

12 TLP workers acquitted

LAHORE (PPI): An anti-terrorism court Thursday acquitted 12 workers of Tehreek-e-Labbaik Pakistan in the case of arson and vandalism. "The prosecution could not prove the charges against the accused," the court stated. TLP Northern Punjab Nazim-e-A'ala Usman Muzaffar and others including Allama Sagheer Ahmed, Salman Jameel, Timur Khan, Majid Ali, Muhammad Nadeem had been acquitted by the court.



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48 Pakistani deported

CHAGAI (PPI): Iranian border officials on Thursday deported another 48 Pakistani immigrants who had illegally entered the neighbouring country. Pakistan's border authorities said that citizens deported from Iran have been handed over the detained persons to the Federal Investigation Agency's anti-human trafficking cell. "The deportees were intending to illegally emigrate to European countries via Iran," border officials said.

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MULTAN: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif distributing laptops among the high achievers of public sectors universities under the PM's Youth Laptop Scheme.

## Floodwater enters 40 villages of Jhang district

F.P. Report

JHANG: Punjab Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi on Thursday said Chenab river water had entered over 40 villages of Jhang district, as evacuations intensified to protect villagers amid the flood situation. In a tweet, Naqvi posted helicopter footage of flooded lands that was reminiscent of the imagery that followed the catastrophic rains that left more than a third of the country under water last year. The northern states of India, where the catchment areas of Sutlej and Ravi rivers are located, have witnessed torrential downpours in the past week. As a result, India is releasing more water towards the downstream areas in Pakistan. In Pakistan, the Meteorological Department has forecasted another spell of monsoon rains from July 13 to 17 in the upper and central parts of the country. In a statement, the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) in Punjab has stated that the district administrations of Okara, Pakpattan, Bahawalnagar, and Wazirabad had been placed on high alert in response to the flood situation.

The PDMA further confirmed that the necessary preparations to address the flooding in areas connected to the Chenab River had been successfully completed. According to the PDMA, relief camps had been established in Kasur district, with a total of 11 camps accommodating 211 officers and personnel engaged in rescue operations.

Similarly, in Bahawalnagar district, 26 rescue and relief camps have been set up, with 578 officers and personnel assigned to duty. In Pakpattan district, 20 rescue and relief camps have been established, involving 220 personnel. Additionally, Wazirabad and Okara districts have 12 camps each. The PDMA also reported that Punjab Relief Commissioner Nabil Javed was "closely monitoring the situation across all districts", with an appropriate increase in the number of personnel involved to address the challenges effectively. During his visit to various points in district Jhang, caretaker Chief Minister Naqvi was informed by the irrigation department that more than 40 villages in the district were affected by the inflow of river Chenab water. Recognising the need for administrative improvements, he emphasised the importance of expediting rescue operations.

The chief minister issued instructions to the Jhang deputy commissioner to ensure the accessibility of rescue teams to all

flood-affected villages. Naqvi highlighted that the district administration held the responsibility of providing medicines and essential food supplies. He also directed the Faisalabad commissioner to remain in Jhang district until the situation was brought under control. Emphasising his personal monitoring of rescue operations across all districts of Punjab, he stated that any negligence on the part of the district administration would not be tolerated.

Meanwhile, Climate Change Minister Sherry Rehman tweeted about the new monsoon spell that was beginning today, saying it brought with it a possibility of thunderstorms and heavy rains in different regions including Islamabad, Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Kashmir, which was expected to continue until July 17. "In the meantime, all relevant departments have been instructed to remain alert. From July 13 to 17, there is a risk of urban flooding in low-lying areas of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Gujranwala, and Lahore due to heavy rainfall. Also, there is an alert on possible landslides in hilly areas such as Murree, Galiyat, Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa."

She advised tourists to those regions to exercise caution to "avoid misadventures" during this period. "Strong winds, thunderstorms, and heavy rainfall can cause damage to vulnerable infrastructure such as power poles, solar panels, and mud houses. Therefore, citizens are requested to take necessary precautions," she added. The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) had on Wednesday said a medium to high level of flood was expected in the Sutlej River near Ganda Singhwala, Kasur.

Sutlej River has been in medium flood at Ganda Singh Wala in Kasur district with water flow surged to 1,15,000 cusecs, citing Provincial Disaster Management Authority. The PDMA has warned against likely high flood in Sutlej at Ganda Singh Wala and Sulemanki Headworks. An upsurge continuing in Sutlej River at various points as water flow at Sulemanki measured 62,118 and several villages and hundreds of acres farmland reported submerged in floodwater in Kasur and Okara. The Flood Forecasting Division has apprehended further increase in Sutlej water flow, which is consistently on rise at Sulemanki Headworks. "The water in Sutlej river could reach to 1,50,000 cusecs at Head Sulemani," irrigation officials cautioned.

## Pak receives first tranche of \$1.2b from IMF: Dar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Darhas stated that Pakistan has received the first tranche of 1.2 billion dollars under the stand by arrangement reached with the IMF.

In a televised message on Tuesday, he said the IMF's Executive Board meeting approved the nine month stand by arrangement of three billion dollars last night. The Finance Minister said the receipt of IMF's tranche will further improve our foreign exchange reserves. He pointed out that the reserves of State Bank of Pakistan has increased by four point two billion dollars this week.

He said it is expected that our foreign exchange reserves will be between thirteen and fourteen billion dollars when the central bank will share the exact figures tomorrow at the close of the week. The Finance Minister said Pakistan will receive the remaining 1.8 billion dollars from the IMF after two reviews in November and February. Ishaq Dar said this stand by arrangement has been limited to nine months so that the next elected government could take its own decisions.

The Finance Minister expressed his gratitude to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif for the support extended by him in reaching the stand by arrangement with the IMF. He was also appreciative of his economic team for supporting him during this difficult process. The Finance Minister said Pakistan has been put on the positive journey, stressing for collective efforts to further consolidate these gains and take the country towards positive growth trajectory.

## ATC issues arrest warrants of PTI chief

ISLAMABAD (INP): An anti-terrorism court of Islamabad on Thursday issued a bailable arrest warrant of the chairman Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) and other party leaders in the judicial complex attack case.

According to details, the ATC along with PTI chief issued bailable arrest warrants for Shibli Faraz, Farrukh Habib, Hassaan Niazi and other leaders and summoned them in person on July 19. The counsel for the PTI chairman requested the court for exemption from appearance as his client was to appear before the Lahore High Court. Judge Abul Hasnat stressed that the PTI chairman would have to appear before court. The judge later adjourned the hearing for July 19 with the directive that all the suspects should appear in person.

The PML-N and the PPP had announced their support for Haji Gulbar Khan of the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) forward bloc for the post, while three members of the PTI like-minded group who had submitted their nomination papers for the post of chief minister late at night announced to boycott the election. Candidates were told could withdraw nomination papers till 10 am on Thursday. The PTI ally in the GB Assembly (Like-minded group) said the majority in the assembly was forcibly converted into a minority.

Like-minded group members who boycotted election of the chief minister said that their fellow assembly members were lured by schemes worth tens of millions of rupees. They further alleged that fellow members had also been threatened with arrests and lawsuits in case they did not cooperate.

Islam Tehreek Pakistan have one each, along with one independent candidate. Gulbar has served as the GB health minister during the previous PTI government as well as in early 2011. Belonging to the Diamer district, Gulbar was leading one of the two forward blocs within the PTI and had previously declared he would contest for the position independently. Initially, opposition parties had decided to nominate a joint candidate with the support of estranged PTI members and claimed the support of the required 17 members. The authority to decide the candidate from any opposition party member was given to the central leaderships of the PPP, the PML-N, and the JUI-F. After voting, which started around 12:00 at noon, the speaker Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly announced results of the election.

## Haji Gulbar Khan elected GB new chief minister

GILGIT (INP): The Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly on Thursday elected Haji Gulbar Khan as new Chief Minister (CM) of the province. The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP) backed Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) forward bloc candidate bagged 19 votes.

His election to the role comes after PTI's Khalid Khurshid Khan was disqualified as chief minister over a fake degree earlier this month. Just days earlier, opposition leader in the Gilgit-Baltistan Assembly Amjad Hussain had resigned from his assembly membership and announced boycotting the elections.

In the 32-member house, the PTI has 19 members, the PPP four, the PML-N three and the Muttahida Wahdat-i-Muslimeen three as well, while the Jamiat Ulema-i-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) and

# The Frontier Post

## Will hand over govt to caretaker set-up in August: PM

— IMF deal, a self-evaluation moment for Pakistan to focus on financial self-reliance

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Thursday said despite challenges and conspiracies hatched by the political opponents, the coalition government had successfully managed to put the country in the right direction in the shortest period.

The prime minister, in his over 14-minute address to the nation, said the International Monetary Fund (IMF) programme agreed by the previous government on the toughest conditions, was the biggest obstacle in the way of the country's economic revival. The last regime had brought the country to the brink of default by deviating from that agreement, he added.

He said ironically, the political opponents remained busy in hatching conspiracies and creating hurdles while the coalition government was trying to resume the programme. The incumbent government had to face the biggest challenges and conspiracies in Pakistan's democratic history in the shortest period, and steered it out of the deep crisis, he added.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said the coalition government was going to end in August on completing its tenure and would hand over the reins to the caretaker set up. "During the short period of one and a quarter years, due to our collective wisdom and prudent policies, we cleared the debris and economic landmines laid by the previous government," he added. He said the period of his government was a journey of moving from the destruction towards construction, economic stability, helping the flood affected people, providing maximum employment to the jobless and relief to the people hit by inflation, and revival of

freedom of speech, media freedom and national integration.

He said the coalition parties sacrificed their politics for saving the country from default by taking the toughest decisions. "We always remained worried about increasing the foreign exchange reserves instead of thinking about our vote banks." The prime minister said despite anti-state conspiracies, the government did not lose its heart and succeeded to reach a staff level agreement with the IMF.

"Today on behalf of the whole nation, I sincerely thank friendly and brotherly countries China, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE, which once again supported Pakistan with sincerity under very difficult situation and that can never be forgotten," he added. He said the way, Chinese President Xi Jinping, Saudi Crown Prince Mohammad bin Salman and UAE President Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan played their role in bringing Pakistan out of the crisis, was praiseworthy.

The prime minister also acknowledged the efforts of Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on the diplomatic front. Similarly, he also appreciated Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and Chief of the Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir for their untiring efforts to help stabilize the economy. Now, he said, the time had come to regain the country's lost glory by moving forward with collective wisdom and struggle. For that purpose, he added, a comprehensive national plan of economic revival had been finalized. The Special Investment Facilitation Council had been set up, which had initiated its work and was paving the way for big investments from the Gulf countries in various fields including agriculture, industry, energy, IT, defence production and

minerals, he said.

PM Shehbaz also assured the nation that on this national agenda, the federal government, all the provincial governments, and the armed forces were adopting the whole of the government approach to make it a success. Expressing satisfaction over the overall economic situation, the prime minister said the trust of the business and investment communities was also reviving while the international rating agency Fitch had also improved Pakistan's rating to triple C.

Similarly, he said, the United Nation's Human Rights Council had also testified the improving situation of human rights in Pakistan whereas the country had also showed improvement by seven points in the International Freedom Index. Shehbaz Sharif said when the staff level agreement with the IMF was announced on June 30, the investors expressed their full satisfaction through the Stock Exchange Market as the KSE-100 index jumped by record 2446 points in a single day.

Now the Stock Exchange had crossed the 45,000 points level which was the highest in 14 months, he said adding that the value of Pakistani Rupee was also improving. The prime minister said the Rs 1,150 billion historical development budget, Rs 2,000 billion agriculture development fund under Kissan Package, conversion of agriculture tube wells to solar energy, Rs 80 billion Prime Minister Youth Programme, interest-free and concessional loans in agriculture industry, IT and other sectors, provision of laptops to the talented students, educational scholarships, women empowerment, special scholarships to families of

(Continued on Back Page)

## Former govt planned to auction national assets

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb on Thursday said that the present government during its 14-month rule had taken several steps to transform the Pakistan Television Corporation and the Radio Pakistan into financially viable organizations.

Apprising the National Assembly's Standing Committee on Information and Broadcasting about the reforms carried out in the state broadcasters, the minister said the former government had planned to auction the national assets, including Radio Pakistan and PTV. The committee meeting chaired by Javaria Zafar Aahir, was attended by its members Zaib Jafar, Kiran Imran Dar, Zulfiqar Ali, Naz Baloch, Dr Shazia Sobia Aslam Soomro, Nasir Khan Musazai and Asiya Azeem.

Secretary Information and Broadcasting Sohail Ali Khan, Principal Information Officer Mubasher Hassan, Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority Chairman Saleem Baig and other officers of the Ministry of Information also attended the meeting. The minister said now both the Radio

Pakistan and the PTV were now on moving path of self-reliance and due to the prudent policies of the present regime, the latter had earned a record profit worth Rs 5.5 billion during the current year.

The government, she added, had regularized all contract employees of the PTV to boost its performance. She informed the panel that the PTV Peshawar Center had started 24-hour transmission of its programmes in regional languages, including Pashto, while Multan and Karachi centres were airing round-the-clock their programmes in Saraiki and Sindh languages respectively.

All studios of the PTV Lahore had been upgraded, she said, adding a virtual studio was set up in the PTV Islamabad Center. Marriyum said for the promotion of filmmaking, the PTV Film Division had been established, besides setting up the Film Production Institute at the PTV Academy. She said now film production and media related courses were being started in the PTV Academy.

Cinemas were being established on the premises of the Radio Pakistan Lahore and Peshawar, and their foundation stones had

been laid, she added. The minister said 12 new studios were established in the Radio Pakistan Islamabad, while the work of digitizing the entire archive of Radio Pakistan had started. "On May 9, the building of Radio Pakistan Peshawar was burnt down, but we have started a project for its restoration," she informed the committee.

The minister recalled the then Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz government had introduced the first film policy in 2017-18, and now money had been allocated for the purpose in the current year's budget. In the film policy, she added, filmmakers had been given immense incentives. Moreover, she said, health insurance funds had been established for artists and journalists.

The minister said they had worked round the clock during the last 14 months to complete the projects. "When we came into power, we used the national assets for the people and did not opt for their auction," she said recalling the tenure of former information minister who had come up with the policy of selling everything. She said now national broadcasters were playing their due role in providing information to the public in a better way.

## Afghanistan urged to fulfill promises

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan has reaffirmed its commitment to engage with Afghanistan on all aspects of cooperation and concern including issues relating to terror threats.

At her weekly news briefing in Islamabad on Thursday, Foreign Office Spokesperson Mumtaz Zahra Baloch urged the Afghan authorities to fulfill their promises that their soil will not be used for terrorism against Pakistan. She said it is their responsibility to ensure that their land is not used against Pakistan, and Afghan authorities have accepted this responsibility on various occasions.

On the situation in the Indian illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir, Mumtaz Zahra Baloch said since 5th August 2019, over seven hundred and eighty Kashmiri people have been martyred by the Indian occupation forces. She said India's unabated repression over the last seven decades has failed to break the will of Kashmiri people for the right to self-determination. She said Pakistan will continue to support its Kashmiri brothers and sisters in their just struggle against Indian oppression till the realization of their inalienable right to self-determination as enshrined in the UN Security Council Resolutions.

Responding to a question, the spokesperson said Indus Water Treaty is an important document that has served both Pakistan and India. She said Pakistan is committed to its full implementation and hoped India will remain committed to it. The Spokesperson said the UN Human Rights Council recently adopted a historic resolution presented by Pakistan on the behalf of the OIC which condemned any advocacy of religious hatred including the recent acts of desecration of Holy Quran and underscored the need for holding the perpetrators to account. She said Pakistan shared the disappointment of the OIC countries that despite its balanced and apolitical nature, this important resolution was put to vote on fallacious grounds, derailing the council's consensus.

## SC to hear pleas against military courts on 18th

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Supreme Court (SC) on Thursday fixed pleas against trials of civilians in the military courts for hearing. A six-member bench headed by CJP Justice Umar Ata Bandial will take up the pleas on July 18. Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Muneeb Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Sayyed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi, and Justice Ayesha Malik will be the other members of the bench.

Notices have been served to the respondents for the hearing. On the last hearing, Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial

hoped that no civilians would be tried in military courts until the outcome of proceedings against them in the Supreme Court (SC). Earlier, the seven-member bench of the Supreme Court was dissolved after Justice Mansoor Ali Shah recused himself from hearing over the reservations raised by the federal government.

The federal government noted that one of the petitioners, Jawwad S. Khawaja, was related to Justice Mansoor Ali Shah. Rescuing himself from the case, Justice Shah pointed out that this fact was highlighted at the very first

hearing. In the month of May, the government decided to try the suspects accused of attacking military installations on May 9 under army laws. Violent clashes broke out across Pakistan after the former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf was arrested from the premises of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on May 9. Army installations, Corps Commander's house in Lahore and General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi came under attack during a protest by PTI workers.



## Hot, dry weather to persist in Sindh

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Meteorological Department, on Thursday, forecast hot and dry weather for most parts of Sindh with a likelihood of partly cloudy weather with chances of drizzle in the night or morning along the coast during the next 24 hours. According to the Met Office, the maximum temperatures on Friday would range between 36 to 38 degrees Centigrade in Karachi, 39-41 C in Hyderabad, 41-43 C in Sukkur, 36-38 C in Thatta, 42-44 C in Mohenjo Daro, 42-44 C in Dadu, 38-40 C in Mithi and 42-44 degree Centigrade in Nawabshah.

According to the Met Office weather remained dry in the province during the last 24 hours.

## Two shot dead at Sessions Court

LAHORE (APP): Two persons including woman were shot dead in the premises of Sessions Court, Islampura area here on Thursday. Police said that Muhammad Ameen and Sughran Bibi came to appear in the court when their alleged rivals opened fire at them. They suffered serious bullet injuries and died on the spot.

A heavy contingent of police rushed to the spot and collected evidences. The bodies have been shifted to mortuary for autopsy.

However, police have arrested two suspects. Taking notice of the incident, Punjab police chief Dr Usman Anwar sought a detailed report from the Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Lahore.

## 22 drug peddlers, illegal weapon holders netted

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers, bootleggers, illegal weapon holders and other lawbreakers here on Thursday arrested 22 accused besides recovering over 6.5 kg charras, 28 liters liquor, six 30 bore pistols, ammunition and other items from their possession.

According to a police spokesperson, Banni, Naseerabad, Race Course, Wah Cantt, Kahuta and Pirwadhai police conducted raids in their respective jurisdiction and arrested Kamran, Shahid, Ahsan, Sajid, Ishtiaq, Mohsin, Hassan, Imran, and others on recovery of over 6.5 kg charras.

Similarly, Naseerabad, City, and Kalar Syedan police rounded up Shahid Chana, Gulfraz, Asad, Aman, Alam and others and seized 28 liters liquor.

Naseerabad, Morgah, Gujar Khan, Mandra, Rawat and Kahuta police while conducting raids managed to net six namely Tariq, Manzoor, Ashiq, and others for having six 30 bore pistols, ammunition and other items.

Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations are underway. Superintendent of Police, Potohar, Muhammad Waqar Khan held a khuli kuchery here at Police Lines Headquarters to address complaints of the citizens.

# CM Punjab discusses proposal to develop urban park

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi chaired a meeting at his office to assess the progress of restoring 12 historic gates and to discuss the proposal of developing an urban park, similar to Greater Iqbal Park, near the mausoleums of Noor Jahan and Jahangir in the city.

DG Walled City of Lahore Authority gave a briefing on the restoration of historic buildings. Instructing the WCLA, the CM emphasized the importance of setting a timeline for the restoration of the historic gates. He stressed the need to initiate the work promptly to restore the gates to their original condition and eliminate encroachments. He directed to contact LESCO to lay underground electricity cables.

The CM issued orders for the immediate removal of wall chalking and banners from the historic buildings and instructed the restoration of the Mariam Zamani Begum Mosque, located opposite Lahore Fort. Under a phased program, the experts from WCLA will finalize the restoration plans for Lahore's historic gates, including Taxali, Lahori, Shah Alami, Mochi, Akbari, Delhi, Yaki, Roshnai, Sheranwala, Masti Gate, and others.

The meeting was attended by Provincial Ministers Mansoor Qadir, Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, SMBR, as well as secretaries from the finance, local government, planning & development, and communication & works departments. The Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner of Lahore, along with others, were also present.

**CM seeks report:** Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has sought a report from the IG police about firing incident at Lahore Session Court.

He directed that legal action be taken against the arrested accused and justice be provided to the heirs of the deceased.

**CM pays tributes to martyrs:** Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi has paid tribute to the security officials who embraced martyrdom in an operation against terrorists in the Sui area of Dera Bugti.

The brave sons thwarted the nefarious designs of terrorists and sent them to hell, he said and extended heartfelt condolences to the bereaved heirs.

He stated that the martyred officials sacrificed their lives for a peaceful tomorrow for the nation. The nation holds the sacrifices of these martyrs in the highest regard and pledges to remember their valor and dedication, he concluded.

**CM pays tribute to Kashmiris' struggle:** Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi paid tribute on the occasion of Kashmir Martyrs Day and conveyed his utmost respect and admiration for the brave struggle of the Kashmiris in their pursuit of fundamental rights.

In a statement issued on Thursday, the CM paid homage to the Kashmiri martyrs who endured the brutalities of the state-sponsored Dogra Raj in 1931. He highlighted the unfortunate reality that, even after 92 years, the oppressed Kashmiris continue to suffer under the tyrannical rule of the brutal Modi regime, which mirrors the injustices of the past. Despite the challenges, the unwavering bravery and sacrifices of the Kashmiris have fueled a resilient struggle for the right to self-determination, which remains ongoing to this day, he concluded.

# IGP's historic step in recognition of constabulary services

LAHORE (APP): Inspector General of Police Punjab Dr Usman Anwar has taken a historic step to increase the honor and respect of thousands of employees serving as constables in the police force.

A special ceremony was held in honor of the constables serving in the Central Police Office here on Thursday, in which IG Punjab Dr. Usman Anwar presented shoulder braids to the constables according to their tenure, constables with 10 to 20 years of service were given one braid (strap) constables with 20 to 30 years of service were given 02 braids, constables with more than 30 years of service were given 3 braids.

Dr Usman Anwar has started giving special shoulder braids to all constables of the police force in recognition of their services IG Punjab expressed that respect and prestige of constabulary has

been enhanced by keeping in view their services. Likewise, braids are being applied to constabulary in all regions and districts. The IG Punjab further said that constables were the backbone of police department and now it was duty of constables to restore the respect and dignity given by the department. He said that all resources including health, education, departmental promotions and capacity building were being utilized for the welfare of constabulary. Constables participating in the event thanked for the honor conferred by the IG Punjab. Additional IG Establishment Raja Riffat Mukhtar, DIG Headquarters Humayun Bashir Tarar, DIG Establishment Dr. Inam Waheed Khan, senior officers including AIG Admin Amara Athar, AIG Discipline Ahsan Saifullah and AIG Welfare attended the event.

# ANF seizes 522 kg drugs in 12 operations; arrests 11

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in 12 operations across the country managed to recover over 522 kg drugs and arrested 11 accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman on Thursday.

He informed that in an operation, 96 kg hashish concealed in two vehicles near Main Sharapur Lahore was recovered.

