djokovic wrote on a message about Kosovo on a camera lens after his first-round win in the French Open. "Kosovo is the heart of Serbia. Stop the violence," he wrote in his native language. Accusing Djokovic of stirring up political tensions, Ismet Krasniqi, the head of KOK, said: "As president of the Kosovo Olympic Committee, I have an obligation to raise my concerns and kindly ask you to react on behalf of the International Olympic Committee, as these messages and actions are dangerous for the future of sport if unpunished." He said the Serbian player's message is "dangerous for the future of sport." He reminded the Olympic charter, fundamental principle 5, as it calls all sporting organizations under the Olympic Committee shall be politically neutral. Djokovic addressed the recent violent clashes in Kosovo during the Roland Garros. The 22-grand slam champion later told the press that this was the least he could have done. "I feel the responsibility as a public figure – doesn't matter in which field – to give support," he added. Tensions have gripped Kosovo, with protesters and security forces clashing in the northern Serb-dominated municipalities over the election of ethnic Albanian mayors. According to hospital sources, more than 50 civilians were injured from shock bombs and tear gas. Most UN member states including the US, the UK, France, Germany and Türkiye recognized Kosovo as a separate country after it declared independence from Serbia 15 years ago. Serbia, however, continues to regard it as its territory.

# Javeria Rauf, Omaina Sohail half-centuries lead Challengers to first win

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Half-centuries from Javeria Rauf and captain Omaina Sohail along with a four-fer by Syeda Masooma Zahra led Challengers to a five-wicket win over Blasters at the State Bank Stadium on Wednesday. This was Challengers' first win in the second phase of the Pakistan Cup Women's Cricket Tournament.

Chasing 191 to win, Challengers lost two wickets for 42 runs in the 13th over when player of the match Javeria and right-handed batter Omaina got together. The pair knitted 134 runs for the third wicket before both batters Javeria (82, 119b, 6x4s, 1x6) and Omaina (75, 86b, 5x4s, 1x6) went back to the



hut on successive deliveries of the 38th over. Challengers achieved the target in the 42nd over for the loss of five wickets.

For Blasters, left-arm spinner Anam Amin bagged two wickets for 42 runs.

Earlier, after being put into bat, Blasters were reeling at 42 for three in the

13th over, when captain Muneeba Ali was joined by Iram Javed. Both batters stitched a 104-run partnership for the fourth wicket, but after the departure of Muneeba (50, 75b, 2x4s) and Iram (49, 69b, 3x4s, 2x6s), no Blasters batter managed to score significantly as the side was dis-

missed for 190 in the allotted 45 overs.

For Challengers, right-arm fast Masooma and left-arm spinner Sadia Iqbal grabbed four and three wickets, respectively.

Challengers, in the last round match, will play Dynamites on Friday. The final of the tournament will be played between the top two sides on Sunday.

Scores in brief:

Challengers beat Blasters by five wickets

Blasters 190 all out, 45 overs (Muneeba Ali 50, Iram Javed 49; Syeda Masooma Zahra 4-34, Sadia Iqbal 3-34)

Challengers 192-5, 41.2 overs (Javeria Rauf 82, Omaina Sohail 75; Anam Amin 2-42)

Player of the match – Javeria Rauf (Challengers).

## PSB to hold 4 coaching courses in June

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) will be organizing refresher coaching courses in June with an aim to advance the skills and techniques of all stakeholders associated with the games.

Deputy Director General Pakistan Sports Board Shahid Islam informed APP that PSB had prepared a plan to organize four coaching courses in June.

"The courses are being held on special instructions of the Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ehsan ur Rehman Mazari and Director General Pakistan Sports Board Shoaib Khosa. These courses will be held in Karachi, Peshawar, Quetta and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK)," he said.

Shahid Islam said earlier, courses have been organized in Islamabad and Lahore as well. "Male, female coaches, players and technical officials (judges, referees and umpires) from different sports will participate in the courses," he said.

He said speakers would give lectures on various matters of different sports to the participants in the courses.

"These will cover coaching and training theories, nutrition, doping, sports psychology, sports injuries, injuries and first aid and skills education," he said and added that the course would continue for three days.

# Participation in World Cup depends on govt's directives, PCB tells ICC

LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) has informed the International Cricket Council (ICC) that the national team would participate in the World Cup, scheduled to be held in India later this year, only if the government allows it. The announcement comes amid India's show of inflexibility in its conditions for participation in Asia Cup 2023, which is ensuring that the event is held at a neutral venue.

Owing to their soured political relations, bilateral cricket between Pakistan and India remains suspended and they play each other only in multi-team events. And now, despite PCB's

proposal of a hybrid model for hosting the regional cricket event, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) continues to show reluctance to come clean on the matter.

As per a report, the PCB officials in a crucial meeting with ICC Chairman Greg Barclay and Chief Executive Geoff Allardice in Lahore, made it clear that it would follow the directives of the government in regard to the participation in World Cup if the Indian team did not visit Pakistan for the Asia Cup.

The top ICC officials had been received by Najam Sethi, Chairman of the PCB Management Committee on Tuesday, for their two-day visit to Pakistan.

While the meeting addressed the PCB's share in ICC revenue and matters concerning the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), an agreement was not reached. As a result, negotiations between the PCB and ICC officials are set to continue for another day before the ICC officials leave.

This is the first time ICC Chairman Barclay has travelled to Pakistan. The PCB has been trying to organise the event as hosting the event in any other country would have a negative impact on its efforts on bringing international cricket back to the cash-strapped nation, but arch-rival India continues to undermine Pakistan's efforts.

# Baseball United announces official partnership with PFB

ISLAMABAD (APP): Baseball is all set to rise in Pakistan as Baseball United, the first-ever professional baseball league focused on the Middle East and Indian Subcontinent on Wednesday entered into an exclusive partnership with Pakistan Federation Baseball (PFB).

The agreement will enable strategic integration of the two organization's growth plans with a focus on player development, national team training, fan experience, community outreach, global publicity, and sponsorship.

"It is a watershed moment for the development of baseball in Pakistan. It will give a major boost to the sport there. I am sure the country's true potential in the game will be known to the world now," Syed Fakhar Ali Shah, the president of the PFB told APP on the phone from

Ohio, US where the agreement was signed.

"We extend our deepest and most heartfelt gratitude to Kash Shaikh (President, CEO and Co-Owner, Baseball United) and Baseball United for their exceptional leadership, unwavering support, and extraordinary vision," he said.

"As the son of late Syed Khawar Shah, the revered founder of Pakistan Baseball, words cannot express the immense joy I feel as I witness the realization of our shared dream. For over three decades, Pakistan Federation Baseball has tirelessly worked to promote and expand the game of baseball within our cherished nation. We are deeply honoured to work alongside Baseball United as they establish a groundbreaking professional baseball league that will inspire

young players from around the world to step onto the field and ignite a passion for the sport across Pakistan," he added.

"We are honored to partner with Pakistan Federation Baseball and Syed Fakhar Ali Shah to help grow the game of baseball in Pakistan, and to help create more opportunities for young people across the country," said Kash Shaikh in a statement.

"Pakistan has created one of the most competitive and successful programmes within Asia, and we are looking forward to helping them continue their growth at both the grassroots and national team levels. We built a strong foundation for partnership earlier this year with our tournament in Islamabad, and now we believe we can make an even greater impact in Pakistan and beyond," he added.

