

Six tourists die in Gilgit F.P. Report

GILGIT: Six tourists died on Monday when their car skidded off the road and plunged into a river in Gilgit. The tourists were coming to Gilgit from Skardu. Their car veered off the road while negotiating a turn and fell into the river flowing alongside the road. The rescue officials pulled out body of one tourist and are trying to find other drowned people.

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

Victim succumbs to injuries F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Another victim of suicide blast at Bara tehsil compound succumbed to the injury on Monday. The Police official Abdul Hadi was under treatment in Hayatabad Medical Complex where he lost his life, the reports said. The death toll has now increased to five. Four policemen were martyred and 10 other people were injured in a blast near a police station in Bara Bazaar last week.

Vol. XXXIX

No. 186

Regd. No. 241

MUHARRAM-UL-HARRAM 06 1445 -- TUESDAY, JULY 25 2023

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30

No tariff hike for power consumers up to 200 units: PM

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the 63% domestic consumers using up to 200 units per month would be exempted from the recent increase in power tariff.

A partial subsidy was also being given to those consuming up to 300 units per month, who were around 31% of the total domestic consumers, he added. "Due to the toughest conditions from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the government had to raise the electricity prices but I stressed that the burden should not be passed on to the protected segments of the society," he said after witnessing the signing of a framework agreement between the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) Trading and the Pakistan LNG Limited (PLL).

The framework agreement was signed by PLL Managing Director Masood Nabi and Chief Executive Officer of SOCAR Trading Mariam Almazade. Minister of State for Petroleum Musadik Malik, Punjab Governor Baleegh Ur Rehman, diplomats and government officials were also present on the occasion. Under the framework agreement, the SOCAR Trading has offered supply one cargo per month of liquefied natural gas (LNG) to Pakistan on flexible terms and with the credit line for 30 days after delivery of the cargo in one year contract which is extendable by another year.

Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said it was really a great day as "we are standing here as brothers from two brotherly countries - Pakistan and Azerbaijan". He expressed good wishes for President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev whom he met in Baku few weeks ago and thanked him for finalizing the agreement.

"We had extremely productive and very fruitful discussion over there as to how to promote economic relations between the two friendly countries," he said, adding immediately on his return to home, the Government of Pakistan accorded approval to the Azerbaijan Airline to land at

Islamabad, Lahore and Karachi. "This is a big step forward to promote tourism and investment, and exchange of delegations between the two countries."

The prime minister also appreciated and thanked Finance Minister Ishaq Dar, Dr Musadik Malik, secretary petroleum, Pakistan's ambassador in Azerbaijan, SOCAR Trading CEO, and PLL MD for their efforts to conclude the framework agreement. The ambassador of Azerbaijan in Islamabad, on the occasion, said the framework agreement would help further strengthen bilateral economic relations.

He said the cooperation between the two countries remained sustainable since the start of diplomatic ties. He said approval of giving airspace to the Azerbaijan Airline would increase the number of visitors and business delegations between the two counties. A team of horticulture experts from Azerbaijan was arriving in Pakistan to share their first hand experience in the sector with the Pakistani authorities, he added.

Modern technology, alternative energy inevitable to achieve exports competitiveness: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said that the utilization of modern technology and alternative energy by the industrial sector were inevitable to make exports competitive in the international market.

The prime minister, addressing the soft launching of Ombre Special Economic Zone, Sundar Green Special Economic Zone and Smart Special Economic Zone, said owing to surging oil prices, the only option was to exploit the potential of solar, wind and hydel energy for the cost-effectiveness of local products.

He said the issue of circular debt was required to be addressed on a war-footing basis, which was swelling due to wasting billions of rupees annually because of line and transmission losses as well as power theft. The prime minister appreciated the private sector for chalking out a plan to establish the three special economic zones and assured all-out sup-

port from the federal and Punjab governments.

He said the commitment by the private sector to attract investment worth billions of rupees was also laudable, besides their plans to set up a three-megawatt solar power plant and other allied facilities like the vocational training center. He hoped that the interim government would also take all possible measures to keep the national economy on track of progress, as the incumbent one was already making necessary legislation to pave the way for future course of action.

The prime minister told the gathering that an agreement between Pakistan and Azerbaijan for the import of LNG was signed earlier in the day under which the latter would provide an LNG shipment per month with the former having the option to purchase it or not, in accordance with the needs and without any penalty. Similarly, he said, the private sector should also sign the deals with Qatar to import LNG for industrial use - not for sale in the market - and assured that the Federal Government would facilitate them at the Karachi Port.

Prime Minister Shehbaz also called for spreading the network of SEZs across the country. He said during Nawaz Sharif's last government, the SEZs were planned across the country under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, but, despite complete mapping and other formalities, all the projects faced unnecessary delay, except Rashakai. He said the agreement with International Monetary Fund was signed to ebb away the risk of default and put the country on the course toward progress.

The prime minister said as far as the SEZs by the public sector were concerned, the government would provide land free of charge to the investors, as it had done for the Bahawalpur Solar Park. However, he said the use of SEZs' land for non-industrial use would not be tolerated and recalled similar "misconduct" by some parties in Faisalabad and other SEZs where people had been minting money by selling out the land.



LAHORE: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif addressing the signing ceremony of the agreement between Pakistan LNG Ltd and SOCAR of Azerbaijan.

COAS, US Centcom chief vow to boost coop

F.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Commander US Central Command (CENTCOM) General Michael Erik Kurilla called on Chief of the Army Staff General Asim Munir and held in-depth talks at General Headquarters (GHQ), an ISPR statement said Monday.

According to the statement issued by the ISPR, the two leaders also discussed the security situation in the region as well as other related matters of mutual interest.

The statement of military's media wing further said that during the meeting matters of mutual interest, regional security situation and defence cooperation were discussed. Both the defence leaders reiterated the desire to further enhance bilateral relations in all the fields. "The Pakistan-US military leadership agreed to promote bilateral cooperation in all fields," the ISPR said.

The visiting dignitary acknowledged and appreciated Pakistan Army's successes in fight against terrorism and Pakistan's continued efforts for bringing peace and stability in the region. In March last, General Kurilla had told US Senate Armed Services Committee that Pakistan's nuclear system is safe and America is satisfied with it. The Centcom chief had said he had confidence in the security procedures of Pakistan's nuclear programme. He also spoke of his good relations with Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir.

Yasmin's remand extended

F.P. Report

LAHORE: An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Monday extended the judicial remand of PTI leader Dr. Yasmin Rashid in four cases. Yasmin Rashid's judicial remand was extended in Askari Tower, PML-N office arson and other cases. Yasmin Rashid was presented before the ATC judge after her judicial remand expired today. The investigation officer sought more time from the court for the submission of the challan in the cases.

The court while extending her judicial remand for 14 more days, ordered police to present the former minister again on August 7. Last month, the former Punjab health minister was sent to jail in a case related to May 9 riots. The PTI leader appeared virtually before the court where the police sought physical remand of the former provincial health minister.

The court dismissed the police's request and handed over Rashid to police on 15-day judicial remand. The Lahore police had registered case against the PTI leader for allegedly setting vehicles on fire on May 9, the day the PTI chairman was arrested from the premises of Islamabad High Court (IHC).

Focus on to facilitate journalists

PM to launch Journalists Health Insurance Card scheme on August 7, says Marriyum

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb said on Monday that Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif would formally launch Journalists Health Insurance Card Scheme on August 7.

She stated this after launching the registration process for Journalists Health Insurance Scheme by uploading its form on the website of the Press Information Department and Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. The minister said that the health insurance form was now available online for media workers and journalists and they would be able to register themselves through the online health insurance form.

The minister said that for the first time, the government had allocated Rs 1 billion for the health insurance of working journalists in the federal budget. Marriyum Aurangzeb uploaded this online registration form along with journalists present there while Principal Information Officer Mubashar Hassan was also present on the occasion.

The minister congratulated Secretary Information and Broadcasting Sohail Ali Khan, PIO Mubasher Hassan and the entire team of the Ministry of Information for launching the scheme. Talking to the media persons, she said that the Prime Minister had allocated funds worth Rs 1 billion for working journalists. She said that health insurance for working journalists and artists was the vision of Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

The minister said Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif had launched the health card scheme in 2013 which continued in the PTI era after the change of its name. She said that an online form of health insurance card scheme for journalists was being released. This registration form would be available on the website of the Press Information Department, she said and added that the process of registration of journalists was being started.

The health insurance form was simple and easy to fill and all details related to health issues were available in the form, the minister said. She said that all health facilities were being provided to journalists in the health insurance card scheme. "Health insurance and salaries of journalists have always been an issue in Pakistan", she remarked. During 14 months, she added Rs 110 million had been recovered from the platform of ITNE and direct payments had been made to the

employees in print media.

The minister said Minimum wage, job security of electronic media had been addressed in the amended PEMRA law, adding it was the Prime Minister's directive to ensure health insurance to journalists as soon as possible and all working journalists had been included. This project was for the whole of Pakistan, journalists from all over the country should start registering in it, she maintained.

"Health insurance facilities from the government are for journalists across the country, not for journalists of Islamabad only", she remarked. She said during the tenure of the present coalition government, no action had been taken against journalists having critical views about its policies and performance.

In the present government rule no journalists attacked, kidnapped, arrested or fired at as was the practice during the previous government, she added. Taking a jibe on PTI tenure, regarding the title of media predator given to Imran Khan by Reporters Without Borders, she the current government did not get that title, on the contrary the ranking of freedom of expression in Pakistan improved by seven ranks.

Replying to questions from media persons, she said that the health insurance scheme was not only for press club members, it was for all journalists and media workers. "It is not mandatory for a journalist to be a member of the Press Club for health insurance registration," she said.

The minister said all stakeholders were involved in the process of preparation of PEMRA (Amendment) Bill 2023 and no one opposed the bill or issued any adverse statement. She said that the Pakistan Broadcasters Association had issued a statement regarding the PEMRA (Amendment) Bill. Only a certain group was indulged in propaganda against PEMRA Amendment Bill 2023, the minister added.

She remarked that these people thought that they would continue spreading propaganda in the country and no one would question them but this would not happen now. She said that registration of journalists for health insurance would be done through digital form to ensure transparency. The minister said that the PM's Health Card and health insurance card for journalists were two separate schemes. A journalist who is benefiting from the Prime Minister Health Card Scheme would not be eligible for the Journalists' Health Insurance Scheme, she said in reply to a question.

SC bars LEAs from arresting PTI chairman

QUETTA (INP): The Supreme Court (SC) on Monday barred authorities from arresting PTI Chairman Imran Khan till August 9 in a case pertaining to the murder of lawyer Abdul Razzaq Shar in Quetta.

A three-member bench led by Justice Yahya Afridi and comprising Justice Sayyed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi and Justice Mussarat Hilali issued the directives while hearing Imran's plea seeking to quash the case. On June 6, Shar was fatally shot by unidentified assailants near Alamo Chowk on Airport Road. According to the police, the attack occurred while he was en route to the Balochistan High Court (BHC), targeted by unknown individuals wielding automatic weapons.

The government and the

PTI had traded blame over the incident, with both sides accusing the other of having a role in the killing. Prime minister's aide Attaullah Tarar had alleged that the lawyer was killed at the behest of Imran to allegedly evade accountability in a treason case while PTI spokesperson Raof Hassan had accused Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah of being behind the murder. It may be recalled that Shar had filed a constitutional petition against the PTI chief in the Balochistan High Court, seeking proceedings against the ex-premier under Article 6 that pertained to high treason. Subsequently, a first information report (FIR) was registered on the complaint of Shar's son, Advocate Siraj Ahmed, at Quetta's Shaheed Jamil police station against Imran.

An anti-terrorism court (ATC) had subsequently issued Imran's arrest warrants in the case, which were later upheld by the BHC. Imran had then approached the apex court to quash the FIR registered against him. During the previous hearing on June 20, the bench had directed the ex-premier to submit before it in person before asking for the annulment of the FIR and warrants of arrest.

