

Fazl calls on Shehbaz
F.P. Report
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and head of JUI-F Maulana Fazlur Reham met here Friday and discussed the overall political situation in the country. Federal Minister for Communication Asad Mahmood also joined the meeting here at the PM House. Maulana Fazlur Reham lauded PM for allocating funds for development projects in the budget 2023-24 despite financial constraints.

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FP revives memories of Shahida at US State Dept

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: Every few months we hear about a migrate boat sinking in some ocean killing dozens of people including women and children. Such news does get attention of the world for one day but then the world waits to hear another such tragic incident.

Yesterday off the coast of Greece another such incident happened where more than eighty people dead bodies are recovered so far and several dozens are missing. One such incident happened in March and a Pakistani lady, Shahida Raza was among those killed in the ship wreck off the coast of Italy. Shahida was from Quetta and she was a national hockey player of Pakistan. shahida had left her child to seek a better future for herself and her child. One can also wonder about the hard work

she must have done to become a part of National Hockey team.

Yesterday's US State Department briefing started with introduction of Miss Cindy Dyer, who is US Ambassador at large to combat human trafficking. Cindy did not choose the right day to address the media because that same day a very sad incident had taken place off the coast of Greece. Her media interaction was certainly a media mimic. She did mention that Pakistan falls in the top tier of those countries where thousands of people every year use the services of human traffickers to reach their dream destinations.

This business of human traffickers continues to flourish because each year many of these immigrants do make it to their desired destinations and these destinations especially include countries like US, Canada, UK and a few others. So far the efforts of these coun-

tries to combat human trafficking has failed pretty badly and this leaves a big question mark on the security of these countries as well.

On the other hand these dream seekers do not trust the legal way/system to spend their money and try to reach those countries through proper channel. These people choose to risk their lives for a better life and they each carry a sad story behind them.

Whether it was a coincidence or done on purpose that Ambassador Cindy spoke to the journalists at State Department on the same day when eighty plus dead bodies of humans were pulled out of the ocean, at least her speech should have started with prayers for those who died. And with prayers for those whose are left behind these dead individuals.

It's a shame for those countries where such human traffickers operate

and of course this whole cycle can not be completed without the connivance of government machinery. It's a shame for those countries who let's it's citizens die in such circumstances.

The Frontier Post did bring the memory of Shahida Raza in the press briefing of US State Department but the child she has left behind to live in this brutal world does not care about it much because that child needs her mother, who can never come back. Human smugglers from Pakistan are a reality. And in my opinion they are not many in numbers. If any government genuinely tries to get rid of this brutal reality of life, they can do it.

The Frontier Post also asked Ambassador Cindy about human traffickers not getting arrested or serving long imprisonments. Ambassador Cindy replied by saying that she agrees and until human traffickers



work with impunity, this menace can not be controlled. It's about time that Pakistan and a few other countries realize that dead bodies of their citizens do not deserve to be floating in the oceans.

Nawaz to return to lead Pakistan: PM

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Friday here said Nawaz Sharif would return from abroad to lead the country to progress and prosperity after becoming prime minister for the fourth time.

Speaking after his re-election as President of Pakistan Muslim League(N) for a four year term at the party's Central General Council meeting, he said Nawaz Sharif was the builder of modern Pakistan and during his tenure as prime minister he eliminated energy shortages, laid down the network of roads, built infrastructure and developed agriculture, industry and other vital sectors of the economy.

He said he would hand over the presidency of the party to Nawaz Sharif after his return to Pakistan. He thanked the General Council for electing him as its new president and his associates for the leadership positions in the party. He lauded Maryam Nawaz for courageously leading the party all across Pakistan despite all the difficulties that came in her way.

He said sixty percent of the population of the country were youth and Pakistan Muslim League (N) needed young leaders for the future. He appreciated workers of the party for standing by PML(N) despite going through hardships in jails and facing difficulties, adding similarly party leadership also stood its ground and faced oppression and suffering with courage and determination. He said Finance Minister Ishaq Dar was working hard to steer the country's economy out of the present difficulties. Those who were unduly criticizing Ishaq Dar had no place in the party, he added. The prime minister said the government met all the conditions of International Monetary Fund for meeting financial needs of the country. He reminded that PML(N) spent its political capital for the sake of the state at a time when inflation was high and international commodity prices skyrocketed.

Despite difficult economic conditions, common man was given relief in the budget and salaries were raised



by 35 percent and pensions by 17 percent, he noted adding Pakistani nation was brave and would emerge from the current challenges. He said his government signed agreement with Azerbaijan to import gas and bought oil from Russia. He criticized Imran Niazi for spreading lies and false propaganda for his ulterior motives and to mislead people.

The PM said Nawaz Sharif had a comprehensive policy on Kashmir and he forcefully raised the issue of Kashmir at the international forums including the United Nations. Every Pakistani was ready to offer sacrifices for the freedom of Kashmir and no compromise would be made on the rights of Kashmiri people, he added.

PM, PPP leaders discuss prevailing political situation: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif held a meeting with a high level delegation of Pakistan Peoples Party and had a detailed discussion on the current political situation in the country.

Minister for Commerce Syed Naveed Qamar, Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman, Minister for Water Resources Syed Khurshid Shah, Advisor to PM on Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan Affairs Qamar uz Zaman Kaira, Chief Minister Sindh Syed Murad Ali Shah and Senator Nisar Khuro were part of the PPP delegation. Minister for Finance Ishaq Dar and Minister for Planning Ahsan Iqbal also attended the meeting.

During the meeting, the PPP leadership appreciated the prime minister for measures for public welfare in the budget despite the difficult economic conditions.

Federal govt to give professional training, laptops to Balochistan's youth: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif terming talented youth a "real asset" to Balochistan said the federal government would work on strengthening their professional capacity.

He said the youth in Balochistan would be given professional training in diverse areas and laptops would be distributed among them. He was talking to an eight-member delegation of the Pakistan Muslim League (Nawaz) from Balochistan led by Jafar Khan Mandokhel. The other delegates included Jamal Shah Kakar, Sardar Yaquob Nasir, Agha Shah Zeb Durrani, Amir Afzal Mandokhel, Chaudhry Naem, Naseer Achakzai, and Zaheer Khan.

PM Sharif said the progress of Pakistan was linked with the development of Balochistan. The government, he said, was working on priority over the development projects in Balochistan under the umbrella of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor. The meeting discussed the current political situation in the country. The delegation thanked the prime minister for allocating special funds for development projects in the budgetary proposals of fiscal year 2023-24.

Shehbaz elected PML-N President

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Friday was elected unopposed President of the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N) and Maryam Nawaz elected Senior Vice President and Chief Organizer of the party.

They were elected in the intra-party elections held during the General Council meeting of the PML-N here at the party's secretariat. The meeting was chaired by PML-N Quaid Nawaz Sharif online and President Shehbaz Sharif. The result of the intra-party elections were conducted by Chairman of Election Commission PML-N Sardar Muhammad Yousof.

Minster for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal was elected as PML-N General Secretary and Special Assistant to the PM Attaullah Tarar his deputy, while Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb as Information Secretary. Finance Minister Ishaq Dar was elected as President of Overseas and International Affairs.

Ex-principal secy Azam goes missing

ISLAMABAD (INP): Azam Khan, the former principal secretary of former prime minister Imran Khan, has gone missing, media quoting his family members said.

According to details, the family members of Azam Khan – the former principal secretary – lodged a first information report (FIR) at the Kohsar police station, Islamabad. The FIR – which was lodged by nephew – stated that his uncle did not return home after leaving yesterday evening, and his mobile phone is also switched off. Following the filing of the complaint, the police said that they were actively looking into the case and will make a decision once the investigation is concluded. Khan was part of the PTI government, which was ousted in 2022. He was a grade 21 officer till the tenure of the previous government. In 2017, he served as chief secretary in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Imran's sister gets bail

DERA GHAZI KHAN (PPI): A local court in Dera Ghazi Khan on Friday granted interim bail to PTI Chairman Imran Khan's sister Uzma Khan till June 27 in a land fraud case.

An anti-corruption court heard the bail applications filed by Uzma Khan and her husband Ahad Majeed Khan Niazi. Accepting their pleas, the court granted the couple interim bail till June 27. Last week, the Punjab Anti-Corruption Establishment (ACE) registered a fraud case against the sister and brother-in-law of former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan for buying 5,261-kanals of expensive land in the Layyah district at cheap rates through fraud.

Senate passes bill to end lifetime disqualification

Senate approves Election Act (Amend) Bill 2023, commission granting power on election dates

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Senate on Friday has passed a bill amending the Election Act with a majority vote under which the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) can now decide the election date or dates. Despite opposition from PTI and Jamaat-e-Islami senators, the house stamped the legislation amending Section 57 of the Election Act.

The bill empowered the ECP to announce the date or dates for general elections, amend the election schedule or announce the new election date. The Upper House of the parliament has now passed on the right to announce election date to the ECP, the right that was previously rested with the president and the governors of each province. The set of changes introduced through Election Act (Amendment) Bill 2023 also abolished the lifetime disqualification of a legislator. In cases where the duration of deseatng has not been specifically outlined, a person's disqualification to run for provincial or federal legislatures will not exceed five years, the new rules apply.

The amendments say that a person's eligibility to become member of parliament will be decided according to the criteria set under Article 62 and 63 of the Constitution. In case the Constitution does not have a special provision for disqualification, any person disqualified through a court decision will be disqualified for a maximum of five years starting from the day the verdict is announced. Disqualification under Article 62(1)(f) will not go to beyond five years.

The new rules were introduced by amending clause 232 of the Election Act. The changes to bill seeking end to lifetime disqualification was suggested by Senator Hafiz Abdul Kareem and Senator Dilawar Khan. Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar informed the Senate that Pakistan is a responsible state and no one can dare to cast ill eyes on atomic and other assets of the country.

Speaking in the Senate in response to points raised by Senator Mushtaq Ahmed, the minister said that no member of the federal cabinet was taking salaries and

very minimum perks were being given to them. Only 1800 CC car and petrol at par with federal secretary was being given to them. Earlier resuming debate on the budget, Senator Mushtaq Ahmed said that International Monetary Fund (IMF) wanted to default Pakistan and creating hurdles in disbursement of \$ 1 billion tranche. Such tactics were being adopted to snatch atomic bomb facility of Pakistan, he added.

He suggested that elimination of elite and protocol culture besides curbing various 'mafias' were mandatory to address the key challenges to the national economy. He criticized the government for not giving any concrete plan for debt retiring, controlling inflation, civil and police reforms. He said that the national debt has surged to record Rs 60,000 billion and the budget lacked any concrete plan to address this grave issue. He demanded that a commission should be formed to investigate who had borrowed these hefty loans and where it had been spent.

He said inflation has also touched to 38 per cent which was even more than Sri Lanka. There was no programme to over-power circular debt which was a result of mismanagement and poor governance, he added. He claimed that there was also dire need of reforms in FBR as there was leakage of Rs 1000 billion in it. He said that in new merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, no development was carried out and no facility was extended to these areas. Tax exemption should be given to Malakand and erstwhile FATA for next 10 years instead of one year, he said.

Rana Maqbool of PML-N said the government has given a balanced budget despite many challenges. He said many incentives were given to the agriculture and IT sectors besides for youth. He said significant increase in pension and salary of the employees has been announced in the budget which would provide prompt relief to the people. He said amendment should also be brought in the House so its recommendation could be binding to incorporate in the money bill.

KP govt to present budget for four months on 20th

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

Caretaker Minister for Information, Hajji, Auqaf, Religious and Minority Affairs Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel has said that the caretaker government will present the budget for 4 months on June 20, 2023. Relief cheques have been handed over to the families of dead persons due to rainstorms in the southern districts, while the survey is going on to estimate further damages. A wall of shame should be built for the PTI leadership involved in the May 9 incidents, he added.

He furthered that State of the art hospital project is being restarted by the federal government in Hayatabad. He condemned propaganda against military intelligence institutions on social media. The PTI leadership should show its detachment from anti-state elements.

Caretaker Provincial Minister Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel expressed these views during a press conference at Itla Cell Civil Secretariat Peshawar on Friday. He said that anti-state activities are being run on social media against national security and intelligence institutions. Social media activist Adil Rajal is an anti-state and Indian agent who is propagandizing against intelligence institutions and spreading disinformation on social media by taking money from Indian businessmen while sitting

abroad.

The caretaker provincial minister said that such elements of the social media activist have direct links with chairman Tehreek-e-Insaf. If the leadership of Tehreek-e-Insaf is not linkage, then they should express their denial in the media. He said Both former PTI Chief ministers of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa should also announce its denial and detachment from such anti state elements and clarify their position before the nation within 72 hours. Intelligence institutions are our asset," he added".

He said that we strongly condemn targeting intelligence institutions on social media. Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel said that PTI has destroyed and misled the entire generation and misled the youth. He said that the houses of the PTI leadership involved in these tragic incidents should be sold and the building of Radio Pakistan and other public places which were vandalized should be built.

He said that the leadership of PTI came to assemblies by means of public transport but when they left the government, they had luxurious vehicles which had been exposed in yesterday's raids. Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel said that Lt General Retired Chaudhry Faiz Hameed had started the PTI project. If Chaudhry Faiz Hameed has sympathy with the nation, then tell the truth to the pub-

lic that he had prepared the project formula till 2035, the result of that project is the 09 May incidents. If the PTI leadership is patriotic and they are sincere with Pakistan, they should come forward and condemn the events of May 09. If an incident like 09 May happens or whoever thinks of such an incident in future, the public will come forward to beat them instead of the police.

The caretaker minister said that, A Wall of Shame should be built for the PTI leadership involved in the May 09 incidents with their pictures so that people throw eggs on it. Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel said that more than three thousand accused involved in vandalism have been arrested while 33 cases have been handed over to military courts. The demand of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is that the first and second tier leadership of PTI should be banned.

He further said that the state of the art hospital project by the federal government in Hayatabad was pending for the last 20 years, but now the federal government has released money for this project. This hospital will become operational in the next two to three months. He furthered that the PTI leadership came to government only for commission and have burdened the province with debt. Currently, the province has to pay 32 billion rupees in debt and interest.

Pakistan wants good relations with all neighboring states: FM

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, at the 50th Foundation Day of the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad (ISSI), has said that the world today is beset by the inter-locking food, fuel, financial crises and the existential threat of climate

Addressing the event Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that when the Government assumed Office in April 2022, it faced serious challenges on the diplomatic front. Despite that, we diligently pursued a foreign policy aimed at addressing our national challenges, opening doors for our people, improving access of our goods and services, preserving

Türkiye, Iran, and Qatar and we see a positive trend in Pakistan-Africa bilateral linkages in terms of trade, political, parliamentary, and military & security Cooperation.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that Pakistan has clearly voiced its opposition to any bloc politics or relapse into the Cold War, forging military alliances and assigning the role of 'net security provider' to some countries at the expense of others is fraught with grave consequences. He said that in our view, the main driver for international relations should be cooperation, not confrontation, there is everything to be gained from economic inter-dependence and peaceful coexistence?

He said that the ALL-weather Strategic Cooperative Partnership between Pakistan and China has been enduring and mutually-beneficial over several decades, China remains a steadfast and reliable partner, and our bilateral ties continue to strengthen across myriad fields. He said Pakistan is fully committed to ensuring the success of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), the China Pakistan Economic Corridor's extension to Afghanistan and further West would help significantly advance our agenda of connectivity and economic integration.

Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said that as a friend of both Russia and Ukraine, we hope that there will be move towards peaceful resolution of the ongoing conflict through dialogue and diplomacy and we earnestly hope the current drift would be reversed and a beginning would be made towards addressing mutual concerns and building sustainable peace in Europe again.



change. He said that the most distinguishing feature of our times is the intensifying great-power contestation – which has in its wake the potential to divide the world, undermine the prospects of international collaboration to tackle global challenges, and even evoke major-power conflict, if the current trends are not checked and reversed, we might end up losing the world itself. He said seeking to preserve the current world order, Pakistan's foreign policy therefore, must be imaginative, multi-dimensional, and flexible enough to adapt to the rapidly transforming geo-political landscape across the globe.



BISP completes survey of 2,062,031 households so far

ISLAMABAD (APP): Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) has so far completed a survey of 2,061,031 households under the dynamic registry through its registration centers at the district level across the country. According to an official source, the dynamic registry is aimed at identifying more poor households and enabling them to register under the program and get quarterly stipends and benefits from other schemes.

The survey of 643,183 households in Punjab, 575,926 in Sindh, 510,511 in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 89,241 in Azad Jammu and Kashmir, 45,395 in Gilgit Baltistan (GB) and 7,905 households in Islamabad. The BISP has also specified "Saturday" for special persons, those above 65 years of age, and transgender persons to register through the dynamic survey without any hassle.

More than 600 dynamic registration centers are operating across the country to facilitate the registration process.

WB delegation meets Sharjeel



F.P. Report

KARACHI: The World Bank delegation met with the Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon, at the Archives Complex in Karachi. Later, the World Bank delegation also attended a review meeting chaired by Provincial Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon regarding the Yellow Line BRT project.

Secretary Transport Salim Rajput, MD Sindh

Mass Transit Authority Kamal Dayo, Senior Transport Specialist Hassan Zaidi, Transport Specialist Bilal Paracha, World Bank Task Team Leader Lincoln Flor, Practice Manager Jen Jungeun Oh, and Program Leader Infrastructure Teuta Kacaniku were present in the meeting.

During the meeting, the attendees discussed the challenges faced by the Yellow Line BRT project and explored potential solutions to address those

issues. In the meeting, Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit, Sharjeel Inam Memon, expressed his strong desire to expedite the completion of public transport-related projects. He emphasized the importance of timely execution to ensure the efficient delivery of services to the public.

During the meeting, Minister Sharjeel Inam Memon stated his intention to initiate BRT projects across the province, aiming to provide improved, cost-effective, and comfortable travel facilities to the people. Sharjeel Inam Memon mentioned that there is a growing demand from the residents of all districts in Sindh to establish a service similar to the People's Bus Service, the Sindh Government plans to procure additional vehicles to enhance the public transportation facilities and cater to the needs of the people.