# Dembele, Nkunku back in France squad for Euro 2024 qualifiers

PARIS (APP): Barcelona's Ousmane Dembele and RB Leipzig forward Christopher Nkunku are among the players recalled to the France squad named on Thursday by coach Didier Deschamps ahead of two Euro 2024 qualifiers in June.

Fitness problems meant both players missed France's opening qualifying matches in March, when they beat the Netherlands 4-0 at home and won 1-0 away to the Republic of Ireland.

They now go into a match against minnows Gibraltar in Faro, Portugal on June 16, and a home clash with Greece three days later, on top of qualifying Group B with six points.

"You will say I am very pragmatic, but the three points that are available against Gibraltar have the same value as those we took against the Netherlands or in Ireland," Deschamps told reporters in Paris.

"He was supposed to be in the squad for the World Cup but was ruled out by injury, but now he is back on top form," added

Deschamps of Nkunku, who scored four goals in the last five Bundesliga games of the season for his club as they finished third. He is set to feature for Leipzig in this weekend's German Cup final against Eintracht Frankfurt. Chelsea centre-back Wesley Fofana is also in the squad and will hope to make his full France debut after withdrawing from the March list due to injury.

Real Madrid left-back Ferland Mendy was also handed a first call-up since before the World Cup, while injured Arsenal defender William Saliba is among the notable absentees.

Highly-rated Nice midfielder Khephren Thuram was left out, while Juventus midfielder Paul Pogba and Chelsea's N'Golo Kante – two stars of France's triumphant 2018 World Cup campaign – are again absent after injury-ravaged seasons.

France squad for Euro 2024 qualifiers against Gibraltar on June 16 and Greece on June 19: Goalkeepers: Alphonse Areola (West Ham

United/ENG), Mike Maignan (AC Milan/ITA), Brice Samba (Lens) Defenders: Axel Disasi (Monaco), Wesley Fofana (Chelsea/ENG), Theo Hernandez (AC Milan/ITA), Ibrahima Konate (Liverpool/ENG), Jules Kounde (Barcelona/ESP), Ferland Mendy (Real Madrid/ESP), Benjamin Pavard (Bayern Munich/GER), Dayot Upamecano (Bayern Munich/GER)Midfielders: Eduardo Camavinga (Real Madrid/ESP), Youssouf Fofana (Monaco), Antoine Griezmann (Atletico Madrid/ESP), Adrien Rabiot (Juventus/ITA), Aurelien Tchouameni (Real Madrid/ESP)Forwards: Kingsley Coman (Bayern Munich/GER), Ousmane Dembele (Barcelona/ESP), Olivier Giroud (AC Milan/ITA), Randal Kolo Muani (Eintracht Frankfurt/GER), Kylian Mbappe (Paris Saint-Germain), Christopher Nkunku (RB Leipzig/GER), Marcus Thuram (Borussia Moenchengladbach/GER).



PARIS: Caroline Garcia of France during the Day 4 of Roland Garros at Roland Garros.

# Unless I can't walk, I'll be on the field: Stokes

LONDON (Agencies): Captain Ben Stokes says the only way he will not take a full part in England's Ashes summer is if he "can't walk".

The 31-year-old had a cortisone injection in a persistent knee injury in March, before playing only two games for Chennai Super Kings in the Indian Premier League. Stokes will lead England in the one-off Test against Ireland on Thursday.

"I've given myself the best possible chance to play a big role, especially with the ball," he told BBC Sport. Stokes did not bowl in England's last Test, a defeat by New Zealand in Wellington in February. His time with Chennai was disrupted by a foot injury, after which he was left out of the side, but the all-rounder said he used his time in India to improve his chances of playing a full part

with the ball for England.

"The knee is in a much better place than what it was in Wellington," he said. "I've worked incredibly hard with the medical team in Chennai, who were liaising with the England guys. "I've got myself into a place where I feel like I'm back at a 2019, 2020 space in terms of my body. "I know I won't look back on this summer and regret any decisions that I had in the build-up period, because I've worked my nuts off.

"Unless I can't walk, I'll be on the field."

England will hand a debut to Worcestershire pace bowler Josh Tongue in the four-day Test against the Irish. Bowlers James Anderson and Ollie Robinson have been left out as they recover from minor injuries, but Stokes

said both would have been able to play had this been the first Ashes Test. Tongue, 25, has been chosen ahead of Chris Woakes to join Stuart Broad and Matthew Potts in the pace attack. "We know Woakesy is a very experienced player and what he will offer this team when he plays," said Stokes. "We see this as a great opportunity to see someone like Josh Tongue go out and play in a Test. We might need someone like him throughout the summer.

"It gives me an opportunity to see what his character is like and what he is like to operate with as a captain. Woakesy completed understood that." The five-Test Ashes series begins on 16 June, with England looking to regain the urn from Australia for the first time in five years. Under Stokes and coach Brendon McCullum,

England have won 10 of their past 12 Tests in thrilling fashion.

Now, the prospect of England taking their swashbuckling style to the Australians is creating the prospect of the most eagerly anticipated Ashes series since the epic contest of 2005.

Stokes, though, does not believe that this summer will "define" his captaincy. "That would make it feel like once the Ashes is over, that's it, but it's not it for me as a captain or the end of what this team is about to do," he added.

"This Ashes is about the journey that we've been on and will continue to be on. It's not going to be the end of me as a captain, me as a player or this team and the way we're trying to progress the game."

Stokes also dismissed any sug-

gestion that England's aggressive method will have to be tempered against the high-quality Australian attack.

"That's the English mentality of turning something negative straight away," he said. "Every team we've played against, it's been said 'it will be a big challenge to play against that team in this way'.

"This is the way we have found ourselves playing our best cricket. Every team we come up against is a challenge, but I find myself answering the same question against different opposition."

This will be Ireland's second Test at Lord's - in 2019 they bowled England out for 85 before themselves succumbing for only 38 in a 143-run loss.

Since then they have played only three Tests - all this year.

They are still looking for their first ever Test win after six successive defeats.

Left-arm pace bowler Josh Little is not part of the Ireland squad after playing in the IPL final for Gujarat Titans on Monday. Little is being rested with the qualifying tournament for the 50-over World Cup beginning on 18 June in Zimbabwe.

"Our focus is to put in our best possible performance," said Ireland captain Andrew Balbirnie.

"As a Test team, this is a pinnacle event for us. We're not sure when our next Test is, so we have to enjoy this. "I have to support what's best for Josh. Of course I want him in my team, he's a brilliant bowler. I understand he has to rest up and focus on getting ready for the World Cup qualifier."





## In brief

### Inayat Hussain Bhatti remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): A great multi-talented artist Inayat Hussain Bhatti was remembered on the occasion of 24th death anniversary in which fans from all walks of life through media platforms paid him rich tributes for his unforgettable life time achievements in entertainment industry. He was born in 1928 in Gujrat and moved to Lahore to pursue further studies. As fate would have it, he ended up singing for Radio Pakistan and subsequently, for the 1949 Punjabi hit 'Pheray', private news channels reported. He was a multi-talented distinguished singer, actor, director author, social leader, columnists, religious scholar and zakir. He was interested in Sufi poetry since he was a child. Inayat sang for nearly 500 films, in both Urdu and Punjabi. His impressive discography includes 2,500 songs. In 1997, he suffered an attack of paralysis, which impaired his speech and kept him bed-ridden for most of the time thereafter. He died on May 31, 1999.