Three accused residents of Kasur, Peshawar and Nankana Sahib were arrested during the operation.

9.6 kg opium and 20.4 kg hashish were recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Kala Shah Kaku Motorway Toll Plaza.

Two accused residents of Nowshera were also rounded up. In third operation,

1720 grams Ice was recovered from a parcel being sent to Korea through a private courier office located at Tariq Road, Karachi.

180 kg opium and 192 kg hashish concealed in a vehicle intercepted near Ring Road Peshawar were recovered. An accused resident of Rawalpindi was also netted.

The recovered drugs were being smuggled from Peshawar to Punjab.

9.6 kg hashish concealed in secret cavities of an abandoned vehicle near Bord Bazar University Road Peshawar was recovered. Five kg hashish concealed in secret cavities of a vehicle near Havelian Interchange Abbottabad was also recovered.

The ANF arrested accused resident of Kohistan during the operation and recovered drugs, which were being smuggled from Peshawar to Mansehra. As many as 1030 grams heroin being sent to Kuwait through a courier company located in Faisalabad was recovered.

Five kg hashish concealed in an abandoned motorcycle parked at Railway Station in Hyderabad was recovered.

The force recovered 47900 intoxicated tablets from the possession of an accused resident of Quetta arrested from Pak-Afghan border Chaman.

Separate cases had been registered against all the accused while further investigations were under process, he added.



KARACHI: A delegation of Abu Dhabi Ports UAE led by Consul General Bakheet Ateeq Al Remeithi call on Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tessori at Governor House.

# Minister inaugurates 'Dastkar Mela'

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Minister for Information and Local Government Amir Mir has emphasized the potential of promoting handicrafts at the international fora to generate foreign exchange for the country. He acknowledged the remarkable craftsmanship of artisans from Pakistan, Iran, Türkiye and Afghanistan whose products were cherished worldwide. Pakistani artisans create awe-inspiring items ranging from Ajrak to carpets, salt, and clay crafts. The Dastkar Mela provides a platform for artisans and craftsmen to showcase the essence of their art.

Addressing the opening ceremony of Dastkar Mela 2023 organized by the Punjab Small Industries Corporation at a local hotel on Wednesday, the minister commended the event and felicitated MD PSIC and the organizers.

He highlighted the significance of promoting talented artisans, noting that the government and the chief minister attach great importance to the artisan fair.

Housing Minister Azfar Ali Nasir expressed that the purpose of organizing the Dastkar Mela was to encourage the artistry of artisans and craftsmen. "Such platforms play a vital role in introducing Punjab's handicrafts at the international fora while projecting a positive image of Pakistan through these artistic endeavors." He stressed the need for organizing similar programs at both national and international levels and highlighted Punjab's prowess in the cutlery, surgical instruments and sports equipment industry, emphasizing the government's efforts in promoting Women Resource Incubation Centers for empowering women.

CEO SMEDA Farhan Aziz Khawaja emphasized the importance of leveraging the Global Agreement of Geographical Indication to gain international recognition and benefits for Pakistani handicrafts. Secretary Industry Ehsan Bhatta mentioned that it is the first time that such a grand handicraft fair has been organized under the supervision of the CM Punjab. MD Punjab Small Industries Corporation Asim Javed highlighted the aims and objectives of the festival in his address.

Following the inauguration of the artisan fair, the ministers inspected the stalls and admired their craftsmanship. The event witnessed the participation of secretaries from various departments, Consul Generals from Iran and Türkiye, PSIC representatives, and artisans from across the province.

## Five including street criminal arrested

KARACHI (APP): Five including an alleged most wanted street criminal, proclaimed offenders and wanted accused were arrested by police on Thursday. According to police, a most wanted street criminal was arrested from Qaimkhani Colony by Ittehad Town police station. The arrested was identified as Shahzaib while another accused namedly Anwar Zaib managed to escape.

An illegal pistol along with rounds and a stolen motorcycle was recovered from the possession of the arrested. The recovered motorcycle bearing registration number KHP-3326 was stolen last month from the limits of Docks police station. A case had been registered and further investigations were underway. The arrested during initial interrogation confessed his involvement in dozens of street crimes and he had been to jail earlier also. The Gulshan-e-Maymar police station arrested four wanted and proclaimed offenders in different cases.

## PFA stops production of nimko unit

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Food Authority (PFA) shut-down a snacks unit for violating Punjab Pure Food Regulations and disposed of 160 kg of inferior quality cooking oil during a raid on Katcha Defence Road.

PFA Director General Raja Jahangir Anwar said in a statement here on Thursday the authority took action against the nimko production unit for frying nimko in inferior quality cooking oil, using tainted spices, preserving nimko at the surface level of the floor and the presence of a washroom in the production area. Apart from that, the raiding team also a witnessed poor hygienic working environment, an abundance of flies, and rust on machinery, he said.

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Ijaz Ahmad with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Abdul Sattar citizen number 1730114126141 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Ijaz Ahmad (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA RING ROAD-DSFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Wajid Khan with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Khaista Rahman citizen number 157028742043 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Uzma Hussain (Daughter)  
2. Shakila Bibi (Daughter)  
3. Iqra Rehman (Daughter)  
4. Lal Bibi (Spouse)  
5. Saadea (Spouse)  
6. Muhammad Sajid Khan (Son)  
7. Maaz Ullah (Son)  
8. Muhammad Khaj (Son)  
9. Muhammad Sajid (Son)  
10. Umar Gul (Son)  
11. Wajid Khan (Son)  
12. Asim Khan (Son)  
13. Bilal Khan (Son)  
14. Mansoor (Son)  
15. Muhammad Ayaz (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA DIR UPPER-SFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Nadeem with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Behrang Muhammad citizen number 1420255069183 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Sadia Naz (Daughter)  
2. Raheela Naz (Daughter)  
3. Shafiqah Bibi (Spouse)  
4. Muhammad Nadeem (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA RING ROAD-DSFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Sardar Niaz Ali with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Sultana Bibi citizen number 1430188745494 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Rahim Khan (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA KOHAT-SFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Sardar Niaz Ali with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Nighat Begum citizen number 1310156363475 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Gulnaz Bibi (Daughter)  
2. Mehnaaz Liaquat (Daughter)  
3. Shahnaz Bibi (Spouse)  
4. Sardar Imtiaz Ali (Son)  
5. Sardar Niaz Ali (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Nighat Begum with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Nighat Begum citizen number 1310156363475 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Akifa Khanzada (Daughter)  
2. Khanzada Abdul Rehman (Daughter)  
3. Behrang Khanzada (Son)  
4. Abdul Ghafar Khanzada (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Khawaj Muhammad Khan with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Siraj Muhammad citizen number 1510165594215 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Sana Begum (Daughter)  
2. Haseena Naz (Daughter)  
3. Kawish Bibi (Daughter)  
4. Farhat Begum (Daughter)  
5. Aameela (Spouse)  
6. Salmaan Ahmad (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Qureshi (if any) with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Siraj Muhammad citizen number 1510165594215 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Sana Begum (Daughter)  
2. Haseena Naz (Daughter)  
3. Kawish Bibi (Daughter)  
4. Farhat Begum (Daughter)  
5. Aameela (Spouse)  
6. Salmaan Ahmad (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA BUNER-SFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Oodhin Qureshi with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Oodhin Qureshi citizen number 1430120677939 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Bibi Rooshan Jan (Daughter)  
2. Bibi Zarjan (Daughter)  
3. Gulab Jan (Daughter)  
4. Muhammad Saadiq (Daughter)  
5. Raza Muhammad (Son)  
6. Naseer Ud Din (Son)  
7. Muhammad Qasim Khan (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA KOHAT-SFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Abdul Wahab with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad Qureshi citizen number 1310178718209 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Sadia Shaheen (Daughter)  
2. Sobia Imtiaz (Daughter)  
3. Sibgha Niaz Hashmi (Daughter)  
4. Mohsin Imtiaz (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA DIR UPPER-SFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Sadia Shaheen with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Imtiaz Ahmad Qureshi citizen number 1310178718209 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Sadia Shaheen (Daughter)  
2. Sobia Imtiaz (Daughter)  
3. Sibgha Niaz Hashmi (Daughter)  
4. Mohsin Imtiaz (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU**

**PUBLIC NOTICE**  
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Mukhtiar with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Jan Muhammad citizen number 1330203822533 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs:  
1. Noreen (Daughter)  
2. Shabana Bibi (Daughter)  
3. Khadija Bibi (Spouse)  
4. Sajjad (Son)  
5. Raza Muhammad (Son)  
6. Imtiaz (Son)  
7. Sheraz (Son)  
8. Muhammad Hanif (Son)  
9. Muhammad Mukhtiar (Son)  
10. Israr (Son)  
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.  
**INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MANSEHRA-SFU**

LAHORE (APP): Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Director General Imran Qureshi has said that flood relief activities were going on by the PDMA in the districts adjacent to the Sutlej River.

In a press statement, he said the PDMA was closely monitoring the situation from the control room, while the district emergency operation centers and rural reporting centers across the province were on high alert as the government was utilizing all available resources to ensure the safety of human lives.

The DG mentioned that PDMA supplied tents, food hampers, flood equipment, and machinery to all districts in preparation for the monsoon season. Rescue and relief operations were currently underway in the districts connected to the Sutlej River, he added. In Kasur district alone, 10 relief camps had been established, with 110 rescuers and 8 ambulances deployed. PDMA provided 27 boats, 200 life jackets, 27 life rings, 16 wireless sets, and other necessary equipment to aid the rescue teams. As a result of these efforts, 1,218 people had been rescued, and 4,972 individuals had been safely relocated in the Kasur district where 27 animals had also been rescued.

Turning to the arrangements in Okara district, Imran Qureshi reported the establishment of six rescue and relief camps, with deployment of 54 rescuers and two ambulances. The PDMA provided 12 boats, 52 life rings, and 164 life jackets to assist the rescue teams in Okara. So far, 220 people and 18 animals had been transported to safe areas from the flooded regions, he said.

PDMA ensured that required equipment and tools for flood situations were readily available in the respective district warehouses. Additionally, the department developed plans for emergency transportation of further supplies to the affected districts if necessary, he added. Later, the DG visited the flood-affected areas of Kasur to assess the arrangements personally.

On the occasion, he shared the latest updates on the flood situation at the Sutlej Talwar post. He mentioned that the floodwater in the Sutlej River receded by 1 foot compared to the previous night, and the flow had reduced from 114,000 cusecs to 104,000 cusecs at Ganda Singhwala. He highlighted that a flood relief and rescue operation was initiated on July 9, following the instructions of the Punjab government, and it was still ongoing.

The floods had impacted a total of 15 villages along the Sutlej River in Kasur, affecting a population of 18,000. 11,000 people had been safely relocated and ten relief camps, with a capacity of 3,000 to 5,000 people, had been established in Kasur.





## US envoy terms IMF accord positive development

PESHAWAR (APP): United Ambassador Donald Blome Thursday termed the IMF stand-by agreement for Pakistan a very positive development the stabilising the economy of the country. Pakistan was confronted with various economic challenges and the Internationally Monetary Fund's (IMF) agreement would help the country overcome the crisis soon, he added. The ambassador was addressing a ceremony to sign a memorandum of understanding (MoU) by the Board of Revenue of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Provincial Ombudsperson Office and United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for cooperation in digitalization of land record in the Newly Merged Districts (NMD).

Blome, the MoU signing ceremony and handing over of equipment for digitalization of land record system in NMDs was also witnessed by Secretary KP Board of Revenue Department Khalid Khan and Provincial Ombudsperson Rakhshanda Naz. The ambassador said the US was the largest investor in Pakistan. He said that inheritance rights to women in properties would help them to financially support their families. He said that Pakistan had generously accepted and supported the Afghan refugees for several decades. During the ceremony, the USAID has provided \$5 million worth of equipment to the KP Board of Revenue that would help augmenting its capacity for accurate land measurements.

The MoU was aimed to support government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to strengthen transparency and accuracy in the land records and registration system, promoting economic growth and investment in NMDs. The United States also announced a new partnership to empower the ombudsperson secretariat by providing training to the department's staff on women rights and land settlement regulations. The initiative was aimed to raise awareness about ombudsperson crucial role in safeguarding women's rights including property inheritance. Secretary Board of Revenue Department, Khalid Khan said digitalizing land records system was underway in the seven subdivisions of NMDs that would give inheritance

property rights to women and address land settlements issues among tribesmen. He said land digitalization in merged areas would help increasing efficiency, accuracy and convenience. Appreciating the support of US, he said land digitalization in all 49 subdivisions in merged areas would be completed in three to four years. Initially the project was started with an estimated cost of Rs 1200 million under which 90 percent manual work on property and settlement issues in merged areas were completed. Provincial Ombudsperson, Rakhshanda Naz said the project would economically empower women in tribal districts after digitalization of land records and would long disputes among tribesmen.



PESHAWAR: Australian High Commissioner Neil Hawkins meeting with Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan.

### Khafza condemns 9th May incidents F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) finance secretary Khafza Bukhari Advocate condemned 9th May incidents and argued for exemplary punishment, on Thursday. SCBA finance secretary condemned 9th May incident while talking to media personnel at Peshawar and added that it is black day of our history. The incidents had shocked whole nation. SCBA finance secretary argued on hand for exemplary punishment for culprits while on the other opposed trial of civilian in military courts. The law didn't permit trial of civilian in military's courts. SCBA finance secretary Bukhari rejected trial of civilian in military while advocate for trial in Anti-terrorism and other ordinary courts.

### Daughter, son-in-law arrested

PESHAWAR (APP): Resolving the mystery behind a blind murder, the Gulberg police here on Thursday arrested the daughter and son-in-law of a cameraman, involved in his murder, police told media on Thursday. Police said, a team headed by SP Cantt, Waqas and police officers succeeded in arresting the accused involved in the murder of a PTV Cameraman, Wajid Hussain within three days of time. Police said the daughter of the deceased and her husband, Muhammad Junaid were found to be the killers of Wajid Hussain. The incident occurred three days ago in Al Noor Street of Gulberg where a PTV Cameraman, Wajid Hussain was murdered inside his home by unknown accused. A case on the complaint of the son of the deceased, Danish, was registered at Gulberg police station. The investigative team of police included relatives of the deceased in the investigation and found out the statements of his daughter and son-in-law as suspicious. When further interrogated, the daughter of the deceased and her husband confessed to killing Wajid Hussain over a property dispute. Police said the dagger used during the murder has also been recovered from the accused while further investigation was underway.

## Appointment, termination of chairmen, members BOG's MTI: PHC raises questions, orders to prepare — previous chairman ATH working SKH Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice Shakeel Ahmad and Justice Shahid Khan raised 10 questions regarding termination of chairmen as well as member Board of Governors (BOG) at Medical Teaching Institution (MTI) hospital while ordered Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to address it, on Thursday. During hearing PHC observed that are petitioners' termination notification is legal? Is the termination made under MTI Act? Is High Court can exercise the jurisdiction in light of Section 16(A) of Appellate Tribunal or Tribunal has the jurisdiction to hear the petition? Is the petitioners have alternative forum for redressal of their grievances as per section-7 of MTI Act or High Court can exercise its jurisdiction in writ? Can petitioners continue their services on the will of Chief Minister or CM can make appointment and termination? Is termination/appointment of chairmen and members BOG contradict with Election if the appointment is made by nonfunctional committee? Is Chief Minister responsibility is looking into daily affairs or he can make appointment and termination? What will be its impacts? Is Chief Minister has jurisdiction to appoint chairman BOG under MTI Act or appointment and termination petitions are maintainable? What will be the impacts if the vacant has been fulfilled with new appointment and they are assumed the charges? Moreover, PHC observed that is the writ petition filed by Nausherwan Barki is maintainable because he was in America on the institution of petition's day? However, PHC directed Advocate General Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and counsel for petitioner to prepare to address the ques-

tion raised by the court. The counsel Shumail Butt argued that chairmen and members BOG of MTI Lady Reading Hospital, Ayoub Teaching Hospital along with other hospitals were terminated recently which isn't legal. He added that earlier identical cases were disposed-off by PHC on assurance by provincial government on withdrawal of notification. However, Ayoub Medical College lawyer Zahid Aslam Advocate that new appointment is made is per law while that previous chairman didn't attend BOG's meetings for several months while serving at Shaukat Khanum Hospital which has Ayoub Teaching Hospital into dirt while the new official has addressed the longstanding issue immediately. PHC has raised several question ordered both parties to prepare the case and adjourned further hearing till 22nd August after conclusion of initial arguments.

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### 37th MCMC officers of NIM visit offices of KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The under-training officers of the 37th Mid Career Management Course (MCMC) of the National Institute of Management (NIM), Islamabad here Thursday visited different offices at Peshawar. The participants were briefed by Special Secretary Planning and Development KP in detail regarding the administrative affairs and ongoing development projects in the province besides the merged tribal districts. Later on, the delegation visited the office of IGP at CPO where the under-training officers were given detailed briefing about law and order situation in KP and the KP police. The participants also visited Regional Tax Office where Chief Commissioner Inland Revenue briefed them about the revenue collection. Earlier, the participants of 37th MCMC have also visited Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Peshawar Museum and Model Collectorate. The under training officers belonged to Pakistan Administrative Service, Information Service, Foreign Service, Inland Revenue Service, Audit and Accounts Service, IB, Commerce and Trade Group, Election Commission, Board of Investment and Planning and Works.



PESHAWAR: A group photo of participants of 37th Mid-Career Management Course of NIM Islamabad with Special Secretary (P&D) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

## CM's distributes China Ambassador scholarships

PESHAWAR (APP): Provincial Caretaker Minister for Law and Higher Education, Justice Retired Irshad Qaisar here Thursday termed CPEC a milestone achievement for both the neighboring countries and said that project is a proof that relations between two nations are growing stronger with each passing day. She expressed these views during a ceremony to distribute China Ambassador Scholarships among ninety students and to award cash prizes among

participants of a painting competition being held to mark ten year completion of CPEC project. The ceremony was held in University of Peshawar and attended by large number of teachers and students. Addressing the ceremony, she said that CPEC project would prove to be a game changer for the whole region besides bringing both the two countries closer and strengthen cordial relations between them. She said that CPEC has not only changed the economic scenario of Pakistan but has also created endless opportunities of growth for people. She said that CPEC has become a benchmark reflecting friendship between two countries adding that we should take benefit of the project and work to led country on the course of progress and development. CM aide also congratulated students and also urged them to prepare themselves to meet new challenges and explore new opportunities in this world for their own benefit.

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## Orthopaedic interactive clinical review course successfully held



### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chairman Department of Orthopaedics MTI Khyber teaching Hospital Prof. Dr Muhammad Shoaib Khan, who is President Elect of Pakistan Orthopaedic Association,

also successfully organised and supervised a six days orthopaedic clinical review course at Khyber teaching hospital Peshawar. Orthopaedic faculty members with different subspecialty skills from different teaching hospitals of KP made

the course successful by giving interactive lectures and skills, conducted model long and short cases & TOACS. Around 100 participants from different cities of the country attended the review course. Free accommodation facility was provided to out of province candidates. It is worth mentioning that that apart from different orthopaedic subspecialty workshops Prof. Dr. Muhammad shoaib khan is regularly conducting 5 to 6 days ortho interactive clinical review courses for FCPS part 2 candidates twice each year for the last so many years. Course dinner was organised for the course participants, course faculty and organisers at foreign faculty University guest house.

## 31 members team of Buddhists monks visited UNESCO heritage site

PESHAWAR (APP): A 31 members high level delegation of the Buddhists monks on Thursday visited the UNESCO world heritage site of Takht Bhai in Mardan district and colonial era Peshawar Museum and were highly impressed by its history, artifacts and ancient sites. The delegation including foreign diplomats and ambassadors besides followers of Buddhism visited UNESCO world heritage site of Takht Bhai in Mardan district and took keen interest in its ancient Buddhists Monastery, artifacts, antiquities and Ghandhara art. The members of the delegation included from South Korea, Japan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia and Nepal. Director, Archaeology and Museums KP, Abdul Samad Khan briefed the delegation about the historical significance of world

heritage site of Takht Bhai and nearby Seri Bahlol, that were attracting tourists from across the globe. The delegation also went around the primitive Buddhists Monastery at Takht Bhai where they were highly impressed by its historical significance and conservation work. The tourists took keen interests in ruins' monastic complexes of Takht Bhai that are spectacularly positioned on various hilltops ranging from 36.6 meters to 152.4 meters height with a covered area of about 33 hectares. The delegation was informed that Takht Bhai monastery was in continuous use till 7th century (CE) composed of an assemblage of buildings constructed of stone on Gandhara patterns in diaper style using local dressed and semi-dressed stone blocks set in a lime and mud mortar. The Neighbouring City

remains at Sahr-i-Bahlol located in a five kilometers distance from Takht Bhai's monastery, is a small ancient fortified town of Kushan period. It was constructed on an elongated mound of nine meters height on 9.7 hectares surrounded by portions of a defensive wall in diaper style characteristic dates back to the first two or three centuries (BC). The boundaries of Sahr-i-Bahlol are well defined with a part of fortification walls still intact. Both these historical sites had been declared as protected monuments under an Ancient Preservation Act (1904) of the colonial era and Antiquity Act (1975) of the Government of Pakistan. KP government has declared the entire mountain area of 445 hectares as "Archaeological Reserve" to control urbanization at Sahr-I-Bahlol. Later, the delegation visited Peshawar Museum,

the lone Ghandhara Art Museum in world and visited it's different sections and galleries. Director Archeology KP, Abdul Samad informed that Peshawar Museum was the only Ghandhara art Museum where over 40,000 rare artifacts, antiquities and complete life story of Lord Bhuddha were kept preserved. He said it is the only Museum in the world where the complete life story of the Founder of Buddhism, Lord Bhudda was preserved in the form of panels and statues. The main hall of Peshawar Museum was constructed in 1906 in memory of Queen Victoria where Buddha Gallery with statues of Lord Bhudda and Buddha Savatta Gallery having princely life of Lord Bhudda. The tourists also took interest in rare antiques, artifacts, coins, swords, guns and other antiquities

at Peshawar museum. Minister of State and Chairman Prime Minister Task Force on Ghandhara, Ramash Kumar Vankwani told reporters that Pakistan was home to many religious tourism sites including Takht Bhai and Peshawar Museum, attracting hundred of thousands of tourists from throughout the country. He said such visits bring people of different faiths closer and strength bonds of friendships. Ramash said that increase of contacts among tourists companies between Pakistan and these countries would help promote religious and Ghandhara tourism. He said about eight percent Ghandhara sites were existed in KP and its proper showcase in world could bring huge foreign investment. He said visa for international tourists were being relaxed to bolster tourism

and generate employment opportunities for youth besides strengthening economy. The monks praised Govt for preservation of

Ghandhara and other ancient sites in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and said that tourism should be seen beyond religious perspectives.

They thanked the hospitality of Government and reiterated to come again to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa being a tourists friendly province of Pakistan.



PESHAWAR: Monks from different countries visit Peshawar Museum to see remains of Buddha's.





