

Watchman injured in blast
F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: A forest watchman identified as Hafeez ur Rahman s/o Shehzada, a resident of Laalo village in the limits of Zaimdara Maidan police station, was injured when a homemade improvised explosive device went off near his house here on Saturday, residents and police said. They said the watchman was coming home when the incident happened.



@thefrontierpost

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

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIX No. 151 Regd. No. 241 ZIQA'AD 28 1444 -- SUNDAY, JUNE 18 2023 PESHAWAR EDITION 08 PAGES PRICE. 30



LAHORE: A delegation of Alabyrak Group led by its president Ahmed Albayrak called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

PPP ready for elections: Bilawal

Shafi Ullah

SWAT: Pakistan, People's Party Chairman and Foreign Minister, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari here Saturday said that his party strongly believed in democracy and was ready for general election. He directed the party workers to start campaign for General Election.

Addressing a big public gathering here at Khwazakhela, Bilawal Bhutto said that any political party that achieved people's mandate in free and transparent election would have all the right to form Government and address the country's problems. He said that PPP has recently won by-election in the country and its candidate was elected a Mayor of Karachi that was a big achievement.

Bilawal Bhutto said PPP has strong roots in masses that would win the upcoming elections and complete the mission of former prime ministers Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Benazir Bhutto Shaheed. Bilawal Bhutto underlined the need for allocation of funds for reconstruction of flood hit areas in the budget 2023-24.

He said that PPP strongly believed in people's wellbeing and welfare. He paid rich tributes to the people of Swat, who stood against terrorism with bravery and steadfastness. He said PPP Government had fulfilled the promise of Shaheed Benazir Bhutto by hoisting the national flag in Swat. Bilawal Bhutto said that democracy was the best revenge and former President Asif Ali Zardari had raised the slogan of Pakistan "Khapay" after Benazir Bhutto Shaheed was martyred outside Liaquat Bagh on December 27, 2007.

He said that a selected Prime Minister was ousted from power

through a successful no confidence motion under the constitution. He said the entire nation had seen the vandalism and barbaric mindsets of attackers involved on ransacking of defence installations on May 9 after a selected former Prime Minister was arrested in a NAB case. Bilawal Bhutto underlined the need for strict action against elements involved in May 9 vandalism so that no one can dare to attack defence installations, public and government properties and ransacked statues of martyres.

He said that Quaid e Awam ZAB and Benazir Bhutto Shaheed had given all rights to people including employment and land ownership. He said majority of the country's population was comprised on youth and demands of our skilled workforce in Middle East and Europe has increased, adding people knew that a selected Prime Minister had deprived youth of jobs.

Bilawal said country's problems could be addressed by strictly adhering to the PPP manifesto of Shaheed ZAB and Benazir Bhutto Shaheed. He said that PPP has started the revolutionary Benazir Bhutto Income Support Program to eradicate poverty. He said PPP's struggle is against hunger, poverty, unemployment and price hike and not against any political party. Bilawal Bhutto said that Imran Khan's cypher drama has been badly exposed before masses.

He said the world was keen to work with Pakistan as evident of USD 10 billion pledges and commitment by the international community for an assistance of the flood victims of Pakistan. He said peace in Afghanistan was vital for regional peace and development. Bilawal Bhutto said that PPP has always

given respect and honour to its workers while a selected Prime Minister deceived his workers in the name of change.

He thanked the party workers for the successful public meeting at Swat. Minister of State Faisal Karim Kundi and others PPP KP leaders were present. On this occasion, former member national assembly, Dr Haider Ali Khan along with his supporters announced joining of Pakistan People's Party.

We believe that the economic situation is such that it is troubling every citizen. The PPP believes that its manifesto, one that is the manifesto of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto is an asset that we have inherited and contains the answers and solutions to all the political challenges we face. We believe that the PPP is not competing with any other entity or political party, but with hunger, poverty, inflation and unemployment. The day that we eradicate these problems with the help of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's manifesto is not far.

We want for the new generation to support us in our mission to help the country prosper. The time has come for them to be given the opportunity, and if they avail it by supporting us, then no problem would ever be big enough. We need the support of politicians who feel for the people and actually wish to bring about change. The majority of the country's population is constituted of youngsters and it is the PPP's priority to integrate them into the decision-making process. In fourteen months, a young Foreign Minister has achieved what no other predecessor could.

(Continued on Back Page)

Hearing in Parvez Elahi case adjourned

ISLAMABAD (PP): A special anti-corruption court in Lahore on Saturday adjourned the hearing in an illegal recruitment case against former Punjab chief minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi.

The hearing was adjourned due to the absence of the presiding judge. Meanwhile the duty judge, in the interim, rescheduled the hearing to take place on June 19. According to the details provided by an ACE spokesperson, Elahi made 12 illegal recruitments in Punjab Assembly on grade 17 positions.

The candidates were recruited in the provincial assembly by altering the records. "The illegal recruitments were made through fake testing services," said the spokesperson. He said that the investigation by the ACE proved that fake recruitments were made in Punjab Assembly, adding that the anti-corruption has also arrested Secretary Rai.

Saudi, Iranian FMs discuss bilateral ties

TEHRAN (Agencies): Saudi Arabia's Foreign Minister Prince Faisal bin Farhan landed in Tehran on Saturday on his first visit since both the countries restored diplomatic ties ending a seven-year dispute in January this year. The Saudi foreign minister was received by his Iranian counterpart Hossein Amirabdollahian at the country's foreign ministry ahead of bilateral talks, Al Jazeera reported.

Saudi FM Prince Faisal he would also meet Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi during his landmark trip. During the press conference, the two officials hailed the restoration of diplomatic ties. "The Islamic Republic of Iran has never equated security with militarism, and considers security to be a comprehensive concept, which includes political, econom-

ic, cultural, trade and social dimensions between all the countries of the region," Amirabdollahian was quoted as saying.

The Iranian foreign minister said he discussed a wide range of issues with his Saudi counterpart, including trade ties. Speaking on the occasion, the Saudi FM said mutual respect, non-interference in the two countries' internal affairs and commitment to the United Nations charter will be at the centre of bilateral relations going forward, with an eye on securing the interests of both nations.

"I would also like to highlight the two countries' discussions on cooperation on ensuring maritime security and reducing proliferation of weapons of mass destruction," he said. Saudi Arabia severed relations with Iran in 2016 after its

embassy in Tehran and consulate in the northwestern city of Mashhad were attacked during protests over Riyadh's execution of Shia cleric Nimr al-Nimr.

But the two countries agreed in March to mend ties and reopen their respective embassies, in a Chinese-brokered deal that has shifted regional relations. Iran's government spokesperson Ali Bahadori Jahromi told local media Prince Faisal was expected to "take some measures" towards reopening the Saudi diplomatic mission in Tehran during the visit. On June 6, the Islamic republic reopened its embassy and consulates in Saudi Arabia. The Iranian Sazandegi daily reported on Saturday the Saudi embassy would reopen in a hotel in Tehran before resuming its permanent location in the Iranian capital.

Pakistan has no problem with US developing partnership with India: Asif

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Defence Minister Khawaja Asif has said that Islamabad does not have any problem with the United States (US) developing a partnership with India if it is not at the cost of Pakistan.

During an exclusive interview with American magazine Newsweek, the defence minister said, India is a very big market of over 1.3 billion people. "Everywhere in the world, the other big economies will need to have them as partners. But Pakistan is not a very big economy, and [is] a vulnerable economy," he added.

"All we have is a geographical location, which is strategic, which attracts, I would say, not all the good things, it sometimes attracts some things which really make us even

more vulnerable." The minister said he personally feels that some appreciation is required in Washington about their situation, and they should not be pushed into a situation where they have to make some very hard choices.

He maintained that Pakistan has common borders with China, Afghanistan, Iran and India, adding, "We would like to have good relationships with them." "We would like to improve our relationships with them if the relationship is not good. We want to live in peace," he added. The minister said that Pakistan gives great value to its ties with the US, adding, "We want that relationship to flourish."

Terming the incumbent government in New Delhi "Hindu national-

ist", Asif said the Indian outlook towards regional politics completely changed since Prime Minister Narendra Modi came into power. "The secular ideology, which India pursued since 1947, since the subcontinent was divided and we became independent, that was abandoned because of Modi's politics."

Lashing out at Indian PM Modi, the minister said, "If you look at his politics in Gujarat, it was again based on anti-minority, it is based on communal tensions and of voting Hindu nationalist support by fanning sentiments against the community, and minorities, both Muslims, Christians, Buddhists, and so many other communities that are very large." To another question, the defence minister

12 killed, 24 injured in motorway accident

F.P. Report

CHAKWAL: At least 12 people — including women and children — were killed and 24 others sustained injuries after a passenger bus turned turtle on the Islamabad-Lahore motorway near Kallar Kahar.

According to motorway police, the passenger bus was heading to Lahore from Rawalpindi when it met with an accident near Kallar Kahar salt range. As per the preliminary reports, the accident occurred due to breaks failing, said the police. After being informed, police and Rescue 1122 officials rushed to the scene and shifted the bodies and the injured to the hospital.

"Three women and two children were among the dead," said the police. A spokesperson of NHMP said that due to the accident, two lanes of Lahore-Islamabad Motorway were closed, while the third one was open for traffic.

DIG Motorway Police Muhammad Yusuf Malik and sector commander supervised the rescue operations at the spot. Later, the DIG visited Trauma centre Chakwal and inquired about the health of the injured, said the spokesperson. A CCTV footage of the incident shows a car coming from the opposite direction also overturned after being hit by the passenger bus. However, it could not be ascertained whether the people travelling in the car sustained injuries or not in the accident.

Aitzaz Ahsan challenges mily court trials of civilians in SC

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chaudhry Aitzaz Ahsan in a petition in the Supreme Court has challenged trials of civilians in military courts seeking the court to declare them unconstitutional. Salman Akram Raja advocate has filed petition on behalf of seasoned lawyer Aitzaz Ahsan.

Aitzaz Ahsan has petitioned to the apex court to declare the federal government's decision to conduct trials in military court as null and void. "The federal government has rubber stamped the corps commanders' decision of conducting trials in the military court," text of the petition read.

"The decision of holding military court trial of civilians under Section 2 of the Army Act has been in contravention to Article 59 of the constitution," according to the plea. Petitioner argued that Section 94 of the Army Act and the rules of 1970 are incomparable and pleaded the court to declare Section 94 and the rules as unconstitutional.

The petitioner also seeks the court to declare the decision of handing over the accused to the military authorities as void and sought court order for acquittal of civilians handed over to the military. Petitioner has made Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, federal ministers Khawaja Asif, Rana Sanaullah, Chairman PTI, five IGs, chief secretaries, ministries of law, interior, defence and cabinet division as parties in the case.

PM reviews policy on alternative energy sources

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Saturday reviewed the process of formulation of policy regarding alternative sources of energy especially, solar energy.

During a meeting chaired by him here, the prime minister said the government had ensured in the budget implementation of the measures about alternative sources of energy including solar energy. He said the process of converting public buildings on solar energy should be expedited. The solar energy will not only reduce the cost of production but will also save precious foreign exchange, he said adding that the policy on solar energy should be finalized as soon as possible.

The prime minister noted that Pakistan had immense capacity to produce solar energy. Federal ministers Khawaja Asif, Engineer Khurram Dastgir, Syed Naveed Qamar, Riaz Hussain Pirzada, Advisor to PM Ahad Cheema, Special Assistant Jehanzeb Khan, Chairman National Electric Power

Regulatory Authority (PEPRA) and officials concerned attended the meeting. The meeting was briefed in detail about the progress on the countrywide solarization projects and on the policy of alternative sources of

energy.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif regretted that during the previous government's dark period, Lahore was intentionally targeted with revenge and the international companies were unjustly harassed. Moreover, with political inductions, he said the companies and institutes were destroyed.

"The nation will not forget those who stalled the country's journey towards progress and development," the prime minister said while talking to a delegation of Albayrak Group, a renowned Turkish company, led by its President Ahmet Albayrak that called on him, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

During the meeting, the prime minister appreciated the group's services in solid waste management and public transport. PM's adviser Ahad Cheema, PML-N senior leader Khawaja Hassan, Board members of Albayrak Group and other relevant authorities were present on the occasion.

The prime minister said that during their previous tenures, they had provided the residents of Lahore with international standard facilities. With global investment, they introduced the latest traveling, solid waste management facilities and

created job opportunities, he added. The delegation expressed its deep interest in investment in different sectors of Pakistan. During his recent visit to Turkiye, the Group had apprised the prime minister of its keen interest to invest in different sectors of Pakistan and their upcoming visit.

Moreover, the Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif expressed his condolences with the bereaved families who lost their loved ones in the unfortunate ferry disaster in the Mediterranean sea off the coast of Greece.

On his Twitter handle account, the PM said, "My thoughts and prayers are with the bereaved families who lost their loved ones in the unfortunate ferry disaster in the Mediterranean Sea off the coast of Greece." He further said Pakistan's Embassy in Athens had identified 12 Pakistanis rescued by Hellenic Coast Guard. The embassy was in contact with the Greek authorities for further updates.

Former Minister of State and a former member of the National Assembly Syed Javed Ali Shah on Saturday called on Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif. During the meeting, the current political situation in the country was discussed, PM Office Media Wing said in a press release.

Boat crash: FO releases list of rescued Pakistanis

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Foreign Office (FO) has released a list of rescued Pakistani people in the capsizing incident of a fishing boat in Greece, wherein more than 500 migrants have been presumed drowned.

These people include; Muhammad Adnan Bashir S/o Muhammad Bashir, District Kotli, Haseeb Ur Rehman S/o Habib ur Rehman, District Kotli, Muhammad Hamza S/o Abdul Ghafoor, District Gujranwala, Azmat Khan S/o Muhammad Saleeh, District Gujrat, Muhammad Sunny S/o Farooq Ahmed District Sheikhupura, Zahid Akbar S/o Akbar Ali District Sheikhupura, Mehtab Ali S/o Muhammad Ashraf, District Mandi Bahauddin, Rana Husnain S/o Rana Naseer Ahmad

District Sialkot, Usman Siddique S/o Muhammad Siddique, District Gujrat, Zeeshan Sarwar S/o Ghulam Sarwar, District Gujranwala, Irfan Ahmed S/o Shafi (Hospitalized) and Imran Arain S/o Maqbool (Hospitalized).

A team of the Embassy of Pakistan has visited them. The Embassy is in close contact with Greek authorities for recovery of the missing and confirmation/identification of the deceased. Earlier in the day, FO Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said that the Pakistan Mission in Greece remained in contact with the local authorities for identification and recovery of Pakistani nationals among the deceased and providing relief to the survivors.

Earlier, the rescuers were

scouring the seas off Greece on Saturday in a massive search operation as hopes dwindled for survivors of a shipwreck that estimatedly killed 298 Pakistan nationals.

The ship was carrying 310 Pakistan nationals along with other migrants when it met the accident earlier this week. The Pakistan embassy in Greece has confirmed that 12 of the citizens had been rescued, adding that the local authorities had managed to recover 78 bodies as search operation continues for fourth day. The embassy said the identity of the bodies was yet to be confirmed. It asked the families in Pakistan, whose beloved ones were on the boat, to send verified reports of their DNA tests for cross-match.



MINGORA: PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari addressing a public gathering in Swat. - F.P. photo



CM winds up budget discussion

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah on Saturday said that during the last five years, the Sindh government collected Rs5 trillion (from fed govt and provincial resources), of them Rs2.6 trillion were spent on salaries, retirement benefits, and pension of the government employees.

"We have spent Rs442 billion in the non-development expenditures of local government, Rs909 billion on education, including Rs48.9 billion on grants universities," He said this while winding up a debate on the budget 2023-24 here on the floor of the provincial assembly of Sindh.

The Chief Minister said that it was his 11th speech to wind up annual budgets. He said that so far, he had made 18 speeches, including five as opposition member. "My association with the Sindh assembly was since 1972 when he had sat in the gallery," he recalled and went on saying that his father, former chief minister of Sindh Syed Abdullah Shah had the honor to preside over the then session in which Ghulam Rasool Kehar was elected as assembly speaker.

Murad Shah said that in the past opposition members were not allowed to speak in the assembly. "Even the then speaker had banned my entry in the assembly," he recalled and then said it was the PPP government, which

had established a new tradition of giving maximum time to the opposition member to speak in the houses since 2008.

Though he could not attend the session, but he had the record of each and every speech, including Nand Kumar, Khwaja Izhar Mohammad Hussain and others.

In 2008, our leader Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto was killed, and people had come out to cast vote in favor of PPP. 'We did better than 2008 in 2013 and better than 2013 in 2018.'

He alleged that former PM Imran Khan not gave a single scheme in the province. He used to speak reluctantly with him during the meetings. "We served the city and out of 25 have won 13 UCs in local bodies election," he said.

1970 there were only 7 seats, of them 2 PPP had won and two Jamaat and one independent PPP had bagged 200754 votes while Jamat had taken 168,000 votes. The city which belonged to Shaheed Bhutto. "ye shahre karachi Bhutto (this city of Karachi belongs to Bhutto)," he said.