### IRSA releases 167,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 167,700 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 173,000 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1426.84 feet and was 28.84 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 55,900 cusecs and 64,900 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1125.30 feet, which was 75.30 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 49,300 cusecs and 35,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 79,500, 81,900, 50,000 and 14,500 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 37,800 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 13,600 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### Police net 10 drug peddlers

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers and bootleggers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up 10 accused on recovery of over 3,390 kg charras and 20 liters liquor, said a police spokesman here on Wednesday. He informed that Rattaamral police held Shakir for having 700 grams charras while Shehzad was sent behind the bars on recovery of 1400 grams charras. R.A.Bazar police netted Zargham for possessing 520 grams charras. Jatli police also rounded up Babar with 270 grams charras, Tahzeeb for having 270 grams charras and Rab Nawaz for carrying 230 grams charras. R.A.Bazar police nabbed Abdul Waqar and Babar Pervaiz on recovery of 10 liters liquor. Sadiqabad and Saddar Baroni police in two operations arrested Amir and Nawaz and recovered 10 liters liquor from their possession. Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations are underway. City Police Officer, Rawalpindi Syed Khalid Mehmood Hamdani had directed the police officers to accelerate ongoing operations against drug peddlers, bootleggers and other law-breakers, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Azam Nazir Tarar chaired a meeting of the cabinet subcommittee to recommend the mechanism to engage foreign law firm of strategy for treaties with investment provisions.

## Shaza Fatima unveils plan to distribute 100,000 laptops among talented students

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday unveiled the Federal Government's plan of distributing 100,000 laptops among talented students of universities and colleges during the next one year.

"Laptops have an important role in building a knowledge economy which ultimately creates massive job opportunities for youth," the SAPM said in an exclusive interview with APP. She said the laptop scheme, which was halted by the previous government, had been resumed.

It was a flagship project of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) which was launched during the last government tenure of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif who had a vision to empower the youth by creating an enabling environ-

ment in the country, she added. "Half a million laptops were distributed by the Federal Government during 2013 to 2018 by keeping the importance of technology in mind which is crucial to acquire modern education in the current era," she added. The SAPM recalled that the youth continued their employment and educational activities through laptops during the Coronavirus pandemic.

She also shared details about a proposal of allocating Rs 100 billion in the upcoming budget for the distribution of subsidized loans among the youth under the ongoing scheme. Half of the allocated money would be dedicated for the agriculture sector while the rest would be distributed for promoting entrepreneurship in the country, she added.

She explained that the agri loan would help the

youth add innovation and technology in the agriculture sectors to bring it at par with international level.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, she said, inaugurated the loan scheme on January 24 and loans amounting to Rs 22 billion had been disbursed so far, while the target was Rs 30 billion by June 30.

Discussing the innovation awards, she said 100 students would be given the awards and 500 children would be invited to a boot camp in that regard.

"Tops 20 ideas will be awarded Rs 1 million each and others Rs 500,000 each," she added. The SAPM said national development was not possible without women's participation. Therefore, efforts were being made to ensure more inclusion of women, persons with disabilities, minorities and transgenders in various youth programmes.

## ANF seizes over 45 kg Ice drug in two operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting two operations managed to seize over 45 kg Ice drug, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Wednesday.

He informed that in an operation at International Cargo Office, Rawalpindi, ANF recovered Ice drug from a parcel consisting 10 cartons with a total 104 kg weight booked for Australia. Ice was absorbed in garments, he added.

He said, in another operation conducted in Kach Balochistan, 45 kg crystal methamphetamine (Ice drug) was recovered from a far-flung rural area. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process.

## French envoy visits NUML

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Department of French, National University of Modern Languages (NUML) organized the celebration ceremony of the Academic Cooperation Agreement on Wednesday. This Agreement was signed in 2020 between Alliance Française d'Islamabad and NUML but the ceremony of this accord could not be held due to covid-19.

The Ambassador of France, Nicolas Galey, was the Chief Guest, while Pro-Rector RSI Dr. Zubair Iqbal, Dean faculty of Languages Jamil Asghar Jami, Ms. Gaelle Le Breton, Director of all Alliance Françaises in Pakistan, Mr. Ali Bhatti, Director, Alliance Française d'Islamabad and Ms. Hannah Bieber, Education Officer of French as a Foreign Language at French Embassy graced the event with their presence.

The Ambassador of France emphasized the need for cooperation in education and science and technology between the two countries. The main purpose of this cooperation was to promote friendly exchange visits between the parties in areas of French language teaching and research. Especially the DELF examinations shall be held at the premises of NUML. The other activities to be conducted through collaboration include short courses, internships, seminars, and workshops.

## Azam chairs meeting of Cabinet Sub-committee to engage foreign law firm

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Senator Azam Nazir Tarar on Wednesday chaired a meeting of the Cabinet Sub Committee to recommend the mechanism to engage foreign law firm of strategy for treaties with investment provisions (TIPS).

According to the spokesperson of the ministry, representative of Board of Investment, Privatization Commission, Attorney General Office and PPRA attended the meeting.

The Committee was constituted by the Cabinet to recommend the mechanism for engaging reputed international law firms for transactions and appointment of financial and legal advisors. After delib-

eration on the matter, it was decided that the appointment of transaction advisors, financial advisors and legal advisors in respect of privatization matters should be given a formal shape for the approval of the Federal Cabinet.

It was also decided that the Privatization Commission would formulate a report covering all aspects relating to the appointment of pre-transaction services of the transaction advisors, financial advisors.

However in the emergent cases, a provision could be added to cater the matters on early basis. The final report by the Committee would be submitted to the Cabinet for approval.

## Over 75% repair, maintenance work of Neelum Jhelum hydropower project completed

ISLAMABAD (APP): The National Assembly Standing Committee on Water Resources on Wednesday was apprised that over 75 per cent repair and maintenance work of 969 MW Neelum-Jhelum Hydro Power Project has already been completed and remaining work would be complete shortly.

The committee which met with Nawaz Yousaf Talpur in the Chair was informed that due to blockage in the water discharge tunnel of Neelum-Jhelum Hydro Power Project the project was closed in 2022. Due to the blockage and closure of the project a loss of billions of rupees has been incurred.

The Project Director, Neelum-Jhelum Hydro Power Project informed the Standing Committee that as the project has insurance, so a claim of over Rs 41 billion has already been sent to concerned insurance companies. The Standing Committee directed that

the claim be properly followed-up and the Standing Committee should be updated, regularly.

The committee was informed that dewatering of flood water from Sindh and Balochistan has also been completed. Dewatering of flood water was the duty of National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA). However, the provincial departments and NDMA have jointly completed the task, it was further told.

NDMA paid Rs. 250-million to relevant provincial department of Balochistan for dewatering. Similarly, 159 dewatering pumps were also provided to relevant provincial department of Sindh.

Hence, 99% of dewatering has been completed in the province. However, in few lowlands some water was still there.

The Standing Committee was informed that during the current year the Advisory Committee of Indus River

System Authority (IRSA) predicted for 27% shortage of water. But actually 20% more water shortage took place as of the predicted water. So, the shortage of the water is proportionately distributed among different federating units.

Nawab Muhammad Yousuf Talpur directed that Water Apportionment Accord 1991 be acted upon in letter and spirit.

He further declared that any mistake, laziness or violation of the law would not be tolerated at all.