Imran appeared before the SC during Monday's hearing alongside his lawyers. At the outset of the hearing, the Balochistan advocate general urged the SC to instruct the petitioner to appear before the joint investigation team (JIT) tasked with probing the murder. In response, Justice Afridi stated that the court would not issue such an order at this stage.

KP Governor denotifies minister

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in exercise of the powers conferred under clause 3 of Article 132 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Monday denotified caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Adnan Jalil from his office.

On his de-notification from his respective office, Adnan Jalil has ceased to hold the portfolio of Provincial Minister with immediate effect. It was notified by Administration Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Mati takes oath as KP minister

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Advisor to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Chief Minister Matiuallah Khan took oath as caretaker minister on Monday.

The oath taking ceremony was held at Governor House Peshawar and attended by caretaker provincial ministers and administrative officials of government departments. Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Ali administer oath to caretaker minister Matiuallah Khan. Matiuallah has replaced Adnan Jamil and he was nominated by ANP.

Meanwhile, KP caretaker Transport Minister Shahid Khattak has stepped down from his position after the Election Commission of Pakistan sought his dismissal, according to a report on Monday. Khattak sent his resignation to interim KP Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan. He also faxed his resignation to the provincial chief.



RAWALPINDI: Commander US Central Command (CENTCOM) General Michael Erik Kurilla called on Chief of the Army Staff General Asim Munir.

Indian lady reached Dir to find her love with a local youth

Haleem Asad

LOWER DIR: A 35-year old lady from Kailor Uttar Pradesh in India identified as Ms Anju Arvind Kumar, reached the Upper Dir district here the other



day after his friendship with a local youth Nasrullah, 29, a resident of village Kulsho in Upper Dir on a social media platform. She crossed the Wahga border after getting a visit visa for one month restricted only to Upper Dir.

Born on 25/12/1988 in Uttar Pradesh, India, Ms Anju briefly told local journalists at Dir Khas on Sunday that she loved one Nasrullah s/o Gul Mula Khan belonging to Upper Dir and that she could not live without him. She said that first they met on Facebook and their friendship turned into a deep love, after which she decided to leave the country for Pakistan. According to security officials, she reached Rawalpindi on July 22 and then her friend Nasrullah brought her to Upper Dir.

In a 40 seconds short video message through social media from Upper Dir, the 35-year old Indian lady Anju Arvind Kumar clarified that she had legal-

ly travelled to Pakistan under planning. "I want to give a message to all that I have come here with planning", she said, adding that it was not in a day or two. M&S Anju said that she was safe here and had no difficulty. She said that her return was in process in a way she came here in. "I am coming back in two three days", she is heard as speaking.

She requested all the media organizations not to harass and disturb her relatives and children. "Anyone wishing to talk to me can contact as I am online", she added.

The officials said, the friendship of Ms Anju and Nasrullah was being investigated. Talking to this reporter on the phone, one of the officials said that he could not say anything about their marriage. The Upper Dir district police officer Mushtaq Khan told local journalists that the lady was being investigated with utmost care. He said that she travelled to the area legally as she had

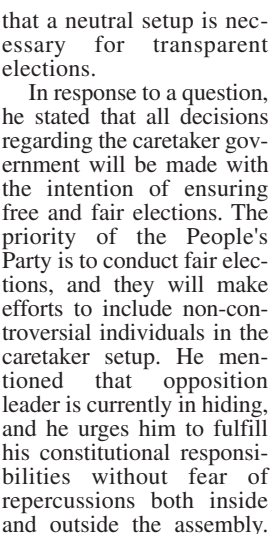
all relevant travel documents. The DPO said the lady would be presented to the media once she was cleared. A local journalist said that the lady was avoiding the media and that he had not much information about the matter. He said that several journalists rushed to the house of Nasrullah when the news about her arrival went viral on social media but they were told the lady was not present at home.

The woman belonging to Christian faith, is stated to be a divorcee and it is her first visit to Pakistan. The man is a permanent resident of Kulshu village in Upper Dir and he has done his BSc from Dir college and working as a medical rap.

According to an Indian writer Anupam Shukla, Arvid Kumar, husband of the lady that before leaving home, Anju told him she was going to visit her friend in Jaipur.

Mr Kumar told an Indian news agency that later he got a voice message from her telling him that she was in Lahore, Pakistan. Anju's husband said that she had no information how she got a visa and how she visited Pakistan.

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KARACHI: Minister of Information, Transport and Mass Transit Sindh Sharjeel Inam Memon's Media Talk.

The Minister for Information, Transport, and Mass Transit of Sindh, Sharjeel Inam Memon, stated that the People's Party has nominated a three-member committee for the caretaker government. The opposition leader is currently in hiding, and I urge him to fulfill his constitutional duty without fear of any repercussions, both inside and outside the assembly."

While speaking to journalists at the Sindh

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PUBLIC NOTICE

Application for issuance of Letter of Administration Succession Certificate by Ms. Nishat Begum with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Inayat Ur Rehman citizen number 1710104180931 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.

1. Nazish Rahman (Daughter)
2. Mooni Gul (Daughter)
3. Nishat Begum (Spouse)
4. Muneeb Ur Rahman (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.

THE FAZLEHAQ COLLEGE MARDAN RE-TENDER NOTICE

Sealed tender are invited from income tax and General Sales Tax (Active Tax Payer) & KPRA registered firms/suppliers for the following supply/contracts for the year 2023-2024. Bids will be evaluated under rule 6(2) (a) "Single Stage One envelope Procedure" of KPRA Rules 2014"

Tender documents and other information can be obtained from account office of the Fazlehaq College Mardan. During working hours on payment of Rs.1000/= Only (Rupees One Thousand Only) (Non-Refundable) up to 9th Aug 2023.

Tender from along with call deposit (Equal to 02% of the annual supply-Refundable) in the name of the Principal the Fazlehaq College Mardan, should reach the undersigned on 10th Aug, 2023 up to 10:00 hrs. Tenders will be opened on the same day (10/08/2023- 10:00 hrs.) in the presence of contractors or their representatives. Other terms and conditions are mentioned in the tender form.

The Undersigned may reject any one or all tenders any time prior to acceptance as per provisions contained in Rule 47 of KPRA Rules.2014. Moreover price will be considered on the basis of good quality products on items wise lowest rates among the competitors.

S.No.	Name of Contract	S.No.	Name of Contract
1.	Milk Pak, Fresh Milk & Curd Supply contract	7	Agriculture Land (Tenant 13.6 Jerab) (Security Rs.200000/-) Refundable
2.	Veal Meat, Mutton, Chicken and Eggs supply contract.	8	Supply of Sanitary & Electricity Accessories.
3.	Fresh Ration (Seasonal Fruit and vegetable)	9	Supply of Paint, Distemper & Carpentry item
4.	Dry Ration (Black Tea, Jam, Pulses Beans Chana White and Masala jat etc)	10	Sports items Supply of Crockery and utensils for Hostels
5.	Rice Saila A grade, Rice Irre best quality	11	Supply of Bhoosa, Chana Barley etc (Security Rs.50000/-) Refundable
6.	Bread, Butter and Confectionary Supply contract	12	Cricket Academy (Security Rs.50000/-) Refundable.

Principal The Fazlehaq College Mardan
Contact No:0937-9230070/9230087
fcmm.edu.pk

INF(P) 1734/2023

“Take special care of special persons”

إِنَّا لِلّٰهِ وَإِنَّا إِلَيْهِ رَاجِعُونَ

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing away of

Munawar Humayun Khan

on 23rd July 2023 in Islamabad.

Mama, the guiding light of our lives. Monono to her sisters and cousins, Mamatoo for all her nieces and nephews, and Nanay to her grandchildren, she was the beautiful, strong and wise Pashtun matriarch of our tightly knit family.

Qul will be held at House 67, Block E, Holy Family Road, Satellite Town (opposite Holy Family Hospital) Rawalpindi on Tuesday 25th July, 2023, with dua at 5:30pm.

Shandana, Amina and Ayesha Humayun Khan Taimur & Mya, Shahmir and Deena	Mrs Azizullah Khan Khalid Mohtadullah Nayyar Liaqat Gauhar Saadullah Kishwar & Himayatullah Khan	M.Afzal Khan M.Zafar Khan Yasmin & Shahid Hosain Shireen Safdar
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And all Mamatoo's nephews and nieces

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a, Amina and	Mrs Azizullah Khan	M.Afzal Khan
Mumayun Khan	Khalid Mohtadullah	M.Zafar Khan
t Mya,	Nayyar Liaqat	Yasmin & Shahid Hosain
and Deena	Gauhar Saadullah	Shireen Safdar

And all Mamatoo's nephews and nieces

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‘Imran could not erase Pakistan, but his politics erased’

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Adviser to the Prime Minister, Engineer Amir Muqam has said that Imran Khan could not erase Pakistan, but his politics itself was erased from the country and his true face was unveiled before the people.

He said that there will be no sign of Bat and Imran Khan in the upcoming election. He further said that God willing, PML-N will come into power not only in the center but also in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He added that everyone has understood that PML-N alone has the ability to take the country out of the ongoing crisis.



He said that we fulfilled the promises made without securing any mandate from the people of Kalam. Engineer Amir Muqam expressed these views while addressing a huge public gathering on the occasion of the inauguration of NADRA Office Kalam and Kalam Electrification Project.

Engineer Amir Muqam said that we had already built Kalam Road and again the prime minister had approved it's restoration project.

He said that the tender for the construction of

Kalam Gabral Road will be given very soon. Advisor to the Prime Minister also announced the construction of Arianai Road, Arianai Bishamal Bridge and Lykot Bridge.

He has also announced the construction of Ain Village Council Barai Serai, Daruli Bridges in Bahrain and tenders for Madyan and Bahrain Bypass, Bridges, Roads and Tunnels have been issued.

Adviser to the Prime Minister Engineer Amir Muqam thanked the people of Kalam for giving him a grand welcome while thousands of people participated in the rally with full enthusiasm.



PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry presiding over a meeting. Provincial Election Commissioner KP Shamshad Khan also present in meeting.

Governor denotifies minister for industries

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in exercise of the powers conferred under clause 3 of Article 132 of the Constitution of Islamic Republic of Pakistan on Monday denotified caretaker Minister for Industries, Commerce and Technical Education, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Adnan Jilil from his office.

On his de-notification from his respective office, Adnan Jilil has ceased to hold the portfolio of Provincial Minister with immediate effect. It was notified by Administration Department, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Intermittent rainfall to continued

PESHAWAR (APP): The Met Office on Monday predicted that the intermittent spell of rain would continue in most parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa till July 28.

It said that scattered to widespread wind, thunderstorm-rain with isolated heavy falls is likely to occur over most districts of the province during next 24 to 48 hours.

Heavy rain may cause urban flooding in low-lying areas of Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Charsadda, DI Khan, Bannu and may trigger landslides in the vulnerable areas of Swat, Chitral, Dir, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Torgar, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Kurram and Khyber districts, it warned.

Heavy rain may also cause flash flooding in Swat, Chitral, Dir, Shangla, Kohistan, Battagram, Torgar, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Kurram and Khyber districts, the Meteorological Department added.

During the last 24 hours, the highest rainfall was recorded 65mm in Timergara, 64 in Malamjappa, 61 in Kakul, 38 in Pattan, 37 in Balakot, 16 in Saidu Sharif, nine in Dir, three in Bannu, and two in Mirkhani.

The PDMA said that due to heavy rains, 11 houses were partially damaged with two in Bajaur, three each in Buner, Malakand, and Shangla while one house was fully damaged in Swat.

District admins asked to assist ECP in conducting by-polls

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry Monday directed district administrations to assist Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in holding peaceful, transparent and fair local body by-elections.

The Chief Secretary gave the instruction in a meeting, called here to review security arrangements for by-elections.