He said that MQM-P had shown lack of maturity for a few years. He urged MQM-P not to blame PPP for its weaknesses. The Chief Minister said that they had seen the first disaster was Imran Khan as prime minister. The other one was COVID-19 and then they

had seen the unprecedented rains. When PM Shahbaz Sharif visited Sindh, he saw rainwater accumulated all over Sindh, he asked and said the provincial government would not be able to grow wheat. Our government made all-out efforts and grew record wheat crop, he said.

He said that 8 per cent relief to the people was given by the provincial government. The affected people were given cash through the Benazir Income Support Program (BISP).

Murad Shah gave a complement to Education Minister Syed Sardar Shah for delivering an impressive speech.

He further said that his government started making projects just after receiving devastating floods. "We talked to the world bank, the Asian Bank and other donor agencies and managed to get funds to rehabilitate the devastated people.

The federal government had been talking to reach a deal with IMF for a loan of \$1.2 billion but we managed \$2.3 billion facility. The world Bank Regional Director and the Country director visited Sindh last week and they appreciated the provincial government for doing an excellent job for rehabilitation of the flood affected people.

Syed Murad Ali Shah said that our development outlay had been pitched at Rs700 billion.

Court puts off recruitment case against Elahi

ISLAMABAD (PPI): A special anti-corruption court in Lahore on Saturday adjourned the hearing in an illegal recruitment case against former Punjab chief minister Chaudhry Parvez Elahi.

The hearing was adjourned due to the absence of the presiding judge. Meanwhile the duty judge, in the interim, rescheduled the hearing to take place on June 19.

The illegal recruitment case According to the details provided by an ACE spokesperson, Elahi made 12 illegal recruitments in Punjab Assembly on grade 17 positions.

The candidates were recruited in the provincial assembly by altering the records. "The illegal recruitments were made through fake testing services," said the spokesperson.

He said that the investigation by the ACE proved that fake recruitments were made in Punjab Assembly, adding that the anti-corruption has also arrested Secretary Rai Mumtaz Hussain in connection with this case on the basis of evidence. "Rai Mumtaz was involved in a fake recruiting process with Parvez Elahi," he said.

Chan wants PPP to form 'alliance with PTI'

LAHORE (NNI): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) leader Nadeem Afzal Chan on Saturday revealed that he had advised his party to form an alliance with Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in Punjab for upcoming elections.

In an exclusive interview with a private television channel, Chan said that he had advised PPP to go for an alliance with PTI as it will benefit the party in upcoming elections in Punjab. The PPP leader further said his father had left politics 15 years ago but yet he was arrested without any case registered against him.

"In CEC meeting I advised PPP to make an alliance with PTI in Punjab and I think that was the reason for the arrest of my father," Chan claimed and added that he will still ask his party to "stand with people" as it will benefit them in polls, especially in Punjab.

"There is a wave of anti-Nawaz vote in Punjab and candidates will win the election on this narrative," Nadeem Afzal Chan said.

On general elections, he said that PPP was in favor of holding polls in October but the coalition partners did not want elections in the near future.

Nadeem Afzal Chan further said that he is seriously thinking to quit politics as he had failed in resolving the issues of masses.

The PPP leader said that Mohsin Naqvi is not a strong caretaker chief minister as all the matters are being looked over by bureaucracy which is under the "control of ruling Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N)".

12 dead, 1295 injured in road accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least twelve persons were killed and 1,295 injured in 1,202 Road Traffic Crashes (RTCs) in all 37 districts of Punjab during the last 24 hours.

Out of these, 655 people with serious injuries were shifted to different hospitals, while 640 victims with minor injuries were treated at the incident site by rescue medical teams thus reducing the burden of hospitals, said a spokesperson for Rescue-1122.

Furthermore, the analysis showed that 655 drivers, 40 underage drivers, 140 pedestrians, and 512 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics show that 292 RTCs were reported in Lahore which affected 310 persons placing the provincial capital at top of the list followed by 96 in Faisalabad with 98 victims and at third Multan with 74 RTCs and 90 victims.

According to the data 1,015 motorcycles, 80 autorickshaws, 127 motorcars, 35 vans, 10 passenger buses, 43 trucks and 113 other types of auto vehicles and slow-moving carts were involved in these road traffic accidents.



KARACHI: Pakistan Navy rescue team evacuate local populace from Creeks area. —INP Photo

Pak Navy continues relief operation at cyclone affected areas

KARACHI (NNI): Pakistan Navy continued wide scale Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Operations in coastal areas of Sindh.

The Pakistan Navy Emergency Response Teams in coordination with local administration continued evacuation of personnel from various areas and provided relief goods to aggrieved populace relocated due to Cyclone BIPARJOY, a Pakistan Navy news release said.

The Navy troops evacuated over 800 inhabi-

tants from various coastal areas of Ketu Bandar, Kharo Chan, Shah Bandar, Baghan, Sujawal, Chuhar Jamali and Jati City. Moreover, medical camp was held at Ketu Bandar by Sindh government health department in coordination with World Health Organization (WHO).

WHO's Country head of Pakistan, Dr. Palitha Mahi Pala from Sri Lanka, also visited and monitored health care activities. Around 230 people were treated in the medical camp and were

also provided with mosquito nets.

Pakistan Navy's medical teams are providing healthcare facilities to affecteds at shelter camps while patrolling of PN ships and Emergency Response Teams in the Sea and affected areas continue to promptly respond to distress calls.

Pakistan Navy's Emergency Response Teams are poised and remain ready to provide rescue and relief assistance as the cyclone makes landfall off the Sindh coast.

Steps being taken to resolve issues: Tessori

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori on Saturday said that measures were being made to resolve the problems of all markets of the city.

He stated this while meeting a number of trade organization delegations, which called on him at the Governor House.

Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM) - Pakistan's senior leader Dr. Farooq Sattar was also present on the occasion.

The Governor said that the carpeting of roads and repair work of footpaths were being paid special attention and police patrolling would also be beefed up in the surroundings of the markets.

Kamran Tessori said that traders were the back bone of economy. He said that the traders were playing vital role in the economic development of the province and the country.

The delegations thanked the Sindh Governor for hearing their problems in detail.

Dolphin man killed by second wife

LAHORE (INP): Dolphin Force man was killed by his second wife over domestic disputes here on Saturday.

The incident took place in Gulistan Colony Factory area of Lahore where Dolphin man Sakhawat exchanged hot words with his second wife.

The verbal clash turned violent after which the woman opened straight fire killing her husband on the spot.

The body was shifted to hospital and police after registering a case into the incident started an investigation.

Police continue action against criminals: CCPO

LAHORE (APP): The Lahore police have apprehended a significant number of individuals involved in criminal activities, with a total of 9,031 proclaimed offenders, 19,384 court offenders, and 9,300 habitual criminals being taken into custody since the beginning of the year.

In a statement released on Saturday, Bilal Siddique Kamyana, Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Lahore, highlighted the notable achievements within various divisions.

In the Cantt Division, 1,989 proclaimed offenders, 3,385 court offenders, and 2,169 habitual criminals have been apprehended.

Similarly, in the Civil Lines Division, 825 proclaimed offenders, 1,534 court offenders, and 1,026 habitual criminals have been successfully arrested.

Likewise, within the City Division, an impressive number of individuals involved in criminal activities have been successfully apprehended, with a total of 1,837 proclaimed offenders, 4,519 court offenders, and 2,186 habitual criminals being taken into custody.

The Iqbal Town Division witnessed significant progress, with the apprehension of 1,070 proclaimed offenders, 2,598 court offenders, and 1,321 habitual criminals.

Sikh Yatrees return to India through Wahga border crossing

LAHORE (APP): The Sikh yatrees, who had come to Pakistan to attend the 417th martyrdom day of Guru Arjan Dev Ji (Jore Mela), return to their homeland India on Saturday through Wagah border crossing.

Additional Secretary Shrines Rana Shahid Saleem, Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Parbandhak Committee (PSGPC) Pardhan Sardar Amir Singh and other committee members presented bouquets and gifts to yatrees and later saw off them.

Sikh yatrees party leader

Sardar Gurbachan Singh told the media the love they received in Pakistan was the most precious gift for them, adding that the yatrees would spread that love after returning to their country.

Rana Shahid said peoples on both sides of the border wanted to meet each other. "Humanity's respect takes precedence," he added.

"Whether they were followers of the Sikh faith or Hindu pilgrims, the Pakistani government is committed to issuing maximum number of religious visas," pledged the

additional secretary. He said maintenance and upkeep of historical religious sites and temples were the domain of the Evacuee Trust Property Board (ETPB).

He emphasised the board's efforts in ensuring better care of gurdwaras and temples. "All minorities residing in Pakistan are protected, and they enjoy all constitutional rights and religious freedoms," assured Sardar Amir Singh.

Indian Sikh pilgrims also chanted slogans of 'Pakistan Zindabad'.

Politics of PML-N is public welfare based: Muqam

ISLAMABAD (INP): Adviser to Prime Minister for National Heritage and Culture Division Engineer Amir Muqam on Saturday said that the politics of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) is purely based on public welfare and the development of the country.

The PML-N was utilizing every penny of public money in an honest and

transparent manner for the welfare of the people and the provision of basic facilities to them, he said while speaking to a Private news channel.

He lauded PDM-led government under the leadership of Shahbaz Sharif for their remarkable achievement in steering the country away from the brink of default despite inheriting severe econom-

ic hurdles.

He said with regard to this year's 2023-24 budget, the government has paid special attention to the provision of quality education, and vocational training to the youth, boosting the IT sector and improving the agriculture sector.

"We are also working on the policy to maintain balanced relations with all other countries," he added.



سونی ناردرن گیس
Sui Northern Gas
پٹرولیم ڈیولپمنٹ کورپوریشن



ONGC

0111/SNGPOfficial Helpline: 1199

حکومت پاکستان کے توانائی پلان کے مطابق

اوگرا نے گیزرمیں گیس سیورکوں کی تنصیب لازمی قرار دے دی



اوگرا کے احکامات کے تحت

سونی ناردرن کی ٹیڑ نے گیس سیورکوں کی گھر گھر تنصیب کا آغاز کر دیا ہے

سونی ناردرن کا مکمل آپ گے گیزرمیں سیورکوں کی تنصیب کا ذمہ دار ہے۔

یاد رکھیں!

سیورکوں نصب نہ کرنے کی صورت میں گیس فراہمی میں دشواری ممکن ہے

آڈر کیلئے ایس پی آن 1199 پر کال کریں

بل کے ساتھ 12 ماہ کی آسان اقساط میں ادائیگی

اوگرا نے اوگرا کی تنصیب کے سلسلے سے گیزر ماسین کے ساتھ ساتھ دیگر اہم کاموں کو بھی سونپ دیا ہے۔ یہ منصوبہ کارڈ کے تحت اوگرا کی ایک بڑی ٹیم کے زیر نگرین ہے۔ یہ منصوبہ کارڈ کے تحت اوگرا کی ایک بڑی ٹیم کے زیر نگرین ہے۔ یہ منصوبہ کارڈ کے تحت اوگرا کی ایک بڑی ٹیم کے زیر نگرین ہے۔

**GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA
COMMUNICATION & WORKS DEPARTMENT**

NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING

(Single Stage Two Envelope E-Bidding System)

The Executive Engineer Building Division Swabi, C&W Department Govt. Of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa invites sealed E-Bidding Online Tender from the eligible Firms/Contractors in accordance with KPRA procurement Rules 2014, amended upto 10-05-2022 on single stage two envelop procedure for the following works:-

S. No	Name of Work	Required Category of PEC	Tender Fee	Bid Security	Period completion	Last date and time of submission E-Bid	Date and time of opening of Technical
Reconstruction of 300 Govt Schools (100 Primary, 100 Middle & 100 High) (B&G) on need basis in KP ADP No.386-200121/2020-21 to 2022-23)							
1	GGPS No.1 Tordher	C-5 & Above with relevant codes	0.03% of Estimated Cost	2% of Estimated Cost	As per work order	04-07-2023 At 12:00 PM	04-07-2023 12:30 P.M
Establishment of 100 Primary School on need basis in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ADP No. 309/200025/2022-23							
2.	Establishment of GGPS Said Qamar Kotkay Chak Yar Hussain District Swabi	C-6 & Above with relevant codes	0.03% of Estimated Cost	2% of Estimated Cost	As per work order	04-07-2023 At 12:00 PM	04-07-2023 12:30 P.M
3.	Establishment of GGPS Jaganath District Swabi	C-6 & Above with relevant codes	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-	-do-
Construction of BS Blocks, Additional Class Rooms/Missing/Security Facilities in Govt: Colleges in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa ADP No. 738/210695/2022-23/SH:-							
4.	GGDC Marghuz	C-5 & Above with relevant codes	-do-	-do-	As per work order	04-07-2023 At 12:00 PM	04-07-2023 12:30 P.M

- Bid Solicitation Documents and Instructions to Bidders can be obtained from the office on any working day or can be downloaded from C&W website (www.cwd.gkp.gov.pk) before the submission of date/time. Bids submitted without documents will not be processed.
- A copy of technical proposal in the required format is mandatory and to be uploaded as a part of E-bid before submitting Financial Bid.
- All bidders are required to be registered with the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority, under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Finance Act, 2013 (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Act No. XXI of 2013)
- The bidder should submit their E-bids as per KPRA Notification No. S.R.O.(14)/Vol: 1-24/2021-22 dated: 10-05-2022
- Original Copies of Call Deposit for Bid Security and Tender Fee should be enclosed in the Technical Proposal and shall reach to the Office before closing date/time
- Legible Scanned copy of bid Security shall be submitted Electronically along with the bid on E-bidding system
- All bidders are required that bid security shall be kept sealed in Financial Proposal. In addition keep an affidavit in the technical proposal stating that a bid security in percentage without indicating the figure.
- Venue of bids opening is office of the Executive Engineer C&W Building Division Swabi.

**EXECUTIVE ENGINEER
C&W BUILDING DIVISION SWABI**
 PH# 0938-920029 E-mail: cwd.swabi@gmail.com
INF(P) 1308/23, The Frontier Post Peshawar, Date: 18-06-23



KP caretaker govt to present budget for 4-month on 20th

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Information and Public Relations, Hajj, Awqaf, Religious and Minority Affairs Barrister Firoz Jamal Shah Kakakhil Saturday confirmed that the caretaker government would present the budget for 4 months on June 20.

Relief checks have been provided to the families of the citizens who died due to rain in the southern districts in the last few days while the survey is going on to estimate the damages, the Minister added. A wall of shame should be built for the PTI leadership involved in the May 9 incidents. State of the art hospital project is being restarted by the federal government in Hayatabad.

Talking to media men, the Minister said: "We condemn propaganda against sensitive organizations on social media," the Minister said. The PTI leadership should show its detachment from anti-state elements, he added.

He said that activities are being done on social media against national security and sensitive institutions. Social media activist Adil Raja is an anti-state and Indian agent who is propagandizing against sensitive organizations and spreading wrong things on social media by taking money from Indian businessmen and sitting abroad.

The caretaker provincial minister said that this is the direct hand of the social media activist chairman Tehreek-e-Insaf. If the leadership of Tehreek-e-Insaf is not related to it, then it should express its indifference to the media.

He said former chief ministers of KP also say that they have nothing to do with it and clarify their position before the nation within 72 hours. "Sensitive institutions are our asset. We strongly condemn targeting sensitive organizations on social media," Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhil said, adding, "PTI has destroyed and misled an entire gener-

ation."

Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhil 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 leadership of PTI should be separated. 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 further said that the PTI people came to the government only to eat commission and have burdened the province with debt. Currently, the province has to pay 32 billion rupees in debt and interest. In response to a question, he said that the PTI leadership is hiding, leaving the workers alone, but the police are trying to arrest them.

KP govt directs officials of Finance Dept to deposit dues in June

PESHAWAR (APP): The Caretaker Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Saturday directed all the concerned officials of the Finance Department to collect the dues by the last week of June and deposit it in the government treasury on time otherwise it has decided to take disciplinary action against the officials who show incompetence.

Supervising Special Assistant for Revenue Pir Haroon Shah in a statement issued by his office issued here Saturday instructions to the Senior Member

Board Revenue saying that this is the last month of the financial year while the revenue target for this year is 945.00 billion.

About 70% of the revenue has been collected while 30% is yet to be collected, for which all the concerned officers are working hard to make it possible.

He issued further instructions and said that strict disciplinary action should be taken against all such officers and concerned authorities who are using delaying tactics in revenue collection because now the target of

collecting more than three billion rupees remains.

Special Assistant for Revenue, Pir Haroon Shah, while giving further remarks, said that all resources should be used to recover the arrears so that the current target can be achieved this year.

Any kind of negligence in this regard will not be tolerated. He said that we believe that due to the increase in taxes and other challenges this year, the finance department is falling short of achieving the current target of taxes.

5th Senate meeting of University of Malakand held

PESHAWAR (APP): The fifth Senate meeting of the University of Malakand was held at the Governor Secretariat Peshawar with caretaker provincial minister for higher education and law Justice (retired) Irshad Qaiser in the chair.

In the fifth Senate meeting of the University of Malakand, a detailed briefing was given to the caretaker provincial minister, Justice (retired) Irshad Qaiser, about the administrative and financial affairs of the University of Malakand.