Members of National Assembly (MNAs) Engr. Sabir Hussain Kaim Khani, Ms. Nuzhat Pathan, Mr. Khalid Hussain Magso, Mir Munawar Ali Talpur, Syed Hussain Tariq and Mr. Muhammad Mohsin Leghari, the Secretary, Ministry of Water Resources, Chairman and Members, IRSA and senior officers of the Ministry of Water Resources, IRSA, Irrigation Departments and WAPDA also attended the meeting.

## Ashrafi condemns 'disinformation war', calls for unity against threats to national security

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Ulama Council Chairman and Prime Minister's Special Representative on Interfaith Harmony and Middle East Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi on Wednesday highlighted the emergence of a new war of 'disinformation' imposed on Pakistan through social media by non-state actors.

He, in a convention on 'Stability of Pakistan' held at Jamea Masjid Marhaba, expressed concerns that this disinformation campaign aimed to create a hostile environment in the country. Ashrafi emphasized the

negative impact of disinformation, stating that it had resulted in the polarization of society, leading to division, stress, and disappointment. He called on the seminary students to distance themselves from such anti-state activities and become sources of countering disinformation through effective communication in the society. He also criticized the alleged double standard within the country's judicial system, noting that cases involving influential individuals were given "preferential treatment", while those concerning marginalized sections of society languished

for years without resolution. He emphasized that justice, as a fundamental component of the Khilafat-e-Rashida system, played a vital role in maintaining peace and tranquility in the society.

Praising the sacrifices made by the Pakistan Army, Ashrafi acknowledged the 90,000 lives lost in the war on terror, which aimed to restore peace and prosperity in the country. He labeled May 9 as a black day, referring to the unprecedented attacks on public, private, and military installations, which had never been witnessed in Pakistan's 75-year history.

## MNAs demand effective awareness campaign, increased taxes on tobacco products, SSBs

ISLAMABAD (APP): The members of the National Assembly (MNAs) on Wednesday demanded the Lower House of the Parliament to propose increased taxes on tobacco products and sugar-sweetened beverages (SSBs) in the upcoming budget and initiate effective public awareness campaign to shun its use among masses wasting both health and money.

MNA, Dr. Nisar Ahmad Cheema of Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) taking to the floor of the House on a point of order, said that the country like rest of the world was celebrating World No Tobacco Day under the theme "We need food, not tobacco". He said that smoking cigarettes was causing loss of money and health to an individual that needed to be contained to ensure healthy life.

Cheema regretted that the tobacco mafia was strong, wealthy and influential enough and running effective campaigns to mislead the public. They have started another campaign of pouched (nicotine packed in small pouches) tobacco products like Velo as an alternate to cigarettes to quit smoking which was equally injurious to human health and also addictive in nature, he said.

He sought the Speaker to issue a ruling to the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting to run effective awareness campaigns on discouraging the used of tobacco products.

He also proposed the House to recommend increase in tax on cigarettes and tobacco products and also SSBs like coke

and pepsi. "A glass of SSBs contains 8 spoons of sugar which is health injurious and casts negative impacts on human body." MNA Dr. Ramesh Kumar Vankwani of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) said that last year, World No Tobacco Day was celebrated amid budget and he had proposed the government to increase taxes on tobacco products, and intoxicants to make it unaffordable to youth and masses of other age groups to reduce its use.

He added that one way was to increase taxes on tobacco, disallow under 18 youth smoking at public places and detain them if found violating so that it could bring a sense of fear among the people.

Dr. Vankwani underlined that most importantly the social awareness and responsibility should be increased to get rid of tobacco products use rising among the youth. "We need to bring a behavioural change in the society. There are laws but acceptance of those laws is the responsibility of the masses to ensure effective implementation," he said.

MNA, Shakila Luqman of PML-N said every government used to make efforts to give relief to the masses in the budget but Prime Minister Mian Shehbaz Sharif distributed free flour in Ramzan despite economic crisis.

She added that the cheap Russian oil being imported would also help in benefit the masses whereas the government had made all out efforts and implemented all conditions of the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

## CDA provided two cremation grounds for Hindu, Buddhist communities in H-9 sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Law and Justice Shahadat Awan on Wednesday told the National Assembly that Capital Development Authority (CDA) provided two cremation grounds for Hindu and Buddhist communities in Sector H-9, Islamabad, measuring 0.49 acre and 0.50 acre respectively.

Replying to various question during Question Hour, he said that CDA had also provided graveyards for Christians 9.01 acre, Bhaish 1.70 acre, Qadianie 3.424 acre in sector H-9.

To a question, the minister said that

case of Federal Shariat Court Employees Housing Society (FSCECHS) had been pending in the Supreme Court since 2017.

Last hearing was done in 2022, he said. He said FSCECHS purchased the land in Mozza Karlot and Mozaa Hotra Bi Chiragh Tehsil Murree District Rawalpindi from local land owners and got the possession of the same land.

However, two parties (previous land owners) Raja Kabir and Raja Ayub re-occupied the land. The case has been pending before the apex court for last 6 years, he added.

## HEC announces scholarships for studies in Germany

ISLAMABAD (PPI) :The Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan has announced scholarships for students who want to study in Germany from the German assistance organization Deutsche Akademische Austauschdienst (DAAD).

According to HEC information on Wednesday, the organisation has announced scholarships for students to pursue a Master's degree in their Development-Related Postgraduate Courses (EPOS). "Under the Development-Related Postgraduate Courses (EPOS) programme, for-

foreign graduates from development and newly industrialised countries from all disciplines and with at least two years professional experience have the opportunity to take a postgraduate or Master's degree at a state or state-recognised German university," the HEC statement read on Twitter.



ISLAMABAD: A lady on the motorcycle holding an umbrella during rain that experience in twin cities.



### Ministry rejects claims

HERAT (Agencies): The Ministry of Finance of Afghanistan has rejected claims that the Islam Qala customs office in Herat province of Afghanistan has suspended operations. According to officials, media reports indicated that their office closed on Wednesday. "We reject the false reports published in this regard and want to mention that Islam Qala Customs of Herat works normally and provides the necessary services," officials said.

## The Frontier Post

# AFGHANISTAN

Zil-Qadah 11, 1444 — Thursday, June 01, 2023

### 10 arrested in Kabul

KABUL (Agencies): An alcohol-producing laboratory has been destroyed and at least ten individuals have been arrested in connection to the case in Kabul, the provincial police office said in a statement. The Kabul counter-narcotics police personnel in a clearance operation have discovered and destroyed a wine processing factory, as well as seized 19 kg of crystal meth-amphetamine and 40 bottles of alcoholic beverage in the capital, Kabul province, the statement said.

## Qatar PM meets IE chief for secret talks

KABUL (Reuters): The Qatari prime minister held secret talks with the supreme leader of the Islamic Emirate this month on resolving tension with the international community, a source briefed on the meeting said, signaling a new willingness by Afghanistan's rulers to discuss ways to end their isolation.

The May 12 meeting in the southern Afghan city of Kandahar between Qatari Prime Minister Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani and Mawlawi Hibatullah Akhonzada is the first the reclusive Islamic Emirate's chief is known to have held with a foreign leader.

US President Joe Biden's administration was briefed on the talks and is "coordinating on all issues discussed" by the pair,

including furthering dialogue with the Islamic Emirate, said the source.

The source, who spoke on condition of anonymity, said other issues Sheikh Mohammed raised with Hibatullah included the need to end an Islamic Emirate bans on girls' education and women's employment.