It may be noted that ECP

has announced August 6 as polling day for the slots of chairmen, Tehsil Council Havelian, Abbottabad and Tehsil Council Mathra, Peshawar.

Provincial Election Commissioner, Home Secretary, Commissioner Peshawar and Hazara divisions, AIG Police, CCPO Peshawar, RPO Hazara, Deputy Commissioner Peshawar and Abbottabad and other relevant officials attended the meeting.

The meeting was told

that 134 and 155 polling stations had been established in Tehsil Havelian and Tehsil Mathra respectively. Moreover, the total number of voters in Tehsil Havelian is 165,800 while in Tehsil Mathra, the number is 216,769.

The forum was briefed in detail about all arrangements including security for the polling day.

The Chief Secretary ordered fool-proof security arrangements at very sensitive polling stations.

Illegal raid on residence: AD&SJ orders to register case against SHO Shahpur

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Additional District and Session judge (AD&SJ) Peshawar Nasir Khan has ordered to registered case against Station House Officer (SHO) Shahpur Abdul Ali Khan along with six other policemen for illegal raid on residence and torturing retired school's principal, on Monday.

The counsel Abid Ullah

Advocate argued that on 1st April 2023 SHO Shahpur Abdul Ali along with Tariq Khan, Shahid Khan, Uzair, Muhammad Amir, Dunya

Gul and Shaukat Wali raided residence of Safdar Khan at Pakha Ghulam illegally.

The counsel argued that police has tortured retired school's principal named Safdar Khan during the illegal raid without court's orders. He argued that video of the incident went viral on social media.

The petitioner had approached police high-ups several times for redressal of his grievances to registered cases against SHO Shahpur Abdul Ali Khan along with other six policemen but to no veil, counsel stated.

The counsel Abid Ullah Advocate argued that Safdar Khan has approached honorable court under section 22A to obtain relief in this regard. He requested for registration of case against SHO Shahpur Abdul Ali Khan along with other six personnel under relevant section of law.

AD&SJ Peshawar has ordered to registered case against SHO Shahpur Abdul Ali Khan along with six other personnel for illegal raid and torturing of retired school's principal after conclusion of arguments.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Minister for Information Barrister Feroze Jamal Kakakhel addressing a conference.

Shamshad Khan inaugurates orientation and training workshop



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Provincial Election Commissioner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Shamshad Khan on Monday inaugurated one day orientation and training workshop for

officers of Election Commission of Pakistan from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa regarding use of Election Management System (EMS) software app in the general elections 2023 in Peshawar.

In his address, he urged

the officers to increase their knowledge about this app in the training session. The training will be completed in three phases which will culminate on 26th July, 2023. All District Election Commissioners have been divided in three groups.

On Monday's first phase, the training was attended by Regional Election Commissioner, Peshawar, Deputy Director (LGE), Deputy Director (MCO), District Election Commissioners, Nowshera, Charsadda, Khyber, Mohmand, Swabi, Mardan, Kohat, Upper Chitral, Lower Chitral, Lower Dir, Upper Dir, Abbottabad and Shangla.

The orientation session

was organized by the

Information System Wing

of ECP with the collaboration

of Sapphire (Software House).

At the end, the Joint

Provincial Election Commission

(Els), Javed Rehmat

awarded certificates among

the participants.

Investigation unearths poaching

PESHAWAR (APP): Initial investigation into the death of a black bear which was found in critically injured condition due to bullet wounds in Bugermung area of Siren Valley of Manshera district has unearthed poaching as the reason that prompted a few locals to snatch her two cubs for selling.

"After holding inquiry into the incident and discussions with locals, we have convinced that the bear is killed for snatching of her two cubs," shared DFO Wildlife Manshera, Sarmad.

It is also established that the bear had two cubs out of which one escaped in the forest after firing bullets at her mother and the other one is grabbed by the killers, Sarmad told APP.

He said raids are being conducted for the arrest of three nominated persons in the case and for recovery of the snatched bear cub from their possession.

It merits a mention here that a female black bear was found in critically injured condition at the Bugermung area of Manshera on July 19, last.

The locals and Wildlife Department officials shifted the injured bear to Dhodial Peshantary for treatment but the beast succumbed to her injuries.

DFO Wildlife Manshera said the search is also in progress for the escaped bear cub and teams along with some locals are visiting nearby forest areas.

He said after the recovery of the cub from the possession of killers, the baby bear would be shifted to a safe location including Peshawar Zoo for care and upbringing.

If the cub is suckling, that would be kept in a safe facility for feeding by humans and if is grown up then the option of releasing it back into the wild would also be given consideration, Sarmad opined.

He said there is also a plan to hold a discussion with the administration of the Islamabad Wildlife Management Board (IWMB) for the release of the cub in its rehabilitation center where such bear cubs are kept and grown.

He expressed the hope that the killers of the bear would be arrested soon and the snatched cub be recovered from their possession.

Ombudsman stresses on capacity building of staff

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Provincial Ombudsman Syed Jamal-U-Din Shah has vowed to focus on capacity building of staff particularly investigation officers for delivering better performance, he said while presiding over

the monthly review meeting of Provincial Ombudsman Secretariat here on Monday.

The Director General, Advisors, Consultants and Administrative staff attended the meeting. The AD (IT) Akhunzada Kamran Ali gave presentation on performance of officers.

On this occasion, participants were informed about the monthly progress of all officers as well as Regional Offices. Ombudsman directed the Incharge of Regional Offices to provide relief to the complainant and facilitate them at Regional Offices instead of coming to Peshawar Secretariat. He said that regional offices role is significant. He also said that grievance redressal facilities may be provided to common peoples while they lodge complaints against departments.

The head of Provincial Ombudsman Secretariat while appreciating the role of media team and investigation officers asked them to work hard and keep delivering their input to strengthen the Ombudsman Secretariat. He also directed that training workshop may be arranged for investigation officers in order to enhance their investigation capabilities.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Haji Zubair Ali visiting street of Behar Colony Warsak Road.

Political reconciliation imperative for economic stability, transparent polls

PESHAWAR (APP): Experts here Sunday said that political parties give strength to democracy and reconciliation among it was imperative for continuity of a democratic system on basis of free, fair and transparent elections.

As the country is moving towards general election, therefore it was necessary that all religious and political parties set aside their differences by sitting together for a transparent and free election to give legitimacy to the future political government and take democracy to safe shores.

"Pakistan is passing through a very difficult time since its existence and it is right time for all political parties including PDM and PTI to shun differences and unite for genetal elections," Professor Dr A.H Hilali, former Chairman, Political Science Department, University of Peshawar (UoP) while talking to APP on Sunday.

Providing solutions to all political problems, he said democracy is a best form of government that not only guarantees supremacy of constitution and rule of law but also brings political and economic stability to a

country.

He said that unfortunately, democracy couldn't strengthen its roots in the country due to wrangling among political parties for power and leveling of corruption and rigging allegations against elected governments after elections, consequently, this popular system derailed four times in the past and no elected prime minister completed the five-year constitutional term.

Dr Hilali said instead of learning lesson from the country's grim political history, the political parties again have started wrangling ahead of the general elections that not only increased people's problems but made negative effects on economy and politics in the country.

He said Pakistan can't afford political instability and economic chaos besides hate based politics, adding that May 9 vandalism showed political intolerance and illogical approach to democratic values and norms.

Dr Hilal said Inspite of the completion of 75 years of independence of Pakistan, the country was still looking toward IMF and other financial institu-

tions to run the economy mainly due to inconsistent economic policies and political instability.

He said the present government deserved appreciation for brokering a successful agreement with IMF to save the country from bankruptcy.

Wajid Ali Khan, former KP Minister for Environment said that ANP founder Bacha Khan and Abdul Wali Khan advocated for political reconciliation and unity of people.

He said those countries, which have evolved a stable, progressive, inclusive and tolerant political culture have attained all feats including economic prosperity, civilian supremacy and rule of law, institutional efficiency and balance of power.

He said a politically stable government that came into existence after free and transparent elections ensured sustainable economic development, national security and social harmony, transparency and capitalisation of resources, freedom of expression and pragmatic foreign policy besides taking bold decisions in national interest.

To achieve these key goals, he said that the 1973

constitution empowered all political parties to serve their countrymen for five years after winning the election and implement its manifestoes, adding that in democracies, people have the power to decide about the future of political parties through votes.

Ejaz Khan, former Chairman International Relations, UoP said that democracy, which is the process of political evolution, strengthened its roots after free and transparent elections following completion of five years term of the provincial and national assemblies.

He said political unity and dialogue was imperative among political parties ahead of general elections so that no one can raise finger on polls' results.

He said that elections were fast approaching and urged all political parties including PDM and PTI to sit together and start a grand political dialogue to take the ship of democracy to safe shores.

Ikhtair Wali Khan, PMLN KP spokesman said his party strongly believed in political dialogue and time and again offered PTI Chairman to come forward and sit with the government

for a grand political dialogue to bring down the political temperature besides holding of simultaneous elections for national and provincial assemblies for political and economic stability.

However, the stubbornness of PTI leadership and bad relations with the opposition in Imran's four year poor rule had created political and economic chaos in the country, he said.

He said PTI leadership had dissolved two elected assemblies after Imran Khan was ousted from power through a successful no confidence motion last year and tried to destabilize the system.

He said the constitution cannot act on the whims of one person, who could violate it anytime, dissolve the two provincial assemblies prematurely whenever he wants, saying such a negative attitude was against the spirit of the constitution.

"As Imran cannot face the public after May 9 vandalism, that is why he was using different dramas only to gain people's sympathies ahead of general elections," he said.

He said Imran has victimised the opposition leadership and put them in jails.

He said that Imran's cypher drama was completed flopped and exposed before masses now after reported statement of his former Principal Secretary Azam Khan.

Ikhtair Wali said the PTI chief instead of talking about his government performance in public rallies and TV shows had leveled baseless allegations against political opponents as he had nothing to show.

He said the billion trees project has been taken by the NAB and the BRT project was completed at very high cost thus huge taxpayers' money was wasted by the PTI.

He said Imran had left millions of flood victims alone in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Punjab provinces despite his government at that time and would face peoples' wrath in the upcoming general elections.

Wali said the PTI leader must answer for his false narrative of a foreign conspiracy against him, which he repeated for several months before suddenly retracting and declaring it false by own, adding his actions have negatively impacted the foreign policy of Pakistan.

He said PTI chairman would have to answer May 9 vandalism and about his 'two-faced behaviour' and politics of lies and accusations, saying people would reject Imran's ill-mannered politics in the upcoming general elections.

Despite political stubbornness and allegations of PTI chairman, he said the coalition government had offered several times to PTI's former lawmakers to take their resignations back and come to parliament but they made a mockery of the sincere offer of the PML-N leadership and were now weeping after their resignations were accepted.

Due to negative politics of Imran, he said that PTI was divided in groups and fictions and people started distance from him.

He said Imran Niazi had deceived people on the hollow slogan of "accountability and change" as the former PTI government in KP itself closed its own Ehtesab Commission at Peshawar exposing its tall anti corruption slogans.

He said PTI has lost footings in KP and Punjab provinces where they would now face people's anger in upcoming elections.



In brief

Customs seizes smuggled items

QUETTA (INP): Pakistan Customs Anti-Smuggling Quetta during separate actions seized smuggled items worth millions of rupees. Customs spokespersons Dr. Atta Brech said that actions were conducted against smuggled items in Kolpur, Noshki, Lalkpas, Ziarat Cross and other field enforcement units recovered Indian smuggled gutka valuing 90 million rupees. Customs seized smuggled clothe, tyres, edible oil and non-custom paid vehicles worth 90 million rupees. Thousands of bags of smuggled sugar and fertilizer was recovered from Noshki while smuggling bids of the two items were also foiled in the two areas. Five expensive non-custom paid vehicles were also recovered from Ziarat Crossing.