Fahd Haroon, reassures the vision of Quaid-e-Azam that 'Pakistan is and will remain the Pivot of the World'

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Mr. Fahd Haroon, the Special Assistant to the Prime Minister of Pakistan with the status of Minister of State for Public Communication and Digital Platforms, visited the historic Jinnah House in Lahore today to express solidarity with the people of Pakistan and condemn the forces working against the interests and stability of the country. Mr. Haroon's visit comes in the wake of recent violent incidents and damage to the Corps Commander House on May 9th, 2023.

During his visit, Mr. Fahd Haroon made a pledge to the people of Pakistan that such incidents would never ever be allowed to happen anywhere in the country. He emphasized the importance of maintaining peace, unity, and security and expressed the government's commitment to holding the culprits accountable and make sure that those responsible for the violence and vandalism are put to Justice because of their acts of barbarism and

savagery done on the May 9th, 2023.

The Corps Commander House, also known as Jinnah House, holds immense historical significance as the official residence of the Lahore Corps Commander. Originally owned by Mohan Lal Bashin, it was acquired by the founder of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, in 1943. Since Quaid-e-Azam's death, it has served as the official residence for the Corps Commander of Lahore.

Mr. Fahd Haroon expressed deep concern over the damage inflicted upon this historical property and its contents. He emphasized the need for a thorough investigation to ensure that all those who have damaged the property and committed treachery are brought to justice and ensuring that justice is served.

During his visit, Mr. Haroon reaffirmed his unwavering commitment and love for the nation. In a heartfelt gesture, he dedicated a message in the visitor's book, reassuring the vision of Quaid-e-Azam that Pakistan is and will

remain the Pivot of the World. Jinnah House, a symbol of Pakistan's rich history and heritage, holds a special place in the hearts of Pakistanis. As Mr. Haroon walked through the halls of this iconic bungalow, he was filled with a deep sense of patriotism and admiration for the sacrifices made by the founding father, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah.

Expressing his love and dedication for Pakistan, Mr. Fahd Haroon said, "Pakistan, the Pivot of the World, continues to be the embodiment of our dreams and aspirations. I reaffirm our commitment to Quaid-e-Azam's vision and pledge to work tirelessly to safeguard the interests and stability of our great nation." Through his heartfelt message, Mr. Haroon emphasized the enduring significance of Pakistan on the global stage and its role as a pivotal player in shaping the world's future. He highlighted the country's unwavering determination to uphold the principles of freedom, democracy, and progress.

Mosquito nets, hygiene kits to combat dengue outbreak handed over to relief department

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Secretary of the Relief, Rehabilitation, and Settlement Department Khyber PAKHTUNKHWA, Abdul Basit has expressed his profound appreciation for the invaluable support and coordinated efforts of Médecins du Monde (MDM) in anticipation of a potential Dengue outbreak in the province.

Speaking at a special event held at the PDMA Humanitarian Response Facility Jalozai, Secretary Abdul Basit commended MDM for actively raising awareness across the province. MDM has generously donated a total of 3,900 mosquito nets and 2,950 hygiene kits to the Relief Department as per the Provincial Dengue Action plan 2023. These essential supplies will play a critical role in safeguarding public health, said spokesman of the KP PDMA. Mr Basit emphasized the significance of collaborative efforts between government departments and international organizations like MDM in effectively addressing public health challenges. He further



acknowledged the unwavering dedication and commitment of MDM in providing timely support and conducting mass awareness cam-

paigns. The donated mosquito nets and hygiene kits will be strategically distributed to high-risk areas identified by the Relief

Department. The distribution will be carried out by the attached bodies, Rescue 1122 and Civil Defense, with the aim of reducing Dengue transmission and promoting proper hygiene practices among residents. MDM has consistently been at the forefront of humanitarian initiatives. Their contribution to the fight against Dengue in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa marks another significant milestone in their ongoing efforts to combat infectious diseases and improve global health.

Awareness alert regarding the use of internet

Itfikhar Malik

The internet has become an integral part of our lives, especially for youngsters. In today's digital era, the internet provides a wealth of information and entertainment, and it has made communication easier than ever before. Perhaps most importantly, the internet has opened up a whole new world of information. Since it is a vast and democratized library of information, it provides the youth access to various educational resources, such as e-books, research papers, and online courses. Young people can learn new skills and knowledge, and stay up-to-date on current events and trends. This is especially important for students who may not have access to these resources in their schools or local communities. But unfortunately the younger people are not reaping the benefits of this great technology to their benefit. Instead they are misusing the internet by wasting time on useless and time consuming apps.

The young minds are being shaped and influenced in a harmful manner by the continuous unchecked exposure to everything negative on the internet. There are a lot of influencers

online which have millions of followers on the popular social media apps and they are not guiding the younger generation in the right manner. Instead the younger generation has started on a venture that will not be proving as beneficial in the long run.

Internet is not just online gambling and gaming. There are a lot of healthy activities that younger lot can engage themselves into.

For example, the internet has made communication easier than ever before. Social media and messaging apps have revolutionized the way we communicate with each other. People of all age groups can connect with friends and family members who live far away, and they can make new friends from all around the world. This has helped to break down cultural barriers and promote understanding and tolerance.

In addition to this, the internet has provided new opportunities for creative expression. Young adults can use various platforms to showcase their talents and creativity, such as YouTube, TikTok, and Instagram. They can share their thoughts, ideas, and work with other like-minded individuals, and even monetize the fruit of their labour.

Speaking of economic opportunity, the internet has revolutionized the way

we do business, offering new and massive economic opportunities that were never before possible. From e-commerce and online marketplaces to digital advertising and social media marketing, the internet has opened up a whole new world of possibilities for entrepreneurs and businesses of all sizes. The rise of freelancing and remote work has also been made possible by it, allowing individuals to tap into a global talent pool and work from anywhere in the world. Furthermore, the internet has made it easier to access information and education, providing people with the tools and knowledge they need to start and grow their own businesses. Overall, the internet has created a more level playing field, giving everyone the chance to succeed in the global economy.

It is therefore the need of the hour that parents, together with schools and teachers, should work together to inculcate positive habits in their children to enable them to use the internet effectively as a means of learning, communication, and artistic expression. Afterall it is a tool - an extremely powerful one, and the result of using that tool depends entirely on the capability and intentions of the one wielding it.

Cyclone Biparjoy averted, life in coastal belt inching towards normalcy: CM

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah Friday commended all provincial government departments, particularly the essential services, and the police for working hard and dedicatedly in view of Cyclonic Biparjoy and said that the Sindh government had taken effective

measures to protect life and property of the people living along the coastal belt.

He said that in view of the cyclone, the provincial government took effective precautionary measures but with the grace of Allah, the cyclonic storm had been averted and life in the coastal belt was inching

towards normalcy. He commended all the institutions of the government for their hard work and dedication and expressed gratitude to the Pakistan Army, Navy, Rangers, and Maritime Security for their cooperation with his government. He also thanked welfare organizations for extending a helping hand to the government in dealing with the situation. He

also appreciated the cooperation of the people living along the coastal belt and in dangerous buildings in Karachi for vacating their houses. "I believe it is quite painful to vacate homes, but it was a question of security and safety of the people, therefore they were requested for the purpose," he said adding that they understood the situation and cooperated.

File Lost

Mr. Alam Khan S/O Bakhat Sher, CNIC No. 15702-0397935-3 have lost an original file of Blue World City Overseas Block Islamabad, Residential App Form No. OS-NR-N-0165, Registration No. BWOM48L61J somewhere in Timergara Lower Dir. Anyone who finds it, is requested to return the same to me. Advertiser: Alam Khan s/o Bakhat Sher, Kakad P/O Wari Bala District Upper Dir, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Contact # +923072701119z

EXPRESSION OF INTERESTS

REHABILITATION OF ECOTOURISM TRACKS / BRIDAL PATHS AND ESTABLISHMENT OF CAMPING FACILITIES AT GALIYAT ON BUILT, OPERATE AND TRANSFER (BOT) BASIS

Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Forest Department, Climate Change, Forestry, Environment and Wildlife Department Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for the promotion of ecotourism, socio-economic development, promoting non-consumptive uses, conservation of bio-diversification (flora & fauna) and revenue generation invite expression of interests for pre-qualification of interested parties / investors for the development of bridal paths / tracks and camping facilities in Reserve Forests on Built, Operate, Transfer (BOT) Basis.

i. The details of the bridal paths and camping facilities are as follows:

i. Ayubia to Khairagali Bridal Path	Total Length 06 KM
ii. Camping facility at Changlagali Top	Area 01 acre
iii. Namigali to Dagri Bridal path	Total length 18 KM
iv. Camping facility at Dagri	Area 01 acre
v. Baragali to Geh Bridal path	Total length 06 KM
vi. Camping facility at Bagh	Area 01 acre

2. SALIENT FEATURES:

- To reduce pressure on natural forest by promoting their non-consumptive use through tourism development.
- To rehabilitate the Forest Bridal Paths/Tracks in environmental friendly manner to promote eco-tourism, improvement of livelihood, socio-economic uplift of local communities without liquidation of forest resources alongwith least disturbance to nature and forest eco-system.
- To establish environmental friendly camping facilities in its natural state and landscape without disturbing the land status and biodiversity.
- The bidder(s) shall be responsible for all fees, costs and expenses incurred in preparing and negotiating any expression of interest as well as proposal submitted by them and Forest department shall under no circumstances become liable to reimburse any bidder for any such fees, costs or expenses regardless of the conduct or outcome of bidding process.
- Forests department reserves the right to reject any or all Expression of interests, proposals.
- Interested parties are required to submit their EOI and information / biodata in a sealed envelope clearly marked "Rehabilitation of eco-tourism track / bridal paths and establishment of camping facilities in Build, Operate and Transfer (BOT) basis at Galiyat" for each track and camping facility on or before 30th June, 2023 upto 1100 hours. Submission should be delivered either by hand or Courier service at the address mentioned below. Any submission after the specified date will not be accepted. All inquiries regarding the details about the EOI/Advertisement should be directed to:

Divisional Forest Officer

Galis Forest Division

Civil Lines Officer, Near Shahzada Masjid Abbottabad.

Ph #: 0992-9310306

INF(P) 1319/23

PROJECT MANAGEMENT UNIT (PMU)
KP-HUMAN CAPITAL INVESTMENT PROJECT (KP-HCIP)
E&SE DEPARTMENT
GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA
(email address: pd.heip@outlook.com)

CORRIGENDUM

With reference to/or Request for Expression of Interest (REOI) as advertised in the Daily Mashriq dated 03.06.2023 & 11.06.2023 and Corrigendum in the Daily Mashriq and The News dated 09.06.2023 for hiring of Consultancy Services for Community Engagement Firm, the last date of submission of EOIs is extended to 10th July 2023. The remaining terms and conditions remain the same.

Address: Project Director Human Capital Investment Project, H.No. 1-2A, Park Avenue, University Town, Peshawar, Pakistan
Attention: Tel: 091-9224270

COURT NOTICE

In the Supreme Court of Pakistan (Appellate Jurisdiction), Notice under order XIV, Rule 10 Supreme Court Rules, 1980 Civil Appeal No.911 of 2018 Bibi Sultana (deceased) through her LRs...Appellants Versus Zarshad & others... Respondents. On Appeal from the judgement dated 09.05.2118 of the Peshawar High Court, Mingora Bench (Dar ul Qaza, Swat passed in C.R.No. 1441/P/2010). To 1. Syed Bakht Shah son of late Gul Shah of Shahrshamo Tangay Mashwani village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. 2. Pir Shadi son. 3. Min Shad son. 4. Noshad son. 5. Nasib Shad son. 6. Anwar Shad son. 7. Sahib Shad son. 8. Umar Shad son. 9. Amnah Shad son. Respondents from serial 2 to 9 are sons of late Poshad residents of Merah village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. 10. Khair ul Bashrah. 11. Khair ur Rehman sons of Abdul Sattar residents of Gulshan Abad village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. 12. Saifullah s/o Sher Aziz. Khan resident of Shanganat village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. 13. Suleman s/o late Sher Afzal Khan. 14. Munir ullah s/o Habib ullah Khan 15. Mst. Zainara resident of Gulshan Abad village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. 16. Mst. Bakhtnisa d/o late Zarul Khan resident of Shanganat village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. 17. Mst. Zainara Sher d/o late Zarul Khan residents of Cheena thehsel Daggar district Buner. 18. Nasar Khan s/o late Amir Jawab Khan resident of Gulshan Abad village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. 19. Ghafar Khan son. 20. Mst. Rukhsana. 21. Mst. Bibi Hawa daughters of late Sher Nawab Khan resident Shanganat village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. 22. Khalid Said s/o late Mst. Bakhtnisa resident of Merah village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. 23. Ajmal s/o late Zarif Khan. 24. Zia ur Rehman s/o late Mst. Samina d/o late Zarif Khan residents of Muhallah Cham village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. 25. Syar Khan s/o Maltab Khan resident of Merah village Ailal thehsel Daggar district Buner. Take notice that the above cited Direct Civil Appeal has been filed under Article 185(2)(d) of the constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan 1973 and the paper books in the above cited appeal have since been completed, copies thereof will be available at Principal Seat Islamabad for delivery to you as required by order XIV Rule 7, Supreme Court Rules 1980. The concise statement may be filed at any time before the appeal is set down for hearing. You are therefore required through this notice by way of publication to enter appearance within 30 days either in person or through an advocate-on-record duly appointed according to the Supreme Court Rules, 1980, failing which, the appeal will be set down for hearing ex-parte as against the non-appearing respondent, under order XVI, Rule 6, Supreme Court Rules, 1980. Given under my hand and seal of this court, (Fawad Ahmed) Assistant Registrar (Civil-1) for Registrar Supreme Court of Pakistan Islamabad.

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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST
(Consultancy Services for Community Engagement Firm)

Country: Pakistan
Name of Project: Human Capital Investment Project (Education)
Loan No. Grant No.: IDA67140-PK/PD680-PK
Assignment Title: Hiring of Firm for Community Engagement Including Gender Mainstreaming Activities.
Reference No.: PK-EDUPMU-349432-CS-QCBS

The Human Capital Investment Project, Elementary and Secondary Education Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has received financing from the World Bank toward the cost of the Human Capital Investment Project, and intends to apply part of the proceeds for consulting services.

The consulting services ("the Services") include:-

- Designing/financing community engagement strategy and action plan and Implementation of Community Engagement Plan.
- Community Sensitization (awareness in civil rights, in school/education governance, Gender Based Violence (GBV) and gender mainstreaming, awareness/ capacity building (in original four (4) project districts) and on in Disaster Risk Reduction/Resilience (DRR) and prevention of disease out-breaks and its management (in flood affected districts).
- Parent Teacher Councils (PTCs) Level (Strengthening (sensitization) of PTCs in knowledge on civil rights, school/education governance & state accountability and awareness/ orientation sessions on GBV and sexual harassment) and training of PTCs on DRR/DRM & Development of School Safety Plan (SSP).
- Local Government Representatives (Sensitization/ awareness of LG representatives (civil rights, girls' education, school/ education governance).
- Officials of Education Department (Sensitization/ awareness trainings for the officials of education department in understanding of civic rights, accountability & role of community in school education governance to recognize the community/ PTCs' role).
The above activities will be carried out in the following Four Districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (1) Peshawar, (2) Nowshera, (3) Swabi and (4) Haripur.
- The DRR/DRM and Development of schools safety plan activity will be carried out in Thirteen Districts which are (1) Peshawar, (2) Nowshera, (3) Swabi and (4) Haripur (5) Dir Payan (6) Charsadda, (7) Abbottabad (8) Lakki Marwat, (9) D.I. Khan, (10) Upper Chitral, (11) Dir Bala, (12) Swat, (13) Tank.

The Human Capital Investment Project Elementary & Secondary Education Department now invites eligible consulting firms ("Consultants") to indicate their interest in providing the Services. Interested Consultants should provide information demonstrating that they have the required qualifications and relevant experience to perform the Services. The shortlisting criteria are:

- The firm must be registered with government entity such as Security & Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP), Societies Registration Act 1860 (SRA) and Social Welfare Department. In case of a foreign firm, it should be registered with the relevant authorities of their parent country. In addition to this, the consultancy services firm should have a legal authorization to work in Pakistan.
- Overall, the firm have collectively 7-10 years' professional experience in designing and implementation of community level projects, well experienced in successful implementation of 3-5 similar nature of community engagement programs/ projects in different societies with different organizations and at least one project(s)/ interventions specifically in the Education Programs/ projects.
- Ability to undertake technical policy-focused approach related to Enhancing Community Engagement and Accountability in the Education Sector.
- Experience of working with a range of organizations including local communities, civil society, and government organizations.
- Strong analytical capacity and experience in community mobilization, sensitization, assessments/ profiling, data analysis, FGDs, socio-economic analysis, needs assessment. PTCs training and program design.
- The firm having a team of professionals with excellent report writing, communication and interpersonal skills and having work experience in the Project area of influence.
- Should have adequate professional staff both women and men. (CVs not required at shortlisting stage) Firm should have adequate logistical capacity and should either have its local presence in the proposed districts or commit to establish its presence here for smooth functioning by signing of contract Firms are encouraged to provide only materials that are specific to the proposed services, and to avoid submitting generic promotional material. Consultants may associate with other firms in the form of a joint venture or a sub-consultancy to enhance their qualifications.

The attention of interested Consultants is drawn to paragraph 1.9 of the World Bank's Guidelines: Selection and Employment of Consultants under IBRD Loans and IDA Credits & Grants by World Bank Borrowers ("Consultant Guidelines"), setting forth the World Bank's policy on conflict of interest.

Consultants will be selected in accordance with the Quality and Cost based Selection (QCBS) method out in the Consultant Guidelines of World Bank.

Procurement should be completed as per Quality and Cost Based Selection (QCBS) method in accordance with Section II of Consultant Guidelines. Further information can be obtained at the address below during office hours [i.e. 0900 to 1700 hours]. Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below.

Expressions of interest must be delivered in a written form to the address below (in person, or by mail, or by e-mail) by 10 July 2023 by 16:00 hours.

Address:
Project Director
Human Capital Investment Project,
H.No. 1-2A, Park Avenue, University Town
Peshawar, Pakistan
Attention: Tel: 091-9224270 Fax: 091-9224270,
Email: pmukphcip@gmail.com

INF(P) 1345/23

Establishment of illegal car parking PHC orders authorities to submit reply till July 11

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) ordered Deputy Commissioner, Cantonment Executive Officer, Station Commander Peshawar, Secretary Defense, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Agriculture's department to submit comments regarding establishment of illegal carparkings and encroachment on Sadr, Fakhar Alam roads and Kala Barhi while adjourned further 11th July, on Friday.