The Senate also approved an estimated budget of Rs. 1405.741 million for the year 2023-2024 of the University of Malakand. The senate members were also apprised about the cost saving and revenue generation services offered by the University of Malakand.

That is millions should be reduced. The University of Malakand was informed that the University of Malakand is not increasing its fee structure, university degree fee, migration fee, registration and examination fee.

Provincial Minister Justice (Retired) Irshad Qaiser Pro-Chancellor University of Malakand appreciated his actions and also issued instructions to further improve the quality of education in the university.

KP govt banned on illegal skins collection

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government Saturday banned illegal and unregistered organizations from collecting skins on Eid al-Adha.

The provincial government has directed the Deputy Commissioners of all districts to allow registered and charitable organizations to collect sacrificial skins. The Home Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has issued a letter to all Divisional Commissioners and Deputy Commissioners of districts. Steps are necessary to prevent financial support of terrorism, money laundering, etc, the letter says.

In the rules of the committee established by the federal government to prevent the financial support of terrorists, it is to stop the collection of charity and donations by illegal NGOs.

Welfare organizations in Pakistan play an important role in providing essential social services and relief from natural disasters through charitable funds, however, under the Charities Act 2019, the Deputy and Assistant Commissioners have been empowered to register and approve the receipt of charitable funds.

Sacrificial skins should not be collected by any banned organizations and persons nominated for ban, the letter said.

Patwar Khana inaugurated

PESHAWAR (APP): The Deputy Commissioner Swabi, Furqan Ashraf here Saturday inaugurated newly constructed Patwar Khana in Zaida.

Assistant Commissioner, revenue officials and local representatives were also present on the occasion.

Speaking on the occasion, he said that it was a long standing demand of people that was being addressed for facilitation of people.

He said that government is also making efforts to resolve core issues of people relating to revenue department. He said that now it would be now for public to pursue their cases relating to revenue and property.

Sharif, Professor Dr. Muhammad Arif, Director of Advanced Studies and Research Professor Dr. Muhammad Sajid, Professor Dr. Inamullah, Professor Dr. Dost Muhammad and other faculty members. Scholars congratulated Supervisor Dr. Asad Ali Khan and Scholar Dr. Akhtar Ali for their successful defense.



PESHAWAR: Chairman Qaumi Watan Party Aftab Ahmad Khan Sherpao addressing party office bearers meeting.

What do 90 per cent of the students after matriculation in Karam?

Rehan Muhammad

ZAKIR Khan, a 16-year-old resident of Kamran Clay in central Karam, has recently given his matric examination at Manatto High School in his locality, but it is difficult for him to pursue further education as there is no higher secondary school in the area, which is 30 km from Manatto. It is not possible for them to go to Sada Bazar at a distance and stay in a hostel there.

Zakir's father is engaged in farming and the recent inflation does not allow him to send his son to Sada Bazar for higher education as earlier Zakir's elder brother also did not complete matriculation due to financial difficulties.

Talking to media, Zakir Khan said that he wants to study further, but financial difficulties and lack of

nearby educational institutions in the area have become the biggest obstacles in his education. This story is not only of Zakir Khan, but of more than hundred matriculation students in Central Karam every year, out of which barely ten children can afford to study outside their locality.

Ghazni is working as a teacher in Gul Minato High School. In a conversation with TNN, he said that Manato High School is the only one in central Karam for a population of more than one lakh, where 681 children from

Mandan, Zamisht, Alisharzai and Khawaidad Khel are studying. He said that if a higher secondary school or college is built for these children in the area, then these children will be able to continue their educational journey easily, while in this regard, the regional elders have demanded many

times to build a higher secondary school.

In this regard, when the Chairman of Central Karam VC Mandan, Muhammad Naeem, was contacted, he said that in 2017, a higher secondary school building was constructed in Manatu and Langro Murghan with the support of the Pakistan Army, but unfortunately, so far

The staff has not been appointed in the schools, while many requests have been made to the relevant authorities in this regard, but no hearing has been done so far.

It should be noted that according to the Education Department of District Karam, there are a total of 681 schools in the district, including 502 primary, 92 middle, 70 high, 7 higher secondary and 15 mosque schools, in which more than 80,000 children are studying in total. Among the schools, 20

schools are inactive.

According to Faridullah Mehsud, education officer of district Karam, the reason for the closure of 20 schools is the non-return of the victims, while the schools of Lower and Upper Karam have almost all kinds of facilities, the main reason for the low education rate in Central Karam is often There is a shortage of teachers in schools but to meet this shortage, the education department is recruiting new teachers every year and soon this shortage will be filled.

The education officer said about the commencement of the education in Manatu and Langro Murghan Secondary Schools that after the merger of FATA, the post-selection process is being delayed by the finance department due to the corona epidemic and now the financial problems in the province.

Envoys of Czech Republic, EU explore cultural heritage in city

PESHAWAR (APP): The Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Pakistan, Tomas Smetanka and Head of the Delegation of the European Union to Pakistan, Dr. Riina Kionka arrived on a memorable visit to Peshawar on Saturday.

The purpose of their visit was to attend the EU film festival, which was scheduled to take place in the city. During their stay in Peshawar, they had the opportunity to visit various historical and cultural landmarks, including Masjid Mahabat Khan, Sathi House and famous antiques' market at Asamai Gate.

Hosted by the Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar, Ambassador Tomas Smetanka and Ambassador Dr. Riina Kionka expressed their delight in exploring the rich history and heritage of Peshawar. Their visit to Masjid Mahabat Khan included a meeting with Maulana Tayyab Qureshi, the caretaker of the mosque, where they were presented with a bouquet of flowers and enjoyed the hospitality of the locals with a refreshing cup of green tea, a tradition of the people of Peshawar.

The delegates were fascinated by the antique jewelry showcased during their visit to Sarafa Bazar. Additionally, they had the privilege of meeting Mr. Wajeeh Sethi, the current owner of Sethi House, one of the esteemed historical sites in Peshawar. The visit provided an opportunity for cultural exchange and appreciation of the region's architectural wonders.

The culinary experience was equally delightful, as the crew of the Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Peshawar graciously treated the distinguished guests to "Sobat" (Penda), a traditional dish of the Marwat Tribes.

This culinary experience was made possible through the initiatives of Barrister Assad Saifullah Khan, the Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Honorary Consulate of the Czech Republic has been working since 2018, when Barrister Assad Saifullah Khan became the first Honorary Consul of the Czech Republic for KP in Peshawar. The consulate has proved a milestone in the promotion of friendly relations between the

Czech Republic and the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

The Czech Consulate in Peshawar is working as a turning point and milestone, leading to a brighter future for Pakistan and the Republic's ties. Barrister Assad Saifullah Khan is working day and night for the promotion of trade and the resolution of issues between the republic and the KP people.

The visit showcased the strong bond between Pakistan and the Czech Republic, as well as the European Union's commitment to fostering cultural exchanges and strengthening relations with Pakistan.

The delegation's exploration of Peshawar's cultural heritage highlighted the city's historical significance and its vibrant traditions.

FPCCI, CRBC agree to jointly work for economic stability of KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) and China Road & Bridge Corporation (CRBC) have agreed on working together on various projects of economic stability in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to create employment opportunities through mutual cooperation in Rashakai Special Economic Zone.

In this connection, an important meeting was held here in FPCCI Regional Office on Saturday. Those who attended the meeting were included Regional Coordinator, FPCCI, Sartaj Ahmad Khan, Secretary Peshawar Chamber of Small Trade & Industry, Akbar Sethi and Regional Secretary FPCCI, Engineer Khalid Haider, Mr Dawood of the Chinese origin represented CRBC.

During the meeting, various issues relating to strengthening of Pak-China Friendship and particularly taking benefit of the best experiences of the business communities of both coun-



tries, especially Rashakai Special Economic Zone came under discussion.

Talking on the occasion, Coordinator FPCCI, Sartaj Ahmad Khan assured the CRBC representative of complete cooperation and said that he is grateful to the People's Republic of China and Chinese business community for initiating various projects in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa including Rashakai Special Economic Zone.

He said that said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has

several potential sectors for Chinese investment, which will not only help in further strengthening of bilateral relations between both countries including promotion of mutual partnership among the investors and generate employment opportunities for unemployed youth of the Khyber Pakhtukhwa province.

In response to the proposals of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI), the CRBC representative said that a memo-

randum of understanding (MoU) in this regard would be signed soon to start practical work.

He said that they do not believe in giving merely verbal assurances rather believe in practical work and success of both friendly countries.

At the end of the meeting, the CRBC official was presented a memorable shield of the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce & Industry (FPCCI) and booklet of the budgetary proposals.

Jails authorities directed to ensure quality food



PESHAWAR (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Special Assistant on Prisons Hidayatullah Khan Afridi Saturday issued instructions to the authorities of Haripur and Mansehra jails to ensure the provision of quality food and all other facilities to the prisoners in the jails.

Special attention should be paid to cleanliness and all medical facilities should be provided in prisons for the treatment of sick prisoners and relatives and visitors should be treated well. The Superintendent Special Assistant issued these instructions on the occasion of separate visits to District Haripur and Mansehra Jails.

Superintendents Jails visited the various parts of the jails and gave a detailed briefing on the administra-

tive affairs of the jails to the Superintendent Special Assistant.

Supervising Special Assistant Hidayatullah Afridi inspected the kitchens of both the jails and checked the quality of food served to the prisoners and also inquired about the menu of food served to the prisoners in the jails on a daily basis.

On this occasion, Supervising Special Assistant Hidayatullah Afridi said that we are trying our best to carry out the responsibilities of the caretaker government as long as we are assigned and to create facilities in all departments for the convenience of the people so that people can benefit more from these facilities.

He said that the prisoners in the prisons should be well reformed so that after

their release from the prisons, these prisoners can live like responsible citizens of the society and not get involved in any type of crimes again, only by following such measures.

Crime can be controlled in society. He directed the psychiatrists present in the prisons for counseling the prisoners to counsel the prisoners well. He issued instructions to the authorities of both the jails that the security of the jails should be made possible in every possible way and any kind of negligence or negligence in this would not be tolerated. Supervising Special Assistant for Jails, Hidayatullah Afridi urged the two prison administrations to ensure cleanliness and provision of all other facilities in the jails.

Dr. Akhtar defended his PhD thesis

PESHAWAR (APP): Dr. Akhtar Ali, scholar of Agriculture University Peshawar, Saturday successfully defended his PhD thesis.

According to detail given by the spokesman of the Agriculture University Peshawar, Dr. Akhtar Ali, Ph.D Scholar of Agricultural University Peshawar and Agricultural Officer of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Dep-

artment of Agriculture has completed his Ph.D in Agronomy under the supervision of Dr. Asad Ali Khan.

His research paper was titled as "Response of Maize to Organic and Inorganic Potassium Fertilization".

The thesis of Dr. Akhtar Ali was endorsed by leading scientists in China and Japan. In the defense seminar, Dr. Akhtar Ali success-

fully defended his research paper by answering the questions raised by the participants and declared him as qualified for the Ph.D degree.

On this occasion, Chairman Department of Agronomy Professor Dr. Habib Akbar, Chairman Department of Soil and Environmental Sciences Professor Dr. Muhammad



In brief

Dengue control meeting held F.P. Report

KOHAT: District administration held a meeting regarding prevention of the spread of dengue virus in the district. On the instructions of Deputy Commissioner Kohat Dr. Azmatullah Wazir under the supervision of Assistant Commissioner Dara Amir Nawaz, a meeting was held regarding prevention of the spread of dengue virus in which officers from TMA, Local Government, Health Department, Police Department and other related departments participated. Assistant Commissioner Dara said that it is important to inform the public about preventive measures to prevent spread of dengue virus. He further said that it is not possible to defeat dengue without the cooperation of the people.

Assistant Commissioner Dara said that to prevent dengue virus, do not let water stand in your homes and keep water containers covered in your homes and avoid littering and keep your surroundings clean. Cooperate with the staff as much as possible so that together we can eradicate dengue virus, he said.

Robbers gun down bike rider

OKARA (INP): Armed robbers gunned down a bike rider for not stopping during picket looting in Hujra Shah Mugeem, district Okara. Police said that a gang of robbers was engaged in picket looting in village Fatoana of tehsil Dipalpur during which it signaled to stop a bike rider. The motorcyclist instead of stop tried to flee after which robbers opened straight fire killing him on the spot and fled the scene. DPO Okara Mansoor Aman reached the scene and assured the victim family of bringing the culprits to book. The body was shifted to hospital and search teams of police have been constituted for arrest of the culprits.

Notorious dacoit killed

BUREWALA (PPI): A notorious dacoit was killed during an exchange of fire with police near Mouza Jhedu in the jurisdiction of Luddan police station, here on Saturday morning. According to a police spokesman, a notorious dacoit Abdul Shakoor was in police custody due to his involvement in various heinous crimes. The police were returning from a place after recovery from the arrested criminal when three unidentified armed outlaws started firing on the police personnel near Mouza Jhedu in a bid to free their partner from police custody. During the exchange of fire, Abdul Shakoor was killed by the firing of his own accomplices. Police teams had been formed to arrest escaped criminals. Further investigation was in process, the spokesman added.

Robber killed in encounter

GHOTKI (INP): One robber was killed and two others injured and held with arms after exchange of fire with police on M-5 near Ghotki on Saturday. The district and motorway police on a tip-off launched joint operation for arrest of gangsters wanted in dozens of cases. An encounter took place between the robbers and police resultantly one robber was killed and two others were injured and held while their one cohort managed to escape. Police recovered deadliest weapons from possession of the killed and arrested robbers.



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

Illegal cattle fairs in Lakki Marwat banned

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Local deputy commissioner Abdul Hadi has banned holding illegal cattle fairs in Lakki Marwat tehsil to prevent any financial loss to the tehsil municipal administration. An official said on Saturday that the municipal officer had requested the district administration to impose the ban as the cattle fairs other than notified by the tehsil municipal administration were illegal.

He said that banning sale and purchase of animals in the illegal cattle fairs was inevitable to prevent any loss to the municipal body. The official said that cattle fair was one of the major sources of income for the tehsil municipal administration as cattle trade got momentum before the Eidul Azha festival. He said that the violators of ban would be liable to punishment under section 188 of Pakistan Penal Code (PPC).

Meanwhile, the Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) will solarize seven health facilities in the district. An official of the district administration said that the health facilities proposed for solarisation included category C hospitals in Lakki and Naurang, type D hospitals in Tajori and Titterkhel and rural health centres in Kurrum Par, Landiwah and Ahmadvah. He said that the company would also install two water filtration plants in the Bitanni area with the cost of Rs 3 million.

The establishment of a

50-bed hospital and a school in the Bitanni area has also been approved", he revealed, adding that the company will also provide Rs 180 million as royalty to launch uplift works in the backward southern district. He said that the uplift projects executed by the company would bring sustainable development to the region. "Besides, these projects will also prove helpful to provide basic amenities of life to local residents on their doorsteps", he added.

Meanwhile, the elders of North Waziristan tribal district and government authorities have underlined the need to complete construction work on phase-II of the Kurrum Tangi dam project without any delay as the successful completion of the project would usher a new era of development in the entire region. At the meeting of the grand Jirga held in Bannu with divisional commissioner Parwez Sabatkhel in the chair, they said that the mega developmental projects including KT dam and discovery of gas reserves were fruitful for the future generations.

Elders from Shiva tehsil of North Waziristan district attended the meeting. Officials of Kurrum Tangi dam project, Asian Development Bank and in North Waziristan district administration and military authorities were also in attendance. The divisional commissioner said that besides raising the living of local tribesmen the dam project would also bring a lot of benefits for them.

"The completion of the

project, he said, would pave the way for bringing peace, prosperity and development to the region by power generation and turning barren and arid lands into fertile ones. "The dam will also prove helpful to prevent floods and mitigate its losses", he added. He asked the elders to fulfill their responsibilities and help the government to complete the project within stipulated time for the bright future of their future generations.

Three bodies found

FAISALABAD (INP): Bodies of three people were found different parts of Faisalabad during past 12 hours here on Saturday. Police spokesman said that some passersby witnessed corpse of a 40-year-old man lying at a deserted place near Steam Power Station Colony and informed Mansoorabad police.

Similarly, Sadar police also recovered 10-year-old body of a young boy from Satiana Road canal when some area people pointed out presence of the corpse in the canal water.

Meanwhile, Samundri police was informed that mutilated corpse of a young woman was lying in the bushes at rare side of Dogar Hospital Tandlianwala Road Samundri. The police took all bodies into custody and started investigation for their identification after dispatching them to mortuary for post-mortem, he added.

MCCI hails KP Governor services for businessmen

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) president Zahir Shah said on Saturday that services of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor Ghulam Ali for the traders and business community were unforgettable, which helped boost commerce and industry in the province.

In a statement, the traders' leader said that the incumbent governor belonged to business community, who always worked for the provision of facilities to the traders and industrialists to boost economy of the province and create employment opportunities for the youths.

He said that the businessmen would get benefits and the KP would soon overcome challenges by supporting the sick industry under his patronage.