16 culprits break judicial lock-up

F.P. Report

SHAH DAD KOT: As many as 16 suspects who were imprisoned under various cases in the judicial lockup of Shahdaddot district of Qambar broke the wall of the room and escaped from the premises. According to details, Sarfraz Chandio, Rab Nawaz Gopang, Ishaq Gopang, Zubair Shaikh, Saddam Mugheri, Yaseen Manganhar, Ayaz Khoso, Ghulam Asgher, Yousif Joyo, Sarfraz, Waseem shaikh, Rehmat Brohi and Asgher mugheri escaped from judicial lock-up. On the information that they managed to escape due to Lee, on intimidation, SSP Qambar Shahdaddot arrested ASI Imdad Gopang and three officials Gada Hussain, Zulfiqar Ali khoso and Haji Khan Khoso on the charge of negligence of duty and facilitating the accused and locked them up after strict investigation and legal action was ordered.

Father, son died killed in accident

FAISALABAD (INP): A youth and his father were killed in an accident in the precinct of Factory Area police station, here on Monday. Rescue 1122 spokesman said that Muhammad Saleh (24) along with his father Muhammad Akbar (65) was travelling on a motorcycle when a speeding truck hit their bike near Railway Phatak Sitara Colony. As a result, the both died on the spot. Rescue 1122 handed over the bodies to area police, while further investigation was underway.

Man crushed to death

SARGODHA (INP): A train crushed a man to death at Chak No. 137-NB in the jurisdiction of Sillanwali Police station on Monday. Police said that Muhammad Arshad was travelling to Sillanwali on his bike. When he was crossing Railway crossing Sillanwali, Hazara Express train crushed him to death. Further investigation was under way.

Five injured in roof collapse

MURIDKE (INP): Five including mother and children were critically injured when roof of a dilapidated house collapsed here on Monday, rescue sources said. According to details, roof of a house located in Choliyanwala area of Muridke came down after rain. Five family members including mother and four children were buried under the rubble and injured. The rescue personnel pulled out the injured from the debris and shifted them to hospital for treatment where their condition was stated to be critical.

Residents request PM to announce gas for Lakki

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: The residents of Lakki Marwat district have demanded the Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif to approve a gas distribution pipeline for provision of gas facility to major towns and rural areas of the district.

Talking to this scribe here, they said that the Prime Minister was expected to visit the backward southern district in the next couple of days to inaugurate uplift projects including the Wali oil and gas field in Bitanni area.

"The district is rich in natural resources and the local residents had the first right to take advantage of gas and other facilities",

said former tehsil nazim advocate Faridullah Khan Meenakhel. He said that the provision of gas to all urban and rural areas in four tehsils of the district including Bitanni subdivision was the genuine right of the citizens.

The former nazim asked the premier to direct SNGPL authorities to lay out a gas distribution pipeline in the area as it was the constitutional right of local residents. He also hailed leaders and activists of rights' bodies for launching a peaceful agitation movement for the rights of area people.

PPP leader Haji Muhammad Tariq Sikandari said the Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif's expected visit to the district

is a good omen and local residents and elders are optimistic that Sharif would announce provision of natural gas to all parts of the southern district. He said that the discovery of oil and gas reserves would pave the way for sustainable uplift of the backward district.

Another elder said the OGDCL and SNGPL are doing injustice by not providing the gas distribution pipeline to Lakki Marwat which is also against natural justice. "The non-provision of gas facility to local residents will ignite a protest landing the concerned authorities in trouble and creating law and order situation in the district as well", he added.

Security of lives and property priority of police

F.P. Report

WANA: As many as 200 policemen of Lower South Waziristan has been deployed in District Tank for security during Muharram Ul Haram. In order to protect the life and property of the people, to maintain the atmosphere of law and order and to control the situation to deal with any emergency situation.

Before deployment and departure, DPO Farman Ullah (PPM) took a detailed briefing about the arrangements and expressed his satisfaction, issuing special instructions on this occasion, he said that no compromise will be made on security during Muharram, nor will any

negligence be tolerated.

DPO said that all of us have heavy responsibilities due to our position, which we will fulfill in any case, be ever alert to discourage the miscreants and crush their nefarious intentions, avoid using mobile phone during duty, make use of belt proof jacket and helmet mandatory, keep a close watch on people coming and going and suspicious persons and also ensure your safety.

DPO further said that during Muharram, there is a need to maintain contact and unity among people of different schools of thought. In order to thwart the evil intentions of the miscreants, it is necessary that the police and the people cooperate with each

other.

DPO said that in the blessed month of Muharram, we all have to play our full role to maintain the atmosphere of unity and brotherhood. We have to forget our differences and play our full role for the survival and stability of the country and the development and prosperity of our generations.

However, the nefarious intentions of anti-national elements and saboteurs must be thwarted in a timely manner through unity and agreement in our ranks. He further said that Muharram is a holy month which we all have to respect the state will fulfill its responsibilities and mis-chief will be discouraged in all circumstances.

Islamia varsity signs MoU with Organic Pakistan

Saqib Mushtaq

BAHAWALPUR: A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and Organic Pakistan Limited for the promotion of Urban Farming. The agreement was signed by Vice Chancellor Engr. Prof. Dr. Athar Mahboob and Muhammad Nadeem Iqbal Chairman Organic Pakistan Limited on behalf of their institutions.

The aim of the agreement is to grow locally fresh and affordable vegetables and fruits to address the challenge of food security. Both the institutes will take initiatives for farming in the Islamia University of Bahawalpur Baghdad ud Jadeed campus which includes vegetables, honey and poultry feed. Both the institutions will work for the promotion of farming in Bahawalpur City and Cantonment Board as well.

Both institutions will make efforts to attract



teachers, students and common citizens to urban farming. Urban farming will ensure eco-friendly, chemical-free cultivation of vegetables and fruits. A Knowledge Center for Urban Farming will be established in the Islamia University of Bahawalpur and special training programs will also be started in the university to increase the capacity of teachers and students.

Both institutions will also organize international

conferences in this regard in the future. Dean Faculty of Arts and Languages Prof. Dr. Javed Hassan Chandio, Dean Faculty of Agriculture Prof. Dr. Tanveer Hussain Tarabi, Prof. Dr. Naveed Aslam Mulghani, Prof. Dr. Muhammad Nafees, Syndicate Member Samar Fahad, Dr. Bushra Siddique, Dr. Jam Sajjad Hussain, Chaudhry Uzair Ahmed and Ali Zameer Station Manager APP participated.

Naqvi chairs meeting on cotton cultivation

F.P. Report

MULTAN: An important meeting chaired by the Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi at the Circuit House, Multan, reviewed the steps taken to ensure the supply of cotton production and agricultural medicines.

Consideration of preventive measures to protect cotton from damaging insects. Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi appreciated and congratulated the tireless efforts of farmers, agriculture department and administration for increas-

ing the area under cotton cultivation. Cotton should not be sold for less than 8500 rupees.

Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi gave the task of ensuring the sale of cotton at the fixed rate to all the commissioners. Farmers will be fully compensated for their labor. Commissioners, Deputy Commissioners and concerned officers continue field visits. Secretary Agriculture gave a detailed briefing about the current cotton crop.

Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi's measures

for record cotton cultivation are commendable. President of Pakistan Kisan Ethihad Khalid Khokhar said that after 31 years a high-quality cotton crop was witnessed which goes to the credit of Mohsin Naqvi and his team.

Chief Secretary, Inspector General Police, Additional Chief Secretary South Punjab, Additional IG South Punjab, Secretary Agriculture, Commissioner Multan Division, RPO Multan, Secretary Agriculture and concerned officials attended the meeting.

FIA arrests man for harassing woman

HYDERABAD (PPI): The Federal Investigation Agency's (FIA) Cyber Crime Circle, Hyderabad on Monday arrested a man for harassing a woman.

According to the FIA, Ghuffran Ali was blackmailing the woman by sending

objectionable content to her on WhatsApp. The agency officials also recovered the cellphone as well as the SIM from the suspect.

Later, the case was registered against him under the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act

(PECA). The women harassment cases have risen on social media and other places due to no solid steps taken yet. There is need to take stern actions against such crimes so that people could take a sigh of relief.



HYDERABAD: Vehicles passing through accumulated rainwater in Latifabad area after heavy rain.

Hundreds of workers join PTIP

Syed Waliullah Shah

NOWSHERA: Tens of hundreds political workers as well as traders including transporters had joined Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Parliamentarian (PTIP) while part away from former Prime Minister Imran Khan, on Monday.

The activists had joined PTIP in the leadership of Haji Shah Zaman Khan while addressing press conference at Nowshera press club along with presidents of trader, bread-maker, transporters, vendor's unions, fruit & vegetable and mobile associations while satisfied with Pervaiz Khattak vision.

The speakers condemned 9th may vandalism while demanded exemplary punishment for culprits involved the hooliganism along with master minders to eliminate such extremist narrative from politics.

Public transport Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Union president Aftab Khan, ex-banker Haji Aslam Khan, traders president Sher Zamin Khan, Shakeel Ahmad, Munisif, Waleed Akhtar and Haleem Khan along with hundreds of activists joined PTIP while committed for victory in upcoming general elections.

The participants claimed that they had quitted PTI due to fascist and extremist narrative of Imran Khan to compel youth towards violence for his personal ends. They claimed that Imran Khan had played with national security and demoralized national heroes which was day's dream of the enemies of Pakistan.

Four killed as house collapses

SUKKUR (PPI): Four people were killed and several others were injured as a two-storey building collapsed in Sukkur due to heavy rainfall on Monday. According to rescue sources, a two-storey house located in Sukkur's Mian Dad Khoso village collapsed in heavy rains. As a result, four people were pronounced dead while others were trapped in the rubble.

The bodies and injured were rushed to the hospital, where reportedly the medical staff is finding it difficult in treating the injured due to a power outage. The monsoon rains are affecting parts of the country and according to the MET office, the current wave is to prevail in Sindh until July 26.

Meanwhile, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) has directed the authorities concerned to make necessary arrangements for the relocation of people in flood-risk areas.

According to NDMA, due to rapid discharge of water at river Kabul, there is risk of flooding in the low-lying areas near Nowshera. The NDMA said as heavy rains are likely to continue throughout the country during next two days, there is risk of land sliding and flash flooding in KP, Gilgit, Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir.

Police capture 8 fleeing prisoners

QAMBAR (PPI): Police on Monday captured eight out of 15 prisoners who escaped after breaking the Judicial Sub-Jail in Qambar.

According to Qambar police, the accused broke down the roof of the sub-jail yestered and managed to escape. The inmates climbed on the shoulders of one another and broke down the roof of the jail barrack. After the incident, police teams fanned out in search of them and apprehend eight jailbreakers out of 15 while conducting raids in various places of the city.

More police search parties

were formed to arrest the remaining escapees. The accused who broke jail were mostly involved in crimes like drug peddling and robberies. They were identified as Amir Gadhi, Waseem Tootani, Rab Nawaz Khaskheli, Zubair Sheikh, Ghulam Asghar Gopang, Saddam Hussain Mughiri, Asghar Ali Mughiri, Rehmat Ali Barohi, Ishaq Gopang, Muhammad Yousuf Joyo, Yaseen Minghar, Ayaz Hussain Khoso, Sarfraz Chandio and others.

The ASI and three other cops appointed at the sub-jail had been arrested while

seven other officials were suspended for showing dereliction in the performance of their duty. The entire staff of the Qambar sub-jail has been replaced with the new one. An inquiry team was formed to investigate the incident. It is pertinent to mention here that as per the Sindh Home Department's directive, no detainee could be kept in the Qambar judicial lock-up due to security reasons. The detainees are supposed to be kept at Larkana Central Jail. But the jail administration does not follow the Home Department's instructions.

Money dispute claims two brothers' lives

F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Two real brothers were shot and dead and two other sustained bullet injuries in firing over monetary dispute here in Wali Khel village of Tehsil Landi Kotal district Khyber.

Station House Officer (SHO) Landi Kotal police station Ibrahim Shinwari said that a dispute had erupted over 0.4 million rupees between uncle and cousins. Both the parties recalled their well-equipped maternal relatives for their assistance in the conflict.

