

Aleema gets interim bail
LAHORE (INP): An anti-terrorism court in Lahore has granted interim bail to PTI Chairman Imran Khan's sister Aleema Khan in connection with Jinnah House attack and arson cases. Aleema Khan appeared in the court herself and was able to get interim bail until June 27. Barring the police from arresting her, ATC Judge Ijaz Ahmad Buttar ordered Aleema Khan to submit Rs100,000 surety bonds.

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Govt working on a solarisation initiative: PM

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that despite the constraints imposed by domestic and global circumstances, the budget 2023-24 promised to turn things around and has outlined a clear path for the purpose.

The prime minister, in a tweet, said that achieving economic self-sufficiency, remained the overarching goal where the economy was insulated from external turbulence and shocks. He said as the experts were analysing the various facets of budget 2023-24, he considered it important to highlight the special emphasis the government had placed on the growth-inducing sectors in the budget.

He said the measures for the uplifting of information technology, agriculture, solarisation, youth development and other sectors were proposed after thorough deliberations. "They are

aimed at incentivizing innovation and entrepreneurship of our talented youth and boosting the productivity of agriculture and attracting investment in the agro-industry."

At the same time, the prime minister said the government was working on a solarisation initiative to replace the costlier sources of power generation by harnessing the vast solar power. "Affordable energy is key to economic growth and the provision of relief to the people. The procurement of crude oil from Russia is also part of the energy security plan," the prime minister remarked.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif lauded the Sindh government for the arrangements it had made to deal with the fast-approaching cyclone Biparjoy — which is expected to make landfall on June 15 between Karachi and India's Gujarat.

Taking to Twitter, the premier appreciated the

efforts being made under the leadership of Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah. "I just spoke to CM Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah and discussed the preparations to deal with the cyclone. I commend the Sindh government for the arrangements it has made under the leadership of the Chief Minister," wrote the premier on the microblogging site. Assuring the federal government's complete support for the Sindh government, PM Shehbaz said that the province will "overcome this situation with the support of the people."

Shehbaz, Rohale Asghar discuss political situation: Advisor to the Prime Minister Sheikh Rohale Asghar Monday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and discussed the current political situation in the country. Rohale Asghar praised the prime minister for his people-friendly measures in the budget 2023-34.

Terrorist killed in clash with troops in N Waziristan

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: One terrorist was killed and two injured during a clash with security forces in North Waziristan district on Monday.

According to ISPR, fire exchange took place between own troops and terrorists in general area Spinwam, North Waziristan District. "Own troops effectively engaged the terrorists' location and after intense fire exchange, one terrorist was sent to hell, while two terrorists were injured."

Weapons and ammunition were also recovered. The killed terrorist remained actively involved in terrorist activities against security forces as well as killing of innocent citizens. Locals of the area appreciated the operation and expressed their full support to eliminate menace of terrorism from the area.

Funeral prayers of three martyred soldiers offered: Funeral prayers of Subedar Asghar Ali Shaheed (age 40 years, resident of District Lakki Marwat), Sepoy Naseem Khan (age 26 years, resident of District Lakki Marwat) & Sepoy Muhammad Zaman (age 22 years, resident of Abbottabad) who embraced shahadat while fighting gallantly with terrorists in general area Miran Shah, North Waziristan District on the night of 9/10 June 2023, were offered at their native hometowns.

The Shaheeds were laid to rest with full military honours, according to ISPR press release. Senior serving & retired officers/soldiers, relatives and a large number of people attended the funerals. Pakistan Army remains committed to ensuring the defence of the motherland at all costs.

Another suspect identified in GHQ attack

RAWALPINDI (INP): Security forces have identified another suspect involved in an attack over GHQ Rawalpindi during May 9 violence, following the arrest of the former prime minister and the PTI chief. Raja Danish Waheed, who is a resident of Rawalpindi, was found inciting people to attack Pakistan Military's General Headquarters (GHQ) on May 9.

The suspect entered GHQ after taking down its monogram. Danish was also involved in pelting stones and throwing petrol bombs at law enforcement agencies on May 9 during violent protests. Efforts are underway for the arrest of the miscreant. Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) vice president — Rawalpindi Chapter — was allegedly identified as a prime suspect for initiating May 9 riots at General Headquarters (GHQ).

28 killed in KP rains: PDMA

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Provisional Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Monday reported that death toll reached to 28 and 150 injured and 158 houses were partially damaged due to heavy wind, rain and storm in Bannu, Lakki Marwat and Karak districts.

Secretary Relief Abdul Basit said that Rescue 1122 and district administrations search and rescue operations are ongoing as all the injured are being shifted to the hospital before providing medical aid on the spot.

He said that Rs40 million has been released for Bannu district on priority basis. He said that all the affected will be treated under government policy. Health Department has also sent medical teams to provide medical assistance to affecteds.



ISLAMABAD: Advisor to PM Sheikh Rohale called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

State bank keeps policy rate unchanged at 21pc

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan's (SBP) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) on Monday decided to maintain the status quo on the policy rate as it anticipates that inflation had peaked and would "start falling" from this month onwards. The MPC had met in April last in which it had jacked up the key policy rate by 100 basis points to a record high of 21% to control inflation.

Since January 2022, the SBP had raised rates by a total of 1,150bps. The statement by the central bank today stated that "higher inflation outturns for April and May were broadly as anticipated". It also "noted a sequential ease in inflation expectations of both consumers and businesses from their recent peaks". The committee also expects "domestic demand to remain subdued amid tight monetary stance, domestic uncertainty and continuing stress on external account".

"In this backdrop, and given the declining m/m trend, the MPC views inflation to have peaked at 38% in May 2023, and barring any unforeseen developments, expects it to start falling from June onwards," the statement further said. On inflation, the SBP also said that it "remained broad-based" owing to the increase in food prices. "Importantly, core inflation maintained its upward trajectory, albeit at a slower pace, mainly indicating the second-round impact of higher food and energy prices and exchange rate depreciation amid still elevated inflation expectations," said the SBP. However, central bank "expects that reduced demand-side pressures and ease in inflation expectations, along with moderating global commodity prices and high base effect, would help bring inflation down from June 2023 onwards".

"In this context, the MPC views that maintaining the current policy stance is necessary to bring inflation down to the medium-term target range of 5%-7% by the end of FY25," it noted. The central bank also added that "broad money growth decelerated in May 2023 compared to last year, largely due to a substantial fall in private sector credit (PSC) and a contraction in net foreign assets of the banking system". The MPC also took stock of the "multiple important developments" that took place since it had last met.

Ammon those it noted that the provisional National Accounts estimates showed a deceleration in the "real GDP growth" in the ongoing fiscal year. Secondly, it shared that the current account balance recorded back-to-back surpluses in March and April 2023, which had "reduced some pressures on foreign exchange reserves". "Third, the government unveiled the budget for FY24 on June 9, which envisages a slightly contractionary fiscal stance against the revised estimates for FY23. Fourth, the global commodity prices and financial conditions have eased recently and are expected to persist in near term," said

the statement.

The MPC also noted that the impact of the "substantial monetary tightening" is "still unfolding". "On balance, the MPC views the current monetary policy stance, with positive real interest rates on a forward-looking basis, as appropriate to anchor inflation expectations and to bring down inflation towards the medium-term target — barring any unexpected domestic and external shocks. However, the MPC emphasised that this outlook is also contingent on effectively addressing the prevailing domestic uncertainty and external vulnerabilities," the central bank said. On the external sector, the SBP stated that the current account has been responding to the "demand-compression policies and regulatory mix" as the deficit during Jul-Apr FY23 dropped to \$3.3 billion — less than one-fourth of last year's deficit.

"The policy-induced contraction in imports more than offset the drop in exports and remittances. The committee noted that the narrowing of the current account deficit has somewhat contained pressures on the foreign exchange reserves and the interbank exchange rate, which has broadly remained stable since the last MPC meeting," the statement further said. But it warned that the "debt repayments amid lower fresh disbursements and weak investment inflows" are exerting "pressure" on the forex reserves. However, the committee was optimistic about the current account deficit will remain "in check" due to the "baseline assumptions of the relatively favourable outlook for commodity prices and moderate domestic economic recovery next year".

On the fiscal side, the central bank noted that the position had "improved" during Jul-Mar FY23, as the fiscal deficit reduced slightly to 3.6% of GDP from 3.9% last year, while the primary balance posted a surplus of 0.6% of GDP this year against a deficit last year. "Notwithstanding this cumulative improvement, there has been some deterioration in fiscal indicators in Q3, largely reflecting an increase in non-interest current expenditures, mainly subsidies, and a significant deceleration in the pace of overall tax revenue. Usual end-year increase in developmental spending and further slowdown in revenue collection amidst substantial slowdown in domestic economic activity and contraction in imports, points to a further increase in the fiscal deficit in Q4," said the central bank. As per the "revised estimates" the fiscal deficit would remain at 7.0% and the primary deficit at 0.5% of GDP for FY23. Meanwhile, the budget presented by Finance Minister Ishaq Dar has projected a fiscal deficit at 6.5% and a primary surplus of 0.4% of GDP. On the budget projections, The MPC noted that the target was "not significantly different from the revised estimate for FY23".

Senate flays May 9 attacks

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Upper House of the Parliament on Monday through a unanimous resolution commemorated the sacrifices of martyrs rendered for peace, safety, security, and stability.

The resolution presented in Senate by Minister of State for Law and Justice, Shahadat Awan paid tribute to the unparalleled role played by the Armed Forces in safeguarding the nation against both external and internal threats.

The resolution strongly condemned the shocking and distressing acts of vandalism and arson that occurred on May 9. These reprehensible actions targeted prominent landmarks such as Jinnah House Lahore, monuments dedicated to martyrs and national heroes, installations belonging to the Armed Forces, and the Radio Pakistan Peshawar building.

Expressing their deep sense of dismay and resentment, the House deplored these attacks and demanded that those responsible for planning, facilitating, and instigating them be brought to justice under the full extent of the law. In a show of unwavering support and solidarity, the Senate extended its backing to the armed forces and other security agencies in the aftermath of this unfortunate incident.

Additionally, the resolution expressed solidarity with the families of the martyrs, recognizing and honoring the tremendous sacrifices they had made for the nation. The Senate resolved to hold their invaluable services for the motherland in the highest regard for all times to come. The passing of this unanimous resolution in the Senate serves as a powerful testament to the nation's unity and determination to protect the ideals of peace and stability that Pakistan holds dear.

NA passes resolution to try May 9 rioters under Army Act

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The National Assembly (NA) on Monday passed a resolution demanding the trial of May 9 rioters — who were involved in attacks on military and state installations — "without any delay" and under the Pakistan Army Act, 1952. The resolution, was moved by Defence Minister Khawaja Asif.

During the protest, military installations — including the Lahore corps commander's residence — and state properties were damaged across Pakistan. Following the episode, the military had termed the day a "dark chapter" in the country's history and resolved to bring to justice all those involved in the vandalism. It had also decided to bring the arsonists who attacked the civil and military installations to justice through trial under relevant laws, including the Pakistan Army Act and Official Secrets Act.

The resolution passed in the NA on Monday claimed that "a political party and its chairman" broke the law and Constitution on May 9 and "orchestrated" attacks on military installations. "The actions of this party and its chief caused damage, that cannot be compensated, to the state institutions and its evidence is present. Therefore, actions must be taken against them according to the law and Constitution without even a day's delay," it read.

The resolution alleged that the "burden of these anti-state actions" conducted by the party was not being taken by its own

members and they were distancing themselves from it. "This proves that the agenda of this party and its chairman is against the state," it added. It further read that "no human rights were violated in the inquiry against the rioters," adding that "a political party was spreading propaganda and levelling fake accusation in this regard".

"Across the world, the right of inquiry against people involved in incidents such as attacks on military installations lie with the army. In Pakistan too, laws and constitutional protection against such elements exist. "Therefore, an inquiry should be initiated without any delay against all the people involved in these incidents and they should be punished under the Pakistan Army Act, 1952," the resolution added.

During the NA session on Monday, debate was also opened on the Federal Budget 2023-24, which was unveiled by the government last week. Leader of the Opposition Raja Riaz Ahmed, while speaking on the budget, lamented the lack of incentives for the agricultural sector and suggested corrective measures to ensure food security and achieve reliance in the production of agriculture-based products.

He stressed the need for adopting modern harvesting techniques and increasing per acre production of seasonal crops. Riaz called for increased focus on research in agriculture to enhance crop productivity and suggested that the gov-

ernment should announce more incentives for farmers. One of his key demands was the restoration of the price control magistrate system across the country to provide relief to the masses. He expressed concern over the unchecked activities of middlemen, who, he claimed, were exploiting the people by creating significant price differences between wholesale and common markets.

Another suspect identified in GHQ attack

RAWALPINDI (INP): Security forces have identified another suspect involved in an attack over GHQ Rawalpindi during May 9 violence, following the arrest of the former prime minister and the PTI chief. Raja Danish Waheed, who is a resident of Rawalpindi, was found inciting people to attack Pakistan Military's General Headquarters (GHQ) on May 9.

The suspect entered GHQ after taking down its monogram. Danish was also involved in pelting stones and throwing petrol bombs at law enforcement agencies on May 9 during violent protests. Efforts are underway for the arrest of the miscreant. Earlier, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) vice president — Rawalpindi Chapter — was allegedly identified as a prime suspect for initiating May 9 riots at General Headquarters (GHQ).

outstanding payments of their workers. The minister said health insurance was part of the vision of the coalition government led by PM Shehbaz Sharif who played a crucial role in that regard.

She said the incumbent government had not tortured any journalist during its tenure, nor issued directives to suspend any television programme or current affairs show. "We have not taken any retaliatory measures against any media professionals," she added. On the contrary, she said, during the previous government tenure, the opposition was not allowed to speak and even the doors of Parliament were closed upon its leaders. However, the doors of National Press Club remained open for the then opposition leaders at that time.

She noted that censorship on the media was enforced during the tenure of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) government which enacted laws to suppress media freedom. The PTI chief was given the name of "Media Predator" at the international level. Marriyum said that the proposed legislation of the PTI regime regarding the Pakistan Media Development

Authority was a back law and its sole objective was to silence the voice of dissent.

"The credit of foiling the PTI regime's plan to introduce PDMA law goes to the unity of media organizations, civil society and political workers," she added. She said it was the resistance showed by the then opposition which hampered the PTI government's move to enact a draconian law for the media and journalists.

"This happens only when the country has a brave leader like Nawaz Sharif who courted his arrest before his workers," she said while highlighting his era's development works, particularly launch of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. Nawaz Sharif made the country's defence impregnable, curbed inflation, created massive job opportunities and rooted out terrorism, she added.

When he was disqualified, she said, not a single pot was broken, nor any ambulance, hospital or mosques was tortured. He did not give any call either for attack on the GHQ or vandalizing memorials of martyrs, she said while referring to the May 9 tragedy when sensitive installations came under attack following the arrest of the PTI chief.

She said Nawaz Sharif had not disrespected any institution as he was convinced that he did nothing wrong. Recalling the Army Public School tragedy when terrorists killed innocent children, she said Nawaz Sharif emphasized on enacting a law which could ensure security and safety of the field journalists. "Nafeesa Shah of the Pakistan Peoples Party presented a private bill in the House for safety and security of journalists when I held the portfolio of Information Minister during the previous government tenure of PML-N," she said while regretting no progress on the legislation which was put in cold storage during the four years of the PTI.

She said the Security and Safety Bill had been sent to the Parliamentary Committee on Information and Broadcasting that would be enacted soon. A fund for death claims of the journalists who lost their lives in accidents had also been included in the bill, she added. "Rs 1 billion for health insurance scheme has been announced and second announcement regarding security and safety legislation will be made soon," she stressed.

She said a circular regarding Rs

35,000 minimum wage had been sent to ITNE and PEMRA to ensure its implementation. Marriyum also lauded the role of journalist community for defending democracy and raising voice against censorship during four years under the leadership of Afzal Butt and RIJUL leaders. She said she would soon visit the Rawalpindi Press Club.

The minister also thanked the Information Secretary, PIO and their team for playing their due role for welfare and protection of journalists. She said the era of progress and prosperity had been resumed in the country with an end to four years fascist rule of the PTI. Marriyum called for collective efforts for progress and development of the country.

Earlier upon her arrival at the NPC, she was accorded a warm welcome by the journalists community and media workers. The minister appreciated the journalists for showing unity and burying differences on the auspicious occasion. She thanked the office-bearers of Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists, Rawalpindi Islamabad Union of Journalists, RISJA, Media Workers Organization, cameramen, anchors for showing unity.

Zardari leaves for Dubai

LAHORE (INP): Former president and Pakistan People's Party (PPP) Co-chairman Asif Ali Zardari left for Dubai from Lahore for eye examination on Monday. Asif Zardari will return to Pakistan in a couple of days after meeting the doctor for eye check-up, informed sources have said. In his place, Foreign Minister and PPPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will hold meetings with the party leaders and workers in Lahore.

Free media plays crucial role in safeguarding democracy: Marriyum

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb Monday lauded the journalist community for playing a critical role in protecting democracy from different kinds of threats in the country.

"Nobody can dare to attack democracy if the voice of journalists is powerful and their message is loud and clear," the minister said while addressing a reception organized by the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) here at the National Press Club.

The reception was also attended by Federal Secretary for Information and Broadcasting Sohail Ali Khan, Principal Information Officer Mobashir Hassan and a large number of journalists and media workers. The minister said the health insurance scheme for journalists and media workers was introduced in the Federal Budget 2023-24 in line with the vision of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Quaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif.

"This step is continuity of the policies of Muhammad Nawaz Sharif who also has credit of the constitution of 8th Wage Board after a hiatus of 18

years," she added. When PM Shehbaz Sharif was opposition leader in the National Assembly, many journalists visited his chamber complaining about their health problems, she recalled while highlighting directives of the prime minister who soon after coming into the power ordered establishment of a fund for the medical treatment of deserving journalists and media workers.

"This is not a favour to anyone since this is your right and our responsibility," the minister remarked. She said owners of media houses could not be absolved of their responsibilities regarding welfare of the journalists and media workers. Marriyum said the Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) had been given representation on the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority's Council of Complaints and PEMRA Authority so that issues faced by the journalists and media workers were resolved in the earliest possible time.

She said the government had worked out a new strategy to ensure timely clearance of media workers' dues by the media houses which would get advertisement payments from the government only on clearing

PML-N govt providing youth right direction, platform to excel in all fields: SAPM

LAHORE (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Monday said that the incumbent government led by Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif was taking all-out measures to provide the youth right direction and platform so that they could excel in all fields including sports.

Addressing at a Football talent hunt program under the Prime Minister's Youth Program being launched at University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences UVAS, she regretted that the youth was misguided and engaged in negative politics by the previous government of the PTI. She said that the year 2023 had marked the 10th year since the launch of Prime Minister's Youth Program started by the PML-N in 2013 for engaging the youth towards positive activities.

Shaza Fatima said the year 2023 had been declared as year of the youth on the directions of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

She said it was the PML-N government which always took exemplary practical measures for the uplift of the youth like youth loan scheme under which soft loans were extended to the

youth for starting own business, and added that around Rs 95 billion of amount had been disbursed among the youth so far under loans scheme enabling around one lac youth to start or expand existing businesses. The PML-N believed that the youth could bring about real change if they were given right direction and platforms to express their skills and abilities and the present government was making every possible effort in this regard.

The SAPM said that the PML-N government provided laptops to the students along with providing scholarships so that bright students could further excel and earn a good name for the country here and abroad.

She said sports facilities were being provided to the youth in various games and currently football hunt program had been started to bring the talented players on a platform.

The PML-N had also arranged skills training to the youth as the training courses for 60,000 youth were underway while 40,000 others had already completed their training courses. She said that this talent hunt program would lead to competitions at regional and provincial level to make the talented

youth players of national level.

The SAPM said the future of the country was linked to the youth provided they continue playing positive role instead of becoming a tool of negative activities. She said the PML-N had a history of steering the country out of challenges whenever it was given a chance to serve.

The people of the country were experiencing 20 plus hours' load-shedding and terrorism incidents when it came into power in 2013, however the dynamic leadership of the PML-N put the country on track to speed progress by eliminating power load-shedding as well as terrorism. She said her government believed in equal opportunities and social status for male and females and took measures to ensure the same.

She said this football talent hunt was being organized in collaboration of UVAS, Higher Education Commission and University of Sargodha.

Former Punjab Minister Rana Mashhood, former MPA Hina Pervez Butt, Vice Chancellor UVAS Naseem Ahmed and others were also present.

In his address, Rana Mashhood appreciated the role of HEC and UVAS for promoting sports activities and said

Modernization in poling need of hour: IGP

KARACHI (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Ghulam Nabi Memon on Monday said modernization was being adopted in policing and investigations standards because current times and circumstances demand that IT should be taken forward in the process of policing.

He stated this while talking to a delegation of under training assistant superintendents of police (ASPs) from National Police Academy, at the Central Police Office (CPO) Karachi, said a news release. He said that in addition to the Safe City project, ANPR and facial recognition cameras were installed at the entry and exit points of province besides other such measures. The IGP Sindh further said the use of technology would prove to be an effective weapon of the police in recent and future times. The DIGP - Headquarters Sindh gave a point-to-point briefing to the participants about various departments/units of Sindh Police including Counter Terrorism Department (CTD), Special Security Unit (SSU), Special Protection Unit (SPU), Crime Investigation Agency (CIA), Special Branch Sindh and others.

CM directs to make functional water filtration plants

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has expressed displeasure over the non-functioning water filtration plants in Multan and Faisalabad and directed the commissioners concerned to ensure the prompt functionality of these water filtration plants.

He instructed them to make the water plants operational with the cooperation of the philanthropists. The CM also mandated that a comprehensive report be submitted to his office once the filtration plants are operational. Importantly, he emphasized that the government would not incur any expenses for this revival, and directed the Aab-e-Pak Authority to gather authenticated data for the revitalization of water filtration plants throughout the province.

CM reviews "Ab Gaon Chamkein Ge" program: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi presided over a meeting at his office to review recommendations for the successful implementation of the "Ab Gaon Chamkein Ge" program.

The primary objective of this plan is to establish a comprehensive cleanliness system at the ward level within the union councils.

According to the proposed plan, dedicated sanitation workers will be assigned to improve the cleanliness standards at the village level. They will utilize rickshaws, tractors, and tractor-trolleys to effectively remove solid waste from the villages and dispose of it outside their premises. Additionally, a chowkidari system will be introduced, ensuring the presence of a vigilant 'chowkidar' in each ward of the union council. During the meeting, the chief minister emphasized the importance of implementing a sustainable cleanliness system

in villages, drawing inspiration from successful models in urban areas. He stressed the need to prioritize measures that guarantee the provision of clean water and other essential facilities to the rural population. Provincial Minister for Information Amir Mir, SMBR, secretary finance, secretary local government, and others attended the meeting.

CM visits Complaints Cell, inspects sections: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Monday paid a visit to the Chief Minister's Complaint Cell and Special Monitoring Unit to inspect various sections of the cell and special monitoring unit, carefully reviewing their performance.

To his disappointment, some officers and staff were found absent from their offices. Expressing strong displeasure over the staff's absence, the Caretaker CM took immediate action and ordered removal of the head of the complaint cell from his position. He emphasized that operating air conditioners in the absence of officers and staff amounted to a wasteful utilization of resources.

Additionally, the Caretaker CM engaged in telephonic conversations with the complainants present in the complaint cell, attentively listening to their issues. He assured the complainants that their concerns would be resolved promptly. Emphasizing the significance of addressing citizens' problems within a specified time frame, he emphasized the need to keep the complainants informed about the progress made on each received complaint. Provincial Minister for Information Amir Mir, Secretary to CM, and the Secretary (Coordination) to CM were also present.

Italian CG, Ombudsman call on Sindh Governor

KARACHI (APP): The Italian Consul General Danilo Giurdanella and Ombudsman of Lazio, Italy Marino Fardelli called on Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori at the Governor House here on Monday.

Marino Fardelli, who is also President of the National Coordination of Italian Civic Ombudsmen is visiting Karachi on the special invitation of the Provincial Ombudsman Sindh Ajaz Ali Khan.

The Governor welcomed the distinguished guests and appreciated the role of the Office of Ombudsman in grievance redressal for the public.

IGP takes notice of firing on police van

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police (IGP) Punjab Dr Usman Anwar on Monday took notice of an incident of firing by unknown persons on a mobile van of Ratta Amaral police station in Rawalpindi, Hazara Colony and asked for a report from the regional police officer (RPO) Rawalpindi. The IGP ordered the CPO Rawalpindi to immediately arrest the accused involved in the firing and also ordered to provide the best medical facilities to the injured police personnel.

The IGP said that the policemen, who did not care about their lives while protecting the lives and property of the citizens, were pride of the department and no effort should be spared in treatment of the injured policemen, he added. The spokesman said when the police were checking suspicious activity in the junkyard and buffalo shed, unknown persons opened fire on the party and escaped. ASI Awais and constables Muhammad Waqas and Atif were among the injured. They were shifted to DHQ Hospital.

Meeting of CPO Committee for Ghazi cases, welfare held

LAHORE (APP): On the instructions of Inspector General Police Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar, a meeting of the CPO Committee for Ghazi cases and Welfare was held at the Central Police Office, in which 22 police officers & officials were selected after reviewing the cases sent from different regions and units.