Zahir Shah said that Governor Ghulam Ali had vast experience in the field of industry and commerce as he remained president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, the Federation of Pakistan Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FPCCI) and was still representing Pakistan as vice president in the SAARC countries. He advised the opponents to stop propaganda against the governor for political scoring and join hands with the traders and industrialists to help boost industrialization and commerce in the province.

May 9 the blackest day in country's history: QWP

F.P. Report

CHARSADDA: Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) Chairman Aftab Khan Sherpao on Saturday termed the May 9 the blackest day in the country's history and demanded strict punishment as per the law for the masterminds, facilitators and perpetrators of the violence.

Speaking at a meeting of party office-bearers at Zaim Union Council in Charsadda district, he said the military installations were attacked, government buildings and state properties were vandalized during the so-called protests on the May 9-10 mayhem across the country.

"The country has never experienced such vandalism and chaotic situation. Even Pakistan's enemies could not dare attack the country's military installations the way the miscreants indulged in vandalism under a pre-planned conspiracy to weaken the foundations of the motherland," he lamented, calling for severe punishment for the perpetrators, their abettors and instigators. Aftab Sherpao said that giving any relief to the perpetrators of violence by any institution would amount to treason against the state.

Holding the PTI chairman responsible for the mayhem, the QWP leader said Imran Khan not only pitted the state institutions against each other but also poisoned the minds of the young people. He vowed that his party would spare no effort to work for the welfare of the young generation to create jobs for them in order to steer them away from negative activities.

He said that Imran Khan had a cult following, which was harmful for the country, adding the PTI even tarnished Pakistan's image at the international level. Aftab Sherpao said Imran Khan was ousted from power through the vote of no-confidence, which was a democratic process, but the PTI chairman lacked the moral courage to concede defeat by swallow his pride. "Instead of facing defeat gracefully, he has resorted to dirty tricks by instigating his cult followers to campaign against

the country's interests," he remarked, adding that the PTI leadership had asked the world not to extend financial support to Pakistan facing economic crunch, resulting in the impasse with International Monetary Fund.

The previous PTI government, he maintained, was responsible for the prevailing state of economic affairs. Commenting on the recent federal budget, he said though the government announced salary raise for the government employees, it was not in line with the rising price-hike.

He said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa was the least developed province in the country, asking the federal government to give it its due share of resources and funds particularly for the merged tribal districts. Aftab Sherpao urged the federal government to give KP its share in the Kissan Package and the 5,000 solar tube-wells to be installed across the country to boost agriculture in the province.

He said KP had lagged far behind in the race of development due to the misrule and bad governance over the last 10 years. The entire system was riddled with corrupt practices and there was a dire need for reforms to fight the tax evasion. He said smuggling was taking place unchecked in KP, which had caused colossal loss to the provincial economy in the shape of tax theft, adding that coordination lacked between the Centre and the provincial government.

He also expressed concern over the long hours of electricity loadshedding in KP, saying the province produced surplus power, but its residents faced prolonged power cuts after rise in mercury. The QWP leader said that the cash-strapped KP was in dire financial straits, lacking funds to prepare the next budget. He said that the province had virtually gone bankrupt due to the flawed policies of the previous PTI government. He said that the provincial government should put in place the price control mechanism to provide relief to the have-nots by bringing down the prices of the daily use commodities.

Orientation seminar held

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: The population welfare department in collaboration with the Timergara campus of the Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan arranged a daylong orientation seminar on "Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Reproductive Healthcare Rights, 2020 and its importance for the betterment of general public health" at Timergara here on Saturday.

It was aimed to sensitize the university students of both genders, academia and faculty members about the Act. The campus coordinator Dr Minhajud Din was chief guest, District Population Welfare Officer Shahid Khan was co-chief guest while Deputy District Population Officer Kinan Pasha was the resource person of the session.

Speaking on the occasion, Kinan Pasha said the

Act was passed to facilitate, ensure and improve the reproductive health issues pertaining to couples' health. He said that reproductive health was a fundamental human right.

"It was intrinsic to our right to life, freedom, choice, confidential education and highest level of reproductive health without any discrimination, coercion and practice of violence", he said. Shahid Khan said that reproductive healthcare rights encompassed a complete package of RH health services. The Act implied a wide range of health issues, including family planning; maternal health and newborn health care; prevention diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV, Adolescents reproductive health (ARH), Cervical cancer screening, infertility prevention and management of

these services aimed at preventing poor RH such as complication of pregnancy and childbirth, unintended pregnancies, unsafe abortion complications caused by STIs violence and denying from avoidable cancer and complications, he observed.

The speakers were of the view that the RH Act, 2020 was instrumental and its promulgation was need of the hour and improving autonomous decisions about reproductive health, including the fundamental right to use or refuse reproductive health care. They maintained that the Act ensured elimination of all discrimination against women.

The reproductive healthcare rights implantation was the domain and responsibility of PWD to execute it in letter and spirit in the district to protect the couple's rights, they added.

Social media to vulgarity....

Farrukh Sultan

OUR country is going through a very crucial time right now. Atheist and other specific groups having same ideology, have started a systematic conspiracy through social media to destroy the morals, character, beliefs of our young generation as well as peace and economy of beloved Country for the last twenty five years. No intelligent and sane person can deny the importance and necessity of technology in today's modern era.

Social media is a part of our daily lives which is full of knowledge and wisdom. It is not only restricted in providing knowledge and wisdom whereas on the other hand it also gives access to the filth of immorality, indecency, pornography leading ultimately to blasphemy. Now it solely depends on the upbringing, training and thinking of the user, whether he tends to collect the knowledge and wisdom or the filth of misguidance and immorality.

One right click on social media can put the youth and country on the path of success but one wrong click can be devastating for the young generation and our beloved country. It depends on the user whether social media can be a blessing on one hand and curse on the other. Our society is so mired in immorality that we are the top viewers of porn videos in the world. This is a matter of concern for the entire nation.

Even if it had been only indecency, it would not have been tolerable, but now it has gone beyond indecency to blasphemy. These groups have launched a conspiracy on social media in a very systematic way followed by ill intent to insult or causes to insult the Holy name of Allah, the Holy Prophet (may Allah

bless him and grant him peace) the Ahl al-Bayt, umhat ul momineen the Companions of the Prophet (PBUH), the Holy Quran and the national flag of Beloved Country Pakistan.

This Blasphemy is so grave that a man of common prudent cannot even imagine it. The parts of the human body which are not considered to be spoken of even in loneliness, the names of above mentioned Holy Personalities are being written on such private parts by this group. Such sick minded people after writing these Holy names perform intercourse with each other and its videos are made, images are shared on specific apps and in certain specific groups. All of this is not taking place in Norway, Sweden, France and Holland, but in our beloved Pakistan which is fastly becoming victim to this conspiracy that tends to deteriorate our beloved country.

No corner of the country is safe from this conspiracy whether it is Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Gilgit or anywhere in Pakistan. We got this homeland after our elders, mothers, sisters and daughters sacrificed their lives and was established on the basis of Islam. Considering that now the sanctity of Islam is being insulted in this country which ultimately is resulting in situation of law and order leading to economic crisis. The enemies behind this conspiracy are the same as were in 1947 at the time of creation of our beloved Pakistan. FIA

Cybercrime has so far arrested doctors, professors, engineers, chartered accountants, lawyers, religious scholars, Hafiz, Naat Khawan, Sajjada Nashin, government employees, private employees, rich, poor belonging to every sect, religion and locality in Pakistan among the people who have been involved in blasphemy. Infact

there are people from every class and creed involved in the blasphemous activities.

Its gravity can be determined from the fact that, such Ahl al-Hadith were arrested who used to insult Allah, the Most High along with other pious, such Bareilvi was arrested who along with other persons used to insult the Prophet (peace be upon him) such Deobandi were arrested who insulted the umhat ul momineen and the Caliphs, such ehl tashii were arrested who insulted Makhdooma Kunin R.A, Such Hafiz were arrested who insulted the Holy Quran, such Christians were arrested who insulted the Bible and Such Hindus were arrested who were insulting the Hindu religious beliefs. Similarly, when the FIA cybercrime arrested a teacher of Hadith in a Madrasa, the blasphemy he committed to the Holy Qur'an Ahl al-Bayt Athar and Prophet PBUH cannot Even be imagined.

According to the version of FIA Cybercrime in the Lahore High Court Rawalpindi Bench and the research of the Legal Commission on blasphemy Pakistan (LCBP), more than four lakh unfortunate social media accounts from Pakistan are involved in such serious blasphemy on social media. Allama Muhammad Iqbal (may God bless him and grant him peace) said a century ago that the powers of polytheism want to weaken the relationship of Muslims and their love towards the Prophet PBUH.

What Allama said a hundred years ago is in front of us like an undeniable fact. In the name of innovation/modernism, the culture of immorality is being promoted and an attempt is being made to remove it from Hijaz and Yemen (Muslim world) by giving Arabs thoughts of foreign imaginations (vulgarity and indecency). Indecency is being

promoted through social media and through this indecency the new generation is being pushed into the swamp of blasphemy.

More than 10 crore people are currently using social media in our beloved country. There is no effective social media monitoring system in the country, which has given free rein to the users of the media. You can gauge how fast this evil is spreading from the fact that four people together formed a blasphemy group in the mid of 2019, later in 2022 FIA Cybercrime arrested all four of them but when they were arrested the number of members of such group had increased to more than 32 thousand. Controlling this epidemic is not just a matter of a few people, for this the whole nation has to play a role, the government institutions have to fulfil their responsibilities and duties.

The main objective of this organized conspiracy is to create chaos in Pakistan and destroy law and order in order to stop the development of the motherland by pushing it into civil war and to destroy it and to create hatred between the religions and the followers of the religion. So defusing the objective of this conspiracy is the prime responsibility of every patriotic citizen of Pakistan. This conspiracy is so dangerous that a social media account conspiring to one religion or creed is intended in defaming the opposite religion or creed to achieve their objective of destroying our beloved country.

By thwarting the intentions of these blasphemers, not only the motherland can be saved, but to thwart this conspiracy, it is the responsibility of the PTA to register the social media in Pakistan and apply filtration on the social media so that the blasphemy and Such obscene content cannot be posted, shared or downloaded. Information of these

accounts/persons involved in these crimes should be provided to FIA Cybercrime by PTA and FIA through use of modern technology should arrest wherever they are and brought to book and make an example. Until this happens, the responsibility of parents is the highest in the current situation.

Parents who provide mobile, laptop and internet access to their children should also keep an eye on what their children do on social media because when any such culprit is arrested the one's who suffer the most are the parents. When the children follow the path of indecency in ignorance they reach the point of blasphemy through pornographic videos in light of this conspiracy. Because when a person becomes indecent, he can do anything.

If One becomes indecent the reciter of the Qur'an can also insult the Quran, Noha khwan can do blasphemy of Sayeda Pak, and the impudent humming of national songs can also become the impudence of the green crescent flag. In order to control this epidemic, it is necessary to educate the society where parents are made aware of these situations, not to share any such content further at any cost in any shape and to prevent the promotion of such content in all circumstances. The path of law should be adopted so that deterrence is established against such criminals with the rule of law in the society.

The Legal Commission on Blasphemy Pakistan has so far arrested one hundred and forty people while helping the FIA cybercrime by taking the path of law. The trial court has so far sentenced eleven people to death. The death sentence of two persons has also been confirmed by the High Court. There are fifteen police stations of FIA cybercrime across the country

and blasphemy cells have been established in all these police stations. A resolution has been passed by the parliament of Pakistan to remove this blasphemous material from the social media space as soon as possible and at any cost.

Standing committee on religious affairs has constituted a special committee to curb this evil, courts have been issued directions to eliminate this evil. Wherever you see offensive content on social media, file a report in the concerned FIA Cyber Crime Station. Blasphemy cells are active in all police stations and such requests are promptly processed. A blasphemer using any app, sharing blasphemous content on any website or using a VPN is traced by cybercrime technology, arrested and prosecuted as per the law.

One of the reasons for the rapid spread of this epidemic is that there is no necessary awareness in the society regarding the criminal use of social media. The Legal Commission on Blasphemy of Pakistan, realizing the importance and necessity of awareness in this regard, has decided to organize a systematic campaign for awareness on this issue.

In this regard, it is requested that all sections of the society, especially madrasas, scholars, teachers, journalists, lawyers, columnists, political and social leaders, businessmen and political, journalistic, religious, social, Political parties and institutions play a full role in this campaign. If we all play our role responsibly in this campaign, then the epidemic of indecency and blasphemy in our beloved country can be prevented to a large extent. So it is humbly requested to be a part of this noble campaign in order to save the future generations.

The Frontier Post

JALIL AFRIDI
Managing Editor

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

The peril of human trafficking and world nations

THE Frontier Post revived the memories of famous Pakistani women hockey player late Shahida Raza, who was killed in a Shipwreck off the coast of Italy a few months ago, during the media interaction with Ms. Cindy Dyer, US Ambassador at Large to Combat Human Trafficking at the US State Department on Friday. Shahida was among 63 deceased when a wooden boat carrying 200 illegal migrants broke apart on rocks during an illegal landing on the Italian coast in February this year. Surprisingly, the media interaction of the US Special Envoy to Combat Human Trafficking coincided with another tragic incident of Shipwreckage that occurred in the Greek Ocean involving over 750 illegal refugees among whom above 78 people lost their lives in a state of helplessness and misery during their failed attempt to reach Italy. The Frontier Post asked Cindy about the world's failure in taking stringent measures and inflicting severe punishment on the culprits to end human trafficking, Ambassador Cindy admitted that until human traffickers work with impunity, this menace can not be controlled around the world.

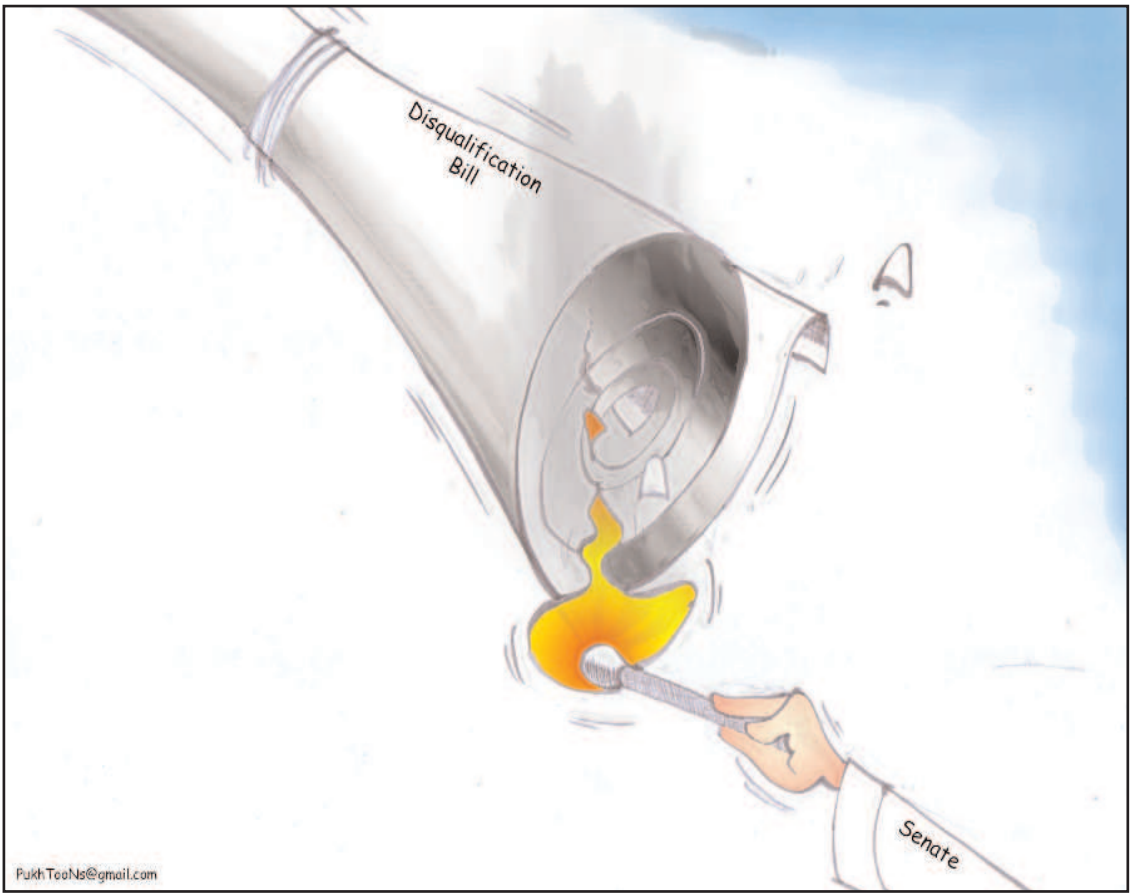
The menace of human trafficking flourishes unrestrictedly in all parts of the world, while it has shaped into an alternative business to the migration industry in the current era when illegal migration from Asia and Africa to Europe and North America is at its peak. The peril of human smuggling is in full swing in the Southern Hemisphere where people use illegal means to migrate from Latin America and East Asia to New Zealand and Australia. Multiple carnages of mass killings and border shootings happened over the past years that cost thousands of lives of innocent migrants while crossing borders through illegal dangerous mountainous terrains in South America while countless migrants had been drowned in ship swamps in the Adriatic and Mediterranean seas.