Last day both the oppo-

nents confronted each other and after exchanging hot words, they opened indiscriminate firing on each other, SHO added. As a result six persons got injured who were shifted to Headquarter Hospital, Landi Kotal for medical aid, hospital sources said.

Three serious wounded were referred to Peshawar hospital however two brothers succumbed to their injuries in the health center, hospital sources informed. The deceased were identified as Muhammad Ilyas and Abbas Afridi. Local police officials moved to the site and adopted security meas-

ures to avoid further human loss.

Separately, the death toll raised to four when one more wounded police cop of suicide attack at tehsil compound, Bara martyred in Hayatabad Medical Complex on Monday.

Police and relative of the late police official said that Abdul Hadi who critically injured in suicide attack passed away in the Peshawar health center. It is to be mentioned here that on July 20, 2023, two suicides hit tehsil compound building martyred three police cops and injured eleven others including civilians.

First monsoon showers at Obaro, Sindh

OBARO (INP): Rain, accompanied by strong winds, considerably brought down the temperatures due to which people heaved a sigh of relief. However, the downpour also caused a loss to mango, and date orchards besides severing power supply to different parts of the city.

Heavy rain also lashed Kandhkot and its outskirts due to which heat-stricken people of the city heaved a sigh of relief. However, it also brought with it lot of inconvenience as electricity supply to the city was disconnected. There were also reports of monsoon

rains from other parts of Sindh.

The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) on Monday said that different parts of Punjab would continue to receive monsoon rains between July 24 and July 30. PDMA Spokesman Imran Qureshi said that another spell of rains would start in the province on July 27.

However, he made it clear that the new spell would not be as intense as it was its predecessor. The spokesman further said that since dams were already 90 per cent full in India due to heavy rains, there were

fears that the country would release more water into rivers in the coming days due to which there could be again floods in Pakistan.

He said already water levels in rivers in Punjab were rising, and River Ravi, River Chenab and River Jhelum were likely to remain in medium to high flood. "Therefore, it is incumbent upon the district administrations to remain alert round the clock since protecting the lives and properties of people is the first priority," he asserted. The spokesman asked people to dial PDMA's helpline number 1129 in case of any emergency.

2 killed in name of honour

Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: Man killed wife and her friend in the name of honor in Peouchar area of Tehsil Matta, police has arrested alleged murderer along with weapon used in the offense.

Last night, police received information about the killing of Javid Ali son of Nadir Khan along with

his wife Masmat (t) with firearms in his house in Peuchar Chapriyal. Station House Officer (SHO) Chaprial Police Station Mohammad Zeb Khan took immediate action along with the police team and arrested Akhtar Ali who killed his wife in the name of honor and also recovered with a murder gun. Further investigation is underway.

The Frontier Post's correspondent contacted DPO Swat Shafiullah Gandapur in this regard, he confirmed the incident and said that the accused has been arrested in time and said that no one is allowed to take the law into their own hands. And those who violate the law will be dealt with their own hands he said.

Women hold protest

F.P. Report

LARKANA: The heirs of two youths, Amjad Ali Manganji and Irfan Ali Manganji, who were killed in firing by two sides of the Magnija and Gopang communities in Sadu Dero, a suburb near Larkana, protested in front of the

press club with Holy Quran.

The armed men of the Gopang community have been brutally killed our two youths amjad ali mangnejo & irfan ali mangnejo and continue they are threatening the three involved accused who are walking around in

public, but despite the case being registered, the border police are not arresting them, while they are still being threatened in various ways.

They requested to IG(P) Sindh for immediate action for arrest of involved/nominated persons on humanitarian grounds.



9 people killed in plane crash in eastern Sudan

CAIRO (AP): A civilian plane crashed after taking off from an airport in eastern Sudan, killing nine people, including four military personnel who were aboard the aircraft, the military said, as the conflict in the northeastern African country reached the 100-day mark on Monday with no sign of abating.

The military said in a statement that a child survived crash in Port Sudan, a city on the Red Sea that so far has been spared from the devastating war between the military and the powerful paramilitary Rapid Support Forces. The Antonov plane crashed shortly after taking off from the city's airport, the military said. It blamed a technical failure for the crash. The statement provided no further details.

Al-Taher Abdel-Rahman, the secretary of Finance Minister Gebreil Ibrahim, was among the dead, according to the minister, who took to social media to mourn his employee. Sudan has plunged into chaos since mid-April when monthslong tensions between the military and the RSF exploded into open fighting in the capital, Khartoum, and elsewhere across the country.

"It's been 100 days of war in Sudan, with a devastating toll on lives and infrastructure, but worse lies ahead," said William Carter, Norwegian Refugee Council's director in Sudan. The fighting has turned Khartoum and other urban areas into battlefields. The sprawling

region of Darfur saw some of the worst bouts of violence in the conflict with the fighting turning into ethnic clashes. The clashes have killed more than 3,000 people and wounded more than 6,000 others, Health Minister Haitham Mohammed Ibrahim said in televised comments last month. The casualty tally is likely much higher, according to doctors and activists.

More than 2.6 million people fled their homes to safer areas inside Sudan, while more than 757,000 people crossed into neighboring countries, according to the UN migration agency. The UN refugee agency warned that about 300 South Sudanese refugee children in Sudan's southern province of White Nile were dying from suspected measles and malnutrition since the start of the conflict. "These figures are staggering — civilians who have nothing to do with this conflict are sadly uprooted from their homes and livelihoods on a daily basis," UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi said.

The conflict derailed Sudanese hopes of restoring the country's fragile transition to democracy, which had begun after a popular uprising forced the military's removal of long-time dictator Omar al-Bashir in April 2019. A coup, led by the military and RSF, disrupted the democratic transition in October 2021. Carter, of the NRC, warned about a "total collapse" in the country as international efforts have so

far failed to establish a cease-fire to allow humanitarian support to millions of people impacted by the war. "The first 100 days drew attention, but it's fading. We must sustain efforts and apply diplomacy and mediation to tangibly impact civilians in Sudan," he said.

Humanitarian group Care International called for a cease-fire and the establishment of a safe corridor to allow the delivery of basic goods and services to those trapped in the fighting, as well as funds to meet the growing needs of Sudanese. "The world cannot afford to look away from the worsening situation in Sudan as it has the potential to destabilize the entire region," said David MacDonald, CARE's country director in Sudan. Talks between the military and the RSF the Saudi Arabian coastal city of Jeddah repeatedly failed to stop the fighting. The Jeddah talks were brokered by Saudi Arabia and the United States.

Pro-democracy leaders, meanwhile, were meeting Monday afternoon in Egypt's capital, Cairo, the first such gathering for Sudanese politicians since the breakout of the war. The Forces of Freedom and Change, the pro-democracy coalition, said the two-day meeting would discuss ways out of the war, and reviving the derailed transition to democracy. The alliance, which co-ruled Sudan with the generals following the ouster of al-Bashir, reiterated its calls for the warring factions to stop fighting.

Soldier in DR Congo kills wife

DR CONGO (Agencies): A soldier in the northeastern Democratic Republic of the Congo opened fire on family members and others who had buried his son before he could arrive home to attend the ceremony, killing 13 people, officials said.

The attack in the village of Nyakova on the banks of Lake Albert in the province of Ituri, left the soldier's wife, in-laws, and two of his children dead, said Lt Jules Ngongo, a spokesperson for the army in Ituri province, where the killings took place. Eight other children were among those also killed by the unidentified soldier.

The soldier arrived home from his post at another village in the province to find family and community members gathered in mourning for his son, who died on Thursday of natural causes, said Baraka Mugwa Oscar, the local village chief. "This soldier did not like the fact that his son ... was buried without his approval and in his absence," Oscar said. Search teams comprising members of the Congolese military have been dispatched to apprehend the soldier who fled the scene after the attack. "No matter what the case, the time, or the circumstances, you can't take a person's life. This is an act of indiscipline that will be dealt with by the courts," said Ngongo, the army spokesperson.

Fire still blazing on Greek island

ATHENS (AP): Firefighters struggled through the night to contain 82 wildfires across Greece, 64 of which started, the hottest day of the summer so far. Their efforts were without the help of fire-fighting planes and helicopters, which do not operate at night.

The most serious fire was on the island of Rhodes. Some 19,000 people had been evacuated from several locations on the island as wildfires burned for a sixth day, Greek authorities said. No further evacuations had been ordered. The Ministry of Climate Change and Civil Protection said it was "the largest evacuation from a wildfire in the country." Local police said 16,000 people were evacuated by land and 3,000 by sea from 12 villages and several hotels. Six people were briefly treated at a hospital for respiratory problems. A person who fell and broke a leg during a hotel evacuation and a pregnant woman remained hospitalized, the latter in good condition, authorities said.

A number of tourists were waiting to fly back home from Rhodes International Airport. The package holiday companies TUI and Jet2 canceled flights to Rhodes. But the Ministry of Infrastructure and Transport later announced that 14 TUI and Jet2 flights carrying 2,700 passengers would depart from Rhodes airport by 3 a.m. Monday (0000 GMT). 70,000 passengers traveled through the airport, with some being arrivals, the ministry said. The announcement did not break down the figures by arrivals and departures.

British tourist Kevin Evans was evacuated twice with his wife and three young children — first from Kiotari to Gennadi, then as the fire approached the island's capital in the northeast, he told Britain's PA news agency. "There were lots of people in Gennadi sent from the hotels — many in just swimsuits having been told to leave everything in the hotel," he told PA. "As night fell, we could see the fire on the top of the hills in Kiotari. They said all the hotels were on fire." Rhodes travel agent Stelios Kotiadis confirmed to the Associated Press that the evacuation was hasty. "There was panic. ... The authorities were overwhelmed," he said.

But, he said, the abandoned hotels "are in much better condition than reported in social media. ... They will be ready to reopen very soon if Civil Protection gives the go-ahead." Kotiadis said he and other travel agents sent buses to the island's southeast to pick up evacuated tourists. They had to go the long way around, since the road running down Rhodes' eastern side was blocked in places.

More than 170 dead as Bangladesh grapples with dengue 'epidemic'

DHAKA (Agencies): Bangladesh is grappling with a deadly dengue outbreak as heavy monsoon rains in the country cause widespread infections and fill hospitals. Health experts in the South Asian nation of 170 million people say the disease has already reached an "epidemic" proportion, even though the government has not officially declared one.

At least 176 people — 31 of them children aged below 14 — had died of the mosquito-borne fever, according to the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS). Wednesday was the deadliest day when 19 people died of the disease which has seen nearly 33,000 hospitalisations this year, says the DGHS data. Officials said the death rate from the disease this year stood at an "alarming" five-year high of 0.53 percent, compared with 0.45 percent last year when a record 281 people had died of dengue in Bangladesh.

DGHS says 115 of the 176 deaths this year happened in the first 23 days of July. There were only 29 deaths last year in the same period. Experts warn the situation could get worse in the coming days as both dengue hospitalisation and deaths in Bangladesh usually reach a peak in August and September.

"I think the outbreak of dengue this year has the same impact on people as it did in 2019, if not more," ANM Nuruzzaman, physician and public health expert, told Al Jazeera. He was referring to the year which saw more than a million hospitalisations — the highest ever in the country — and 179 deaths. Many in Bangladesh still call 2019 the "year of dengue". "The government should declare [this year] as an epidemic as well and take proper measures to stop the spread. Otherwise, it will get worse," Nuruzzaman said. On July 16, the Bangladesh Medical Association, the apex body for the country's doctors, also urged the government to declare the dengue outbreak a "public health emergency".

DGHS Director General Dr Abul Bashar Mohammad Khurshid Alam, however, thinks it is too early to declare dengue an epidemic in Bangladesh this year. "For declaring it an epidemic, we need to justify some more criteria. I don't think we have reached that point yet. Besides, there is no point in creating fear among people by declaring it an epidemic," Alam told Al Jazeera. But fear over the disease is spreading. Social media is flooded with accounts of suffering and deaths from all parts of the country, especially the sprawling capital of Dhaka.