## In brief

### 3 held, cash, goods recovered

RAJANPUR (INP): Local police claimed to have arrested three accused involved in the robbery and motorbike snatch with recovering a handsome amount of cash from their possession. According to DPO Dost Mohammed a special team was formed to clamp down on criminals in the limits of Dajal Police Station and succeeded to arrest the three accused named Javed, son of Jameel, Rafiq son of Mukhtar and Salman son of Malik Hakim. An amount worth 280,000 was recovered from their possession. Police said it had distributed the recovered money among the victims who had registered complaints of snatching their money on different occasions. DPO said the police was all out active to nab criminals to save life and properties of people. He said all police stations of the concerned jurisdictions were given targets to control crimes and ensure peace within the respective territories.

### Several projects launched: RPO F.P. Report

BANNU: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Bannu Qasim Ali Khan has said that the provincial government and higher authorities of the police department have launched several projects for the welfare of policemen therefore they should perform their professional obligations with commitment and alertness. During a visit to police posts in remote rural areas of Mazanga, Shaikh Landak and Fatehkhel on Thursday, Mr Qasim Ali met cops and heard their problems. DPO Iftekhar Shah also accompanied him. The regional police officer inspected construction work at the police posts and said that sincere efforts were underway to ensure provision of better residential facilities to the policemen. "The cops are the asset of the police department and all efforts will be made to resolve problems faced by them", he reiterated and asked the subordinate officials and policemen to improve hygiene conditions at the police posts and police stations and exhibit vigilance and alertness during performing duties.

### Drug smuggling bid foiled F.P. Report

MARDAN: Excise and Taxation department claimed that seized big cache of drugs and foiled a bid to smuggle it to other parts of the country. Director Excise and Taxation office (Mardan Region) Fawad Iqbal told while acting on a tip-off, they recovered 31200 grams of hashish from a motor car. He disclosed that the arrested alleged drug smuggler was identified as Kaleem hailing from Abbotabad district. He told that the accused was being interrogated so that to trace out his other companions involved in the illegal act of drug smuggling. He vowed that they were committed to not only arrest all those involved in illegal drug smuggling but also to uproot this bad activity from area the area.

### Murderer of sister held

GUJRANWALA (INP): The police resolved a murder case on Thursday and detained elder sister for killing younger sister over domestic disputes. According to details, a 26-year girl was stabbed to death in Cheema Colony of Gujranwala some one week earlier. The police over suspicion arrested elder sister of the deceased who during investigation revealed that she stabbed to death her younger for not washing dishes.



HYDERABAD: A view of water level of Indus River rises after the recent rains in the country.

## ECP schedules LG by-polls on August 27

F.P. Report

KHYBER: Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), Khyber has issued the schedule of by-election of Local Bodies (LB) for categories left vacant in Neighborhood Councils (NC) and Village Councils (VC) in the district.

According to the ECP, candidates can submit their nomination papers from July 17 till July 19, 2023 and the polling will be held on August 27 of 2023. According to the Election Commission, nominations can be submitted for the seats from July 17 to July 19 and nomination papers

will be scrutinized from July 21 to July 24.

Candidates will be able to withdraw nomination papers on August 03. Election signs will be allotted on August 04 besides candidates list will be issued on the same day and polling will be held on August 27, 2023.

As per notification District Election Commissioner (DEC) Shahid Ali has been appointed as District Returning Officer (DRO), Khyber while election in NCs and VCs Taimour Afridi, Riaz-ul-Haq, Daud Afridi and Asif Ali Shah were assigned duties of

Assistant Returning Officers (AROs).

Keeping in view code of conduct for the election, posting and transfer of the government employees will be banned in addition with participation of Prime Minister, Deputy Speaker, Parliamentarians, Federal and Provincial Ministers in the election campaign and announcement of development in the consistencies where the election is carried out will be restricted, ECP stated. When the DEC Shahid Ali was asked that on how many seats election will be conducted in Khyber, he was reluctant to reply.

## Expert polo stick maker and player dies in accident

F.P. Report

CHITRAL: A Subedar retired polo player and expert of polo stick making died while at least seven others critically injured when a Jeep fell into a deep gorge in Drosh Gromail area of Lower Chitral here on Thursday.

Police said Subedar @ Mansoor Ali Khan who was a known player of polo and expert in polo stick making was among eight injured in the accident. He along with other injured was taken to THQ Drosh where he succumbed to his wound.

Police said Mansoor Ali Khan was supposed to travel along with his family but for some reason the family members on boarded another Jeep for travelling to Drosh.

The Rescue 1122 said all the injured have been shifted to THQ Hospital Drosh from where two of the critically injured were referred to Lower Chitral hospital. The Jeep was travelling from Drosh Goss area of Lower Chitral to Drosh Bazaar when it skidded off the road and fell into a gorge. Police said the incident was the result of reckless driving on a dangerous road.

## Two killed in clash

F.P. Report

MINGORA: Two people were killed in armed clash over drinking water share in tehsil Kabal of Swat on Thursday, police said.

According to details, dispute emerged among two groups over drinking water which intensified and led to fire exchange. In cross fire two people, one from each group were killed on the spot. The bodies were shifted to hospital for postmortem and police after registering a case into the incident started an investigation.

## 3 killed in road accident

FAISALABAD (INP): Three persons were killed in different road accidents in Faisalabad during the past 12 hours. A spokesperson for Rescue-1122 said here on Thursday that 40-year-old Mumtaz Ahmad of People's Colony was crossing the road near Khurarianwala Chowk on Faisalabad Road when a speeding van hit and killed him.

Also, 50-year-old Saifur-Rehman of Kot Addu was killed when his car collided with a trailer in its rear due to over-speeding near Samundri Interchange on Lahore-Multan Motorway (M-3).

## Girl dies

SHEIKHUPURA (INP): A young girl died while three people were injured when a car overturned on Sheikhupura motorway on Thursday.

Rescue sources said that the accident took place near Hiran Minar where an over speeding car turned turtle. A 10-year old girl died on the spot in the accident while three others sustained injured. The victims were heading to Islamabad from Lahore.

# Buddhists monks visit heritage site Takht Bhai

MARDAN (APP): A 31 members high level delegation of the Buddhists monks on Thursday visited the UNESCO world heritage site of Takht Bhai in Mardan district and colonial era Peshawar Museum and were highly impressed by its history, artifacts and ancient sites.

The delegation including foreign diplomats and ambassadors besides followers of Bhuddism visited UNESCO world heritage site of Takht Bhai in Mardan district and took keen interest in its ancient Buddhists Monestary, artifacts, antiquities and Gandhara art. The members of the delegation includes South Korea, Japan, Thailand, Sri Lanka, Myanmar, Cambodia and Nepal.

Director, Archaeology and Museums KP, Abdul Samad Khan briefed the delegation about the historical significance of world heritage site of Takht Bhai and nearby Seri Bahlool, that were attracting tourists from across the globe. The delegation also went around the primitive Bhuddists Monastery at Takht Bhai where they were highly impressed by its historical significance and conservation work.

The tourists took keen interests in ruins' monastic complexes of Takht Bhai that are spectacularly positioned on various hilltops ranging from 36.6 meters to 152.4 meters height with a covered area of about 33 hectares. The delegation was informed that Takht Bhai monastery was in continuous use till 7th century (CE) composed of an assemblage of buildings constructed of stone on Gandhara patterns in diaper style using local dressed and semi-dressed stone blocks set in a lime and mud mortar.

The Neighbouring City Remains at Sahr-i-Bahlol located in a five kilometers distance from Takht Bhai's monastery, is a small ancient fortified town of Kushan period. It was constructed on an elongated mound of nine meters height on 9.7 hectares surrounded by portions of a defensive wall in diaper style characteristic dates back to the first two or three centuries (BC).

The boundaries of Sahr-i-Bahlol are well defined with a part of fortification walls still intact. Both these historical sites had been declared as protected monuments under an Ancient Preservation Act (1904) of the colonial era and Antiquity Act (1975) of the Government of Pakistan. KP

government has declared the entire mountain area of 445 hectares as "Archaeological Reserve" to control urbanization at Sahr-I-Bahlol.

Later, the delegation visited Peshawar Museum, the lone Gandhara Art Museum in world and visited it's different sections and galleries. Director Archealogy KP, Abdul Samad informed that Peshawar Museum was the only Gandhara art Museum where over 40,000 rare artifacts, antiquities and complete life story of Lord Bhuddha were kept preserved.

He said it is the only Museum in the world where the complete life story of the Founder of Buddhism, Lord Bhudda was preserved in the form of panels and statues. The main hall of Peshawar Museum was constructed in 1906 in memory of Queen Victoria where Buddha Gallery with statues of Lord Bhudda and Buddha Savatta Gallery having princely life of Lord Bhudda.

The tourists also took interest in rare antiques, artifacts, coins, swords, guns and other antiquities at Peshawar museum. Minister of State and Chairman Prime Minister Task Force on Gandhara, Ramash Kumar Vankwani told reporters that Pakistan was home to many religious tourism sites including Takht Bhai and Peshawar Museum, attracting hundred of thousands of tourists from throughout the country. He said such visits bring people of different faiths closer and strength bonds of friendships.

Ramash said that increase of contacts among tourists companies between Pakistan and these countries would help promote religious and Gandhara tourism. He said about eight percent Gandhara sites were existed in KP and its proper showcase in world could bring huge foreign investment. He said visa for international tourists were being relaxed to bolster tourism and generate employment opportunities for youth besides strengthening economy. The monks praised Govt for preservation of Gandhara and other ancient sites in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and said that tourism should be seen beyond religious perspectives. They thanked the hospitality of Government and reiterated to come again to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa being a tourists friendly province of Pakistan.

# Admn reject traders price hike demand

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Local administration has rejected the demand of traders' representatives to revise the official price list and increase rates of essential commodities. The demand was made at a meeting held here at the district headquarters complex Tajazai on Thursday with assistant commissioner Tariq Mehmood in the chair.

Additional ACs Ishaq Ali Khan, Sultan Nooruddin Ahmer, Awais Khan and Gohar Ali, DFC Aman Khan and traders' leaders were in attendance. Representatives of traders'

organizations said that the transportation cost had increased due to the surge in oil prices therefore the administration should review the existing prices of daily use commodities.

The shopkeepers are justified in demanding an increase in prices of commodities on the basis of high rates of utilities and surge in rent of shops", they maintained. The meeting discussed and reviewed the process of essential food items with detail and decided to maintain the previous rate list till further orders.

The assistant commissioner said that the administration would protect the

rights of consumers at all costs. "The traders have no solid and justifiable reasons to demand an increase in prices of daily use commodities", he added, asking the shopkeepers to reduce their profit margin and provide maximum relief to inflation-hit people.

He said that local deputy commissioner Abdul Hadi had already issued special instructions to price magistrates to ensure implementation of official price lists in letter and spirit during visits to bazaars and markets. Tariq made clear that the violators of the official rate list would face stern legal action.

# Water channel handovers to tribesmen

F.P. Report

TIRAH VALLEY: A local welfare organization, with the help of district administration, handed over an irrigation channel to local residents in the Khais Qillah in the lower Tirah Valley of the Khyber district.

A two kilometers long water channel was completed in Khais Qillah area in Kukikhel tribe with the support of CRA North. The project aims to significantly improve the water management and irrigation system in the area, which will benefit numerous communities in the surrounding areas.

Tirah Rifle Wing 213 Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Hasan and Community Resilience Activity Officer Ziaur Rehman and local elders participated in the opening ceremony. The newly constructed water channel will

serve as a lifeline for agricultural communities and will provide them with a constant and reliable supply of water.

Speaking on the occasion, the chief guest Lt. Col. Muhammad Hassan thanked CRA North for its generous funding and emphasized the government's commitment to promoting sustainable development in the region. He said the major infrastructure project is expected to increase agricultural productivity and improve the overall socio-economic status of the region. He said that the purpose of the programme was to provide training to people in the remote areas affected by extremism in the newly merged tribal districts and provide them employment opportunities.

Later, CRA official Ziaur Rehman praised the

local communities for their patience and cooperation during the construction phase. He said the water channel would have an impact on the region's agriculture, empowering farmers and promoting economic development.

The official added 50 youth and elder persons had trained on social cohesion to enhance former TDPs economic reintegration and social cohesion in Rajgal valley in Phase-1. A local person, Naveed Afridi thanked the CRA-north and district administration and said that the organisation had launched water channels in different areas of the Khyber district. He said the tribal people infrastructures had been destroyed in prolonged militancy whereas the NGOs were involved in various development projects in tribal districts.

# AKPLHWA demands upgradation

F.P. Report

MINGORA: A joint meeting of All Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Lady Health Workers Association (AKPLHWA) was held in Matta. In which officials from Mardan Abbottabad, Swabi, Swat, Mansehra, Haripur, Malakand and other districts participated in large numbers.

On this occasion, President of All KPK LHWS, Rifaset Qamar, Abbottabad, Namia Bibi, Swat, John Feroze, Dr. Yasmeen and Jan

Taj addressed the meeting and said that Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government along with lady health workers. We are being mistreated by them which is absolute cruelty, we are not given an increase in our salaries or upgradation and extra duties are taken from us separately while there are EPI technicians to administer injections but unfortunately this is not possible and duties are taken from LHWS, he further said that TB and Malaria staff are present in the hospital but

their duties are also taken from us.

The speakers strongly demanded the caretaker government and said that God should have mercy on our situation and increase our upgradation and salaries and we boycott extra duties. They will sit in front. On this occasion, Nusrat Bibi, Saira, Rubina, Nafisa, Rahat, Lubna, Samina, Mehnaz Khalid, Yasmin, Muhammad Shah Bacha teacher, Jahanzeb Lala and others participated.





# Thailand’s parliament is set to choose PM

BANGKOK (AP): Thai lawmakers are gathering Thursday to select a new prime minister, a process whose outcome is far from certain even though the country's most progressive party won both the popular vote and the most seats in the House of Representatives in the most recent election. Thailand's May 14 election was regarded as a major political turning point. The reformist Move Forward Party's victory appeared to spell an end to nine years of unpopular army-supported rule. Two months later, it is unclear if that mandate for change will be honored.

Parliament is due to vote on whether to make Move Forward's leader, 42-year-old businessman Pita Limjaroenrat, the country's prime minister. His party captured 151 of the 500 House seats but has assembled a coalition government-in-waiting. The eight parties in the coalition won 312 seats combined, a healthy majority. "This is a party leading a coalition, and they've won the election," Thitinan Pongsudhirak, a political scientist at Bangkok's Chulalongkorn University, said. "In most other countries, they would be in office by now."

One of several potential roadblocks to Pita taking power is that the prime minister is elected through a joint vote of the House and the 250-seat Senate, whose members owe their positions to the military-backed regime established by a 2014 coup. Pita, or any other candidate, therefore needs a minimum of 376 votes to become head of government. The biggest bone of contention between the liberals backing Move Forward and the deeply conservative Senate is the campaign pledge of Pita's party to amend a law that makes defaming the royal family punishable by three to 15 years in prison. The monarchy is sacrosanct to members of Thailand's royalist establishment, and even minor reforms that might improve and modernize the monarchy's image are anathema to them. Move Forward's coalition partners also have not endorsed the proposed legal change, and other parties ruled out joining the coalition because of the idea.

Thitinan thinks that given the massive voter support for Move Forward and the Pheu Thai Party, its top partner and political ally, Pita stands a good chance "because of mounting public pressure on the senators. It will depend on the will, the resilience and the intransigence of the royalist conservative establishment." But if Pita cannot win over enough senators, his options appear nil. The options for the eight-party coalition as a whole appear more viable. One is for the Pheu Thai Party to put forward one of its members as a candidate for prime minister, a possibility that once



would have been unthinkable.

Pheu Thai used to be the royalist establishment's public enemy No. 1. The party is closely affiliated with former Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra, a billionaire populist who was ousted in a 2006 military coup, in part because his popularity rubbed royalists the wrong way. Thaksin-backed parties finished first in every election from 2001 until this past May but were blocked or forced from power each time. The 2014 coup, for example, seized power from a government that Thaksin's sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, had formed. Pheu Thai enrolled three of its members as potential prime minister candidates this year, including Thaksin's daughter, Paetongtarn Shinawatra. It is a measure of the shift in political winds that Pheu Thai is now regarded as a party that royalists can deal with, compared with Move Forward, which they dismiss as radical.

Paetongtarn's colleague, real estate developer Srettha Thavisin, is considered more likely to have his name put forward if Pita isn't elected, at least partly as reassurance to the business community. But the possibility that any proposed coalition including Move Forward won't be approved complicates the numbers game. The departure of Move Forward would probably require Pheu Thai to enlist allies from among military-friendly parties, which it vowed, with hedging, not to do. In the long run, seeking such an alliance could erode Pheu Thai's credibility with supporters who stuck by the party and boost support for Move Forward while it's in opposition. Another cost could involve ceding the prime minister's seat to a newly enlisted coalition partner, the key one being the Bhumjaithai Party, which polled third in the May election and secured 71 House seats. The party's leader, Anutin Charnvirakul, was health minister in the outgoing government and has made no secret of his political ambitions.

If Pita and Move Forward somehow prevail -- and it could take several votes over a period of weeks -- their political survival still would sit on a knife's edge. There have been fears that Thailand's conservative ruling establishment would use what its political opponents consider to be dirty tricks to cling to power. For a decade and a half, it has repeatedly utilized the courts and supposedly independent state agencies to issue questionable rulings to cripple or sink political opponents. The Election Commission said it concluded there was evidence that Pita had violated election law, and referred his case to the Constitutional Court for a ruling. If the court accepts the case and finds him guilty, he could lose his House seat, get kicked out of politics and face a prison sentence. The alleged violation involves undeclared ownership of media company shares, which are banned for Thai lawmakers. Political scientist Thitinan describes the charge and other legal complaints against Pita as "bogus" and something many people, especially voters who backed him, would be unwilling to tolerate.

"It all depends on how far the royalist conservative establishment wants to go after Pita and prevent a democratic outcome," he said. Depending how they are resolved, the efforts to block Pita and Move Forward could prove dangerous and cause Thailand unnecessary pain, said Michael Montesano, a Thai studies expert who is an associate senior fellow at Singapore's ISEAS-Yusof Ishak Institute. "At the end of the day, the political system and those who would dominate need to move into closer correspondence with the realities of Thai society and with the aspirations of its younger, well educated members," Montesano said. "The biggest question is whether this transition will be painful and even violent, or whether it will be constructive and thus serve the country's future prospects."

## Iran summons Russian ambassador over remarks

DUBAI (AP): Iran summoned Russia's ambassador after Moscow released a joint statement with Arab countries earlier this week challenging Iran's claim to disputed islands in the Persian Gulf. It marked a rare spat between Iran and Russia, which have deepened ties since Moscow invaded Ukraine, with Iran supplying killer drones that have been used to devastating effect there. Iran and Russia are also strong backers of President Bashar Assad in Syria's civil war.

Iran's official IRNA news agency said the ambassador was summoned over a joint statement released after a meeting in Moscow between Russia and the Gulf Cooperation Council, which includes the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain and Oman. In the statement, the ministers affirmed their support for efforts "to reach a peaceful solution to the issue of the three islands, Greater Tunb, Lesser Tunb and Abu Musa, through bilateral negotiations or the International Court of Justice," according to the Saudi Press Agency. Iran took control the three islands after British forces withdrew in 1971 and considers them an "inseparable" part of its territory. The United Arab Emirates also claims the three islands and has long pressed for a negotiated solution. "We never stand upon ceremony with any side over Iran's independence, sovereignty and integrity," Iran's Foreign Minister Hossein Amirabbollahian tweeted, without naming Russia. Iran summoned China's envoy over similar remarks on the disputed islands in December. The three islands dominate the approach to the strategic Strait of Hormuz, a key waterway through which about one-fifth of the world's oil supply passes.

Iran says the islands have been part of Persian states from antiquity up until they were occupied by the British in the early 20th century. It also says an agreement reached with Sharjah, one of the UAE's seven emirates, gives it the right to administer Abu Musa and station troops there. There is no such agreement on the other two islands. The UAE says they belonged to the emirate of Ras al-Khaimah until Iran seized them by force days before the Emirati federation was formed.

## UN denounces expulsions from Ghana

DAKAR (Reuters): The United Nations refugee agency (UNHCR) said it was concerned about reports in Ghana that hundreds of citizens seeking refuge from an insurgency in neighbouring Burkina Faso were being deported. Burkina Faso is one of several West African countries fighting armed groups that took root in north Mali and have seized ground across the region over the past decade, killing thousands and displacing over six million in the process. More than 2 million have fled their homes in Burkina Faso alone, where frustrations over growing insecurity spurred two military takeovers last year. Some, mainly women and children, have sought refuge in north Ghana, where the insurgency has also hit in more recent years. Twitter user Alhaji Gbangbanku shared video online of dozens of women holding their children, sitting on the ground in a parking lot with buses. "The repatriation of Fulbes from Burkina Faso is continuing today in several northern Ghana communities," he wrote, describing it as a "military-led exercise" and a "dangerous development." Reuters could not independently verify the videos or the expulsions.

The UNHCR called on Ghana's government to guarantee access to its territory and asylum to Burkinabes fleeing the violence, and cease reported expulsions. The agency added in a statement that it was working with Ghanaian authorities to ensure the protection of over 8,000 Burkinabe nationals, and had set up a reception centre in the bordering Upper East Region with a capacity of 4,000 people. Ghana's government did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

# Syrians in rebel enclave alarmed by UN aid deadlock

NEW YORK (AFP): Syrians in the country's last rebel enclave expressed alarm after the United Nations Security Council failed to renew an aid delivery mechanism to the area, imperilling critical humanitarian assistance. The UN largely delivers relief to northwest Syria via neighbouring Turkey through the Bab al-Hawa crossing, but the deal to do so expired. Russia vetoed a nine-month extension of the agreement, and then failed to muster enough votes to adopt just a six-month extension, during a vote at UN headquarters in New York. From a bleak displacement camp near the town of Batabo in the Idlib bastion, Ghaith al-Shaar, 43, expressed dismay at the political bickering and the crushing impact any interruption to aid supplies could have on his family. Without the UN assistance, "it's impossible for anybody to cope, particularly if they have children", said the father of five, who was displaced from Damascus's Eastern Ghouta area five years ago. "Even though it was just simple assistance, it helps support us," Shaar said.

Syria's conflict has killed more than 500,000 people, displaced millions and battered the country's infrastructure and industry. The 15 Security Council members had been trying for days to find a compromise to extend the cross-border aid deal, which since 2014 has allowed for food, water and medicine to be trucked to northwestern Syria without the authorisation of Damascus.

Negotiations were continuing at the UN to try to find a solution to the impasse. Damascus regularly denounces the aid deliveries as a violation of its sovereignty, and Russia has been chipping away at the deal for years. Moscow is a major ally of Damascus, and its intervention in Syria since 2015 helped to turn the tide in the regime's favour. Shaar, who receives food, medical and other assistance from international organisations, expressed anger at the Russian veto. "Russia forced us from our homes and today it is... turning humanitarian assistance into a political issue," he charged. The cross-border aid accord originally allowed for four entry points into rebel-held Syria before being reduced to one -- Bab al-Hawa -- after years of pressure from China and Russia at the Security Council. Bab al-Hawa crossing is controlled on the Syrian side by jihadist group Hayat Tahrir al-Sham (HTS). After a deadly earthquake in February, Syria agreed to open two additional crossings, which are in areas under the control of Turkish-backed rebel forces. Authorisation for those two crossings is set to expire in mid-August. But Stephane Dujarric, spokesman for the UN secretary-general, warned that those two crossings "cannot match" Bab al-Hawa, which handles 85 percent of the aid. "That door is shut right now," said Dujarric, noting that "UN agencies did preposition supplies... to ensure that humanitarian needs will

continue to be met in the immediate future". He said that "the secretary-general is not giving up on the possibility of keeping" Baba al-Hawa open.