The meeting represents a diplomatic success for Qatar, which has criticized Islamic Emirate's restrictions on women while using long-standing ties with the Islamist movement to push for deeper engagement with Kabul by the international community.

The United States has led demands for the Afghan interim government to end the bans on girls' schooling and women working, including for UN agencies

and humanitarian groups, to restore their freedom of movement and bring Afghans from outside Taliban ranks into government.

The source's comments suggested that Washington supported elevating what have been unproductive lower-level talks in the hope of a breakthrough that could end the world's only bans of their kind and ease dire humanitarian and financial crises that have left tens of millions of Afghans hungry and jobless.

The White House declined to comment on the talks. The State Department and the Qatar embassy in Washington did not respond to requests for comment.

The Islamic Emirate did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

### 6 killed, 9 hurt in traffic accident

KAPISA (Khaama Press): At least six people were killed, and nine others were injured in a traffic accident in Kapisa Province of Afghanistan on Wednesday, local officials said.

Six people were killed, and nine others were injured, including children and women, after a Mazda vehicle flipped and jumped into the valley on Wednesday morning in the Alasay district of Kapisa province, according to the provincial police office.

According to the police, the cause of the traffic incident was reckless driving and the narrow width of the road in the area.

The injured people were taken to the hospital while the authorities were sent to investigate the cause of the incident.

Several factors, such as careless driving, backed-up traffic, poorly built roads, a lack of the rule of law, and poorly maintained vehicles, contributed to increased traffic incidents in the country.

According to the WHO, 6,033 fatalities from traffic accidents are expected to occur in Afghanistan in 2020, or 2.6% of all fatalities. As a result, the nation is ranked 76 globally regarding accidents.

### Ancient artifacts discovered

BAMYAN (Khaama Press): Officials in Afghanistan's central Bamyan province have discovered at least 12 items of ancient artifacts the provincial information and culture directorate said in a statement.

While searching foreign nationals at Bamyan Airport, artifacts and dust from the outskirts of Bamyan's destroyed Buddha statues were seized, according to the statement.

Out of the discovered items, 8 pieces of ancient works include pottery, precious stones, and engraved iron plates, and the other 4 items are grains, the provincial officials said.

Bamyan airport officials have prevented the smuggling of soil and black stone samples possibly collected from the remains of destroyed statues of Buddha.

The artifacts and ancient items have been seized based on the orders of the Ministry of Information and Culture, Rahmatullah Rahmani, head of culture and art of Bamyan information and culture directorate, said.

"Ancient items are the national treasures and every citizen is responsible for protecting and preventing them from smuggling," Rahmani said.

Smuggling artifacts and ancient items have been a lucrative business for decades in Afghanistan. Having a strong government network, smugglers were able to send precious stones and artifacts beyond the borders with ease.

Although the Taliban officials repeatedly claimed to have stopped smuggling these precious items overseas, the lucrative illegal business is still popular in Afghanistan and in the region.

## Foreign nations urged to refuse sanctuary to Afghan migrants

KABUL (Agencies): The Foreign Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan Amir Khan Muttaqi said that security in the country has been restored and Afghans should not leave the country under the pretext that their lives are in danger.

Speaking to family members of the 18 deceased migrants, whose remains were returned from Bulgaria last week, Muttaqi also called on the international community not to take in Afghans who say their lives are in danger.

"The world should not harm Afghanistan's talents, talents and honor and should not expel them from this country under the name that their lives are in danger," he said adding: "Don't oppress them [Afghans] anymore, 20 years of war is enough, they have martyred countless Afghans."

Muttaqi also expressed his condolences and prom-



ised the families of the deceased he would cooperate with them. The bodies of the 18 migrants were returned to the country last week, three months after they were found dead in an abandoned van outside Sofia in Bulgaria.

Muttaqi raised the issue of the delay in repatriating

the bodies and said sanctions were to blame. "The process faced many obstacles and the reason for the delay in the transfer of bodies was this issue (international sanctions)."

He said however that all Afghans are free to travel abroad but they should not use the system to secure

asylum. Family members of the deceased migrants meanwhile said that many young people are deceived by human traffickers who get them to Europe via dangerous routes.

These families called on the IEA to stamp out the issue and end human trafficking in the country.

## Dawlina clinic without doctresses, surgeon

FEROZKOH (Pajhwok): The residents of Dawlina district in western Ghor province say there are no lady or specialist doctors and other health related facilities in the district and urge the government to address these issues.

Faiz Mohammad, a resident of Dawlina district, told Pajhwok Afghan News the district clinic had no female surgeon and gynaecologist and female patients were being taken to the hospital in Ferozkoh city.

Faiz added: "My child was suffering from appendicitis, as there was no surgeon in the district, I had to take my child to the provincial hospital for operation. We have this problem since years and the authorities should find a solution to it".

Sher Ahmad, another resident of Dawlina district, held similar views about the lack of health facilities and doctors and said:

"There is no good doctor in the clinic, no ambulance, no doctresses are available at all, if someone falls ill, we need to take the patient to the Ferozkoh city hospital, we ask the authorities to solve our problems".

Transferring a patient to the provincial hospital cost a lot and the majority of Dawlina are unable to pay, he said. The residents insisted the district clinic should be equipped and female doctors appointed there.

Provincial authorities confirm there are no female doctors, surgeon or other specialists in the Dawlina district clinic.

Abdul Latif Dawlati, director of the Dawlina clinic told Pajhwok: "There are many problems in the clinic, one of them is the lack of female health provider and the clinic must be upgraded to enable us to provide better health services".

However, provincial

officials of Ghor Public Health department said that the problem of lack of female doctors was common issue all over the province.

Doctor Abdul Ahmad Noori, Deputy Director of Ghor Public Health Department, told Pajhwok: "Unfortunately, the number of female doctors is very limited. There are only two doctresses in the provincial hospital, we are trying to solve this problem".

Noori added some clinics had been upgraded and soon surgery departments would be activated in these clinics including Dawlina clinic and the problems of people would be solved.

Dawlina residents say the district is 80 kilometers away from the provincial capital and the residents face different problems, especially during winter when taking patient to the provincial capital becomes difficult.

### Univesity lecturers warned

KABUL (Khaama Press): Afghanistan's Ministry of Higher Education in a letter has warned university lecturers to avoid criticizing the Taliban regime in their research work, sources reported.

In the letter, it is stressed that university lecturers should have a good command of both national languages (Farsi and Pashto) and utilize national terminologies rather than using terms that are alien to Afghan people and culture.

The letter contains seven decrees about research and translation, sent by Hamidullah Muzamal, the head of the research and translation department of the Ministry of Higher Education of the Taliban on May 27.

Muzamal has clearly said that university lecturers should defend the ruling regime and refrain from criticizing or speaking against Taliban officials to avoid possible problems.

It is also stated that lecturers and researchers should avoid using alien terms in their writes ups, adding the country has common expressions for these words.

Banning the use of the term "Danishgah" which has a Farsi root, which translates university in English has repeatedly sparked widespread reactions in universities and media in Afghanistan.

While describing the term "Danishgah" as foreign, the officials have banned using the term. The former government officials and the Taliban did not have sensitivity towards non-Persian words such as Urdu and English.