The nomination of Ghazis was approved for an unprecedented display of courage and bravery.

DSP Muhammad Naveed, Sub-Inspectors Mazhar Abbas, Muhammad Shafiq and Ghulam Hassan, ASIs Ehsan Ullah, Fateh Sher, Head Constable Muhammad Iqbal, Constables Azhar Mehmood, Tariq Mehmood, Ghafoor Ahmed, Abdul Ghaffar Kanwal, Traffic Warden Shehzad Ahmed, Constables Sana Ullah, Kaleem Ullah, Muhammad Azam, Muhammad Arif, Zulfiqar Ali, Irfan Ahmed, Tahir Mahmood, Tajamal Abbas and Ijaz Jilani were included.

IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar said for the safety of the country and the nation, the brave personnel of Punjab Police who took bullets on their bodies were valuable assets, adding that the officers and personnel who were declared Ghazi would be eligible for all the facilities under the "Ghazi Package". The IG Punjab said that the Ghazi employees would get medical treatment, while modern various facilities including medical devices and artificial limbs would be provided.

Ghazi officers and personnel would be awarded with medals, their names would be engraved on the Ghazi wall of the Central Police Office.

Additional IG Welfare and Finance Riaz Nazir Gara presided over the Ghazi Cases and Welfare meeting.

DIG Welfare Ghazi Salahuddin, AIG Welfare Naveed Ajmal, AIG Finance Syed Ali, AIG Logistics Ismail Kharak and AIG Discipline Ahsan Saif Ullah were also present in the meeting.

KMC declares emergency in wake of cyclone Bipерjoy

KARACHI (APP): Municipal Commissioner KMC Syed Shujaat Hussain has said that an emergency has been declared in all relevant departments of KMC as a precautionary measure in relation to possible cyclone Bipерjoy and all works will be done in collaboration with the district administration to deal with any kind of situation.

He said this on Monday while presiding over a meeting held at the KMC head office regarding Cyclone Bipерjoy, said a statement issued here. On this occasion, Director General Technical Services Azhar Hussain Shah, Director General Parks and Horticulture Junaidullah Khan, Senior Director Municipal Services Noman Arshad, Senior Director Medical and Health Services Dr. Nadeem Asif, Senior Director Anti-Encroachment Bashir Siddiqui, Senior Director MUCT. Irshad Arain, Chief Fire Officer Ishfaq Ahmed Khan, Superintendent Engineer Abbas Ali Shah and other officers were also present.

During the meeting, the participants were briefed about the cyclone Bipерjoy, Municipal Commissioner Syed Shujaat Hussain instructed the heads of all the concerned departments to deploy the relevant staff by imposing emergency in their departments and taking all necessary precautions.

He said constant communication

should be maintained with the district administration so that any kind of situation can be jointly dealt with.

He directed the Senior Director Medical and Health Services to ensure 24-hour presence of doctors and staff by imposing emergency in all hospitals and medical institutions under the management of KMC.

He also directed to mobilize machinery and start cleaning of drains and clearing choke points by contacting all concerned agencies.

The Municipal Commissioner directed that the fire brigade and USAR rescue teams should be ready to be deployed especially in the coastal areas, the MUCT department should immediately remove billboards and hoardings on pedestrian bridges and underpasses and the anti-encroachment staff must be put on ready to deal with any kind of situation.

During the meeting, the Director General Technical Services gave details of the necessary measures taken by the Engineering Department including the preventive measures taken on the roads and underpasses.

Municipal Commissioner Syed Shujaat Hussain instructed the Director General Parks to ensure the deployment of relevant personnel on the roads to deal with any emergency situation. He said KMC will take all possible steps to provide convenience to citizens.



LAHORE: Federal Minister for Power Khurram Dastgir Khan presiding over the meeting of LESCO officials at LESCO Headquarter.

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

INVITATION OF BIDS

(SINGLE STAGE TWO ENVELOPES)

Sealed tender/bids on the basis of "Single Stage Two Envelops Procedure" are hereby invited for execution of the following works from eligible contractors/firms duly enlisted/register with Pakistan Engineering council (PEC) in relevant specialization technical category & financial limit Category C-5 & above is required on percentage rates basis on Pak. PWD Schedule of Rates 2022, who possess valid renewal with PEC, having renewal upto 30/06/2023.

S #	Name of Work	NIT Amount	E/ Money	Tender Cost
1	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Muhammad Naddi and VC's Manaf Kela District Charsadda 1	Rs. 37,951,597/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
2	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Muhammad Naddi and VC's Mufti Abad District Charsadda 1.	Rs. 38,813,427/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
3	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Muhammad Naddi and VC's Muhammad Naddi District Charsadda 1.	Rs. 39,618,698/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
4	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Matra and VC's Ashara, Umer Abad Muslimabad District Charsadda 1.	Rs. 42,326,871/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
5	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Matra and VC's Baghi Band District Charsadda 1.	Rs. 37,060,754/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
6	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Rajar and VC's Shakar Dand District Charsadda 1.	Rs. 37,951,597/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
7	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Matra VC's Wardaga District Charsadda 1	Rs. 41,437,690/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
8	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Muhammad Naddi and VC's Ghunda Karkena District Charsadda 1	Rs. 39,618,698/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
9	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Matra and VC's meka Der Sarderi, Islambad District Charsadda 1	Rs. 42,326,871/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
10	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Matra and VC's BATAGRAM, Kangra District Charsadda 1	Rs. 44,110,300/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
11	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Rajar and VC's Salarzai District Charsadda 1.	Rs. 41,437,690/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
12	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Rajar and VC's Amerabad District Charsadda 1.	Rs. 38,813,427/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
13	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Rajar and VC's Shekh abad District Charsadda 1.	Rs. 37,951,597/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-
14	Construction of PCC Street, Drain Retaining Wall, Pipe Culvert at UC,s Deri and VC's Sakandar Khan District Charsadda 1.	Rs.27,318,680/-	2% of the bid amount	Rs.5000/-

TERMS & CONDITION FOR ISSUANCE OF TENDER DOCUMENTS:

1. The contractors/firms/companies who will receive bidding documents are required to submit their bid in two separate sealed envelopes, i.e one envelop containing technical information/data and documents of the contractor/firm required for post qualification , clearly marked as "Technical Bid, while the second envelop containing bid price clearly marked as "Financial Bid.

2. The application must be accompanied with bid security @ 2% of the NIT amount in shape of CDR/deposit at call from any Scheduled Bank of Pakistan, in favour of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD, Peshawar, clearly mentioning the name of firm, whereas the difference of the tendered amount must be accompanied with Financial Bid with its sealed envelop..

3. Bidder may purchase the Bidding Documetns from the office of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD, Peshawar at cost of Rs. 5,000/- (Non refundable upto 11/07/2023 during office hours.

4. Envelopes of Technical Bid & Financial Bid shall be submitted in the office of the Executive Engineer, Central Civil Circle, Pak .PWD, Shami Road Peshawar on 12/07/2023 by 12:30 PM. The envelope containing Technical Bid shall be opened on same day at 01:00 P.M in the presence of Bidders representatives who upt to be present, Bids received after the prescribed date and time shall not be accepted.

5. Bidders will be Technically Qualified on the basis of information provided with the Bids as per the criteria prescribed in the Bidding Documents. Once a Technical Bid received and opened in this office, no addition/subtraction/alteration of any sort of document will be acceptable.

6. Pay Order/Demand draft will not be acceptable.

7. No tender will be entertained without bid security @ 2% of the bid amount if not found will be declared as non responsive.

8. Every firm/contractor must provide the affidavit on stamp paper regarding the non litigation with the department.

9. Under Rule 33(1) of PPRA Rules 2004, the under signed reserves the right to accept/reject any or all bids/ proposals at any time prior to acceptance of a bid or proposal

10. METHOD OF PROCURMENT

- As per PPRA rule 36(b), open competitive Bidding with "Single Stage Two Envelop" Procedure One envelop containing
- Technical Proposal and the other Financial Proposal and both sealed in separate envelopes.
- After conducting evaluation of Technical Bids, qualified firms shall be informed accordingly for opening of their Financial Bids whereas bids of unqualified frims shall be returned unopened.
- Non-compliance of instructions to bidders in the Tender Documents will lead to disqualification/non-responsiveness of the bid/firm.

Nazir Ahmad , Executve Engineer

Central Civil Division No.II,

Pakistan Public Works Department Shami Road Peshawar

Phone & Fax: 091-9211471/Fax 091-9211471

Email: ccd1pwdpsh@gmail.com

PID(P) 193/2023



Govt provides relief to common man, businessmen

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali on Monday said that despite the economic crisis, the federal government has provided relief to the common people including the business community in the budget.

The current federal government has allocated 57 billion rupees for the merged districts in the budget, he said while talking to a representative delegation of Kohat Chamber of Commerce and Industry here at Governor House.

Representatives of Kohat Press Club and Kohat Bar Council were also included in the delegation.

The Governor said that the services of the business community in providing economic stability and

employment in the province are commendable.

He said that in order to deal with the economic challenges facing the country, people associated with all sectors would have to work together.

He said the previous provincial government could not get released even one rupee of fund from the federation for the merged districts.

The federal and provincial governments are taking joint measures to provide facilities to the business community, he noted.

Governor Haji Ghulam Ali said that economic development is the first priority of the federal and provincial governments.

In the meeting, the delegation informed the

Governor about the overall problems faced by Kohat Chamber, Bar Council, Press Club and the people of Kohat city.

Caretaker provincial ministers Adnan Jalil, Syed Hamid Shah, former provincial minister Amanullah Haqqani and Kohat Chamber President Arshad Hayat, Rasheed Paracha, Kohat Press Club President Noor Muhammad Bangash, Bar Council Ameer Ajam, Ishtiaqur Rehman, Qasim Bukhari and others were present on the occasion.

The delegation of Kohat Chamber presented various suggestions to the Governor for the development of the business sector and the elimination of their problems and difficulties.



PESHAWAR: Representatives of Kohat Chamber of Commerce & Industry, Kohat Press Club and Kohat Bar Council meeting with Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali at Governor's House.

PHCBA observes strike

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court Bar Association (PHCBA) along with district courts Khyber, Nowshera and Peshawar bar associations observed strike from court's proceedings over killing of Asadullah Advocate, on Monday.

However, chairman Executive Committee has issued show notices to general secretaries of Kohat and Kurram Bar Associations for observing strike without approval from competent forum while directed to appear before Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council.

The strike has jeopardized court proceedings while clients and petitioners/respondents returned to homes hopelessly while KPBC argued competent authorities to arrest culprit involved in the killing immediately.

PHCBA president Tariq Afridi, general secretary Lajbar Khan, Syed Mubashir Shah, Ishfaq Khalil and Iftikhar Samandar advocates condemned the killing of Asadullah and demanded security of legal fraternity across the country.

Caretaker Advisor appears before PHC

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice Shakeel Ahmad and Justice Sahibzada Asadullah dispose-of writ petition against transfer of Settlement Officer on direction of Advisor for Revenue on assurance that it should be address within 15 days, on Monday.

The petitioner named Irshad pleaded that applicant was Settlement Officer

Abbottabad but transferred on directives of Advisor to Chief Minister for Revenue.

The petition stated that the transfer has made on political victimization and requested to declare null and void.

During hearing Additional Advocate General Danyal Asad Chamkani and Assistant Advocate General Hasnain Tariq appeared before Peshawar High Court (PHC) in the writ petition while Advisor

on Revenue Peer Haroon also appeared on court's direction.

Advisor to Chief Minister for Revenue Peer Haroon informed that transfer was made on several complaints against the petitioner filed before competent forum.

However, PHC has disposed-of the writ petition on assurance by Additional Advocate General that petitioner departmental appeal should be dispose within 15 days.

AD&SJ rejects alleged murderer's bail plea

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Additional District and Session Judge (AD&SJ) has rejected bail petition of alleged murderer after conclusion of arguments, on Monday.

According to prosecution, Azmat has killed Khayal Zaman over oral dispute in the premises of Taktbhai police station on 10th April 2023.

The alleged culprit was arrested by police few days earlier following absconding from law.

The counsel for complainant Malak Shahbaz Advocate argued that petitioner has brutally killed youth with knife while escaped from crime scene and remained absconder from law of the land.

He added that evidence produced before court also establishes the offense committed by Azmat and can't liable for relief of bail.

AD&SJ has turned down bail petition of alleged murderer named Azmat after conclusion of after conclusion.

Govt to present Rs600b budget for four-month, says Finance Advisor

PESHAWAR (APP): Advisor to the Chief Minister for Finance Himayatullah on Monday said that the caretaker government had prepared the budget for the financial year 2023-24, however, it would present an approximately Rs 600 billion budget for the next four-month.

"If the new government does not come within time then there will not be any issue of budget for the rest of the year as the government has already prepared the budget for the whole fiscal year," he said, adding that the size of the

four-month budget was expected to be Rs 550 to 600 billion, according to a statement.

The Advisor said that there was a consideration of 15 to 20 percent increase in salaries and pensions while no new tax would be levied in the budget and no new development plan would be included.

Himayatullah said that the province is likely to get 876 billion rupees from the centre during the next financial year while the province would generate 85 billion rupees from its own resources.

He said that 30 percent of the budget has been allocated for education, 20 for health, 20 for pension and debt repayment and 10 for peace and security while the remaining 20 percent of the budget have been allocated for all other departments.

He said that the size of the provincial ADP size would be Rs 130 billion, adding that the government has decided to extend tax exemptions for merged tribal districts and the former tribal areas of Malakand division for the next two-year.

Closure of stage-show, sealing cinema condemned

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The artists condemned sealing of Arshad Cinema by Assistant Commissioner Syeda Zainab Naqvi to Stage Show despite No Objection Certificate (NOC) issued by Deputy Commissioner (DC) Peshawar in this regard.

This is said by Pakhu film industry hero Shahid Khan and actress Jiya Butt belongs to Lahore while condemned AC Syeda Zainab Naqvi behavior with actors and actresses in the premises during sealing of Arshad Cinema. They claimed that artists were maltreated by Syeda Zainab Naqvi thrown them by force from the premises.

There is no respect for art and artists in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa because AC Zainab Naqvi has broken the doors of Arshad Cinema evacuated the premises by force. They added that there is no forum for redressal of their grievances and

Arshad Cinema.

The artists requested Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif, Chief Justice of Pakistan, Chief Justice Pakistan High Court and other competent authorities to address their grievances otherwise they will be compel to uphold their objections at every forum.

Annual budgets for three universities approved



PESHAWAR (APP): Separate meetings of the Senates of Bacha Khan University Charsadda, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan, Women University Mardan and Islamia College University Peshawar were held here with Caretaker Provincial Minister for Higher Education (Pro-Chancellor) Justice (R) Arshad Qaisar in the chair here at Governor House on Monday.

The annual budgets of

all four universities for the financial year 2023-24 were presented for approval.

The meeting was briefed by the vice chancellors of the concerned universities about the details of the annual budgets and the current budget situation.

The budget of Bacha Khan University Charsadda was not approved due to technical reasons and deficit, while the annual budgets of the other three uni-

versities for financial year 2023-24 were approved.

During the meeting, the members of the Senate also presented various suggestions to the universities to increase their financial resources, control expenses and increase their resources.

Vice Chancellor of Bacha Khan University Dr. Bashir Ahmad, Vice Chancellor of Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan Prof. Dr. Zahur-ul Haq,

Women University Mardan Prof. Dr. Ghazala Yasmin, Vice Chancellor of Islamia College University Peshawar Prof. Dr. Gul Majid Khan, Principal Secretary to Governor Mazhar Irshad, Higher Education Department, Finance Department, Other members of the Senate including representatives of the Department of Establishment and Higher Education Commission participated.

Food Deptt recovers 1300 dead chicken; arrests five accused

PESHAWAR (APP): The Food Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in a major

2000 substandard carbonated drinks seized

PESHAWAR (APP): KP Food Safety and Halal Food Authority on Monday conducted a raid on a factory of carbonated drinks and seized 2,000 litres of substandard and misbranded drinks.

The spokesman of the Food Authority said that an inspection team of the authority visited Phandu Road here and checked various factories working in the area, adding that during the surprise visit the team found substandard and misbranded carbonated drinks in a factory. The teams took the stock into custody and started legal action against the owner of the factory.

Director General Food Authority Shahrukh Ali Khan appreciated the team and directed the teams of Food Authority to intensify the crackdown against substandard edible items and drinks across the province.

crackdown against the suppliers and sellers of dead chicken in the market on Monday conducted a raid in poultry market here in Chargano Chowk and recovered 1300 dead chicken.

During the operation the Food department along with a police team arrested five accused from the spot

who were members of a network involved in the supply and selling of dead chicken to various vendors in the market.

On the identification of the accused, the Food department recovered 1300 dead chickens from various warehouses and shops and discarded on the spot.

All the arrested accused were handed over to Faqiraabad police and sent to jail on a 14-day remand.

Secretary Food Abid Wazir appreciated the successful operation of the Food department and said that those who were playing with the lives of masses deserve no mercy.

Hot, dry weather and rain in most KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Meteorological Center, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar on Monday predicted that hot and dry weather is expected in most districts of the province however, partly cloudy weather is likely during the evening and night hours.

It said that Isolated wind-dust storm and thunderstorm with rain is likely to occur over Abbottabad, Mansehra, Haripur, Battagram, Torgar, Kohistan, Shangla, Chitral, Lower & Upper Dir, Swat, Buner, Malakand, Bajaur,

Mohmand, Mardan, Charsadda, Nowshera, Peshawar, Khyber, Kohat, Hangu, Karak, Orakzai and Kurram districts in the afternoon hour.

During the last 24 hours, weather remained hot and partly cloudy over most districts of the province.

However, thunderstorm and rain occurred at isolated places over the Malakand division.

Rain recorded (in mm): Timergara 13, Mirkhani 04, Chitral & Drosh 03 (each), and Upper Dir 01.

The maximum and min-

imum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar City 37/25, Chitral 36/16, Timergara 37/22, Dir 33/18, Mirkhani 38/17, Kalam 27/09, Drosh 36/18, Saidu Sharif 35/18, Pattan 37/26, Malam Jabba 23/15, Takht Bhai 36/24, Kakul 30/17, Balakot 35/22, Parachinar 28/14, Bannu 36/23, Cherat 31/18, D.I. Khan 38/24.

The highest temperature recorded in the province was 38°C each in Dera Ismail Khan and Mirkhani.

Chicken rates doubles in one year

PESHAWAR (INP): Rate of chicken (live) in the provincial capital Peshawar has increased to almost double in last one year going out of the reach of the consumers.

According to details, the chicken rate in Peshawar which was Rs250 per kg during last year has now climbed to Rs435/kg.

On the other hand, chicken meat was being sold against Rs650 rupees per kg in the city.

Massive increase in chicken and chicken meat rates has also minimized its sale by 35 percent affecting the poultry business.

The citizens have urged the government to take notice of uncontrolled chicken rates.

Power suspension notified

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Electric Supply Company on Monday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from 132 KV Peshawar University Grid Station on 13th, 17th, 20th, 24th and 27th June from 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

Subsequently, it said the consumers of 11KV University Campus, Canal Town, Malakandher, Engineering, Regi, Taj Abad 1, 2, Taj Abad, Agriculture, Mera Achini, HMC Hospital, Ring Road, Danish Abad, Gharib Abad, Rahat Abad 1, CMB, Abdara, Achini 1, 2, Hasain Jan, Safiad Dheri, Old Bara Road, JAF, Academy Town, Circular Road, DHA, HBC, Aksari 6, Commercial Building Abdul Razaq feeders will face inconvenience.

Tehreek-e-Islahat merged into PMLN by Shah Ji Gul

PESHAWAR (APP): In a significant political development, former Member of National Assembly (MNA) Shah Ji Gul Afridi has announced the merger of his political party, Tehreek e Islahat Pakistan Party, into Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

Tehreek Islahat Pakistan Party was founded on August 14, 2021, with the primary objective of initiating comprehensive reforms in the tribal districts and extending the same to the entire country. Shah Ji Gul, however, now decided to merge his political party in Muslim League (N) after holding meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif last week.

According to Shah Ji Gul political secretary, a group of prominent former provincial assembly lawmakers, including Shah Ji Gul Afridi's brother

Provincial Minister Taj Muhammad Afridi, former provincial assembly member Bilawal Afridi, Shafiq Afridi, Tehsil Chairman Jamrud Syed Nawab Afridi, Tehsil Chairman Lundi Kotail, and their entire group, will officially join the PML-Nawaz.

In the light of the development, a significant meeting has been scheduled in Alhaji Shah Ji Gul Afridi's residence in Shah Kas Jamrud in a couple of days. The meeting is expected to be attended by several federal ministers, as well as PMLN KP President and advisor to PM engineer Amir Maqam.

The gathering aims to solidify the merger and discuss future plans and strategies for the alliance between Tehreek Islahat Pakistan Party and PML-N. The political expert viewed the merger as a crucial step to

counter the PTI popularity and a step forward toward the development of the tribal district in a true manner.

1st shipment of LPG arrived

PESHAWAR (APP): The first consignment of 100,000 tonnes of LPG arrived here at Torkham border from Russia.

Ten containers carrying the LPG entered Pakistan via Torkham, said an official of custom at Torkham border. The consignment was part of an agreement signed between Pakistan and Russia in January this year.

The LPG was imported from Russia to Uzbekistan via Heratran border and then through Afghanistan to Torkham.



PESHAWAR: A view of rush in sacrificial animals at Arbab Mandi on ahead of Eidul Azha.



In brief

Youth shot dead over resistance

SHEIKHUPURA (INP): Armed robbers gunned down a youth upon resistance during a robbery in tailor shop in Richna Town of Ferozewala district Sheikhupura on Monday. Police said that armed robbers barged into a tailor shop and asked the tailor to hand over cash, sewed and unsewn clothes to him. The tailor identified as Iqbal offered resistance after which the robber shot him dead and fled the scene. The body was shifted to hospital for postmortem and police after registering a case into the incident started an investigation. It is worth mentioning here that three youth have been killed over resistance during robberies in two days.

Drug trafficker held with hashish

RAJANPUR (INP): Police arrested a drug pusher with over five kilograms of hashish in an operation here on Monday. According to SHO Sadar Jampur Naveed Aftab, acting on a tip-off, a police team nabbed notorious drug pusher, Majid Hussain, from Dhora Hajjana village, a rural area of Jampur tehsil. Around 5,300 kilogrammes of hashish was also recovered from his possession, he informed. A case has been registered while further investigation was in progress.

Shopkeeper killed

SHEIKHUPURA (INP): Armed robbers gunned down a shopkeeper and injured another over resistance during a robbery in a grocery store in Feroze Watwan town Faisalabad Road on Monday, police said. According to details, two armed robbers barged into a grocery store and took the shopkeeper hostage at gunpoint. Over resistance, the robbers shot dead owner of the grocery store identified as Mubashir and injured another and fled with the looted cash and other valuables. The body and injured were shifted to hospital and police after registering a case into the incident started an investigation.

Babusar Pass opens for tourists

F.P. Report

MINGORA: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Tourism department in a travel advisory issued said Babusar-Naran Road is opened for all tourists from Monday between 9 am to 5 pm. However, the authorities have placed a ban on night travel from Jhalakid and Zero Point. Furthermore, tourists can approach Tourist Facilitation Hub Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 24/7 via helpline 1422. Earlier, the deputy commissioner of Mamshehra issued a travel adversary and asked tourists and locals to avoid traveling to Babusar Pass amid bad weather condition and risk of avalanche. He said road is being cleaned and after it will be restored for all kinds of traffic. "In the current weather conditions, there is a risk of avalanches and landslides," Mansehra DC said. Babusar Road was closed for traffic due to snowfall in October last year. He said Kaghan highway will be opened for light traffic till Babusar top.

Four die in bus crash

FIROZPUR (INP): Four people died while dozens others injured in a bus accident near Ferozewala-Faizpur interchange on Motorway on Monday. The bus was going to Sialkot from Multan when it met the accident due to overspeeding at Faizpur interchange on Motorway 3.

ATC grants interim bails to eight PTI's workers

F.P. Report

MARDAN: The anti-terrorism court Mardan here on Monday granted interim pre-arrest bail to eight PTI activists in the case FIR No. 833 which was registered against them by the officials of City Police Station on May 9 after the occurrence of violent incidents.

The PTI legal team led by Riaz Khan PindaKheil advocate submitted application in the anti-terrorism court Mardan to get interim pre-arrest bail for the party

workers booked in the abovementioned FIR. However, the ATC court granted interim pre-arrest bail to eight PTI activists till June 15 of the current month.

The accused PTI workers were identified as Jehanzib Khan, Muzamil Khan, Ashfaq Ahmad, Khan zeb, Wisal, Mirza Ali Khan, Adam Khan and Gohar Hussain. The accused were asked to appear before the court along with their necessary legal documents.

Meanwhile, the PTI

leader and ex-MNA Ali Muhammad Khan would be presented in the anti-corruption court Peshawar on Tuesday (today).

It values to mention here that Ali Muhammad Khan was arrested by the officials of anti-corruption department in the FIR registered on May 10 against him and other PTI lawmak-ers over irregularities in the appointments to fisheries department. PTI sources told that the party legal team would try their best to get bail for him in the said case.