The counsel Bashir Wazir Advocate informed that in Cantonment Board several illegal car parking and encroachment had established in Sadr, Fakhar

Alam along with other roads and Kala Barhi areas which has created hurdles in communications of public in the premises.

The counsel argued that the petitioner requested the shopkeepers to remove encroachment, however, traders threatened him despite cooperating in the matter. He argued that petitioner is law abiding citizen while Shaukat Ullah the applicant has office in the premises and facing road blockade on routine due to establishment of illegal car parking and encroachments.

The counsel informed that roads are blocked regularly due to establishment of illegal car parking and encroachment in the premises of Cantonment Board Peshawar. He added that competent authorities had turned blind toward the issue the VVIP movement in the area due to its importance and location.

The counsel Bashir Wazir Advocate argued Bus Rapid Transit had already shortened the width of road in the premises while on the other hand establishment of illegal car parking has made the situation worsened.

PHC's divisional bench comprised of Justice Muhammad Ibrahim Khan and Justice Shakeel Ahmad ordered respondents to submit comments in this regard and adjourned further hearings till 11th July.

Governor: No compromise on quality education

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor, Haji Ghulam Ali here Friday said that provision of quality education was the top priority of the government and no compromise would be made on supremacy of merit and learning in the educational institutions.

He was addressing a function after laying the foundation stone of the Peshawar Model Softer project of Peshawar Model educational institute during his visit to the city university of science and technology, Peshawar. Provincial Minister Adnan Jalil, Saboor Sethi, Gayoor Sethi and Secretary Higher Education were present.

While appreciating owners and administration of the City University and its allied education institutions for provision of quality education at minimum fee to people, the governor said that promotion of quality education was the prime priority of the government and no compromise would be made on quality education and supremacy of merit. He said there was a need of solid thinking if performance of the government education institutions were not improved despite resources provided by the Government. He said the country can make rapid progress and achieve economic growth by providing quality education to children.



PESHAWAR: President City University Sabur Sethi and Zubair Afridi giving away shield to Governor KP Haji Ghulam Ali during the inauguration ceremony of Peshawar Model Sapphire Hayatabad Campus.

Progress on Mohmand Dam reviewed

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Commissioner Peshawar Division, Muhammad Zubair here on Friday presided over a meeting held to review progress of work on under construction Mohmand Dam. At the meeting a special committee was constituted under the headship of Deputy Commissioner Mohmand for land acquisition for the right bank canal of Mohmand Dam.

The meeting besides others was also attended by DC Mohmand, DC Charsadda and officers from relevant departments.

At the meeting Commissioner Peshawar Division was briefed in detail regarding construction, land acquisition and other issues of the Mohmand Dam.

At the meeting it was decided that issues related to land acquisition for the right bank canal would be addressed in a phased manner. A piece of 18 acres land would be acquired in the next week, the meeting decided. A special committee headed by the Deputy Commissioner Mohmand and DC Charsadda, land acquisition collector and representative of the Mohmand Dam as its members will address issues related to the construction of the dam and canals.

Addressing the meeting Commissioner Peshawar Division, Muhammad Zubair said that DC Mohmand would ensure payments of salaries and formation of PC-1. The meeting also decided in order to provide employment to the local people in Mohmand Dam project, the services of CCTA and TEVTA of the Pakistan Army would also be hired.

Hot, humid weather likely

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Friday predicted that hot, humid and partly cloudy weather is expected over most districts of the province.

However, It said that dust and thunderstorm coupled with rains and isolated hail-storm is likely to occur over Lower & Upper Dir, Chitral, Malakand, Buner, Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Torghar, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur, Swabi, Mardan, Nowshera, Peshawar, Charsadda, Bajaur,

Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, Hangu, Kohat, Karak, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, North & South Waziristan, Tank and Dera Ismail Khan districts.

The dust storm and dust raising winds are likely to occur in the plain areas of Peshawar, Charsadda, Nowshera, Mardan, Swabi, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, D.I.Khan, Tank, Kohat and Karak districts. Rain may trigger landslides in vulnerable areas of Swat, Shangla, Kohistan, Mansehra and Balakot during the forecast period.

During the last 24 hours, weather remained hot, humid

and partly cloudy over most districts of the province. However, thunderstorms and rain occurred at isolated places in Kohat, Mansehra, Bajaur, Upper Dir, Peshawar, Nowshera and Mardan districts. Rain recorded (in mm): Kohat 08, Balakot 07, Bajaur (Khar 02 & Pashat Trace) , Upper Dir 01, Peshawar, Nowshera & Mardan Trace (each).

The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar City 38/26, Chitral 36/17, Timergara 34/22.

Fawad Khan defends his MPhil thesis

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Scholar Fawad Khan on Friday successfully defended his MPhil thesis at a public defence held at Botany department of University of Peshawar.

He completed his research work under the supervision of Prof Dr. Fazli Hadi. Associate Prof Dr. Muhammad Adnan of Kohat University of Science and Technology was his external examiner.

The scholar did his research on " Floristic and ethno ecological profile of Tehsil Ghazni Khel District Lakki Marwat". Senior faculty members, research scholars and students attended the defence event.

CJ PHC chairs 11th PJC meeting

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Justice Peshawar High Court Justice Musarrat Hilali chaired the 11th Provincial Justice Committee meeting at the PJC Secretariat, which was also attended by the Registrar, Peshawar High Court, Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Inspector General of Police, IG Prisons, SMBR, Additional Chief Secretary, Secretary Law, Secretary Home, Joint Secretary Law & Justice Commission of Pakistan and others.

The implementation status of the decisions taken in the previous meeting was reviewed. The Chair expressed satisfaction on implementation of the decisions. Directions were issued to Departments regarding decisions partially implemented. Discussion ensued on agenda items.

The Committee was informed that land at Hayatabad Peshawar has been earmarked and possessed by the Home Department where after release of funds by the concerned department, state of the art Forensic Science Laboratory will be established in a phase wise manner.

The Offenders Management System and data integration of Justice Sector Stakeholders was also on the agenda. The Committee was appraised that a Technical Working Group (TWG) is constituted in this regard where after deliberations and meetings, certain recommendations were made regarding data entry of all the documents in the public domain by the Police Department and the IT Wing of the Peshawar High Court will ensure introducing the feature of accessibility of data to the Presiding Officers of the Courts and it will work on introducing modules of Police, Prosecution and

Prisons with a Case Flow Management and Information System while the Prisons Department will give regular updates on the deployment of the new Software.

Regarding simplification of inter-provincial transfer of accused persons, Advocate General and Secretary Home informed the Committee that the requisite data has been shared with the Ministry of Interior for further process. The representative of the P&D, Peshawar High Court, though stated that the acquisition of land for construction of Judicial Complexes at Newly Merged Districts is smooth, however the allocation of funds is the need of the day. The establishment of Shelter Homes and Dar-ul-Aman also came under discussion.

The Secretary Social Welfare informed that the Shelter Homes have been established and working on regular basis in 8 districts while for capacity enhancement of Dar-ul-Aman, one each in Peshawar, Mardan, Haripur, Abbottabad, Mansehra and Swat are reflected in ADP 2022-23. Regarding establishment of facility at district D.I Khan, it was directed that the bottlenecks shall be removed and in this respect, the Advocate General will coordinate with the concerned department.

IG Police informed the Committee that the security measures have been boosted at almost all the court premises in KP and similarly fool proof security has been provided to the Judicial Officer working at North Waziristan. He further appraised that though the Law & Order situation in South Waziristan is volatile, however, security will be provided not only to the Judicial Officers transferred there but to the court premises as well. Jail

issues were thoroughly discussed.

The Committee was informed that the Home Department will coordinate with the Public Health Engineering Department for provision of clean drinking water in District Jail Karak. Similarly, the matter regarding shifting of Internment Center from Lakki Marwat Jail is in process and soon after its completion, the inmates will be shifted to the said jail. The Secretary Home also informed that to cater with the provision of drinking water facility in the newly constructed Hangu Jail, funds have been released.

The directives issued by the NJPMC in the last meeting also came under discussion including expeditious disposal of cases of Under Trial Prisoners. Member Inspection Team, Peshawar High Court apprised that a dedicated cell has been maintained at the Secretariat of District Judiciary, a team of officers is regularly monitoring the progress regarding expeditious disposal of cases of Under Trial Prisoners.

The Chair directed that Prosecution shall produce the Police witnesses before the courts immediately without unnecessary delay. Vice Chairman KP Bar Council was asked to take on board the Bar Members to prioritize the cases of Under Trial Prisoners. Regular meetings in this respect will be held by the AIG Investigation and DG Prosecution to review the progress of disposal of cases. The bottlenecks if any shall be brought before the concerned District & Sessions Judge who shall take immediate remedial measures. It was decided that the ratio of disposal of cases of Under Trial Prisoners (UTP) shall be reviewed in the next meeting hoping for significant decline in such cases.



PESHAWAR: KP paramedics holding a protest demo for acceptance of their demands. — F.P. photo

Bid to smuggle heroine foiled

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) foiled a bid to smuggle huge quantity of narcotics and arrested a drug peddler here on Friday.

According to details, the ANF on a tip-off regarding drug smuggling conducted operation near Charsadda road in Peshawar. During raid, the ANF recovered 84 kilogram heroine worth millions of rupees and arrested a drug pusher stated to be hailing from Peshawar.

The ANF spokesperson said that the detainee was involved in supplying narcotics to various cities of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab.

WSSP, IDEA sign pact

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: To provide clean drinking water to the poor living in civic areas, the Water and Sanitation Services Peshawar (WSSP) and Initiative for Development and Empowerment Axis (IDEA) in joint collaboration have signed a one-year agreement.

According to the WSSP office on Friday, the agreement was signed by GM Operations WSSP, Turab Shah and ED IDEA, Muhammad Ahmad, here the other day. IDEA was materializing the project of supply of water under the Water Aid fund.

Under the agreement, the IDEA will ensure access of the poor to the activities of the project and will install four filtration plants in the city. Officials from both sides would also discuss the designs of water filtration plants and machinery in the limits of WSSP.

During execution of the project preference would be given to the spots, identified by the WSSP while with joint collaboration the social and technical feasibility of the targeted areas would be carried out. To provide the sense of ownership, the WSSP will be kept in contact to control and look after the filtration plants.

Under the agreement, the Wash Committee would completely be assisted while to take maximum

advantage of the filtration plants and machinery, the Wash Committees and operators of filtration plants will be imparted necessary training. Besides, the manual of repair and look after will be provided to the staffers while health and hygiene sessions would also be held. Observance of World Environmental Day and method to preserve water and session on proper utilization of water would also be arranged, the agreement said. The WSSP will provide the initial list, spaces for the installation of water filtration plants, electricity and water connection to the project and also run the water filtration plants after its installation.

2 children, two women burnt in gas cylinder blast

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: At least two children and two women of a family were burnt in a gas cylinder explosion inside a house in Gulbarg area in Cantonment here Friday.

Rescue 1122 medical team and fire vehicle reached at the spot after receiving the information about the accident and controlled the fire within 35 minutes in a professional manner. The injured were rushed to the Lady Reading Hospital.

Budgetary allocation for NMDs to combat illiteracy

PESHAWAR (APP): The substantial budgetary allocation in federal budget 2023-24 amounting to record Rs57 billion for seven merged tribal districts by the government has laid a strong foundation for its fast-tracked development and ensuring socio economic emancipation of the tribal people.

To bring the newly merged tribal districts(erstwhile Fata) at par with the developed districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Federal Government has allocated a huge amount of Rs57 billion under its PSDP program 2023-24 focusing on education, health, roads infrastructure, youth empowerment, IT, energy and agriculture to speed up development process there.

Besides focusing on completion of ongoing projects, new important initiatives have been budgeted under the PSDP 2023-24, which mainly include solar tube-wells, youth programme for small loans, Pakistan fund for education, support for IT startups and venture capital, women empowerment, laptop scheme, green revolution, youth skill development, establishment of institutes for sports and hepatitis-control programme.

A significant provision regarding

an extension of sales and customs tax's exemption in provincial and federally administered tribal areas were included in budget till June 30, 2024, which is highly praised worthy step of the government," said Z.A Malik, former Chairman, Economics Department, University of Peshawar while talking to APP.

This significant tax exemption for another one year was landmark relief to people of erstwhile Fata and PATA, however, there is a need to closely monitor it so that only local residents were benefited from it, he added. Zahid Shinwari, former President Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry said that record increase in budget for ex Fata uplift was a good endeavour of the Govt. To intensify anti-trafficking operations and strengthen penalties for the smuggling of essential commodities, he said that enhanced measures were proposed for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan provinces.

The major objectives of these steps are aimed to enhance the effectiveness of anti-trafficking efforts and bringing those involved in smuggling under the law. As many as 45,000 young people across the country are currently undergoing IT training, and

this number is expected to increase with the implementation of the new initiatives. He said provision of 100,000 laptops on a merit basis to deserving individuals including students of erstwhile Fata would help research activities and online learning.

The Rs14,460 billion budget 2023-24 had marked a significant increase of 4,958 billion rupees compared to the previous year's budget of 9,502 billion rupees, was expanded by 34 percent within a year, which is more than a third of its previous size. As the previous year's budget stood at 9,502 billion rupees, only the tax collection target for the upcoming fiscal year is set at 9,200 billion rupees. The Federal Board of Revenue to collect 3,759 billion rupees in direct taxes, with an additional 5,441 billion rupees expected from indirect taxes.

He said in addition to taxes, the government's policies would help generate additional revenue of 2,963 billion rupees for benefits of people including merged tribal areas. In an effort to support the renewable energy sector, he said the import of machinery, equipment, and inputs required for the manufacturing of inverters and batteries for solar pan-

els and related equipment were exempted from customs duty, adding this exemption would help facilitate the growth of the renewable energy industry and promote adoption of sustainable technologies in the country's development process.

Professor Dr Z.A. Malik said information technology has made deep inroads in all sectors and the government's proposal to allow duty-free import of IT and related equipment up to one percent of their export earnings was a positive decision. It would also encourage development of the IT industry and facilitates access to advanced technology for expanding businesses and SMEs.

He said people of erstwhile Fata would also facilitate exempting the agriculture sector from customs duty on import of seeds for sowing that would help farmers to have better access to quality seeds and cheap fertilizers. He said exemption of import of prawns for breeding purposes in commercial fish farms and hatcheries from custody duties would increase fish production in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in particular and other provinces in general and revenue of fish farmers to jack up.

He said KP's cold water reservoirs

in Malakanad, Hazara and Parchinar Kurram district were most suitable for trout fish farming and Pakistan could earn substantial revenue by facilitating farmers of KP to increase trout fish production. Malik said that Gomal Zam Dam in South Waziristan has been completed while work on Kurram Tangi dam in North Waziristan was underway that would hopefully be ready by December next year, adding these projects would bring green and white revolution in southern districts of KP.

The government's allocation of Rs. 97.098 billion for Education Affairs and Services in the federal budget for the fiscal year 2023-24 would help bring out of school children under education net and increase enrollment besides strengthening of infrastructure in the once hitherto neglected areas. The bulk of the allocated funds, amounting to Rs. 76.589 billion has been designated for Tertiary Education Affairs and Services, accounting for approximately 79 percent of the total allocation under this category.

Rs. 4.468 billion earmarked for pre-primary and primary education affairs, representing an increase from the previous year's allocation.

Similarly, Rs. 10,778 billion allocated for Secondary Education Affairs and Services. The federal government has also proposed an allocation of Rs24.21 billion for the healthcare sector for the financial year 2023-24 as compared to Rs22.49 billion allocated during the outgoing financial year, while a sum of Rs13 billion would be spent to uplift the sector under the public sector development budget.

As much as Rs16.59 billion would be spent to maintain hospital services while Rs3.11 billion allocated for public health services including in merged areas and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Besides people of merged areas, he said people of all provinces would be facilitated from sales tax exemptions introduced on various items, including contraceptives, planters, combine harvesters and dryers for agricultural products. These adjustments in duty and tax exemptions besides mega development projects have reflected the government's strong commitment to fostering economic growth, promoting sustainable practices, and supporting key sectors of the economy besides improving socioeconomic conditions of the tribal people.



In brief

Alcoholic drink kill 2 in Buner F.P. Report

BUNER: Two friends namely Umerzah Khan and Khirur Rehman of Bazargay salarzi were found dead vee hours on Friday, drinking sub-standard alcohol in a car they were parked in a garage near their home. The family members traced the bodies during search for them whole the night between Thursday and Friday. The bodies were shifted to nearby RHC Jowar where the health staff confirmed they were expired due to use of substandard alcohol. They family members were started search for them when both of them were yet to arrived homes despite mid night. The family members confirmed they parked the car inside the garage at night and were found dead inside the care with liquors. The Jowar police have registered the case and are investigating the case to find fact behind double murder. The namazi Jananaza offered at Jowar play ground at 11 am and buried in the ancestral grave yard. Meanwhile, another one namely Nasar son of Sher Afzal resident of Sunigrane shot dead on broad day light near his home and the killers escaped. City police Swari police have registered the case and are investigating to find out motive behind the murder and to trace the killers as soon as possible.

3 girls drowned in river Kundyan

KOHIATAN (INP): Three teenage girls on Friday drowned in the Kundyan River near Tehsil Kundyan Sayal Darra, Kohistan when they were attempting to cross the river through a hanging bridge. According to the police sources, three girls ages 7 to 10 years were trying to cross the rope-knitted hanging Shankiyari bridge over the Kundyan River. When they reached centre of the river, the rope allegedly broke and all three fell into the river which was recorded as being flooded. Rescue workers and divers have started operations to recover the bodies of the girls, owing to the speedy flow of the river, they failed and the operation is to be continued. The all ill-fated girls belonged to the Maddakhail tribe of Kohistan.