The UN says more than four million people are in need in northwest Syria, while it and its partners have been reaching 2.7 million people a month with aid there. Since the quake, more than 3,700 UN trucks carrying aid have crossed through the three checkpoints. Most have passed through Bab al-Hawa, including 79. Save the Children's Kathryn Achilles warned that "the lives of millions of children are entirely dependent on aid through the Bab al-Hawa crossing". The UN Security Council must urgently reconvene and reverse this fatal decision," she said in a statement. Russian representative Vassily Nebenzya accused Western countries of "artificially" provoking Moscow into vetoing. He also threatened to "close down" the aid delivery mechanism if support for his country's proposed six-month renewal was not forthcoming. At the displacement camp near Batabo, Jaziyah al-Hamid, 55, expressed distress at the Russian position. "Do they want to fight us for our food?" asked Hamid, who lost her husband and daughter in the earthquake and now lives with her five children in tough conditions. She said that even the little assistance she has been receiving helped her family cover the bare minimum. "We want more aid," not less, she said. "Russia must not close the crossing."

# Children in hospital after being tear-gassed

NAIROBI (BBC): Fifty-three children have been rushed to hospital in Nairobi after tear gas was thrown into their class by police during protests. Dr Aron Shikuku from Eagle Nursing Home hospital told the BBC they have now stabilised the unconscious children. There have been demonstrations around the country called by the opposition over the rising cost of living, but they've turned deadly.

Six people have been killed, authorities said. Human rights bodies however put the number of those dead at 12, with many more injured. Two people died after protesters set fire to a police station, while another died during an attack on a police van along the Nairobi Expressway on the outskirts of the city, reports say. The protests had been banned, but people took to the streets anyway, such is the anger amongst some Kenyans about the rising cost of living and a new finance bill -

which includes tax increases. The controversial hikes include the doubling of fuel taxes and the imposition of a 1.5% levy on all employees to fund new houses. The government says the hikes are essential to pay off debts and create job opportunities for young people but the law has been suspended by a court over constitutional concerns. Opposition leader Raila Odinga, who was defeated by Mr Ruto in last year's election, has been pressing the government to reverse the tax hikes, calling for civil disobedience last month and describing those who want to implement the finance bill as "traitors".

An opposition rally had been scheduled, but Mr Odinga called it off, saying he wanted to avert further violence. Policing boss Japhet Koome said that "all lawful means" would be used to disperse the demonstrations, the AFP news agency reports. These latest protests come just a few days after several people

were killed during anti-government demonstrations last Friday, in which human rights groups accused the Kenyan police of using excessive force. Kenyans are divided over the protests, with some backing them, saying the high cost of living is unsustainable: "Kenyans are personally defending themselves, arguing against the imposed taxes. The salary you are paid against what you are spending, there is nothing important you can do for yourself as a human being," William Musembi told the Reuters news agency. While others have complained about looting: "A group of around 400 to 500 people were gathering along the highway and they came all at once and broke the doors that were already bolted," supermarket manager James Kagimi Wanjema told Reuters. "They were able to access the tills, they looted some cash and merchandise. It's a little chaotic, very chaotic," he said.

# UN wants Sudan sides held to account as 3 million flee

NEW YORK (AFP): The United Nations said nearly three months of war in Sudan have uprooted more than three million people, and called for the warring sides to face "accountability". Britain said it was taking action. It announced sanctions on businesses it said were associated with Sudanese military groups on both sides of the conflict.

Fighting has raged in the northeast African country since mid-April, when army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and his former deputy Mohamed Hamdan Daglo, who commands the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF), turned on each other. Safa Msehli, a spokeswoman for the UN's International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Geneva, told AFP that more than three million people had fled their homes because of the conflict. IOM figures showed that more than 2.4 million people were now displaced within Sudan, while nearly 724,000 have escaped across the country's borders, in a continuously increasing stream. "This is more than a figure, however: these are people who

have been uprooted, fleeing for their lives," Msehli said, appealing for an immediate cessation of hostilities. "We need the international community's sustained support to provide aid and protection to those affected by the conflict," she said. Khartoum's millions of residents, cornered in the capital often without water or electricity in the searing heat of summer, were again subjected to air raids, witnesses said. "Planes have been pounding RSF bases since dawn," one resident told AFP. Dozens of civilians have been killed in air raids, and paramilitaries have established bases in residential areas.

Witnesses also reported artillery fire in Khartoum. The conflict "risks morphing into an ethnicised, tribalised and ideologised conflict which is much closer to being a full-blown civil war," the United Nations Sudan chief Volker Perthes told reporters in Brussels. Perthes, whom Burhan ordered out of the country on June 9 as "persona non grata", said his deputy was running the UN mission from Port Sudan, while he was moving the main

office to Kenya's capital Nairobi. "Accountability is a much broader concept than only a judicial one," he said. "It is about whether the Sudanese people would allow the leaders of the warring parties to have any leadership function after this war." Around 3,000 people have been killed, and the UN has warned of possible crimes against humanity in the western region of Darfur.

Perthes said the situation was causing a "humanitarian catastrophe -- again" in Sudan, and putting pressure on neighbouring Chad, which was taking in many refugees and whose food supply lines through Sudan were cut. IOM figures show more than 239,000 people have crossed into Chad. Perthes warned of a "risk that neighbouring states are being dragged into the conflict". He said the UN backed "linked" diplomatic overtures by the east African regional bloc IGAD and an Egypt-hosted summit of Sudan's neighbours on Thursday. Many truces have been agreed and quickly broken since the fighting in Sudan erupted.

# Deforestation in Colombia dropped by 29 percent, a milestone

BOGOTA (Agencies): Deforestation in Colombia dropped by 29 percent in 2022, falling to the lowest level in nearly 10 years, according to newly released government statistics. The figures, published, show particular gains in regions of the Amazon rainforest, considered an important "carbon sink" for trapping greenhouse gas emissions in the fight against climate change.

In the span of one year, from 2021 to 2022, deforestation in Colombia dropped from 174,103 hectares (672sq miles) to 123,517 hectares (477sq miles), marking a nearly 30-percent decrease. "This year we have a very good reduction above the target. The question is if we're going to be able to sustain that in the year 2024, 2025 and 2026," Environment Minister Susana Muhamad told journalists in Bogota.

Muhamad said that the

government has worked with local communities to protect forests and crack down on illegal enterprises that contribute to deforestation. The numbers come as the left-wing government of President Gustavo Petro promises to step up efforts to halt deforestation and prioritise environmental protection. His administration has urged wealthier countries to cancel foreign debt as part of an exchange to ensure greater investment in Amazon conservation. Similar initiatives have been taken in neighbouring Brazil, where the leftist government of President Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva has also cracked down on illegal logging and forest degradation. Earlier this month, his administration announced that deforestation in the Amazon rainforest fell by 34 percent in the first half of 2023, reaching the lowest level in four years. Lula has also

appealed to the international community for help sustaining Brazil's forests. Since taking office in January, he has pushed for countries around the world to contribute to the Amazon Fund, a deforestation initiative in Brazil, where two-thirds of the rainforest is located. Since Lula took office in January, Germany pledged \$38m to the fund, and in May, the United Kingdom said it would contribute \$101m.

But criminal groups and illegal businesses have complicated efforts to stop deforestation in the Amazon, as they continue to expand their operations in the rainforest. Meanwhile, Indigenous communities who stand up against encroachment and resource extraction on their land are frequently targeted with violence. Just over a year ago, Indigenous expert Bruno Pereira and British journalist Dom Phillips were mur-

dered during a trip to the Amazon. Police believe they were killed after coming across an illegal fishing scheme in the Javari Valley, a protected Indigenous territory in western Brazil.

And in Yanomami territory, illegal gold mining has sparked a humanitarian crisis, with pollution and environmental degradation leading to health problems and malnutrition. The governments of Colombia and Brazil have linked the fight against climate change to the fight for Indigenous rights and security. But despite the positive figures released, some experts have cautioned against a premature declaration of victory. "It's a figure that is surely very unstable, vulnerable and still has many factors for it to be controllable," said Rodrigo Botero, director general of advocacy group the Foundation for Conservation and Sustainable Development.

# More people can’t afford nutritious food, UN says

UNITED NATIONS (AP): The UN delivered grim news on global food security: 2.4 billion people didn't have constant access to food last year, as many as 783 million faced hunger, and 148 million children suffered from stunted growth. Five UN agencies said in the 2023 State of Food Security and Nutrition report that while global hunger numbers stalled between 2021 and 2022 many places are facing deepening food crises. They pointed to Western Asia, the Caribbean and Africa, where 20% of the continent's population is experiencing hunger, more than twice the global average.

"Recovery from the global pandemic has been uneven, and the war in Ukraine has affected the nutritious food and healthy

diets," Qu Dongyu, director-general of the Food and Agriculture Organization said in a statement. "This is the 'new normal' where climate change, conflict, and economic instability are pushing those on the margins even further from safety." FAO chief economist Maximo Torero said the FAO food price index has been declining for about 15 months, but "food inflation has continued." But he said not knowing if the deal that has enabled Ukraine to ship 32 metric tons of grain to world markets and is trying to overcome obstacles to Russian grain and fertilizer shipments will be renewed when it expires on July 17 "is not good for the markets." If it isn't renewed immediately "you will have a new spike for sure" in food prices, but how

much and for how long will depend on how markets respond, he said.

According to the report, people's access to healthy diets has deteriorated across the world. More than 3.1 billion people - 42% of the global population - were unable to afford a healthy diet in 2021, an increase of 134 million people compared to 2019, it said. Torero told a news conference launching the report that reducing the number of people eating unhealthy diets "is a big challenge, because it's basically telling us that we have substantially to change the way we use our resources in the agricultural sector, in the agri-food system." According to the latest research, he said, between 691 million and 783 million people were chronically undernourished

in 2022, an average of 735 million which is 122 million more people than in 2019 before the COVID-19 pandemic began.

Torero said UN projections for 2030 indicate that 600 million people will still be suffering from chronic undernourishment in 2030, far from the UN development goal of achieving "Zero Hunger" by that date. In the report's foreword, the heads of FAO, the World Food Program, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the UN children's agency UNICEF and the World Health Organization wrote that achieving Zero Hunger "poses a daunting challenge." They called for redoubled efforts "to transform agri-food systems and leverage them" to reach the target.



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# Mega corruption scam and regulator's complicity

**T**HE Parliament Public Accounts Committee (PAC) to asked the NAB, the FIA and the Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) to probe and submit a report on 3 billion dollars loan issued to 620 borrowers during the PTI tenure. According to the reports, during the in-camera session the PAC was informed that on April 19, 2021, the Central Banks issued loans totalling \$3 billion to 620 borrowers/businessmen at a three to five percent interest rate. While the Chairman PAC claimed that the loan was given at a zero-interest rate for ten years. During the previous hearing at the PAC, the State Bank declined to reveal the names of 620 consumers who received zero-interest loans totaling \$3 billion from the Central Bank. Interestingly, Secretary Finance supported the State Bank's stance and told the PAC that under the 1956 Act, the Central Bank has the authority to launch such re-finance schemes. The Secretary Finance further endorsed the governor State Bank's decision that all information exchanged between the bank and customers were kept secret and could not be shared with anyone including the Parliament/ Public Representatives at the PAC.

An interesting and highly deplorable situation has emerged in the country which currently faces severe risks of economic default due to incapacity to pay foreign debt while Country's Central Bank and Finance Ministry claim impunity/ exemption from scrutiny and accountability. It was a living example of institutional corruption/ misconduct during which mafias interest completely align with Bureaucracy so that Esa supports Musa and both come to rescue each others. Realistically, the State Bank acts as Financial Regulator and implement rules and regulations to enhance transpracy, curb corruption and remove malpractices in financial and banking sectors but in our country it looks that the watchdog has complicit with the law abusers and trying to coverup corruption at the cost of it's prestige and credibility. Meanwhile, the level of the febliness and impotence of the Public Representatives and the parliament was that the government institutions refused to furnish report on the subject matter to the elected leadership in the country. In fact, \$3 billion is a huge money that constitute about 900 billion rupee in local currency while a single penny is more crucial for a dying economy like Pakistan whose leaders totally submitted to the IMF to unlock \$1.2 billion tranche from the global lender.

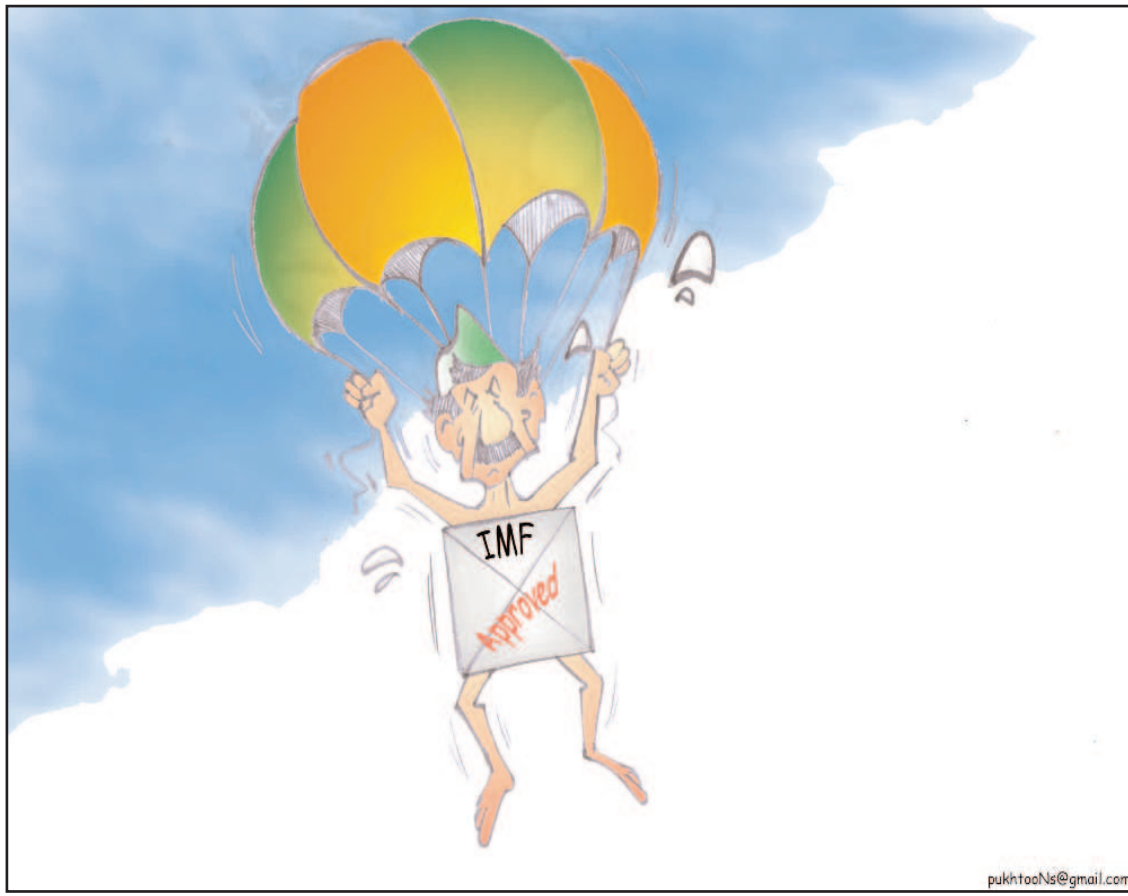
According to the reports the previous government has imburshed a bulk of money to local businesses during the COVID 19 pandemic to avoid disastrous effects of pandemic driven economic meltdown in the world. If that loan program was under the previous government COVID 19 Counter Pandemic strategy than why the State Bank and Finance Ministry was hiding the statistics and refused to share details of the beneficiaries of that plan, under which the federal government provided massive economic relief to multiple sectors under National Economic Recovery Plan to counter worst economic impact of the pandemic. In fact, it is the primary responsibility of the national institutions to keep their track straight and transparent which is the essence of national service and fundamental need of fiscal transparency in any nation.

Currently, the PAC has taken up the case of alleged corruption of \$3 billion in loan to 620 individuals or business entities and asked for a joint probe by the Superior Intelligence agencies and anti-money laundering watchdogs while the Auditor General was also tasked to unearth the facts behind this alleged mega corruption scam or otherwise. The Ministry of Finance and the State Bank should also cooperate with the Public Account Committee (PAC) because nothing is supreme than national interest and the Public representative have the authority to oversee the work of government servants while the bureaucrat baboons can't supercedes the public leaders.

At the same time, the politicians sitting in Public Accounts Committee must not politicize any scheme which had been launched with good intent in those dire situations and should act apolitical and on merit. The sloganeeing of corruption is an easy and most popular tact of the public leaders but it's proof is difficult and nerve testing. Apparently, the truth behind the \$3 billion loans and the names of over 600 lucky individuals will finally be exposed to the public. Hence, this scandal unveiled Pakistan's institutional flaws and bureaucracy misdeameanors which led the nation to this day.

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# Feminism should focus on reality, not narcissistic fantasy

Julie Bindel

**T**HESE days "intersectionality" seems to be the word on everyone's lips. It is parroted by experts and politicians in interviews, chanted by rallying activists, carried to headlines by journalists and scrawled in bold letters across campus walls by progressive students.

But what does this seemingly all-encompassing term really mean? "Intersectionality" was coined in 1989 by American civil rights activist and feminist legal scholar Kimberlé Crenshaw. In a recent interview with Time magazine, she described it simply as "a lens, a prism, for seeing the way in which various forms of inequality often operate together and exacerbate each other".

But in the three decades since its inception, there has been a major distortion in the meaning of the term. "My feminism will be intersectional, or it will be bullshit," cultural commentator Flavia Dzodan stated in a blog post in 2011. After the publication of the essay criticising the use of a racial slur by a participant in New York's "Slutwalk", the statement became a famed internet catchphrase – a rallying cry of sorts for so-called "modern feminists" critical of previous generations of feminism for being too concentrated on women's rights and male violence against women.

Dzodan, who advocates for blanket decriminalisation of the sex trade and labels those who want to abolish it "whorephobic", soon came to be seen as a leading representative of "intersectional feminism" and helped the term coined by Crenshaw slowly lose all its meaning.

In my view, Dzodan and supposed "intersectional feminists" like her, gravely misinterpret what Crenshaw meant by intersectionality. No one who truly understands intersectionality and wants to ease the overlapping effects of multiple forms of discrimination experienced by marginalised individuals, and especially marginalised women, could be supportive of the sex trade. Poor, Black, brown and Indigenous women are significantly overrepresented in global prostitution markets. I have interviewed dozens of women of colour

who have escaped the sex trade, all of whom told me sex buyers treat them with particular contempt. At its best, feminism has always adhered to the principle now known as intersectionality. Indeed, addressing the cumulative damage inflicted on marginalised individ-

uals by different forms of oppression (tied to race, disability and class as well as sex) has always been fundamental to the practice of most considerate feminists.

***Because of this new, warped understanding of "intersectionality", in the United Kingdom, we are now facing a reality where dozens of working-class lesbians, many of whom are of colour, are being accused, mostly by highly privileged, white students, of oppressing white natal males who identify as "non-binary", "asexual" or trans.***

But now, people are increasingly using the concept of "intersectionality" to describe the grievances they say they experience because of their self-identification as "polyamorous", "non-binary", "gender fluid" or some other novel identity or orientation. Meanwhile, the label "sex worker" is being sold to us as just another identity that is supposed to be embraced and protected under the umbrella of intersectional feminism. All this is an insult to the term coined by Crenshaw. Identity politics have created a new brand of feminism, and a new understanding of "intersectionality", that is nothing but an exercise in narcissism that centres the (privileged) individual and ignores true, institutional oppression.

Because of this new, warped understanding of "intersectionality", in the United Kingdom, we are now facing a reality where dozens of working-class lesbians, many of whom are of colour, are being accused, mostly by highly privileged, white students, of oppressing white natal males who identify as "non-binary", "asexual" or trans. We are being accused

of being "bigots" or "not real feminists" because we refuse to put the interests and feelings of male-born people of whatever identity above the needs of women and girls. When those students so attached to the "sex work is work" line use the concept of intersection-

sions on their shoulders, matter more than those hitting their heads on the corporate glass ceiling, complaining they earn "only one million" while their male counterparts earn much more. Not that those women are not victims of sexism – it's simply that their plight is clearly less urgent than that of women struggling to feed their children, facing racism and other forms of discrimination on top of the oppression they suffer for being female. What we call identity politics today, of which a distorted understanding of "intersectionality" has become a defining component, was born of the political left in the 1980s, in response to the majority of social justice movements of the time being dominated by white, middle-class men. This has always been a problem for the left: whilst the right is unapologetic about what it sees as the "natural order" of things (in which class and race privilege is simply a matter of fact rather than something to angst about) the left often claims to represent a wide intersection of communities in societies, even as its privileged proponents often make little effort to step away from the spotlight so that the marginalised can be seen and heard.

It is far from perfect, but in its long history, the feminist movement has never been one that is steered by the privileged. Feminism is a grassroots movement that began with women who had suffered the most horrendous oppression – such as domestic abuse, sexual assault and child abuse – demanding a platform to make their voices heard. Today, there are people (of both sexes) trying to lay claim to the "feminist" label and use the women's liberation movement as a vessel for their narcissism. They claim those who identify as "asexual" or "aromantic" are suffering some form of "oppression" akin to sexism or racism.

This is ludicrous and should be recognised as such. Behind all this needless noise, women and girls are still suffering from patriarchy and male violence. Let's return to the true and authentic meaning of intersectionality, and focus on reality – as opposed to narcissistic fantasy.

# We must tell it for her

Olesya Khromeychuk

Victoria was being shelled, Victoria travelled the globe telling international audiences about Ukrainian culture and warning of its destruction. Documenting stories of people she met in liberated territories, Victoria found a diary written by the writer and poet Volodymyr Vakulenko. He had buried it in his garden before he was kidnapped and murdered by the Russians in the first months of the full-scale invasion. His body was found in a mass burial site when the Ukrainian Armed Forces liberated the Kharkiv region.

Victoria made sure the world knew Vakulenko's story. Posting a selfie with the diary, rolled up and tightly wrapped in a plastic bag, she wrote: "The diary of Volodymyr Vakulenko as I found it in black Ukrainian soil on Sep 24, 2022, exactly half a year after Volodymyr had hidden it before being abducted and killed by the

occupiers. I keep telling myself the story of Volodymyr has nothing to do with me; but it does." On June 22, 2023, five days before the Kramatorsk shelling, Victoria spoke at the Book Arsenal, Kyiv's major literary festival, at the launch of Vakulenko's diary. "Vakulenko's memory lives," she wrote afterwards. Victoria was about to go to Paris for a residency to write a book about the crimes to which she had borne witness. She was determined to document the murder of Ukrainian creatives, to prevent the new "Executed Renaissance" as she referred to it, harking back to the 1930s when a whole generation of Ukrainian artists and authors was murdered by the Soviet regime.