River rafting introduced in Kalam

F.P. Report

MINGORA: The Swat Development Authority has introduced the adventure water sport, river rafting for the tourists in the beautiful Kalam area of Swat.

The facility was inaugurated some days back by Special Assistant to the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Chief Minister on tourism, Zafar Mehmood while provincial minister Muhammad Ali Shah, Deputy Director Swat Development Authority, Sardar Zeb, hotel owners

and a large number of local people and tourists were also present.

The district administration authorities said to promote adventure tourism and add another feature to the tourism sector in Swat, river rafting has been started in the white waters of River Swat in the scenic Kalam valley.

The administration officer said river rafting will definitely give a significant boost to the tourism activities in the area. He declared the rapid waters of the river in Kalam and the atmosphere as the best place for

river rafting. He said some expert rafters with their reliable boats, safety kits and life jackets were taking the people for river rafting. The people seemed very enthusiastic about rafting and those who enjoyed their rapid waters rafting were quite excited after their rafting experience, he added. The operators of the river rafting have termed the facility an enjoyable sports activity for the people and invited the tourists and locals to must avail this thrilling sports activity during their visit to the scenic areas of Swat.

More exemption of taxes in PATA sought

Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: President of Malakand Division Traders Federation, Abdur Rahim Khan has said that we are firm on the demand of tax relief in Malakand division for another 10 years and our stand regarding tax is very crystal clear, the government is distorting the ground realities by putting PATA and FATA in the same account, PATA was merged in 2018 and Malakand division was merged in 1969.

The government is trying to give lollipop to the people of Malakand division by putting both in the same account, imposing tax in Malakand division is a matter of life and death for

us. The government should take full care of public sentiments by giving exemption to Malakand division for another 10 years.

He expressed these views while talking to media persons. He said that the relief given by the government to Malakand Division in terms of tax for the current year is not acceptable to us. Rahim pays tribute to Adviser to the Prime Minister, Engineer Amir Muqam, for his efforts in this regard. He said that now we want to draw the attention of Engineer Amir Muqam to play more role in providing tax relief in Malakand Division for another 10 years.

He said that due to this

prejudice of The Punjabi Industrial Empire, which is biased towards the Pakhtuns and especially the Malakand Division, the government relief is not reaching the people of Malakand Division. He said that in view of the current situation in the country, we have taken utmost patience and we are not in favor of further expanding instability, so our patience and seriousness should not be considered as our weakness. We understand that in the current situation of the country, we will not play the role of oil on the fire. But we warn the government to show seriousness about the implementation of the tax in Malakand division.

ANF seizes 200 litres of liquid Ice near Gwadar

GWADAR (INP): Anti-Narcotic Force (ANF) conducted an operation and seized 200 litres of liquid ICE (Crystal methamphetamine) and 30 kg of hashish hidden near the Padizer area of Gwadar, it was reported on Monday.

According to the details, the ANF officials thwarted an attempt to smuggle narcotics by recovering 200 litres of liquid ICE and 30 kg of hashish hidden near the Padizer area of Gwadar for the purpose to smuggle abroad. In a separate operation near Ring Road Rawalpindi, two suspects – residents of Khyber Agency – were arrested on the identification of the already arrested accused from Alharam Town, Peshawar.

The antinarcotics officials recovered two capsules filled with ICE from

the possession of the arrested suspects. While the in some other operations, the ANF officials successfully recovered 2400 drug pills from two Afghans near GT Road Peshawar, five kg of hashish and 1.5 kg of ice were recovered from the uninhabited area of Bara Khyber.

Moreover, seven kg of hashish hidden for smuggling purposes was recovered from Khyber District Jaborri, while two kg of hashish was recovered from a vehicle near Pishtakhara Chowk, Peshawar. The Anti-Narcotic Force (ANF) cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act have been registered against all the arrested accused.

Earlier this month, Anti-Narcotic Force (ANF) thwarted an attempt to smuggle narcotics through

the sea route and seize 26.5 kilograms of Ice drug in Karachi. According to the details, a raid was conducted by the ANF officials at the Karachi International Container Terminal, resulting in the seizure of 26.5 kilograms of Ice drug (Crystal methamphetamine).

As per an ANF spokesperson, the narcotics were skillfully concealed within the container's cargo, hidden in the secret compartments. The container was booked by a private company in Karachi for shipment to Malaysia. Following the seizure of the container and narcotics, further action will be taken against the individuals involved in this illicit trade, as ANF initiates a comprehensive investigation.

Jirga rejects imposition of taxes, condemn MPs

F.P. Report

BUNER: The Buner Qaumi Jirga rejected imposition of taxes in Malakand division following constitutional amendment for merger of erstwhile Fata but the fate of Provincially Administered Tribal Areas (PATA) was also decided against their well without consulting the local populace.

The jirga condemned and criticized elected members from Malakand division who had turned blind eyes towards public of their respective constituencies for the sake of their political boss/owners. BQJ chief Mian Syed Laiq Bacha chaired the meeting. The JUI Saeedur Rehman

Mufakir, Waliur Rehman, Mutabar Khan, JI Haleem Bacha, Akbar Khan, ANP Afsar Khan, PTI Salar Khan, PML N Jihanbakh Khan, Haji Sadiqullah, BPC Muhibul Haq and many more elders participated in the meeting.

The meeting passed resolutions unitedly saying big no to imposition of taxes in the Malakand Division for more ten years. The restoring maintaining and long lasting peace was the dominant demand of the day meeting too.

The meeting jointly passed resolution against imposition of taxes use of Norco its trade besides action against professional baggers and discouraging

self-imposed extra customs due to which locals were facing difficulties. The members and elders aided valued recommendations for promotions of public interest norms to developed the area and let inhabitants to live prosperous and peaceful.

Minor boy killed in road mishap

FAISALABAD (INP): A minor boy was hit to death in a road mishap in the area of Thikriwala police station. A police spokesman said here on Monday that three-year-old Subhanul-Haq was going on foot along with his mother when a speeding mini truck hit him to the ground near 64 Pulli Stop on Jhang Road. The minor died on the spot while the truck driver managed to escape from the scene. The police took the body into custody and started investigation for arrest of the truck driver, he added.

One killed by lightning in Lower Dir

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: One killed by lightning identified as Yousaf Khan son of Taza Gul, a resident of Qashodal Samarbagh, last day. The deceased was killed when he was hit by lightning inside his house in the jurisdiction of Samarbagh police station here the other day. He was shifted to the THQ hospital Samarbagh, where he was confirmed dead by the on-duty doctor.

DPC held: A meeting of the Departmental Promotion Committee was held under the chairmanship of DPO Lower Dir Ziauddin Ahmed. In view of the reforms, the departmental promotion of the officials was implemented in this regard, under the chairmanship of DPO Lower Dir Ziauddin Ahmed, a meeting of the departmental promotion committee was held in his office. SP investigation Zahoor Ahmad, DSP headquarters Fakhre Alam, DSP Legal Rashid Khan, Head Clerk Amir Rehman, Establishment Clerk Tahir Khan, ASI Jamilur Rehman attended. Departmental Promotion Committee appointed 07 equipped Head Constables. Zahidullah, Sardar Ali, Osman Ali, Shah Munir, Muhammad Siraj, Siraj Hazrat, Fayyaz Ur Rehman as Head Constables.

On this occasion, District Police Officer Late Ziauddin Ahmed placed promotion badges on the policemen who were promoted from Constable to Head Constable and congratulated them. aims to boost the morale of the police force and improve service delivery.

Un-elected person for slot of mayor opposed

QUETTA (PPI): Introducing un-elected person for the slot of Mayor Karachi was tantamount to robbing the rights of three crore people of Karachi.

These views were expressed by speakers while addressing a protest demonstration held under the aegis of Jamaat-e-Islami, district Quetta on the call of Siraj-ul-Haq, Ameer, JI, Pakistan to protect the mandate of Karachi and against the undemocratic and unconstitutional designs of Sindh Government.

They alleged that mandate given to the scion of Karachi Hafiz Naeem-ur-Rehman was being snatched by the government of Pakistan Peoples Party in connivance with the establishment. "If anybody wants to see the real face of PPP, he should visit Larkana where donkeys are kept in schools", they alleged, adding that the confidence of the people of Karachi reposed in JI ought to have been respected. They said that on June 15, 2023, it was being conspired to snatch the mandate of the mandate of the people of Karachi, adding that the people of Quetta would resist the undemocratic step of Sindh government.

Rescue 1122 hold training session at UET

Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: Rescue 1122 arranged training workshop at University of Engineering and Technology (UET) Jaloza campus, on Monday.

Senior District Emergency Officer Nowshera Kamal Shah arranged the workshop under Training and Awareness Wing as per directives of Director General Rescue 1122 Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Training Wing In-charge Hazart Ali Shah lead the session in which UET Jaloza campus students along with faculty members participated in large number. Dr. Amjad Khan paid thanks to Rescue 1122 training team and hopeful for participation of youth in socio-welfare activities to serve humanity.

Rescue 1122 set up training sessions for students in Tirah



F.P. Report

TIRAH VALLEY: Three days long training and awareness sessions for students and general tribal were concluded here in Maidan, Pinda Cheena, Bar-Kamber Khel Tirah Valley.

The purpose of the sessions was to impart knowledge pertaining to how to deal with emergencies, rescuing procedures, extinguish fire to the students of schools, madrasa and other communities in the remote and bordering area

of Tirah. The awareness activities were organized by the district Rescue 1122 and were attended by a large number of learners and people from different walks of life.

Under the head of training wing in-charge Dr Wakeel Shah, fruitful sessions were delivered on first aid, rescuing methods in fire eruption and response in various emergencies. The participants were also taught how to deal with natural disasters and practical training was given to them.

District emergency officer Syed Shoab Mansoor and emergency officer Baryal Mukhtyar who supervised the training gathering in their messages said that besides providing relief to the people in emergencies, the Rescue 1122 also trained different sections of the society to equip them technically to respond during untoward incidents. Students and tribals thanked the Rescue 1122 department for arranging useful training in which they learnt a lot regarding the rescue process.

Karachi mayor's election: JI workers take to street

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Jamaat-i-Islami central deputy chief Liaqat Baloch has warned dire consequences in case the public mandate in Karachi is not honoured. He was addressing a protest rally organized by the Lower Dir chapter of JI at Timergara here the other day.

Hundreds of the Jamaat-i-Islami workers on the call of party chief Sirajul Haq took to the streets against the Pakistan Peoples' Party alleged 'attempt to rig the Karachi mayor election'. The JI district chief Izazul Mulk Afkari, general secretary Yaqub ur Rehman, secretary information Muhammad Shuiab, JI candidate for NA 7 Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, JI candidate for PK 15 Shad Nawaz Khan and others were also present on the occasion. Earlier the workers gathered at the Ahyia ul Uloom Balambat and marched on the road to the Gorgorai Chowk in Timergara city.

The protesters were chanting slogans against the PPP Sindh government and its leaders for allegedly rig-

ging the city mayor's election. They also blocked the main road in the square for some time.

Baloch said that the number of JI and its ally's chairmen was 193 as compared to the PPP's 173 in Karachi. He said that Karachi was an international city and the JI had struggled hard for years to elect its mayor. He said the voters trusted the JI but the Sindh government wanted to create hurdles in its way. He said the PPP with the help of the Sindh government earlier postponed the local government elections but the JI moved the court. He said the people would never accept the mayor's election in Karachi if the PPP succeeded in electing its candidate while using government resources and illegal steps. He said the nation would not accept such a massive rigging that would lead people to distrust democratic norms.

The speakers alleged the public mandate in Karachi was being stolen and the Sindh government was involved in undemocratic and unconstitutional practices to deprive the JI of its

mandate. They said the JI had emerged as a strong political party in Karachi and it had the right to make its candidate as city mayor. They said the Pakistan Tehreek Insaf had also announced to support the JI candidate but the PPP government in Sindh wanted to deprive the JI from electing its mayor despite a clear majority. The JI leaders said the party workers would never tolerate this illegal, unconstitutional and immoral practice and would strongly resist such a move from the government.

Youth commits suicide: A youth identified as Wahabullah 24, a resident of Shako village in Maidan committed suicide by shooting himself in the chest at his home in the jurisdiction of Haya Serai police station late on Saturday night. He was brought to the district headquarters hospital Timergara in critical condition where he succumbed to injuries. The motive behind the act could not be ascertained at the moment. The Haya Serai police registered a case and started investigations.

Civil society starts Railway station repair

Hafiz Aziz-ur-Rehman

HAFIZABAD: Old students of government high school No. 1, Hafizabad started repair of Railway Station Hafizabad on self-help basis for providing different facilities to passengers.

Deputy Commissioner Umar Farooq Warriach inaugurated repairing work.

Prominent educationist Muhammad Azim, social worker Abdul Jabbar Ansari, Station Master Intiaz Ali, Ex-Chairman Press Club Ch. Intiaz Ahmad Taj, Educationalist Zafar Iqbal Zafar, Mehmood Sadiq Dhothar, Khalid Janjuha and other people attended the ceremony.

Addressing the ceremony, DC said that this steps for development of area on self-help basis and impartment of government entities is laudable act of social workers. He said that other people of society also come forward to participate to launch and complete people welfare works on self-help basis.

PTI's vandalism on May 9, a national carnage: Leader of Pakistan Muslim League (N) Sheikh Gulzar Ahmad said that carnage of 9 May is continuity of conspiracies of anti-Pakistan evil forces and disrespect and attack on GHQ, Jinnah House, Lahore, Radio Pakistan

Peshawar and plane of National Hero M.M. Aalam was hurt the hearts of the whole nation while people of the country would feel pain of these hurt till late.

He said that national monuments and national interests were red line for the nation and PTI leadership would have given lesson of unity, peace and coherence instead of spreading anarchy and target national monuments. He regretfully stated that leadership of PTI could not fulfill national obligations in lust of power and political gains.

PML-N leader said that anti-Pakistan evil force were engaged in destabilized the country and atomic programme was big deterrence to foil evil designs of anti-Pakistan elements. Unmatched Pakistan Army is guaranty of integrity, prosperity of the country and security of 240 million people of the country, he said that added that political leaders should play their role for promoting harmony and unity among people as well as refrain from playing in the hands of evil forces.

Religious scholar joins PPP: Patron In-Chief Jamaat-ul-Suffha Pakistan and prominent religious scholar Peer Syed Waseem-ul-Hassan Naqvi has joined Pakistan People's Party. In this connection, he call on Chairman PPP and Foreign

Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at Bilawal House Lahore.

General Secretary PPP Hafizabad Muhammad Arshid Mehind, Malik Fakhar Abbas Awan, Rana Farooq Saeed, Central General Secretary PPP Syed Naiyer Abbas Bukhari, General Secretary PPP Punjab Syed Hassan Murtiza, Nadeem Afzal Chan, Shahzad Cheema and other party leaders were also present on the occasion. On the occasion, Bilawal Bhutto Zaradri said that joining of Barrister Peer Syed Waseem-ul-Hassan Naqvi would help strengthen relation of PPP with religious circles.

Minor dispute claims youth's life

FAISALABAD (INP): Minor dispute claimed life of a youth at Jhumra Khurianwala police station jurisdiction in Faisalabad on Monday.

According to details, a youth Shafique hailing from Toba Tek during visit to his friend, residing at Jhumra road, exchanged hot words with Zulfiqar. Culprit Zulfiqar along with his accomplice shot injured Shafique and fled the scene. The injured youth succumbed to his wounds while being shifted to hospital.



Colombia Indigenous children survived 40 days eating seeds, roots

COLOMBIA (Agencies): Four Colombian Indigenous children, who were discovered 40 days after their plane crashed in the Amazon jungle, survived eating seeds, roots and plants they knew were edible thanks to their upbringing, according to Indigenous people. "The survival of the children is a sign of the knowledge and relationship with the natural environment that is taught starting in the mother's womb," according to the National Organization of Indigenous Peoples of Colombia (OPIAC).

The local knowledge of Indigenous adults, who were involved in the search alongside Colombian troops, also played a part in the children being found alive. The four siblings, aged 13, nine and four, as well as a now 12-month-old baby, survived a small plane crash on May 1 that took the lives of the pilot, their mother and a third adult. The children's family clung to the hope that the siblings' familiarity with the jungle would see them through. "They are Indigenous children and they know the jungle well. They know what to eat and what not to eat. They survived because of this and their spiritual force," said Luis Acosta of the National Indigenous Organization of Colombia (ONIC). Acosta, who took part in search operations, said the children ate seeds, fruits, roots and plants they identified as edible from their upbringing in the Amazon region. The children have been reunited with their family after

their rescue. "They are happy to see the family... they have all their senses," the children's grandfather, Fidencio Valencia, told reporters shortly after visiting them at a military hospital in the capital Bogota. "They are children of the bush," Valencia said, adding that they know how to survive in the jungle. Javier Betancourt, another ONIC leader, told AFP: "We have a particular connection to nature."

"The world needs this kind of special relation with nature, to favour those like the Indigenous who live in the jungle and take care of it." During the search, soldiers worked side by side with Indigenous trackers for 20 days. Army chief Helder Giraldo said rescuers had covered over 2,600 kilometers (1,650 miles) in total to locate the children. "Something that seemed impossible was achieved," Giraldo said on Twitter. President Gustavo Petro praised what he called a "meeting of Indigenous and military knowledge" that he said showed respect for the jungle. Army helicopters broadcast recordings of the children's grandmother telling them in the Indigenous Huitoto language to stay put in one spot until rescuers reached them. "It was President Petro who brought us together," Acosta told local media, referring to soldiers and Indigenous experts.

"In an initial meeting, eight days before our search began, the president told us we needed to go with the army because

the army couldn't do it alone," he added. More than 80 volunteers from Indigenous territories in the departments of Caqueta, Putumayo, Meta and Amazonas joined around 100 soldiers in what was dubbed "Operation Hope". It was an unusual union of forces. In many of Colombia's Indigenous territories, armed outlaw groups roam and easily coerce native peoples, who protect their lands with rudimentary weapons. Relations between Indigenous communities and the armed forces are also strained. But in the Guaviare department, rescuers from separate groups set their differences aside to work together. While soldiers planned operational details, native searchers held rituals to communicate with jungle "spirits," using mambe, a paste made of coca leaf and ash, as well as chirrinchi, a fermented drink. Using machetes, rescuers felled trees and marked them with spray paint to guide the children.

Indigenous medicinal knowledge was also used to adapt to the difficult jungle conditions, treating scratches, splinters, insect bites, exhaustion and physical pain. The Indigenous people have "worked in the rain, in storms and in many difficult situations, but always with the hope and spiritual faith that [the children] could be found," Acosta said. It all led to the discovery of the siblings by an Indigenous tracker in an area that had not yet been explored.

Honduras opens embassy in China

BEIJING (Reuters): Honduras opened an embassy in China, Chinese state media reported, after the Central American nation cut diplomatic relations with Taiwan earlier this year. The embassy in Beijing was opened by foreign ministers from the two countries, state broadcaster CCTV reported. Honduran President Xiomara Castro is in China for a state visit, during which she is to meet with her Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, state media have reported.

Tegucigalpa in March ended its decades-long relationship with Taipei and established diplomatic ties with Beijing. China claims democratically ruled Taiwan as its own territory with no right to state-to-state relations, a position Taipei strongly rejects. China demands that countries with which it has ties recognise its position. Taiwan now has formal diplomatic relations with only 13 countries, mostly poor and developing countries in Central America, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

Part of major US highway collapses

PHILADELPHIA (Agencies): A large vehicle fire under an elevated section of Interstate 95 in Philadelphia has caused a huge portion of the highway to collapse, an incident likely to have long-lasting repercussions for travelers. Video from the scene showed a massive slab covering an entire section of the northbound lanes collapsed onto the surface roadway in northeast Philadelphia. Officials said there were no reports of injuries.

Captain Derek Bowmer of the Philadelphia Fire Department said emergency crews responding shortly before 6:30am (10:30 GMT) to an accident report found heavy fire from a vehicle or vehicles. Early reports indicated a vehicle may have been a tanker truck, but officials said that had not yet been confirmed. The fire was reported to be under control. Interstate 95 is the main highway in the eastern United States linking major centres such as New York City, Philadelphia and Washington, DC and running all the way south to Florida state. Mark Fusetti, a retired Philadelphia police sergeant, said he was driving south toward the city's airport when he noticed thick plumes of black smoke rising over the highway. As he passed the fire, the road beneath began to "dip", creating a noticeable depression that was visible in video he took of the scene. He saw traffic in his rearview mirror come to a halt. Soon after, the northbound lanes of the highway crumbled. "It was crazy timing," Fusetti said. "For it to buckle and collapse that quickly, it's pretty remarkable." Bowmer said the northbound lanes were gone and the southbound lanes were "compromised" because of the heat from the fire. He also said runoff from the fire or perhaps compromised gas lines were causing explosions underground. Officials said they were also concerned about the environmental impacts of runoff into the nearby Delaware River. "Today's going to be a long day. And obviously, with 95 northbound gone and southbound questionable, it's going to be even longer than that," said Dominick Mireles, director of Philadelphia's Office of Emergency Management.

Heavy construction equipment would be required to start to remove the debris, he said. US Transportation Secretary Pete Buttigieg said the closure of I-95 will have "significant impacts" on the region and the city of Philadelphia. Buttigieg said on Twitter he was coordinating with regional leaders for recovery and rebuilding efforts. Other streets were closed for the response and officials urged people to avoid the area. They also said they planned to launch a drone to assess the damage. Fire was strikingly similar to another blaze in Philadelphia in March 1996, when an illegal tyre dump under I-95 caught fire, melting guard rails and buckling the pavement.

EU offers Tunisia aid package, seeks tighter border control

TUNIS (Agencies): The European Union is considering offering Tunisia some 900 million euros (\$967m) to support its economy, plus an immediate 150 million euros (\$161m) in budget support once a "necessary agreement is found", according to European Commission head Ursula von der Leyen.

Along with von der Leyen, Dutch Prime Minister Mark Rutte and Italian Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni were in Tunisia for talks with the country's President Kais Saied. Meloni, who visited Tunisia alone on June 6 on a similar mission, urged the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and other countries to help Tunisia. The statement comes two days after Meloni said Europe may see a wave of refugees and migrants from North Africa if financial stability in Tunisia is not safeguarded. Italy is a common destination for refugees and migrants who have fled from all over Africa and the Middle East to gather at departure points such as Tunisia to try to make it to safety in Europe.

Tunisia agreed to a loan from the IMF, but subsequently rejected the conditions with Saied saying the demanded cuts to subsidies and restructuring of state-owned companies risked igniting social unrest. Any new agreement based on different reforms could take months more to negotiate, and Meloni has pushed the IMF to relax its conditions on Tunisia. Earlier in the month, Saied proposed taxing the country's wealthiest citizens to avoid the "foreign dictates" of the IMF. A series of longer-term European investments - including ongoing plans for a 150 million-



euro (\$161m) digital cable link to Europe and a 300 million-euro renewable energy power export project - was also discussed. Von der Leyen said the EU would also expand opportunities for young Tunisians to study, work and train in the EU to help them develop skills that could be used to boost the Tunisian economy. No mention was made of facilitating visa applications.

Among the priorities mentioned by von der Leyen was 100 million euros (\$107m) the EU is ready to give Tunisia this year for border management, search and rescue, and returns "rooted in respect for human rights" to address migration. A day ahead of the visit, Saied had made a surprise visit to the Tunisian coastal city of Sfax - a departure point for refugees

seeking safety in Europe - where he declared that Tunisia would not become a border guard for other countries. Days before, five African citizens died and many more went missing after three boats carrying refugees and migrants sank off Sfax. The coast near Sfax has become a major departure point for people fleeing poverty and conflict in Africa and the Middle East in the hope of a future in Europe. In March, 29 asylum seekers died attempting the same journey.

Refugees and migrants are undertaking the perilous journey from Tunisia in unprecedented numbers, with Tunisian authorities saying they stopped 13,000 people from attempting the crossing from Sfax in the first three months of this year.

Scotland's ex-leader Nicola Sturgeon arrested

LONDON (Agencies): Former Scottish leader Nicola Sturgeon was arrested as part of an investigation into financial irregularities of the Scottish National Party (SNP). She was later released without charge pending further investigation. The third arrest in the probe, which is sending shockwaves through Scotland's political system. Sturgeon's husband Peter Murrell, the former chief executive of the SNP, was arrested as part of the probe in April.

"A 52-year-old woman has today ... been arrested as a suspect in connection with the ongoing investigation into the funding and finances of the Scottish National Party," Police Scotland said in a statement. A spokesperson for Sturgeon said she was cooperating with the investigation, and had by arrangement attended the interview with Police Scotland. "To find myself in the situation I did today - when I am certain I have committed no offence - is both a shock and deeply distressing... I would never do anything to harm either the SNP or the coun-

try," Sturgeon said in a statement posted on Twitter. "Given the nature of this process, I cannot go into detail. However, I do wish to say this... I know beyond doubt that I am in fact innocent of any wrongdoing."