Man dies due to lightning

MIRPUR KHAS (INP): A man has died after reportedly being struck by lightning in Jhuddo area of Mirpur Khas District, Sindh province on Friday. The incident occurred during a powerful thunderstorm that swept through the region. The thunderstorm, accompanied by heavy rainfall, also resulted in the flooding of low-lying areas in Jhuddo. The sudden deluge caused inconvenience and disruption to the lives of the local residents. Additionally, the downpour led to the suspension of electricity supply in the area, compounding the challenges faced by the community. It is pertinent to mention here that Biparjoo — a “severe cyclonic storm” — has inched closer to India and Pakistan, prompting authorities to take preventive measures to minimize the damage it may cause. On her official Twitter handle, Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Senator Sherry Rehman said “Cyclone Biparjoo has completed landfall in Indian Gujrat”. She further added that Pakistan was prepared but largely spared the full force, “Sindh’s coastal areas like Sujawal were inundated by high sea levels,” she stressed, adding that most of the people had been evacuated to safe ground.

Balchistan budget will be ideal: Senator Samina

F.P. Report

QUETTA: The difficulties of every class will be kept in mind while making the budget for the next financial year 2023-24. Special packages should be announced for the lower class. In the preparation of the provincial budget for the financial year 2023-24, the budget has been allocated for each region on the basis of equality, which is a welcome thing.

It is necessary to announce special packages for the lower class and create employment opportunities for the unemployed youth. The Bizenjo government has played an important role in the development of Balochistan and played an important role in bringing the province out of economic and financial crises as soon as it took over the government. Better economic policies have opened new chapters for international investment companies to invest in Balochistan, Vice President BAP.

Central Vice President Balochistan Awami Party Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri has said that the Balochistan government has taken the province out of difficult situations and put it on the path of development. Despite all the difficulties, the Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo government has allocated a budget for each region on the basis of equality in the preparation of the provincial budget for the financial year 2023-24,

which will lead to significant progress in the development works and availability of resources across Balochistan. Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri further said that the proposed budget will be people-friendly and this budget will truly reflect the aspirations of the people of Balochistan.

She said that the Balochistan government will complete its constitutional term. The Balochistan government has taken the province out of crisis and set it on the path of development and prosperity. She said that the Balochistan budget will be very balanced and people-friendly, which is good for Balochistan. It will open new avenues of development for the people and employment opportunities will be created. She said that in the budget, development projects worth billions of rupees have been laid in every district of Balochistan, which will bring Balochistan on par with other provinces in the journey of development. A new era of social development will begin in the province, the credit of which goes to the government of Qudoos Bizenjo.

Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri said that in these circumstances, a better budget cannot be presented for Balochistan. She expressed hope from the provincial government that while making the budget for the next financial year 2023-24, the difficulties of every

class will be taken into consideration. It is necessary to announce special packages for the lower class and create employment opportunities for the unemployed youth. She also said that the Chief Minister of Balochistan Qudoos Bizenjo is working day and night for the development of Balochistan and Balochistan is on the path of development. In the next budget, InshaALLAH, many projects will be allocated for the people of Balochistan, which will help in the development of Balochistan.

Senator Samina Mumtaz Zehri further said that the government of Balochistan Awami Party and allies under the leadership of Mir Abdul Qudoos Bizenjo has played an important role in the development of Balochistan and has played an important role in bringing the province out of economic and financial crises as soon as it took over the government. With better economic policies, international investment companies have opened new chapters for investment in Balochistan and brought the province out of the economic crisis into a new era of development. She hoped that, Insha Allah, the Balochistan government Similarly, it will strive day and night for the service and development of Balochistan and its people and will soon make Balochistan equal to other provinces in every field.

Seerat-un-Nabi and Naat conference held

F.P. Report

BANNU: A prestigious Seerat-un-Nabi and Naat Conference was held at Bannu Medical College Bannu recently, shedding light on the teachings and exemplary life of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The event aimed to inspire individuals to follow the Prophet's teachings and integrate them into their daily lives, leading to personal and spiritual growth.

Dr. Qibla Ayyaz, Chairman of the Islami Nazaryati Council Pakistan, addressed the participants, emphasizing the significance of Prophet Muhammad's teachings as guiding principles for the Muslim community. He highlighted that by adhering to these teachings, individuals could not only attain success in the hereafter but also achieve progress in this world. Dr. Ayyaz stated that the Prophet (PBUH) initiated the era of knowledge and education through the revelation of the Quran, dispelling ignorance and fostering an environment of

peace, love, and brotherhood. He urged today's youth to establish platforms, similar to the Seerat-un-Nabi Conference, to promote education and ethics, thus nurturing the intellectual and moral development of future generations.

Dr. Nasim Saba, Dean of Gomal Medical College D.I. Khan, expressed her thoughts on the subject, emphasizing the importance of Prophet Muhammad's teachings in the modern era. She highlighted how his teachings have illuminated our lives, both in terms of knowledge and ethics. Dr. Saba stressed that educating women was crucial, as their education is synonymous with an entire family's enlightenment. She welcomed the establishment of a separate university, "Kalam-e-Bibi University," dedicated to women's education, as a significant step forward.

The conference witnessed a large gathering of students from BMC and USTB and various educational institutions affiliated with different schools of

thought. Faculty members from BMC and the Faculty of Science and Technology were also present.

Professor Dr. Dost Muhammad, the Dean of Bannu Medical College Bannu, expressed gratitude to the attendees, acknowledging their contribution to the success of the Seerat-un-Nabi and Naat Conference. He stated that the conference aimed to familiarize students with the life, teachings, and noble character of Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) so that they could progress in the right direction and apply his teachings to improve their own lives and the lives of others. He extended a warm welcome and thanked all the participants for making the event a resounding success.

The conference concluded with soulful recitations of Naats by Fahadullah, Javed Ihsas, Ahmed Shah, and other prominent Naat reciters. Certificates and prizes were also distributed among participating students who excelled in Naat recitation and Quranic recitation competition.

Newly built central library inaugurated

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Women University Mardan inaugurated the newly built central library at under construction site of main building. The chief guest at the occasion Dr. Aneela Mehfooz Durrani Secretary Higher Education KP unveiled the central library yesterday. Meanwhile a daycare center was inaugurated at Bakhshali campus by secretary and graced the scholarship distribution ceremony as well.

Vice Chancellor Prof. Dr. Ghazala Yasmin and Additional Director Works Nasir Hussain apprised that the total covered area of the library building is 10066 sft having Reception area, Photocopier room, Offices, Book acquisition area, Reading room, Foyer at Ground floor and Research cubical section, Digital library room and Book acquisition section. Vice Chancellor further shared her views with chief guest that this library will be equipped with huge number of books to foster the needs of students and faculty to retrieve the reading habit in the new generation. The

daycare lab, at the Bakhshali campus will provide support to students and staff by offering childcare services, allowing them to focus on their educational and professional activities during their duty hours. Women University Mardan while keeping the tradition alive has awarded scholarships to academically strong and deserving students.

A total amount of rupees 80 Million awarded among 345 students under Ehas scholarship program, 45 students were awarded merit scholarship from university's own sources, while 250 students are enrolled in Pakistan Baitul Maal. WUM is planning to design a new section with prior aim to provide financial assistance to the needy and deserving students, the section will work on different financial aid/assistance programs to encourage the students to continue their academic career with strong determination said by Prof. Dr. Ghazala Yasmin on the occasion. She appreciated the efforts of differently abled student ayesha anwar from department of psychology by

receiving an electric wheelchair to move ahead in academic and professional career. At the end shield of honour was presented to Dr. Aneela on behalf of Women University Mardan with a vote of thanks from hon. Vice Chancellor.

Two held

KASUR (INP): Two accused of supplying counterfeit drugs on medical stores were arrested and huge quantity of fake medicines were recovered from their custody.

Taking notice of surge in supply/sale of fake medicines, Assistant Commissioner Kasur, Rizwan ul Haq Puri launched operation against the culprits involved in illegal practice. During operation, two accused of supplying fake drugs on medical stores of the city were arrested with hundreds of packs of counterfeit medicines of different kinds. The recovered fake medicines were confiscated and the detainees were being investigated after registering a case against them at B-Division police station.

Anti-polio campaign in Kohat from 19th

Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: Deputy DHO Kohat Dr. Tariq Aziz formally inaugurated the 5-day polio campaign starting from June 19 to 23 by administering polio drops to children under 5 years of age. Similarly 6-day measles vaccination campaign will also be formally launched in Kohat from June 22 to 27.

Speaking on this occasion, Dr. Tariq Aziz said that polio is a fatal disease that crippled the children forever, so eradicating this disease is a common national responsibility of all of us. He added, since 2014, no case of polio had been reported in Kohat but are continuing this campaign as positive samples of the disease are still reported in some areas of the province.

Dr. Aziz maintained, similarly, measles is also a deadly disease due to which children may die. Therefore apart from polio, a special measles campaign is also being started from June 22 to June 27. DDHO has appealed the civil society especially parents to give their children polio vaccinations as well as a measles vaccination course. He clarified that no campaign can be successful without parents and civil society.

Old enmity claims three lives: Rival group allegedly attacked a family with arms and gunned down three people including a woman and injured two in Kohat district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Friday. Sources disclosed that incident occurred owing to the old enmity.

According to the media reports, police told that the armed men of the rival group opened fire at the family in Mirozai area of Kohat, resulting in the death of three people including a woman, while two people sustained injuries.

The deceased have been identified as Abdul Basit, Abdul Razzaque and Sanobar. Naem and Pir Muhammad are identified as injured. The police have shifted the bodies for autopsy and the injured for medical aid to the hospital. Meanwhile, a case of the incident has been lodged against Usman, Umarzaib and Hashim at the Muhammad Riaz Shaheed police station.

Residents welcome newly appointed CSP officer



F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: A resident of Chakdara named Izhar Ullah has been allocated at Foreign Services of Pakistan (FSP) following his success in prestigious Central Superior Services (CSS) while local populace welcomed him at Interchange and brought in procession to his residence.

The newly recommended Civil Servant of Pakistan (CSP) Izhar Ullah paid thanks to his family, friends and villagers for welcoming him while committed to serve the country as public servant.

Civil Servant of Pakistan (CSP) declared his success as the result of parent's prayers, teacher's hard work and motivation by friends. However, the father of Civil Servant of Pakistan (CSP) named Hakeem Muhammad Kitab offered prayer of thanks to Allah and welcomed local residents for participating in their happiness.

JI rejects mayoral election in Karachi



F.P. Report

BARA: A protest demonstration of volunteers of Jamat-e-Islam (JI) Khyber chapter against alleged fraud in the election of mayor of Karachi was held in Bara Square on Friday. It is to be mentioned here that last day JI Pakistan Ameer Sir-ul-Haq announced to mark Friday as “Black Day” to protest against the alleged rigging in Karachi's mayoral election.

Large number of JI workers carried banners

inscribed with slogans in favor of their demands. Speaking on the occasion Khyber Pakhtunkhwa JI Youth wing head Shah Jehan Afridi, local leaders Khan Wali Afridi, Qazi Momin Afridi and others condemned the negative role of establishment and the Election Commission Pakistan (ECP) in the mayoral election of Karachi and declared it supporting team for the candidate of Pakistan People Party (PPP).

They maintained that

PPP had ruled in Karachi for fifteen years although it failed to deliver as per promises therefore they robbed their mandate by fraud.

It is our basic right to raise our voice for our democratic right to have a genuine mandate; they added and said PPP through unfair means, adopted in the election, damaged democracy. Last day, the PPP led coalition won Karachi mayorship by defeating JI and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf alliance.

Those who came to bring change, changed themselves

F.P. Report

MUZAFFARABAD: Leader of Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and former minister for tourism and transport, Muhammad Tahir Khokhar has said that those who came with commitment of bringing change in the country have change themselves and slogan of has buried.

In a statement issued on Friday, he said that those who bought Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) tickets in return of heavy donations were not PTI activists but investors instead. Tahir Khokhar further stated that PTI even issued tickets to some people who had nothing to do with Kashmir or the refugees, nor were they

political workers or workers, but they were given tickets in exchange for donations. He said that the story has become past and PTI chief who alleged MQM of terrorism, was being pushed in the courts to prove himself innocent.

He said that the time has proved that all the conspiracies against MQM were baseless and propaganda, the purpose of which was only to pave the way for Imran Khan to power and MQM was not sidelined has been exposed. The accusers against MQM in Karachi have changed themselves and left Imran Khan, he added.

The MQM AJK leader said that PTI was not a political party but people from all over to make a family of ‘Bhanmati’.

There was a family to bring him together and bring him to power, when the power was lost, all the ‘Panchis’ flew back and went to their nests and Imran Khan has returned to his original place, he said.

He said that once successful despite conspiracies, MQM was a movement whose foundations are watered by the blood of MQM workers and they are a wall of lead, like every time the conspiracies to remove MQM from the political map have failed and every time Allah has made MQM blowed. He said MQM was a reality and to keep this reality alive. The workers have sacrificed their lives for it. He said that PTI has no political existence anymore, it is broken.

Four girls raped, four abducted in Faisalabad

FAISALABAD (INP): Four girls were raped while four people were abducted in separate incidents in different localities of Faisalabad, police said on Friday.

According to details, accused Yousaf Mukhtar hailing from and others alleged Ishrat Bibi of Sidhar in the name of arranging job for her in State Life and raped her. The culprit Zafar Ali raped daughter of Dr. Aftab in Aminpur Bangla.

In Joya Chowk of Batala Colony, accused Ghulam Murtaza barged into a house and raped Javeria when she was all alone at home. In Chak 402-GB unidentified culprits raped daughter of Ghulam Qadir.

Unidentified accused abducted Amar s/o Iftikhar near Chaudhary Mills and Hamza s/o Shahid from 189-RB.

Daughter of Ramazan was kidnapped from 66-GB while wife of Babar was kidnapped from 657-GB by unknown culprits. Police registered separate cases in all incidents at respective police stations and started efforts to arrest the culprits and rescue the abductees.

Teenager killed, other injured in road accident: In an unfortunate incident a motorcyclist was trodden to death but his pillion rider sustained critical injuries in a road mishap in the area of Madina Town police station

of Faisalabad on Friday.

According to the Rescue 1122 spokesman said that a speeding motorcycle slipped at Abdullah Pur under pass, Canal Road early in the morning. As the riders fell down on the ground, a van coming from the rare side ran over them and in result Moeze (18) resident of Daniyal Town received serious injuries and died on the spot, whereas other boy with him Hamza Arshad (17) was shifted to District Headquarters (DHQ) hospital in a critical condition. The police shifted the dead body and injured boy to hospital for medico-legal procedure and started investigation.

School bags, stationary distributes in students

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Orphans and poor 108 students of 20 state-run schools of Bazaar Zakha Khel, received free bags and stationary here on the last day.

Under the auspices of Tanzeeme Asateza (teacher association) Pakistan, district Khyber, the charity work was initiated in the government-run educational institutions of the remote area.

Speaking on the occasion tehsil head of the

organization Sharifullah Afridi said that since the first day, the Tanzeem had focused on problems of the learners and besides resolving problems of the teachers it strived hard to work for the welfare of the students.

He expressed his concern over the lack of services in the government schools in Bazaar Zakha Khel and said it was obligatory on the State to supply all basic facilities being enjoyed by students in

other parts of the country. Bazaar Zakha Khel is one of a backward area and maximum numbers of children give up their schooling due to poverty therefore the philanthropists should contribute in the noble cause, Afridi. Tehsil General Secretary of the organization Mujahid Shah Afridi and Deputy Chairman of All Teacher Association, Landi Kotal Nadir Shah Afridi along with notables of the area were also present on the occasion.

Murderer of son held, body recovered

KHANEWAL (INP): The police on Friday arrested accused had killed his teenage son and buried body in agricultural fields besides recovering the body of youth. SHO Saddar police station Mian Channu, Rao Zeeshan said that a drug addict Abdul Rehman hail-

ing from suburban village 110/15-L of Mian Channu killed his 17-year-old son Saqib some two and a half months earlier after exchange of hot words with wife and buried his body in nearby agricultural fields.

The deceased was student of 1st year and had two

brothers and a sister. The police over suspicion arrested the father who during investigation admitted the crime and point out place where body of buried. In presence of ASP Babar Ali and DSP Nasir Ali Saqib, the body was pulled out and shifted to hospital.

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Pak-Azerbaijan ties, prospects and aspirations

THE Prime Minister's Office media wing has announced the good news that Azerbaijan will start sending cargo containers of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) to Pakistan from next month. According to the detail, the decision was taken at a meeting held between Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev at the Azeri capital Baku. The two leaders agreed that Azerbaijan would help Pakistan fulfill its energy needs through cooperation in the fields of oil and gas. Pakistan State Oil (PSO) and the State Oil Company of the Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) will collaborate at a government-to-government level to work out the energy resources. As said, one cargo on concessional rates will reach Pakistan every month.