Illegal migration from poor nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America is on the rise because of the abundance of economic opportunities, quality living and education, security, and civil liberties along with lax immigration regimes of Western nations. As legal migration has a lengthy and hectic process and demands the bulk of the money, high education, and top skills, thus, illegal migration and voluntary human trafficking has become a top priority for young men, and women from developing countries to fulfill their dream and reach top destinations in Europe and North America. According to reports, a majority of Travel agencies are involved in human trafficking or at least have working relationships with professional human traffickers in Asia particularly in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran, Turkey, Bangkok, Dubai, Syria, and Iran meanwhile Custom Agents and border guards in East Europe, Latin America, and Balkan states facilitate human smugglers for mere few hundred dollars. The reports reveal that millions of people move annually through the dangerous sea and land routes, across mountainous terrains in Eastern Europe, and South America while others use horrific sea passages to cross the Sea of Aegean, Red, and Medditeranean Seas, and Gulf of Marmara to reach Italian and Spanish shores.

Awfully, rising poverty, mismanagement, and corruption in developing nations had shattered the public faith in the rulers, and youths are fleeing their countries through legal as well as illegal means that have caused a brain drain in most nations in Asia and Africa. Currently, Pakistan is at the top of the list of nations that face a mass exodus, and dozens of Pakistanis illegal immigrants often involve in each tragedy of ship swamp or mass killings that occur in the European Seas or in Brazilian/Maxicon jungles. This is a very awful and alarming situation that unemployment and corruption had eaten up the opportunities for the youth and thousands of Pakistani doctors, engineers, intellectuals, and national stars like Shahida Raza are fleeing the country every other day, while several of them embrace death in a hope of quality life. This state of affairs merits due attention from the leadership if they really have concerns regarding the rapid mass exodus and brain drain going on through legal and illegal migration from the country. The government must create conducive and livable economic and social conditions in the country so our youth opt to live in their nation instead of losing their lives in barren hills, rough seas, and custodial detention in other countries.

Important Notice

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



Fuad Toohs@gmail.com

Bridging the climate change implementation gap at COP28

Nickolaye Mladenov

AS we approach the COP28 UN climate summit, the debates surrounding what we must do versus what we are willing to do intensify. In the meantime, our planet continues to heat up. The recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change report highlights the urgency of the climate crisis and the need for real solutions. However, in a world marked by geopolitical and economic divisions, this task becomes even more daunting.

One of the primary challenges confronting COP28 is bridging the implementation gap between negotiated agreements and real-world action. Previous conferences have set ambitious goals, but the translation of these goals into tangible policies and actions on the ground has been insufficient. COP28 must foster mechanisms that ensure effective implementation of commitments. Additionally, countries, especially those in the Global South, should be provided with adequate financial and technical support to enable them to implement their climate plans effectively.

The task of addressing climate change is further complicated by geopolitical and economic divisions. Global cooperation is vital and countries must recognize the interconnected nature of the climate crisis, as the impacts of climate change do not respect national borders. National climate plans, known as Nationally Determined Contributions, need to be coherent with the global goals set by the Paris Agreement. However, many countries' actions fall short of what they commit to. Therefore, G7 leaders recently called on parties to increase their ambition and enhance their NDCs before COP28.

National efforts alone are not sufficient to tackle this crisis. The private sector plays a crucial role in driving climate action. COP28 needs to encourage greater private sector engagement and investment in sustainable solutions. By mobilizing the resources, expertise and innovation of the private sector, COP28 can unlock significant opportunities for transformative change. Marginalized communities, indigenous peoples, women

and youth are often disproportionately affected by climate change. Their perspectives and concerns must be central in our discussions and decision-making processes. Achieving climate justice means acknowledging historical responsibilities and ensuring that climate action is inclusive, fair and respects the rights of all people. Furthermore, it is essential to recognize the impor-

portance of climate targets, diplomatic relations and experience in delivering on sustainability initiatives, can make a significant impact. The nation's notable investments in diverse energy sources, beyond oil and gas, exemplify a commitment to sustainable solutions. Its strategic geographic location and exceptional relations with African and Asian countries present a unique opportuni-

ty to foster a genuinely inclusive dialogue that transcends regional biases. Already served as chairman of Masdar, a sustainable energy and development company, established well before others embraced renewables. He can engage with diverse stakeholders, including fossil fuel industries, to find common ground and drive sustainable solutions. He also has a strong track record in spearheading sustainability initiatives, having championed renewable projects and clean technologies. As the UAE's special envoy for climate change, Al-Jaber engaged with international partners and represented the UAE in global climate discussions.

As the world prepares for the COP28 conference in Dubai later this year, the UAE carries the huge responsibility as the host nation to help ensure the climate implementation gap is closed. And while that challenge is daunting, the UAE, with its ambitious climate targets, diplomatic relations and experience in delivering on sustainability initiatives, can make a significant impact. The nation's notable investments in diverse energy sources, beyond oil and gas, exemplify a commitment to sustainable solutions. Its strategic geographic location and exceptional relations with African and Asian countries present a unique opportunity to foster a genuinely inclusive dialogue that transcends regional biases.

While he may not be a diplomat in the traditional sense, given the state of global climate action, surely we need someone who can bridge gaps and bring a culture of innovation to a COP process that has long been criticized for falling short of setting ambitious targets and implementing effective measures to address the magnitude of the climate crisis. Al-Jaber has clearly stated that "we need to match what is agreed in the negotiated text with concrete action in the real world." This reflects the understanding that, while the COP negotiations process is crucial, it is also essential to translate the agreed-upon commitments into tangible action on the ground. The challenges posed by climate change demand collective action, inclusive dialogue and effective implementation of commitments. By bridging the gap between negotiated agreements and real-world action, aligning policies at various levels of governance, engaging the private sector and fostering an inclusive environment, we can drive transformative change.

The UAE, with its commitment to sustainability and experience in renewable energy, plays a significant role as the host nation. Al-Jaber's expertise and dedication to sustainability make him a valuable asset in climate change negotiations. By uniting diverse stakeholders and translating commitments into concrete action, we can work toward a sustainable future for our planet and future generations. It is time to turn words into meaningful change and address the magnitude of the climate crisis together.

Arab News

Egypt leading the way on ensuring net-zero transition is just

Rania Al-Mashat & Erik Berglof

THE gap between the resources needed to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050 and the resources that are available currently amounts to trillions of dollars - and is still growing. As many developing and emerging economies lose ground in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, public and private capital must be mobilized to accelerate mitigation and adaptation efforts. But this requires governments to produce credible plans for achieving global sustainability goals, to design and implement these policies themselves and to ensure that their strategies' costs and benefits are fairly distributed.

Last November's UN Climate Change Conference in Egypt, known as COP27 and dubbed the "implementation COP," laid the groundwork for a fairer, more robust climate finance system. The conference's "guidebook" called on the international community to advance a

transformative agenda that accounts for developing countries' national priorities and ensures equitable access to financial and technical resources. It included, in its definition of climate justice, "equitable access to quality and quantity climate financing" that considers "historical responsibility for climate change" and "supports resilient development pathways, leaving no one behind."

With this in mind, Egypt launched its Nexus of Water, Food and Energy investment program during COP27, providing a practical and replicable model for ensuring a just net-zero transition through a concept of "country platforms." These platforms are meant to help countries build state capacities and emphasize the importance of developing countries' agency (or "ownership," in aid parlance).

The Nexus of Water, Food and Energy - whose acronym NWEF, pronounced "nuffy," is Arabic for "fulfilling pledges" - builds on Egypt's

commitments under the 2015 Paris climate agreement and aims to attract financial support for the country's development agenda, while accelerating climate action. The stakeholders include multilateral development banks such as the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the African Development Bank, the European Investment Bank and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank. The Nexus of Water, Food and Energy platform integrates several high-priority water, food and energy projects - all selected by the Egyptian government - worth a total of \$14.7 billion. The projects seek to replace existing inefficient thermal power plants with renewable energy; enhance small farmers' adaptation to climate risks; modernize farming practices to increase irrigation efficiency and boost crop yields; strengthen the resilience of vulnerable regions; create water desali-

nation capacity; and establish early-warning systems.

By using innovative financing mechanisms to mobilize public funds, technical assistance and private investment, Egypt seeks to leverage its partnerships with the multilateral development banks and other development stakeholders to accelerate its climate agenda. This would support the country's green transition and show that climate action and economic development can go hand in hand. Egypt can also rely on these partnerships to help it phase out "brown" oil, gas and mineral assets. For example, partial concessional financial support from the US will enable the country to retrain (or retire) fossil fuel workers. Yet, the most innovative instrument may be debt-for-climate swaps, whereby Egypt receives partial debt relief from, say, Germany, in exchange for commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Boris, Silvio and the future of populism

Andrew Hammond

THIS week's downfall of Boris Johnson and the death of Silvio Berlusconi - two of Europe's best-known and most successful populist politicians - has shone a spotlight on how much European politics has changed in the last few decades. After taking office for the first time in 1994, Berlusconi led four nonconsecutive Italian governments, leaving the prime minister's office for the final time in 2011.

As Italy's longest-serving PM, he showed a remarkable ability to bounce back from sex scandals and corruption cases and, in many ways, was a forerunner of many of Europe's populist politicians of today, including Johnson, and indeed further afield too, such as former US President Donald Trump.

Internationally, Berlusconi had strange political bedfellows, including Russian President Vladimir Putin, similar to the populists of a more recent vintage, such as Trump. As recently as October, Berlusconi was reportedly still describing Putin as a "friend," despite Moscow's invasion of Ukraine. When Berlusconi first assumed power in Italy, only a handful of key states with populations over 20 million - including Venezuela - had populist leaders. However, this then relatively small populist club expanded significantly after the onset of the 2007-08 international financial crisis, which heralded what has been called the Great Recession. The economic downturns and austerity seen in the wake of that economic tsunami were key to the rise of populism in Europe. The biggest rise in populism across Europe and the wider world has been seen in the last decade, including Trump winning power in 2016 and Johnson doing the same in the UK in 2019. For those who prefer their political history neatly arranged, it is perhaps fitting that Johnson's political career may be ending in the same week as Berlusconi died.

On Monday, the same day as Berlusconi's passing at the age of 86, Johnson formally submitted his resignation as an MP. The implosion of the latter's political career, for now at least, came ahead of Thursday's release of a hugely damning report into his behavior as prime minister in the midst of the pandemic, during the so-called Partygate scandal. However, while Johnson, who is 58, may seem politically dead, in the current populist era it cannot be completely ruled out that he may yet try to stage a Trump-style political comeback after the Conservative Party loses power, potentially at the next general election. Despite all of his many flaws, the former prime minister remains popular among many Conservative members. Indeed, a group called the Conservative Democratic Organisation appears to be fast becoming a "bring back Johnson" campaign. Remarkably, this grouping is even encouraging party members to deselect any current Conservative MPs who show support for Thursday's damning Privileges Committee report, despite the fact it was agreed by a bipartisan group of legislators. What makes Johnson's

appeal for some Conservatives so potent is that he won in 2019 the party's largest majority in the House of Commons since the 1980s under Margaret Thatcher. Moreover, rather than losing a general election, he was deposed from Downing Street in an internal party vote, which large numbers of Conservative members may regret when the party next loses power, despite his obvious ethical flaws. Incredible as it may seem, it therefore cannot be completely ruled out that Johnson may try to run again for the party's leadership in future years. In the last century, four people have served second stints in Downing Street, including Johnson's hero Winston Churchill, who he still has big, unfulfilled ambitions to try to emulate. The fact that Johnson could yet stage a comeback despite all of his improper behavior, which would have definitively ended political careers in a different era, showcases that the era of populism is far from over.

Some data indicates that the number of populist leaders globally has fallen since the COVID-19 pandemic began. However, populism is still widely prevalent in Europe, as seen with the 2022 success of Giorgia Meloni in Italy. Prime Minister Meloni, a right-wing nationalist supported by Berlusconi, exemplifies how European populism tends to be of a different, conservative variety to Latin America, where left-wing populism dominates. While leaders from different continents often have different flavors of populism, they tend to win power through common campaign tactics. This includes attacks on immigration. Although populists can be very effective campaigners, they tend to be very poor at governing. This has been the case with Trump and Johnson, and was too with Berlusconi.

Take the example of Johnson who, despite winning a big majority in 2019, achieved very little of significance during his years in power. This includes the failure of his central vision to "level-up" the UK by increasing pay, living standards and the number of jobs in areas of the country where they are relatively low, so that all areas are more equal. Equally, Berlusconi did not leave a legacy of great accomplishment either. His time in charge of Italy was largely spent in fruitless battles with the judiciary and media. Yet, while the governing record of politicians like Johnson and Berlusconi has been poor, populism may only grow in appeal once again. This could be fueled by the aftermath of the pandemic, which triggered a deeper, broader global recession than even that of the 2007-08 financial crisis. Moreover, rising economic inequality is also key. While some affluent cohorts have seen their wealth increase since the pandemic began, many poorer people have seen their incomes stagnate or worse. So, while the respective fates of Berlusconi and Johnson may indicate the end of an era in European politics, the phenomenon of populism may yet rebound. This is despite the fact that politicians of this ilk have done so little to tackle the economic and political challenges that powered them to office.



Need of agriculture sector uplift urged for attaining growth

ISLAMABAD (APP): President of Islamabad Chamber of Commerce Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari on Saturday said that agricultural sector can play a very key role in increasing exports, reducing imports and achieving sustainable economic growth in the country.

He expressed these views, while talking to the members of the Agro Committee of the Chamber, which met him under the chairmanship of the Convenor Committee Chaudhry Sohail, said a press release.

In the last one year, the trade deficit has reduced from \$17 billion to \$3 billion because of measures taken by the government, he said adding that in order to completely eliminate the deficit, attention should be paid to increase the export of fruits, vegetables and

other agricultural commodities.

He said that the promotion of research is necessary to increase the efficiency of the agricultural sector and urged the government to mobilize embassies to promote Pakistani products to new markets of the world.

Being an agrarian economy, agriculture is the lifeline for Pakistani economy, he said adding that Pakistan achieved a record production of 27.5 million tons of wheat this year despite the devastating floods.

Similarly, Pakistan ranks fifth with 88.7 million tonnes of sugarcane output, 10th with 9.3 million tonnes of rice, 20th with 10 million tonnes of maize, 5th with 2.3 million tonnes of mango and sixth with 2.1 million tonnes of onion production, he remarked.

Pakistan should take steps to take its agricultural products to traditional as well as non-traditional markets, focusing on Central Asian countries, he added.

For the agriculture sector, the results of the Prime Minister Kisan package given by the government have been seen this year in the form of record production of wheat, he said and urged the government to not only extend this package but also increase the incentives.

He said that like other industries of the country, the fruit and vegetable industry is facing problems due to high production cost.

Fruit orchards in Pakistan have become very old, which has affected the production and on the other hand, due to the decline in quality, there are problems in exports, he added.

He urged the government for allocating funds for cold storage development, besides providing electricity on affordable prices for the cold storage industry.

Speaking on this occasion, Convenor Agro Committee Chaudhry Sohail said that we want to take steps to increase the export of fruits and vegetables from this region through the platform of Islamabad Chamber.

He urged the government for ensuring the exhibitions of the agricultural sector at the local and international level.

He said that this sector is facing severe shortage of cold storage, cold storage and warehouses and urged the need to built such facilities at all airports for the storage of Pakistani agricultural commodities.

OGDCL announces commencement of production from Wali Oil & Gas Field



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), the operator of the Wali (Bettani) Exploration License with a 100% working interest, is delighted to announce commencement of production from the Wali (Bettani) Oil & Gas Field situated in District Lakki Marwat, Khyber

Pakhtunkhwa Province.

OGDCL has successfully completed the installation of all necessary production facilities, which include well flow lines, gathering network, separators, dehydration plant, membrane unit, crude oil storage tanks, and dispatch gantries. These facilities have been installed by OGDCL team utilizing in-house expertise and

resources.

The Development of early production facility did not involve any import or local procurement as equipment available at other facilities was refurbished, remodeled and upgraded for utilization at Wali (Bettani).

We are proud to declare that the Wali (Bettani) Gas Field has commenced production by injection of gas

into SNGPL transmission system with following anticipated daily production rates:

*Gas Production (Qgas): 10 MMSCF/Day
Oil Production (Qoil): 1000 Bbls/Day*

Going forward OGDCL will drill two additional wells i.e. Wali Deep #1 and Wali # 02 during the next few months. Upon completion of these wells production would enhance to 50 MMSCF/Day with 3000 bbl of oil.

The production from Wali (Bettani) field will help in meeting energy requirement of the Country and mitigate reliance on imported energy.

The initial production will help in saving US \$ 43 M foreign exchange annually and upon full production by the end of FY 2023-24 the savings would surpass US\$ 176 M. This is indeed a proud amount for the OGDCL family for contributing to the prosperity of Pakistan.

China sees more taxpayers in May

BEIJING (APP): China witnessed a spike in the number of new taxpaying market entities in May as the country's economy continues to recover.

A total of 1.52 million new market entities handling tax-related business were registered in May, an increase of 24.9 percent from the same period last year, data from the State Taxation Administration showed.