Police Scotland said she was arrested at 10:09am (09:09 GMT) and released without charge at 5:24pm pending further investigation. "As the investigation is ongoing, we are unable to comment further," it said. Murrell has long faced questions over the alleged diversion of 600,000 British pounds (\$754,000) in SNP donations that were meant to support its drive for Scottish independence. He also failed to declare a personal loan to the SNP of more than 100,000 British pounds (\$125,700), which could breach laws on political funding transparency. He was later released without charge pending further investigation. Party treasurer Colin Beattie was also arrested in April and later released. Sturgeon made her final appearance as first minister in the Scottish Parliament in March, having announced her intention to retire a month earlier.

The arrest of Sturgeon is deeply embarrassing for the SNP, which campaigns to end Scotland's three-century political union with England. "These issues are subject to a live police investigation. The SNP have been cooperating fully with this investigation and will continue to do so, however, it is not appropriate to publicly address any issues while that investigation is ongoing," an SNP spokesperson said. A the time of Murrell's arrest, police carried out a lengthy search of the couple's home in Glasgow, which was sealed off with blue and white police tape.

Sturgeon, Scotland's longest-serving leader of its semi-autonomous government, caught the political world by surprise when she announced her resignation in February, saying she had become too divisive to lead her country to independence. Acknowledging the strains of office, Sturgeon said on her departure that she felt unable to give "every ounce of energy that it needs" to see out the high-pressure job. "I am a human being as well as a politician," she said.

10 killed in wedding party bus crash in Australia

SYDNEY: At least 10 people were killed and 25 injured after a bus carrying a group of wedding guests crashed in Australia. Police in the eastern state of New South Wales said the accident in the picturesque Hunter Valley wine region took place at about 11:30pm (13:30 GMT) near Greta, about 180km (112 miles) northwest of Sydney. The coach reportedly rolled off a ramp at a roundabout on a foggy night, although the fog had not been identified as a cause of the crash.

"I understand they had been at a wedding together, it's my understanding they were travelling together ... presumably for their accommodation," NSW Police Acting Assistant Commissioner Tracy Chapman said during a televised media brief-

ing. Two of the passengers were airlifted from the scene of the crash by helicopter, Chapman added. Television coverage showed the light-coloured coach lying on its side after the accident, with a dozen emergency workers wearing high-visibility yellow vests working nearby. The coach driver, a 58-year-old man, was taken to hospital where he underwent mandatory testing. He is expected to be charged over the accident, police said. "He's under arrest. He's been the driver of a motor-vehicle collision where there have been fatal injuries and there will be charges pending," Chapman said. The Hunter Valley and its vineyards are a popular location for short breaks and weddings. A local mayor said the bus that crashed had been travelling from a wedding

reception at a nearby wine estate.

"All Australians waking up to tragic news from the Hunter send our deepest sympathies to the loved ones of those killed in this horrific bus tragedy," Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said. "For a day of joy to end in such devastating loss is cruel indeed. Our thoughts are also with those who have been injured," he said in a message on social media. The area is being examined by specialist forensic police and a Crash Investigation Unit. The two worst bus accidents in New South Wales were head-on collisions within two months of each other in 1989, which killed 35 and 21 people each. Eighteen people died in 1973 when a tourist bus plunged down a slope after a brake failure.

Kim vows to 'hold hands' with Putin

SEOUL (Reuters): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has vowed to "hold hands" with Russian President Vladimir Putin and bolster strategic cooperation on their shared goal of building a powerful country, state media KCNA reported. Kim made the pledge in a message to Putin marking Russia's National Day, defending his decision to

invade Ukraine and displaying "full support and solidarity."

"Justice is sure to win and the Russian people will continue to add glory to the history of victory," Kim said in the message published by KCNA. Kim called for "closer strategic cooperation" with Moscow, "holding hands firmly with the Russian president, in conformity

with the common desire of the peoples of the two countries to fulfil the grand goal of building a powerful country," it added. North Korea has sought to forge closer ties with the Kremlin and backed Moscow after it invaded Ukraine last year, blaming the "hegemonic policy" and "high-handedness" of the United States and the West.

Lava seen at Philippines's volcano

MANILA (Agencies): Mayon, the Philippines's most active volcano, has begun sending lava down its slopes, as volcanic activity increases in an area that is home to tens of thousands of mostly-poor farmers. Lava began to appear on Mayon's slopes and Teresito Bacolcol, director of the Philippine Institute of Volcanology and Seismology said that authorities were on alert for further developments.

"What we are seeing now is an effusive eruption," Bacolcol told The Associated Press news agency. "We are looking at this on a day-to-day basis." At least 12,800 people living within a 6km (3.7 mile) radius of the Mayon volcano have been evacuated since last week. Bacolcol said there was a possibility the high-risk zone could be expanded if the eruption turn violent. The area below Mayon, about 330km (205 miles) south-east of the capital Manila, is designated a permanent danger zone but many thousands of people continue to live there because they have nowhere else to go. Volcanologists say the lava is a further sign of increased activity, noting that there were also about 260 rockfall events in the past 24 hours, compared with 177 in the previous 24 hours. More tremors were also recorded - 21 in the last 24 hours compared with two previously.

Sulphur dioxide emissions had also tripled, according to state volcanologists. "There is a concomitant health risk while being close to the eruption because of inhaling sulphur dioxide gas or the particulate matter of ash-falls," Health Secretary Teodoro Herbosa told a press briefing.

The alert level for the volcano remains at three on the Philippines's five-step system, meaning that there is a tendency towards a hazardous eruption in weeks or days. The province of Albay, where the conical Mayon is a popular tourist attraction, was placed under a state of emergency to allow for quicker distribution of any disaster relief funds in the event of a major eruption. Mayon is one of 24 active volcanoes in the Philippines and last erupted violently in 2018, displacing tens of thousands of villagers.

The archipelago is located on the so-called Pacific "Ring of Fire", the rim of seismic faults where most of the world's earthquakes and volcanic eruptions occur. It also sees frequent typhoons and tropical storms with a typhoon forecast to hit the area later this week. The country's most powerful eruption in recent decades was Mount Pinatubo in 1991, which killed more than 800 people and produced an ash cloud that travelled thousands of kilometres.

Wagner will not sign any contract with Russia

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russia's most powerful mercenary said that his Wagner fighters would not sign any contract with Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu, publicly refusing an attempt by the defence ministry to bring his fighting force under its sway. Yevgeny Prigozhin, the founder of the Wagner group, has repeatedly attacked President Vladimir Putin's top military brass for what he casts as treachery for failing to fight the war in Ukraine properly.

Neither Shoigu nor Chief of the General Staff Valery Gerasimov have commented in public on the insults from Prigozhin, whose forces in May took the Ukrainian city of Bakhmut after a battle in which tens of thousands perished. The defence ministry said Shoigu had ordered all "volunteer detachments" to sign contracts with his ministry by the end of the month, a step it said would increase the effectiveness of the Russian army. Though the ministry did not mention Wagner in its public statement, the Russian media reported that it was an attempt by Shoigu to bring

the mercenaries to heel. "Wagner will not sign any contracts with Shoigu," Prigozhin said in response to a request for comment on the matter. The order, he said, did not apply to Wagner.

The defence ministry did not respond to a Reuters request for comment. Prigozhin and his Wagner mercenaries gained renown for what the United States said was destabilising countries across Africa, plundering natural resources and even meddling in the 2016 US presidential election. He says the United States has destabilised so many countries across the world that Washington has no moral authority to lecture anyone. Prigozhin said Wagner was completely subordinate to the interests of Russia but that its highly efficient command structure would be damaged by reporting to Shoigu. "Shoigu cannot properly manage military formations," Prigozhin said, adding that Wagner coordinated its actions in Ukraine with General Sergei Surovikin, nicknamed "General Armageddon" by the Russian media.

The defence ministry

said that in the interests of increasing the effectiveness of "volunteer detachments", all such units - or their men - would have to sign a contract with the defence ministry by July 1. It did not mention Wagner by name but it routinely refers to Wagner as "volunteer assault detachments".

"This will give the volunteer formations the necessary legal status, create unified approaches to the organisation of comprehensive provision and fulfilment of their tasks," the ministry said. "These measures will increase the combat capabilities and effectiveness of the armed forces and their volunteer detachments," Deputy Defence Minister Nikolai Pankov said. Prigozhin said the ministry might use the failure to comply with the order as a reason to deprive Wagner of supplies. "What could happen after this order is that they will not give us weapons and ammunition. We will figure it out, as they say," Prigozhin said. "But when the thunder breaks, they will come running and bring weapons and ammunition with a request to help."

US aims to rejoin UN organization

WASHINGTON (AP): The Biden administration says the US will rejoin the UN's educational and scientific organization after a five-year absence that began while Donald Trump was president. The State Department said it had delivered a letter seeking re-admission to the Paris-based body, known as UNESCO, late last week. The June 8 letter from Deputy Secretary of State for Management Richard Verma proposed "a plan for the US to rejoin the organization," the department said.

"Any such action would require concurrence by UNESCO's current membership, and it is our understanding that UNESCO leadership will convey our proposal to the membership in the coming days," the department said in a statement. Details of the proposal were not immediately clear. The US owes a significant amount of money to the organiza-

tion for arrears in dues payments. But earlier this year, the administration set aside \$150 million in its current budget plan to pay for a return to UNESCO. The US and UNESCO have had a turbulent relationship over the past four decades after sparring mainly over ideological issues during the Cold War and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict more recently. Former President Ronald Reagan withdrew the US from UNESCO in 1983, but former President George W. Bush re-joined in 2002. Trump withdrew the US from the agency in 2017, citing its alleged anti-Israel bias. Israel announced its withdrawal at the same time and the withdrawals took effect in January 2018.

The Biden administration said when it took office that it intended to rejoin UNESCO. And, in March, when the budget for the next fiscal year was presented, Under

Secretary of State for Management John Bass said the administration believed that rejoining UNESCO would help the US in its global rivalry with China, which has invested large sums into UN organizations. Rejoining UNESCO will "help us address a key opportunity cost that our absence is creating in our global competition with China," he said. "If we're really serious about the digital-age competition with China, from my perspective, in a clear-eyed set of interests, we can't afford to be absent any longer from one of the key fora in which standards around education for science and technology are set," Bass said. "And there are a number of other examples in that space of UNESCO's mission where our absence is noticed and where it undercuts our ability to be as effective in promoting our vision of a free world," he said.s

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Will the Moon soon repeat the devastation of last year?

THE death toll has climbed to 29 with 169 Injured as torrential rains and heavy windstorms hit most parts of Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa's (K-P) including districts Bannu, Karak, DI Khan, and Lakki Marwat, while the pre-moon soon rainfalls equally affected several districts in Northern Punjab. The powerful brunt of storms swept away homes, collapsed walls of muddy houses, uprooted trees and electricity pylons resulting in the loss of precious lives and injuries leaving hundreds of people stranded in affected regions. According to the details, the devastation has resulted in significant financial losses, primarily affecting the solar panel plants installed on the rooftops of mosques, schools, and houses. Moreover, a majority of the affected areas are currently deprived of electricity, and Electricity Supply Corporations are still working on the restoration of power supply in certain areas in the country. The Prime Minister has directed the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) to initiate relief and rehabilitation work in cooperation with the PDMA and Rescue 1122. Meanwhile, the Pakistan Army Rescue teams have reached the affected areas in KP and Punjab and started their rescue and relief operations on an urgent basis.

The Climate Change spectacle is at its peak in Pakistan while the South Asian nation has become zero ground for climate-related events, and environmental and weather changes that cost heavy monetary and material prices and cause tremendous challenges for the poor nation. After suffering the repercussions of a super flood last year, the country is currently passing through another series of unexpected heavy rains, storm winds, and heavy hailing contrary to the forecast of the Pakistan Metrological Department and South Asian Climate Outlook Forum (SASCOF) which predicted a below-normal rain in Sindh and Balochistan while forecasted a regular or above normal rains in KP, Punjab, and North Areas during the upcoming moon soon season. There is a prediction of above-normal temperatures during the moon soon season from June to September throughout South Asia which has increased the risk for sharp glacier meltdown, and glacier burst that can cause floods in major rivers, or brought destruction in the lower stream.

Pakistan faces severe devastation caused by floods during the moon soon season annually. Moon soon regularly brings heavy rainfall that causes mountainous and Urban flooding and inflicts heavy life and property losses because of insufficient water storage infrastructure, unplanned and irregular construction over waterways and alongside banks of rivers and ravines, encroachment near/over sewerage lines, and lack of forestation in the country. At the same time, no implementation of flood protection measures including the construction of dams, the regular clearance of flood Nullahs, the construction of safety walls/ bands alongside waterways/ canals, or the removal of encroachment on a permanent basis, so the flood water can pass through its designated waterways without obstruction and causing damage to the population in the hilly and urban areas. Meanwhile, all government agencies including the Metrological Department, NDMA, PDMA, and local government institutions must have a close liaison to proactively mitigate the situation without any loss of life and property of the public.

Unfortunately, the Pakistani nation had not learned a lesson from the annual destruction brought by floods every year. The government institutions including NDMA, PDMA, and local governments failed in performing their core functions in a timely manner because of corruption and institutional laxity, while those institutions do not work proactively and often wait for the occurrence of calamity before coming into action. The government annually allocates funds for strengthening flood protection measures, and the construction and repair of dams, canals, and other irrigation infrastructure prior to the moon soon season but no single penny incur on the required job by the local governments and revenue departments. At the same time, unrestricted encroachment and unethical living of the people often block the waterways and play a role in making up the disaster.

Historically, the recurrent floods not only ruined the national economy but bring havoc to the public in the lower stream on a regular basis in the shape of displacement, loss of property and livestock, damage to crops and livelihood, etc. The Federal government must in place a credible mechanism to ensure the judicial utilization of allocated funds at the local level, along with the timely mobilization of the Federal and Provincial institutions to reduce losses in the forthcoming moon soon season. Although, the government can not stop natural calamities yet it could reduce the devastation of those events through in placement of proactive strategies and kinetic measures. The Pakistani nation suffered through superfoods unprecedentedly last year while the upcoming moon soon will be a test for the leadership and the institutions.

The West has lost the plot in the Balkans

IMAGES of pipe-welding and stone-throwing Serb militant nationalists assaulting NATO peacekeepers in the northern Kosovo town of Zvecan in late May put the Balkan country in the international spotlight once again. The violence erupted in the Serb-majority north of the country after Kosovo police escorted to work mayors who had been recently elected in local polls which ethnic Serb residents had boycotted.

The news that Serbia had concurrently placed its military on high alert had many unfamiliar with Balkan affairs asking if another armed conflict was about to break out in Europe. The answer is no, we are not on the verge of another Balkan war. But that does not mean the situation in Kosovo is not alarming. Apart from the violence, what is raising concern in the region is the role that the United States and the European Union have played in abetting a dangerous new phase of Serb nationalist militancy in Kosovo and in the Western Balkans more broadly.

Kosovo declared its independence from Serbia in 2008, backed by the US, the United Kingdom, Germany, France and Italy, also known as the Quint. It came after almost a decade of international supervision under the UN Interim Administration which was set up at the end of the Kosovo War. During this interim period, Kosovo remained nominally part of

the then Federal Republic of Yugoslavia as an "autonomous province", but Belgrade exercised no actual authority over any aspect of the territory's governance, save for a limited presence in a handful of Serb-majority municipalities in the north. Kosovo had also enjoyed a significant degree of self-rule during the socialist period, though its ethnic Albanian majority was a frequent target of repression. In 1989, as Slobodan Milosevic seized power in Belgrade, he imposed a new constitutional regime on Kosovo and turned the region into a veritable police state with ethnic Albanians stripped of virtually all civil liberties. This draconian rule eventually resulted in armed resistance by the Albanian community, and ultimately NATO's military intervention.

Over the past 15 years, the US and the EU have sought to secure a normalisation deal between Pristina and Belgrade. Despite successive rounds of high-level talks, the two sides remain as far apart on a settlement as ever - as the clashes in Zvecan neatly illustrate. But there is no question of equal culpability here. The problem remains almost entirely on the Serbian side. The increasingly autocratic regime of Serbian President Aleksandar Vucic is categorical in its refusal to accept the sovereignty of Kosovo. At the last round of talks held in Ohrid, North Macedonia in March, Vucic refused to even sign the purported deal he had

Jasmin Mujanovi

"agreed" to, telling Serbian citizens in a subsequent address that he did not want "to make an international legal agreement with the Republic of Kosovo".

In Serbia's regime-aligned media, the ethnic Albanian community, which comprises 92 percent of Kosovo's population, are routinely referred to by ethnic slurs, while the government in Pristina is branded as the "temporary" local authorities. And in Kosovo's Serb-majority north, Belgrade maintains a sort of clandestine occupation, administered through a network of local ultranationalists and gangsters, as The New York Times recently detailed. But Serbia's reactionary posture is not limited to Kosovo. The Serbian leadership and large segments of the public who have been inundated by more than three decades of revisionist state propaganda, exist in a world of their own. Neither Belgrade nor a large part of the Serbian public accepts that the Milosevic regime - in whose last cabinet Vucic served as information minister - was the chief architect of the Yugoslav dissolution or of the subsequent decade of conflict that engulfed the region. They falsely claim that Serbia did not wage wars of aggression against Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Kosovo between 1991 and 1999. They also falsely maintain that Serbia did not orchestrate a systematic, genocidal campaign of extermina-

tion, terror, and expulsion against the non-Serb population of Bosnia between 1992 and 1995, which disproportionately affected the Bosniak community.

In fact, the genocidal violence directed against the Bosniaks by Milosevic and his Bosnian Serb proxies was so severe that approximately half of all casualties during the Yugoslav Wars and 82 percent of all civilian deaths during the Bosnian War were ethnic Bosniaks. Post-war Bosnia has remained riven by dysfunction and strife because of the US-brokered Dayton Peace Accords and the extreme degree of autonomy given to ethnic chauvinist elements under the country's new constitution. In the Republika Srpska entity, which Milosevic's genocidal purge carved out as a Serb-majority region and which is loyal to Belgrade, the secessionist regime of Milorad Dodik undermines even the most modest reforms, while explicitly pushing for the breakup of Bosnia, with Russian and Serbian assistance. In light of Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, one would think that there would have been severe political and diplomatic repercussions for Serbia and its proxies due to their close links with the Kremlin and their own expansionist machinations in the Western Balkans. But precisely the opposite has taken place. For example, in the case of the clashes between Serb nationalists and NATO peacekeepers in

Zvecan, the Quint condemned the country's prime minister, Albin Kurti, for having sent the police to escort the newly elected mayors to their offices in the north.

The US also ejected Kosovo from the NATO-led Defender 23 military exercises and threatened local officials with sanctions. Washington's ambassador to Pristina Jeffrey Hovenier also said his country will no longer assist Kosovo in seeking international recognition. By contrast, Serbia and Vucic suffered no consequences. Republika Srpska's Dodik has also faced no repercussions for meeting regularly with Russia's President Vladimir Putin, whom US and European officials have repeatedly called a "war criminal". The entity is still receiving funding from the EU for various development projects and although Dodik is under US and UK sanctions, he continues to openly lobby US officials in Washington. The Bosnian Serb leader is also not the only anti-state actor in Bosnia to benefit from a curiously high degree of Western appeasement. Dragan Covic, the leader of the hardline Croat nationalist HDZ party who also enjoys the patronage of the Kremlin, seems to have his interests defended directly by the internationally appointed Office of the High Representative (OHR). Last October, the OHR used its expansive executive powers to rewrite Bosnia's election laws in his favour and then in April of this year amended the con-

stitution of the Federation entity in order to install an HDZ-dominated government.

In Bosnia, as in Kosovo, the US and the EU seem uninterested in curbing Russian influence; instead, they have sought to accommodate Moscow-backed militant nationalists. Why? Because the West has concluded that it is not worth the time or effort to confront people like Vucic, Dodik, or Covic in a region as peripheral to its interests as the Western Balkans. The US and the EU have instead opted for a kind of Kabuki policy, maintaining a performative posture of opposition to militant nationalists but expending political and diplomatic capital to help them achieve their aims in the fleeting hope that this will pacify them. The result, of course, has only been a more emboldened form of nationalist extremism in the Balkans - most of it sponsored by the West. Unfortunately, both the US and the EU appear wholly committed to this course, as evidenced by their surreal reactions to the violence in Zvecan. That will likely remain the case until domestic publics, including the Bosnian and Kosovar diasporas in the West, and their legislative allies, can effectively make the case for why Western double-dealing in the Balkans is dangerous to Europe's stability and security. Until then, however, Belgrade is likely to continue fomenting chaos, safe in the knowledge that Washington and Brussels will look the other way.

Aljazeera

Why support for Putin's war is rife in Russia's worst-hit regions

Alexei Gusev

scale invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24 last year, the presence of military personnel and equipment in all three border regions had become a familiar part of everyday life.

People there have gotten used to regular document checks and military aircraft flying over residential buildings. It is hardly surprising that in this atmosphere, a kind of "military self-censorship" has kicked in among locals - even in their thoughts. It is impossible to live in a constant state of anxiety for two years, so people start to justify the existing state of affairs. It is also possible that the Federal Security Service (FSB) has been hard at work there - especially at large companies and among state employees - raising public awareness about "threats from across the border." Even ten or fifteen years ago, these border regions were actively profiting from cross-border trade, and trips to neighboring countries were a common occurrence. With the deterioration of relations with Ukraine and Europe, the socioeconomic role of cross-border contacts has decreased, while that of the military and associated state sectors has increased. According to an April poll by ExtremeScan, only 29% of respondents in Belgorod agree with a hypothetical withdrawal of troops from Ukraine, compared with 40% across Russia. On

average, in the three regions, as many as 67% of respondents said they were helping the military in one way or another. That's not surprising: 24% have family members who are or have been involved in the fighting.

Another important factor in the consolidation of public opinion is the influx of Ukrainian refugees. 37% of Belgorod residents and 25% each in the other two regions say they have helped Ukrainians fleeing the war. Ukrainians seeking refuge in Russia tend to be either a priori pro-Russian, or forced to hide their attitude toward the invasion and toe the official line of the Russian authorities, thereby seeming to confirm Russian propaganda to those living in the border regions. Ultimately, however, the roots of support for the authorities lie in the values of conservatism. Belgorod, Bryansk, and Kursk are former "red belt" regions that were particularly unhappy with democratic and market reforms. In the 1996 presidential elections, Communist Party leader Gennady Zyuganov won a convincing majority in all three regions, taking around 60% of the vote in the runoff. In the parliamentary elections of 1999, the Communists took first place. Since that was effectively a vote to return to the Soviet Union, it is not surprising that in the 2000s the "red belt" switched its loy-

alty to the Kremlin. By that time, the Russian government had successfully hijacked the Communist rhetoric about the "geopolitical catastrophe" of the Soviet collapse, the "wild 1990s," and the country "getting up off of its knees." The key points of this narrative were the confrontation with the West and the restoration of the Soviet Union's imperial might. In the 2020s, the Communist "red belt" of the 1990s has turned into a support belt for Putin's "special military operation."

It's hard to say whether this support will withstand the test of the forthcoming Ukrainian counteroffensive. If it is successful, then Russia's border regions will most likely see both the consolidation of those who believe in seeing the war through to victory, and extreme anxiety, which may culminate in criticism of the military command - though not necessarily the civilian leadership. The sustainability of the situation in the regions depends not so much on public opinion as on federal support and the effectiveness of local authorities. And while the Belgorod region may be the most vulnerable militarily, it also receives generous federal subsidies: enough to almost entirely compensate the region for a drastic drop in its budget caused by a 45% decrease in income tax revenue. Meanwhile, Governor Vyacheslav Gladkov is con-

sidered one of the most effective technocrats to come up through First Deputy Chief of Staff Sergei Kiriyenko's School of Governors training program. Since being appointed acting governor in 2020, he has demonstrated an aptitude for crisis management and has been swift to respond to residents. He also knows how to negotiate with different branches of the security forces.

In April, Gladkov's approval rating was an extraordinary 89%, compared with 63% and 62% in the neighboring Kursk and Bryansk regions, respectively. The Belgorod governor has 400,000 followers on the Telegram app; among all the heads of Russian regions, only the outspoken Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov's channel is more popular. Even heavyweights like Moscow Mayor Sergei Sobyanin are far behind Gladkov, with fewer than 100,000 subscribers. Despite the growing military problems, therefore, the situation in the Belgorod region so far looks quite stable. Still, further escalation could create qualitatively new problems, especially infrastructural ones. If, for example, there is insufficient transport to evacuate all the residents of Shebekino, or a shortage of places in temporary accommodation centers, people's indignation could start to impact whether they are really prepared to support their country's war to the bitter end.

The Moscow Times

The spectacular rise and fall of Nicola Sturgeon

Tom Harris

to Holyrood in the first devolved elections in 1999. From this point, she was regarded as leadership material and formed a close personal and political bond with Alex Salmond during his first stint as SNP leader. Sturgeon's own personal manner and styling changed noticeably once she became an MSP. She smiled more and adopted a less severe countenance - at least publicly. Slowly she managed to shed the "Nippy Sweetie" nickname her enemies had bestowed on her. When Salmond returned from his self-imposed exile at Westminster to resume the role of party leader in 2004, Sturgeon stood as his deputy and won. The succession was already being planned for. But her period as Scotland's health minister from 2007 to 2012 stubbornly refused to produce any notable achievements. Nevertheless, her stock among party activists - and ordinary Scottish voters - continued to rise, and when Salmond resigned in the aftermath of defeat in the 2014 Scottish independence referendum, there was

only one realistic candidate to whom the torch could be passed.