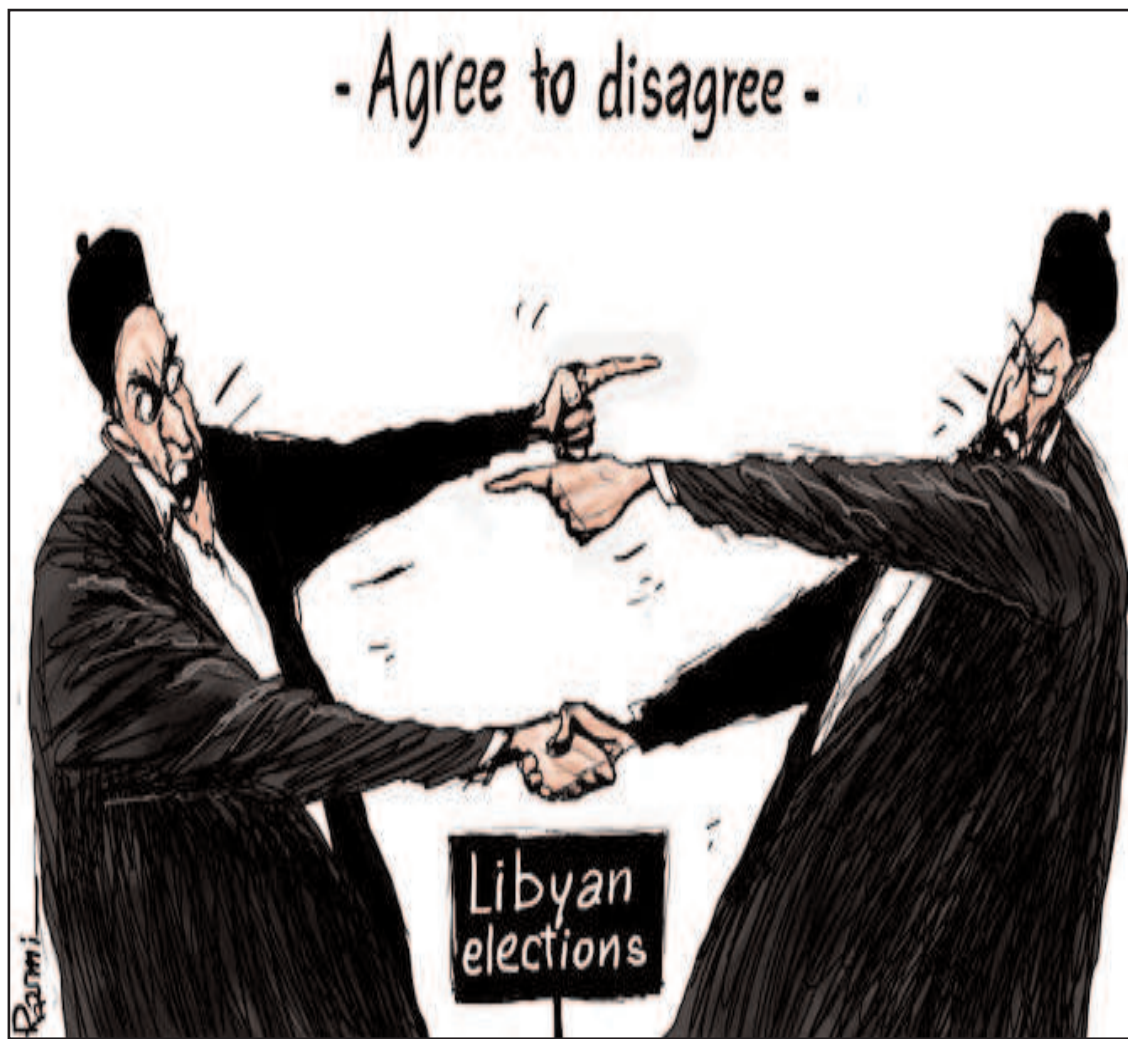
Pakistan and Azerbaijan share an enduring diplomatic and Security relationship based on mutual benefit, and historic bonds of religion, culture, history, and identical longstanding territorial disputes with their neighboring nations. Both nations have shared friends, resembling foreign policy and security challenges, terrorism issues, and geographical and climate-related problems, and faced repercussions of decade-long Shia-Sunni polarization in the Muslim world. Both nations have had historic fraternal bilateral trade, and defense ties since the early days of the Independence of the former Soviet Muslim state in 1991. Pakistan and Azerbaijan had always supported each other viewpoints on the issues of Jammu and Kashmir and Nagorno Karabakh respectively at global forums including the UN and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Because of Muslim brotherhood, and historic and geographical bonds, both nations have had an undying quest to transform their bilateral cooperation into a sustainable strategic partnership between their countries. The two countries aimed at enhancing their cooperation in multiple domains including trade and investment, agriculture, industry, tourism, culture and education, mining, hospitality, security, and others. Presently the volume of bilateral trade is about 800 million dollars, which is comparatively insignificant to the extent of bilateral relations of both countries. Pakistan offers a sizeable market for Azeri energy products including oil, gas, and electricity while Azerbaijan has tremendous potential as a good export destination for Pakistani agricultural and industrial quality products including pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, surgical instruments, sports goods, cutlery, electrical appliances, textile & leather products, furniture, home-made crafts, food and fruits, and rice.

In the defense and security domain, both nations face serious security challenges and faced multiple aggression from their staunch enemies due to the decadeslong unresolved territorial disputes of Jammu and Kashmir and Nagorno Karabakh, which compelled them to manifest a solid defense and security partnership to enhance their defense capabilities. In that context, the two countries had already collaborated in defense production, the training of military personnel, and joint military drills under the defense agreement signed by the two nations in 2003. Meanwhile, amid heightened hostility with Armenia, Baku perceives close military ties with a nuclear-armed Pakistan as a source of strength in any future conflict with Armenia.

During Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's visit to Azerbaijan, both countries agreed to increase cooperation in defense, agriculture, trade, and transport, while Azerbaijan would invest in the alternative energy sector of Pakistan including solar power generation. Both nations will formulate a comprehensive mechanism for exemption of duty on Pakistani rice, while Azerbaijan's national flag carrier, AZAL will operate its two flights to Islamabad and Karachi in a week. Both countries agreed to mobilize their efforts to finalize a Preferential Trade Agreement (PTA) by early August of 2023. A mechanism had been formed for sharing trade information, organizing events, conducting studies to identify exportable products, and promoting economic cooperation between the two friendly nations. Both nations have the unimaginable potential for bilateral diplomatic cooperation, trade and investment, and defense and security collaboration, that will equally benefit both states, their militaries, and the public, however for that end a persistent political resolve, continued efforts, businesses to businesses links and people to people contacts of utmost importance. Currently, Pakistan is actively working to establish its roads and rail links with Central Asian countries and multiple regional connectivity and energy transportation projects are in the planning or construction phases. Azerbaijan should join those regional initiatives that would not only boost Pak-Azri ties but also prove to be a game changer for greater South and Central Asian regions in the future.

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Quad cannot prevent China's rise

Fu Xiaoqiang

AT their third Indo-Pacific Security Dialogue on the sidelines of the G7 Summit in Hiroshima, Japan, on May 20, the United States, Japan, India and Australia reaffirmed their commitment to a "free, open, inclusive, and resilient Indo-Pacific" region. But no matter how they package it, the "Quad" is nothing more than a typical example of Washington's "clique diplomacy" to contain China and maintain its global hegemony.

The US revived the Quad in 2017 to serve its global strategy, especially its "Indo-Pacific" strategy. In fact, the US launched the "Indo-Pacific" strategy in 2017 with the core objective of containing China by strengthening cooperation with partner countries, shaping a favorable "Indo-Pacific" order, and maintaining its hegemony. In recent years, the Quad's efforts to contain China have become increasingly pronounced. After the Joe Biden administration took office, the Quad was elevated from the ministerial level to the summit level, and its first (online) Quad Leaders' Summit was held in March 2021. The scope of cooperation within the Quad has expanded from military security to include fields such as the economy, science and technology, and biosecurity.

While its joint statement this year did not directly mention China by name, it was subtly targeted at China. It opposed any attempts to change the region's status quo by force, undermine its stability, or engage in unilateral actions in the Asia-Pacific region. Expressing "serious concern" over the militarization of disputed islets, the dangerous use of coast guard vessels, and actions that could disrupt other countries' maritime resource development activities, the Quad vowed to intensify its countermeasures against China's infra-

structure development in the region. Despite repeated denials from the four countries, the Quad still exhibits a strong "Cold War" undertone. As the leader of the Quad, the US' main goal is to rally allies and partner countries in the anti-China camp, and seek regional advantages through alliances and partnerships. Similar to the Cold War, military and technology are the two important areas where the US uses the Quad to contain China. Since the revival of the Quad, military and security cooperation among the four countries has been steadily strengthening. For instance, the Malabar naval exercise has evolved from a bilateral military drill between the US and India to a trilateral exercise among the US, India and Japan and a quadrilateral naval exercise with the inclusion of Australia in 2020.

And in 2022, the Quad launched a new maritime security initiative called the "Indo-Pacific Partnership for Maritime Domain Awareness", which currently is in pilot phase. In the field of technology, the Quad has intensified its efforts to check China's technological advancement, by establishing a "Critical and Emerging Technology Working Group" and launching the "Semiconductor Supply Chain Initiative". The joint statement of the Quad also mentions critical and emerging technologies, meaning the grouping intends to become the leader in innovations and strengthen "supply chain resilience". Apart from causing disruptions in the "Indo-Pacific" region, the Quad engages with countries outside the grouping in an attempt to lure them into its fold to contain China, thereby creating divisions in the region. The joint statement specifically mentions ASEAN, the South Pacific and the countries around the Indian Ocean,

emphasizing the importance of the regional leadership of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and pledging to further consolidate the Quad's relationship with ASEAN and expand cooperation.

The statement also promises to expand cooperation with Pacific island countries and the Indian Ocean Rim Association, as well as to increase investment and infrastructure construction, particularly laying submarine cables, in the Asia-Pacific region. Besides, it has announced initiatives such as the Quad Infrastructure Fellowships Program and Quad Partnership for Cable Connectivity and Resilience. Recent years have also seen the US and Australia repeatedly undermine and disrupt underwired cable cooperation between China and other countries, while the Quad has said it will take measures to counter the China-proposed Belt and Road Initiative and pressure regional countries into making a "binary choice". The Quad has been trying to create divisions and raise tensions in the region, posing a serious challenge to the regional order and security. Particularly concerning is the potential escalation of maritime tensions and increased risks of naval clashes due to the US' aggressive military activities in the region. In recent years, Quad member states have conducted frequent military drills and other activities in the South China Sea, with the US carrying out illegal air and naval reconnaissance and patrols.

The Quad has also conducted military activities with some ASEAN members and non-regional countries such as the United Kingdom and France in the South China Sea. These activities are likely to boost the military confidence of the countries that have disputes with China in the South China

Sea, increasing the risk of maritime confrontations and undermining the relatively stable security environment in the region. The establishment of the Quad Infrastructure Fellowships Program and the Quad's intensified efforts to disrupt supply chains and infrastructure projects targeting China make it even more difficult to develop a free, open and prosperous Asia-Pacific region. And yet the US says it wants to improve relations with China and has no intention of challenging China. This is nothing but an effort to create a smokescreen which it believes will allow it to continue its anti-China activities without being noticed. The US is wrong, because even the dumbest person knows that it is not possible for the US to improve its relations with China while it strengthens its military presence in the region to counter China.

The Quad cannot prevent China's rise. While the four countries share the common goal of containing China, their specific interests and preferences vary greatly. In particular, India lacks the strong motivation needed to contain China and its position is different from the other three countries' on issues such as the Russia-Ukraine conflict. So it is unlikely that the Quad will turn into a solid US-led alliance. Moreover, the majority of countries in the region are unwilling to take sides between China and the US. While Washington may have grand ambitions of containing China by using the Quad, it is likely to fall short of its objectives. Therefore, the Joe Biden administration should seize the opportunity of Secretary of State Antony Blinken's visit to China on Sunday and Monday to change its short-sighted China policy, and commit to concrete actions that match the US president's statements that the US desires to cooperate with China for global good.

The China Daily

Behind the facade, it is politics as usual in Iraq

Talmiz Ahmad

IRAQ'S parliament on Monday passed a \$153 billion budget for 2023, the largest in the country's history. This reflected a brief moment of consensus among Iraq's feuding politicians, whose infighting had delayed it by six months. Anticipating problems in the coming years, the parliament approved the budgeted amount of \$153 billion for the next two years as well.

Iraq's political divisions go back to the national elections in October 2021, when the firebrand cleric Muqtada Al-Sadr's coalition gained the largest number of seats. He, however, insisted on forming a "national majority government" of Shiite, Sunni and Kurdish partners, condemning his Shiite rivals - the Iran-sponsored Fatah and Nouri Al-Maliki's State of Law coalition - to opposition status. They, with their allies, formed the Coordination Framework of their own.

In June last year, frustrated by delays in the formation of a government, Al-Sadr ordered his followers to resign from parliament, possibly to force early elections. Instead, as per Iraqi law, his members were immediately replaced by the candidates who came second in the previous electoral cycle. This enabled the rival Coordination Framework coalition to obtain a majority and form a government in October 2022, with Mohammed Shia Al-Sudani as prime minister. Earlier, in August, Al-Sadr had announced he was withdrawing from politics and closing all his offices and institutions. Since then, the level of internecine violence has reduced and Iraq has projected a sense of calm. The prime minister has earned a reputation as a good leader and administrator who is making every effort to promote national unity and deliver on his agenda of security, development, the provision of public services - particularly healthcare, education and employment - and improved ties with all neighbors.

Critics, however, point out that there is little evidence of real change. The country continues to be controlled by well-entrenched politicians who gouge national assets for personal benefit. Regionally, too, Iraq continues to grapple with the challenges posed by its immediate neighbors - Iran and Türkiye. Iran remains the dominant player in Iraqi affairs, largely because it is the principal sponsor behind most of the politicians that make up the Coordination Framework and also the militias that constitute the powerful Popular Mobilization Units. The PMU remains a strong political and military presence in the country and is a major threat to the Coordination Framework's rivals and the US military presence in the country. In November, Al-Sudani approved the setting up of a PMU-controlled commercial enterprise, the Al-Muhandis General Company, which is authorized to operate in areas such as agriculture, industry, engineering and construction, thus entrenching the militias in the national economy.

Tehran also has concerns about some of the disgruntled Kurds living in Iraqi Kurdistan, who have launched attacks on Iranian territory, leading to retaliatory attacks from the Iranian

side. In March this year, Iran and Iraq concluded a border security agreement to curb such actions by the Kurds and keep the border tranquil. Türkiye's involvement in Iraq is related to the Kurds from the US-supported Syrian Democratic Forces, who have close links with the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan, based at Sulaymaniyah in Iraq, and who take sanctuary there when needed. Ankara not only launches cross-border attacks on them, but it also maintains military outposts deep inside Iraqi territory. In April, Türkiye launched a drone strike on a senior SDF commander at Sulaymaniyah airport. It sees the SDF as a partner of the Kurdistan Workers' Party, known as the PKK, which it has labeled a terrorist organization. Türkiye thus views the SDF as a legitimate military target in both Syria and Iraq. In his short time as prime minister, Al-Sudani has made a major effort to mend Iraq's ties with Arab countries, which had been strained by the sectarian orientation of some of the country's earlier governments, particularly that of Al-Maliki. Ties with Saudi Arabia are now a priority concern, particularly the expansion of economic relations.

In February, Saudi Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan visited Iraq and the two countries signed a memorandum of understanding on intelligence and security cooperation - their first in 40 years. The same month, Al-Sudani visited the UAE and applauded the latter as a "model" for Iraq's reconstruction efforts. In May, Iraq hosted a meeting of officials from Iran and Egypt on restoring diplomatic ties and arranging a meeting between the leaders of the two countries. Even though Iraq currently has a functioning government, it faces serious domestic challenges. The federal government has to contend with the problem of oil exports by the Kurdistan Regional Government in Irbil and the attendant problem of its sharing of revenues with Baghdad, as differences on this led to the suspension of oil exports in March. In April, the two sides agreed that the federal government and the KRG would jointly market the latter's oil and the revenues would be adjusted against the monthly budgetary flows from Baghdad to Irbil. However, politicians are now revisiting the agreement and seeking major modifications; this has created uncertainty among major buyers about the smooth flow of oil from Kurdistan. Iraq is also beset with serious economic issues. Despite the strong political support for the budget, there are concerns about the large fiscal deficit, the ever-increasing public wages and pensions bill, and uncertainties relating to oil production and the price on which all budgetary projections have been made.

Above all, Al-Sadr, who remains temporarily out of politics, is a potentially disruptive presence due to his ability to mobilize millions of followers with a single tweet. Thus, behind the facade of normalcy, the country's mainstream politicians remain discredited, its youth remain frustrated, its public services remain grossly inadequate and its neighbors remain intrusive. It is politics as usual in Iraq.

Economic recovery should be a priority for the Syrian government

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

ONE of the most pressing issues for the Syrian government to focus on is leading the nation into a sustainable economic recovery. Syria has been facing an unprecedented economic crisis. Several factors have contributed to this problem. The internal conflict, which began more than 12 years ago, has had a negative impact on the nation's economy. Civil wars can inflict damage on infrastructure and, more importantly, disrupt production and manufacturing processes.

In addition, in a conflict-affected nation, private and state organizations become extremely reluctant to invest their capital in the country due to the political instability and uncertainty. Foreign direct investment can play a critical role in generating revenue and addressing the nation's budget deficit. For example, before the civil war began in Syria, according to the Atlantic Council, capital inflows "comprising mainly foreign direct investment from other

Arab countries and Europe led to overall balance of payment surpluses and increases in the international reserves holdings of the Central Bank of Syria that reached \$18.2 billion at the end of 2010." But it is important to point out that the protracted civil war is not the only reason for Syria's economic crisis. The economic outlooks of other countries often impact their neighbors. In this case, the Lebanese and Turkish economies have also affected Syria's economy. In Lebanon, the ongoing cash crisis and economic meltdown continues to grow, with the currency regularly hitting new lows.

In addition, Syria used to be a net crude oil exporter, but it is now relying on other countries to import oil. The cost of this switch from exporting to importing has been more than \$100 billion in losses for this Arab country since the beginning of the civil war. The aforementioned issues have also contributed to the devaluation of the currency in Syria. Syria's currency was trad-

ing at about 47 pounds to the US dollar just before the unrest erupted in 2011. However, it recently hit an all-time low and \$1 is now worth about 9,000 Syrian pounds. Inflation is also reportedly at its highest level. While the average inflation rate from 1957 to 2020 was about 11 percent, it last year reached 139 percent - higher than countries such as the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Angola and Libya. This places it fourth in the world in terms of highest inflation rates, only ranking behind Venezuela, Sudan and Lebanon, according to World Population Review. To put this in perspective, Syria's inflation rate is about 40 times higher than the average in the Arab Gulf states. The likes of Kuwait, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Qatar and Oman are among the countries with the lowest inflation rates in the world. It is worth noting that a healthy and standard rate of inflation is about 2 percent to 3 percent per year. The

problem is that the skyrocketing inflation is drastically affecting Syrians' purchasing power, making life extremely difficult for ordinary people. Huda, a single mother of two and a teacher, pointed out that: "Before the unrest started, I used to make 10,000 lira (pounds) a month, which was around 200 US dollars. I could afford food, doctors and basic necessities, and I could save. Now, I am making 120,000 lira, which is around 15 US dollars. Prices of everything keep going up every day. I cannot make ends meet and I cannot even afford (to buy) enough food with this salary, let alone pay for utility bills, clothes, children's school, medicine, and other important things. Bread alone costs me around 4,000 lira a day, that is 120,000 a month, which is my salary now. A lot of people are living on assistance from charities and from borrowing money." Some areas in Syria are experiencing an unemployment rate that

has reached a staggering 85 percent. Before the unrest erupted in Syria, the national unemployment rate was about 9 percent. As prices have increased by more than 800 percent in the last two years alone, nearly 90 percent of the Syrian population now lives below the poverty line.