In May, newly registered companies numbered about 691,000, representing a rise of 27.1 percent year on year, while the number of new individual businesses stood at about 817,000, up 33.7% from a year ago.

In the first five months, the total number of new taxpaying market entities totaled nearly 6.44 million, up 15.5% year on year.

By the end of May, the number of taxpaying market entities stood at 86.92 million, up 7.5% year on year.

Meanwhile, China's used vehicle sales surged 25.95 percent year on year in May, data from the China Automobile Dealers Association showed.

China EximBank lends 730b yuan to help foreign trade

BEIJING (APP): The Export-Import Bank of China (China EximBank) has issued over 730 billion yuan (102.4 billion U.S. dollars) of loans to support the country's foreign trade during the first five months of this year.

The value represents a 15.8 percent increase from the same period last year, the bank said.

At the end of May, the bank's outstanding loans to foreign trade firms came in at nearly 3 trillion yuan, up 16.36 percent year on year and 130 billion yuan more than the beginning of 2023.

The bank has stepped up financial support for foreign trade companies and related industrial and supply chains in the past two years, in particular for small and micro trade firms. Its Belt and Road outstanding loans also topped 2.2 trillion yuan at the end of last month.

The China EximBank is a state-funded and state-owned policy bank supporting China's foreign

trade, investment, and international economic cooperation.

Meanwhile, China's online ride-hailing companies reached 313 by the end of May, four more than the number registered in the previous month, data from the Ministry of Transport shows.

By the end of last month, the authorized ride-hailing vehicle certificates and driver licenses in the country hit 2.36 million and 5.58 million, up 2.5 percent and 3.3 percent month on month, respectively, according to the ministry. In May, 735 million ride-hailing trips were made.

Hangzhou, the capital city of east China's Zhejiang Province, led the city list in terms of compliance rate of online-hailing orders, according to the data.

In 2022, online ride-hailing trips made up about 40.5 percent of total taxi trips, an increase of 6.4 percentage points from a year earlier.

Albayrak Group expresses keen interest in investing

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Turkiye's famous company Albayrak Group has expressed keen interest in investing in the diverse sectors of Pakistan.

A delegation of Albayrak Group led by its President Ahmed Albayrak expressed the interest during a meeting with Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif in Lahore on Saturday.

On the occasion, the Prime Minister said state institutions were destroyed by previous government and the nation will never forgive those who stopped the journey of national development.

The Prime Minister said Albayrak group rendered valuable services in solid waste management and public transport in Lahore.

He said international investors provided modern travel facilities, solid waste management and employment opportunities in Lahore during PML-N government's previous tenure.

China in a perfect position to help Pakistan develop SME sector: CG

KARACHI (PPI): Consul General of China Yang Yundong, while responding to President Karachi Chamber's suggestion, stated that China's Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs) account for 70 to 80 percent of GDP so it was in a perfect position to help Pakistan develop its SME Sector.

In addition to developing the SME sector, a host of other areas also exist where the business communities of the two countries can collaborate with each other for furthering the existing trade and investment relations but in order to attract more and more Chinese companies to Pakistan, the security as well as political situation has to be improved, he added while

exchanging views with Karachi Chamber's delegation led by its President Mohammed Tariq Yousuf at a meeting held at Chinese Consulate in Karachi.

KCCI delegation also comprised of Senior Vice President Touseef Ahmed, Vice President Mohammad Haris Agar and Chairman Diplomatic Relations & Embassies Liaison Subcommittee Zia ul Arfeen.

Chinese Consul General, while highlighting the bustling activities under China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), stated that this project was making significant contributions to promoting Pakistan's economic and social development, enhancing people's well-

being, and deepening people-to-people affinity and regional connectivity between China and Pakistan.

Vowing to expand comprehensive cooperation and deepening China-Pakistan friendship, he assured to broaden the scope of cooperation and continuously enhance cooperation in industries, agriculture, maritime, science and technology.

He informed that for the first time, Pakistani seafood was recently transported via land along the CPEC to Kashgar, Xinjiang and Chinese companies have actively carried out cooperation in chili peppers and canola in Sindh Province.

While welcoming KCCI's suggestion pertaining to sending trade delega-

tions to China, the Envoy assured full support and cooperation to businessmen and industrialists looking forward to enhancing trade and investment ties with their Chinese counterparts.

President KCCI Tariq Yousuf, in his remarks, underscored the need for having some kind of collaboration between Pakistan and China for the development of SMEs in Pakistan.

"It has been observed that the Government-to-Government interactions between the two neighboring countries usually remain confined to mega projects only, hence, it is very important to pay equal attention to the SME sector as well which plays the role of a backbone in any economy."



MULTAN: Vendor sprinkling water on lemon to keep them fresh at his roadside setup.

FWCCI hails new British HC in Pakistan

FAISALABAD (APP): Faisalabad Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry (FWCCI) President Rubina Amjad has welcomed the appointment of Jane Marriott as the first female British High Commissioner (HC) to Pakistan.

In a letter written to the newly appointed high commissioner on Saturday, she congratulated Ms. Jane Marriott, saying that it was a matter of great pleasure for the Women Chamber of Commerce & Industry.

She said Britain and Pakistan were enjoying cordial diplomatic and economic relations while appointment of Jane Marriott as the high commissioner to Pakistan would further cement the liaison.

She said that Britain was one of the largest trading partners of Pakistan and it had always supported Pakistan at the international forums and fronts.

The EWCCI president invited Ms. Jane Marriott for a visit at the earliest convenience and hoped that during her tenure, diplomatic, economic and bilateral relations between both countries would grow to further height.

PARC organizes training workshop for rice growers

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Agricultural Engineering Institute (AEI) of Pakistan Agricultural Research Council (PARC) has organized a seminar and training program for rice growers at Daska, Sialkot for enhancing rice yields through education and training on the advantages of utilizing specialized machinery for rice cultivation and harvesting.

The seminar was also aimed to highlight the drawbacks of traditional methods, said a press release issued here on Saturday.

Prominent participants were comprised of Dr Asif Ali Mirani, DG, AED, PARC, Dr Hafiz Sultan Mehmood, Director, AEI, NARC along with experts, researchers, engineers, program leaders and representatives from agricultural organizations.

Dr Ghulam Muhammad Ali, Chairman PARC emphasized the significance of rice as Pakistan's second major cash crop, following wheat and highlighted the need of using modern farming equipment and high-yielding varieties to enhance productivity and combat the impacts of climate change on the agricultural sector.

Rice cultivation primarily takes place in fertile regions of Sindh, Punjab and Balochistan, providing a livelihood for a significant number of farmers, he said adding that as compared to wheat, rice mechanization in Pakistan was relatively low, leading to delays in sowing and reduced yields due to manual labor.

Moreover, labor shortages caused by urbanization and industrialization pose a significant challenge for farmers, he added.

Dr Ali suggested that adopting mechanization and utilizing head-feeding combine harvesters could provide viable solutions to tackle these issues.

During the fiscal year 2021-22, he said rice cultivation encompasses a land area of 3,537 thousand hectares, yielding a total of 9,323 million tons. Nonetheless, the manual transplantation method resulted in a notable shortfall in seedlings compared to the recommended planting density of 80,000-85,000 plants per acre, with an average of merely

40,000-45,000 plants per acre.

The average rice yield per acre in Pakistan, standing at 30 to 35 maunds, falls below the international average of 50 maunds per acre, he said adding that utilization of reconditioned combine harvesters and manual harvesting practices caused significant losses, ranging from 5 to 13 percent due to grain scattering and 2 to 7 percent due to threshing.

In contrast, he said the application of a rice transplanter enabled the efficient establishment of 80,000 to 125,000 plants per acre, thereby substantially enhancing the yield per acre.

Notably, head-feeding combine harvesters exhibited minimal losses, with crushing rates of 1.7 to 3.5 percent and threshing losses of 0.5 to 1.5 percent.

At the end, the participants of the seminar shared their insights and experiences regarding mechanized production technology, emphasizing its potential to augment crop yields and encouraging wider adoption in the agricultural community.

Pakistani industrial ecology to provide endless opportunities

BEIJING (APP): "Today's Pakistan is in line with "good timing, geographical convenience and great human relations" from the traditional Chinese perspective", noted Wang Jianxun, Senior Advisor of Pakistan National Science and Technology Park.

Addressing as a key speaker at the SCO International Investment and Trade Expo co-hosted by China Study Center, National University of Science and Technology, Pakistan (NUST) held in Qingdao, a scenic coastal city in Shandong Province, Wang emphasized the environment of "blue ocean" in Pakistan, with the theme of Opportunities and Challenges of Pakistan's Industrial Ecological Chain under the New World Situation.

When technological productivity lacks sufficient capacity to meet national demand, the trade deficit has been increasingly emerging, Pakistan's current trade deficit has soared

to a record high of USD 48.66 billion from USD 30.96 billion a year ago, driven by a sharper-than-expected 57 percent jump in imports. Not only that, Pakistan's trade deficit widened 32 percent year-on-year to USD 4.84 billion in June as imports grew almost twice as fast as exports.

Such an astonishing demand for imports means that Pakistan's domestic industrial structure needs to be optimized urgently, as well as scientific and technological productivity needs to be greatly improved. Just like the two sides of a coin, today's status quo also means unlimited opportunities for global companies.

"So far, initial diversified cooperation in various industries in Pakistan has begun to emerge. The special economic zone represented by the National Science and Technology Park (NSTP) has created a spiral development model of "industry + academic +

government + public society".

Regarding e-commerce, in NSTP, we will form a two-way interactive simulated video sales platform in cooperation with China's Ningbo live broadcast e-commerce base, vigorously promoting Pakistani specialties; The NUST has formed an effective cooperation mechanism with many top universities in China, such as Tsinghua University, Harbin Institute of Technology, China University of Geosciences, Southwest Petroleum University, etc.

In addition, due to Pakistan's vigorous opening of NFT and other related digital currency technologies, as well as AI and IoT tools, there is also huge room for digital improvement, as a global hot spot," Wang told China Economic Net.

Leapfrog of science and technology is inseparable from the support of the talent pool, as Pakistan's population under the age of 23 accounts for 76 percent of the country's total population, it enjoys prominent advantages in labor resources.

At present, China's domestic labor cost is three times that of Pakistan's. In industries such as biopharmaceuticals, IT, forging and textiles, Pakistan could be described as rich in talent.

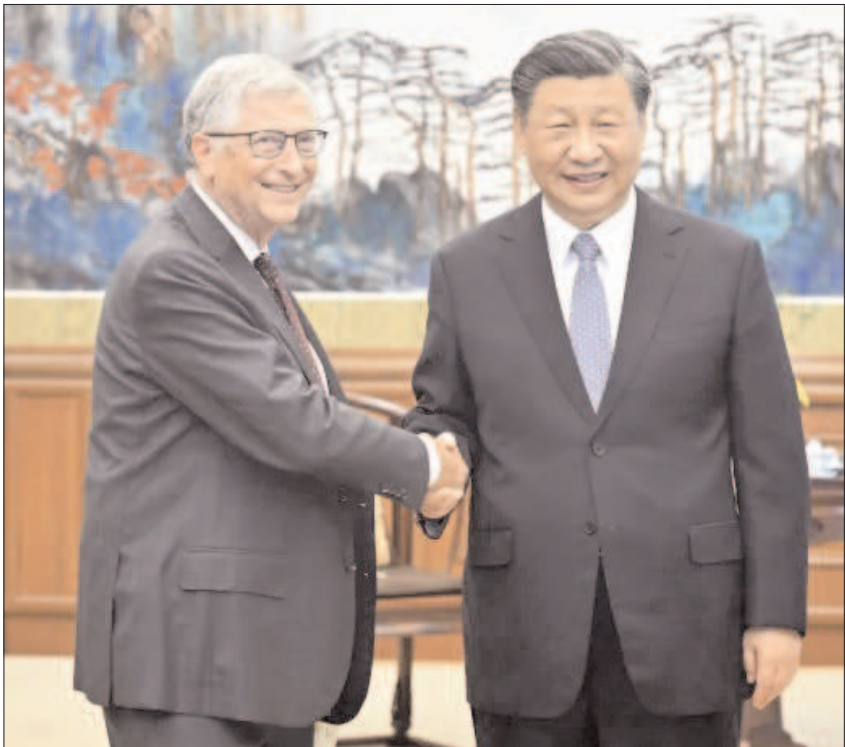
Back to Pakistan itself, this country is also blessed with unique conditions which should not be ignored by anyone. As a traffic springboard linking the trinity of Asia, Europe and Africa, it has trade routes leading to a total of 68 countries around the world.

The reporter learned that Pakistan has implemented preferential tariff reduction and exemption policies for 188 Chinese projects, which is a major benefit for companies in various fields that are involved in the construction of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC).

While warmly welcoming Chinese projects in Gwadar under CPEC, President KCCI invited Chinese companies to take interest in Dhabaji Special Economic Zone near Karachi which would prove more feasible for their businesses because of its location near Karachi which is the financial, industrial and commercial hub of Pakistan.



Xi Jinping stresses US-China coop in meeting with Gates



BEIJING (AP): Chinese leader Xi Jinping said the United States and China can cooperate to “benefit our two countries” in a meeting with Microsoft Corp. co-founder Bill Gates ahead of a visit by US Secretary of State Antony Blinken at a time of strained relations.

The state broadcaster CCTV showed Xi saying he was happy to see Gates, who he called an “old friend,” after three years without meeting during the pandemic. “I believe that the foundation of Sino-US relations lies in the people,” Xi said to Gates. “Under the current world situation, we can carry out various activities that benefit our two countries, the people of our countries, and the entire human race.”

Xi gave no details but emphasized the potential

benefits of cooperation that has been hampered by disputes over human rights, Taiwan, security and technology. Gates told Xi he was “very honored” to meet with Xi. The visits by leading foreign business people have coincided with efforts by the ruling Communist Party to revive investor interest in China’s slowing economy. Apple CEO Tim Cook visited China in March.

Despite his upbeat remarks, Xi accused Washington in March of trying to hold back China’s development with restrictions on access to US microchips and other technology. Tensions between the US and China have festered in recent years, but recently the two sides have held talks on trade and other issues. Secretary of State Antony Blinken is

expected to arrive in China on Sunday for a two-day visit.

He will be the first secretary of state to visit China since 2018 and is expected to meet with Foreign Minister Qin Gang and possibly with Chinese President Xi Jinping, according to US officials. The the Gates Foundation pledged \$50 million to bolster the Global Health Drug Discovery Institute’s capacity to develop drugs to fight diseases like malaria and tuberculosis. The institute was jointly founded by the Gates Foundation, Tsinghua University and the Beijing municipal government. Gates’ last trip to China was in 2019, where he met first lady Peng Liyuan to discuss the Gates Foundation’s efforts in HIV/AIDS prevention.

Palestinian leader Abbas ends China trip

BEIJING (AP): Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas wrapped up a trip to China after seeking economic aid and voicing support for Beijing’s repressive policies toward Muslim minorities in the northwestern region of Xinjiang.

During his four-day visit, Abbas met with Chinese President and head of the ruling Communist Party Xi Jinping. The leaders then issued a joint statement endorsing Beijing’s domestic and foreign policies and repudiating Western concepts of human rights. In the statement, the Palestinian Authority said issues regarding China’s policy toward Muslims in Xinjiang have “nothing to do with human rights and are aimed at excising extremism and opposing terrorism and separatism.”

“Palestine resolutely opposes using the Xinjiang problem as a way of interfering in China’s internal affairs,” the joint statement said. That echoes Chinese propaganda surrounding the detention of more than 1 million Uyghurs, Kazakhs and other Muslim minorities in prison-like detention centers on little or no legal grounds — often merely for having a relative studying abroad or downloading the Koran onto their phones.

China says the widely-documented complex of heavily-guarded centers were intended to instill patriotism, purge radicalism spread over the internet and provide vocational training — and have now been shut down. Critics say many have been turned into prisons. China has campaigned furiously to counter the outside criticism, and in the competition for resources and markets, Arab states have almost never openly expressed concern over Beijing’s treatment of Muslims. Followers of the religion make up around 2% of the population. The country is led by an officially atheistic party dominated by the majority Han ethnic group.

Zelenskyy urges African leaders to press Putin on release of prisoners

KYIV, Ukraine (AP): Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy appealed to a group of African leaders to ask his Russian counterpart, Vladimir Putin, to free political prisoners from Crimea and beyond — saying it would be an “important step” in their trip to Russia on Saturday.

Seven African leaders — presidents of Comoros, Senegal, South Africa and Zambia, as well as Egypt’s prime minister and top envoys from the Republic of Congo and Uganda — visited Ukraine as part of a self-styled “peace mission” to both Ukraine and Russia to try to help end their nearly 16-month-old war. The African leaders were traveling to meet with Putin on Saturday in the Russian city of St. Petersburg.

The mission to Ukraine, the first of its kind by African leaders, comes in the wake of other peace initiatives such as one by China, and it carried extra importance for the African countries: They rely in varying degrees on food and fertilizer deliveries from Russia and Ukraine, whose war has jeopardized and impeded exports from one of the world’s most important breadbaskets. “This conflict is affecting Africa negatively,” South African President Cyril Ramaphosa said at a news conference alongside Zelenskyy and the four other African heads of state or government, after the leaders met for closed-door talks.