Within months of taking up residence at Bute House, the official residence of Scotland's first minister, Sturgeon fronted the SNP's general election campaign, leading her party to an unprecedented victory, winning 56 of Scotland's 59 Westminster seats and reducing its traditional opponents, Scottish Labour, to a single seat. A year later, with the UK narrowly voting Leave while Scotland voted by a three-to-two margin to Remain, Sturgeon was handed the perfect opportunity to agitate for the second referendum that she was always going to demand - even if, until then, she was having difficulty choosing the best excuse. She immediately became the hero of disappointed Remainers across the UK who chose to ignore the fact that she had just spent two years campaigning for Scotland to leave not only the UK but the EU as well. In hindsight, this proved the apex of Sturgeon's influence. First, successive prime

ministers, from Theresa May to Rishi Sunak, refused to accede to her demands for a second vote. At the same time, Sturgeon's leadership was disturbed by the legal battles of her predecessor, Salmond, who had found himself in court facing a series of charges based on complaints of sexual misconduct. Salmond was acquitted but Sturgeon, having taken the side of the female complainants, became an object of loathing for Salmond and his supporters. This was personal. Yet the dramatic events seemed to have little impact on Scots' willingness to vote for her party, and her reputation was further enhanced during the Covid pandemic when she chose to appear on live TV broadcasts delivering updates to the public as the lockdowns were enacted and the vaccine rolled out.

Frustrated with her own inability to act on her repeated commitment to a second referendum, she was persuaded to request a definitive ruling from the UK Supreme Court on whether the approval of the UK government was strictly necessary for the

Scottish Parliament to organise a second vote. Their Lordships' verdict was unequivocal: it was. With troubles mounting around her - unbuilt ferries in Port Glasgow, lengthening waiting lists in the NHS, her own activists' increasingly voluble impatience for a referendum and an unexpected (and popular) veto by the UK government of her gender ID legislation for trans people - Sturgeon vanished from the political scene. The irony is that it is what happened afterwards - the dramatic arrest of her husband days after leaving office - that will define her in the history books. Can she rebound? Rumours that she might accept a high-profile international post with the UN or an NGO will have abated during the recent dramatic developments. Much will depend on whether she faces charges and a court appearance. But either way, events have placed a gloomy shadow over her reputation. This is the woman who was once assumed to be destined to lead Scotland into a new era as an independent country.

The Telegraph

The rule of law victorious, or justice weaponized?

Baria Alamuddin

It has been obvious for several years that a cluster of legal torpedoes were directed toward Donald Trump. It was only a question of which ones would hit their targets and how much damage they would do. With both Trump and his British alter ego, Boris Johnson, facing potentially career-ending accusations on the same day last week, what does this mean for justice and the rule of law in the Western world?

The sheer number of Trump's legal challenges is bewildering. The federal criminal indictments contain nearly 40 counts relating to his hoarding of top secret documents. Recordings of him boasting about this include a juicy clip in which he is exuberantly handing round a US "plan of attack" against Iran to guests at his golf club. Other documents related to American's nuclear program, national strategic vulnerabilities, and plans for military retaliation in the event of attack. Potential prison sentences could add up to 420 years.

These may not ultimately be the most damaging charges he faces: evidence has also been circulated of his efforts to pressure officials to decertify the results of the 2020 presidential election. This year his property company was fined for tax fraud. Then there is the issue of alleged hush-money payments to prostitutes. In a furious speech after the latest indictment, Trump thundered that he was the victim of a conspiracy: "They're cheating. They're crooked. They're corrupt. These criminals cannot be rewarded. They must be defeated. You have to defeat them. Because in the end, they're not coming after me. They're coming after you and I'm just

standing in their way." House Speaker Kevin McCarthy was hardly less hyperbolic, declaring: "This is going to disrupt this nation...and we're not going to stand for it" - demonstrating the extent to which the Republican Party remains in Trump's thrall, and is likely to go scorched-earth as these cases progress.

Meanwhile, few expected Britain's former Prime Minister Boris Johnson to resign as an MP so quickly as a result of findings by the House of Commons Privileges Committee that he lied to Parliament over his role in frequent parties and social events while the rest of the country suffered under Covid lockdowns. Johnson quit before the committee's findings were made public, but he received an advance copy indicating that he would be suspended from Parliament for at least 10 days - triggering a by-election in his constituency that he would almost certainly lose. And so he jumped before he was pushed. His track record as a serial liar had already lost him the trust of Parliament, including most of his own Conservative MPs. Johnson's bitter, almost Trumpian resignation statement denounced party colleagues on the investigating committee as conducting a "witch hunt." The fates of both Trump and are inextricably conjoined, exemplifying the personality-cult populism infecting Western politics. Johnson exploited Brexit as his vehicle to achieving power, in the process delivering some of his most consequential lies about the viability and "benefits" Britain leaving the EU. He and his short-lived successor crashed out of office,

leaving the British economy a shattered wreck severed from many of its most important markets. Like Trump, his government was tainted by corruption and cronyism, with senior posts and lucrative Covid contracts awarded to acolytes.

The Conservative elder statesman Lord Heseltine remarked that Johnson's "basic problem" was that "words are designed to make his audience believe whatever they want to believe. There is no anchor to any discernible truth or sense of integrity." His own biographer denounced his "inner emptiness ... a total absence of moral compass." With Labour holding a double-digit lead in the polls, the Conservatives look set for a drubbing in parliamentary elections expected next year. They are already in a state of civil war, with an ascendant far-right loony fringe already nakedly seeking to drag the post-defeat party in a kamikaze trajectory toward all-out cultural warfare. On the left of the British political spectrum, Scotland's former First Minister Nicola Sturgeon has just been arrested by police investigating apparent irregularities in the finances of the Scottish National Party.

A fetid atmosphere of corruption and impunity has clouded numerous Western governments in recent years, and it is entirely welcome if this is decisively addressed, with leaders held to the highest standards. However, that also risks fueling a retaliatory and escalatory exploitation of serious legal measures, weaponized in the toxic cauldron of partisan US politics. Republicans are already pursuing the president's son,

Hunter Biden, with a raft of congressional investigations. As part of this cesspool, a dump of 9,000 images from Hunter's laptop has been published - the contents of which I cannot bring myself to elaborate on. In any country, who is there to prevent the justice system from being politicized as a nuclear option against either side's political opponents? Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's efforts at emasculating Israel's judiciary illustrate how few safeguards there are if a determined and corrupt majority decide that democracy is too democratic.

In the right-wing echo chamber of mendacity and radicalization, Fox News became both perpetrator and victim. Any modest attempts to rein in its diet of lies and propaganda were immediately rejected by disenfranchised audiences, while Fox paid nearly \$800 million in compensation for deliberate lies about voting machines in the 2020 presidential election. This issue of competent and clean leadership is crucial because we are but a few steps away from a Third World War over Ukraine, Taiwan and numerous other sources of tension. Never have we been in greater need of inspiring and farsighted leadership, but never have such qualities been so lacking in the international arena. Legal action against Trump, Johnson, Sturgeon and other politicians must be in the service of justice and justice alone, and the public must see that justice is done. In a rules-based system, leaders are necessarily beholden to truth and justice. It is in no one's interest for the law to be weaponized by maverick politicians in the service of their own tawdry ends.

Arab News



What lies behind Moscow's acts of extreme violence?

BENEATH the veneer of Russian military "tactics", you see the stupid leer of destruction for the sake of it. The Kremlin can't create, so all that is left is to destroy. Not in some pseudo-glorious self-immolation, the people behind atrocities are petty cowards, but more like a loser sneering their faces over life. In Russia's wars the very senselessness seems to be the sense.

After the casual mass executions at Bucha; after the bombing of maternity wards in Mariupol; after the laying to waste of whole cities in Donbas; after the children's torture chambers, the missiles aimed at freezing civilians to death in the dead of winter, we now have the apocalyptic sight of the waters of the vast Dnipro, a river that when you are on it can feel as wide as a sea, bursting through the destroyed dam at Kakhovka. The reservoir held as much water as the Great Salt Lake in Utah. Its destruction has already submerged settlements where more than 40,000 people live. It has already wiped out animal sanctuaries and nature reserves. It will decimate agriculture in the bread basket of Ukraine that feeds so much of the world, most notably in the Middle East and Africa. To Russian genocide add ecocide. The dam has been controlled by Russia for more than a year. The Ukrainian government has been warning that Russia had plans to blast it since October.

Seismologists in Norway have confirmed that massive blasts, the type associated with explosives rather than an accidental breach, came from the reservoir the night of its destruction. Some - including the American pro-Putin media personality Tucker Carlson - argue Russia couldn't be behind the devastation, given the damage has spread to Russian-controlled territories, potentially restricting water supply to Crimea. But if "Russia wouldn't damage its own people" is your argument then it's one that doesn't hold, pardon the tactless pun, much water. One of the least accurate quotes about Russia is Winston Churchill's line about it being "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma, but perhaps there is a key. That key is Russian national interest." This makes it sound as if Russia is driven by some theory of rational choice - when century after century the opposite appears to be the case. Few have captured the Russian cycle of self-destruction and the destruction of others as well as the Ukrainian literary critic Tetyana Ogarkova. In her rewording of Fyodor Dostoevsky's Russian classic novel Crime and Punishment, a novel about a murderer who kills simply because he can, Ogarkova calls Russia a culture where you have "crime without punishment, and punishment without crime". The powerful murder with impunity; the victims are punished for no reason. When not bringing humanitarian aid to the front lines, Ogarkova presents a podcast together with her husband, the philosopher Volodymyr Yermolenko. It's remarkable for showing two people thinking calmly while under daily bombardment. It reminds me of German-

Peter Pomerantsev

Jewish philosophers such as Walter Benjamin, who kept writing lucidly even as they fled the Nazis. As they try to make sense of the evil bearing down on their country, Ogarkova and Yermolenko note the difference between Hitler and Stalin: while Nazis had some rules about who they punished (non-Aryans; communists) in Stalin's terror anyone could be a victim at any moment. Random violence runs through Russian history. Reacting to how Vladimir Putin's Russia is constantly changing its reasons for invading Ukraine - from "denazification" to "reclaiming historic lands" to "Nato expansion" - Ogarkova and Yermolenko decide that the very brutal nature of the invasion is its essence: the war crimes are

her three brothers were killed in Stalin's terror - first put forward the idea that people were drawn to death as much as to life. She drew on themes from Russian literature and folklore for her theory of a death drive, but the founder of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud, first found her ideas too morbid. After the First World War, he came to agree with her. The desire for death was the desire to let go of responsibility, the burden of individuality, choice, freedom - and sink back into inorganic matter. To just give up. In a culture such as Russia's, where avoiding facing up to the dark past with all its complex webs of guilt and responsibility is commonplace, such oblivion can be especially seductive. But Russia is also sending out a similar message to Ukrainians and their allies

"Russia claims to be a powerful 'pole' in the world to balance the west - but has failed to create a successful political model others would want to join. So it has nothing left to offer except to drag everyone down to its own depths." "How dare you live like this," went a resentful piece of graffiti by Russian soldiers in Bucha. "What's the point of the world when there is no place for Russia in it," complains Putin. After the dam at Kakhovka was destroyed, a General Dobruzhinsky crowed on a popular Russian talkshow: "We should blow up the Kyiv water reservoir too." "Why?" asked the host. "Just to show them." But, as Ogarkova and Yermolenko explore, Russians also send their soldiers to die senselessly in the meat grinder of the Donbas, their bodies left uncollected on the battlefield, their relatives not informed of their death so as to avoid paying them. On TV, presenters praise how "no one knows how to die like us".

the point. Russia claims to be a powerful "pole" in the world to balance the west - but has failed to create a successful political model others would want to join. So it has nothing left to offer except to drag everyone down to its own depths. "How dare you live like this," went a resentful piece of graffiti by Russian soldiers in Bucha. "What's the point of the world when there is no place for Russia in it," complains Putin. After the dam at Kakhovka was destroyed, a General Dobruzhinsky crowed on a popular Russian talkshow: "We should blow up the Kyiv water reservoir too." "Why?" asked the host. "Just to show them." But, as Ogarkova and Yermolenko explore, Russians also send their soldiers to die senselessly in the meat grinder of the Donbas, their bodies left uncollected on the battlefield, their relatives not informed of their death so as to avoid paying them. On TV, presenters praise how "no one knows how to die like us". Meanwhile, villagers on the Russian-occupied side of the river are being abandoned by the authorities. Being "liberated" by Russia means joining its empire of humiliation.

Where does this drive to annihilation come from? In 1912 the Russian-Jewish psychoanalyst Sabina Spielrein - who was murdered by the Nazis, while

with these acts of ultra-violent biblical destruction: give in to our immensity, surrender your struggle. And for all Russia's military defeats and actual socio-economic fragility, this propaganda of the deed can still work.

The reaction in the west to the explosion of the dam has been weirdly muted. Ukrainians are mounting remarkable rescue operations, while Russia continues to shell semi-submerged cities, but they are doing it more or less alone. Ukraine's president, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, has been mystified by the "zero support" from international organisations such as the UN and Red Cross. Perhaps the relative lack of support comes partly because people feel helpless in the face of something so immense, these Cecil B DeMille-like scenes of giant rivers exploding. It's the same helplessness some feel when faced with the climate crisis. It's apposite that the strongest response to Russia's ecocide came not from governments but the climate activist Greta Thunberg, who clearly laid the blame of what happened on Russia and demanded it be held accountable. But there's been barely a peep out of western governments or the UN. Pushing the strange lure of death, oblivion and just giving up is the Russian gambit. How much life do we have left in us?

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Farewell, Boris Johnson: Britain will not miss your attempts to play Trump

Simon Jenkins

HE'S gone. Again. Ducking and swerving, crashing and picking himself up, Boris Johnson is a political wrecker. He smashed David Cameron's leadership with his mendacious Brexit campaign, and then returned it to smash Theresa May. When he won and reached Downing Street, he made it a music-hall turn. The government was reduced to a shambles over Partygate, and was found to have broken the law during lockdown.

Like any talented comedian, Johnson can well command a public stage. His is a likable personality whose performances are amusing to those who find most politicians tedious and the spectacle of politics dull. But out of sight, Johnson is a mess quite unsuited to high office. He brought discredit to Downing Street in the eyes of the world, and those who worked with him and knew him best told him a year ago that he had to stand down.

Johnson is in a line of populist mavericks who have found themselves at odds with the core institution of British democracy and parliament. He has now resigned his seat, murmuring that this is only "for now". His resignation statement was issued over the heads of his fellow MPs in a grievance trope that portrayed himself as victim of a "political hit job ... a witch-hunt ... a kangaroo court". He cast parliament's privileges committee as the equivalent of Donald Trump's "federal injustice" department. The tactic works for Trump because Americans love to hate Washington. It is far less clear that the adoring shires, the "red wall" and floating voters will join Johnson in his march on Westminster. Will they really smash the windows and send Mr Speaker quivering under his chair? There was no ounce of contrition in Johnson's

statement. Even by his own reckless standards, it read like a late-night rant which should have carried a Don't Press Send warning. The language was mean-spirited, chippy and mendacious. At a time of acute delicacy in the Tory party's standing, it was deeply disloyal to its leadership - precisely the accusation he levelled at Rishi Sunak for resigning as his chancellor. For Johnson to accuse anyone of disloyalty is monumental hypocrisy, given how he treated Cameron and May.

The privileges committee judgment appears from first reports to be unequivocal, even if its preparation was far too dilatory. At the start, Johnson had professed himself content with its hearing. Now that it has presumably found he misled parliament, his depiction of it as a Labour-dominated, anti-Brexit conspiracy is ridiculous. Its seven member have a Tory majority, two of whom are Brexiteer Tories, Sir Bernard Jenkin and Sir Charles Walker. Johnson accuses them of being "undemocratic", but their verdict goes to parliament, and it was for parliament to decide what should happen next. Johnson could have appealed to his fellow MPs, a majority of them Tories. If they in turn suspended him, he could have appealed to his constituents for reselection and re-election. The process is laboriously democratic. The truth is that Johnson was afraid of democracy. He feared his constituents, not parliament. He cut and ran.

Even in doing so, Johnson confirmed the worst suspicions of his critics and those who feel his era in politics has been seized by a corrupt and ritualised squalor. He scattered in his wake a trail of "honours" to scores of his most loyal courtiers, irrespective of their merits. All of them - from

Priti Patel to Johnson's former hairdresser - apparently deserved the thanks of the nation. Seven will be given life membership of parliament as peers, with a corresponding income to match. This is a parody of politics. Will it never stop? A possible early return for Johnson appears to have been plotted between him and his chief supporter, Nadine Dorries. She resigned her Mid Bedfordshire seat in an obscure deal surrounding her failure to get a peerage. This would involve Rishi Sunak's team having to decide whether Johnson merits Tory sponsorship. This would be bizarre, with his current behaviour so clearly aimed at undermining the party's chances at the next election. Sunak's authority could not survive granting Johnson this opportunity. At the very least, a two-election expulsion would seem appropriate.

This is the moment when egocentric politicians toy with the idea of going independent, even founding their own party. Johnson could finance it from his grievance memoirs and, like Enoch Powell and Nigel Farage, become a nagging wound on the party's political fringe. But such ventures always end in ignominy. Johnson is by now a Marmite attraction. Besides, Powell and Farage had serious policies to champion. Johnson's only policy is self-promotion. Britain is not a populist democracy, but a parliamentary one. These are quite different concepts. Parliament is in place to discipline the popular will to the realities and necessities of power. Johnson's most publicised faults were committed in Downing Street, resulting from what his biographer Anthony Seldon called in the Sunday Times an "inner emptiness ... a total absence of moral compass". The faults for

which he has fallen were not in power but in his handling of parliament. He may have survived the breaking of lockdown law. He may have apologised to the public and the monarch. But lying to parliament was tantamount to lying to the people in the one place where their representatives should hold power to account. The content of the lie is not the issue. The issue is the fact of its existence.

From the moment Johnson came to power, his attitude to parliament was orchestrated by ethically neutered aides imported by him into Downing Street. He sacked the ablest half of the existing cabinet on suspicion of disloyalty - a contempt for his parliamentary party Margaret Thatcher never showed. In 2019, he tried to suspend parliament and had to be called to order by the supreme court. He defied parliament's regulation of ministerial conduct in the Priti Patel and Owen Paterson affairs. Partygate was merely the last straw. Johnson failed what the historian Lord Hennessy calls the "good chaps" test of constitutional behaviour. This holds that Britain's unwritten constitution is underpinned by unspoken protocols of honesty, courtesy and compromise. Compared with other world assemblies, these conventions have guided parliament down the ages, steering clear of revolutions, anarchies and mob rule. The constitution has been sorely tested in recent years, but it has contrived to eject three poor leaders from Downing Street in just three. It took the US constitution four years to dispose of just one, and he may yet return. Johnson insulted parliament. Its members are most unlikely to forgive him. He is surely best advised to do what he does best: retire profitably, and entertain the world from the sidelines.

The Guardian

New era for Turkiye

Yasar Yakis

TURKISH President Recep Tayyip Erdogan last week announced his new Cabinet. He changed almost all ministers, leaving only Fahrettin Koca, the minister of health, and Mehmet Nuri Ersoy, the minister of culture and tourism, in their posts. Erdogan has a habit of testing new recruits and, if he does not find them suitable, he immediately turns to new faces. The present Cabinet is unique in terms of the highest number of new members.

All members of the Cabinet are distinguished people in their domains, but three of them attract extra attention because of the importance of their ministries. They are Mehmet Simsek, the new minister of finance, Hakan Fidan, the minister of foreign affairs, and Gen. Yasar Guler, the minister of defense. Simsek was born to a Kurdish family in Turkiye's south-eastern province of Batman. He learned Turkish after he went to school. He is an important political figure because of his brilliant economic career. He completed his university studies at the prestigious Imperial School of Administrative Studies (Mulkiye), which was established in 1859. Many high-level Ottoman bureaucrats graduated from this school, including the former president of Syria, Shukri Al-Quwatli.

Simsek completed his master's degree at Exeter University in the UK. Between 1993 and 1997, he worked as chief economic analyst in the US Embassy in Ankara. He then worked for a short period in the US at the Union Bank of Switzerland and later at Deutsche Bank in Turkiye. He became the

top administrative economist for Merrill Lynch covering the Middle East and Africa, before switching to Central Europe and Russia. Erdogan picked him up when he was in this post.

His position has been a subject of tough bargaining with Erdogan. He disagreed with the president on the economic policy to be followed. After having served as finance minister between 2009 and 2015, he quit this post and returned to his international finance business. Simsek's name returned to the forefront immediately before the first round of last month's elections. The ruling AKP party's spokesman Omer Celik said that Simsek was not considering getting involved in active politics, but added that he was prepared to extend any assistance in case he was asked. Presidential spokesman Ibrahim Kalin expressed the same idea with slightly different words.

A pessimistic public opinion poll company, Aksoy, operating in Istanbul, had stated that Simsek's refusal to join the AKP's ranks was neither the first nor the last sign of the bruised support for the AKP government. In fact, Simsek - after talking to Erdogan on the Monday before the May 14 elections - announced on his Twitter account that he was not interested in a return to active politics. These continuous changes prove once more how slippery the political ground is in Turkiye. A senior journalist, Toygun Atilla, said that when Erdogan proposed that Simsek should sit in the command seat of Turkiye's economy, he accepted it by saying: "This is a service for my

country and I am ready to assume this responsibility."

In the very first statement he made after assuming the ministerial job, Simsek said: "Turkiye's economy has no other option but returning to the rational ground." This is a clear statement that the country's economy was previously not sitting on rational ground. Simsek will now try to salvage what is salvageable, but the challenges lying ahead are gigantic. The Foreign Ministry has been entrusted to Fidan, the former head of the National Intelligence Organization. He started his career as a noncommissioned officer. He later completed his studies at the University of Maryland in the US and at the Bilkent University, Ankara. From 2001 to 2003, he worked as a senior political and economic adviser at the Australian Embassy in Ankara. His immediate agenda includes the NATO Summit to be held next month in Vilnius, Lithuania. This will be followed in September by the G20 Summit in New Delhi and the 78th session of the UN General Assembly.

Ankara last week hastily dispatched a battalion-sized peacekeeping force to Kosovo because it wants to gain NATO's favor in several alliance-related issues. Sweden's NATO membership is a complicated foreign policy issue for Turkiye because Stockholm believes it has fulfilled all the required criteria by passing three laws to meet Ankara's expectations. Turkiye, however, believes that Sweden has to draw a sharper line between acts of terror and freedom of expression. The Gordian

knott of this subject will probably be cut by the US.

As the next US presidential election will be held in November 2024, Turkiye wants to solve the F-16 fighter aircraft issue before Congress becomes more sensitive on this subject. Turkiye also wants to bring the Nagorno-Karabakh issue to a satisfactory conclusion. The participation of Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan in Erdogan's oath-taking ceremony offers a promising signal for the future. This may be a further step in the thaw between Ankara, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Fidan was directly involved in the negotiations with the Kurds within the framework of the Oslo process. And he made substantive contributions in almost everything concerning Syria. Erdogan's choice of Fidan for this important job may be aimed at him directly solving several complicated issues. Ozer's choice for the post of minister of defense is reminiscent of an old practice in Turkiye of giving this job to the military top brass. The chain of command is important in the army. All kinds of complications can be expected once this chain is disrupted. Former Defense Minister Hulusi Akar proved his loyalty by skillfully controlling the 2016 military uprising initiated by the supporters of the self-exiled Muslim cleric Fethullah Gulen.

Turkiye has entered a new era following the elections that took place last month. Everyone looks at Simsek in particular. A more rational management of the economy may now be expected, but we should refrain from expecting miracles from him.

Coordinator to FTO for expanding trade with Russia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Federal Tax Ombudsman (FTO) Meher Kashif Younis on Monday said that Pakistan could capitalise the opportunity to expand cooperation and attract Russian investments as Russia's economic footprint in Asia is still relatively low.

Addressing the celebration of the Russia Day ceremony, he said, "This year marks a very important milestone in our relations-a 75th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic ties between Russia and Pakistan," said a press release.

Meher Kashif Younis said we had quite a few important episodes in the history of our productive bilateral cooperation.

"It's a good omen to note that Russian President

Vladimir Putin in his recent address to the federal assembly categorically mentioned Pakistan as one of the few countries with which Russia is eager to develop a partnership and this desire was clearly reflected by the practical steps made by the leadership of both countries," he added.

He said both countries had demonstrated strong political will and taken initiatives to enhance trade cooperation.

Pakistan's pursuit of economic redemption and energy supplies, plus the Russian aspiration to expand its economic footprints in Asia brought the two countries together, he added.

He said the business community hailed the judicious decision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif to import cheap crude oil from

Russia and was keen to further promote bilateral trade in diversified sectors.

He said that widely referred to as an 'energy superpower', Russia is the world's leading natural gas exporter and second-largest oil exporter.

It has long been the EU's principal supplier of natural gas and petroleum. However, as Europe moves toward decarbonization and renewable energy under the European Green Deal, Russia needs to find new markets for its energy products, Kashif highlighted.