Previously, the Taliban authorities repeatedly removed Farsi words from official plaques of universities in different parts of the country. Some critics of the Taliban administration describe the move as a clear anti-Farsi language campaign that will further widen the gap among the people of Afghanistan who are ethnically and linguistically very diverse.

## IEA and Turkmenistan agree to form trade body

KABUL (TOLOnews): Afghanistan and Turkmenistan discussed the development of cooperation in the area of transporting goods and agreed on the creation of a joint committee to improve trade.

The Ministry of Industry and Commerce said that the current government asked Turkmenistan to decrease

the transit costs of commercial goods of Afghanistan.

"The acting Minister of Industry and Commerce asked him to reduce the cost of transit and transportation and transfers from this route so that it will be used more. The Minister of Transport of Turkmenistan, while announcing his readiness, stated that a bilateral

committee should be established to discuss the details of the mentioned cases," said Akhundzada Abdul Salam, spokesman of the ministry.

Meanwhile, some economists believe that with the reduction of transit costs, the price of goods will also decrease in the country and it will have a good impact.

"If these meetings are implemented and the Islamic Emirate gives assurances based on such meetings, it will have a positive effect on the economy of both countries," said Nazik Mer Ziyarmal, an economist.

Earlier, the acting minister of Industry and Commerce in a meeting with the transportation minister of Turkmenistan discussed starting a joint committee for solving transit challenges.

### Japanese organization ready to build 15 schools

KABUL (Agencies): A Japanese aid organization is building fifteen schools in Helmand with all facilities. The provincial, head of education in Helmand, Mawlawi Mohammad Awaad Ansari, said that these new school with all facilities are about to be built at the request of Helmand education department. The construction of these schools will cost up to one hundred and thirty-five million Afghani, which will be paid by Japan's aid organization. Meanwhile, a team of engineers from the Ministry of Education have traveled to Helmand to assess this project to conduct practical.

## Kunar dam, jobs on merit, retirees pay raise key public demands

KABUL (Pajhwok): A number of people have called on the caretaker government to build a dam on the Kunar River, create jobs for the people and prevent 'biased' appointments and increase salaries of teachers.

The citizens also called for solution to the problem of passports by foreign based Afghans, not to give documents to right hand drive vehicles because they cause traffic accidents and increase pensions of retired people.

The IEA spokesman says the current system has been addressing people's demands and executing anything possible.

#### Voice of people

On Monday (May 22), Pajhwok Afghan News launched "Voice of People" program to convey people's problems, demands and suggestions to the authorities.

In the first part of this program, people were asked on Facebook and Twitter about their utmost demands from the caretaker government of Afghanistan.

This week's question has so far been answered by more than 1,400 people in written, audio and video on WhatsApp, Facebook and email. The question has been liked by around 5,300 people on Facebook and nearly 6,000 people have seen it on Twitter.

In this report, Pajhwok compiled people's written requests and suggestions regarding the establishment of a water dam in Kunar, creating jobs, passport related issues, increase of teachers' salaries, pension of retired people, issuing of documents to right hand drivecars.

#### Employment

Ehsanullah, an employee of the Ministry of Interior in the former government, who is currently jobless, said the youth need jobs to serve their country and the government should provide them this opportunity.

Khan Haji, another individual, wrote: "I obtained my Bachelor's degree in literature from Ghazni University six months ago, I completed my studies by borrowing money from people, but now no one gives me a job wherever I apply."

He said he would choose to go abroad through smuggling routes if he was failed to land a job.

Shah Faisal Momand says: "Many changes happened with the arrival of the new caretaker government, most of the young people, especially literate,

migrated to foreign countries, most of them with legal documents. I have also a bitter experience and memory of traveling to Pakistan like other young people. Living in Pakistan illegally has become more difficult than before."

He demanded employment and said that many educated Afghan refugees had left the country due to lack of jobs.

"People having strong ties with current authorities are appointed," he claimed.

Asadullah Wafa also asked the Islamic Emirate to give the educated people employment opportunities.

He also claimed: "Nowadays only those people who are relatives of the officials can find a job and even illiteracy not matters." Mohabatullah Hasanai wrote: "My question is ...

When you apply for a job in any agency, they ask you in which group you did Jihad, who you were with, bring a letter and we will give you a job. And those who have no relations with the current officials, they are denied jobs."

#### Construction of dam on Kunar River

Tahsil Gul suggested a bank account should be opened so that the Afghans, especially those living abroad, could donate money for construction of the dam on Kunar river. He said he was an engineer and was ready to work on the dam project for free.

Sail wrote: "Water is flowing freely from the Kunar River to the neighboring country, so if a dam is built in Kunar, it will benefit the country and the entire nation. All Afghans

will be grateful."

Another person, whose name has not been revealed, also asked the Islamic Emirate to allocate a budget for the water management of Kunar river and to generate electricity from it.

Saleh also demanded construction of the complex road in Kunar and said the road was key because it connected people of five districts.

#### Teachers' salaries increase

ShariullahMajroh, a teacher of a public school in Kabul, said during the previous government, he used to teach for 28 hours a week and was paid 10,000 afghanis, but now he taught for 36 hours a week and received 8,500afs. He requested an increase in their salaries.

Some other people also

asked for salary increase in their messages sent to Pajhwok Afghan News.

#### Passport-related issues and suggestions.

A person, who did not reveal his name, wrote that for the past two months a 'tussle'; was ongoing between the adviser of the Afghan embassy in Egypt and the staff of the embassy and they had stopped the work of the mission.

He said passports of many students in the country had expired and they needed to be renewed and the students were facing many problems.

Paindagul wrote: "Extending a five-year passport in the United Arab Emirates costs 1,600 riyals or 37,000 afghanis and the price of a ticket to this country is 2,000 riyals which is an injustice and must be

stopped."

Another Afghan wrote after the political change in Afghanistan, flights to the United Arab Emirates had stopped and the people were facing problems and the IEA should find a solution to it.

Haqmal wrote without details that Afghans in Saudi Arabia were facing the lack of passports.

#### Pension payment

Momand Khan writes: "I hope you will raise this voice. The pension of retired individuals should be paid because they spent their whole life serving the country and they should not be denied their right."

Sardar WaliHewadmal urged the Islamic Emirate to give the right of retired individuals.

Some other people held similar views.



# Dr. Fouzia meets Aafia Siddiqui after 20 long years

NEW YORK (Agencies): Dr. Aafia's elder sister met her after 20 years in Fort Worth town of United States where she is currently detained. Meanwhile, British attorney Clive Stafford Smith accompanied Dr. Fouzia Siddiqui to meet her sister.

According to Senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan, Aafia Siddiqui is currently being detained at the infamous FMC Carswell prison. He added that a long journey of 20 years have at last started bearing fruit as Dr. Aafia Siddiqui has been granted the right to meet her family. The senator said that Aafia's elder sister Dr. Fouzia has met Aafia and he is next to meet the "Daughter of Nation" on Thursday.

Senator Mushtaq narrated that both sisters met each other after 20 years and the meeting spanned over two and a half hour. While meeting her sister,

Dr. Fouzia was neither allowed to touch her sister nor was she allowed to show her the pictures of Dr. Aafia's children. Both the sisters met in a room separated with a thick glass wall. Dr. Fouzia said that Aafia was wearing beige jail dress and a white scarf.