According to the World Bank, due to high uncertainty, Syria's real gross domestic product is projected to "contract by 3.2 percent in 2023, following a 3.5 percent decline in 2022. Conflict, high input costs, and water scarcity are projected to limit crop production.

In addition, fuel shortages are expected to further weaken manufacturing and disrupt transportation and services." To address its financial woes, the Syrian government needs to implement major structural changes and reintegrate itself into the global financial system. This will bring the country out of isolation. More importantly, if the Syrian government concentrates

on the reconstruction of the nation's infrastructure, this can play a key role in creating jobs and improving the economy. This mission can be more effectively achieved if Damascus is able to attract investments from other countries. The Syrian government must also adequately address the country's economic mismanagement, the lack of a robust private market, corruption, and the predominantly state-controlled economy, which has led to socioeconomic disparity and pushed more people into poverty.

Establishing safety nets and social protection mechanisms are critical as well. Any state's monopolization of the economy may benefit the people on top, but it prevents the overwhelming majority of the population from prospering economically. In a nutshell, ordinary people and families in Syria continue to bear the brunt of the ongoing economic crisis. The government must put economic recovery at the top of its agenda.



MULTAN: People busy in purchasing vegetables at Friday Bazar.

Over \$15 bln textile products exported in 11 months

ISLAMABAD (APP): Textile exports reached \$15,029.845 million during the first eleven months of the current fiscal year (2022-23), the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

Textile exports showed a decline of 14.72 per cent from \$17,623.697 million during the same period of last year (July-May 2021-22). The export of raw cotton witnessed positive growth during July-May (2022-23) of 104.13 per cent from \$6.577 million (last fiscal year) to \$13.425 million, and that of tents, canvas and tar-

paulin went up by 26.52 per cent from \$99.463 million to \$125.840 million. Similarly, the export of cotton yarn showed negative growth by 33.75 per cent from \$1,112.712 million to \$737.186 million.

Likewise, the export of cotton cloth decreased by 16.87 per cent from \$2,236.855 million to \$1,859.389 million; cotton (carded or combed) by 38.97 per cent from \$1.631 million to \$0.996 million, yarn (other than cotton yarn) by 32.91 per cent from \$60.624 million to \$40.674 million, knit-wear by 12.94 per

cent from \$4,646.097 million to \$4,044.754 million, bed wear by 18.53 per cent from \$3,008.838 million to \$2,451.263 million and towels by 10.56 per cent, from \$1,020,111 million to \$912.363 million.

The export of ready-made garments also declined by 10.28 per cent from \$3,535.953 million to \$3,172.385 million; art, silk and synthetic textile by 10.13 per cent from \$421.860 million to \$379.142 million; made-up articles (excluding towels, bedwear) by 18.55 per cent from

\$780.182 million to \$635.428 million, and all other textile materials by 5.17 per cent from \$692.793 million to \$657.002 million.

On a year-on-year (YoY) basis, the textile goods' exports declined by 19.57 per cent in May 2023 to \$1,320.558 million against \$1,641.961 million in May 2022.

On a month-on-month (MoM) basis, the textile goods' exports however increased by 7.12 per cent in May 2023 against \$1,232.834 million in April 2023, according to the PBS data.

Equity markets climb as traders eye China stimulus

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Hopes China will unveil fresh measures to kickstart its ailing economy lifted markets Friday, while the dollar struggled to bounce from losses fuelled by bets the Federal Reserve is near the end of its tightening cycle.

Optimism is seeping through trading floors after the US central bank on Wednesday decided against lifting interest rates as data suggested the 10 previous straight hikes were beginning to kick in.

That was followed by a cut by the People's Bank of China that compounded speculation that authorities are about to announce measures to help fire growth as the post-zero-Covid recovery runs out of steam. A series of lacklustre economic indicators in recent weeks have added to worries about the outlook for the world's number two economy. Inflation is just 0.2 percent, factory activity contracted for the second consecutive month in May, retail sales slowed further last month and youth unemployment has hit a record high.

Bloomberg News reported this month that authorities were planning a rollout of support measures, with the State Council said to

target the ailing property sector.

A further loosening of monetary policy to boost lending could also be on the cards as well as more infrastructure spending.

The commerce ministry said Thursday that promotion of the car, home appliances and catering industries was also on the agenda, Bloomberg said.

"It seems China's policymakers have had enough and are unwilling to sit idle and watch consumer sentiment crumble," said SPI Asset Management's Stephen Innes. "This big-time stimulus is geared to stabilise expectations, bring the post-Covid recovery back on track, and build the case for market-based interest rates and the yuan exchange rate to bottom out. At the same time, China's risk market should flourish as the deflationary haze lifts."

Hong Kong and Shanghai rallied, while Tokyo reversed early losses as the yen weakened in reaction to the Bank of Japan's decision to maintain its ultra-loose monetary policy. The Nikkei has now risen for 10 straight weeks, the longest run since February 2013.

Kelvin Wong at OANDA said the bank's

statement "suggested that BoJ is not in a 'rush mode' to normalize its ultra-easy monetary policy due to an expected slowdown in inflationary pressures".

There were also gains in Sydney, Singapore, Seoul, Mumbai, Manila and Wellington. London, Paris and Frankfurt were also stronger in the morning.

The tepid performance came despite another strong performance on Wall Street, where all three main indexes climbed more than one percent on bets the Fed has come to the end, or is close to, its hiking programme.

After Wednesday's rate pause, bank officials indicated they would use data to decide on whether or not to resume lifting, but analysts said investors thought that unlikely.

A report showing more US jobless claims than expected last week added to those expectations. The prospect of an extended pause weighed on the dollar Thursday and it was unable to recover with any force against the pound and euro. The euro was lifted after the European Central Bank lifted rates and warned of persistent inflation that will remain "too high for too long".

Shipping Activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Two ships namely, Golden Denise and Fuwairit with 7,000 tonnes of Chemicals and 64,734 tonnes of LNG are arrived at outer anchorage of Port Qasim during the last 24 hours.

A total of 05 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, Kition-M, PS-Pelican and Dona BIBI are expected to sail on Friday. Cargo Throughput of 30,849 tonnes, comprising 30,849 tonnes imports Cargo exclusively, was handled at the port during the last 24 hours.

There are eight ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them four ships, Elim, Cielo Rosso, Fuwairit and MilahaRasLafan& two more ships, APL California and Cosco America scheduled to load/offload Palm oil, Mogas, LNG and Containers are expected to take berths at Liquid Terminal, Oil Terminal, Engro Terminal, Gas Terminal and Container Terminal on Friday, & two more container ships, Olympia and Maersk Nyassa are due to arrive at Port Qasim on Saturday, & Navios Lapis and MSC Flosta-III are due to arrive at Port Qasim on Sunday.

Weekly inflation increases by 0.20 pc

ISLAMABAD (APP): The weekly inflation, measured by the Sensitive Price Indicator (SPI), witnessed an increase of 0.20 per cent for the combined consumption group during the week ended on June 15, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported on Friday. The SPI for the week under review in the above-mentioned group was recorded at 255.17 points as compared to 254.67 points during the past week, according to the PBS data. As compared to the corresponding week of last year, the SPI for the combined consumption group in the week under review witnessed an increase of 34.96 per cent.

The weekly SPI with the base year 2015-16 =100 is covering 17 urban centres and 51 essential items for all expenditure groups. The SPI for the lowest consumption group up to Rs17,732, increased by 0.11 per cent and went up to 261.66 points from last week's 261.36 points whereas it also increased by 0.11 per cent for the consumption group from Rs 17,732-22,888.

The SPI for consumption groups from Rs 22,889-29,517, Rs 29,518-44,175; and above Rs 44,175 witnessed an increase of 0.28 per cent, 0.29 per cent and 0.20 per cent respectively.

During the week, out of 51 items, prices of 19 review witnessed an increase of 34.96 per cent, 12 (23.53%) items decreased and 20 (39.22%) items remained stable.

The items, which recorded a decrease in their average prices on a week-on-week (WoW), included Onions (7.56%), Bananas (5.00%), Eggs (4.86%), LPG (4.14%), Pulse Moong (2.04%), Pulse Gram (1.46%), Vegetable Ghee 1 kg (1.36%), Chicken (1.12%), Mustard Oil (0.75%), Cooking Oil 5 Litre (0.44%), Pulse Masoor (0.42%) and Vegetable Ghee 2.5 kg (0.36%). The items that recorded an increase in their average prices on a week-on-week (wow) basis, included Sugar (4.24%), Gur (2.42%), Wheat Flour (1.79%), Curd (1.59%), Pulse Mash (1.25%), Garlic (1.15%), Milk Fresh (1.08%) and non-food item, Washing

Soap (1.61%).

The commodities that witnessed a decrease in price on a Year-on-Year (YOY) basis, included Tomatoes (29.71%), Onions (17.94%), Diesel (3.89%) and Pulse Masoor (0.91%). On a Year-on-Year (YoY) basis, the commodities which recorded an increase in their average prices, Cigarettes (124.38%), Tea Lipton (114.93%), Wheat Flour (110.08%), Gas Charges for Q1 (108.38%), Rice Basmati Broken (79.11%), Rice Irri-6/9 (78.11%), Potatoes (67.44%), Bananas (67.33%), Gents Sponge Chappal (58.05%), Pulse Moong (53.41%), Bread (52.36%), Pulse Mash (52.32%) and Salt Powdered (49.65%).

‘Real estate sector is the backbone of economy’

ISLAMABAD (NNI): President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari has said that the real estate sector is the backbone of the Pakistani economy, the last two decades the construction sector has contributed to economic recovery, employment and investment.

Islamabad State Agents Association is one of the prominent organizations of the business community, IEAA and Islamabad Chamber have solved the problems through exemplary coordination. The current body of the Chamber is taking historic steps to serve the business community and address issues.

Vice President Chamber Engineer Azhar ul Islam, President Islamabad State Agents Association Sardar Tahir Mehmood, Former President FPCCI Zubair Malik, Secretary General UBG Zafar Bakhtawari, Zahid Rafiq, Abid Khan, Ijaz Abbasi, Tahir Abbasi, Mian Maqbool and others attended the ceremony.

President Islamabad

Chamber said that the current body of IEAA has done a great job in solving the problems in collaboration with the Islamabad Chamber. The unity of the present leadership and members is ideal, we need this unity to solve the problems, and Islamabad Chamber has taken many historic steps in the last 8 months, including representation of the Chamber in CDA Board, construction of Expo Center, FM Radio, School, Hospital and Multipurpose Ground. We are trying to complete all these projects as soon as possible.

The Expo Center is a long-standing project of the Islamabad Chamber. In a few days, an agreement will be concluded with Gulberg Green. The role of the Islamabad State Agents Association will be very important for the construction of all these projects. IEAA is fully represented in the Executive Board of the Islamabad Chamber, I hope this series of cooperation will continue.

Speaking on this occasion, President Islamabad

State Agents Association Sardar Tahir Mehmood said that I am thankful to President Islamabad Chamber and his entire team for the honour. Our organization is the second largest organization of the business community in the city after the Islamabad Chamber, but the importance of the Chamber cannot be denied in any way. Islamabad Chamber has always played the role of a big brother, all previous presidents including the current president have provided us with full guidance in every issue.

He said that the facilities provided in the current budget regarding the real estate sector have been made possible by the joint efforts of the Chamber and their organization. Real estate is the most important sector of the economy providing more than 7% of total employment, more than 72 industries are connected with this sector. I especially thank the President Chamber for playing a role in expanding the package in the budget for the construction sector.

Harano, Naveed discuss mutual interests, import issues

ISLAMABAD (NNI): A three-member delegation, led by Mr. Masafumi Harano, the Asia Head of Suzuki Motors, held a crucial meeting with the Federal Minister for Commerce, Syed Naveed Qamar, in his chamber.

The meeting was attended by Mr. Hiroshi Kawamura, MD PSMCL, and Mr. Shafiq Ahmed Shaikh, Head of PR at Pak Suzuki. The purpose of their discussion was twofold: to address matters of mutual interest and deliberate on import-related issues. Mr. Harano emphasized the import restrictions issues and stressed the need for a conducive business environment that promotes growth and competitiveness.

The Minister expressed his willingness to address these concerns and assured Mr. Harano of the government's commitment to facilitating a conducive import framework. The meeting concluded positively, with both parties reaffirming their dedication to fostering a mutually beneficial partnership that will drive the growth of the automotive sector in the country.

MCB Bank and Marham join hands to promote digital healthcare services

F.P. Report

LAHORE: MCB Bank Limited, one of Pakistan's leading banks, has established a strategic alliance with Marham Medicare Pvt. Ltd, a leading healthcare service provider. This collaboration aims to empower MCB Bank's digital banking customers by offering them the convenience of finding, booking and consulting doctors digitally. Additionally, the partnership includes exclusive packages that incorporate home diagnostics and online medicine delivery services.

Through this collaboration, MCB Live users will have access to comprehensive healthcare services and various other services, all within the MCB Live app. With just a simple click, MCB Live users will be able to avail Marham's specialized services, ensuring easy access to quality healthcare and convenience no matter where they are.

Speaking at the signing ceremony held at MCB House Lahore, Syed Jaffar Abbas Shirazi, Division Head Digital Channels & Branchless Banking, MCB Bank said, "We remain committed to leveraging tech-



nology and partnerships to deliver innovative solutions to our customers. We believe that the well-being of our customers extends beyond financial matters, and this collaboration allows us to explore avenues to enhance our services and create a seamless digital ecosystem that integrates finance and healthcare".

"At Marham, we are super excited

to do an innovative partnership with MCB Bank to make healthcare accessible and efficient for everyone in an affordable way. With the focus on giving a reliable service & patient-centric experience to MCB Live users, we look forward to building a long-term impact together", said Ms. Asma Salman Omer, Co-Founder and COO Marham.

Gas supply from Wali gas field injected into SNGPL's network



F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: In a landmark development, injection of gas supply into SNGPL's network from OGDCL's newly discovered gas field namely Wali (Bettani) in District Lakki Marwat of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, has started earlier this morning (Friday). It is pertinent to mention that Oil and Gas Development Corporation (OGDCL) discovered Wali

gas field last year. Accordingly, the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mian Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and Federal Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) had directed SNGPL to lay pipelines for injection of gas from the newly discovered gas field.

The gas flow from Wali gas field will be processed at OGDCL's facility before being injected into Sui Northern's transmission system. Current gas supply

flowrate from the gas field is 10 MMCFD which is expected to rise to 20 MMCFD in near future. The gas is supplied vide recently constructed 50-kilometer long high-pressure pipeline connecting OGDCL's processing plant to Sui Northern's network at Kaka Khel, District Lakki Marwat. In addition, SNGPL also constructed a 16-kilometer-long gathering line on OGDCL's request as contractor.

It is pertinent to mention here that SNGPL faced security issues during the construction of pipelines but despite all the odds, the company efficiently managed to complete the construction of 66-Kilometer-long pipelines of 8-inch diameter from Wali Well to Kakakhel Valve Assembly in shortest possible time. Both the pipeline segments comprising of 16-kilometer segment from the well to the processing plant and 50-kilometer segment from processing plant to Kakakhel Valve Assembly were successfully commissioned on 14 and 15 June respectively.

The before time completion of pipeline construction project for injection of gas, which carries significant national importance owing to the prevailing energy crisis, was only made possible through the guidance of the Company's Board of Directors and the current management along with steadfast dedication and hard work of SNGPL's workforce.



MULTAN: Women selecting and purchasing second-hand clothes displayed by a roadside vendor.



North Korea fires two short-range ballistic missiles

SEOUL (AFP): North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles, South Korea's military said, shortly after Pyongyang warned of an "inevitable" response to ongoing US-South Korea joint military drills. South Korea and the United States, which have ramped up defence cooperation in response to growing threats from the nuclear-armed North, are currently carrying out joint large-scale live-fire "annihilation" exercises.

Seoul's Joint Chiefs of Staff said it had detected the launch of "two short-range ballistic missiles from the Sunan area into the East Sea between 19:25 and 19:37 (1025 to 1037 GMT)," referring to the body of water also known as the Sea of Japan. "We have stepped up monitoring in case of further provocations and are maintaining readiness in close coordination with the United States," the military said. Tokyo also confirmed the missile launches, with a defence ministry official telling reporters that the two missiles had landed in waters within Japan's exclusive economic zone.

"The missiles may have flown on irregular trajectories," Japan's top government spokesman Hirokazu Matsuno told reporters, adding that one had flown 850 kilometres (530 miles) and the other around 900 kilometres at altitudes of 50 kilometres, before landing in Japan's EEZ. In a joint statement, the United States, South Korea and Japan condemned the launches, saying they violated UN Security Council

resolutions and demonstrate the threat "unlawful weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs pose to the region." And in a separate move, Washington imposed sanctions against two North Koreans based in Beijing over their alleged connection to Pyongyang's weapons program. "The DPRK's development of its missile programs directly threatens regional and international security, and the United States will continue to take action to curtail activities in support of those programs," State Secretary Antony Blinken said in a statement, using the acronym for North Korea's official name. Relations between the two Koreas are at one of their lowest points in years, with diplomacy stalled and the North's leader Kim Jong Un declaring his country an "irreversible" nuclear power, as well as calling for ramped-up weapons production, including of tactical nukes. North Korea has conducted multiple sanctions-busting launches this year, including test-firing its most powerful intercontinental ballistic missiles, and last month attempting to put a military spy satellite into orbit.

In response, the hawkish administration of South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol has bolstered defence cooperation with the United States and Japan, including expanding joint drills, which had been scaled back because of Covid-19, and during a bout of ill-fated diplomacy. Yoon personally watched South Korean and US troops take part in

the live-fire exercises. All such drills infuriate Pyongyang, which regards them as rehearsals for invasion. North Korea slammed the drills, saying they were escalating military tensions in the region. "Our response to this is inevitable," the defence ministry said in a statement carried by the official Korean Central News Agency. "Our armed forces will fully counter any form of demonstrative moves and provocation of the enemies." South Korea filed a lawsuit seeking damages from North Korea for the 2020 demolition of a liaison office. The office was established in 2018 with funding from Seoul at an industrial zone near the border in North Korean territory, as South Korea's then-president Moon Jae-in pressed for a diplomatic breakthrough with Pyongyang. But after that process collapsed and relations deteriorated, North Korea demolished the building in June 2020. Seoul describes the demolition as a "clearly an illegal act" and is seeking 44.7 billion won (\$35 million) in damages. North Korea is likely to ignore any ruling by the court, but there is precedent in South Korea and the United States for damages being awarded against its government. "Given the timing, the launch seems like the North's expression of discontent or protest at Seoul's legal action seeking compensation (for) the North's demolition of the Kaesong office," Choi Gil-il, professor of military studies at Sangji University, told AFP.