Anwara Ferdousi, 76, went to see a doctor in Dhaka's Square Hospital after she had a fever for two days. "I was asked to do a test for dengue and I did that. When I went to the hospital after two days with the result, I couldn't see the doctor as he himself was diagnosed with dengue. In fact, two more doctors from the same floor of the hospital caught the virus as well,"



Ferdousi told Al Jazeera. Parents are especially worried about their children. The DGHS data says a total of 7,240 children aged below 14 have already caught the disease.

"I have stopped sending my daughter to school as some of her classmates are already infected with dengue," Rashed Jitu, a businessman in Dhaka's Lalbagh area, told Al Jazeera. "Her school has issued notice to every parent to put mosquito repellents on their children. It's so scary." Doctors say dengue is particularly dangerous for children who are more prone to developing shock syndrome — a condition which prompts the body's immune system to overreact against the dengue virus, causing plasma leakage, bleeding and severe dehydration.

Dr Shatavisa Dhar of Bangladesh Shishu Hospital and Institute, the country's largest state-run hospital for children, told Al Jazeera it takes a day for affected children to turn critical compared with about 48 hours for an adult. "Besides, a child has 20 percent more risk than an adult to develop shock syndrome," she said. Abdul Qayyum, a bus driver in Gazipur, a district adjacent to Dhaka, lost his six-year-old son Rehan Ahmed earlier this month to dengue. "He was in hospital for 10 days. He was recovering but all of a sudden, he went into a shock and died," a grieving Qayyum told Al Jazeera. The NGO Save the Children on Monday issued a statement, saying Bangladesh is facing its "worst dengue fever outbreak in five years" and children aged five to 14 bear the brunt of the outbreak "as the worst affected age group".

"They are particularly vulnerable to the disease because their immune systems are weaker than adults and they tend to play outside where there's less protection against the mosquitoes," said the charity. Dr Yasir Arafat, Save the Children's senior health and nutrition adviser for the Asia region, warned that with climate change and the predicted effects of El Nino phenomenon, "the situation

could get worse". As more than 90 percent of dengue cases are reported from urban areas, many Bangladeshis blame the municipal corporations in the cities for not taking timely steps to check the breeding of Aedes mosquitoes that cause the disease. Dhaka-based activist Mizanur Rahman told Al Jazeera the authorities knew monsoon rains will create the perfect breeding ground for the mosquito-borne virus but they did not act in time.

"I have gone to the Dhaka South City Corporation multiple times and asked them to spray mosquito repellants in the area. My plea fell on deaf ears. The other day, some people from the city corporation came and took photos of drains. They are playing jokes with us," Rahman said. Dr Fazle Shamsul Kabir, chief health officer at Dhaka South City Corporation, rejected the allegation. He said they had been conducting dengue awareness campaigns in the city since May. "We have also been conducting regular anti-mosquito drives and spraying repellents. The problem is the number of construction sites has increased manifold and they are perfect breeding grounds for mosquitoes. We don't have enough manpower to check all the places," he said. Kabirul Bashar, an entomologist at Dhaka's Jahangirnagar University, told Al Jazeera dengue used to be a seasonal fever but it has turned into a yearlong phenomenon in the past decade.

"I think it has happened due to climate change. Usually, a temperature range of 20-30 degrees Celsius [68-86 degrees Fahrenheit] is suitable for Aedes mosquito to breed. We now get constant above 20 degrees even during winters. Also, we witnessed untimely rains throughout this year," he said. Bashar said the authorities usually take "reactionary measures" against dengue during monsoon when infection from the disease peaks. "But since it has become a yearlong thing, they need to keep their guard on throughout the year to keep the spread in control," he said.

Former Brazilian President Bolsonaro fades from the spotlight

RIO DE JANEIRO (AP): Former Brazilian President Jair Bolsonaro is fading from the spotlight, showing the courts' power over the electoral system and the political shortcomings of the increasingly powerless former leader.

Brazil's top electoral court ruled last month that Bolsonaro is ineligible to run for any political office until 2030 for abusing his power and casting unfounded doubts on the country's electronic voting system. Bolsonaro was once called the "Trump of the Tropics" after emerging as a crusading outsider promising to shake up the system and pursuing an aggressive brand of identity politics including conservative values. Trump, who also cast doubt on the US electoral system and faces legal trouble, remains the front-runner for the Republican Party's nomination.

A clear demonstration of Bolsonaro's waning power was a tax reform vote in Congress' lower house this month. A proposal supported by President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva's government to overhaul Brazil's notoriously complicated tax system was also backed by lawmakers and the general public. Bolsonaro tried to marshal opposition — his first attempt at doing so — but the reform passed by a greater than 3-to-1 margin. Almost two dozen members of Bolsonaro's party defied his will. Bolsonaro has "little to no influence as a potential opposition leader," political analyst Leandro Loyola wrote after the vote.

A political cartoon in Brazil this month showed a scientist peering into a microscope at an irate, fist-clenching Bolsonaro. "Fascinating," the caption read. "He keeps diminishing," executive Alexandre Cohim donated to Bolsonaro's reelection campaign but said Friday that the court making the former president ineligible was a "blessing." "It will allow other people from the right who are more capable to emerge," Cohim, 60, said by phone from Salvador. After he lost the race by the narrowest margin since Brazil's return to democracy over three decades ago, the presumption of many in his party was that Bolsonaro would lead fierce opposition against Lula. But just before Lula's inauguration on Jan. 1, Bolsonaro decamped to

Florida for an extended stay. He returned in March and now he may even lose the monthly salary he receives from his party, reported by local media to be around \$8,500. His allies have already called on supporters to help the former president pay his bills, while a newly founded Bolsonaro Store hawks everything from Bolsonaro-themed wall calendars to party decorations. The threat of jail time also looms amid multiple criminal investigations into the former president's actions, and the question of who might lead a viable challenge to Lula's Workers Party in 2026 is being openly discussed. "Bolsonaro seems to be on his way toward an inevitable end of his career," political columnist Merval Pereira wrote in newspaper O Globo this month. Sao Paulo state Gov. Tarcísio de Freitas, Bolsonaro's former infrastructure minister and a close ally who backed his reelection bid, is among the politicians floated as potential standard-bearers for the right.

Some scoff at the conclusion that Bolsonaro has no shot of returning to the nation's highest office less than a year after he received

58 million votes against Lula's 60 million. But Geraldo Tadeu, a political scientist from the State University of Rio de Janeiro, said Bolsonaro's rise to power in 2018 could be mostly explained by a confluence of one-off factors. Brazil had just suffered its worst recession in almost a century, and the Car Wash corruption probe implicated dozens of politicians, opening space for an outsider. Lula — who had been leading the polls — was ejected from the race by corruption and money-laundering convictions, and imprisoned. His convictions were later annulled. "The circumstances left a vacuum that Bolsonaro filled," said Tadeu.

Bolsonaro's lack of "leadership and negotiation skills" and inability to maintain political support undermine his odds of a comeback, Tadeu said. Since returning to Brazil from the US, Bolsonaro has been ordered to provide testimony to the Federal Police on several occasions, and criminal convictions could extend the ban on him running for office and subject him to imprisonment. Bolsonaro denies any wrongdoing.

Shock as collapse kills 12 in Cameroon

DOUALA (BBC): A building has collapsed in Cameroon's biggest city, Douala, killing at least 12 people and injuring five others. It is not known how many people were inside the four-storey building when it fell onto another residential block. The rubble is being searched for survivors. Distressed neighbours

have described hearing screams and frantically trying to dig people out. Teams from Cameroon's fire brigade, the Red Cross and others rescue services are still working at the scene. The regional governor, Samuel Dioudonné Ivaha Diboua, has sought to reassure people - saying the situation is under control and rescue teams will make sure

nobody is left beneath the wreckage. Three children and 10 adults are receiving emergency care at nearby Laquintinie Hospital, reports AFP. Staff there say a three-year-old girl who was brought in has died. It is not known what caused the building in Douala's Ange Raphael neighbourhood to collapse, but residents have told journalists it looked dilapidated. City authorities have been demolishing homes deemed at risk from flooding or landslides, but this particular block was not earmarked for demolition. Building collapses are not uncommon in Cameroon. Back in 2016 a dilapidated building in Douala that flouted construction rules collapsed, killing five people.

Yemen police arrest 21 suspects in murder case

SANAA (Agencies): Yemen police have arrested 21 suspects in the killing of a local office head of the United Nations World Food Program (WFP) in Taiz, according to Yemen's Interior Ministry. Moayad Hameidi was shot dead in Turbah in the Taiz governorate. Turbah is a town near the coast of the Red Sea.

The Interior Ministry said that Yemen police in Taiz made the nearly two dozen arrests over a 24-hour period. Cindy McCain, the WFP's executive director, has strongly condemned Hameidi's killing, describing him as "a dedicated humanitarian." Hameidi had served the WFP for 18 years in Sudan, Syria and Iraq, according to McCain. "Those responsible must be held accountable. Aid workers should never be a target," McCain said in a post on Twitter on Friday.

The WFP's representative and country director in

Yemen, Richard Ragan, referred to Hameidi's killing as "a profound tragedy for our organization and the humanitarian community." Hameidi, who worked as the local office head of WFP in Yemen, was a Jordanian national and "working in Turbah, in the country's southwest. He came under fire on Friday afternoon, and the identity of the assailants is not yet known," the UN said in a statement on Friday. Hameidi had recently arrived in Yemen "to assume a new job as head of the agency's office in Taiz," according to the UN. Taiz is the country's third largest city and has been under siege by Iran-backed Houthi rebels for around seven years, "creating a blockade for essential goods and humanitarian supplies for the city's residents," the UN said.

Yemen's conflict has been festering for more than a decade. In 2012, protesters unseated then-President

Ali Abdullah Saleh a year after the 2011 Arab Spring uprisings swept through the region. In 2014, Iran-backed Houthi rebels seized control of the capital Sanaa and eventually pushed aside then-President Abd-Rabbu Mansour Hadi. "Since 2015, a Saudi-led coalition supporting the internationally recognized government has been battling for control of the Arab nation, with Houthi militia, who control the capital and much of northern Yemen," the UN said in the statement.

"Tens of thousands of civilians have died during the grinding conflict and the UN estimates that 17 million people are still food insecure across Yemen, with projections showing that by the end of this year the number suffering high levels of acute food insecurity could rise to 3.9 million," the UN added. The UN said food supplies from WFP "is crucial to avoid potential famine and a lingering food security crisis."

Freed Egyptian human rights campaigner arrives in Italy

MILAN (AP): A high-profile Egyptian activist who was recently released from prison landed in Italy, where the government championed his case. Patrick George Zaki was greeted by applause and a throng of video and still cameras as he emerged into the arrivals hall at Milan's Malpensa Airport after traveling on a commercial flight. He continued to Bologna, where he had been living and studying before being detained in Cairo in 2020.

"This is the most important day of my life," Zaki, 32, told reporters as he made his way through the Milan airport. Later, in Bologna, he pledged to continue his human rights work. Zaki's case has echoed in Italy, reminding many of the tragic fate of Italian student Giulio Regeni who was abducted and killed in Cairo in 2016. The Italian government had repeatedly called for Zaki's release since his arrest in 2020.

Italian Premier Giorgia Meloni told reporters in Rome that Zaki's return was "the result of diplomacy, founded on the basis of mutual respect." She added that Italy had not stopped pressing for clarity on Regeni's fate from Egyptian authorities. "I don't consider the issue closed. I continue to work on it, as I did with the case of Zaki, without speaking (publicly)," Zaki was pardoned last week, just days

after an Egyptian court convicted him of a charge of disseminating false news, stemming from an article he wrote in 2019 about alleged discrimination against Coptic Christians in Egypt.