Dr. Fouzia further added that Aafia is not in a good condition, it took almost an hour for Aafia to state what she has been through every day. She was waiting to her meet mother and children and she does not even know that our mother died almost a year ago. Dr. Fouzia said that Aafia has lost her front teeth in an assassination attempt inside the jail and have a scar on her head because of which she face difficulties in hearing. Reportedly, Dr. Aafia has been pressurised through different torturous techniques to speak up about the things she does not even know.

Although Dr. Fouzia explained what she has come to know in the recent meeting but still a lot of mysteries are yet to be uncovered. Things would become clear gradually as the meetings are expected to continue with Senator Mushtaq Ahmad next in line. However, Senator Mushtaq Ahmad Khan showed resolve that they will not leave any stone unturned to get Dr. Aafia Siddiqui out of jail and they have been meeting uncountable personalities to voice concern about the miseries being faced by Dr. Aafia.

The senator urged the Pakistani nation to stand up and thrive for justice for Aafia or else the whole nation would be responsible in case of any misfortune. The senator reiterated that the issue should be raised at diplomatic level under American government.

## PHC sets free PTI workers

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Peshawar High Court (PHC) Wednesday annulled the 3-MPOs (Maintenance of Public Order) imposed by the deputy commissioners across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and set free all the accused.

The court had reserved its decision after completion of the arguments yesterday regarding petitions filed by the accused detained under 3-MPO, and pronounced its verdict. A two-judge bench consisting of Justice Ishfaq Ibrahim and Justice Arshad Ali issued a short order over-throwing the orders of the deputy commissioners to impose 3-MPO.

The PHC ordered the quashment of all the cases and release of the arrested persons under 3-MPO, which is being seen as a big relief to PTI workers. Earlier, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Advocate General Hamid Sajjad told the PHC that around 2,000 persons were arrested under 3-MPO.

## 'Not in favour of minus formula'

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Former prime minister and Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leader, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi has said that he is not in favour of 'minor formula' and said that let the voters to decide about the fate of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI).

In interaction with media in Karachi on Wednesday, he while talking about the reports of trial of Chairman PTI Imran Khan in military courts in the backdrop of May 9 mayhem said that one should remember that the minus formula had never worked in Pakistan. However, Shahid Khaqan Abbasi said that the PTI chairman considered himself above the law and did not even appear before any court. Law would take its course whether it was the attack on GHQ, setting ablaze the corps commander's house or any other incident, he added.

The PML-N leader recalled that he faced a trial for three years in a NAB case in Karachi, which was absurd in nature. "The court sent back this case to NAB yesterday. Imran now says that [former army chief retired Gen Qamar Javed] Bajwa was behind this [practice]." He also said that those who committed injustice to Nawaz Sharif must apologise and called for learning from the mistakes made in the past. "Tell me, which law and constitution provide for lifetime disqualification? The country's Supreme Court may explain. I am ready to listen to their stance."

Shahid Khaqan Abbasi noted that there would always be complaints about the system. "Complaints would be made if the system is used wrongly." As there is a lot of speculation about formation of a new party by Jahangir Tareen, the senior PML-N leader described it as a right of every person. "I am the eldest member of PML-N. Politics is not about profit and loss. Every party follows its own politics."

There was no other option except holding general elections, he stressed. "Under which law and constitution the country would be run if elections were not held," he added. "Elections should be and would be held in October."

## Nepra okays Rs1.6 per unit increase

ISLAMABAD (INP): The National Electric and Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) Wednesday approved a Rs1.6 per unit increase in electricity price on account of monthly fuel cost adjustment for April.

According to the Nepra sources, the power consumers will have to make additional payments in the next month's bills. The increase in the electricity bills will not be applicable to lifeline customers. The Nepra will issue the detailed decision later.

According to the Nepra authorities, 16.06 percent less electricity was generated from water and 10.23 percent from coal. Similarly, 12.08 percent less electricity was generated from imported coal and 3.98 percent from local coal.



QUETTA: President Dr. Arif Alvi addressing during a seminar.

# Imran's interim bail in Al-Qadir Trust case extended till June 3

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court has extended Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's interim bail in the Al-Qadir Trust Case till June 3. The PTI chairman's legal team had sought an extension till June 8, which was rejected by the court.

A division bench comprising Justice Mianqul Hasan Aurangzeb and Justice Saman Riffat conducted the hearing. The bench extended Imran's interim bail for three days, and ordered him to refer to the accountability court over expiry of the period. Upon not referring to the court concerned, the interim bail will stand invalid.

Speaking to the media informally in the courtroom, the former premier claimed he floated the offer for talks to stabilize the country's economy. He further said there is no other option except election right now. Imran also alleged that the establishment and the government were the same thing, as the establishment was running the government.

To a question if President Arif Alvi does not respond to him, the PTI chief refuted the reports, saying it is not true the two are not in touch. He also said they had talked to former army chief Gen (retd) Qamar Bajwa also about elections. He added he was cooperating with the teams probing all the cases against him. Declaring the PTI a terrorist party is an attempt to keep it out of elections, Imran alleged, adding his people were being blackmailed through all kinds of means.

Earlier in the day, Imran Khan had left his Zaman Park residence in Lahore to appear before the National Accountability Bureau's Rawalpindi office and Islamabad High Court in various cases. Imran Khan is also accompanied by a team of lawyers. On the other hand, the Islamabad accountability court has declared infructuous the bail petition of Bushra Bibi over her arrest warrant not being issued in the 190 million pound Al-Qadir Trust case.

## Court declares bail plea of Bushra Bibi ineffective

ISLAMABAD (APP): An Accountability Court (AC) on Wednesday declared the interim bail petition of Bushra Bibi, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan's wife, as ineffective in 190 million pounds' investigation initiated by the National Accountability Bureau (NAB).

The court, in its written order, said it had been told that neither Bushra Bibi's arrest warrants had been issued so far nor her custody was required in the said case. It said Bushra Bibi had filed a petition seeking pre-arrest bail in the said case, which was being disposed of under Section 498 of the NAB Ordinance. AC Judge Muhammad Bashir announced the verdict after hearing arguments against the petition. NAB Investigation Officer Mian Umar Nadeem and Bushra Bibi's lawyer Khawaja Haris appeared before the court during hearing.

During hearing, NAB's Deputy Prosecutor General Sardar Muzafar Abbasi said that PTI's Chairman Imran Khan in his statement on May 13, used unethical words against NAB and its chairman. Imran Khan had been doing a false propaganda against NAB and claimed that the bureau had issued arrest warrants against his wife, he argued. The NAB prosecutor said neither the Bureau had conducted a raid nor it had issued arrest warrants against Bushra Bibi. The Bureau had had no personal conflict with anybody and petitioner Bushra Bibi should cooperate with it whenever she was summoned for investigation. The NAB investigation officer also confirmed that no arrest warrants had been issued against Bushra Bibi so far as her custody was not required yet. After the statements of NAB officials, the court declared the bail petition as ineffective. NAB had initiated an investigation against Imran Khan and Bushra Bibi with regard to the Al-Qadir Trust, a scam of 190 million pounds.

The former first wife appeared in the court of accountability judge Muhammad Bashir along with her husband Imran Khan. Her lawyer Khawaja Haris told the court that the NAB did not send even a single notice for joining the investigation and converted the inquiry into an investigation. Bushra Bibi went to the NAB office with her husband on orders.