UN experts raise 'torture' concerns with Russia

GENEVA (Reuters): A group of UN experts said they had written to Moscow raising concerns about the use of torture by Russian military forces on Ukrainian civilians and prisoners of war. The UN experts said in a statement the torture included electric shocks, hoodings and mock executions and had been carried out to extract intelligence, force confessions or in response to alleged support for Ukraine's forces.

It had resulted in damage to internal organs, cracked bones and fractures, strokes and psychological traumas, they said. A spokesperson for Russia's diplomatic mission in Geneva did not immediately respond to a request for comment. Moscow has previously denied torturing or mistreating prisoners of war and says it does not deliberately target civilians in Ukraine. While torture allegations have previously been levelled against both sides in the 15-month conflict, the team of UN independent experts said Russian forces' methods may be "state-endorsed". The consistency and methods of alleged torture suggested "a level of coordination, planning and organisation, as well as the direct authorisation, deliberate policy or official tolerance from superior authorities", according to UN Special Rapporteur on Torture Alice Jill Edwards, who sent the letter alongside several other independent experts.

"Obeying a superior order or policy direction cannot be invoked as justification for torture, and any individual involved should be promptly investigated and prosecuted by independent authorities," she said.

Iraq, Qatar agree to boost cooperation

BAGHDAD (AP): Qatar and Iraq inked a series of economic and energy deals during a visit to Baghdad by the Qatari emir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani. The two countries signed a broad agreement to expand "cooperation in politics, economics, energy, and investment," Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani said in a statement.

They also inked specific deals on transportation, development projects and energy, including "the establishment of a joint oil company, and the construction of an oil refinery" and an agreement on hotel construction, he said. Qatar's state-owned Qatar News Agency reported that the emir had announced his country's intent to "invest \$5 billion in a number of sectors in Iraq in the coming years."

Iraq has sought to strengthen its previously strained relationship with its wealthy Gulf Arab neighbors in recent years and court foreign investment - efforts that have begun to bear fruit. Last month, Baghdad hosted a one-day conference that convened transport ministers and representatives from Iraq, the Gulf Arab countries, Turkey, Iran, Syria, and Jordan, culminating in the announcement of plans for a \$17 billion regional transportation project intended to facilitate the flow of goods from Asia to Europe.

In April, QatarEnergy, the Gulf country's state-run petroleum company, announced it had agreed to buy a 25% stake in a massive gas project in Iraq. Iraq urgently needs to develop local gas resources to meet electricity demands, especially during the peak summer months. The country is heavily reliant on Iranian gas and electricity imports. Al-Sudani also said that Iraq, which has suffered decades of upheaval and violence, now "enjoys security and political stability, which makes it a promising environment" for projects. "Iraq has regained its normal position and role in the region, and it is ready to work with brothers and friends to achieve peace, prosperity and development," he said.

US guided-missile submarine arrives in South Korea

SEOUL (AP): The United States deployed a nuclear-powered submarine capable of carrying about 150 Tomahawk missiles to South Korea, a day after North Korea resumed missile tests in protest of the US-South Korean live-fire drills. The USS Michigan's arrival in South Korea, the first of its kind in six years, is part of a recent bilateral agreement on enhancing "regular visibility" of US strategic assets to the Korean Peninsula in response to North Korea's advancing nuclear program, according to South Korean officials.

With the deployment of the USS Michigan, the US and South Korean navies are to conduct drills on boosting their special operation capabilities and joint ability to cope with growing North Korean nuclear threats, the South Korean Defense Ministry said in a statement. It said the US submarine arrived at the southeastern port city of Busan but didn't say how long it would stay in South Korean waters. The USS Michigan is one of the biggest submarines in the world. The Ohio-class guided-missile submarine can be armed with 150 Tomahawk missiles with a range of about 2,500 kilometers (1,550 miles) and is capable of launching special forces missions, according to the South Korean statement.

The South Korean and US militaries have been expanding their exercises in reaction to North Korea's provocative run of missile tests since last year. North Korea has argued it was forced to ramp up testing activities to deal with its rivals' expanded military drills that it views as an invasion rehearsal, but experts say the North ultimately aims to modernize



its arsenal and increase its leverage in eventual diplomacy. In April, after their meeting in Washington, President Joe Biden and South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol agreed that the United States would enhance the "regular visibility of strategic assets to the Korean Peninsula." Biden also stated that any North Korean nuclear attack on the US or its allies would "result in the end of whatever regime" took such action. The two leaders also announced other steps to reinforce joint deterrence capabilities such as the docking a US nuclear ballistic missile submarine in South Korea periodically; bolstering joint training exercises; and the establishment of a new nuclear consultative group. The nuclear ballistic missile submarine hasn't come to South Korea. Kim Yo Jong, the powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un, slammed the Biden-Yoon summit

agreements, saying they revealed the two countries' "most hostile and aggressive will of action" against the North. She threatened to further bolster her country's nuclear forces.

North Korea fired two short-range ballistic missiles off its east coast, shortly after it vowed responses to the just-ended South Korea-US firing drills near the Koreas' heavily armed border. They were the North's first weapons launches since it tried to put its first spy satellite into orbit in late May. The launch failed as the rocket carrying the spy satellite crashed into the waters off the Korean Peninsula's west coast. South Korea's Defense Ministry said that military search crews have salvaged what it believes is part of the crashed North Korean rocket. The ministry released photos of the white, metal cylinder, which some experts said would have been the rocket's fuel tank.

World breaks average temp record for June: EU

PARIS (Agencies): Average global temperatures at the start of June were the warmest ever recorded for the period, trouncing previous records by a "substantial margin", the European Union's climate monitoring unit said. "The world has just experienced its warmest early June on record," Samantha Burgess, deputy director of the Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S), said in a statement.

"Global-mean surface air temperatures for the first days of June 2023 were the highest in the ERA5 data record for early June by a substantial margin," the Copernicus unit said, noting that some of the data go back as far as 1950. Temperatures have since dipped, but experts say the short surge in early June marked a new global heat record for the month and indicates more extremes ahead as the planet enters an El Niño phase that could last years. Researchers at the EU's Copernicus unit reported that the start of June saw global surface air temperatures rise 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit) above pre-industrial levels for the first time.

That is the threshold governments said they would try to stay within at a 2015 summit in Paris. According to the data, the

daily global average temperature was at or above the 1.5 Celsius threshold between June 7-11, reaching a maximum of 1.69 Celsius above it on June 9. The unit said that on June 8 and 9 this year, the global average daily temperature was about 0.4 Celsius warmer than previous records for the same days. "As the global-mean temperature continues to rise and more frequently exceed the 1.5 degrees Celsius limit, the cumulative effects of the exceedances will become increasingly serious and must be carefully monitored," the unit said. The days spent at the 1.5 Celsius threshold comes as a three-year La Niña phase - which tends to dampen the effects of global warming - has given way to the opposite, an El Niño period, which could add another half-degree or more to average temperatures.

Copernicus recently announced that global oceans were warmer last month than in any other May on record. "The expectation is that 2024 will be even warmer than 2023 as this El Niño continues to develop," Burgess said. "We know as well the warmer the global climate is, the more likely we are to have extreme events and the more severe those extreme events may be," she said. "So there's a direct correlation

between the degree of global warming and the frequency and intensity of extreme events."

UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said the world is racing towards a climate change disaster, describing the global response as woefully inadequate. Current climate policies will lead to average temperatures 2.8 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial times by the end of the century, nearly twice the UN goal of a 1.5-degree Celsius rise, Guterres said. "That spells catastrophe. Yet the collective response remains pitiful," Guterres told a news conference. "We are hurtling towards disaster, eyes wide open - with far too many willing to bet it all on wishful thinking, unproven technologies and silver bullet solutions. It's time to wake up and step up," said the UN chief.

He said the fossil fuel industry must undertake not just a transition but a full-blown transformation as it moves towards clean energy "and away from a product incompatible with human survival". "Countries are far off-track in meeting climate promises and commitments. I see a lack of ambition. A lack of trust. A lack of support. A lack of cooperation. And an abundance of problems around clarity and credibility," he said.

Donor nations commit \$10.3b for millions of Syrians

BRUSSELS (AP): International donors said they would commit \$10.3 billion in aid for millions of Syrians battered by war, poverty, and hunger, both at home and as refugees abroad. The pledges by 57 nations and 30 international organizations at an annual European Union-hosted conference in Brussels for Syria fell about \$800 million short of a United Nations humanitarian appeal.

"This is a tangible demonstration that the international community stands by the Syrian people," said EU Humanitarian Aid Commissioner Janez Lenarčič, who closed out the day-long meeting at the headquarters of the 27-nation bloc. He said the total of grants and loans was about \$875 million higher than last year's pledge. However, exact comparisons are difficult: commitments can be spread over years and different institutions. They can be affected by inflation and devaluations, and can partly recur later. Yet the total seemed higher than what many had expected. UN Secretary-General António Guterres had asked donors for \$11.1 billion, what he called "our largest appeal worldwide." "My appeal is simple: Help

us help the Syrian people," Guterres said. "We have no time to spare."

The money raised will provide aid to Syrians inside the war-torn country and to some 5.7 million Syrian refugees, mostly in Turkey, Lebanon and Jordan. Syria's uprising-turned conflict, now in its 13th year, has killed nearly half a million people and displaced half of its prewar population of 23 million. Amid pressing needs across the globe from Ukraine to Sudan, the annual donor conference raised fears of a serious shortfall of expectations. Lenarčič's figures countered that. The gathering also had more political overtones as Syrian President Bashar Assad is slowly carving his way back from being an international pariah to the regional mainstream. Finding hard cash, though, remained key. But for nations hit by economic difficulties, a surge in inflation that has hurt the poor in even the wealthiest nations and the seemingly hopeless situation that drags on in Syria's conflict, money is increasingly hard to come by. Because of the funding crisis, Guterres said food aid to the 5.5 million people in Syria who had been receiving assistance would have to be drastically cut.

"Our cash assistance will

run out for two and a half million Syrians next month alone," Guterres said, calling it "priority number one." The crisis is also hitting the neighboring nations which host some 5.7 million refugees and are facing economic crises of their own. Foreign Minister Ayman Safadi of Jordan, which hosts about 1.3 million Syrians, said, "Handling the burden of refugees is a partnership between donor states and host states." If donor states didn't play their role, he added, host states couldn't be expected to do as much. The pledging conference comes at a politically precarious time. Assad recently received a major political lifeline with the return of Syria to the Arab League. Several of Syria's neighbors, led by Saudi Arabia, have been holding talks with it to resolve its ongoing security and economic crisis, hoping that it would lead to mass refugee returns.

However, Josep Borrell, foreign policy chief of the 27-nation EU, insisted that the bloc would not change its policies toward Assad, including maintaining sanctions against his regime. "We are not on the same line as the Arab League. That's clear," Borrell said.

Students meet under trees

MALILIPOT (AP): Nearly 20,000 people have fled from an erupting Philippine volcano and taken shelter in schools, disrupting education for thousands of students, many of whom are having classes in chapels and tents or under trees, officials said. The Mayon volcano in northeastern Albay province, one of the deadliest of 24 active volcanoes across the Philippine archipelago, began expelling lava in a gentle eruption that has not caused any injuries or death. But it could drag on for months and cause a prolonged humanitarian crisis, officials warned.

Most of those forced to evacuate live in farming villages within a 6-kilometer (3.7-mile) radius of the volcano's crater that has long been designated as a permanent danger zone but has been home to thriving communities for generations. The evacuees were directed to more than 20 emergency shelters, which are mostly grade and high school campuses. Every classroom has turned into an overcrowded sanctuary for several families with sleeping mats, bags of clothes, cooking stoves and toys for children. More than 17,000 students in five Albay towns are among affected by the displacements for the eruption. About 80% are continuing their daily school lessons through an emergency system in which parents teach their children at home or elsewhere using school-provided "learning modules," said Alvin Cruz of the Department of Education in Albay. The temporary distant-learning approach for students was extensively used during the two years of the coronavirus pandemic, when most of the Philippines was under police-enforced quarantine that restricted people to their homes.

"We came from the pandemic and the learning loss was grave, and now we have the Mayon volcano erupting," Cruz told The Associated Press. "Our challenge now is how to track the displaced school children so we can give their parents the learning modules." Some teachers are trying to continue in-person classes, meeting with their students inside village halls, chapels, gymnasiums and daycare centers, outside in gardens and under trees, or even in school corridors, Cruz said. "We can't do anything because we're in an emergency," he said.

"We will always find ways to ensure the learning continuity." At the San Jose elementary school campus now crammed with more than 2,400 displaced villagers in Malilipot town, AP journalists saw teachers holding classes along narrow open-air walkways, in a flower garden, inside a tiny guest hut and under the shade of a tree.

Iran's president meets Cuban counterpart

HAVANA (AP): Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi met with Cuban leader Miguel Diaz-Canel, wrapping up a Latin America trip that also included visits to Iran's two other allies in the region - Venezuela and Nicaragua. During a trade forum with local businesspeople in Havana, Raisi said Cuba and Iran would seek to work together in biotechnology, mining, electricity generation and other areas.

"I hope this meeting will help facilitate integration as well as an exchange of ideas and opinions," Raisi said. Unlike his previous stops in Nicaragua and Venezuela, Raisi refrained from making harsh comments in public against Washington or the economic sanctions imposed on his

country and its three allies in the region. After the forum, Raisi and Diaz-Canel toured biotechnology production plants in the western part of the capital, then headed to a closed-door reception at Cuba's Palace of the Revolution. The leaders also signed several agreements on customs, justice, telecommunications and diplomatic action. While the scope of the agreements was not yet clear, the energy sector is one of particular importance for Cuba, where fuel shortages have increased dramatically in the past weeks amid a severe economic crisis. Raisi's tour of allied nations in Latin America comes amid rising tensions with the administration of US President Joe Biden. Asked about Raisi's

Latin America tour earlier this month, White House National Security Council spokesman John Kirby declined to comment on the Iranian leader or his agenda. But Kirby acknowledged the administration was concerned about Iran's "destabilizing behavior, and said it will 'continue to take steps to mitigate that behavior.'" The US has accused Iran of providing Russia with materials to build a drone manufacturing plant east of Moscow, while the Kremlin seeks to ensure a steady supply of weapons for its invasion of Ukraine. US intelligence officials believe the plant in Russia could start operations early next year, but Iran has said it supplied drones to Russia before the start of the war.

NATO sees no change in Russia's nuclear posture

BRUSSELS (AP): NATO sees no sign that Russia has changed its nuclear posture, the head of the military alliance said, after President Alexander Lukashenko claimed that Belarus has already received some tactical nuclear weapons from Moscow. In an interview on state television, Lukashenko brashly warned that he wouldn't hesitate to order their use if Belarus faced an act of aggression. Russian President Vladimir Putin has said the weapons will be deployed to Belarus next month and will remain under Moscow's exclusive control.

"We are, of course, closely monitoring what Russia is doing. So far, we haven't seen any changes in the nuclear posture that requires any changes in our

posture," Stoltenberg told reporters before chairing a meeting of NATO defense ministers at the alliance's headquarters in Brussels. NATO's secretive nuclear defense planning group is set to meet. The meeting has long been planned and is not a reaction to recent developments, but the alliance is concerned about Putin's threats and his decisions to pull Russia out of important arms limitation treaties.

"Russia's nuclear rhetoric and messaging is reckless and dangerous," Stoltenberg said. "Russia must know that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never be fought." He noted that "Russia has invested heavily in new modern nuclear capabilities and also deployed more nuclear capabilities, including close

to NATO borders, for instance, in the high north." Earlier this year, Putin announced the planned deployment of short-range nuclear weapons to Moscow's neighbor and ally Belarus in a move widely seen as a warning to the West as it stepped up military support for Ukraine. Russia is also using Belarus as a staging base for attacks in Ukraine. During a meeting with Lukashenko, Putin said work on building facilities for the weapons would be completed by July 7-8, and they would be moved to Belarusian territory quickly after that. US President Joe Biden and his NATO counterparts are gathering for a summit on July 11-12 in the Lithuanian capital, Vilnius, about 35 kilometers (22 miles) from the Belarus border.

Chechen fighters sent to Russian border with Ukraine

MOSCOW (Reuters): Chechen fighters have been deployed in Russia's Belgorod region bordering Ukraine to prevent attacks from "Ukrainian sabotage groups", Chechnya ruler Ramzan Kadyrov said. Belgorod region has in the past month reported a series of cross-border incursions from pro-Ukraine Russian partisan groups calling

themselves opponents of President Vladimir Putin. Kadyrov, a Putin ally who leads the Russian region of Chechnya, said that fighters from the "Zapad-Akhmat" battalion had been deployed near the border village of Nekhteevka and a checkpoint in Graivoron district, the site of a cross-border attack in May. "Residents

of the territories adjacent to the border with Ukraine can rest easy ... Whoever encroaches on our borders will receive a lightning response," Kadyrov said in a post on Telegram messaging app. Ukraine denies involvement in the cross-border attacks, casting them as a direct consequence of Russia's February 2022 invasion.

US not aware of exact size of land China has taken from India

Jalil Afridi

WASHINGTON DC: While replying to a question by *The Frontier Post*, US State Department Spokesperson, Matthew Miller said that he does not know the exact size of land which China has taken from India.

The Frontier Post also asked whether the US Secretary of State, Anthony Blinken will be raising this issue with his counterparts in his upcoming visit to Beijing. Matthew Miller stated that there will be several issues under discussion but the top three includes talking about competition with China instead of conflict, discussing area of concerns and discussing areas of mutual cooperation.

It is pertinent to mention here that Secretary Blinken is visiting China over the coming weekend and Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi is visiting Washington DC next week.

Several analysts in Washington DC wonder why the United States has taken such a strong stance against Russia for attacking Ukraine but on the other hand, the United States is

completely mum over China who has taken over several hundred miles of land from India, which China claims that it originally belonged to them.