Zaki, who is Christian, was arrested in February 2020 shortly after landing in Cairo for a brief trip home from Italy. He spent 22

months in prison before being released in 2021 pending trial, on condition he remain in Egypt. He received a master's degree with distinction earlier this month from the University of Bologna, defending his thesis by video conference. In Bologna, he was received by university officials, who awarded him his diploma in person.

Eight dead after fuel truck explosion in southwest Nigeria

ABUJA (Agencies): At least eight people have been killed after a fuel truck exploded in southwestern Nigeria as residents were trying to siphon petrol out of it, police said. The truck was involved in an accident in a neighbourhood of Ondo state which caused it to veer off the road and topple on its side, the police said on Monday.

"Some people went there to scoop fuel. In the process, the tanker exploded," said Ondo state police spokesman Fumilayo Odunlami-Omisanya. Fuel truck accidents are common in Nigeria where petroleum products are often carried across the country by road as rail infrastructure is mostly outdated or inadequate. Petrol prices have also risen from 189 naira (\$0.24) to 617 naira (\$0.78) per litre, the highest in the history of Africa's largest oil producer since Nigerian President Bola Tinubu scrapped a popular but costly fuel subsidy at his inauguration on May 29. That has triggered economic woes in the country, especially for motorists, households, and small businesses that use petrol generators for power. It also angered labour unions which are now demanding an increase in the minimum monthly wage from 30,000 naira (\$37.69).

"I admit that the decision will impose [an] extra burden on the masses of our people. I feel your pain," the president said in a broadcast to mark Democracy Day on June 12. In June, average daily petrol consumption fell to 48.43 million litres (13 million gallons), down from a daily average of 66.9 million litres in January through May before the subsidy was removed, according to figures from the Nigerian Midstream and Downstream Petroleum Regulatory Authority (NMDPRA).

The Frontier Post

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Taliban’s review of policies, a delayed sagacious idea

AFGHAN Deputy Minister for Economy, Abdul Latif Nazari has recently told the media that a plan is being drawn up for women's return to work and the current restrictions on women in the workspace are not necessarily permanent. Minister noted that over 14 thousand women work in Health Sector, while they also work in banks, airports, Schools, and other departments in the government. According to him, the IEA is seriously considering the public demand, while the interim authorities would also engage with the global community over this issue, which is based on Islamic values and Afghan national interests. As said, the IEA believes in using domestic and indigenous potential in the country instead of relying on foreign aid and monetary assistance. According to him, the IEA remained engaged in averting a possible economic collapse last year while it is endeavoring hard for economic growth and development work in the current year.

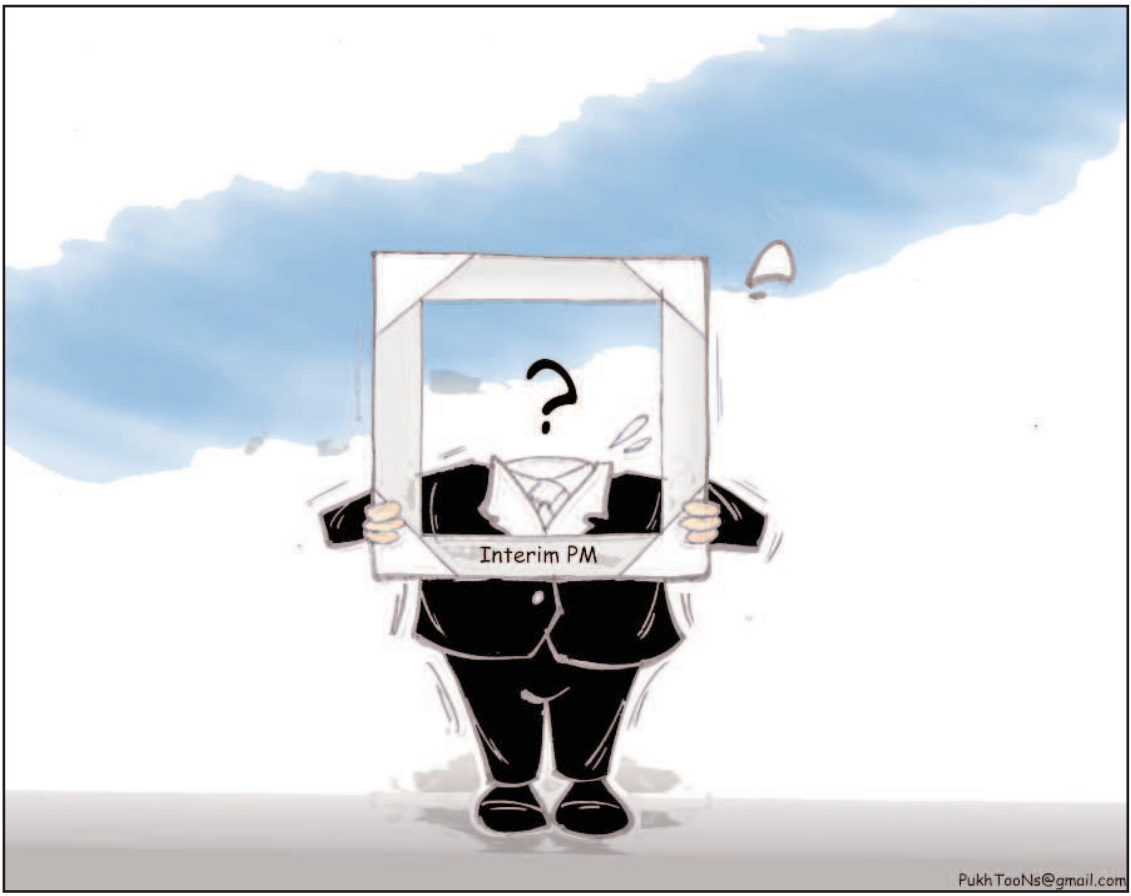
After months-long agitations and a stubborn attitude of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA), finally, a gust of fresh air comes after a senior Taliban leader made an announcement about a proposed plan which would enable Afghan women to resume their jobs in certain fields that were previously banned by the cleric regime in December last year. Earlier, the Islamic Emirate imposed restrictions on girls higher education shutting down the doors of universities and professional institutes for Afghan girls in the country. Those actions of the Taliban rulers practically rendered the near half of the country's population nonproductive and futile. The IEA's move faced widespread reaction from the public and from across the world including Muslim and non-Muslim countries that strongly demanded a reversal of those restrictions that seriously hurt the Afghan girls and women who were already embattled with terrible living conditions, poverty, and scarcity of resources/opportunities. Historically, thousands of Afghan soldiers perish to death in the decades-long conflicts and unceasing rivalries in the past, while their widows had been the sole homemakers through laboring, small businesses, shopkeeping, etc. Similarly, talented Afghan girls have high ambitions regarding a bright future after higher education, skilled training, and other opportunities available to them. But, all those high hopes and fascinating dreams met in the trash, after the Afghan interim authorities declared those blessings illegal, sinful, and contradictory to Islamic values, Afghan national interests, and social ethics, which otherwise has no example in the past.

Today, women are the backbone of families and communities, as no household can survive and thrive without women, who provide care, support, and nurturing to their families and play an essential role in the growth/ development of their children. Women's importance had increased many folds in war-torn societies, where a significant number of the male population had been killed or become disabled in the war/ tribal conflicts, and women are running their businesses and making their livelihood independently. Accordng to statistics, the ratio of unemployment and the menace of begging had increased unimaginably after a banned was placed on women's employment by the interim authorities in late 2022. Meanwhile, a majority of Afghan youth fear reprisal from the interim authorities and see no future in their nation, which prompted a mass exodus from the country. There had been uninterrupted calls from the United Nations and the global community urging the Afghan interim government to uphold its obligations in respect of the Doha agreements and the global responsibility regarding the protection of human and women's rights, preservation of civil liberties, inclusiveness and no tolerance for terrorism so the decades-long conflict permanently comes to an end. Such situations undoubtedly should have been a matter of concern for the interim authorities who gained power after two decades of struggle and claimed to be having a magnificent plan of social and economic revival of the country that was previously derailed by the events following the 9/11 attacks in the United States.

Presently, The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has considered the public aspirations and started a review of its policies regarding women's jobs and girls' education. Hopefully, this sagacious trend will further expand to other avenues including human and civil rights, media freedoms, the inclusiveness of the Afghan interim government, and no tolerance for extremism and terrorism that would surely bring peace, and interfaith harmony in the war-hit nation, which would provide basis for the sustainable development and economic prosperity in the country.

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Are we heading towards a far-right European Union?

Lorenzo Marsili & Fabrizio Tassinari

THE far right is on the rise in Europe.

In Germany, support for the hard-right AfD is surging. In Spain, the far-right Vox party is expected to be the king-maker in the upcoming snap election. Far-right parties are also either in government or supporting the government from within parliament in Italy, Poland, Finland and Sweden.

Undoubtedly, there is some truth to the analyses pointing to a backlash against multiculturalism, "woke" culture wars, or the ever-deepening cost of living crisis as the reasons behind the far right's entry into mainstream politics across the continent. But ultimately, what we are witnessing today is the result of European leaders' insistent failure to meet the people's collective demand for protection and control in the face of many - real and perceived - threats pushing them into precarity.

Amid a climate emergency and a new era of global conflict, the need for Europe to politically unite is self-evident. Small and relatively powerless European nation-states are uniquely misplaced to steer an independent course and give their citizens a sense of security and stability in this age of planetary challenges and emergent superpowers. And yet, European elites appear reluctant to take the necessary steps towards political union. As a result, Europeans are now discovering what it means to be the objects and not the subjects of history. A green transition is desperately needed, but for the least well-off not to be left behind, there is also a need for massive investments. As the climate crisis and conflicts continue to push people towards Europe, the need for effective and humane migration management is also urgent. Meanwhile, war has returned to the continent, so people are demanding a new security paradigm. Unfortunately, there is no single actor in Europe that can steer these issues and not be steered by them. Some have tried to make Europe into a united force that can once again decide its own course. At the beginning of his tenure, French President Emmanuel Macron often spoke of the need of building a "Europe that protects"

- in his landmark 2017 Sorbonne speech he called for "a sovereign, united and democratic Europe" - but the German government and his peers elsewhere in Europe responded to his federalist overtures with indifference, if not contempt.

More recently, the European Commission has tried to lay down ambitious plans for joint climate financing, responding to Joe Biden's Inflation Reduction Act. That effort has been torpedoed by the supposed "national interest" of the most fiscally liquid member states. As the soft-spoken nationalism of mainstream European parties made it impossible to integrate the continent and erect a continental public power that would respond to the many worries of Europeans, the far right has stepped in with its overt, aggressive ethnic nationalism, offering the masses intimidated and confused by the problems of the modern era a familiar place of shelter: the ethnic nation. The question today is not whether the far right can achieve political power in Europe, but what it will do with it once it does.

In the recent past, during their stints in relative power, many of Europe's far-right politicians proved to be more interested in securing populist points than implementing policies that deliver results and help keep their movements in power. For example, Italy's Matteo Salvini ordered Italian ports to block a rescue ship carrying a few dozen migrants, attracting international criticism and even condemnation in exchange for nothing but a round of applause from his devoted supporters. So, one may be excused for expecting the far right to take power, divide an already divided continent further, fail to inflict any change, and retreat back into the political fringes in a relatively short time period. However, the European far right has evolved significantly since Salvini's migrant rescue boat bravado in 2019. And now, its leaders appear to have much more potential to do what is necessary to implement policies that could keep them in power, as well as reshape their countries and the European Union according to their own agenda.