He said in view of the prevailing global scenario, it was the need of the hour that both countries must strengthen and promote their existing economic cooperation in the days to come in addition to defence.

He said currently, Pakistan had a gas shortfall of 1.5 billion cubic feet per day (bcfd), which would double by 2025.

He said according to official estimates that domestic gas supplies in Pakistan would drop from 3.51 bcfd to 1.67 bcfd in 2028, necessitating an increase in LNG imports to meet demand.

He said Pakistan began importing LNG in 2015 to mitigate growth in consumption and to reduce oil imports.

Meher Kashif Younis said over the mere last seven years, Pakistan had become the world's ninth largest LNG importer and Qatar is presently Pakistan's biggest gas supplier, and the latter is still looking for more energy partners to cooperate with.



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Pang Chunxue Charge's Affairs, Embassy of People's Republic of China, meeting with Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Finance Division.

Dar for strengthening economic relations

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar here on Monday highlighted the need to deepen bilateral relations with China with a special focus on economy, trade and financial sectors.

He was talking to Charge'd Affairs, Embassy of the People's Republic of China, Pang Chunxue, who called on the minister here.

According to a press statement issued by the finance ministry, Dar appreciated the deep-rooted historical bilateral relations between Pakistan and China, and much-admired Chinese support to Pakistan on multiple fronts.

The finance minister further updated the Charge de Affairs about the progress on talks with the International Monetary Fund (IMF)

on the completion of the 9th review.

He further apprised her about the positive response of the various sectors of the economy on the Budget 2023-24, presented by the incumbent government despite difficult economic circumstances.

Dar expressed gratitude to Pang Chunxue for the support and cooperation Pakistan has been receiving from the leadership in Beijing.

Attempts to develop economy via debt unwise decision: ED PEW

LAHORE (INP): Executive Director Pakistan Economy Watch (PEW) Saifuddin Sheikh said on Monday the attempts made in the federal budget 2023-24 to develop the country's economy through debt is of no use.

In a statement issued here, he was of the view that the government has left with only option to run the system through borrowing as most of the tax revenue will be spent on debt servicing.

Saifuddin Sheikh said that imposing withholding tax on cash withdrawals

from banks will prove to be a disastrous decision which has damaged the economy in the past.

Imposing tax on bank withdrawals will decrease bank deposits, it will increase money in circulation and the government will have to face difficulty in borrowing from banks, he warned.

The ED PEW further stated that the central bank will have to print excess currency and hike interest rates, which will increase inflation.

Increase in salaries and

pensions will also increase inflation, and in these circumstances the estimate of 21% inflation by the government will prove to be wrong, he noted.

The super tax will affect the investment, production, profit and employment in the industrial sector, Saifuddin said, adding that the controversial measures will reduce the size of the documented economy while the undocumented economy will grow.

Taxes have not been imposed on retail, wholesale and agriculture sector

as expected due to which black money will be directed towards those sectors which will escalate inflation.

The ED PEW said that the rate of population growth in the country is the highest in the world and the real income of the people has not been increased since the last five years.

The income of masses is constantly decreasing, and the public will not benefit from the current budget, but on the contrary, there their income will decrease.

Steps taken for agri development in budget laudable: Atif Ikram

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former Vice President of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI), Atif Ikram Sheikh said on Monday that the measures taken by the government in budget for development of agriculture sector are commendable.

He said, "The agriculture sector has been continuously falling for a decade, necessitating imports worth billions of dollars that can be saved if this sector is promoted."

In a statement issued here, Atif Ikram Sheikh who has also served as President of ICCI and Chairman of PVMA said that Pakistan's agricultural sector has long been the

backbone of its economy, providing livelihoods for millions of people and contributing significantly to GDP but in recent years it has faced many serious problems.

Devastating floods, unexpected weather patterns, erratic rainfall, prolonged droughts, high prices of fertiliser, substandard seeds, and fake pesticides have damaged this sector, he added.

The FPCCI's former Vice President said that extreme climatic events had a negative impact on productivity, threatening food security and exacerbating rural poverty; therefore, it is imperative to develop effective strategies that can enhance the

resilience of the agriculture sector.

Pakistan's agriculture is predominantly rain-fed, making it highly vulnerable to fluctuations in rainfall patterns, as the country has witnessed a disturbing increase in the frequency and intensity of extreme weather events.

Unpredictable rainfall has disrupted cropping cycles, reduced yields, and left farmers grappling with mounting economic losses.

The increasing frequency and intensity of hailstorms in recent months have emerged as a significant threat to this critical sector, which requires strategies to mitigate their effects.

The business leader said

that collaborations between government bodies, insurance providers, and agricultural institutions can facilitate the development of comprehensive insurance schemes, which is necessary for improvement in this sector.

Encouraging farmers to obtain crop insurance that covers hailstorm damage is crucial, as it can provide financial assistance to farmers, helping them recover from the losses.

By supporting farmers and implementing effective mitigation strategies, the nation can safeguard its agricultural economy, ensure food security, and maintain its position as a leading exporter of high-quality products.

Chinese Business Conference to foster Saudia-China economic ties

ISLAMABAD (INP): Arab Chinese Business Conference is a testament to the enduring commitment between Saudi Arabia and China to foster robust economic ties.

It offers businesses and investors a platform to establish partnerships, explore growth avenues, and leverage each other's strengths, according to a report published by Gwadar Pro on Monday.

Saudi Arabia hosted the much-anticipated 10th session of the Arab-Chinese Business Conference and the eighth Investment Symposium in Riyadh. This prestigious event, scheduled for June 11-12, was a collaborative endeavor between the Kingdom's Ministry of Investment, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the esteemed Arab League's secretary-general, the Chinese Council for the Promotion of International Trade, and several other government entities.

This shared determination to enhance economic cooperation aims to drive sustainable development and prosperity for both nations. The conference opens avenues for comprehensive exchanges, emphasizing the immense potential in the harmonious collaboration between the Arab and Chinese worlds.

Topics on the agenda span from China's transformative Belt and Road infrastructure initiative to renewable energy solutions, pharmaceutical advancements, startups,

sustainable tourism practices, and food security.

Building upon a rich history of mutual cooperation and friendship that traces back to the ancient Silk Road, China envisions the Middle East as an esteemed partner in the grand endeavor of the Belt and Road Initiative.

This visionary initiative, rooted in the principles of cooperation, partnership, human development, and peace, seeks to usher in prosperity for all nations involved. By utilizing existing cooperation mechanisms, both regions are set to integrate their development strategies seamlessly. This will expedite the signing of cooperation Memorandums of Understanding and the initiation of cooperative development projects.

These strategic steps will lay the foundation for a myriad of joint initiatives, propelling trade, infrastructure, and economic growth to new heights. The Belt and Road Initiative serves as a catalyst for inclusive and sustainable development, with China and the Middle East being steadfast partners.

As the initiative gains momentum, the collaboration between China and the Middle East stands as a shining example of global cooperation, underpinning a future marked by unprecedented advancements and strong ties.

The conference also underscores the unprecedented deepening relationship between China and Saudi Arabia. The year

began with a landmark achievement as Beijing played a pivotal role in brokering the Saudi-Iranian agreement, leading to the resumption of diplomatic ties between these long-standing rivals. Saudi Arabia joined the ranks as a dialogue partner of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, strengthening their strategic bond. Furthermore, Saudi oil giant Aramco signed a significant deal with China's Baosteel in May to construct a state-of-the-art steel factory within the kingdom.

This partnership signifies the immense economic potential that lies at the intersection of their industries. China holds the distinction of being Saudi Arabia's largest trading partner, while the kingdom has emerged as one of China's primary oil suppliers, only recently surpassed by Russia earlier this year. In 2022, trade between Arab countries and China witnessed a remarkable surge, amounting to \$1.6 trillion (\$430 billion),

reflecting a substantial 31 percent rise compared to the previous year. Saudi Arabia took the lead in this dynamic exchange, as trade between the kingdom and China alone reached approximately \$400 billion (\$106 billion), marking an impressive 30 percent increase from the preceding year's figures.

These robust trade numbers exemplify the growing economic ties and mutual benefits enjoyed by both Arab countries and China, setting the stage for further prosperous collaborations in the future.

China and Arab nations have recognized the potential for fruitful collaboration within the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative, embracing pragmatic cooperation to foster progress. As the Middle East undergoes transformative changes, Chinese investors are presented with new and promising avenues, particularly in cutting-edge industries such as high technology and emerging strategic sectors.

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN
PAKISTAN PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

INVITATION OF BIDS
(SINGLE STAGE TWO ENVELOPES)

Sealed tender/bids on the basis of "Single Stage Two envelopes Procedure" are hereby invited for execution of the following works from eligible contractors/firms duly enlisted/register with Pakistan Engineering council (PEC) in relevant specialization technical category and financial limit Category C-5 & above is required on percentage rates basis on Pak. PWD Schedule of Rates 2022, who process valid renewal with PEC, having renewal upto 30/06/2023.

S #	Title of Work	NIT Amount	Earnest Money	Tender Cost
DISTRICT BUNER				
1	Construction of Black Top Main Road Totahali From Jrandi Stop to Kass Koronna District Buner	Rs.18,649,100/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
2	Construction of Black Top Main road Nagrai to Langawo Road District Buner	Rs. 25,001,498/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
3	Construction of Black Top Main road at Korea to Khanano Dherai District Buner	Rs. 32,818,470/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
4	Construction of Black Top main Road at Bagh District Buner	Rs. 16,663,437/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
5	Construction of PCC Link Road at Mkhraanai District Buner	Rs. 7,785,784/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
6.	Construction of PCC Link Road at Chinglai Sarwai and Ghurghoshito District Buner	Rs. 16,125,579/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
7.	Construction of PCC Link Road Charoarai to Mandawo Channel District Buner	Rs. 8,076,640/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
8.	Construction of PCC Link Road and Jeepeble Tracks at UC Nawagai	Rs. 13,601,933/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
9.	DWSS boring/installation offhand pumps/pressure pumps and irrigation tube well at PK-35	Rs. 11,826,432/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
10	DWSS Boring/installation of Hand Pump/Pressure pump Kawga District Buner	Rs. 5,913,216/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
DISTRICT SHANGLA				
1.	Drinking Water supply Scheme at village Council Karora Opal, Chedam, Karai, Hujra Fateh Hujra Kamar Hujra Kuza Hujra Tehsil Chakisar Grangar Jalkol Sarkol Katkor, Chakidar Qalon UC Sarkol Bunerwal, Tehsil Chakisar at Bore of Tubewell at Farid Korona Ishaq Korona U/C Biana Tehsil Puran Allah oa Akbar Muhall Saidur Sharif Mingora Said Anwar Shawar Muhalla Menerai U/C Maira Tehsil Besham District Shangla	Rs. 15,560,481/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-
2.	Construction of Jeepeable Roads Panyal to Nogran Karora to Norgan Opal to Bogi UC Opal Seday to Tangi Mangri Shamlimano Goshio to Dadam Danday Road Sundya to Chora Sundya to Pirsahib Korona U/C Sarkul Katkor to Braim Kund Opra to Braim Kund and PCC Road Dang ilar UC Buner wall Tehsil Chakidar District Shangla	Rs. 29,107,159/-	2% of bid amount	Rs. 5000/-

TERMS AND CONDITION FOR BIDDING

- The constructors/firms/companies who will receive bidding documents are required to submit their bid in two separate sealed envelopes, i.e., one envelop containing technical information/data and documents of the contractor/firm required for post qualification, clearly marked as "Technical Bid", while the second envelop containing bid price clearly marked as "Financial Bid".
- The application must be accompanied with bid security in shape of CDR/deposit at call from any Scheduled Bank of Pakistan, in favour of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak.PWD, Peshawar, clearly mentioning the name of firm, whereas the difference of the tendered amount must be accompanied with Financial Bid with its sealed envelop.
- Bidders may purchase the Bidding Documents from the office of Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD Peshawar at cost of Rs. 5,000/- (Non refundable upto 12/07/2023 during office hours.
- Envelopes of Technical Bid & Financial Bid shall be submitted in the office of the Executive Engineer, Central Civil Division-II, Pak. PWD Shami Road Peshawar on 13/07/2023 by 12.30 PM. The envelope containing Technical Bid shall be opened on same day at 01.00 P.M in the presence of Bidders representatives who opt to be present, Bids received after the prescribed date and time shall not be accepted.
- Bidders will be Technically Qualified on the basis of information provided with the Bids as per the criteria prescribed in the Bidding Documents. Once a Technical Bid received and opened in this office, no addition/subtraction/alteration of any sort of document will be acceptable.
- Pay Order/Demand draft will not be acceptable.
- All CDR once received will be credit into the Government Account and will be re-funded through Government Cheque.
- No tender will be entertained without bid security @ 2% of the bid amount if not found will be declared as non responsive.
- Every firm/contractor must provide the affidavit on stamp paper regarding the non litigation with the department.
- Under Rule 33(1) of PPRA Rules 2004, the under singed reserves the right to accept/reject any or all bids/ proposals at any time prior to acceptance of a bid or proposal.
- The documents provided by the bidders will be verified and in case found ambiguous/fake one, the firm will face immediate/appropriate penal action as per rules and law.
- METHOD OF PROCUREMENT**
 - As per PPRA rule 36(b), open competitive Bidding with "Single Stage Two Envelop" Procedure- One envelop containing Technical Proposal and the other Financial Proposal and both sealed in separate envelopes.
 - After conducting evaluation of Technical Bids, qualified firms shall be informed accordingly for opening of their Financial Bids whereas bids of unqualified firms shall be returned unopened.
 - Non-compliance of Instructions to bidders in the Tender Documents will lead to disqualification/non-responsiveness of the bid/firm.

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PID(P) 196/23

نوش بشمار : بدالتمتخرمترمين نويد صابرين جينيانگ كرت 1 خبير رختونو پشاور

مقدمه 9/1/2023: 207/023/2017، شرف و انوسر الله دالله اهرام سنده ما نبر 15-1 بغير 1- بغير نانوش بدهن... ديشين بشمار HBL - بشمار 11: ديشين بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 2) بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 3) كريت داريك بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 4) عرفان الله خان ساجد كريت داريك بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 2) ديشين بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 2) ديشين بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 2001 بشمار بشمار 30 كرت دهر برطاني سكين 10/2) ديشين بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 2) ديشين بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 2001 بشمار بشمار 30 كرت دهر برطاني سكين 10/2) ديشين بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 2) ديشين بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 2001 بشمار بشمار 30 كرت دهر برطاني سكين 10/2) ديشين بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 2) ديشين بشمار HBL بشمار كرت بشمار 2001 بشمار



In brief

SBP holds coaching and training session

LAHORE (APP): Sports Board Punjab organized a coaching and training orientation session here on a Monday in connection with upcoming Summer Camp scheduled to start from June 14 to August 12. The coaching and training orientation session was organized under the direction of Director General Sports Punjab Dr Asif Tufail. Assistant Director Zareena Waqar, Assistant Director M Sajid, provincial swimming coach Rafiuz Zaman and provincial hockey coach Razia Malik imparted vital training to around 400 boys and girls of U-8 and U-14 age groups and their parents in four sessions during the orientation session. The participating young athletes were given guidance and awareness regarding how to feature in different games in summer camp. They were also taught about the significance of discipline, fitness and diet etc for participation in a competitive sports activity.

Exhibition fight ends in mass brawl

LONDON (BBC): Floyd Mayweather's exhibition fight with John Gotti III ended in a mass brawl when people stormed the ring following a controversial decision. Referee Kenny Bayliss stopped the fight in the sixth round to the annoyance of Gotti, who then lashed out at 46-year-old Mayweather. The ring was then swarmed with team members from both sides as Bayliss struggled to contain the drama. Gotti III, 30, is the grandson of former New York crime boss John Gotti. The melee kicked off a number of fights amongst the crowd in the FLA Live Arena in Florida and backstage. In a video posted on social media, former boxing world champion Mayweather was filmed after the fight saying: "That's why they pay the big bucks, because I put on a show." The arena had to be cleared by police, who threatened charges against fans who did not leave immediately. Mayweather retired in 2017 with a record of 50-0 and has appeared in several exhibitions bouts against mixed martial arts and YouTube stars. This was the first time his exhibition tour had returned to the United States since his eight-round bout with YouTuber Logan Paul in 2021.

Moyes will stay on at London Stadium

LONDON (BBC): David Moyes will stay on as West Ham manager after winning the Europa Conference League. Moyes' future had been the subject of huge speculation throughout the season. On three occasions, the Scot appeared to be one game from the sack, however, each time, West Ham won and eventually secured their Premier League future with two games to spare. The Hammers have since gone on to end their 43-year wait for a trophy by beating Fiorentina in Prague. And it has now been decided Moyes, 60, will stay in his job as West Ham look forward to European football for the third successive season for the first time in their history. Moyes will have to cope without skipper Declan Rice, who is set to leave the club this summer, but is eager to build on their Conference League triumph. "I hope we can continue to make progress. I think we have done over the last two or three years and last night was progress because we won a trophy."

Pakistan to open their campaign in ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup today

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan women's team will be targeting a good display in the ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup as they begin their journey in the eight-team tournament against Nepal at the Tin Kwong Road Recreation Ground in Hong Kong on Tuesday. Fatima Sana will be leading the side in the T20 tournament, which began on Monday.

Pakistan are slotted in Group A with Hong Kong, India A and Nepal. After tomorrow's game, Pakistan will play hosts Hong Kong and India A on June 15 and 17 respectively. Top two teams from each group will qualify for the semi-finals which will be played on June 19. The final of the tournament will be held on June 21.

In the last edition of the ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup 2019, which was held in Sri Lanka, Pakistan remained winless in the four-team competition. Captain and right-arm fast Fatima, leg-spinners Tuba Hassan and Syeda Aroob Shah, and wicketkeeper-batter Najjha Alvi featured in the 2019 edition. Six players apart from Captain Fatima (31 ODIs, 24 T20Is) have already represented Pakistan women's team in international cricket. These include Gull

Feroza (2 T20Is), Natalia Parvaiz (3 ODIs, 11 T20Is), Sadaf Shamas (4 ODIs, 2 T20Is), Syeda Aroob Shah (2 ODIs, 5 T20Is), Tuba Hassan (1 ODI, 21 T20Is) and Umm-e-Hani (1 ODI).

Other than Aroob, three players – Anoosha Nasir, Eyman Fatima and Shawaal Zulfiqar – have represented Pakistan U19 in the inaugural edition of ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup in January this year in South Africa. Before the 15-day camp in Karachi, the players also represented Strikers in the first phase of Pakistan Cup Women's Cricket Tournament held in Karachi last month, where the team under the leadership of Fatima won all three matches.

On the eve of the first game, Fatima Sana said: "We have worked hard in our preparations, and the roles have been clearly defined to each player. Now is the time for them to step up and deliver their best for the team. "While individual brilliance can make a difference, I believe in the strength of our team. We have a talented group of players, and I don't want to rely solely on one individual. It's crucial for every player to contribute to the team's success. I have faith that each member will

give their all and collectively, we will achieve great results.

"Tournaments like these provide a fantastic platform for our young players to showcase their skills and potentially earn a place in the senior side internationally.

Squad: Fatima Sana (c), Anoosha Nasir, Eyman Fatima, Gull Feroza, Gulrukh, Lubna Behram, Najjha Alvi (wk), Natalia Parvaiz, Sadaf Shamas, Shawaal Zulfiqar, Syeda Aroob Shah, Tuba Hassan, Umm-e-Hani and Yusra Amir. Reserves: Amber Kainat, Dua Majid, Fatima Khan and Rameen Shamim.

Player support personnel: Aisha Jilil (manager), Mohsin Kamal (head coach), Muhammad Kamran Hussain (assistant coach), Muhammad Usman Shahid (analyst) and Rabia Siddiq (physiotherapist).

ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup Pakistan fixtures:

June 13 v Nepal at Tin Kwong Road Recreation Ground, Hong Kong, 0600 PKT

June 15 v Hong Kong at Tin Kwong Road Recreation Ground, Hong Kong, 0600 PKT

June 17 v India A at Tin Kwong Road Recreation Ground, Hong Kong, 1030 PKT

Athletes depart for Germany to participate Special Olympics World Games 2023

ABBOTTABAD (APP): A delegation of three special athletes from Kingston School Abbottabad Monday departed for Berlin Germany to take part in the Special Olympics World Games 2023.

The three special athletes from Kingston School included Abdullah Khan Jadoon, Ali Ammir, and Ahmed Ali will participate in Hockey and Basketball events. The principal of the institution Sardar Muhammad Irfan while talking to the media has revealed that seven special

children from the school secured a place in the Special Olympics Pakistan's final training camp and received national-level training.

He said that the school's coach, Qamar Zaman worked tirelessly with these athletes which led to the participation of these three athletes in the World Games in Berlin, Germany. Sardar Irfan said that these outstanding athletes are not only a source of pride for Kingston School and Abbottabad city but for the entire Pakistan.

The principal disclosed that before this, the school has won three international medals and 290 gold medals at the national level in various sports.

Earlier, another special female badminton player from Abbottabad was also selected for the Special World Olympic games and joined the Pakistan team a couple of days ago in Berlin Germany. Now a total of four special athletes of district Abbottabad is part of Pakistan's national team which is participating in the world games.

Hong Kong beat Pakistan in Asian Netball C'ship

ISLAMABAD (APP): Hong Kong outplayed Pakistan in the Asian Youth Girls' Netball Championship at Jeonju, Korea. Hong Kong beat Pakistan by 78-15 in the game. Pakistan faced defeat at the hands of Hong Kong in their third match after Thailand.

Pakistan would play their fourth match against Malaysia on Tuesday. Pakistan has played three matches in the championship so far and had won against Japan in its first match. It is worth mentioning that teams from 11 countries were participating in the championship, which have been divided into two groups.

Pakistan would play its fifth match against India on June 14. The quarter-finals and semi-finals of the championship would be played on June 16, whereas the final on June 17.



Athletics Federation of Pakistan holds Open National Trials

LAHORE (APP): Athletics Federation holds Open National Trials for selection of athletics team for participation in 25th Asian Athletics Championships scheduled from 12-16 July 2023 at Bangkok, Thailand.

Over 60 elite athletes from all over Pakistan participated in the Open National Trials held here at the Punjab Stadium.

The athletes showed their remarkable athletic abilities and wowed the judges with their performances. The athletes showcased their skills in various disciplines,

including 100m (Men), 100m (Women), 400m (Men), 400m (Women), Long Jump (Men) & Javelin Throw (Men). After a thorough evaluation of each performance, AFP selected five athletes to represent Pakistan in the Asian Athletics Championships.

The selected athletes include Arshad Nadeem, Yasir Sultan in Javelin Throw, Shajar Abbas in 100m & 200m, Abdul Mueed in 200m & 400m, and Esha Imran in 100m, 200m & 400m.

To ensure discipline and

high-performance standard, coaches of Mr. Shajar Abbas and Arshad Nadeem will accompany them with the team. They will train and guide the team to ensure the best possible performance.

AFP believes that the selected athletes have the potential to bring glory to the country by winning medals in the championships. The Federation is committed to provide equal opportunities and support to all athletes in the country, promoting healthy activities, and uplifting the spirits of the nation.



GILGIT: Secretary Finance Gilgit-Baltistan Faisal Peerzada giving away winner trophy to team Captain during the 1st final match between Gilgit 01 and GB Nalter during Jashn-e-Baharan Freestyle Polo Tournament at Aga Khan Shahi Polo ground.

Girmay sprints to Tour of Switzerland second stage win

LAUSANNE (AFP/APP): Eritrean Biniam Girmay won a mass sprint to take the second stage of the Tour of Switzerland on Monday with local rider Stefan Kung retaining the race lead. At the end of a 173km-ride between Beromunster and Nottwil, Girmay, riding for Team Wanty, slipped into an opening left by Wout Van Aert, who broke too early, to finish ahead of Frenchman Arnaud Demare. Belgian Van Aert was third.

Girmay, 23, added the stage win to a victory in the Giro d'Italia last year, as he took advantage of one of the few opportunities left to sprinters in the mountainous race. Overall, Swiss Kung kept the lead he acquired on Sunday's prologue. He is five seconds ahead of Belgian Remco Evenepoel of Soudal-Quick Step, who grabbed a bonus second in the second intermediate sprint, with Van Aert of Jumbo-Visma six seconds adrift in third.

AC Milan pay tribute to owner, who has died at 86

MILAN (BBC): AC Milan have paid tribute to "unforgettable" former owner Silvio Berlusconi following his death at the age of 86 on Monday. Berlusconi bought his hometown club in 1986 and turned the struggling side into one of football's most successful clubs. Under his leadership, Milan won five European Cups, as well as eight Italian league titles. In 2017, he sold the club to Chinese investors for 740m euros (£628m). Fifa president Gianni Infantino described Berlusconi as a "visionary". Milan tweeted: "Deeply saddened, AC Milan grieves the passing of the unforgettable Silvio Berlusconi and wishes to reach out to the family, associates, and most cherished friends to share our sympathies." The former Italian prime minister returned to football less than 18 months after selling Milan, when his holding company, Fininvest, bought 100% of shares in third-division side Monza in 2018.