When she spoke in London back in April, she evoked a famous quote by Mikhail Bulgakov, a representative of "great Russian culture" who lived in Kyiv but was an ardent opponent

# Defeat for Ukraine would be a global disaster

Simon Tisdall

**T**HE pressing question of Ukraine's membership is expected to dominate this week's pivotal summit of 31 Nato states in Vilnius, Lithuania's capital. Volodymyr Zelenskyy knows a gold-embossed official invite is unlikely to arrive while his country is still at war with Russia. But Ukraine's leader is urging US president Joe Biden and alliance leaders to take immediate "concrete steps", including security guarantees, a roadmap and timeline. Zelenskyy argues that would boost morale and send an implacable message to Vladimir Putin.

Zelenskyy is right. Like Finland, Ukraine's accession should be fast-tracked. Yet important though this issue is, Nato faces a far bigger question this week: whether it is doing enough to ensure Kyiv wins the war - or at least, doesn't lose. There's a risk, if the current counteroffensive produces no breakthrough, weapons supplies run short, a new winter energy crisis strikes and western public support drops further, that Zelenskyy will be forced into negotiations - even into trading territory for peace. Secret, informal US-Russia talks are already under way. If Ukraine were already a Nato member, as promised 15 years ago, all this would not be happening.

Yet even now, Biden is refusing to go beyond beefed-up, long-term "security commitments". Rishi Sunak says vaguely that Ukraine's "rightful place" is in Nato. France's president, Emmanuel Macron, is trying to have it both ways, as usual. Germany's reliably insipid chancellor, Olaf Scholz, won't discuss Kyiv's membership until the war is over. They claim to be acting responsibly. But this too-familiar milksoppery, which unnecessarily and unwisely restricts Nato's actions, is actually rooted in American and west European fears that Putin, provoked, might attack the west.

This is such facile thinking. Even when sober and with the wind behind it, Russia's blundering army could not beat Ukraine's 2nd XI. For all his threats, Putin fears Russia-Nato conflict, too. For him, it would be political and military suicide. The view from Nato's east is thankfully more robust. "I hear a lot [of countries] saying that we shouldn't do this or that because it provokes Putin or Russia and especially to use nuclear weapons," Kaja Kallas, Estonia's prime minister, said last week. "Those threats are to intimidate us. The definition of terrorism is to make us afraid so we refrain from the decisions we would otherwise make. And this is what they [Russia] are trying to do."

East European Nato members, clubbed together as the newly-formed "Bucharest Nine", issued a stirring call to arms last month, insisting that beating back Russian aggression was "the only way to restore peace and the rules-based order in Europe". The nine - Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania and Slovakia - all joined Nato after the 1991 Soviet collapse. They urged a "new political track that will lead to Ukraine's membership... once conditions allow". "We should not hesitate to take bolder decisions because otherwise the Putin regime will decide that the western allies are too weak (and

when) pushed to the corner, they will surrender." Lithuania's president and summit host, Gitanas Nausėda, said.

The main objection to this argument was summarised by the former US Nato ambassador Ivo Daalder. "The problem confronting Nato countries is that as long as the conflict continues, bringing Ukraine into the alliance is tantamount to joining the war," he warned. But there are precedents. West Germany gained Nato protection in 1955 even though, like Ukraine, it was in dispute over occupied sovereign territory - held by East Germany, a Soviet puppet. In similar fashion, Nato's defensive umbrella could reasonably be extended to cover the roughly 85% of Ukrainian territory Kyiv currently controls.

That would provide enhanced air, missile and drone defence without "joining the war". It would also allow a Nato military response if Russian forces, based in occupied territory or Black Sea waters, chose to launch additional, criminal attacks on civilians, like that which killed seven people in Lviv on Thursday. Anders Rasmussen, the former Nato secretary-general, recently raised the prospect of Poland and the Baltic states sending ground troops to help fight Russian forces on Ukrainian soil - if Nato as a whole failed to take a bolder line.

"I think the Poles would seriously consider going in and assemble a coalition of the willing if Ukraine doesn't get anything in Vilnius," Rasmussen said. "The Poles feel that for too long western Europe did not listen to their warnings against the true Russian mentality." That latter view is strongly endorsed by A Wess Mitchell, a former US assistant secretary of state, who maintains that some west European governments, prey to "old taboos against antagonising Russia", still don't really get it.

Although arms are flowing to Kyiv, promises to boost eastern flank defences "remain largely unfulfilled", Mitchell wrote. Since the start of the war, for example, France's troop presence in Nato's east has risen "from 300 to 969... and Italy's from 350 to 385". In contrast, "Nato's eastern members have undertaken historic build-ups that will see Poland soon possess more tanks than all of western Europe combined". Meanwhile, the US troop presence has risen from 5,000 to about 24,000.

Avoiding splits over Ukraine's (and Sweden's) membership is important. Infinitely more important is that all Nato countries fully grasp the wider implications of a Ukrainian failure to repel Russian aggression. If that happened, eastern and central Europe, the Nordic region and the Balkans would be destabilised. Nato would be forced on to a permanent war footing. International law would be shredded. A precedent would be set for China over Taiwan.

Ukraine would effectively be partitioned. And a gloating Putin and his gang, escaping justice, would be free to do it all again, there or somewhere else. So no more conditions, caveils and clever caveats, please. Nato must unleash its considerable power to ensure Ukrainian victory.

*The Guardian*

ible with life." He was a soldier of the Ukrainian armed forces, killed in action in 2017 near Popasna, a town 70 kilometers north-east of New York. If you were driving from one to the other, you'd go via Bakhmut. These once-obscure placenames of eastern Ukraine are now known all over the world. We recognise them because the Russians razed them to the ground. There's no Popasna left. Bakhmut looks like a post-apocalyptic wasteland. New York is still holding up, but no literary festival will be held there any time soon.

As with the towns that are no more, the world is learning the names of Ukrainian writers from their obituaries. And that is no way to discover a country's literature. We can keep telling ourselves that Victoria's story has nothing to do with us. But it does. We bear witness to her death like she bore witness to that of Vakulenko and many more killed in Russia's war. Bearing witness comes with the responsibility to ensure justice, and this is a responsibility we must embrace.



# In Ukraine I saw a brave but ravaged land in limbo

Timothy Garton Ash

**UNLESS the US gives bolder leadership on long-term security for Ukraine at Nato's Vilnius summit this week, historians may one day ask, "Who lost Ukraine?" And their shocking answer might be: President Joe Biden. I say this, after talking to a wide range of people in Kyiv last week, before departing Ukraine on Saturday, the 500th day of the largest war in Europe since 1945. There's still the extraordinary fighting spirit that I found on my last visit, in February. But in five months, some people seem to have aged five years. They are exhausted. The casualties, military and civilian, continue to mount.**

With other members of our European Council on Foreign Relations fact-finding mission, I witnessed prayers being chanted in St Michael's monastery over the coffin of the Ukrainian writer Victoria Amelina. As she was visiting Kramatorsk to document Russian war crimes, she herself became the victim of a Russian war crime. While the Biden administration worries at every single step about escalation, Vladimir Putin has continued to escalate - notably with the blowing-up of the Kakhovka dam, which has ruined vast tracts of Ukrainian land. Ecocide complements genocide. In a recent poll, 78% of Ukrainians said close family members or friends had been wounded or killed since Russia's full-scale invasion last year. The pain is partly masked by the adrenaline of resistance, but after the war, the country will face widespread trauma. A priest told us about a soldier who returned after some months at the front, but could not sleep. Back home, it was just too quiet.

Senior defence officials frankly acknowledged how slowly this summer's counteroffensive was

progressing, especially against Russia's minefields and multiple lines of anti-tank defences in the south. The big combined arms push by western-trained and equipped brigades is yet to come, but in this kind of warfare the advantage lies with entrenched defence. Crucially, Russia is stronger in the skies. Hence the constant Ukrainian insistence on the need for more air defence systems - and F-16 fighter jets. In a survey this May, 87% of Ukrainians said they were optimistic about their country's future, but there's an increasingly sober mood in private. We were told that as many as one in every five Ukrainian children is now outside the country. Tymofiy Mylovanov, the president of Kyiv School of Economics, shared with us its projection that on current trends the workforce would be reduced by as much as a third over the next few years. It's a daunting challenge to produce the jobs, housing and schools without which millions of Ukrainians will not return from abroad.

So when I say, "Who lost Ukraine?", I don't mean losing the war. I mean losing the peace: a country exhausted, ravaged, traumatised, still robbed of some of its territory, a land in limbo. For this is now Putin's brutal, vengeful objective: if he can't force Ukraine back into the Russian empire, he will try to ruin it. Here's where the buck comes back to the US. Its military support is essential for Ukraine to win the war. Long-term security is essential for Ukraine to win the peace. Without security, there will be little investment, fewer returnees, no successful reconstruction. And that ultimately means Nato membership for Ukraine is critical.

While US military and economic assistance to Ukraine has

been massive and indispensable, Europe is now ahead of the US in its strategic stance towards the embattled country. The EU has done what Nato has not: unambiguously committed to Ukrainian membership. As elsewhere in central and eastern Europe since 1989, this is already having a transformative impact on the country's politics and policies. For everyone in Ukraine now has this big shared goal of "joining Europe". Non-governmental experts and activists told us they actually wanted tougher EU conditionality, to fight corruption, strengthen the rule of law and improve governance. The EU's four-year, 50bn support package is framing a domestic agenda of reconstruction and reform. Europeans are also ahead when it comes to calling for a strong statement from the Vilnius summit on Ukraine's future Nato membership. And that's not just the central and eastern Europeans. In what one Kyiv thinktank called a "magic transformation" of the French position, President Emmanuel Macron has come out strongly in favour. Germany is more hesitant, but Kyiv's biggest problem is now in Washington. Ukrainians are realistic. They know they can't join Nato while there's a war on. They want what they call a "political invitation", which would be implemented only when conditions are right. As a bridge to that moment, they seek security commitments from leading Nato powers such as the US, Britain, France and Germany. These are sometimes called "security guarantees", but as one expert explained, a more accurate description would be "security assistance guarantees". Those powers would undertake to go on supplying the military means necessary for Ukraine to fight off the

aggressor. This would be something like what the US does for Israel, but from multiple partners and with a clear path to eventual Nato membership.

At the time of writing, Biden is still not there. On Sunday, he told the CNN journalist Fareed Zakaria that Ukraine was not ready for Nato membership and that Israel-style security arrangements should be available "if there is a ceasefire, if there is a peace agreement". He emphasised the word "if". Cross-checking this with public and private statements by senior US officials, one detects a rather hard-nosed stance. Nato membership is to be deployed as a future reward for Ukraine negotiating the best peace it can get, probably accepting some significant loss of territory. If this were to be the outcome of the Vilnius summit, there would be massive disappointment in Ukraine. (The morally dubious gift of American cluster bombs is no substitute for long-term security commitments, and only confuses the debate.) We already heard indications in Kyiv of growing anger against the west. Left to fight on alone for another 500 days, without a firm promise of future security, even the bravest of the brave would find it difficult to rebuild their battered, exhausted, traumatised country. But if the west gives Ukraine the military means to win this war, adding a firm promise of future Nato membership when it's over, then the US will end up with a Europe much more capable of defending itself against a weakened Russia. The US will then be able to devote more of its own resources to the geostrategic threat from China. The final decision will only be taken this week, over the leaders' table in Vilnius. Come on, Mr President, do the right, the bold, the truly strategic thing. History is watching you.

The Guardian

# EU states should be increasing migration, not fighting to curb it

Ranvir Nayar

**THE wave of violence that gripped France for more than a week following the police shooting of Nahel Merzouk, a 17-year-old of North African descent, has sparked yet another virulent debate on migration. Right-wing and far-right politicians across Europe are blaming the violence on migrants and calling for an overhaul of "lax" migration laws, which allow "millions of troublesome migrants" with "alien cultures and values" to "invade" the continent.**

Coincidentally and entirely unrelated to the violence, the French government has drawn up a draft bill on immigration reform, which was presented to the French Cabinet in February. Predictably, there have been calls to thoroughly review the bill and curb future migration. The right deems that the bill, which aims to regulate the migration of skilled workers, will open the doors wide for all kinds of migrants, while the left cites the tightened deportation norms as going against the basic tenets of French values. Although the recent violence remained largely limited to France, conservatives across Europe have jumped on the opportunity it presented to trash migrants - especially Muslim migrants - and blame them for the violence.

Far-right politicians across the continent have seized on the civil unrest in France to demand that the EU toughen its migration policy. The bloc last month approved a mandatory quota system for migrants and asylum seekers, with countries that refuse to receive any refugees needing to pay so that they can be accommodated in other states. Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki rejected the proposed new rules, which were backed by a majority but were opposed by Hungary and Poland at a summit of EU leaders. Morawiecki is hardly the sole EU politician calling for the bloc to shut its doors even more tightly. There have been similar calls made across Europe, notably in Italy, Hungary, Spain, Sweden and Belgium.

Practically, all those

calling for harsher immigration laws on the basis of the violence in France have conveniently ignored that France has witnessed several rounds of violent clashes between the authorities and a sizable section of society over what is perceived to be the high-handed approach of the president toward the French people. In March, Britain's King Charles was forced to call off his first international visit as the head of the British monarchy due to violence resulting from the president's highly unpopular pension reforms. The conservatives may also want to remember the months-long violent protests by the "Yellow Vests," who brought the entire country to its knees for weeks as they protested Macron's policies that seemingly favored the rich over the poor, especially those in semi-urban and rural France.

In both of these and many other protests, the protesters were mainly ordinary people who have been citizens of France for decades, if not longer, rather than some newly arrived refugees or illegal immigrants. But politicizing apart, European leaders know - or at least ought to acknowledge - that, instead of closing the doors of Europe to a broad segment of migrants, they need to urgently not just open their doors wider but also make their nations more welcoming and attractive for migrants.

Europe has been facing a severe shortage of workers for many years. Countries' rapidly aging populations have left far fewer working age people than retirees. And some nations, notably Poland, Italy and Hungary, have actually seen a decline in their population. With birth rates falling across the continent, the situation is likely to be similar in most other member countries. Alarm bells over worker shortages have been ringing for many years, but the situation has become critical, at least in some sectors, since the COVID-19 pandemic, which saw working populations shrink dramatically as millions decided to opt for early retirement. Meanwhile, millions of others, notably long-term

migrants, moved back to their home countries, leaving tens of millions of positions empty across the entire spectrum of the developed countries' economies.

Many sectors are feeling the pinch, notably hospitality, healthcare, transport, agriculture and construction, as the locals prefer to stay away from work rather than do so-called menial jobs. Many reports suggest that the hospitality sector, for instance, has more than 5 million positions that have remained unfilled since the end of pandemic-induced lockdowns. Similarly, farmers across Europe have been complaining that they can no longer find enough seasonal workers, even after offering greater remuneration. There is hardly a sector that has remained untouched by this crisis and, while automation and artificial intelligence can help ease the shortage in some sectors, like agriculture, banking or manufacturing, in many others, especially healthcare and hospitality, humans are unlikely to be replaced by machines or software any time soon.

Thus, instead of cutting their nose off to spite their face, European politicians should rapidly revisit their opposition to migration and find other solutions to allow in a greater number of people - and not just well-educated ones - since their economies need all kinds of positions to be filled. Another reason why they should open their doors is related to human values. Over the past decade, Europe has seen large numbers of deaths as migrants try to cross the Mediterranean Sea on dilapidated boats. Human rights organizations have accused Europe of turning a blind eye to the thousands of deaths at its doorstep, allowing women, children and men to perish in the seas, and even going so far as stopping groups from mounting rescue operations. Saving lives on the high seas is not just a humanitarian gesture but also an obligation under several international treaties, which the European nations signed decades ago. It is time European leaders were held accountable for their actions, or even the lack thereof.

# Putin faces a challenging task that threatens his power

Frida Ghitis

**RUSSIAN President Vladimir Putin did his best this week to make the case that he is firmly in control of Russia, but within 24 hours after he spoke on Tuesday to the leaders of China, India and other members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), the reality on the ground told a different story.**

In a disturbing coda to his diplomatic push at the SCO summit, the Russian capital appeared to come under attack, with Russian officials saying they shot down several drones in the outskirts of Moscow, but not before being forced to briefly close down the airport. Then there was the news that the mercenary chief of the Wagner Group, Yevgeny Prigozhin - Putin's former friend who led a dramatic insurrection less than two weeks ago and was supposed to have moved into exile - was back in Russia.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko confirmed the reports from Russian media, saying Prigozhin was back in St. Petersburg and had left Belarus, where he was supposed to stay according to the terms of an agreement with Putin, which now appears to be in limbo. The Russian president needs to restore his image of a man in full command of his country to audiences at home and abroad. The SCO meeting was meant to boost that effort before both audiences, but the results, combined with the recent headlines and developments on the ground, are pulling the rug out from a man who is used to swaggering on it.

The SCO, a China-led bloc designed as a counterweight to US-led groupings, seemed like an ideal forum for Putin's first international appearance since Prigozhin's mutiny. Putin survived what was the most serious challenge to his

23-year rule. But his aura of self-assured invincibility evaporated in the process. With his unprovoked invasion of Ukraine triggering economic sanctions and global isolation, it has become vital for Putin to convince Chinese President Xi Jinping, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and other SCO members - including its newest one, Iran - that he is still charting Russia's future.

China's, and to a lesser extent, India's purchases of Russian oil have financed Russia's costly attempt at military expansion in Ukraine. Iran has provided drones, and India, a major buyer of Russian weapons, has subtly undercut the West's narrative in developing countries with its ambivalent stance, refraining from acknowledging that Putin has tried to conquer Ukraine, a move that reeks of imperialism. Speaking at the summit, Putin tried to reinforce the message he had delivered to the Russian people, the claim that all Russians had stood with him. "The solidarity," he said, "was clearly demonstrated by Russian political circles and the entire society by coming out as a united front against the attempted armed rebellion."

The reality, however, was quite different. Prigozhin claimed his men faced no resistance as they captured Rostov, a major city bordering Ukraine in the west, took over the military headquarters there and then marched almost unopposed to within 125 miles of Moscow. The Russian people stayed home. Some joked about getting popcorn to watch the crisis unfold. It wasn't just his use of "alternative facts" that undermined Putin's effort to leverage the SCO summit into a place to restore his standing as Russia's czar for the foreseeable future. While the event

was a high-level meeting, it lost much of its diplomatic muscle when the host, Modi, decided to hold it virtually, instead of bringing the leaders to New Delhi.

If able to make his case in person, Putin would have spoken at length with Modi, Xi, Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and others. That, instead of a swift three-hour on camera gathering, could have helped strengthen ties. An in-person meeting would have also provided the images that turn international diplomacy into domestic power. Instead of images of Putin raising a glass alongside other world leaders, shaking hands with other strongmen, audiences who could muster an interest in the event could see the familiar, uninspiring boxes of a video call.

Not that Putin would have been prepared to travel. As rulers throughout history have learned, a propitious time for a coup is when the leader is away. In fact, in the aftermath of the Prigozhin uprising, Putin has echoed the traditional strongman's playbook of buying loyalty. He moved quickly to boost salaries and weapons supplies to the wide variety of security forces that surround him. He even took the extremely rare step of wading into a crowd in the southern Republic of Dagestan to meet (presumably handpicked) supporters.

At the same time, he is continuing to wrap himself in a personal protective shield. The cartoonishly long conference tables he used to keep Covid-19 away are not as visible, but he still reportedly requires several days of quarantine before he allows some of those who meet with him to approach. And he has a special service, the Biological Safety Centre, making sure his food is not poisoned, according to a defector from the agency responsible for his security.

To survive, however, Putin needs more than safe food, a Covid-free environment and loyal security services. He also needs to rebuild his image. Persuading Asia's giants that he remains the mighty leader of a powerful nation is also crucial. And that project is faltering.

Just after the summit - curious timing - a leak from China confirmed that Xi personally told Putin not to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine when he visited Moscow in March, according to the Financial Times. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said he couldn't confirm the detail and called all other reports of Xi's visit to Moscow "fiction." The news comes at a time when Russia and Ukraine are accusing each other of plans to target the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, which is currently occupied by Russian forces. It's hard to imagine Ukraine deliberately spreading radiation in territory it is fighting to retake. At the same time, Russia has a history of blaming others for incidents it creates, as false flag attacks.

Russia's diplomatic efforts in Asia are also facing pressure from the US, which has launched a simultaneous campaign of its own. India's Modi was just honored in Washington with a state dinner and a speech to Congress. And the US is working to contain the deterioration of relations with China. Secretary of State Antony Blinken visited Beijing last month. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen is there this week. Putin now faces a triple task: reclaiming the mantle of invincibility in Russia, rebuilding that image abroad and winning his calamitous war in Ukraine. None of these challenges existed before February 2022. They are problems of his own making. Like never before, all are wondering how long Putin can stay in power.

CNN

# Nigeria's electoral body begins review of elections amid court challenges

Timothy Obiezu

**NIGERIA'S Electoral Commission this week began its monthlong review of the presidential and local elections held in February and March of 2023. The voting was marred by violence and technical glitches, and was considered among the most controversial in the country's recent history.**

Mahmood Yakubu, chair of the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), met with state electoral officials Tuesday in the capital. While praising INEC's successful deployment of the voter accreditation system, Yakubu said INEC will evaluate its operations and the effectiveness of technologies used in the process. Yakubu said the exercise will be carried out without bias and that INEC will make its findings public.

"The time has come for introspection, stocktaking, review and evaluation," Yakubu told journalists. "Since the conclusion of the elections, diverse opinions have been expressed by political parties, candidates [and] observers, and the

commission welcomed all of them as far as their purpose is to improve the conduct of elections and consolidate our democracy." Officials said INEC has received 54 reports from various observer missions regarding the way in which the election was conducted. The review is beginning a week after the European Union observer mission published its final report on the elections, prompting some debate.

The EU said elections did not ensure the well-run, transparent, and inclusive democratic process that the INEC had promised. It also said public confidence and trust in the INEC were severely damaged during the presidential poll and were not restored in state-level elections. In addition, the report cited security issues, noting the political atmosphere was exceptionally tense prior to the election. The Nigerian presidency this week rejected the EU's report. However, Idayat Hassan, director at the Center for Democracy and

Development, said the report was correct in citing an already challenging political environment even before the elections. "INEC overpromised and they underdelivered, nobody is taking that away, [but] it should take into cognizance the prevailing factors surrounding this election," Hassan said. "For instance, this election held against the backdrop of fuel and Naira scarcities, it dampened the morale of Nigerians, it suppressed their ability to move to different parts of the country to even participate."

Hassan said INEC must carry out the review in a broader context, including previous elections, and its collaborations with security agencies and other stakeholders. The February 25 and March presidential and subnational polls were marred by violence that left at least 21 people dead. There also were operational difficulties and logistics issues, and observers allege that voting was suppressed in some states. Emmanuel Njoku of the

nonprofit Connected Development, one of the election observers, said the INEC lacked the expertise to conduct elections, and he faults their appointment process. "You can review yourself, but you cannot score yourself in an examination. If the European Union has given a report, that is what they've observed, and for us at Connected Development, we align with a couple of the things that they reported. They worked closely with us. Beyond the technical glitch at the headquarters, the issue around logistics and operational failure, they [INEC] failed woefully," Njoku said.