Ramaphosa and others acknowledged the intensity of the fight and the deep-seated ill-feeling between Russia and Ukraine, and insisted that all wars must come to an end — and they want to help expedite it. “I do believe that Ukrainians feel that they must fight and not give up. The road to peace is very hard,” he added. “Today, we even told President Zelenskyy that we not only recognize their (Ukrainians’) viewpoint, but we also respect how they feel about the war that’s going on. But we also said there is a need to bring this conflict to an end sooner rather than later.”

The members of the delegation, including Senegal’s President Macky Sall and Presidents Hakiinda Hichilema of Zambia, represent a cross-section of African views about the war. South Africa, Senegal and Uganda have avoided censuring Moscow for the conflict, while Egypt, Zambia and Comoros voted against Russia last year in a UN General Assembly resolution condemning Russia’s invasion. Many African nations have long had close ties with Moscow, dating back to the Cold War when the Soviet Union supported their anti-colonial struggles.

The tenor of the press conference soured when Comoros President Azali Assoumani floated the idea of a “road map” to peace, prompting

questions from Zelenskyy who sought a clarification and insisted he didn’t want “any surprises” from their visit with Putin. Zelenskyy then urged them to help free political prisoners from Crimea, which Russia illegally annexed in 2014.

“Would you please ask Russia to liberate the political prisoners?” Zelenskyy said. “Maybe this will be an important result of your mission, of your ‘road map.’” His expressed thinly veiled frustration about their trip, saying they would have “conversations with the terrorists” on Saturday. Ramaphosa, who laid out 10 priorities to help pave the way to ending the war, said he planned to have a bilateral meeting with Putin in part to discuss conditions around the Russian leader’s possible attendance at a planned August summit, hosted by South Africa, of the so-called “BRICS” countries, which also include Brazil, China and India.

The International Criminal Court in March issued an international arrest warrant against Putin over Russian abductions of Ukrainian children, which could complicate any trip by Putin to South Africa. Ramaphosa said he alone would make a decision whether to extend an invitation to the Russian leader, and the issue was still “under consideration.” Before meeting with Zelenskyy, the African leaders went to Bucha, a Kyiv suburb where bodies of civilians lay scattered in the streets last year after Russian troops abandoned a campaign to seize the capital and withdrew from the area.

The delegation’s stop in Bucha was symbolically significant, as the town has come to stand for the brutality of Moscow’s February 2022 invasion of Ukraine. The Russian occupation of Bucha left hundreds of civilians dead in the streets and in mass graves. Some showed signs of torture. While in Bucha, the visitors placed commemorative candles at a small memorial outside St. Andrew’s Church, near one of the locations where a mass grave was unearthed.

On their way back to the capital, air raid sirens went off in Kyiv — prompting them to briefly take shelter as they returned to their hotel as a “precautionary measure,” said Vincent Magwenya, a spokesman for Ramaphosa. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba tweeted: “Russian missiles are a message to Africa: Russia wants more war, not peace.”

The Ukrainian air force said it shot down six Russian Kalibr cruise missiles, six Kinzhal hypersonic ballistic missiles and two reconnaissance drones. It gave no details on where they were shot down. Germany will deliver another 64 Patriot missiles to Ukraine, German Defense Minister Boris Pistorius said, to help shield it

against Russia’s relentless aerial attacks.

Officials who helped lay the groundwork for the delegation’s talks said the African leaders not only aimed to initiate a peace process but also to assess how Russia, which is under heavy international sanctions, can be paid for fertilizer exports that Africa desperately needs. They are also set to discuss the related issue of ensuring more grain shipments out of Ukraine amid the war and the possibility of more prisoner swaps.

“Life is universal, and we must protect lives — Ukrainian lives, Russian lives, global lives,” Zambian President Hakiinda Hichilema told The Associated Press. “Instability anywhere is instability everywhere.” The African peace overture comes as Ukraine launches a counteroffensive to dislodge the Kremlin’s forces from occupied areas, using Western-supplied advanced weapons in attacks along the 1,000-kilometer (600-mile) front line. Western analysts and military officials have cautioned that the campaign could last a long time.

China presented its own peace proposal at the end of February but it appeared to have few chances of success. Ukraine and its allies largely dismissed the plan, and the warring sides look no closer to a cease-fire. Ukrainian troops recorded successes along three stretches of the front line in the south and east, Andriy Kovalev, a spokesman for the General Staff of Ukraine’s armed forces said in a statement.

According to Kovalev, Ukrainian forces moved forward south of the town of Orikhiv in Zaporizhzhia province, in the direction of the village of Robotyne, as well as around Levadne and Staromaiorske, on the boundary between Zaporizhzhia and Donetsk province further east. Kovalev said Ukraine’s troops also advanced in some areas around Vuhledar, a mining town in Donetsk that was the site of one of the main tank battles in the war so far.

It wasn’t possible to independently verify the claims. Russian shelling and overnight killed two civilians and wounded two others in southern Ukraine’s flood-hit Kherson region, where a major dam was destroyed last week, according to the region’s governor, Oleksandr Prokudin. Russian forces over the previous day launched 54 strikes across the province, using mortars, artillery, multiple rocket launchers, drones, missiles and aircraft, Prokudin said.

Floodwaters in the Kherson region have continued to recede, with the average level in flood-hit areas standing at 1.67 meters (about 5 feet). That is down from 5 meters (16 feet) immediately following the breach of the Kakhovka dam, according to the Ukrainian presidential office.

US, Japan, Philippines agree to boost security ties

TOKYO (AP): The national security advisers of the United States, Japan and the Philippines held their first joint talks and agreed to strengthen their defense cooperation, as Washington and its partners reinforce their alliances to adapt to growing tensions over North Korea, China and Ukraine, White House national security adviser Jake Sullivan said.

Sullivan said he and his Japanese and Philippine counterparts discussed the “turbulent regional security environment and how we can collectively work to enhance peace and stability” in areas including freedom of navigation and economic security. Sullivan, Takeo Akiba of Japan and Eduardo Ano of the Philippines said in a joint statement that they emphasized the importance of enhancing three-way cooperation, building on alliances between Japan and the US and between the Philippines and the US to maintain peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific, especially in the Taiwan Strait.

Sullivan said the “path-breaking” new trilateral framework is part of multiple alliances involving the United States in the Indo-Pacific region, including three-way cooperation with Japan and South Korea and the Quad security dialogue with Australia, India and Japan. “I would say different groupings may have different points of priority

and emphasis, but actually what we are finding is, the agenda is expanding because in a way the world is shrinking. And all of the problems everywhere are coming to touch every country in this area,” Sullivan said.

Sullivan said US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is not expected to make a significant breakthrough during his visit on Sunday to China, while Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s state visit to Washington later in the week “will mark a transformational moment in US-India relations.” The three security advisers discussed opportunities for joint naval exercises in Indo-Pacific waters and agreed to deepen military cooperation in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, they said.

During a visit to Tokyo by Philippine President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. in February, Prime Minister Fumio Kishida pledged 600 billion yen (\$4.3 billion) in development aid and private investment. The two leaders agreed to have their militaries cooperate in disaster relief operations in the Philippines, seen as a step toward a pact allowing their forces to visit and train on each other’s soil. Sullivan and Akiba held a separate three-way meeting with their South Korean counterpart, Cho Tae-yong, which Sullivan said had a “profound impact” on strength-

ening their cooperation following a recent improvement in Japan-South Korea ties.

Japan in December adopted a new National Security Strategy in which it set a goal of doubling its defense spending to 43 trillion yen (\$310 billion) over the next five years to fund a military buildup, including developing a strike capability in a major break from its self-defense-only policy long observed under its post-World War II pacifist constitution. Under the new strategy, Japan began security assistance for the militaries of developing nations, primarily in the Indo-Pacific region, and is likely to provide Japanese-made non-lethal equipment such as radar, antennas, small patrol boats and improvements to infrastructure such as ports. The Philippines is a major candidate.

China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei are locked in tense territorial standoffs over the South China Sea. The United States has no claims to the waters, but says freedom of navigation and overflight and the peaceful resolution of disputes in the key international waterway are in its national interest. Sullivan said he and Akiba and Ano decided to meet again in the coming months to expand their cooperation and information sharing.

US imposes visa curbs on officials

WASHINGTON (Reuters): The United States has imposed visa restrictions on Uganda officials after the African nation passed an anti-LGBTQ law that was condemned by many countries and the United Nations, the US State Department said.

The law, considered one of the harshest in the world, was enacted in May and carries the death penalty for “aggravated homosexuality,” an offense that includes transmitting HIV through gay sex. It drew immediate rebukes from Western governments and put in jeopardy some of the billions of dollars in foreign aid the country receives each year. US President Joe Biden had threatened aid cuts and other sanctions, while Secretary of State Antony Blinken said last month the government would consider visa restrictions against Ugandan officials.

The State Department statement did not mention any names or even the number of officials that would be hit with the visa restriction but said the US would hold accountable those who are responsible for abusing human rights in Uganda, “including those of LGBTQ+ persons.” The State Department also updated its Uganda travel guidance for US citizens to highlight the risk that LGBTQ+ persons could be prosecuted and subjected to life imprisonment or the death penalty based on provisions in the law, it said.

“The United States strongly supports the Ugandan people and remains committed to advancing respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms in Uganda and globally,” the State Department said. The law also imposes a life sentence for same-sex intercourse and a 20-year sentence for promotion of homosexuality.

Firms including media and non-governmental organizations that knowingly promote LGBTQ activity will also incur harsh fines, the law says. Homosexuality was already illegal in the conservative and highly religious East African country, and homosexuals faced ostracism and harassment by security forces.

S Africa’s stranded presidential security team: Poland denies racism

JOHANNESBURG (BBC): Poland says racism was not a factor in its decision to refuse entry to South African presidential guards and media for more than 24 hours. The stand-off happened at Warsaw’s Chopin airport. The aircraft will now be held there until Sunday, an airport spokesman told the BBC.

About 120 people were stuck on the plane, who were all on their way to a peace summit in Ukraine. Some of the passengers are now disembarking and going to a hotel. Poland’s actions have left President Cyril Ramaphosa, who travelled separately to Ukraine, without some of his security detail. This prompted a furious reaction from Mr Ramaphosa’s head of security, Maj Gen Wally Rhoohe.

“They are delaying us, they are putting the life of our president in jeopardy,” he told journalists. “We could have been in Kyiv by now and this is all they are doing. I want you guys to see how racist they are.” But Poland has dismissed this outright. “Accusations against Poland of racism are being circulated in this case. This is nonsense,” says the director of the National Security Department and spokesman for Poland’s Minister-Special Services Coordinator, Stanislaw Zaryn.

Warsaw Chopin airport spokesman Piotr Rudzki told the BBC the South

African security guards did not have the necessary permits for their weapons. “We cannot let passengers with illegal firearms into the EU,” he said. Mr Rudzki added that they were told they could disembark if they left their weapons on the plane but they refused.

“The firearms... were not going to be confiscated as some reports in South Africa have said,” he added. What started as an impasse has escalated into a diplomatic row. A spokesman for South Africa’s president said the row was “regrettable”. Vincent Magwenya had said efforts were being made to ensure those on the aircraft can proceed “to cover at least the Russian leg” of the trip. But according to Mr Rudzki, this is no longer an option.

Despite the events in Warsaw, Mr Magwenya says President Ramaphosa arrived safely in Ukraine’s capital Kyiv safely by train from Poland, along with other African heads of state who are visiting the country to promote dialogue with Russia. “I would like to assure all South Africans that there has been no compromise whatsoever to the president’s safety as a result of the impasse that involved the charter flight with the presidential protection services team and the media,” he says in the video posted on Twitter.

During the African delegation’s visit to Ukraine, the military said it had come under missile attack and returned fire - shooting down more than a dozen projectiles. Ukrainian Foreign Minister Dmytro Kuleba said the message was clear: “Russian missiles are a message to Africa: Russia wants more war, not peace.”

Both Russia and Ukraine have sought to deepen their influence in African nations in recent months. South Africa says it does not want to take sides in the conflict but the US has accused it of supplying weapons to Russia, which it has denied. The delegation from South Africa, Egypt, Senegal, Congo-Brazzaville, Comoros, Zambia, and Uganda is meeting President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and President Vladimir Putin on Saturday.

One of those on the plane in the Polish capital was News24 journalist Pieter Du Toit, who praised South Africa Airlines staff for being “quite brilliant in supporting everyone on the plane”. A few hours before he was allowed to disembark, he did however say that supplies were running thin, and joked that the passengers were deciding how to chop up the last remaining chip from a Burger King order delivered the night before by the South African embassy.

Russia, Turkey agree on Putin visit to Turkey ‘soon’

MOSCOW (Reuters): President Vladimir Putin and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan have agreed that the Russian leader will visit Turkey “soon”, Interfax cited a Kremlin aide as saying. The visit would be Putin’s first to a NATO country since he ordered tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022. Putin has only rarely travelled outside Russia since the beginning of full-scale hostilities.

“There is an invitation from the President of Turkey. Putin and Erdogan agreed that the

visit will be in the near future, but we have not yet talked about a specific day, specific dates,” Interfax cited Kremlin foreign policy advisor Yuri Ushakov as saying. Erdogan, re-elected last month for another five-year term, has sought to maintain strong ties with both Moscow and Kyiv since the start of the conflict in Ukraine.

Turkey has refused to join its Western allies in imposing economic sanctions on Russia, but has also supplied arms to Ukraine and called for its sovereignty to be respected. Ankara has

also helped to broker prisoner exchanges and, along with the United Nations, negotiated a deal in July 2022 to allow for the safe export of grain from Ukrainian ports via the Black Sea.

The International Criminal Court (ICC) issued an arrest warrant for Putin in March over alleged war crimes in Ukraine, meaning he may run the risk of being arrested if he travels abroad. However, Ankara is not a party to the Rome Statute, which created the ICC, and so Putin would run no such risk by visiting Turkey.

UN climate body head dissatisfied with Bonn climate talks outcome

BERLIN (Reuters): The head of the United Nation’s climate body said he was not satisfied with the outcome of a 10-day conference and the process was moving too slowly given the urgency of the climate crisis.

“Never satisfied. In terms of whether reasonable progress made. Yes. Was it enough? We will know as we as we enter the COP28 itself,” Simon Stiell, the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Executive Secretary, told Reuters. Global climate negotiators had little specific progress to report at talks intended to prepare for this year’s COP28 UN climate conference in Dubai, which it is hoped will get governments to embrace more ambitious steps to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius (2.7 Fahrenheit).

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said that countries must start phasing out oil, coal and gas - not just emissions - and demanded that fossil fuel companies “cease and desist” measures that aim to hobble progress

on the issue. Some Western governments and climate-afflicted island nations agree, but the oil-producing United Arab Emirates, host of COP28, says the talks should focus on phasing out emissions. Nevertheless, the UAE’s incoming COP28 president said last week the phasedown of the fuels themselves was inevitable.

Asked whether fossil fuel phase-out or down would be on the COP28 agenda, Stiell said the UAE presidency was still crafting its vision. He expected to hear more on that in the coming weeks. “Science tells us that what is required in order to reach zero requires phasing out and down of all fossil fuels. We’ll see what signals are presented. But the science is very clear,” Stiell added.

UNFCCC said the Bonn talks closed with progress on the issues of financing measures to mitigate climate change; the question of liability for the loss and damage it has caused; and funding for measures to adapt to its effects. But it did not specify what had been decided.

Stiell said giving a quantifiable assessment of the conference outcome was difficult but his team was analysing the meetings’ decision and expected a definitive assessment of what was achieved in the coming days.

The meeting is seen as a mid-way check-in to prepare decisions for adoption at COP28, which begins on Nov. 30. The landmark 2015 Paris climate agreement set a 1.5C increase in the global surface temperature as a limit for averting the most catastrophic effects of global warming in the industrial era - a threshold already close to being crossed. But activists accused the United States, Britain and the European Union of trying to divert discussions away from their legal accountability for climate change. They said rich industrialised countries were pushing developing countries to commit to measures such as expanding renewable sources of power without taking into account their inability to pay for them.



FAISALABAD: Federal Minister for Interior, Rana Sanaullah Khan talking to media persons.

NA passes resolution for transfer of SDGs-project funds

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The National Assembly on Saturday passed a resolution demanding the transfer of the amount of development projects, executed under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) programme, to the Non-Lapsable Account (NLA) at the end of the fiscal year (2022-23).

The resolution, moved by Minister for Water Resources Syed Khurshid Ahmed Shah, was unanimously adopted by the House during the ongoing budget session, chaired by National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervaiz Ashraf. The resolution stated that funds were issued to each and every district by the federal government to carry out development activities under the SDGs.

Accordingly, it said tenders had been floated in the current fiscal year for various projects that were in progress and had so far not been completed. In the past, the resolution said the development funds remained lapsing at the end of fiscal years which led to the non-completion of the projects, causing considerable dent to the national exchequer and creating problems for the public. So, it said the House demanded that the Community Development Funds be transferred to the NLA at the end

of the fiscal year.