Naila Kiani ready to conquer breathtaking Nanga Parbat

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's woman climber Naila Kiani will embark Tuesday on the awe-inspiring expedition to attempt 8,126-metre Nanga Parbat, the world's ninth highest mountain. "I will be leaving Islamabad tomorrow to climb the majestic Nanga Parbat. I know it is a challenging task but I feel myself fully prepared to conquer the peak," Naila told APP on Monday.

With a death probability of 21%, Nanga Parbat, which is located in Diamer, Gilgit-Baltistan, continues

to claim its place in the top five most dangerous mountains in the world. Till now 85 of the climbers have died while attempting it. Last month Naila etched her name in history when she first successfully scaled Mt Everest (8848m), the world's tallest peak, and then Mount Lhotse (8,516m), the fourth-highest mountain in the world. Climbing Nanga Parbat will mean she will become Pakistan's fastest woman to ascend seven peaks higher than 8,000 metres. A mother of two kids,

Naila is a Dubai-based Pakistani banker and an amateur boxer. She first rose to prominence after images of her wedding shoot at K2 Base Camp in 2018 circulated on social media. She summited Gasherbrum-II (8,035m) in 2021, Gasherbrum-I (8,068m) and K2 (8611) in July 2022, and Annapurna (8,091m) in 2023. She climbed K2, the world's second tallest peak shortly after Samina Baig, who was the first Pakistani woman to achieve the feat.

Nelson Mandela Talent Hunt Program - Trial Day 02



F.P. Report

KARACHI: The second day of the Nelson Mandela Talent Hunt Program was as busy as day one with a large number of talented kids turning up for the trials at the TMC Cricket Ground. More than 500 kids appeared today aiming to be the next superstar of Karachi cricket.

Karachi - the city of cricket has produced many big international cricket stars that are role models for young cricketers. These players have instilled passion in thousands of young players, driving them to make a name for themselves in the international circuit. The Nelson Mandela Talent Hunt Program, conceived

by Mr Majid Bashir Ahmed, Honorary Counsel of South Africa in Karachi and the South African High Commission in Pakistan, are reinforcing this very idea to the next generation of kids in Karachi- to work hard and pursue your passion.

Players brought their very best to the trials as the kids were seen emulating legends of the game with the likes of Babar Azam, Rashid Khan and Shadab Khan. Batter Mohammad Nizam said, "Babar Azam is my idol, he is a great player and I want to be like him one day making my country proud."

Speedster Asad Umer mentioned: "I have been playing cricket since I was a child but my interest was developed when I saw Dale Steyn

bowling. I take inspiration from Mohammad Hसनain, he is quick and I am highly thankful to Nelson Mandela Talent Hunt Program for this opportunity."

Speaking highly of the program, upcoming star Sajid Khan added, "I admire Shadab Khan, my leg-break is quite good and now I have learnt Googly as well. The whole program is top notch especially the coaches are experienced and professional, I have enjoyed my time here."

Tomorrow will mark the final day of the three - days trial program. At the end of the trials, 60 players will be shortlisted for the next round which will lead to 15 finalists travelling to South Africa for training.

Katie Boulter replaces Emma Raducanu as British number one women's player

PARIS (BBC): Katie Boulter has replaced Emma Raducanu as the British number one women's player following her run to the Surbiton Trophy semi-finals.

Boulter, 26, will hold the top spot for the first time in her career when she plays at the Nottingham Open this week. Raducanu, 20, became British number one after her US Open triumph in 2021 but has been hampered by injuries since.

"Naturally, I am very proud to join the women before me who have reached that historic spot," Boulter said. "However, my main goal remains on improving my ranking and continuing to work hard."

"It's going to be an exciting summer as we are all very close in the rankings." Ranked 126 in the world following her three victories at Surbiton, Boulter is two places and 19 points above Raducanu in the latest standings, with Jodie Burrage (131), Katie Swan (134) and Harriet Dart (143) all close behind.

Raducanu is set to miss the summer season - including Wimbledon - after undergoing hand and ankle surgery, which also kept her out of the French Open.

At Wimbledon last year, Boulter recorded the biggest win of her career



in beating former world number one and 2021 runner-up Karolina Pliskova to reach the third round of a Grand Slam for the first time.

Leicester-born Boulter first picked up a racquet at the age of five before going on to represent Great Britain at eight. Her breakthrough year came in 2018, when she won her first ITF 25k and 60k titles, before reaching her first WTA quarter-final at the Nottingham Open as a wildcard.

She reached a career-high ranking of 82 in 2019, however a stress fracture of the back kept her out for six months and disrupted her progress. Boulter has been drawn against compatriot Emily Appleton in her first match in Nottingham on Tuesday, with coverage of this week's tournament available on BBC iPlayer, the BBC Sport website and app and the BBC Red Button every day.



In brief

Lab camp to be set up for twin cities artists

RAWALPINDI (APP): A free laboratory camp was being organized for the artists of Rawalpindi/Islamabad and their families on the special instructions of Caretaker Provincial Health Minister Punjab Dr Jamal Nasir. President of Rawalpindi/Islamabad Artist Activity Mansoor Afridi said that a free Laboratory Camp would be held at Rawalpindi Arts Council, on June 17 from 10 am to 4 pm. He asked the artists of twin cities to get themselves registered with the organisers of the camp for availing the facility. Mansoor said that free of cost Hepatitis A, B, C, AIDS, blood pressure, diabetes, TB and other tests would be carried out at the camp while in case of a positive test of any disease, all other tests and treatment would be completely free. For registration and other information, Mansoor asked the artists to contact cell no 0332-5314577. He appreciated the efforts of Caretaker Punjab Health Minister Dr Jamal Nasir for providing free healthcare facilities to the artists of the twin cities.

51,660 bikers fined

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Police (ICP) has taken strict action against motorcyclists who were found riding without helmets, issuing a total of 51,660 fine tickets. The ICP aims to uphold a commendable traffic system in the city and crack down on negligence displayed by individuals on the roads. According to a police spokesman, the extensive issuance of fine tickets emphasizes the ICP's commitment to ensuring the safety of road users. Chief Traffic Officer Islamabad commended this performance and highlighted the vigorous campaign launched by the ICP, aligning with the directives of CPO Safe City/Traffic, to raise awareness among citizens about traffic rules. Following these directives, ICP personnel have been instructed to enforce traffic rules and regulations without any bias based on status or rank. They are also urged to demonstrate patience and politeness while issuing traffic violation tickets to the road users. The ICP is utilizing all available resources to facilitate the general public and create a safe road environment. In this regard, the Chief Traffic Officer made a special appeal to parents, urging them not to permit their children to ride bikes or drive cars until they reach the age of maturity. The Chief Traffic Officer emphasized that the purpose behind issuing traffic violation tickets is not merely punitive but rather to ensure the safety and security of the public. He further appealed to parents to refrain from allowing their underage children to operate motorcycles, as this poses a significant risk to their well-being.

13 illegal arm holders netted

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police claimed to have arrested 13 arm holders and recovered arms, and ammunition from their possession during the crackdown here on Monday. According to a police spokesman, Rata Amaral police recovered one pistol (30 bore) from Hussain, whereas New Town police recovered pistol (30 bore) from Shabbaz. Similarly, Sadiqabad police held Noman, Amir Hamza, Zeeshan Taimoor, Jawad and recovered five pistols of 30 bore from their possession. Following the operation, Jatali police recovered one Kalashnikov from Yasir. Rawat police nabbed Jameel and recovered one pistol 30 bore from his possession.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation & Social Safety, Shazia Marri addressing a press conference at PID.

Faisal urges govt to follow all instructions to protect citizens from cyclone impacts

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to the Prime Minister on Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Faisal Karim Kundi Monday urged the Sindh government to follow all the instructions to protect the citizens from the cyclone impacts.

He was speaking at a presser along with the Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Shazia Marri. The SAPM said that the PPP's victory in the by-election in Azad Jammu and Kashmir reflected the people of AJK's love and trust for the PPP.

He said that Chairman PPP, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will address a public meeting in Swat on June 17. While President Pakistan Peoples Party Parliamentarians, Asif Ali Zardari has held meetings regarding the election in Lahore. The SAPM expressed the hope that PPP will win the general election in the same way it won in the AJK by-election. He said that the PPP has always raised its voice for the rights of the people of FATA/PATA and supported extensions in their tax exemption period. Speaking on the occa-

sion, Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety, Shazia Marri Monday said that the administration of Sindh is on high alert in the wake of the cyclone.

She said that Sindh's coastal areas of Sajawal, Thatta and Badin are facing the danger of cyclone.

Shazia Marri said that the provincial government is continuously monitoring the situation and repeatedly giving instructions to the people. She conveyed that more than 80,000 people are being shifted to safe places in wake of the expected storm.

Power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has issued a power suspension programme for Tuesday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman on Monday, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., Islamabad Circle, Anguri, NCP, Magnyal, Shahdara, Shahpur, Khyaban Iqbal, Peer Sohawah, Quid-e-Azam University, Punjab House, Bari Imam, Mandala, Athal, NIH Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Zaraj, Dhok Awan, IST, Mohra Nagyal.

BISP budget enhanced up to Rs. 455 billion for FY 2023-24: Shazia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Poverty Alleviation and Social Safety (PA&SS), Shazia Marri Monday said that the incumbent government has enhanced Benazir Income Support Programme's (BISP) budget from Rs. 404 billion to Rs.455 billion for the Financial Year 2023-24. She informed the journalists about the budget increase during a press conference held here. She said that Benazir Nashonuma budget saw a leap up from Rs. 4.8 billion to Rs. 32.2 billion.

While talking about the Benazir Nashonuma Programme, the minister apprised the audience that BISP has registered 0.643 million children, pregnant women, and lactating mothers up to date.

As part of its ongoing development program, BISP has distributed Rs. 24 billion, effectively supporting vulnerable communities across the country.

She negated the fake news circulating in the media recently about boosting the population through Benazir Nashonuma.

She said it was extremely irresponsible to spread such news which are completely

unfounded and have no true grounds.

Shazia Marri emphasized the importance of the role of the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) in uplifting the lives of the underprivileged and marginalized segment of the society.

BISP, which commenced in 2008 and was the brainchild of Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, has proven to be a highly successful programme.

The program functions on non-political grounds, providing financial assistance to approximately 9 million women across the country which is targeted to be expanded to 9.3 million households after the recent increase in budget, she added.

While talking about the budgetary allocations she said that over the years, the budget allocation for the BISP has witnessed significant growth, reflecting the government's commitment to social welfare of the poor. When the incumbent government came to power the BISP's budget allocation was Rs. 235 billion, which has now been augmented to Rs. 455 billion in a short span of over one year.

Amin urges telecom companies to ensure uninterrupted connectivity

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister of Information Technology, Syed Amin-ul-Haque, has called upon telecommunication companies to take immediate action to secure towers and optical fiber cables in order to maintain uninterrupted power supply and internet connectivity during an upcoming storm.

With the Meteorology Department warning of potential disruptions to the power and internet systems, Amin-ul-Haque's instructions aim to mitigate any possible downtime.

Emphasizing the critical need for continuous communication during emergency situations, the minister stressed the importance of implementing alternative measures to ensure seamless internet and mobile services. He underlined the significance of maintaining robust communication with PTCL and telecommunication companies, emphasizing a zero-tolerance policy for any disruptions that may arise during the storm.

In addition to addressing communication concerns, Amin-ul-Haque held dis-

cussions with relevant authorities to tackle the impending storm situation in Karachi, Thatta, and Sujawal. Collaborative efforts and full cooperation were offered to Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah to effectively deal with the storm's potential impact.

To safeguard against adverse effects, the minister directed Chief Secretary Sindh Sahil Rajput to undertake essential actions such as drain cleaning, improving water drainage systems, and urgent road maintenance.

Sherry Rehman urges new financial regimes for Climate funding

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination, Senator Sherry Rehman on Monday urged for new financial regimes for climate funding.

"A fair amount of thought leadership and retooling is needed, both for markets and public institutions to change their instruments to meet quantum growing needs, as navigating a forest of barriers has become normalized for accessing a small percentage green financing," said the minister.

The minister was keynoting virtually at a Chatham House Conference on Green Accountability and Climate Finance, a news release said. She said, "The accelerated impacts of climate change require transformational thinking, both in terms of the quantum needed for social impact, but also to bridge the dangerous gap between different levels of emitters, especially for the less-prepared developing world, where the speed and scale of financing can mean the difference now between survival and subsistence, development or dystopia."

The scale of human suffering has totally changed because climate change is coming at us so fast and furious that we're having trouble just understanding its scale and velocity. It can't even be called 'climate change' anymore, it's a 'climate emergency'," she said.

She said that the U.N. estimates that developing countries already need \$70 billion per year to cover adaptation costs now and will need \$140-\$300 billion in 2030, rising to \$280-500 billion by 2050, but she reiterated that these numbers are also underestimated. She highlighted that Pakistan alone needs to invest US\$348 billion by 2030 as per the World Bank's CCDR Report to keep its head above water.

"As it stands, the capitalisation of public financing funds is at a fraction of global pledges made. The total annual investment requirement of developing countries would hit \$2.4 trillion by 2030 but no such amount or fund or resource is available to climate-distressed countries trying to access climate funds to actually rebuild resilience in real-time. The formal green financing mechanisms themselves, such as the GCF and GEF, while important, are difficult to access because they require projectionization which then goes into onerous competitive bidding processes, taking more than a year to materialize. Additionally, the problem of double counting is a serious issue, causing a lack of trust in lending from both bilateral and MDBs to developing countries, as it can simultaneously count towards meeting climate change obligations and development commitments," she said.

The minister said that other than pitching for carbon credits on market frameworks that are non-standardized and fragmented, green financing has become a site of growing contests, so the private sector and businesses must be brought to the table for scaling up the surge of climate financing that is needed. She said, "Big business remains outside of the formal negotiations naturally at multilateral convenings but needs to be brought in as part of the solution. We can't anymore expect just rich states to be the only source of formal funds, and in the current frameworks, the private sector, or blended finance has not been able to tip the scales for countries in distress, because investors look for profits."

Countries struggling with both debt and climate challenges cannot attract the level of climate financing or private investment needed at non-predatory or concessional terms. The public sector financing is clearly drying up, and what is needed right now is for big business to be part of the solution which I am sure they'll want to be, instead of running dazzling side shows at the COP convenings." Responding to the conference agenda of enhancing transparency and accountability of green financial mechanisms, the minister highlighted the challenges of accountability in climate finance, noting that while there have been some successes in controlling corrup-

tion in overseas development assistance for the public sector,

Transparency International reports that significant amounts of climate finance bypass typical control channels. The complexity of the institutional network governing climate finance at international, national, and local levels contributes to this issue. The minister emphasized the importance of multi-stakeholder accountability mechanisms to enhance transparency in designing, implementing, and monitoring adaptation and mitigation frameworks.

She concluded, "The global climate crisis has left no country untouched, but it is the developing world that is facing the most severe consequences. In this context, while IFIs have been crucial players in providing technical support and loan-based support, they must re-adapt their instruments and broaden their initiatives and share expertise to allow more grant-based financing."

The resources needed to limit the reversal of development gains that extreme weather brings, to mitigate risks associated with climate shocks and global crises and prevent the weakening of the resilience of populations to climate change, are estimated at US\$4.2 trillion. Leaders in the Global South are calling for the restructuring of global financial institutions to enable climate financing since they were designed for a post-WWII world order and not for the post-climate change era of today.

PMD forecast wind-dust thunderstorm-rain in coming days

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) has forecast wind-dust/thunderstorm-rain in the country in the coming days.

The met office has informed that an Extremely Severe Cyclonic Storm (BIPARJOY) over the East-central Arabian Sea located at 19.5°N and 67.7°E and 600 km south of Karachi and 580 km south of Thatta and is likely to move further northward till 14 June (Morning).

A westerly wave was also likely to enter in upper parts of the country on June 14 (Wednesday). Under the influence of this weather system, widespread wind-dust/thunderstorm rain with some very heavy/extremely heavy falls accompanied by squally winds of 80-100 Km/hour gusting 120km/hour likely in Thatta, Sujawal, Badin, Tharparker, Mirpurkhas and Umerkot districts during June 13-17.

Dust/thunderstorm-rain with few heavy falls and accompanied by squally winds of 60-80 Km/hour likely in Karachi, Hyderabad, Dadu, Tando Muhammad Khan, Tando Allayar, Shaheed Benazirabad, Sanghar, from June 14 -16.

While rain-wind-thunderstorm is also expected in Sukkur, Larkana, Jacobabad, Zhob, Barkhan, Musa Khel, Naseerabad, Sibbi, Lasbela, Kalat, Khuzdar and Makran coast during the period.

Wind-dust/thunderstorm-rain is expected in Chitral, Dir, Swat, Kohistan, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Swabi, Mardan, Bajaur, Kurram, Waziristan, Kohat, Bannu, Tank, Karak, Dera Ismail Khan, Islamabad, Murree, Galliyat, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Gujranwala, Mandi Bahauddin, Narowal

and Lahore on June 13 and 14

More rain-dust/thunderstorm with a few hailstorms isolated heavy falls is expected in Kashmir (Neelum valley, Muzaffarabad, Poonch, Hattian, Bagh, Haveli, Sudhanoti, Kotli, Bhimber, Mirpur), Gilgit-Baltistan (Diamir, Astore, Ghizer, Skardu, Hunza, Gilgit, Ghanche, Shigar), Chitral, Dir, Swat, Kohistan, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Swabi, Mardan, Bajaur, Kurram, Waziristan, Kohat, Bannu, Tank, Karak, Dera Ismail Khan, Islamabad, Murree, Galliyat, Rawalpindi, Attock, Chakwal, Gujranwala, Narowal, Sialkot, Kasur, Lahore, Jhelum, Sargodha, Sheikhupura, Faisalabad, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh, Nankana Sahib, Mandi Bahauddin, Khushab, Mianwali, Bhakkar, Layyah, Dera Ghazi Khan, Multan, Kot Adu, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar and Rahim Yar Khan from June 15-18 with occasional gaps. About the possible impacts, the PMD said that squally (high intensity) winds may cause damage to loose and vulnerable structures (Katcha houses), including solar panels etc. from June 14 (evening/night) to June 17. Storm surge of 3-3.5 meters (8-12 feet) is expected at the land falling point (Keti Bandar and around) which can inundate the low-lying settlements and may cause coastal flooding during the period.

Fishermen are advised not to venture into open sea till the system is over by June 17, as the Arabian Sea conditions may get very rough/high accompanied by high tides along the coast. Farmers are advised to manage their activities keeping in view the weather forecast.



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery being used to clean a nullah at Kuri Road.

IEA to give facilities to Afghans

KABUL (Agencies): Acting Prime Minister Mawlawi Abdul Kabir in a meeting with the Deputy Minister of Border and Tribal Affairs said the Islamic Emirate strives to provide all the necessary facilities for Afghans at the borders. Acting Prime Minister of IEA Mawlawi Abdul Kabir met with Haji Abdul Khaliq Abed, the deputy Minister of the Ministry of Border and Tribal Affairs, Arg said in a statement.

Inmates handed over to IEA

KABUL (Agencies): Iran authorities handed over 100 Afghan inmates to the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, the prisoners charged with various crimes. The authorities handed over these prisoners after a series of talks between Kabul and Tehran, both sides pledged on some agreements, a statement said. Deputy of Afghan Embassy in Tehran Mohammad Alim Noorani told Bakhtar News Agency that these prisoners will spend their criminal charges in Afghanistan prisons.

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

WHO announces 37 sites testing sewage for polio

KABUL (TOLONews): The World Health Organization (WHO) said that it has 37 sites across Afghanistan to collect sewage samples and check for the presence of poliovirus among the community.

"The environmental surveillance system for polio continues to expand," the WHO said.

According to the UN, Afghanistan and Pakistan are the only two remaining polio endemic countries in the world.

The doctors suggested the establishment of sites to collect sewage samples and check for the presence of poliovirus to root out polio in the country.

"This is a good and great step in such a condition. Almost in all areas of the world polio has been eradicated," said Sayed Abdullah Ahmadi, head of Wazir Akbar Khan hospital.

This comes as some Kabul residents called on the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH) to increase the

number of its employees.

"They may increase the number of their employees all over Afghanistan so the people take advantage of it and are protected against these diseases," said Wahidullah, a resident of Kabul.

"They may activate their teams in all areas and the teams were active before as well," said Jalil Ahmad, a resident of Kabul.

This comes as four positive polio cases have been registered in 2023—all of them in Nangarhar.

Security maintained in Afghanistan after IE sovereignty

KABUL (Agencies): The Acting Mines and Petroleum Minister, Sheikh Shahabuddin Delawar, met with the Deputy Director General of the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) Mohammad Zaid Khater and his accompanying delegation in his office on Monday.

The two sides discussed economic development, mines, and security in Afghanistan, according to a statement released by the Ministry.

Mr. Khater, thanking Minister Delawar for his warm receive reminded of the maintained security after the Islamic Emirate sovereignty across Afghanistan, the statement added.

He expressed his satisfaction on banning the children working in mines by the Ministry of Mines of Petroleum.

Minister Delawar at the end of the meeting, hailed the cooperation of the United Nations with Afghanistan and stressed the development of further bilateral cooperation.

Gas suffocation in coal mine kills 1 miner

BAGHLAN (Agencies): A coal miner died, and another became unconscious due to gas suffocation at a coal mine in Afghanistan's northern Baghlan province, the official said.

According to a statement from the provincial police office, a coalminer died, and another became unconscious due to gas suffocation at a coal mine in the Northern Province of Baghlan.

A toxic gas leak occurred on Saturday as the workers were working in a coal mine in the Tala-o-Barfak district. As a result, one miner died, and another became unconscious; the fainting miner had been transferred to a hospital, the statement said.

Last month, four miners died of suffocation from an explosion in Baghlan province coal mines. On May 23, two separate gas explosions in the Tale Barfak and Jalghah districts of Afghanistan's Baghlan province resulted in the deaths of four coal mine workers.

Abdullah Hamid, the head of Taliban mines in Baghlan, confirmed the two instances. In the first case, two brothers named Nazmir and Abdulsir perished after being suffocated while working in a coal mine in the village of "Peshte Marq" in the Tale Barfak region.

In the second instance, a father and son named Shir and Dost Mohammad died while working in the Jalghah district's "Shahkul Chenark" area.

According to authorities, miners frequently die in Afghanistan due to unconventional mining practices, subpar machinery and unskilled personnel trying to uncover hidden treasures.

Rain-induced floods inflict huge financial losses



PARON (Pajhwok): Flash floods triggered by heavy rains have caused huge financial losses to the people in Nuristan province.

Malem Mohammad Rasoul, a resident of Mandul district, told Pajhwok Afghan News rain-induced flash floods

hit some parts of the district and the people suffered financial losses.

According to him, the floods destroyed agricultural land, houses and bridges.

He said the floods also swept away some animals of the people and damaged the road from Gamta up to

Koraj.

Maulvi Qiyamuddin Janbaz, director of natural disaster management authority, said that initial information suggested that the floods swept away 100 sheep, four cars and damaged 12 shops and a health center in Koraj area.

According to Janbaz, two bridges, several small mills and hundreds of acres of farmland and gardens were also damaged by the flood. There was no report of casualties yet, Janbaz added. The signal of telecommunication was also lost in the area.

Afghan Poet Wujodi remembered on 3rd anniversary of death

KABUL (TOLONews): Jawza 21 (June 11) marks the third anniversary of the death of the famous Afghan poet, Haidari Wujodi, who died in 2020 at age 81.

Wujodi was born in 1939 in the northern province of Panjshir and was drawn to poetry, mysticism and literature from an early age.

During his lifetime, the poet led literature and poetry meetings about the Masnavi Manavi, which is one of the most influential works of Sufism. (The Masnavi, or Masnavi-ye-Ma'navi, also written Mathnawi, is an extensive poem written in Persian by Jalal al-Din Muhammad Balkhi, also known as Rumi).

Wujodi instructed many young Afghans about poetry and its meaning.

The death of Wujodi compelled many Afghan political leaders and academic personalities--people from all layers of society--to pay him tribute.

"Mr. Haidari was working on his research about Maulana (Rumi) after his official work time in government," said Abdul Wahid Qureshi, a manager at the Kitab Khana-e-Ama.

"He wanted to create a circle and he was helping the youth who were interested in poetry," said Fatihullah Wafi, head of Kitab Khana-e-Ama.

Poets and cultural activists suggested that Wujodi's books be published and that special programs should be held to honor his contributions.

"Haidari's understanding from Masnavi of Mawlana (Rumi) and Bidal poetry was so good that he would draw even other instructors of literature around himself," said Najib Barwar, a poet.

Afghans have described Wujodi's death as a major loss in the country's academic field.

Some of Wujodi's best-known works: Eshq wa Jawani (Love and youth), Rahnamayee-e-Manzoo-e-Panjshir, Naqsh-e-Omid (The Role of Hope), Ba Lahzahayee Sabz-e-Bahar (With the Green Moments of the

Spring), Sali Dar Madar (A Year in Orbit), Sayae Marefat (The Shadow of Knowledge), Soor-e-Sabze-Sada (The Green Image of Sound), Miqat-e-Tazzul, Ghurbat-e-Mahtab (The Homelessness of the Moon), Lahzahayee dar Ab wa Atash (Moments in Water and Fire), Away-e-Kabood (The Blue Voice), Arghanoon Eshq (The Purple Love), Shikwa-e-Qamat-e-Muqawomat (The Glory of the Strength of Resistance)

"The heart is like a mirror," Wujodi wrote, "If it is cleansed of dust and fog, whichever way or object you aim it at, the reflection of it will be reflected in the mirror."