Deputy Prosecutor General Sardar Muzaffar said Imran Khan made unethical statements on May 13 against the NAB chairman, did false propaganda against the bureau. Imran Khan said the NAB issued arrest warrant for Bushra Bibi, he said, adding this is dishonesty to pressurize the bureau. He claimed the bureau did not conduct a raid nor did they attack. No arrest warrant was issued for Bushra Bibi, he said, adding she is a

suspect and should cooperate with the bureau.

The court had approved her interim bail in the case till today. The court has also sought replies from the NAB and the investigation officer. A large contingent of police will be deployed outside the Judicial Complex, Islamabad. On Tuesday, the former premier had submitted surety bonds for interim bail in four cases at the Lahore High Court and Special Anti-Terrorism Court. The cases in which the bonds were submitted included the Corps Commander House attack, arson at a plaza in Lahore as well as two other cases. Three surety bonds worth Rs100,000 were submitted before the special ATC, while one in the LHC. Both the courts accepted the bonds. Imran's interim bail in all four cases was extended till June 2.



ISLAMABAD: Security personnel securing a vehicle carrying PTI chief Imran Khan during his hearing at court.

# Pak has got Plan B in case IMF deal not reached: Pasha

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister of State for Finance Ayesha Ghous Pasha has said that the statement of IMF mission chief Nahtan Porter is unusual as the global lender does not discuss the domestic political issues.

Talking to media on Wednesday, Ms Pasha said that the International Monetary Fund has not officially discussed such thing. She was of the view that the IMF does not have the mandate to interfere in the internal affairs of Pakistan. According to a report, IMF mission chief for Pakistan Nathan Porter said on Tuesday that the IMF remained in touch with the government in Pakistan in order to pave the way for a board meeting before a financing programme expires at the end of June.

Porter said that broadly speaking, "overcoming the present economic and financial challenges would require sustained policy efforts and reforms for Pakistan to regain strong and inclusive private-led growth." While the IMF does not comment on

domestic politics, the IMF official said it hopes "a peaceful way forward is found in line with the Constitution and the rule of law," referring to Pakistan's political instability.

Ms Pasha said that the IMF programme is ending on June 30, adding that no discussion have been held regarding extension of the current programme. Pakistan had signed the current 36-month \$6 billion Extended Fund Facility in July 2019. The IMF, however, extended the programme by nine months to June 30, 2023 and its size was also increased to \$6.5 billion.

Over the past almost four years, the programme has been derailed at least four times, including on two occasions during the tenure of the current coalition government. The coalition government has failed in timely completing the programme reviews and \$2.6 billion still remains undisbursed because of disagreement on the ninth review, which also delayed the completion of 10th and 11th reviews.

Pakistan has implemented almost all prior actions as demanded by the IMF but still the global lender is delaying the staff-level agreement for the ninth review. The staff-level agreement has been delayed since November, with more than 100 days gone since the last staff-level mission to Pakistan, the longest such delay since at least 2008.

"If the deal with the IMF is not reached, Plan B is always there. However, our priority is the IMF programme," the state minister said resolutely. Ms Pasha said that the delay in the loan programme is not in the interest of both Pakistan and the IMF. Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has assured the managing director of the IMF that Pakistan would implement all the conditions of the IMF and complete the programme, she added. The minister of state for finance hoped that the staff level agreement would be reached with the IMF before the new budget which would be presented on June 9.

# Timely delivery of justice vital: President

F.P. Report

QUETTA: President Dr Arif Alvi has said that timely delivery of justice especially in minor cases holds key importance to prevent worsening of disputes and avoiding bloodshed. Addressing a seminar in the provincial capital Quetta on Wednesday, he said the federal and provincial ombudsmen had their key role in the promotion of public service and good governance.

Dr Arif Alvi said that as a member of National Assembly (NA) in 2017, he proactively worked for passing a bill related to alternate dispute resolution to reduce the burden on the mainstream judiciary. He pointed out, "When physical interaction was not possible owing to security issues, the executives including himself must have arranged online setups such as "Zoom meetings" to ensure direct communi-

cation with the common people to guarantee timely justice delivery."

Last night, he said, "He disposed of 10 cases of the federal ombudsman and normally he disposes of the cases of appeals in just a few hours. President Alvi also stressed the need to raise awareness about the role of the ombudsman as few people were currently aware of its role.

He also directed for removal of obstacles in the way of interaction between government officials and the common people. He said, "Islam teaches people to show patience and forgiveness to promote peace and harmony in society." "No nation needs any foreign aid if they truly follow the values and teachings of Islam."

Referring to the living standards of the Holy Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and the His companions, the president also asked the country's execu-

tives to follow them and adopt the living standard of the common man. Speaking about the importance of woman's rights and their participation in society, the president said, "Islam is the first religion that emphasized to provide an inheritance to women and in Quran it has been emphasized with clarity."

Normally in our society, he said women of a family withdrew their inheritance rights in favour of their brothers which happened often under pressure. However, he said it rarely happened that men of a family withdrew their inheritance right in favour of their sisters. Stressing the need to ensure the women's participation in every field of life, President Alvi said the country could not afford the burden of 52% population, therefore they must be given freedom in public places so that they could freely work at any place.

# ECNEC okays project for setup of Hydropower Project

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Executive Committee of the National Economic Council (ECNEC) Wednesday considered and approved a project of the government of AJK to be executed by the Power Development Organization, AJK for the Establishment of a 48MW Shoulster Hydropower Project in Neelam Valley District, AJK at an updated cost of Rs. 14,985 million including FEC of Rs. 12,736.90 million.

The project is to be financed 85% from the Saudi Fund for Development (SFD) and 15 % of the cost

will be met through AJK ADP. Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Ishaq Dar chaired the meeting of the ECNEC, said a press release issued here. Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal, SAPM on Finance Tariq Bajwa, Senator Nisar Ahmed Khuhro, Federal Secretaries and other senior officers from Federal Ministries and Provincial departments participated in the meeting in the meeting.

The ECNEC also considered and approved in principle a project of the Ministry

of Kashmir Affairs and GB for the Establishment of Regional Grids in Gilgit-Baltistan Phase-I in Astore, Gilgit, Hunza, and Skardu Districts in GB at the revised cost of Rs. 17,425.57 million with FEC of Rs. 1824.02 million subject to the reconsideration of bidding, construction and engineering estimates by the Planning Ministry.

The ECNEC also considered and approved another project of the Government of Gilgit-Baltistan to be executed by W&P Department Gilgit-Baltistan of 26 MW Shagharthang Hydropower Project in District Skardu.

## PTI submits reply in SC

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf has submitted a reply to the Supreme Court in the case challenging the practice and procedure law. The PTI had requested to declare the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Law 2023 null and void.

The law should be declared unconstitutional, the petition pleads, adding its clauses 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 8 of the Act should be declared unconstitutional. The Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Law is against the independence of the judiciary. The law has interfered with the internal administration of the judiciary, the plea states.

A day ago, Supreme Court Bar Association President Abid Zuberi stated that parliament limited the judicial authority by enacting the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) Bill 2023, adding the law is against the constitutional principles. Mr Zuberi said this in his written response he submitted to the Supreme Court. Under Article 191, the Supreme Court has the exclusive power to amend the Rules, the response said.

## Raza Shah quits PTI

LAHORE (PPI): PTI leaders continued to bid adieu to the party in the aftermath of incidents of violence witnessed on May 9 last, following the arrest of former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan.

Makhdoom Ali Raza Shah, from D I Khan, is the latest to join the list of deserters. Addressing a press conference on Wednesday, he said he parted his ways with the PTI in the national interest.