INEC has been evaluating its performance in elections since 2011. The commission is also reviewing evidence of infractions in more than 200 investigations concluded by the police, including cases involving high-ranking officials. Meanwhile, an appeals court in Abuja closed the defense hearing Wednesday for lawsuits challenging Bola Tinubu's election by the opposition groups. The court will resume later this month.

# My trafficker is behind bars

Anonymous

**I REMEMBER the day I decided I was finally ready to report my trafficker's abuse after the false promise of a job turned into sexual exploitation. It was September 2018, and a woman from the organisation Women at the Well, which provides support to people affected by trafficking, came out to meet me at Starbucks with a notepad.**

I told her going to the police was the last thing I wanted to do. I worried about what he would do if he found out, if his other victims would be OK, whether I had broken the law and would be deported. But mostly I just wondered if anyone would believe me. My ability to trust people was almost nil: after all, my trafficker had proven to me that I shouldn't trust anyone. The organisation supported me to report my experiences to the police and begin the recovery process. It also referred me to the Home Office, which recognised me as a potential victim of trafficking and provided me with further assistance, including safe-house accommodation, and legal and subsistence support. Importantly, after the initial decision recognising me as the potential victim of trafficking, I was allowed to stay in the country, at least until the final decision on conclusive grounds was made. What followed was a traumatic four and half years of going through the criminal justice system before my day in court finally came. I remember the usher saying to me: "You are the single most important person in this room right now, and without you, this trial would not be happening." In trafficking, generally there is no prosecution without a witness. With my commitment to see justice served, a dan-

gerous man was successfully removed from the streets and sentenced.

Following my experiences, I feel safe now that my trafficker is behind bars. He can't hurt anyone any more. That's the most important thing to me. I have been able to take back my sense of agency, reintegrate into society and support myself independently. Healing from my experiences and moving forward with my life would not have been possible without the help I received. I am here today, safe and healthy, thanks to professionals from NGOs and local authorities. If I had gone through this journey five years later, under the proposed illegal migration bill, which is back in the Commons today after amendments in the Lords, there is a chance my story could have ended very differently. In fact, my trafficker would still be walking the streets today.

The legislation is designed to detain and remove from the UK those who have arrived here via irregular routes, including potential survivors of modern slavery. The bill sets out that those who arrive irregularly will be detained and removed from the UK. According to an analysis of the bill, carried out by the Modern Slavery and Human Rights Policy and Evidence Centre, to which I contributed, this could have devastating consequences by limiting survivors' ability to report their traffickers and access the support they need. Many people will be scared of coming forward to the authorities to be identified out of fear of being detained and removed rather than protected - exactly the threat traffickers use to control those who they exploit.

Under these conditions, I would not have been able

to help send my trafficker to jail. The home secretary could decide that it's absolutely necessary for trafficking victims to stay in the country to support a prosecution - but the bill specifically creates a presumption that survivors' presence in the UK is not required to provide this support. When you watch police dramas, they don't show you the merry-go-round of interviews, the sudden call to provide a piece of evidence or pop into the police station to sign a paper. Having lived through five years of this, I can confirm that it is tantamount to a part-time job. The idea that I could do this from the other side of the world, where my morning would be the officers' bedtime, is laughable.

Perhaps even more importantly, it would have been near to impossible to access the specialist support I needed and deserved. In my home country, there is still no law addressing trafficking happening on its own soil, let alone provisions for citizens returning to recover from these experiences. I doubt I would have been able to access therapy, accommodation and the many other things I needed to begin my journey to recovery.

If I had gone home I would have taken a broken chapter of my life with me, with no chance of changing my story. The bill is at odds with the compassion I have received from British people, which helped me turn my trauma into a story of my strength. Britain has long been proud of providing support and protection to people who are in need. For people who experienced modern slavery, it has built a support system that - although imperfect - has been leading the way for the rest of the world. Is the UK really prepared to dismantle it now?



# Need stressed for further strengthening Pak-Iran trade, diplomatic ties

ISLAMABAD (APP): Speaking on this occasion, the Iranian Ambassador said that the new changes taking place in the region were a great opportunity for Pakistan and Iran, adding that with the improvement in Iran-Saudi relations, a new era of peace, development and prosperity was beginning.

Pakistan and Iran need to take advantage of these opportunities together, he said adding that trade between Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan and Russia in local currencies will benefit all regional countries. He said that the current trade volume between Iran and Pakistan can be increased through the exchange of rice, meat, sports goods, surgical instruments, fruits, dry fruits, agricultural implements, energy and other commodities.

He said that direct flights should be started between Islamabad and Tehran so that the large population of the two countries consisting of more than 300 million can benefit from the opportunities in each other countries. There is a need to improve the road and rail system between both countries.

Speaking on the occasion, Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari said that Pakistan and Iran have not only shared the border, but both countries are connected by mutual historical and cultural ties.

Both countries have actively supported each other in every difficult time, he said adding that the warmth of existing relations needed to be used to promote trade and business.

The development and prosperity of Pakistan and Iran were interlinked, he said adding that direct air connectivity, rail and road systems must be improved and strengthened on a priority basis to promote trade and investment relations between the two countries.

He also urged the need for forming a joint plan of action, besides the exchange of trade delegations of the two countries on a regular basis to enhance business-to-business interaction.

## Decade-long CPEC brings Chinese companies, technologies to Pakistan

BEIJING (APP): Thanks to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), Pakistan is now slowly moving from imported fuels to local fuel for power generation and from outdated technology to new Chinese technology, Minister for Power, Khurram Dastgir Khan has said.

"This shift is happening and Chinese companies are much more visible now. They are bringing their technology, their management to Pakistan, and they are teaching Pakistani engineers and workers," he told Xinhua in a recent interview at a power transmission project under the CPEC.

The deeper penetration of Chinese companies into the energy sector was one of the major positive developments that had happened in the country as a result of CPEC, Khan said.

Highlighting the prospects of the transmission network, he said that 660kV Matiari-Lahore high-voltage direct current transmission project under

## \$4.2 billion credited to Pakistan in three days, says Bilal Azhar

ISLAMABAD (APP): Coordinator to Prime Minister on Economy and Energy Bilal Azhar Kayani on Thursday said that \$4.2 billion have been credited to Pakistan in last 3 days from Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates (UAE), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Giving breakup figures, the coordinator tweeted that \$2 billion were received from Saudi Arabia, \$1 billion from UAE and \$1.2 billion from IMF.

He said that Minister for Finance and Revenue

## High Commissioner of Ghana to Pakistan visited SCCI

SIALKOT (APP): High Commissioner of Ghana to Pakistan Eric Owusu Boateng visited Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry, President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik welcomed the distinguished guest.

Addressing an important meeting with the Sialkot business community at

### Court Notice

In the Court of Saima Ehsan Civil Judge II/Allaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar.Case No.21/12-2 Institution.28/11/2022. Date of hearing, 22/7/2023. Bakhti Raj VS Abdul Rashid etc.Notice to 3/2.Manzor.3/4.Irshad.3/5. Nisar sons ofMohamad Rashed.5/2.Abdul Jalel s/o Abdul Malik.7/1. Abdul Mutalib.7/5.Mst Namroza d/o Waris Khan. 8/1.Asim.8/4.Abid.8/5.Bakht Raj sons of Nor Ali.9/1/4. Mst Bihaz Bibi.9/4.Said Akbar Khan s/o Nor Ali.10.Kamen Kgan s/o Hudi Khan.11. Norsha Ali Khan s/o Wasal Khan.12.Gul Safdar s/o Wali Khan.13. Wahedullah.14.Serajuden. 15.Amanullah Khan sons of Amer Abdullah Khan. 4/2. Mohamad Sajid s/o Fared residents of Daggar Kalay tehsel Daggar district Buner. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendants will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8. am dated 22/7/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

### Court Notice

In the Court of Madeha Rehman Khan senior Civil Judge (Family) Buner at Daggar.case No.141/FC. Institution 12/6/2023. Date of hearing, 29/7/2023. Saliha VS Hazrat Husain. Notice to Hazrat Husain s/o Shah Said resident of Sur Kamar Mera in the limit of Kalpani tehsel Gagra Buner at present Abha Riadh Saudi Arabia. Whereas in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendant can not be served in the ordinary way, it is, therefore, proclaimed that if the said defendant will/shall not appear personally or through dually authorized agent or pleader in the court at 8. am dated 29/7/2023 the proceeding will be taken ex- parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.

SCCI Auditorium here on Thursday, High Commissioner of Ghana to Pakistan Eric Owusu Boateng acknowledged the need to transform economic and political relations into stronger economic ties. He emphasized the importance of facilitating direct trade and addressing challenges like indirect sourcing and limited export channels.

He expressed his commitment to working closely with SCCI, promoting cooperation, exchanging information, and identifying tradable products.

While appreciating the

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Universal Service Fund (USF) has awarded a con-

tract worth approximately PKR 6.78 billion to Ufone for providing High-Speed Mobile Broadband services in the Sibbi district of Balochistan province and Motorway M-8.

Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Syed Amin Ul Haque and Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Agha Hassan Baloch witnessed the contract signing ceremony and launch of the Research Impact Assessment Study here on Thursday.

Haaris Mahmood Chaudhary, CEO of USF, signed the contract with Hatem Bamatraf, President and Group CEO, PTCL & Ufone 4G.

While addressing the ceremony, the minister said, "We are gathered here today to commemorate the signing ceremony of two new projects that target the provision of uninterrupted voice and 4G broadband data services in Balochistan. One of these projects is worth Rs.. 1.96



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for IT & Telecommunication Syed Amin Ul Haque and Federal Minister for Science & Technology Agha Hassan Baloch witnessing contract signing of High Speed Mobile Broadband Projects for Balochistan.

## Gold rates up by Rs4,000 to 208,400/tola

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs4,00 and was sold at Rs208,000 on Thursday against its sale at Rs204,000 previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs3429 to Rs178,326 from Rs174,897 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs163,466 from Rs160,322, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola silver increased by Rs50 to Rs2,600 whereas that of ten gram silver went up by Rs42.87 to Rs2,229.08.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$13 to \$1959 from \$1946, the association reported.

## US stocks jump after encouraging CPI report

NEW YORK (APP): US stocks jumped on Wednesday after new inflation data came in cooler than Wall Street expected and raised hopes that the Federal Reserve's rate hike cycle may be nearing its end.

The Dow Jones Industrial Average rose 86.01 points, or 0.25 percent, to 34,347.43. The S&P 500 added 32.90 points, or 0.74 percent, to 4,472.16.

The Nasdaq Composite Index increased 158.26 points, or 1.15 percent, to 13,918.96.

Nine of the 11 primary S&P 500 sectors ended in green, with communication services and utilities leading the gainers by rising 1.51 percent and 1.47 percent, respectively.

Meanwhile, health and industrials fell 0.28 percent and 0.20 percent, respectively.

US stocks rose and bond yields fell after crucial June inflation report came out on Wednesday. The US Bureau of Labor Statistics reported that the consumer price index (CPI) rose 3.0 percent on a yearly basis in June, lower than market expectations of 3.1 percent, marking the lowest level since March 2021. On a monthly basis, the index increased 0.2 percent, also below market expectations of 0.3 percent.

## Stock Exchange loses 247 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Thursday, losing 247.99 points, a negative change of 0.54 percent, closing at 45,266.96 points against 45,514.95 points the previous trading day.

A total of 489,176,319 shares were traded during the day as compared to 450,259,607 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs14,543 billion against Rs 13.139 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 362 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 142 of them recorded gains and 191 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 29 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 55,536,051

## Kashif highlights importance new trends in furniture industry

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Executive Officer Pakistan Furniture Council Mian Kashif Ashfaq on Thursday said that new trends and modern designs are essential for gaining a competitive edge, driving sales and profitability, enhancing brand image, embracing sustainability, leveraging technology, and expanding into international markets.

Talking to a delegation of women entrepreneurs and furniture manufacturers led by Ms Nida Ejaz, he said by embracing these trends, furniture manufacturers can thrive in a dynamic and evolving industry, said a news release issued here.

Modern furniture designs often incorporate technological advancements to provide enhanced functionality and convenience, he added.

He said that the integration of features like smart furniture, wireless charging, and Internet of Things (IoT) connectivity can make furniture more appealing to tech-savvy

## Tokyo stocks end higher on slowing US inflation

TOKYO (APP): Tokyo stocks closed higher Thursday after Wall Street extended gains on slowing US consumer inflation.

The 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average advanced 475.40 points, or 1.49 percent, from Wednesday to finish at 32,419.33.

The broader Topix index also went up, closing 21.51 points, or 0.97 percent, higher at 2,242.99.

Stocks received a boost from Wall Street gains overnight after US data showed the consumer price index climbed only 3 percent in June from a year earlier, its lowest reading since March 2021.

Gainers were led by service, electric appliance, and precision instrument shares.

Among heavyweight semiconductor stocks, Advantest jumped 755 yen, or 3.8 percent, to 20,540 yen, while Tokyo Electron increased 395 yen, or 2.0 percent, to 19,840 yen.

Sony Group was up 560 yen, or 4.5 percent, at 13,010 yen following news that the Japanese electronics giant plans to invest around 300 billion yen in gaming research and development in the fiscal year ending March 2024.

## USF awards contract worth Rs6.78b for broadband services

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Universal Service Fund (USF) has awarded a contract worth approximately PKR 6.78 billion to Ufone for providing High-Speed Mobile Broadband services in the Sibbi district of Balochistan province and Motorway M-8.

Federal Minister for Information Technology and Telecommunication, Syed Amin Ul Haque and Federal Minister for Science and Technology, Agha Hassan Baloch witnessed the contract signing ceremony and launch of the Research Impact Assessment Study here on Thursday.

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In brief

‘Sports activities to be promoted’

DERA ISMAIL KHAN (APP): Vice-Chancellor Agriculture University Professor Dr. Shakibullah on Thursday underlined the need for promoting sports activities among the youth for their healthy personality development. He said that unfortunately, sports was declined to grounds as youth was so engrossed with IT gadgets playing games, so they had to be encouraged towards sports grounds by providing them more sports facilities to strengthen their physical as well as mental abilities. In a statement issued here, Professor Dr. Shakibullah said that Agriculture University in this regard was providing modern equal sports facilities to both male and female students. Besides, he said the University is also focusing on promoting research-based knowledge to equip students with education compatible with market requirements. He appreciated the efforts of the Agricultural University in achieving agricultural development and food security. He expressed the hope that in the coming years, the University would become the country's best institution.

National Jiu Jitsu Championship

PESHAWAR (APP): The 14th edition of the National Jiu Jitsu Championship will start in Abbottabad from tomorrow on Friday, in which male and female teams from all over the country will participate. The Championship will continue for three days. Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Jiu Jitsu Association Tahseenullah Khan told while talking to media persons here Thursday. He said that the Championship will start under the supervision of the Pakistan Jiu Jitsu Federation and the Provincial Jujitsu Association. He said that in the 14th edition of the Championship, teams from Punjab, Sindh, Balochistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Departmental teams would take part for which all arrangements would be made well before the commencement of the Championship. He said all arrangements have been made for the players to accommodate them accordingly and for this purpose, he said, accommodation has been made in the hotels for the teams coming from all the other provinces including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. He said the team managers will meet on Friday morning and the opening ceremony will be organized on Friday afternoon. Tehseenullah thanked the two times gold medals Karate player and coach Khalid Noor and the internationally qualified karate coach Shah Faisal for extending their all out support to him for the smooth conduct of the Championship.

Women cricketers begin training

KARACHI (APP): Pakistan Women Cricketers Team began their training at a Skills Camp set up at the Hanif Mohammed High Performance Centre here on Thursday. According to a PCB Spokesman, 20 women cricketers including Captain Nida Dar took part in the training session. The second five-day skills camp will continue from July 13-17. Earlier, the first skills camp was set up at the National Cricket Academy Lahore from July 5 to July 9.

# Vondrousova downs Svitolina to reach Wimbledon final

LONDON (AFP/APP): Marketa Vondrousova of the Czech Republic became the first unseeded player in 60 years to reach the Wimbledon women's final on Thursday, crushing the title dreams of Ukraine's Elina Svitolina. World number 42 Vondrousova came through 6-3, 6-3 and will face either second-ranked Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus or last year's runner-up Ons Jabeur on Thursday.

Left-hander Vondrousova will be playing in her second Grand Slam final after finishing runner-up at the 2019 French Open. The 24-year-old was rewarded for her attacking approach, breaking serve six times and unleashing 22 winners to

Svitolina's nine. "I cannot believe it. I am very happy that I made the final. Elina is such a fighter and a great person. It was a tough match," said the Czech. "I was crazy nervous. I was nervous the whole match. I was leading 4-0 in the second set and she fought back." Reaching the final comes after a miserable time for the Czech -- she underwent a second surgery on her wrist last year, which ruled her out for most of 2022. "I didn't play for six months last year and you never know if you can be at that level again," she said. "I'm so happy to be back out here." Svitolina, taking part in her second succes-

sive Grand Slam semi-final since returning from maternity leave in April, dropped serve three times in the opening set. She managed to retrieve the first to level at 3-3 but the Czech broke again in the seventh and ninth games to edge ahead in the tie. An error-plagued Svitolina quickly fell 4-0 down in the second set. However, Vondrousova, who had seen off four seeded players to reach the semi-finals, suddenly suffered mid-set jitters as she handed back the breaks to allow Svitolina to pull to 3-4. Svitolina then undid all her hard work to be broken again in the eighth game before pushing a forehand long to hand her opponent a place in the final.

## Wahab visits Summer Camps, reviews facilities

LAHORE (APP): Adviser to the Chief Minister Punjab on Sports and Youth Affairs Wahab Riaz visited Nishtar Park Sports Complex Gymnasium Hall to witness Sports Board Punjab's Summer Camps of six games on Thursday. Wahab Riaz visited badminton, wushu, taekwondo, self-defence, karate and gymnastics training camps and played wushu and badminton with young camp participants. He said that it was very pleasant feeling to play wushu and badminton with young players. Wahab Riaz watched young camp participants taking part in training camps under the supervision of expert coaches and had group photographs with them. He also praised the training techniques of expert coaches and keen involve-

ment of young participants. Besides this, he has chit chat Advise with young male and female camp probables and their parents and enquired about the standard of training and facilities being provided to them during Summer Camps. Speaking on the occasion, he said that the mega Summer Camp is being organized to provide an opportunity to young players to keep themselves busy in healthy sports activities during their summer vacations. He expressed his hope that several talented players would emerge from different games in this Summer Camp. Wahab Riaz said the prime objective of Summer Camps is to engage maximum school-going children in sports activities and provide them an opportunity to play mul-

tiiple games under one roof. "This healthy practice will definitely develop the interest and passion of sports among the young generation" he added. He said "Holding of Summer Camps is a useful development and we will try to continue this activity even after the resumption of academic activities in schools". Sports Board Punjab is providing best facilities to all players at Summer Camps, he said and added that the coaches are imparting top level training to young camp trainees. The parents of the young school-going children lauded the facilities being provided to them during Summer Camp. They opined that this healthy activity should also continue after summer vacations.

## Kashmir Volleyball Super League last rounds start

MIRPUR (AJK) (APP): Kashmir Volleyball Super League (KVSL), a first-ever sports event of its kind, is being played in Azad Jammu Kashmir (AJK) to promote the spirit of competitive sports at the State level. "It will not only provide a quality platform for the youth to demonstrate its talent, potential and energy but will create an environment that will instil discipline and spirit among the players, the sources told APP here on Thursday. According to details, the "KVSL is being played in three stages across 3 x Divisions, 10 x Districts, 34 x Tehsils & 189 x Union councils of AJ&K. Over 5000 players (both smash & shoot versions) are competing at State level to win the title of KVSL CHAMPIONS". Stage-1 was

played at Union Council /District level while Stage-2 was played at the Division level for the ultimate showdown of the two best teams of Smash and one Shoot volleyball from each Division. The final round of Stage-3 competitions will be held from 15 to 25 July 2023 in Muzaffarabad where Poonch Panjals, Muzaffarabad Bahadurs, Muzaffarabad Janbaz (from Muzaffarabad Division), Poonch Azads (from Poonch Division) Mirpur Badshah and Sher-e-Mirpur (from Mirpur Division) will face each other to strive for the KVSL Title. A KVSL format has been conceived with the aim to provide a platform right from the Union Council level to give maximum exposure and opportunity to the young of AJK.

## PSB to hold coaching courses in July, August

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) would organize coaching courses in July and August with an aim to advance the skills and techniques of all stakeholders associated with the games. According to details, the courses were being held on special instructions of the Federal Minister for Inter-Provincial Coordination (IPC) Ehsan ur Rehman Mazari and Director General Pakistan Sports Board Shoaib Khosa.

These courses will be held in Muzaffarabad, Multan, Sukkur, Abbottabad and Swat. The first course which began on July 11 would conclude on July 15 in Swat, the second course will begin in Muzaffarabad from July 21 to 25, then in Multan from August 1 to 5, in Sukkur from August 7 to 11 and Abbottabad from August 17 to 21. Pakistan Sports Board Deputy Director General Shahid islam and World

Athletics Level Two Lecturer and Pakistan Sports Board Instructor Nasrullah Rana would give lectures to the participants on various issues related to sports, coaching, training theories, nutrition, doping, sports psychology, injuries during sports, first aid and skills education. Earlier, such courses were held in May and June in Islamabad, Lahore, Faisalabad, Peshawar, Karachi, Rawalkot and Quetta.

## Two Pak cyclists, one coach to attend training camp in Korea

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's two promising cyclists Syed Aqib Ali Shah and Mohsin Khan will proceed to South Korea along with national coach Sarmad Shahab to attend a one-month training camp at the World Cycling Centre (WCC), Pakistan Cycling Federation (PCF) said on Thursday. "The camp being funded by International Cycling Federation (UCI) and the Korea Cycling Federation will be held from July 23 to August 24. The camp is aimed at educating the potential riders from Asian countries about the basics of cycling," PCF President Syed Azhar Ali Shah told

APP. "The WCC Korea is one of the world's best cycling training centres wherein top quality UCI instructors give professional coaching lectures and training to riders on the advanced scientific lines. He said the camp at WCC offered a big opportunity for Pakistani riders and coaches to gain the latest knowledge and race experience. "We are thankful to the UCI and Korea Cycling Federation for accommodating our cyclists and coaches," he added. Sarmad, who is a level 2 road coach, will be doing the level 2 track coaching course and if he successful-

ly completes it he will be the third Pakistani after Haroon General and Sardar Nazakat, who will be having level 2 coaching certification in both tracks and road cycling. "The certificate will qualify him to independently plan, deliver and evaluate cycling activity sessions for aspiring cyclists," he said. According to Shah, the PCF is making an all-out effort to promote cycling in the country and every year sends two to three riders and coaches for training in Korea. "Recently our young woman cyclist Sumaira has returned after attending the training camp at WCC.



LONDON: Tunisia s Ons Jabeur celebrates beating Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus to win their women's singles semifinal match on day eleven of the Wimbledon tennis championships in London.