By channeling the funds into the NLA, the House aims to prevent the wastage of resources and ensure their seamless availability for SDG projects throughout the fiscal year. The resolution signifies a crucial step towards fostering sustainable growth and realizing the national vision for a prosperous and inclusive future.

National Assembly Speaker Raja Parvez Ashraf Saturday asked the government to take firm action against the human smugglers as over 290 Pakistanis are feared dead in a shipwreck in south of Greece. During a session of the assembly, the chair expressed concerns over the death of migrants including those from Pakistan in the boat accident. He said the government should take notice of the incident, saying the human smuggling was a grave crime. Meanwhile, the Foreign Office said a total of 12 Pakistanis were identified among the survivors of the capsized boat off the coast of Greece, but so far the number and identity of Pakistani nationals among the deceased was not yet verified.

FO Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch, in a press statement, said that the Pakistan Mission in Greece under the leadership of Ambassador

Aamar Aftab remained in contact with the local authorities for identification and recovery of Pakistani nationals among the deceased and providing relief to the survivors. "Our Mission also remains in contact with the Greek authorities in the identification process of the 78 recovered bodies. This identification process will take place through DNA-matching with close family members (parents and children only)," the spokesperson further said.

Families of likely passengers on board the ill-fated boat were requested to contact Pak Mission in Greece on the 24/7 helpline numbers for verification purposes. They were also requested to share DNA reports from authenticated laboratories and the identity documents of the passenger at 'info@pakistanembassy.gr' The UN Human Rights officials said that up to 500 people were still missing from a migrant boat that sank off Greece. A large number of women and children were among those missing in the "horrific tragedy" that left 78 people dead. The fishing boat was carrying up to 750 people that went down 50 nautical miles off Pylos in southern Greece, according to international media.

Matter settled between TLP, govt: Sana E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah on Saturday announced that after the successful negotiations with the government, Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan (TLP) had called off its "Pakistan Bachao March" (Save Pakistan March).

He was addressing a press conference flanked by TLP's leader Shafiq Amini.

The minister said that after the second round of talks, crucial matters were settled with the TLP. He said that talks were primarily focused on safeguarding the Prophethood, and curbing blasphemy which is integral to every Muslim's faith.

Regarding the TLP's demand for the release of Aafia Siddiqui, Sanaullah described her case as a national issue that saddened every Pakistani. He urged human rights organizations to pay attention to her situation and assured that the government would write a letter to United States (US) authorities regarding her imprisonment, considering her 86-year sentence unfair.

Rana Sanaullah said that the government also accepted other demands of TLP, including a reduction in petrol prices. He said Finance Minister Ishaq Dar briefed the TLP negotiators about how petrol prices were determined and assured them to decrease petrol prices and resolve issues peacefully. The TLP leader appreciated the government for avoiding confrontation, unlike its predecessor.

IHC issues contempt notice to Minister

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Saturday issued a contempt of court notice to Federal Minister for Science and Technology Agha Hassan Baloch and secretary science and technology.

In its written order, the Islamabad High Court (IHC) said that prima facie both the minister as well as the secretary had deliberately violated the court order. "Both are issued a show-cause notice. Please explain within five days as to why contempt proceedings are not initiated against you," the court said.

The court issued the notice in the case of the appointment of acting DG Pakistan Standard and Quality Control Ghulam Farooq. The Islamabad High Court (IHC), in its order, said that the court had, on March 22, 2023, suspended the notification of Farooq's appointment. But, through office order, dated March 28, another joint secretary Ziauddin was appointed on the post. And on April 10, Farooq was reinstated through another office order.

The high court further said that a civil servant could not be appointed on the post of MP scale, and that it was the federal government, and not the Ministry of Science and Technology, that was authorized to appoint the DG; therefore it suspended the second notification for the appointment of Farooq. Dr. Shahzad Afzal had challenged the appointment of an officer junior to him as the acting DG.

Eidul Azha likely on 29th

KARACHI (Agencies): The Central Ruet-i-Hilal Committee will meet on June 19 for moon-sighting of Zilhaj. The meeting of Ruet-i-Hilal committee will be chaired by Maulana Abdul Khair Azad at the meteorological department office in Karachi. The announcement of moon will be made after the meeting.

Other zonal committees will also meet in Lahore, Peshawar, Quetta and Islamabad simultaneously. According to the Climate Data Processing Center (CDPC), Zilhaj moon is likely to be seen in Pakistan on June 19 and Eidul Azha may fall on June 29 (Thursday). The CDPC report says the Zilhaj moon will be born on June 18 at 9.37pm. It is highly likely that Zilhaj will begin on June 20. However, the final announcement will be made by the committee.

Dar reaffirms resolve to make int'l payments on time

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Muhamme Ishaq Dar on Saturday reaffirmed the firm resolve of the government to ensure international payments on time in order to fulfill all the commitments.

Addressing a press conference, he said that all the arrangements for due payment during the months of May and June were in place, which would also have no impact on foreign exchange reserves held with local commercial banks and State Bank of Pakistan. The minister said that by the end of the current month (June), payments of two Chinese banks including \$1 billion of China Development Bank and \$300 million of Bank of China were due.

He said the adoption of formal payment process usually takes time and sometimes, it takes months, adding that to simplify the formal process,

the Ministry of Finance initiated negotiations with both the banks and ask them to make payments before last week. Ishaq Dar further informed that the government has paid \$1 billion to China Development Bank and \$300 million to Bank of China without any extra charges.

The payment to China Development Bank was made on June 12, 2023 and under the understanding between both countries, the Chinese banks will payback this amount to Pakistan on Friday, he added. The minister said that another payment amounting to \$300 million was also made on Friday, adding that this payment would also be received to Pakistan within next three to four days, he added.

The finance minister further said that all the arrangements for the payment of \$1 billion, which was state-to-state payments between both countries, were also finalized

and matters were in order. About the rumors regarding winding-up of business by Shell Company, the minister said that the Company was not closing its business from Pakistan.

He said the Company was intended to divert its share to another foreign direct investor, which would have no impact on its business operations and not it was shifting its capital abroad. He informed that Shell was not only operating in Pakistan but it was also running its business in many other countries of the world and intended for revising its business plan.

He said that the government was also aware about all the programs of the Company and it was legally bound to take the government into confidence. Shell is selling its shares to another international investor and its business will continue and no one will be deprived from livelihood, he concluded.

Afridi distances himself from Sana's 2019 arrest

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Shehryar Afridi has distanced himself from the arrest of Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah during his tenure as the narcotics control minister in 2019.

Responding to a question outside the district and sessions court in Islamabad on Saturday, the former minister said the Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) headed by a major general detained Sanaullah during the previous PTI-led government on drugs charges. "ANF arrested

Rana Sanaullah based on intelligence reports. ANF had all evidence against Rana Sanaullah," he added.

He denied subjecting Sanaullah to political victimisation during the last PTI government. Speaking about the defections in the PTI following May 9 vandalism, Afridi said he wouldn't say anything about those who are leaving the party. "Only God knows under what circumstances people are leaving party," he added.

Meanwhile, a sessions court in Islamabad handed

over the PTI leader to police on two-day physical remand. He was arrested following PTI chief Imran Khan's arrest on May 9 over his alleged involvement in the riots that saw attacks on defence and public installations in many parts of the country. The investigation officer had sought five-day physical remand of Afridi for photogrammetry and voice matching test. Judicial Magistrate Naveed Khan announced the reserved verdict and approved two-day physical remand.

Female educational officer kills in Landi Kotal

E.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: A female Assistant Sub Divisional Educational Officer (ASDEO) was stabbed to death by unknown persons here in the teacher's quarter of Government Girls Primary School Meri Khel, Haji Liaqat Ali Kelley Landi Kotal.

Local police official said that on the information of the girl students who broke the lock of the main gate of the school that the dead body of the ASDEO Rizwana

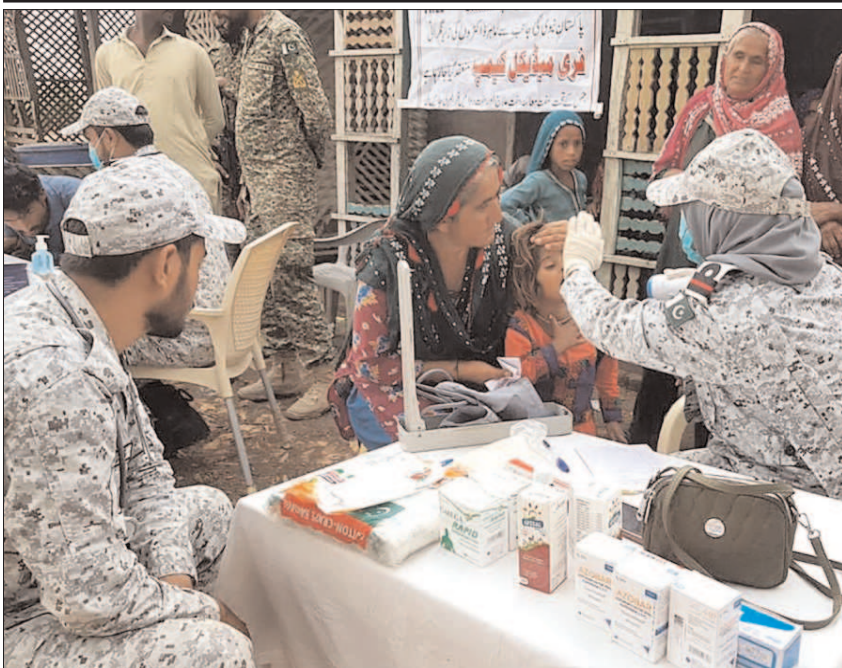
Shaheen was lying in the veranda of the residence brutally killed by unknown assailants.

Although her husband along with her four children (two sons and two daughters) mysteriously disappeared, police said. Getting informed, the police party rushed to the site, took the body to the headquarter hospital and collected evidence of the spot.

Superintendent Police Zia Hassan inspected the spot and said it seemed that the mishap was the cause of

domestic dispute however investigation had been called on and every aspect of the event would be examined and soon the killer would be traced. The body was shifted to Peshawar for postmortem and then the body would be handed over to the heir of female teacher's.

According to the Education Department the murdered Educational Officer was residing in the school quarter with her family and two months back she was transferred from Swat to Landi Kotal subdivision.



KARACHI: Doctors examining patients at a medical camp arranged by Pakistan Navy.

PPP ready for elections

(Continued from Page 1)

There is huge potential all over the world and we know just how willing the world is to work and cooperate with us. When we were combatting climate catastrophes, the world stood with us at a time when certain circles were predicting that it was too busy with the Russia-Ukraine conflict to pay us any heed.

The world needs young people, it wants both low-skilled and high-skilled people, with the only condition of us stabilising ourselves. We will surely work together and strive to show our elders that when given the opportunity, youngsters can make the most of it. When a young politician had proposed to bring forth a no-confidence motion to

drive out the selected puppet, it was met by scepticism by the elders but it is this very democratic path that proved to be successful.

The PPP is geared up for the elections and is ready to make history just as it did in the LG elections. We encourage our allies to prepare themselves and contest the elections so that the next government derives solutions to the problems faced by the people.

As far as the budget is concerned, the PPP sent its high-level committee members to the PM and his team, expressing that the budget contained little of the PPP's input. The federal government had promised the world and provincial governments that it would match the funds spent on flood victims. Hence, we

have approached our allies to make them understand that it is imperative that we look after the flood victims in our budget. We have no doubts over the intentions of the PM, as he witnessed the destruction with his own eyes. However, we would like to ask the PM to introspect within his team and hold those hindering this process accountable. We hope that the finance minister, Ishaq Dar and his team would address our concerns and work towards resolving them.

Chairman Bilawal urged the party workers to initiate the process for electoral campaigning as the PPP is ready to avail the opportunity to work towards the realisation of Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and Shaheed Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto's dream.

Cyclone Biparjoy converts into depression

KARACHI (INP): Cyclonic Storm Biparjoy has converted into a 'depression' and now lies over southwest Rajasthan in India and southeast Sindh (Tharparker), Met Office said in its report on Saturday.

The cyclone over Rann of Kutch moved further northeastward during last 12 hours near Latitude 24.4°N and Longitude 71.2°E. The associated maximum sustained surface winds are 30-40 Km/hour gusting 50 Km/hour. The system is likely to move further eastward and weaken into a low-pressure area over Rajasthan in India.

Arabian Sea cyclone Biparjoy lashed southeastern districts of Sindh with heavy to very heavy rainfall in last 24 hours with Tharparker district focal point, receiving maximum rain. According to the weather department, Nangarparkar received maximum rainfall of 269mm, Mithi 196mm, Diplo 175mm, Islamkot 143mm, Kaloi 80mm, Chhachhro 44mm, Chhore 28.5mm, Dalhi 25mm rainfall. Badin received 24.2mm rainfall, Hyderabad (city) 10mm, Airport 04mm and Thatta 05mm rainfall.

The Met Office has forecast more rain-thunderstorms with few heavy falls today, accompanied with gusty winds of 30-40 Km/hour, gusting 50 Km/hour, expected in Tharparker, Umerkot and parts of Badin districts. Rain with thunderstorm also expected in Thatta, Sujawal and Mirpurkhas districts of Sindh.

Light rain or drizzle may also be expected in Hyderabad, Tando Muhammad Khan, Tando Allahyar, Matari, Dadu, Jamshoro, Sanghar, Shaheed Benazirabad, Naushahro Feroze, Larkana, Qambar-Shahdadkot, Jacobabad and Shikarpur districts today. Balochistan's fishermen have been advised to resume fishing from today, while Sindh fishermen have been asked to venture into the sea from tomorrow.

Establishment of industrial estate on agri's land PHC orders to submit KP agriculture land policy

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) ordered Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to submit policy regarding agriculture's land and extended status quo against establishment of Small Industrial Estate at Swabi while directed Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to prepare assessment report within one month.

During hearing Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Amir Javed, counsel for petitioner Rahman Ullah Shah Advocate, Small Industry Development Board (SIDB) lawyer Wasim-u-Din Khattak, Deputy Director EPA Mumtaz Ali and Director Agriculture appeared while PHC ordered SIDB to provide necessary documents to EPA for preparation of

assessment report.

However, PHC observed that country is facing food shortage while the poor nation is importing edible items for consumption which is issue high concern while inquired regarding submission of report from agriculture department and EPA.

Director Agriculture informed PHC that report has been submitted before honorable court while added that the proposed land is agriculture's cultivated area and standing crops are reported.

EPA Mumtaz Ali argued that environmental assessment can be initiated on request of concern department while the agency didn't receive such request in this regard neither SIDB demanded assessment report. However, PHC observed that court will also look into environmental impact proposed industrial estate on other agricultural land and inquired from Advocate General regarding Agriculture's land policy.

The petitioner informed that a commission was established on the issue which has also declared the land as agriculture cultivated but SIDB has declared it as infertile which is wrong. PHC ordered SIDB to provide necessary documents to EPA within one week for preparation of assessment report while showed satisfaction over Director's agriculture report.

PHC's divisional bench comprised of Justice Abdul Shakoor and Justice Syed Arshad Ali ordered Advocate General to submit agriculture land policy before work and directed EPA to complete assessment report within one month while adjourned further hearing.

Punjab to hold trials of May 9 rioters in prison

LAHORE (INP): Punjab Home Department on Saturday decided to hold trials of all the miscreants involved in the May 9 riots in prison. The Home Department will issue a notification in this regard after the approval of interim Punjab cabinet.

The Home Department has asked the police to make arrangements for holding trials of the accused in jail. All the judges hearing the May 9 tragedy cases will go to the jail and conduct the trial. Meanwhile, more than a month has passed since the May 9 tragedy struck, but a series of confessions made by the miscreants who were affiliated with the PTI is continued.

According to them, the conspiracy of Jinnah House attack was hatched a day before the arrest of PTI Chairman Imran Khan at his residence in Zaman Park. A PTI worker told the authorities that Yasmin Rashid and Ijaz Khan instructed the party workers present in Zaman Park to march towards the

Azam Khan's abduction case registered in Islamabad

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The abduction case of former principal secretary Azam Khan registered, following a missing person report filed at Kohsar Police Station. According to the details, a case of Azam Khan's abduction has been registered in Islamabad's Kohsar police station based on a request from the family under Section 365. It should be noted that the former Prime Minister's Principal Secretary, Azam Khan, was allegedly gone missing and his family had reported his disappearance, confirming it to the Kohsar police station. In a statement the family members stated that Azam Khan had left home the previous evening and did not return. His mobile phone is also switched off. Meanwhile the police said that investigations into the matter are underway to recovered the abducted former principal secretary.

Jinnah House.

He revealed that PTI Chief Imran had called a meeting a day before his arrest and had prepared a complete plan instructing party workers how to create chaos in the event of his arrest. The PTI worker further stated that after the May 9 riots, Imran started blaming agencies to save his own skin. He started spewing venom against Pakistan

Armed Forces soon after the dismissal of his government in no-confidence vote last year. PTI leader Hassan Niazi was also present at the Jinnah House during the arson attack and was busy ripping the Corps Commander's uniform, he added. These startling revelations were made none other than a worker of the PTI party which termed the May 9 riots as London Plan.