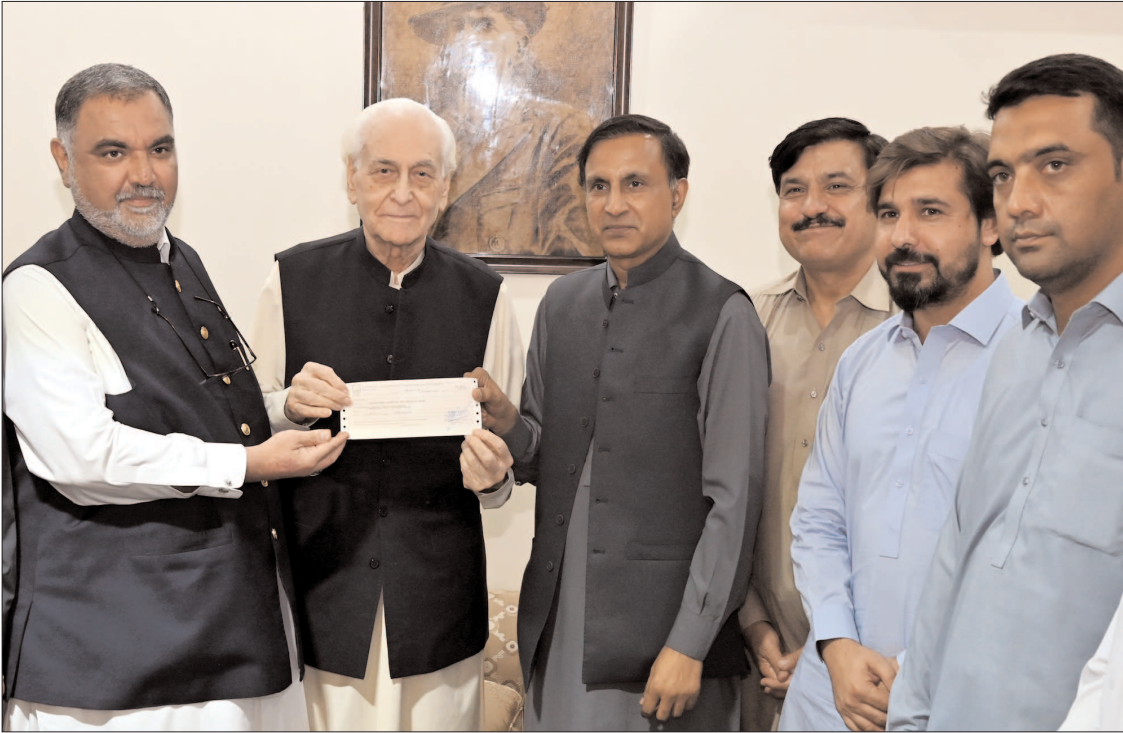
In reply to these analysts others argue that if India is quiet on this issue then why should the United States bother to make a fuss out of it. Prime Minister Modi's critics say that he has kept his whole nation/India in dark about this whole episode and is playing religion card to divert the attention.

President Joe Biden is also looking a little skeptical about Modi's upcoming visit to Washington DC and one of his reason behind all this skepticism is due to media reports appearing against Prime Minister Narendra Modi in international news media outlets. Among those news media outlets is BBC is at the top who had recently released a report by former UK Foreign Secretary, Jack Straw which stated that in Gujarat riots in India, Modi had ordered killings of several thousand Muslims along with hundreds of women being raped. After these reports appeared on BBC,

several attempts were made by Modi's government to shut down BBC operations in India.

At yesterday's press briefing at the US State Department, a journalist from one of the top news media outlet asked Matthew Miller about how long will the US be silent about the crimes Narendra Modi is committing in India with regard to people of different faiths and suppressing the media. Matthew Miller replied by saying that the US discusses these issues with India on regular basis in private and on official level as well.

There are reports that General Electronics will be signing contact with India regarding its manufacture plant in India during upcoming visit of Prime Minister Narendra Modi to the US. The United States is definitely promoting India to come at par with China regarding its manufacturing industry but as far as the technology is concerned, the US will be playing very careful after it's experiences with China and to promote its own local industry.



PESHAWAR: KP Caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan handing over a cheque of grant-in-aid to the cabinet members of Peshawar Press Club. Information Minister Feroz Jamal Kakakhel also present.

CM KP hands over Rs15m cheque to PPC delegation

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A delegation of the Peshawar Press Club (PPC) led by its President Arshad Aziz Malik here Friday called on the caretaker Chief Minister Azam Khan. The Chief Minister handed over Rs15 million cheque to the PPC delegation in grant in aid.

Azam Khan said the Government was well aware of the problems of journalists community and would make all possible efforts for its resolutions. The Chief Minister said that role of media in the present age was a reality, and that journalism was consider as a 4th pillar of the state in a democratic society.

He stressed on journalists to highlight the province's problems and play positive role in the guidance of youth. Arshad Aziz Malik thanked the Chief Minister for taking keen interest in resolution of problems of journalists community. Arshad Malik said there are good relations between KP Govt and journalists and would continue for betterment of the province.

Ex-MNA Shah Jee joins PML-N

ISLAMABAD (INP): Former Member National Assembly (MNA) from the merged districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Shah Jee Gul Afridi along with his supporters and party workers announced to join Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N).

He made this announcement while addressing a news conference along with PML-N leaders in Islamabad on Friday. Present on the occasion were Minister for Parliamentary Affairs Murtaza Javed Abbasi and Adviser to Prime Minister Engineer Amir Muqam. Shah Jee Gul Afridi strongly condemning the May 9 incidents has expressed resolve to continue struggle to make Pakistan a prosperous country under the leadership of Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

ATC adjourns Model Town case hearing

LAHORE (INP): An Anti-Terrorism Court in Lahore on Friday heard Model Town tragedy case and sought arguments on the pleas of acquittal of the four accused in the next hearing. The court adjourned the hearing till June 23. An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) Lahore Judge Ijaz Ahmed Butar heard the case.

Four police officers, including former SSP Umar Virk filed petitions for acquittal from the Model Town tragedy case. The Model Town tragedy known as Model Town operation held between the Punjab Police and Pakistan Awami Tehreek activists on 17 June 2014 resulting in several protesters killings. The standoff occurred when the police's anti-encroachment squad launched an operation to remove the barriers from the road leading to the offices of Minhaj-ul-Quran and the residence of PAT founder Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri in Model Town, Lahore.

emphasised that Shehbaz never made any decision without consulting Nawaz Sharif. Earlier, all the central office-bearers of the Pakistan PML-N, including its President Shehbaz Sharif, were "re-elected" for another four-year term without having any contest.

The intra-party elections at the federal level were held at the Central Secretariat of PML-N, Chak Shehzad. Besides Shehbaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz has been elected unopposed as the PML-N chief organiser, Ahsan Iqbal as secretary general, Marriyum Aurangzeb as secretary of information, Ataullah Tarar as Deputy Secretary and Ishaq Dar as Secretary Finance.

no one held press conferences or left the party.

"The PML-N has shown unwavering patience and perseverance in the face of the most challenging problems, including political victimisation that resulted in several top party leaders being incarcerated," she added. Maryam also lauded the government led by PM Shehbaz Sharif, highlighting its "achievement" of steering the country away from the brink of default despite inheriting severe economic hurdles.

She praised the "resilience and determination" demonstrated by PM Shehbaz and Finance Minister Ishaq Dar in reviving the economy and setting Pakistan on a path toward prosperity. She

CJ hails appropriate remedy against Article 184(3)

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial said on Friday that the apex court would welcome any remedy against Article 184(3) if it was done with caution.

Article 184(3) of the Constitution sets out the Supreme Court's (SC) original jurisdiction and enables it to assume jurisdiction in matters involving a question of "public importance" with reference to the "enforcement of any of the fundamental rights" of Pakistan's citizens. CJP Bandial made the remarks as a three-member SC bench heard a set of appeals challenging the Supreme Court (Review of Judgments and Orders) Act, 2023 and the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) review against the verdict fixing May 14 as the date for holding Punjab Assembly elections.

During Friday's hearing, Attorney-General for Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor Usman Awan presented his arguments. Giving the

example of a 2002 judgement by the Indian supreme court regarding curative pleas, Awan said: "The Indian supreme court had said that ensuring justice is no less important than the finality of a decision. The verdict said that absolute justice is God's desire."

At this, Justice Munib Akhtar said that a review was still a review and was not granted the status of an appeal. The CJP then remarked that a "complete test of justice" lay before the SC, adding that the Indian law also stated the same. "In an appeal, a case is heard once again. We should solve this issue," he said.

"We welcome any remedy against Article 184(3) of the Constitution if it is done with caution. The question is on what basis a review should be allowed," he said. In his arguments, the AGP also said that from high courts to the top court, petitioners were given the opportunity to present their cases. "That is why the SC has limited the scope of review," he said.

Govt firmly committed to IMF programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Finance on Friday said the coalition government was fully committed to the Internal Monetary Fund (IMF) programme and keen to at least complete the 9th review as it had already taken many difficult and politically costly decisions in that context.

Responding to the statement of IMF's Resident Representative Ms Esther Perez, the Finance Ministry spokesperson said negotiations with the Fund were going on, however, it would be appropriate to clarify "our position" on some specific issues raised in the press statement. He said the 9th IMF review was conducted in early February 2023 and the government completed all technical issues at a fast pace.

The only outstanding issue was of external financing "which, we understand, was also amicably resolved in the prime minister's telephonic call of May 19, 2023, with the Managing Director (MD) of IMF". The spokesperson said the budget for the financial year 2023-24 was never a part of the 9th

Review, however, "in line with the prime minister's commitment to the IMF MD, we shared the budget numbers with the IMF Mission and we are continuously engaged with them even on the budget".

On the specific issues raised by Ms Esther Perez, he said as far as the broadening of the tax base was concerned, the Federal Board of Revenue (FBR) had added 1,161,000 new tax payers i.e. 26.38% to its tax base in the last 11 months. "This is an ongoing exercise and will continue," he said, adding 0.6 % advance adjustable withholding tax on cash withdrawals over Rs 50,000 was another big step in that direction.

Besides, he said, the tax-exemptions that had been announced in the budget were "triggers" of growth in the real sectors of economy. "This is the sustainable path to provide employment and livelihood to the common citizen. In any case, the amount is fairly small." On the Benazir Income Support Programme's (BISP) allocation, the spokesperson

said the pro-poor initiatives in the budget were not limited to the BISP beneficiaries whose budget in any case had been increased from Rs 400 to Rs 450 billion. (This was last raised by the government in February 2023 from Rs 350 to Rs 400 billion.)

"There are millions of vulnerable people above the poverty line and the budget provides Rs 35 billion for targeted subsidies on five main items of food consumption through the Utility Stores Corporation for families upto a PMT scorecard 40. This facility is also available for BISP beneficiaries," he added. Similarly, he said, as far as the "amnesty" was concerned the only change was to "dollarize" the value of an existing provision of IT Ordinance, which had always been there, was available under its Section 111(4). He said the cap of Rs 10 million (approximately \$ 100,000 equivalent) was introduced in the fiscal year 2016. "The cap set in FY 2016 is being resolved in terms of rupee equivalence of \$ 100,000," he added.

Maryam Nawaz lauds PML-N leaders, workers

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz chief organiser Maryam Nawaz on Friday lauded PML-N leaders and workers for standing by party in tough time.

Addressing the PML-N's Central General Council in Islamabad, Maryam Nawaz commended Nawaz Sharif's patience and moral values, stating that he never incited chaos or unrest, but instead acted as a teacher and role model for the nation. The PML-N chief organiser stated that the former prime minister never compromised on national interests. "That's the reason, the party stood with Nawaz Sharif in the difficult times," she said, adding that

she

Marriyum elected as PML-N Info Secy

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The General Council meeting of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) on Friday elected Marriyum Aurangzeb as Information Secretary of the party for four years (2023-27). The Council elected the PML-N's cabinet during the meeting which was presided over by the party Qaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, and Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, who was also elected as the PML-N President unopposed.

Maryam Nawaz was elected as Chief Organizer of the party, while Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal as General Secretary. Addressing the meeting, Marriyum Aurangzeb, who is also Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting, expressed gratitude to the party leaders and workers for reposing confidence in her.

"It is a matter of pride for me to be elected as Secretary Information of the PML-N," the minister said, reiterating the party's resolve for steering the country out of crises. The PML-N was committed to chart the country on path of progress and development under the leadership of its Qaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, she added. The newly-elected Information Secretary also presented multiple resolutions in the General Council meeting which reposed complete confidence in the leadership of Nawaz Sharif, paid tribute to the services rendered by PML-N President Shehbaz Sharif for the country and condemned the May 9 incidents of attacking, vandalizing and burning sensitive installations and martyrs' memorials by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) workers.

The resolutions also paid homage to the sacrifices rendered by the Kashmiris for their liberation from Indian yoke, and also to the martyrs of Pakistan who sacrificed their lives for protecting the motherland. The first resolution stated that the PML-N General Council meeting paid tribute to the courage and vision of its leader Muhammad Nawaz Sharif who faced the worst form of oppression and political victimisation with steadfastness, patience and bravery. It further stated that Nawaz Sharif's resolve never dampened by personal traumas he had experienced during the journey. He always gave preference to interests of Pakistan and its people over his personal difficulties.

The resolution noted that Nawaz Sharif had not only averted conspiracies against the country through his policies but also steered Pakistan out of crises rendering sacrifices. The meeting unanimously approved another resolution to commend the role of Maryam Nawaz who fought oppression during the four years of previous government courageously. Another resolution, presented

by the Information Secretary and adopted by the Council, also paid homage to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for his political role in protecting the national interests.

It noted that Shehbaz Sharif, after coming into the power in April 2022, sacrificed his politics in a bid to save the state and took decisions which were not only aimed at stabilizing the economy, but also safeguarding the national interests. It stated that the General Council meeting paid tribute to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif not only for extraordinary services he rendered for the nation in the most difficult times, but also advancing Nawaz Sharif's vision for leading the country to progress, development and prosperity, curbing inflation and uplifting the living standards of all strata of society on equal basis.

The resolution said as Leader of the Opposition, Shehbaz Sharif performed extraordinarily and stood vindicated after facing the worst form of oppression. He endured hardships of prisons and went through the mental agony of media trial. After coming into the power, PM Shehbaz Sharif strove for progress and development of the country continuing his legacy to serve the masses like that of the previous government tenure of PML-N when he exhibited exceptional performance as Punjab chief minister.

Political and economic stability returned to the country due to such efforts of PM Shehbaz Sharif, the resolution added. It also paid tribute to the party leaders and workers who had expressed unprecedented loyalty to the party in face of oppression during trying time. It said the party leadership, including Qaid Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Shehbaz Sharif, Maryam Nawaz and Hamza Shehbaz acknowledged unmatched commitment of the leaders and workers to the party. The resolution said the party leadership was proud of the workers for remaining committed to the party's ideology and manifesto in difficult times. "With the grace of the Almighty and this spirit, we will steer Pakistan out of difficulties and put it on the path of development," it added. Maryam Aurangzeb, reiterating the party's historic, traditional and unshakeable commitment to the Kashmir cause, also presented a resolution which expressed solidarity with the brave people of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir. The General Council, in the resolution adopted unanimously, fully supported the struggle of Kashmiris for their just right to self-determination as per the resolutions of the United Nations, and also paid homage to them for their sacrifices in that regard. Marriyum Aurangzeb also presented a resolution during the meeting to condemn the May 9 tragedy, which was also unanimously approved.

Emergency lifted as cyclone Biparjoy fizzles out

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Sindh's coastal residents, who were forced to flee their towns and villages ahead of tropical cyclone Biparjoy's devastating landfall, are returning to their homes after the Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) confirmed that the sea storm has lost its strength significantly.

"The Very Severe Cyclonic Storm (VSCS) 'BIPARJOY' over the northeast Arabian Sea after crossing the Indian Gujarat coast (near Jakhu port) has weakened into a Severe Cyclonic Storm (SCS)," the Met Office said in its latest advisory. Roofs were blown off houses, and trees and electric poles were uprooted, leaving thousands without power as a severe cyclone made landfall and rain lashed both the Indian and Pakistani coasts late Thursday.

At least two people died in India's western state of Gujarat after being swept away by flood waters just before the cyclone hit. However, in Pakistan, the cyclone had no major impact, with rain reported in some parts of the southern metropolis of Karachi, which is on high alert. More than 180,000 people were evacuated in India and Pakistan in the last few days as authorities braced for the cyclone, named

Biparjoy, which means 'disaster' or 'calamity' in the Bengali language.

The latest advisory of the PMD mentioned that the cyclone lies near latitude 23.8°N and longitude 69.4°E at a distance of 110km south of Badin, 200km southeast of Keti Bandar, and 180km south-east of Thatta. "The associated maximum sustained surface winds are 80-100 Km/hour with sea conditions being over Northeast Arabian Sea with wave height 10-12 feet. The system is likely to weaken further into a Depression by today evening."

Weather expert Jawad Memon told media that the cyclone's effects were limited to Sindh's coastal belt, and the rains in other parts of the country were due to western disturbance. "...the system causing rains in other parts of Pakistan will intensify due to western disturbance and pre-monsoon system. This will lead to rains in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, and isolated areas in Balochistan."

He clarified that pre-monsoon activities begin in July, and according to forecasts, it has been delayed for some days due to the cyclonic system in the Arabian Sea. "Overall, this is normal [...] it is manageable." He noted that the cyclone would downgrade into a depression within 24 hours.

The weather expert noted that it is tough to predict the pattern of Arabian Sea cyclones, and their path is always confirmed at the last moment.

"Contrastingly, the cyclone patterns in the Bay of Bengal are predictable. Over here, the environment is hostile which is why we can't predict the cyclones' pattern."

Climate Change Minister Senator Sherry Rehman told media that the authorities would hold a meeting in the afternoon to discuss how to send the affectees back to their homes. The Sindh government had evacuated as many as 67,367 people from the three vulnerable districts — Thatta, Sujawal, and Badin — and 39 relief camps were set up to house them.

"Thank God; we are safe from the destruction of the cyclone. But it might take us some time to send people back to Sujawal," the federal minister said, noting that their livelihoods had been significantly impacted. On criticism about the government's response, the minister said the population has grown to a huge extent, and the authorities cannot reach everywhere. She said 8,000-9,000 livestock were also transferred to safe places. The federal minister said Biparjoy had lived longer than any other cyclone.