## Pak Shaheens to face Nepal in ACC Men's Emerging Teams Asia Cup

ISLAMABAD (APP): Defending champions Pakistan Shaheens were all set to open their campaign in the ACC Men's Emerging Teams Asia Cup when they take on Nepal at the Colombo Cricket Club Ground in Sri Lanka on Friday. The eight teams in the 50-over tournament are divided into two pools. Afghanistan A, Bangladesh A, Oman A and Sri Lanka A are a part of Group A, while Pakistan Shaheens along with India A, Nepal and UAE A are in Group B. After taking on Nepal, Mohammad Haris-led Shaheens would take on UAE A on July 17 at the P Saravanamuttu Stadium, while their last group match will be against India A on July 19 at the R Premadasa International Cricket Stadium. Top two teams from each group will qualify for the semi-finals which will be played on July 21. The final of the tournament will take place on July 23. Before arriving in Colombo on Tuesday night, Shaheens were involved in a six-day training camp at Lahore's National Cricket Academy. They also underwent two-day training sessions in Colombo under the coaching panel led by Mohammad Masroor. The previous edition of the ACC Men's Emerging Teams Asia Cup was held in Bangladesh from 14 to 23 November 2019. Pakistan Shaheens won the 2019 iteration of

the tournament beating hosts Bangladesh in the final by 77 runs at the Shere Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. In the first semi-final of that competition, they defeated India Emerging Team in a thriller by three runs at the Shere Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur. In that match Omair Bin Yousuf and Amad Butt – the only two players part of the current Shaheens squad for the forthcoming tournament – contributed significantly to the team's win. Opening batter Omair scored 66, while right-arm fast Amad took one for 43 including a brilliant death overs spell to help his side reach the final. On the eve of Shaheens' opening match, Omair and Amad shed light on the team's preparations as they looked forward to the tournament. Amad said, "We have prepared well for this event and are excited to be in action. "This is a very important tournament for each one of us. This presents a comeback opportunity for me and I will strive to utilise it in order to gain a spot in the national side." Omair said, "I am eager to repeat the same performance that I have provided in Shaheens recent tour to Zimbabwe. I will try to execute my plans on the match day that I have practiced in the nets here. "We will focus on executing our plans effectively and making every effort to emerge victorious.

"This tournament provides a great opportunity for any youngster to perform and get a chance to represent the national team, so I will too try to grab it with both hands by giving good performances." Squad includes Mohammad Haris (captain, wicketkeeper) (Peshawar), Omair Bin Yousuf (vice-captain) (Karachi), Amad Butt (Sialkot), Arshad Iqbal (Swabi), Haseebullah (Quetta), Kamran Ghulam (Peshawar), Mehran Mumtaz (Rawalpindi), Mubasir Khan (Islamabad), Mohammad Wasim Jnr (North Waziristan), Qasim Akram (Lahore), Sahibzada Farhan (Charsadda), Saim Ayub (Karachi), Shahnawaz Dahani (Larkana), Sufiyan Muqem (AJK) and Tayyab Tahir (Gujrat). Non-traveling reserves – Abdul Wahid Bangalzai, Mohammad Abbas Afridi, Mohammad Junaid and Rohail Nazir. Player support personnel: Shahid Aslam (manager), Mohammad Masroor (head coach), Hanif Malik (batting/fielding coach), Umar Rashid (bowling coach) and Imtiaz Ahmed (physiotherapist). Pakistan's fixtures in ACC Men's Emerging Teams Asia Cup: Group B: v Nepal- July 14, Colombo Cricket Club Ground (10am local time); v UAE A- July 17, P Saravanamuttu Stadium (10am local time); v India A- July 19, R Premadasa International Cricket Stadium (2pm local time).

## Shaheen Afridi eyes 100th Test wicket

LAHORE (APP): When Shaheen Shah Afridi opened the bowling for Pakistan on Tuesday in a two-day warm-up fixture against Sri Lanka Cricket Board XI at Mahinda Rajapaksa International Cricket Stadium, it was almost after a year that he had donned whites for his country after injuring his knee in the first of the two Tests at Galle last year. The proceedings had similar beginning – searing pace, lethal swing and the ball hitting precise lengths. He took three wickets for 36 runs in 12 overs, three of which were maidens, as Pakistan bowled out the opposition for 196 before tea in the first innings. On the last day, he returned 4-2-2-1 as the hosts could only manage 88 for four after Pakistan, at the back of half-centuries by Shan Masood, Babar Azam and Saud Shakeel, put 342. "I am very excited to be making my Test comeback in the country where I was injured," Shaheen told PCB Digital in Hambantota on Thursday. "Injuries are part of an athlete's life, but it is good to be back. I enjoy red-ball cricket a lot and I am one wicket away from a century of Test wickets, which would be a big achievement for me."

The nature of injury demanded his return to be gradual and systematic, and he has not played a first-class match since the fourth morning of the first Test at Galle when he landed awkwardly at boundary trying to stop the ball. He made his international return in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup in Australia in October last year, but twisted his knee in the final, which saw him miss the home series against England (Tests) and New Zealand (Tests and ODIs). He finally returned earlier this year for Lahore Qalandars to help them retain the HBL Pakistan Super League title before featuring in April's 10-match limited overs series against New Zealand. Prior to being named in the Test side for these two Tests, which are Pakistan's first in the third cycle of the ICC World Test Championship, Shaheen was turning out for Nottinghamshire, where he ensured he met the desired workload levels to get in the rhythm. "It takes time to get used to red-ball cricket after playing white-ball," he said, adding: "But the Karachi camp proved beneficial for me. Test cricket demands patience and you have to work in partnerships with fellow bowlers. Over the last year, I have played more white-ball matches, but when I was playing in the United Kingdom, I bowled extra overs after matches – even with the red ball – to meet the desired workload. "It seems like yesterday when I was injured. I will be making my Test return at the same ground where I was injured. I was talking to our physiotherapist about it. It is a matter of pride to represent Pakistan in any format and I enjoy playing for Pakistan. I hope we will have a good beginning

to this cycle of the World Test Championship and we will qualify for the final, something we have missed on in the last two iterations." What makes this return more exciting is the milestone in line. He is just one wicket away to become 11th pacer from Pakistan to record a century of wickets in the format. "There is a lot of excitement [for that 100th wicket]." But, it has been a long wait. "I was only one wicket away and the new ball was about to be available," he said while recalling the first Test against Galle 12 months ago. "I was planning to utilise the new ball to reach that milestone, but I got injured before we got the new ball. So, I have had to wait a lot. It is very tough to be away from cricket, but time has helped me learn a lot, which will help me perform well for Pakistan across formats." His 99 wickets have come in just 25 matches at an average of 24.86. He also has four five-wicket hauls and one 10-for in the match. Shaheen, however, has added another dimension to his game by strengthening his batting during rehabilitation. His smoking 44 not out off just 15 balls set up Lahore Qalandars' thrilling win over Multan Sultans in the HBL PSL 8 final and he let his slogging abilities known in international arena when he smashed New Zealand's Blair Tuckner for 22 (three sixes and a four) in the last over of the fourth One-Day International in Karachi to lift Pakistan to 334.

## Tall order for Netherlands to match 2019 Women's World Cup run

AUCKLAND (AFP/APP): The Netherlands reached the final of the last Women's World Cup but a repeat looks a tall order for a side who have seen an inspirational coach depart and lost their star striker to a serious knee injury. The Dutch only appeared at their first World Cup in 2015 and followed that by winning the European Championship as hosts two years later under Sarina Wiegman. Then came that remarkable run to the World Cup final in France in 2019, when they defeated Canada, Japan and Sweden before a 2-0 loss to the United States. Their hopes of building on that were dealt a blow when Wiegman left to take the England job after the Dutch went out of the Tokyo Olympics on penalties to the United

States in the quarter-finals. Her successor Mark Parsons was sacked after a last-eight exit to France at last year's Euro, which was won by Wiegman's England. Andries Jonker was then brought in before they wrapped up World Cup qualifying. They sealed their place at the finals starting next week in Australia and New Zealand with relative ease, only to lose the prolific Vivianne Miedema to a ruptured ACL. The 26-year-old netted three times at the 2019 World Cup and is the all-time top scorer for the Dutch team. On July 27 the Netherlands will meet holders the United States once more, this time in a Group E which also contains Vietnam and Portugal. It would be a massive shock if the Dutch and Americans fail to reach the knockout rounds.

Despite the chasm left by Miedema's absence the Dutch believe they can go all the way in Australia and New Zealand. "Yes, you do dream about that," winger Lieke Martens, of Paris Saint-Germain, told FIFA.com. "And I think it is very good that you keep trying to make that dream a reality." Martens, now 30, was the standout player when the Netherlands won Euro 2017 and was named UEFA player of the year off the back of that. She also won the Champions League with Barcelona in 2021. "If we were to win, it would be complete. I would have won everything that I ever dreamt of winning," she added. "It will be a tough challenge, but nothing is impossible."





## In brief

### IRSA releases 263,900 cusecs water

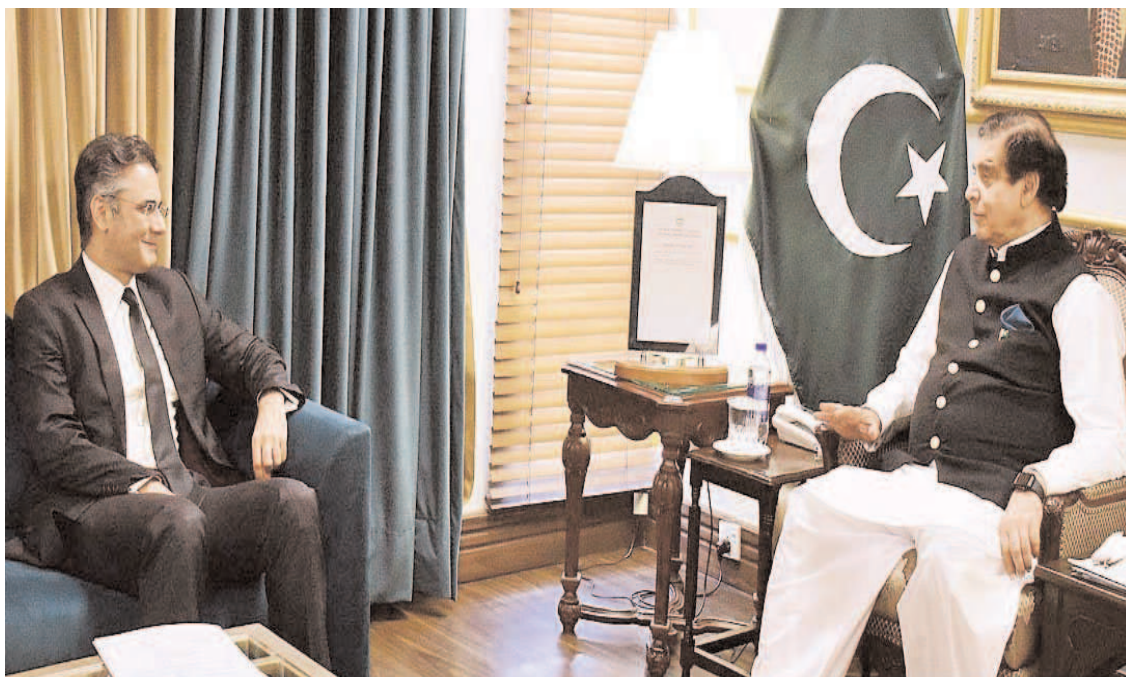
ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Thursday released 263,900 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 310,400 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1517.31 feet and was 119.31 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 140,800 cusecs and 140,000 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1200.10 feet, which was 150.10 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 55,700 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 159,700, 196,400, 149,200 and 85,700 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 39,200 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 48,700 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### 'Uplifting of Sindh PPP's main motto:'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister Faisal Kareem Kundi on Thursday said that the members of Pakistan Peoples Party were committed to uplift the Sindh province as Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) given it in a bad condition. Talking to a private news channel, he said that our party was focusing on the productive development projects in Sindh province adding that those people were in a crucial condition and our main motto was to facilitate them so that they could easily survive with their kids. Replying to a question he said that elections would be held at its specific time and period as PPP was cooperating with their coalition partners. Commenting on the economic stability of the country, he said it plays vital role in the progress of any country.

### AIOU announces admissions

ISLAMABAD (APP): Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) is commencing admissions in the semester Autumn 2023 from Saturday, July 15 across the country. To provide facilities to the students near their residences, the AIOU has set up more than 100 prospectus sale points other than 54 regional offices of the university. According to the direction of the Vice Chancellor AIOU, Prof Dr. Nasir Mahmood, information counters and facilitation centers are set up in regional offices to guide students. The programs offered in the first phase include Matric (General), Matric (Dars e Nizami), Matric (Open Courses), FA (General), FA (Dars e Nizami), FA (Open Courses), I.Com, middle tech, certificate courses BS, MBA, MPhil/MS, and PhD programs. It is pertinent to mention here that AIOU is the only university in the country which provides free matriculation education to the students of Balochistan, merged districts and Gilgit-Baltistan. The last date for admission in Matric, FA, Middle Tech and Certificate courses is September 5, while the last date for admission in BS, MS, MPhil and PhD programs is August 15. Admission to BS (face to face), MS/MPhil and Ph.D programs can only be applied online at <https://fmbp.aiou.edu.pk>. Admission forms for matriculation and intermediate are available on the website and prospectus sale points, and these forms can be submitted manually and via online mode.



ISLAMABAD: Attorney General of Pakistan Mr. Anwar Mansoor Usman Awan call on Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf.

## Irfan calls for judiciary to deliver 'easy and speedy' justice for all

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Senator Irfan Siddiqui Thursday said that his leadership firmly believed in the supremacy of the constitution and stressed the need to simplify laws for the general public to provide speedy and easy justice for all.

"Law should be treated equally for everyone and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) should be held accountable for its anti-

state acts over the past few days", he demanded while talking to the PTV news channel. "Democracy can only flourish if the democratic forces are held accountable in a country and the courts should dispense justice without any discrimination," he added.

Replying to a question, he replied that all cases against Imran Khan are based on facts, adding, the scale of justice should be balanced first and then

elections will be acceptable in the country.

To another question, he said Imran Khan (darling) got relief without a personal appearance in courts, adding, he should present himself for accountability and face the courts the way PML-N leadership faced in the past.

Every day IK concocted a new excuse, as he did not want to go to court and be held accountable, he added.

## Islamabad Police bolster security measures

ISLAMABAD (APP): In preparation for the upcoming religious observance of Muharram-ul-Haram, the Islamabad police have vowed to implement stringent security arrangements.

A high-level meeting, chaired by SSP (Operations) Malik Jameel Zafar and attended by senior police officials, was held to review the security measures. The authorities emphasized the utilization of advanced technologies such as safe city cameras, smart cars, surveillance cameras, and drone cameras to maintain high vigilance and ensure the safety of processions.

Stringent directives were issued to organizers, emphasizing the cooperation between law enforcement agencies and the police. The aim is to maintain strict adherence to designated routes and timings while effectively managing traffic flow and keeping parking areas at a safe distance from Imamabargahs.

Furthermore, the deployment of bomb disposal squads utilizing robots and modern technology will be instrumental in ensuring thorough security checks for participants in the processions.

## DC for ensuring foolproof security during Muharram

RAWALPINDI (APP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema here on Thursday directed the authorities concerned to ensure foolproof security for Muharram processions and Majalis.

Additional Deputy Commissioner General Nosheen Israr, SP Traffic Munir Hashmi, Assistant Commissioners and other officers of the departments concerned attended the meeting. Chairing a meeting, the DC said that foolproof arrangements should be made for the security of Muharram processions and Majalis. Walk-through gates should be installed at entry points of the Muharram processions and Majalis, he added. Encroachments should be removed besides completing patchwork of the routes of the processions, he ordered. A special traffic plan should also be prepared regarding Muharram so that people do not face any difficulties, Hasan Waqar Cheema said adding, CCTV cameras should also be installed to monitor the processions.

## Over 400,000 social media accounts exposed for spreading blasphemy

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony on Thursday emphasized the urgent need for awareness among all sections of society, particularly religious scholars, professors, journalists, lawyers, traders, political and social leaders, and institutions in the country in an effort to prevent the misuse of social media platforms for spreading derogatory and inappropriate content.

It called upon them to play their responsible role in the campaign to curb offensive material and, in every circumstance, to utilize legal avenues to combat such content by reporting it to the relevant cyber crime authorities and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), it said.

According to details released by the Ministry, nefarious elements have been actively using social media to launch a well-organized campaign aimed at undermining the ethics, behavior, and beliefs of our youth for several years.

The negative and harmful effects of social media on society have become a matter of great concern. While indecency itself is intolerable, the situation has escalated to the point of blasphemy, which is an extremely grave offense.

As per the Ministry's statement, highly organized campaigns on social media platforms are being conducted to spread extremely blasphemous material against the most revered figures, including Allah Almighty (God), the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), the Ahl al-Bayt (Prophet's family), the Mothers of the Believers, the Companions of the Prophet, the Holy Quran, and the national flag. Such offensive content is being shared through images and videos on specific applications and groups.

The Cyber Crimes wing of the FIA has apprehended individuals involved in these crimes, including doctors, professors, engineers, chartered accountants, lawyers, and people from various walks of life.

According to the Ministry, the report filed by the FIA Cyber Crime and the investigation conducted by the Legal Commission in the Rawalpindi Bench of the Lahore High Court revealed that more than four hundred thousand accounts in Pakistan are involved in disseminating such severe blasphemy.

The proliferation of indecency through social media is promoting the degradation of our society and dragging the new generation into the quagmire of blasphemy. Currently, over 100 million people in the country use social media, which demonstrates the rapid spread of this evil.

In 2019, four individuals formed a blasphemous group, which was subsequently apprehended by the FIA Cyber Crime in 2022. However, by the time of their arrest, the number of members in this group had significantly increased, and this increase continues to this day.

The primary objective of this alarming trend is to create chaos in Pakistan, destabilize peace and security, and sow seeds of hatred among different religious communities and sects. The act of blasphemy is being orchestrated through conspiratorial means, using accounts with names that appear to belong to a particular religion or sect to defame and insult opposing religions or sects.

The Ministry urges parents, who bear the greatest responsibility in current circumstances, to be mindful of the content their children are exposed to on mobile phones, laptops, and the internet. They should ensure that their children do not inadvertently stumble upon indecent material and end up on the path of immorality, eventually leading to obscene videos and, most egregiously, blasphemous acts. Controlling this epidemic requires not only parents' awareness but also education within society to prevent the circulation of such material and to utilize legal measures in all circumstances to obstruct these crimes.

## IT Ministry signs agreement to enhance connectivity in Balochistan

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Ministry of Information Technology has embarked on two significant projects worth Rs. 69.8 billion to bolster connectivity in Balochistan province.

Federal Minister for Information Technology Syed Amin-ul-Haque and Minister for Science and Technology Agha Hassan Baloch here on Thursday jointly initiated the execution of these projects.

The agreements were signed by USF CEO Haaris Chaudhary and Ufone's Chief Executive Officer Hatem Bamatraf.

The projects, funded through the Universal Service Fund via Ufone,

aim to provide the fastest connectivity to commuters and residents along the motorway.

The first project will involve an investment of Rs. 47.82 billion in laying 478 kilometers of optical fiber cable, linking Gwadar, Quetta, Awaran, Khuzdar, Jhal Magsi, Qambar Shahdaddkot, and Larkana.

The second project, costing Rs. 19.6 billion, will offer broadband services to 34,000 individuals in 47 villages surrounding Sabi.

On the occasion, Amin-ul-Haque said, the projects will be completed in 18 months with funding from the Universal Service Fund

through Ufone.

The minister said, the project aims to provide the fastest connectivity to commuters and populations residing along the motorway. He highlighted that in the past four years, 83 broadband projects worth Rs. 77 billion were initiated nationwide.

These initiatives reflect the government's commitment to expanding broadband infrastructure in Balochistan, with numerous projects already underway across the province.

Moreover, 21 broadband projects worth Rs. 27.12 billion have been launched in 30 districts of Balochistan.

## Police enhance facilitation for driving license applicants

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Police, specifically the Traffic Division, has taken steps to ensure increased convenience for individuals applying for a driving license.

The focus is on providing comprehensive facilities and equal treatment to all applicants. Chief Traffic Officer Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanveer led a special meeting with the licensing department and traffic headquarters to assess the measures implemented for enhancing citizen convenience.

He emphasized the significance of maintaining a civilized demeanor while interacting with citizens and highlighted the importance of comprehensive facilities for obtaining driving licenses. During the meeting, the outstanding performance of the traffic staff was recognized, and special instructions were issued to further enhance their services. With a commitment to providing professional expertise, the Capital Traffic Police Islamabad aims to prioritize the welfare of the public. The meeting, directed by Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, emphasized the Capital

Police's reputation as a model force nationwide and to continue the hard work to uphold its image.

The emphasis was on equal treatment and building confidence among applicants. Furthermore, the meeting discussed the implementation of a merit-based assessment system for driving tests. Instructions were given to educate the team to raise awareness about traffic laws and road safety among driving learners and citizens. These collective efforts aim to transform Islamabad into an accident-free city, prioritizing the well-being of its residents.

## Nepal's Ambassador hails Pakistan's initiative to promote Cultural Buddhist Legacy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Nepal's Ambassador to Pakistan, Tapas Adhikari on Thursday praised the government of Pakistan's commendable efforts to promote the ancient Gandhara civilization.

The envoy also appreciated the government of Pakistan for organizing a symposium entitled "Cultural Diplomacy: Reviving Gandhara Civilization and Buddhist Heritage to create awareness about Pakistan's rich historical and cultural Buddhist Legacy.

The government of Pakistan's initiative to promote Gandhara Tourism in Pakistan and remarkable and commendable.

Highlighting the rich Buddhist heritages in Nepal, while talking to APP he said, "We can work together and explore the potential for collaboration between Nepal and Pakistan in revitalizing religious tourism."

The ambassador expressed gratitude to the government of Pakistan for embarking on various initiatives to promote Buddhism in the Buddhist culture in a programme organized by the Embassy of Nepal in Islamabad on the sidelines of the Symposium on 12 July 2023.

He highlighted that Nepal was a centre of all three major schools of Buddhism, including Theravada, Mahayana and Bajrayana, and a lot of people from around the world, including from Pakistan, visited Nepal for spiritual quests.

He also touched upon the contribution of Guru Padmasambhava also known as Guru Rimpoche who was born in ancient Udiyana which is presently called Swat Valley in Pakistan in promoting and spreading Buddhism in the region.

He also underlined the importance of Takshyashila and Gandhara in Buddhist literature. The programme was attended by venerable Buddhist monks and Buddhist scholars from Nepal as well as by many Buddhist practitioners and enthusiasts.

During programme of the Embassy, the Monks and scholars highlighted various aspects of Buddhist values such as non-violence, love, compassion, meditation etc. They also organized a small session of meditation for the participants.

Dr. Nadeem Omer Tarar, a scholar at Gandhara Chair, University of Wah, said that the Symposium 2023 was the reaffirmation of Pakistan's state commitment for promoting the Buddhist heritage as a symbol of global peace.