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Italian tourists visit historical sites in Balkh province

BALKH (Agencies): A group of Italian tourists visiting Balkh's historical monuments said security in Afghanistan has enabled them to visit Bamiyan, Herat and Kabul in the past nine days. The tourists said they have had positive experiences in the country and have enjoyed their trip so far.

One of the tourists, who was wearing traditional menswear said: "I feel very good, I feel very comfortable in these Afghan clothes, these clothes are very good in hot weather, really these clothes are made for Afghanistan climate, when I go back to Italy again, I will use these clothes there as well."

"I just came to Afghanistan and I am very happy to visit this beautiful country, really, what I had heard about the beauty of this country is exactly the



same, I am really amazed to see this place," said another tourist.

They said they have visited historical sites and have had the opportunity to experience the culture and customs of the Afghan people.

"I am really very happy to come to this country, a country with very old history and culture, I am really happy to be here," said another Italian tourist.

Meanwhile, officials in the Balkh Department of Information and Culture report an increase in the number of domestic and foreign visitors.

Abdul Wahid Ahadi, Director of Tourism at the Department of Information and Culture in Balkh said in the first three months of this year, over 190 foreign tourists from around the world visited the province. "Almost 191 foreign

tourists have visited Balkh province, to see ancient tourist sites; they came from nearly 32 different countries of the world," said Ahadi.

Balkh province has more than a hundred ancient and historical buildings, sites and areas -- including the tomb of Hazrat Ali, the Khanqah of the father of Maulana Jalaluddin Mohammad Balkhi, and the tomb of Rabia Balkhi.

Asadullah named ACB's new Head Selector



KABUL (Agencies): Asadullah Khan has been appointed Afghanistan's chief selector, replacing Noorulhaq Malikzai who stepped down due to family reasons.

Afghanistan Cricket Board (ACB) announced on Monday.

Khan has previously served as acting CEO, chief selector, and video analyst in the ACB.

The selection committee structure will now comprise Asadullah Khan as the chief selector, supported by members Noorulhaq Malikzai as National Selection Member, and members Mir Mubariz, and Ahmad Shah.

Taj Malik Alam and Mohammad Khan Zadran will continue their roles as domestic selectors.

"I am honored to be entrusted with the responsibility of heading the selec-

tion committee of players. ACB is not a new organization for me as I have rich experience working for this great organization in the past. I am committed to identifying talented players and providing them with opportunities to represent our country and achieve success on the international stage," Asadullah Khan said.

Mirwais Ashraf, Chairman of the Afghanistan Cricket Board, commended Noorulhaq Malikzai's "admirable performance" during his tenure as the head of the selection committee. He acknowledged Malikzai's efforts in selecting talented players for the national team and nurturing young talent.

Ashraf also extended his congratulations to Asadullah Khan and expressed his confidence in

his ability to lead the selection committee, emphasizing the importance of securing victories in international matches and bringing glory to Afghanistan, ACB said.

Noorulhaq Malikzai expressed his appreciation for the support and belief shown by the ACB leadership throughout his tenure.

He stated, "It has been a privilege to serve as a head of the selection committee for the esteemed Afghanistan Cricket Board. Due to personal and family commitments, I am unable to continue in this significant position. I have requested to continue my association with ACB as a member of the committee, and I am committed to providing my utmost cooperation to Mr. Asadullah Khan and the board."

1 child killed, 2 injured in mine explosion in Ghor

GHOR (Khaama Press): An official said that one child was killed and two others injured after a mine exploded in the Western Ghor Province of Afghanistan.

A child was killed, and two others were injured after the explosion of a toy-like device in the Ponba Ghalmen area of Firoz Koah City, the capital of Ghor province.

According to Abdul Wahid Hamas, provincial administration spokesperson, the child was killed on the spot after the mine explosion and injured two

others.

Meanwhile, the injured children were taken to the nearby hospital for medical treatment.

Three children were killed earlier, and two others were injured in a similar explosion in Wardak Province of Afghanistan.

Unexploded bombs from previous conflicts have been found throughout the country in recent years, killing and injuring men, women, and including children.

Due to the country's four decades of conflict, it is

contaminated with mines and unexploded bombs, which claim the lives of hundreds of people each month, including children.

International organizations like Australia, Denmark, Germany, Japan, Sweden, the United States, the United Kingdom, and the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) and the UN Central Emergency Response Fund (CERF) have all made donations to support demining in the country since last November.

Night raid victims' families in Maidan Wardak demand justice

MAIDAN WARDAK (Agencies): Families of victims of night operations of foreign forces in Chak Maidan Wardak district are demanding justice from international courts and human rights organizations.

They called the event a war crime and asked the international courts to punish the perpetrators for their actions.

Shams Rahman, one of the relatives of the victims, said that as a result of the night operations of foreign forces in 2016, three women were killed and four others, including children, were wounded.

"When they came (security forces), they said that there was Taliban and when everyone came out of the gate, they shot them," said Shams Rahman.

"We call on the

International Court and UN to prosecute these people and pay damages," said Harm Dil, a relative of victims.

In other provinces, families lost their members over the past 20 years and now they face economic challenges.

"Due to war, many people have been killed and wounded and their families face economic issues," said Akramullah, a Maidan Wardak resident.

"In the past 20 years, people have suffered losses in Maidan Wardak as a result of wars, and we ask the Islamic Emirate and aid organizations to help these people," said Nisar Ahmad, a Maidan Wardak resident.

Meanwhile, the governor of Maidan Wardak province said that in the



wars of the past two decades, during the operations of foreign forces, hundreds of civilians have been killed, and help will be provided to the families of these victims.

"In the past 20 years, foreign forces were raiding civilians in Maidan Wardak province, and the Islamic Emirate has helped these

families," said Bakhtyar Maaz, governor of Maidan Wardak.

Meanwhile, the Australian Defense Minister recently announced that after evaluating the war crimes committed by its forces in Afghanistan, this country will pay compensation to the families of the victims.

Kunar more value as a border province

KABUL (Agencies): The Acting Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in a meeting with the governor of Kunar said that the province of Kunar has special value as a border province.

The Governor of Kunar, Mawlawi Mohammad Ayoub Khalid shared details about the security, economic and social situation of Kunar province, a statement said released by Arg.

All the doors of Islamic Emirate's organs are open to the people and there is good coordination between the public and Islamic Emirate departments, the statement added.

No one is allowed to destruct people's security, any violators of the law would be arrested and dealt with accordingly, Khalid added.

Afghan Refugees face lack of employment opportunities

KABUL (TOLONews): Afghan refugees have complained over lack of job opportunities in Iran, saying they are also concerned about "mistreatment" by authorities.

"Even if an employment opportunity is provided, because of religious issues or for being a Sunni and Afghan, you cannot engage in work. If they are selected for a job, they are given heavy tasks," said Mursal, an Afghan refugee in Iran.

"The refugees have problems in working and residence issues and lack of identification and also the closure of identification and passport centers has created obstacles for the refugees," said Asifa

Stanikzai, a human rights activist.

The Ministry of Refugees and Repatriation meanwhile said on Twitter that more than 2,500 Afghan refugees returned to Afghanistan from Iran on Saturday.

The ministry said that "2,534 refugees arrived in Afghanistan from Iran on Jawza 20 (June 10, 2023).

"According to a border office in Islam Qala of Herat province, 228 of them were sent to IOM to receive assistance," the ministry said.

The Islamic Emirate's spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid called on Iran to treat Afghan refugees properly.

He also said that the Islamic Emirate is making efforts to provide the ground for the return of Afghan refugees from Iran.

"The situation of the refugees should be based on human beings in all neighboring countries, especially Iran. Their rights should be ensured and they should not be deported. Migration is an issue which is difficult for Iran as well to cope with but it should consider it based on neighborly and brotherly manners," Mujahid said.

Iran hosts the highest number of Afghan refugees after Pakistan. Tens of thousands of Afghans have left the country for Iran over the past two years.

Cyclone Biparjoy Sindh govt orders evacuation

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Sindh government has decided to evacuate residential areas and other human settlements located near the coast areas of Sindh, including Badin and Thatta. This decision comes as Cyclone Biparjoy, a powerful weather system looming over the Arabian Sea, poses threats.

The cyclone came within 690km of Karachi on Monday, with winds in the storm traveling between 180 to 200 km/h. According to the latest update from the Pakistan Meteorological Department, Cyclone Biparjoy, also known as ESCS Biparjoy, has tracked further northward over the past 12 hours. It currently lies near Latitude 19.5N, longitude 67.6E, at a distance of about 600km south of Karachi and 580km south of Thatta.

The cyclone is likely to continue moving north until June 14, and then turn northeast, crossing between southeast Sindh and Indian Gujarat on June 15 at noon. The Met Office has classified Biperjoy as a severe storm, showing no signs of weakening. Winds in the center of the storm are blowing at a speed of 180 to 200 kilometers per hour, while the sea surface temperature ranges from 30 to 32 degrees Celsius.

However, waves have reached heights of 30 to 40 feet in the center of the storm. Thatta, Sajawal, and Badin are currently facing the highest risk from the approaching storm. The residents of Thatta are experiencing severe fear and panic as they brace for the potential impact. However, it is concerning to note that no steps have been taken to initiate the evacuation of residents living on offshore islands, leaving them vulnerable to impending danger.

Furthermore, the absence of established relief camps raises significant concerns about the readiness to rescue and provide support to affected citizens. The impact of Biparjoy will keep the city hot, with the temperature reaching 40 degrees Celsius. The temperature in the city is likely to reach 40 degrees Celsius today due to the cyclone. Additionally, the cessation of sea breezes will make it feel like 41 to 42 degrees. Strong winds are expected to blow in the city from June 13 to June 15.

Alongside the strong winds, there is a possibility of heavy showers in various parts of Sindh, including Karachi, Thatta, Badin, Sajawal, Mirpur Khas.

The road leading from Seaview to Village has been closed to traffic due to the cyclone. Both tracks of the road have been closed for traffic as a precautionary meas-

ure in view of the cyclone. In light of Biparjoy, a meeting was held under the chairmanship of the Karachi commissioner to discuss security arrangements across the city. During the meeting, he issued the following orders to the administration. Unnecessary movement of citizens should be stopped during hurricanes and expected rains. Hospitals should be kept on high alert.

Municipal bodies and district administrations should keep the control room active 24 hours a day. The concerned authorities should immediately remove the billboards from the city. KMC, DMC, Water Board, and PDMA have made drainage arrangements more efficient. Relief camps should be established in Ibrahim Haidari, Mubarak Village, and the surrounding areas.

Amid the cyclone threat, Commissioner Karachi has imposed Section 144 on going to the sea as the cyclone is about 910kms away from the port city. According to the notification, bathing, and hunting in the sea will be banned, and fishermen in the sea are also at risk, the ban will be imposed from June 11 until further order.

The Balochistan government has imposed Section 144 across the coastal areas, and all hospitals have been put on high alert. In addition, the leaves of employees in all relevant departments have been canceled. Balochistan Chief Minister Mir Abdul Quddus Bizenjo has instructed the Makran Commissioner and Kalat Commissioner to oversee the implementation of storm response measures.

A day ago, Sindh Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah stated that the areas of Thatta, Sajawal, and Badin face the highest risk from the storm. He said he has also communicated with the Pakistani Army regarding the potential evacuation of residents in those areas, urging them to make necessary arrangements. The individuals who need to be evacuated have already been identified.

Approximately 8 to 9 thousand families are expected to be relocated to safer locations, preferably to paved areas. While the exact categorization of the storm is unknown, the Sindh government is making every effort to address the situation. Instructions have been given to the commissioner in Karachi to secure billboards and other vulnerable structures. He expressed his continuous coordination with various forces, including the Corps Commander Karachi, Hyderabad authority, and DG Rangers, to collectively face the natural calamity and minimize damage while preventing any loss of life.

9 killed as coaster plunges into ravine in AJK

F.P. Report

MUZAFFARABAD: At least nine people were killed while 18 others were injured after a coaster fell into a ravine in Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) during the early hours of Monday, police said. The vehicle, bearing registration number, IOT-1493, was returning from Nairiyan, a remote village in AJK's Sudhnoti district where the victims had gone to attend urs celebrations, to Gujranwala.

As the vehicle arrived near Jarai village, at the border of Kotli and Mirpur at around 1am, it fell into a ravine due to the "negligence of the driver who was unfamiliar with the area".

Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) Kotli Riaz Mughal told media, "The skid marks on the road suggest the speeding vehicle spun out of the driver's control before plunging into the ravine," he said, adding that there were between 28 to 30 people on board the coaster.

The senior police officer said that the local police station was alerted about the incident, following which police and Rescue 1122 personnel from both Kotli and Mirpur rushed to the scene. The SSP said that the driver was believed to have fled the scene, adding that he had been booked under sections 320 (punishment for qatl-i-khata by rash or negligent driving) and 337-G (punishment for hurt by rash or negligent driving) of the Pakistan Penal Code. SSP Mughal said that the deceased and the injured, some of whom were critically wounded, had been shifted to the Divisional Headquarters Hospital, Mirpur.

PTI former KP minister re-arrested

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The Pakistan Tehreek Insaf former provincial minister Shakil Khan was re-arrested by the Malakand administration in a case registered by the anti-corruption establishment (ACE) soon after his release from the district jail Timergara here on Monday.

The former minister along with dozens of the PTI workers and local leaders were taken into custody for blocking roads and damaging public properties during violent protests and riots on May 13. He was kept at the Timergara jail. An anti-terrorism court at Chakdara on Monday accepted his bail petition but he was again arrested as he came out of jail.

Also on Monday the ATC granted bail to over 130 of the PTI workers including divisional organizer of the Insaf Lawyers' Forum Imtiaz Khan who were released from the Timergara jail. The PTI workers and relatives received the jailed workers outside the prison and took them in vehicular processions to their hometowns. Similarly a total of 63 PTI workers including former MNA Junaid Akbar, former MPA Humayun Khan, tehsil chairman Adenzai Fairouz Shah, tehsil chairman Batkhela Nasir Hussain, tehsil chairman Thana Malakand Afzal Khan, village council chairman Gulabad Murad Rehman, deputy convener Insaf Students Federation Malakand Rizwanullah Badwani got bail before arrest (BBA) from an anti-terrorism court at Chakdara.

TikTok star Sundal held

ISLAMABAD (INP): The very intriguing controversy regarding Pakistani Tiktok stars Sundal Khattak and Hareem Shah which has been managing to cause an uproar over social media for quite some time has now come to an end as Sundal Khattak has been arrested by the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) on Monday.

Sundal Khattak and Hareem Shah have lately been asked by the authorities to attend a court hearing which has been conducted due to the very appalling scandal that was initiated after Hareem Shah decided to press charges against her former best friend and TikTok star Sundal Khattak, accusing the Pakistani social media star of leaking some very triggering personal videos of Hareem Shah that contained sensitive content.



MUZAFFARABAD: Speaker Legislative Assembly of Azad Kashmir Chaudhry Latif Akbar taking oath from newly elected member Sardar Zia-Ul-Qamar.

Next govt to face financial challenges: Fazl

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) and Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam Chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman on Monday said that the previous government's ruthless treatment of the country's economy the next government will face severe challenges for its restoration.

Addressing a press conference here at Mufti Mahmood Secretariat, after two days meeting with the party's central members, Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that the meeting focused on the government's commitment to prioritizing relief for the common people. He said that the incidents of May 9, which included attacks on state institutions, were condemned and labeled as a dark chapter in history.

He said that the government was advised to take strict measures in response to such incidents. Pakistan was given a secular identity so the party workers called for actions to restore Islamic identity, said Maulana Fazlur Rehman. Foreign policy was highlighted as a means to protect Pakistan's interests and develop better bilateral relations with regional and neighboring countries, Maulana added.

The meeting discussed the United

Nations resolutions that were ignored regarding Kashmir issue and human rights, he said. He said that investments of China in various sectors were welcomed, adding the economic friendship between Pakistan and China under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) project were made more strengthen. The party central leadership was assigned the task of election preparations in all four provinces, he said.

Immediate restoration efforts were demanded for the storm-ravaged areas of Bannu, Lakki Marwat, and Karak. President Erdogan's victory in the third consecutive election in Turkey was also acknowledged and congratulated in the meeting. The PTI members were questioned about their loyalty to Pakistan's stability beyond their own interests. Reference was made to their association with foreign countries, which raised concerns over their commitment to the country, he said.

Maulana said when attacks occur on government buildings in foreign countries, strong action is taken. The recent incidents in Peshawar, including the BRT, Malam Jabba, and Billion Tree, were mentioned as examples of the need for swift action. Responding a question, Maulana Fazlur Rehman said that former

Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif was not allowed to meet his daughter, as he was in custody despite his wife's death.

PTI voters were advised to reflect on how their votes have affected the country's economy negatively. Pakistan's annual GDP growth has reached zero and major projects have been terminated, said Maulana Fazlur Rehman. The assumption that Imran Khan will become Prime Minister again was dismissed, and it was suggested that one should not fall into the same hole twice. If a PTI leader wishes to join the Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam (JUI-F), they are welcome, but their past mistakes should not be forgiven and they will face cases must, he said.

Maulana recalled that the previous government received 450 billion rupees from the federal government, but their whereabouts are unknown. The promise of providing 100 billion rupees to erstwhile FATA over ten years was made, but only 86 billion rupees were allocated in the last five years. In the upcoming elections, the JUI-F will form an alliance with the party that supports the religious scholars' agenda. Nawaz Sharif will have to decide himself about his return to Pakistan, Maulana responded a query.

Judicial panel to deliberate over SC nominations

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Deliberations for nominations pertaining to the Supreme Court will be held by the Judicial Commission of Pakistan on June 14 amid a significant session in Islamabad.

Peshawar High Court Chief Justice Musarrat Hilali, a distinguished name in the legal fraternity, is being touted to remain in the spotlight and a top contender with regards to inclusion in the esteemed judicial institution. The nominations of former justices of the Peshawar High Court, Justice Qaisar Rashid and Justice Rooh-ul-Amin, will also be discussed during the consultative session.

Meanwhile, the previous session witnessed an engaging discourse as six of the nine commission members called for expeditious appointments to fill

two vacant seats in the apex court. The sources revealed that the highly-regarded name of Sindh High Court Chief Justice Ahmed Ali Sheikh had been unanimously withdrawn from consideration.

In his place, a consensus has been reached to propose PHC Chief Justice Hilali as a candidate. The final verdict on her appointment is eagerly anticipated and will be unveiled during the momentous gathering. However, Supreme Court Chief Justice Umar Ata Bandial's recent nomination of two additional candidates has added a captivating twist to the proceedings.

The inclusion of these names has sparked intrigue and raised eyebrows within the commission, fostering an atmosphere of anticipation and curiosity. Should

Chief Justice Hilali's nomination successfully pass through the commission, it would mark a historic milestone, as she would become the first female judge from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to grace the distinguished corridors of the Supreme Court. Her appointment would not only be a moment of pride for the province, but would also reinforce the growing representation of women in Pakistan's apex court.

Prior to this, Justice Ayesha Malik made history as the first female judge to don the prestigious robes of the Supreme Court, paving the way for future trailblazers. The nation eagerly awaits the commission's decision, as it holds the potential to shape the course of the judicial landscape and the quest for gender equality within the country's top court.

UN chief urges social media integrity to curb misinformation

UNITED NATIONS (APP): UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres Monday called on member states to address the "grave global harm" caused by the proliferation of hate and lies online, as he launched a key report designed to shore up information integrity on digital platforms.

Alarm over the potential threat posed by the rapid development of generative artificial intelligence (AI) must not obscure the damage already being done by digital technologies that enable the spread of online hate speech, as well as mis- and disinformation, he said. The policy brief, which was outlined, argues that there should be integral players in upholding the accuracy, consistency and reliability of information shared by users.

"My hope is that it will provide a gold standard for guiding action to strengthen information integrity," he wrote in the introduction. "Digital platforms – which include social media channels, search engines and messaging apps – are connecting billions of people across the planet, with some three billion users of Facebook alone.

"They have brought many benefits, from sup-

porting communities in times of crisis and struggle to helping to mobilize global movements for racial justice and gender equality. They are also used by the UN to engage people worldwide in pursuit of peace, dignity and human rights on a healthy planet. "Yet these same digital platforms are being misused to subvert science and spread disinformation and hate, fuelling conflict, threatening democracy and human rights, and undermining public health and climate action.

"These risks have further intensified because of rapid advancements in technology, such as generative artificial intelligence," the UN chief said in the report, adding "it has become clear that business as usual is not an option." Although misinformation, disinformation and hate speech, he said, were related and overlap, they were distinct phenomena.

"Hate speech refers to abusive or threatening language against a group or person, simply because of their race, colour, religion, ethnicity, nationality, or similar grounds. "The difference between mis- and disinformation is intent, though the distinction can

be difficult to determine. In general, misinformation refers to the unintentional spread of inaccurate information, while disinformation, while disinformation is not only inaccurate but intended to deceive.

"Regardless, they have all proved to be dangerous and even deadly. "While traditional media remain an important source of news for most people in conflict areas, hatred spread on digital platforms has also sparked and fueled violence," the report said. "Some digital platforms have faced criticism of their role in conflicts, including the ongoing war in Ukraine."

Given the threat, the Secretary-General called for coordinated international action to make the digital space safer and more inclusive while also protecting human rights. Constructive responses had largely been lacking, it was pointed out. "Some tech companies have done far too little to prevent their platforms from contributing to the spread of violence and hatred, while governments have sometimes resorted to drastic measures – including internet shutdowns and bans – that lack any legal basis and infringe on human rights."

Hina, Belgian officials discuss cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khar and Belgian Secretary of State for Migration and Asylum Nicole de Moor on Monday discussed enhancing of cooperation in the field of labour mobility. MoS Hina Rabbani Khar held constructive discussions with the Belgian minister in this regard.

Earlier, she had arrived Brussels on an official visit to Belgium, Foreign Office Spokesperson said in a press release. Minister of State Hina Rabbani Khar also met Senator Allesia Cleas, the Chair of the Pakistan Belgium Parliamentary Friendship Group. The discussions focused on fostering stronger ties between the two nations and exploring avenues for increasing trade and investment cooperation.

Both sides emphasized the mutual benefits of promoting people-to-people contacts as enhancing parliamentary interactions. Khar invited the Belgian Parliamentary members to visit Pakistan and build on the excellent people to people ties between the two countries.

"The visit aims to strengthen bilateral ties between Pakistan and Belgium across all areas of cooperation, with a particular focus on labour mobility from Pakistan to Belgium," the spokesperson said in a press statement. Pakistan attaches great significance to its relations with Belgium, that are embedded in history with a important focus on trade, investment and educational cooperation.

NAB chief pledges to make bureau apolitical

ISLAMABAD (INP): National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Chairman Lt Gen (ret'd) Nazir Ahmed on Monday vowed to make the institution apolitical as he admitted that the anti-graft watchdog had been used as a political tool in the past.

"NAB has been involved in various controversies in recent past and we are cognizant of our shortcomings and mistakes," Mr Ahmed said while addressing a ceremony.

Tareen names Aleem president of Istihkam-e-Pakistan Party

LAHORE (Agencies): Seasoned politician and founder of the Istihkam-e-Pakistan Party (IPP) on Monday announced appointing his close aide Abdul Aleem Khan as the president of his newly-formed party — the new home of most Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) deserters.

Taking to his official Twitter handle, Tareen — a sugar baron and once the close confidant of PTI Chairman Imran Khan — named PTI defectors Aamir Mehmod Kiyani and Awn Chaudhary as secretary general and additional secretary general, respectively. Chaudhary was also appointed as the spokesperson for the party. Amid the ongoing crackdown against the PTI leadership following the May 9 mayhem, Tareen on June 8 officially launched his political party called the IPP.

"We are laying a foundation of a new political party — Istihkam-e-Pakistan Party," announced Tareen at a press conference flanked by former PTI leaders including Aleem Khan, Imran Ismail and others on Thursday. Tareen, who played a major in the formation of the PTI — led government in 2018, said that he joined politics to play his role for the betterment of the country.

"We have gathered at one platform to make joint efforts to lift the country out of this quagmire," he said, adding that the country needed a political leadership which could resolve all prevailing issues including social, economic and others. It is pertinent to mention here that Tareen was disqualified for life after Supreme Court ruled in 2017 that he was found guilty in assets beyond

means case. He was disqualified for concealing his 12-acre Hyde House property in the United Kingdom (UK) in his nomination papers before the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP). The apex court's bench found Tareen to be dishonest under Article 62(1)(f) of the Constitution and Section 99 of the Representation of People Act (ROPA).

Days after officially forming the political party, the IPP founder left for the United Kingdom on Sunday amid speculations that he would hold meetings with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) leaders including party supreme Nawaz Sharif. According to sources, Tareen is expected to stay in the UK for over a week, during which he will hold meetings with the overseas Pakistanis and have his medical check-up.