By inviting monks from the Asian Buddhist communities and scholars from Pakistan and around the world in an engaging dialogue, the organizers of the Gandhara Symposium had set a precedent for successive regimes to follow, he added. He said Pakistan needed a public policy and institute to brand Pakistan as an attractive tourist destination for the Buddhist world.



ISLAMABAD: Law Minister, Senator Azam Nazir Tarar chairing a meeting with Chairperson Special Committee and National Commission on the Rights of Child, Senator Ayesha Raza Farooq, the committee's focal person and Deputy Advisor Ministry of Law and Justice Usama Malik and Section Officer J.R Sultan.



### Naeem meets UK's Robert

KABUL (Agencies): The head of the Embassy in Qatar Dr. Mohammad Naeem Wardak, met with Robert Dickson, British Charge d'Affaires for Afghanistan. The two sides in a meeting discussed in detail the current situation, and recent developments in Afghanistan and exchanged views on bilateral ties between the two countries, the Embassy of Afghanistan in Qatar said in a statement. The head of embassy of IEA in Qatar hailed Britain's position of not supporting violence in Afghanistan.

## The Frontier Post

# AFGHANISTAN

Zil-Hajj 25, 1444 — Friday, July 14, 2023

### 270,000 children treated: UN

KABUL (Agencies): In the first five months of this year, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) provided life saving treatment to 273,000 children with severe acute malnutrition in Afghanistan. In May alone, 60,000 children were treated for acute malnutrition, UNICEF said on Twitter Thursday. "In the first 5 months of this year, UNICEF supported treatment for 273,000 children with severe acute malnutrition," UNICEF tweeted.

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

## Citizens criticize bank restrictions on withdrawals

KABUL (TOLOnews): It has been two years since banks imposed restrictions on withdrawing funds and citizens of the country are once again criticizing the restrictions on banks.

They said that after Islamic Emirate took over the country, the withdrawal of money faced restrictions and this problem has made them face many challenges and they called on the Islamic Emirate to address them. "In this current situation there is no work, and the customer is demanding money, the economy is weak. Private banks should provide customers' money," said Abdul Shokor Akbari, a Kabul resident. "We could receive the money very easily and we

could execute the contracts of our companies very easily; But for now, these limitations have created many problems for us," said Tamim, a resident of Kabul.

Meanwhile, the Central Bank of Afghanistan said that they are trying to provide facilities for those who have bank accounts. "Now, compared to the past, the amount of commercial bank customers' loans has increased, which means that the restrictions have decreased, and in the same way, technical discussions with international institutions continue," said Hasibullah Noori, the spokesman for the Afghanistan Bank.

The owners of some private banks said that in a

few months, all restrictions on withdrawing money will be removed.

A number of economists believe that for the better functioning of banks, it is necessary for banks to provide better services to their customers.

"In order to increase the number of customers in the banking sector, it is necessary to supply banking products and services in a standardized and high-quality manner at reasonable prices and with transparency," said Mer Shekib Mer, an economist.

Previously, the Central Bank of Afghanistan has said that the weekly withdrawal limit has been increased from 30,000 Afghani to 50,000 Afghani.

## 95% Afghans do not want women to work: Haqbin

KABUL (TOLOnews): The deputy Minister of Public Work (MoPW), Din Mohammad Haqbin, claimed that 95 percent of the population of Afghanistan do not want women to work in the society.

Deputy Minister Din Mohammad Haqbin in an interview with TOLOnews said that the Islamic Emirate in a decree is creating opportunities for widows to work.

"Out of 100 percent, 95 percent of Afghans do not want their women to go to work. Only five percent of the people are making statements on (women work's), and they are trained by the foreigners, but these claims are inaccurate," he said.

A women's rights activist, Suraya Paikan, said women's access to work benefits the society.

"It is needed for women to have access to work. On one hand they can serve the people and society and on the other hand, women have the right to be property owners based on the decree of the Quran. The women could be the owners of property, when they have income," she said.

Haqbin said that other countries should not interfere in the issue of women's access to work.

"Why are they interfering in this issue? Every country has its own tradition, religion and law. It is even stated in the UN law that every religion should be respected. We don't want westerners to impose their laws on us," he said.

Haqbin also said that hundreds of thousands of widows need urgent aid in the country.

"The Islamic Emirate leader, in a new decree, ordered us to provide work for widows and we have a program to provide work for 1,000 of these women," he said.

Haqbin stressed that with the implementation of an agreement between Qatar, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, 55,000 workers will be provided with jobs.

## Reconstruction project started

KABUL (Agencies) The Deputy Minister Prime for Economic Affairs of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, Mullah Abdul Ghani Baradar, inaugurated the reconstruction project of the Salang Passway.

The inauguration of the project was attended by Deputy PM Bardar, Acting Public Work Minister, Mullah Mohammad Isa Sani, local authorities of Parwan and Baghlan, and representatives of the private sector.

Addressing the occasion Deputy PM Bardar said that this is the 2nd major national and economic project after the Qosh Tepa National Canal, adding that with the completion of these projects, many traveling difficulties will be resolved and trade from the north to the south of the country will be developed.

The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan is ready to complete this national project with all its strength and assures all kinds of cooperation to the contracting companies, Bardar added.

The reconstruction project of the Salang Passway will be completed in two years with the support of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in North and South Salang with a length of 80km.

Thousands of passenger and cargo vehicles travel on this highway every day. Passengers and motorists traveling on this road are happy that the current traveling issues will be solved after its restoration.

## IEA wants to develop Afghanistan with available resources: Acting PM

KABUL (Agencies): Acting Prime Minister, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, in a meeting with several owners and officials of construction companies, said that the Islamic Emirate will develop Afghanistan with the cooperation of Afghan engineers and available resources.

According to a statement released by his office, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, met with several owners and officials of construction companies.

In the meeting, the owners and officials of the Afghan companies said that they have excellent capacity in building, roads and major dams sector and are ready to start construction projects for the development of the country at a proper cost.

With the start of development projects by the Islamic Emirate, the works of construction companies have started and many job



opportunities have been created, they added.

These officials shared a series of suggestions to provide better and more effective services to construction companies in the field of getting work permits, arranging bank guarantees, and collecting taxes from them with the Acting Prime

Minister.

The Islamic Emirate will develop Afghanistan with the assistance of Afghan engineers and available resources and intends to start other major projects as well, said Acting Prime Minister Kabir.

The digging of the Qosh tape canal proved that

Afghan engineers have good knowledge and management, Kabir said.

He assured them that their suggestions will be considered in the light of principles adding that all government construction projects will be handed over to domestic companies for their support.

## Teacher training center shut down by Islamic Emirate, says teachers

KABUL (TOLOnews): Teachers who were interviewed by TOLOnews confirmed that "Teacher Training Centers" have been dissolved.

The Ministry of Education (MoE) in a letter which was released 6 days ago said that the instructors and employees of Teacher Training Centers will be recruited to fill vacancies of schools, Darul-Uloom and seminaries.

Some of the instructors of Teacher Training Centers

told TOLOnews that the centers were dissolved based on the decree outlined in the letter. They expressed their concerns and urged the Islamic Emirate to review its decision.

"In a letter, a special guideline, unfortunately, an educational entity, an administration of the Ministry of Education, a backbone of the society, has been demolished," said Hamid Ahmadzada, an instructor of Parwan Darul-Mualimeen.

The instructors of these centers said that more than 4,000 academic figures working in the Teacher Training Centers across the country would face an uncertain future.

"The Ministry of Education on one hand claims that the school teachers are not professionals and on the other hand, it separates 4,000 academic teachers from the education (sector)," said Zabiullah Hashimi, an instructor of the Teacher Training Center

in Parwan. Despite multiple attempts, TOLOnews was unable to obtain a comment from the Ministry of Education.

"It is not wise that thousands of instructors lose their jobs and also we will face a shortage of teachers in the future," said Farhad Ibrar, university instructor.

According to available numbers, more than 6,000 instructors and civil employees are working in "Teacher Training Centers" across the country.

## Female makeup artists continue to protest ban on beauty salons

KABUL (TOLOnews): Female makeup artists continue to criticise the decision of the interim government to close women's beauty salons, saying that the decision will deprive thousands of women from work.

They claimed that there are more than 12,000 women's beauty salons across the country.

Earlier, the Ministry of Vice and Virtue in a letter ordered that women's beauty salons should be closed within a period of one month.

25, Rahila, a make-up artist, said that after the universities were closed, she sought to work in women's beauty salons.

"They closed schools for us, universities, educational centers and banned us from work. I came here in a women's environment to learn a profession; they closed that on us as well. I don't know what the Islamic Emirate wants from us," she said.

"The women's beauty



salons are not doing tattoos... they are just working with health stuff," said Marriam Shorash, a women's rights activist.

Meanwhile, some of the female makeup artists held gatherings to protest the decision of the Islamic Emirate.

"There are 12,000 beauty salons. In every beauty salon between 15 to 20 people are working. Every worker and every woman supports their families," said Alia, a female make-up artist.

"First of all, I am a woman who supports two families. I have disabled

kids with me. So, the same is in all families. There is a widow in almost every family," said Meena, head of the union of make-up artists.

Since its takeover of Afghanistan, the Islamic Emirate has issued multiple decrees that restrict women from public life.

## Acting Refugees Minister meets IOM top official



KABUL (Agencies): Acting Minister of Refugees and Repatriation Alhaj Mohammad Ajmal Weyar in a meeting with the head of the International Organization for Migration in Afghanistan stressed more cooperation, coordination, and effective implementation of projects.

Acting Minister Alhaj Mohammad Ajmal Weyar, met with Adnan Baghijati,

Head of International Migration Organization office in Afghanistan, the Ministry said in a statement.

The two sides discussed providing better services for the returnees, reopening of returnees' office at Kabul International Airport, and addressing the problems of the offices of the mentioned organization in the borders of Islam

Qala-e-Herat, Spin Boldak,

Kandahar, Torkham Nangarhar, and other borders, the statement added.

The head of the International Organization for Migration vowed to boost cooperation in addressing the problems at the mentioned borders.

The two sides further stressed developing cooperation, coordination, and effective implementation of projects.

## USIP event stresses aid to Afghanistan

KABUL (TOLOnews): The participants at a US Institute of Peace (USIP) event named "Afghanistan's Dire Humanitarian Situation" called for the continuation of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan as the UN estimated nearly 29 million of the country's population need humanitarian service and the funding is short.

Melissa Cornet, Humanitarian Advocacy Advisor of CARE said that

Afghan women and girls are disproportionately affected by the economic and food crisis.

"There are few points and the first one is... Afghan women and girls are disproportionately affected by the crisis. The economic crisis, the food crisis—it is something that has been largely documented," she said.

The Ministry of Economy (MoE) said that the rate of poverty and

unemployment could be decreased by major investments by governmental and private companies.

"Improvement of exports, supporting domestic products, handmade industries and technical and professional training can cause a gradual reduction in the rate of unemployment in the country," said Abdul Rahman Habib, a spokesman for the MoE.





ISLAMABAD: Ambassador-designate of Iran to Pakistan, Dr Reza Amiri Moghaddam, presenting his diplomatic credentials to President Dr Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## India gives initial nod to buy French Rafale jets

PARIS (Agencies): India's defence ministry has given initial approval to purchase 26 Rafale fighter jets for its navy and three Scorpene class submarines, ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's arrival in France, Defence Minister Rajnath Singh said.

Modi began a two-day visit to Paris on Thursday to deepen ties with New Delhi's oldest strategic partner in the West, with a slew of high-profile defence deals expected and a new joint plan to ensure stability in the Indo-Pacific. The Singh-led Defence Acquisition Council, the apex body for military capital procurements, granted the approvals earlier in the day.

The deal will cover the purchase of 26 Dassault Aviation AM.PA Rafale fighter jets, including four trainers, and three Scorpene class submarines to be built by India's Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders MAZGNSand France's Naval Group, two sources familiar with the details told Reuters. The total value of the purchases is expected to be around 800 billion rupees (\$9.75b), according to one of the sources. The government did not provide any cost figures, saying the prices are yet to be negotiated. In the past few years, Modi has ramped up spending to modernise the military, while underlining his government's commitment to boosting domestic production to supply forces deployed along two contentious borders with Pakistan and China.

Earlier this year, the government proposed a 13 per cent hike in defence spend-

ing to 5.94 trillion rupees for the 2023-24 financial year. The ageing fleet of India's Russian-made platforms, Moscow's inability to perform maintenance work, and delays in India's indigenous manufacturing plans for parallel platforms have necessitated the two new defence deals. The marine version of Dassault's Rafale jets, intended for India's first indigenous aircraft carrier commissioned last year, outperformed the American Superhornet F18s in tests last year for Indian requirements. Singh said in a tweet that the "price and other terms of purchase will be negotiated with the French Government after taking into account all relevant aspects, including comparative procurement price of similar aircraft by other countries". India has relied on French fighter jets for four decades now. Much before buying Rafale in 2015, India bought Mirage jets in the 1980s, which still comprise two squadrons of the air force. In 2005, India bought six Scorpene-class diesel submarines from France for 188 billion rupees (\$2.29 billion), the last of which will be commissioned next year. "India is one of the pillars of our Indo-Pacific strategy," an aide to Macron told reporters this week on condition of anonymity. Macron has made Modi guest of honour for the July 14 military parade, which kicks off France's national day celebrations, with the participation of Indian troops and Indian-flown French-made fighter jets underlining close defence ties.

## Imran, Bushra's bail extended

ISLAMABAD (INP): An accountability court in Islamabad has extended interim bail of former prime minister and his wife Bushra Bibi in the National Crime Agency (NCA) £190 million scandal till July 19.

The Accountability Court No.1, Islamabad Judge Muhammad Bashir heard the case and fixed July 19 for final arguments in the case. The court then adjourned the proceedings till July 19. The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) had launched an investigation against Imran Khan, Bushra Bibi and others for the alleged gain of hundreds of canals of land in the name of Al Qadir University Trust, which reportedly caused a loss of 190 million pounds to the national exchequer.

## Muqam, Awaits call on Shehbaz

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Adviser to the Prime Minister Engineer Amir Muqam called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and discussed with him overall political situation in the country.

Amir Muqam praised the prime minister of his recent announcement to establish a university for the people of the erstwhile tribal areas. He expressed confidence that the university would help the youth of the area to excel in educational and professional fields.

Separately, President of Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Punjab chapter and former parliamentarian Awaits Leghari called on the prime minister and discussed with him the political situation in country. He lauded the prime minister for his efforts in finalization of the deal with International Monetary Fund and for the revival of national economy.

Border Sustenance Marketplaces functional. Talking to the High Commissioner-designate of Rwanda to Pakistan, James Kimonyo, the president emphasized the need to further strengthen trade and economic relations, adding that the business communities of the two countries needed to exchange visits to boost bilateral trade.

He remarked that Rwandan businessmen should explore the Pakistani market, especially for the import of rice, textile products, pharmaceuticals, surgical instruments, and sports goods. The president felicitated the envoys on their appointments and expressed the hope that they would play their role to further increase bilateral cooperation with Pakistan.

Agnes M. Cervantes said that Pakistan was keen to expand bilateral relations with the Philippines across all areas of cooperation and expressed the need to explore new avenues of cooperation to further diversify bilateral trade and economic cooperation.

Speaking to the Iranian Ambassador-designate to Pakistan, Dr Reza Amiri Moghaddam, the president highlighted the need to promote economic engagement and mutually beneficial economic exchanges between the two countries through the established institutional mechanisms and private-sector collaborations. He called for further expanding economic ties by strengthening the existing institutional mechanisms, besides making the

## Pak keen to expand ties with Philippines, Iran, Rwanda

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi has said that Pakistan was to expand bilateral relations with the Philippines, Iran, and Rwanda in diverse sectors including trade, economy, investment, culture besides people-to-people contacts.

This was remarked by him on Thursday while talking to the Ambassadors-designates of the Republic of the Philippines and the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the non-resident High-Commissioner-designate of the Republic of Rwanda, who presented their diplomatic credentials to the President and made separate calls on him, here at Aiwan-e-Sadr. President Alvi while talking to the Ambassador-designate of the Philippines, Maria

# PHC directs IGP to recover kids of late Dr. Bashir Ahmad within 10 days

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) divisional bench comprised of Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Syed Arshad Ali ordered Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to recover children of late Dr. Bashir Ahmad (Lecturer Islamia College University shot killed by security guard within varsity's campus) within 10 days whose were allegedly take away by his brother from his widow two months ago, on Thursday.

PHC observed that if police failed in recovery children of late Lecturer Dr. Bashir then inform the court, to direct another department for matter. Unfortunately, earlier Station House Officer (SHO) was directed for appearance but now Inspector General of Police (IGP) ordered to appear in adversary/enervation/impotency due to no progress in the case.

However, IGP Akhtar Hayat Gandapur, Secretary Home Abid Majeed, Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Peshawar Ishfaq Anwar and Assistant Advocate General Barrister Yasin Raza appeared while PHC inquired why shouldn't you recover

ered two children named Ziad and Ali Ibn Ahmad and didn't handover to widow of Later Dr. Bashir Ahmad.

The counsel for petitioner informed that children has taken away by their uncle (brother later Bashir Ahmad) and didn't allowing to meet with mother while competent court didn't provided relief despite several applications, so PHC has approached in writ jurisdiction.

During hearing CCPO Peshawar Ishfaq Anwar requested for provision of 20 days for recovery of children and informed that police has raided also suspicious places but to no veil however, PHC ordered IGP to appear before court by turning down the plea. IGP along with Secretary Home informed that police utilizing also available resources for recovery of the children and added that it is responsibility of IGP to inform court regarding his department. IGP added that he has meet with widow of Late Dr. Bashir Ahmad and she has appreciated police's effort but unfortunately, we didn't recover the children.

IGP Akhtar Hayat argued that police consulting with Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) to ensure safe recovery of the children while

requested for provision of suitable time ensure recovery of the kids. In the meantime, Justice SM Attique Shah observed that court should must be informed that how will be directed for the task in case police and other departments are failed in recovery of the children.

However, Secretary Home Abid Majeed informed that he was informed two days earlier while added that he stands with police progress because no stone is left unturned and claimed one accused is arrested in this regard. He assured that he will fulfill his responsibility as Home's secretary and should obey court's orders. Although, PHC inquired from IGP for timeframe for recovery of children because CCPO Peshawar has requested for 20 days which is lengthy timeframe while IGP argued that he wants to recover the kids till today evening because it is also a challenging case for police. PHC's divisional bench comprising of Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Syed Arshad Ali ordered to recover the children within 10 days and hand over to the mother (widow of Late Dr. Bashir Ahmad) while adjourned further hearing 26th July.

## Spreading blasphemy, 400,000 social media accounts exposed

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony on Thursday emphasized the urgent need for awareness among all sections of society, particularly religious scholars, professors, journalists, lawyers, traders, political and social leaders, and institutions in the country in an effort to prevent the misuse of social media platforms for spreading derogatory and inappropriate content.

It called upon them to play their responsible role in the campaign to curb offensive material and, in every circumstance, to utilize legal avenues to combat such content by reporting it to the relevant cybercrime authorities and the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), it said. According to details released by the Ministry, nefarious elements have been actively using social media to launch a well-organized campaign aimed at undermining the ethics, behavior, and beliefs of our youth for several years.

The negative and harmful effects of social media on society have become a matter of great concern. While indecency itself is intolerable, the situation has escalated to the point of blasphemy, which is an extremely grave offense. As per the Ministry's statement, highly organized campaigns on social media platforms are being conducted to spread extremely blasphemous material against the most revered figures, including Allah Almighty (God), the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), the Ahl al-Bayt (Prophet's family), the Mothers of the Believers, the Companions of the

Prophet, the Holy Quran, and the national flag. Such offensive content is being shared through images and videos on specific applications and groups.

The Cyber Crimes wing of the FIA has apprehended individuals involved in these crimes, including doctors, professors, engineers, chartered accountants, lawyers, and people from various walks of life. According to the Ministry, the report filed by the FIA Cyber Crime and the investigation conducted by the Legal Commission in the Rawalpindi Bench of the Lahore High Court revealed that more than four hundred thousand accounts in Pakistan are involved in disseminating such severe blasphemy.

The proliferation of indecency through social media is promoting the degradation of our society and dragging the new generation into the quagmire of blasphemy. Currently, over 100 million people in the country use social media, which demonstrates the rapid spread of this evil. In 2019, four individuals formed a blasphemous group, which was subsequently apprehended by the FIA Cyber Crime in 2022. However, by the time of their arrest, the number of members in this group had significantly increased, and this increase continues to this day.

The primary objective of this alarming trend is to create chaos in Pakistan, destabilize peace and security, and sow seeds of hatred among different religious communities and sects. The act of blasphemy is being orchestrated through conspiratorial means, using accounts with names

that appear to belong to a particular religion or sect to defame and insult opposing religions or sects. The Ministry urges parents, who bear the greatest responsibility in current circumstances, to be mindful of the content their children are exposed to on mobile phones, laptops, and the internet. They should ensure that their children do not inadvertently stumble upon indecent material and end up on the path of immorality, eventually leading to obscene videos and, most egregiously, blasphemous acts.

Controlling this epidemic requires not only parents' awareness but also education within society to prevent the circulation of such material and to utilize legal measures in all circumstances to obstruct these crimes. This will enable society to combat such crimes effectively under the rule of law. The FIA Cyber Crime Wing has already apprehended 140 individuals involved in these crimes, with 11 of them having received the death penalty from trial courts and two having their death sentences confirmed by the High Court.

There are 15 Cyber Crime units throughout the country under the jurisdiction of the FIA. These units have already established Anti-Blasphemy Cells, and immediate action is taken upon receiving reports in response to requests made to these cells. Cyber Crime technology traces criminals who engage in offensive activities on any social media application, share derogatory material on any website, or use VPNs. Once apprehended, these individuals are arrested and face legal action in accordance with the law.

## Siraj for FSC decision's implementation

LAHORE (INP): Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI), Sirajul Haq has said the government has not taken a single step towards the implementation of the Federal Shariat Court's (FSC) decision during last 15 months despite promises.

Addressing a seminar on economy here on Thursday, he said that the FSC had declared the Riba Act of 1839 un-Islamic in its landmark judgment in April 2022. Sirajul Haq said that Finance Minister Ishaq Dar had made a pledge during a sitting in Karachi in presence of the head of the PDM Maulana Fazlur Rahman and other religious scholars that the government

would take steps in line with the court's decision but the latter failed to honor his words.

There are clear provisions of the Constitution against interest-based economy and the Council of Islamic Ideology made recommendations for introducing Islamic system of economy, he said, adding the rulers of an Islamic country, however, are unwilling to implement the constitution.

The JI chief said the people were expecting from the head of the PDM that being a leader of a religious party he (Maulana Fazl) would at least raise voice against the riba but the latter disappointed the public. The PDM

head, he said, expressed concerns on different issues time and again against his own government and never uttered a single word against riba. Siraj said the loans from the IMF would not provide any solution to the economy until unless the government introduced good governance, made check on corruption and non-developmental expenditures. Riba constitutes war against Allah Almighty and its Prophet (PBUH) and the prosperity would not be achieved in presence of this evil, he said, adding one of the worst impacts of the interest-based economy was that it makes the rich richer and the poor poorer.



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