Italy's far-right Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, for example, has demands that are not that different from those of Salvini, who is a deputy prime minister in her government: curtailing migration, achieving economic sovereignty, protecting and promoting traditional Christian values and "Western civilisation". And yet, Salvini's loud but ineffective showmanship and populist aggression are nowhere to be found in her administration, replaced with a desire for pragmatic coalition building and inter-governmental bargaining. Consider Meloni's recent high-profile visits to Tunisia, accompanied by European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen and Dutch Prime Minister Marc Rutte, which led to the signing of a migration deal that is in many respects comparable to the controversial "cash for migrants" agreement the EU made with Turkey in 2016 under the leadership of then German Chancellor Angela Merkel. However morally dubious it may be, this deal reinforces a common European border policy and even aims to lay the ground for a European policy towards North Africa.

Meloni's eagerness to collaborate with her European peers to secure an EU-level deal that is beneficial to her national agenda perfectly encapsulates the recent metamorphosis of the far right in Europe. As opposed to the superficial Euroscepticism of its previous incarnations, the new European far right increasingly uses Europe, its institutions and its superior negotiating power to its own advantage. There is, of course, every reason to expect any cooperation between far-right governments like Meloni's and European institutions - as well as their alliances with fellow far-right governments - to eventually collapse, as they all prioritise the national interests of their respective countries over the continental good. We have recently witnessed the limitations of such alliances when Meloni's attempt to reform European asylum policy failed due to a veto from her far-right colleague, Polish Prime Minister Mateusz Morawiecki.

But could this new brand of pragmatic far-right actors

manage to act collaboratively long enough for them to become a genuine force towards a more united Europe? Could they pave the way for more integration, especially in areas like defence, external borders and economic policy, which would help them deliver on their promises to their constituents? And, if so, could they - perhaps unintentionally - help strengthen the European Union and its place in the multipolar world? Take the issue of Ukraine and Western Balkan countries' accession to the EU. The far-right governments in both Poland and Italy want the union to expand to include these countries. Of course, the expansion of the EU from 27 to 35 or more members will require the European institutions to go through a significant transformation, including a move from unanimous to majority voting as a large and diverse Union cannot function if every country has the right to veto collective decisions.

If Europe's far right takes the lead in this transformation, it would become instrumental to what is possibly the most consequential advance in European unity in recent decades and a momentous step towards building a continent-wide political power. Paradoxically, the far right is positioning itself as the champion of a strong European identity, albeit one premised on the ethno-nationalist idea of a white, Christian, and Western civilisation. We always assumed that European unity would imply greater cosmopolitanism and multiculturalism. But what if a united Europe turns out to build what Hans Kundnani calls an "ethnoregionalism", or the appeal to the defence of a European "civilisation"?

Ultimately, the question is this: Could the far right leave behind its old-fashioned, petty nationalism and embrace new "European nationalism" that would further unite and strengthen the continent, even if at the cost of making it uglier? The way Meloni and her peers answer this question will determine whether the new episode of far-right rule in Europe will result in yet another show of impotent extremism, or pave the way for a new political hegemony on the European continent.

Economic gloom looks likely to sink the Tories

Larry Elliott

MORTGAGE rates this week are at their highest level since the global financial crisis 15 years ago. The International Monetary Fund has warned that borrowing costs may need to go higher - and stay there - if the Bank of England is to bring inflation back on target. Pay packets are going up but prices are going up faster. People are getting poorer, not richer.

Clearly, this is a problem for a government that can only delay the next general election for at most 18 months. But it is also a cause for concern for Labour, which stands to inherit an economic mess and a ton of political problems, if it can end a run of four election defeats. Strange things can happen. Rishi Sunak may somehow deliver an economic miracle. When it comes to it, voters may decide they don't fancy Sir Keir Starmer as prime minister and stick with the devil they know. Currently it doesn't look that way. The poor state of the economy helps explain why the Conservatives are more than 20 points behind in the latest opinion polls.

Unless Sunak can conjure up a feelgood factor pretty rapidly, he looks to be on course to lose by a landslide. The Tories have been presiding over a cost of living crisis and could soon be saddled with a housing crash as a result of higher mortgage rates. An economy that has been moving sideways for the past year could easily be tipped into a winter recession if the Bank of England feels the need to heed the IMF's advice. Logically, the worse things get for the economy over the coming months, the better things should look for Starmer. Higher interest rates are pushing up the cost of servicing the UK's national debt, and there is little scope - if any - for the chancellor, Jeremy Hunt, to indulge in that time-honoured tradition: pre-election Tory tax cuts. But logic doesn't always count for much, and there is a risk that the worse things get the harder it will be for Labour to win. No question, voters think things are going badly with Sunak in charge, but they might conclude that taxes and interest rates would be even higher under Starmer. That is what happened in 1992, when the Tories mounted a highly successful Project fear campaign to deny Neil Kinnock victory.

Fear of repeating that defeat explains why Starmer and the shadow chancellor, Rachel Reeves, have been paring back Labour's spending commitments, have said very little about tax and have generally been pursuing a safety-first strategy. They don't trust the opinion polls predicting a Labour landslide at the next election and fully expect Sunak to run a "Labour tax bombshell" campaign. The intention is to give the Tories' negative-campaigning machine as little to work with as possible. Expect the ultra-cautious approach to continue, in the event that Starmer becomes the first

Labour leader since Tony Blair in 2005 to win an election. To be sure, governing is not going to be easy, with money tight and heavy pressure to spend more on everything from the NHS to the arts. The unions will expect Starmer to deliver on public sector pay. Labour's green lobby will demand faster progress on achieving net zero. Meanwhile, the City will demand to know whether the new government's sums add up. The financial markets rarely give Labour an even break. So what's new? Not much. The Conservatives tend to run the economy into the ground before they leave office, with Blair the only Labour prime minister to arrive in Downing Street with a relatively benign economic inheritance. Significantly, the first big announcement of the Blair government - independence of the Bank of England - was designed to give Labour credibility with the markets. It worked, too. Judging by the polls, the public's desire to be shot of the Tories is stronger than its appetite for the alternative. The public would harbour doubts about a Labour government even after voting for one. Starmer and his team know they would be on probation, and - hardly surprisingly - that makes them risk averse. Reeves has insisted Labour's fiscal rules - borrowing only for investment and debt falling as a share of national output - are non-negotiable.

There are obvious downsides to this approach. Most obviously, it makes it harder for Labour to portray itself as the party of change, and feeds the perception that Starmer doesn't really believe in anything. The upside is that Labour will be taking over the economy when the worst is over, and that gives it the chance to take things steadily in the hope of governing for at least two full terms. Inflation will be close to its 2% target, interest rates will be on the way down, living standards will be rising. The IMF is forecasting steady if unspectacular growth of 2% a year in 2025 and 2026. If they are smart, Starmer and Reeves will take control of the economic narrative, blaming Tory mismanagement for any tough decisions that have to be made. This approach worked a treat for David Cameron and George Osborne in 2010, when they pinned the blame for the coalition government's austerity measures on Gordon Brown's alleged profligacy.

The deferred-gratification approach won't be popular with those who say a Labour government needs to think bigger, but let's be realistic. There will be no radical economic departures from a Starmer government, and if it went into the next election proposing anything that seriously challenged the orthodoxy - Bank of England independence and tight control of the public finances, for example - Labour would probably lose. Sometimes you have to win - and govern - ugly.

The Guardian

Government]s plan to protect Britain from extreme heat would be bad

Bill McGuire

IT'S hard not to wonder if the government is living on another planet. One that isn't in the grip of the highest temperatures ever recorded, where tens of thousands of people are not dying every summer in blistering heatwaves, where the oceans aren't boiling. This is the only explanation for the colossally inadequate national climate adaptation programme released this week.

There is so much wrong with it that it's hard to know where to begin. The programme actually constitutes the third of three five-year plans, and therein lies the main problem. You can't plan in five-year chunks for climate mayhem that is set to last for decades, probably centuries. If it is to make living in Hothouse Britain safer and more bearable, any plan worth its salt has to look much further ahead and take in the bigger picture.

You won't find anything in the programme about how the country will cope when temperatures don't just top 40C for a day but for a week or more, when river and surface floods arrive that dwarf anything we have seen, or when the sea comes in and stays in. As it stands, it is simply not fit for purpose. With global emissions needing to fall by half within seven years, it is now practically impossible for us to stay this side of the 1.5C dangerous climate change guardrail. This means that climate breakdown and all its ramifications will define the lives and livelihoods of everyone in the UK for generations and we need to plan on a commensurate timescale.

To have any chance of adapting effectively to what's coming, the country needs to be on a war footing, but you wouldn't think it from the laid-back approach of the government's programme, which

does little more than tinker with already inadequate actions. The report that launched the programme is all talk and no money - or very little of it. A measly £15m to support the research and innovation needed to deliver adaptation action amounts to peanuts. Much of the report is inconsequential padding, and there is no ambition here, and virtually no concerted action. Consequently, there is nothing concrete on reforesting uplands to minimise river flooding, on cooling urban centres through greening and installing reflective surfaces, or on the immediate, wholesale retrofitting of homes, schools and hospitals to make them, and their occupants, more resilient to heatwaves. Nothing either on developing a national water grid or introducing large-scale rainwater harvesting, or on managing

retreat from low-lying coastlines as sea-level rise accelerates. More specifically, you will find no consideration given to whether a new Thames flood barrier should be built or central London abandoned to the sea. Nor is any thought given to legislating for maximum working temperatures, both indoors and outside. The research underpinning all these initiatives has already been done, and the work could start today, given a green light and appropriate funding by government.

The reason none of this is considered is that the government has no real grasp of the scale of the climate breakdown threat, either today or in the decades ahead. This is typified by plans to cope with food shortages that are laughable. The UK imports more than 40% of its food, and is therefore vulnerable to harvest failures abroad as

well as at home. Shortages of certain produce have already become apparent in the past year or so, due to extreme weather overseas and supply chain problems, but this is small beer compared with what we can expect in future decades. In its 2021 climate change risk assessment, the Chatham House policy institute reports a worst-case projection that sees the world requiring 50% more food by 2050, by which time crop yields could be down as much as 30%.

Translating, on average, to an effective halving of food per person, this - should it be realised - would be a recipe for societal collapse. A new paper published in Nature Communications earlier this month also highlighted the risks of simultaneous crop failures, but there is little in the latest adaptation programme that suggests this is a threat taken sufficiently seriously by the government.

The initiatives that make

up the programme are big on consultation, research, monitoring, building frameworks and gathering information, and there is a failure to recognise that these are luxuries whose time has come and gone. Instead of more discussion, debate and evaluation, we need action, now, on all fronts.

It will cost, but it will cost a great deal more if we do little or nothing. If we wish to have anything like a functioning society and economy in mid-century and beyond, then large-scale adaptation is critical, and it has to start today. The environment secretary, Thérèse Coffey, has called the programme a step-change in the government's approach to managing the risks of the climate crisis. And indeed it is, a largely sideways step from nothing to next to nothing, when what we need is a great leap forward. And we need it now.

Frontex: When great power comes with no responsibility

Nidzara Ahmetasevic

ON June 14, just after midnight, a vessel carrying about 750 people, including many children, sank off the coast of Pylos, Greece. Weeks later, most of its passengers are still missing and the 100 or so survivors are stuck in a camp in Malakasa, Greece where they have limited freedoms and questionable psychological assistance.

Long before it sank, starting from 9:47am on June 13, the overcrowded vessel was under the surveillance of the European Union's border security agency, Frontex. In a statement issued soon after the vessel sank, the agency said it is "shocked and saddened by the tragic events that unfolded off the coast of Greece", but refused to accept any blame for what happened. It said it provided Greek authorities with information about the vessel's condition and speed "immediately" after a Frontex plane spotted it "inside the Greek search and rescue region in international waters". It did not comment on why the Greek coastguard, or indeed a Frontex ship, did not immediately rescue the vessel, and tried to put the blame for the hundreds of lives lost solely on "people smugglers".

"People smugglers have once again trifled with human lives," it said. "Our thoughts go out to the families of the victims." The actions of the Greek coastguard, which reportedly outright refused to tow the vessel, are currently under investigation. But Frontex, which admits to surveilling the doomed vessel for many hours before it began taking water, also has questions to answer about its role - or lack thereof - in the rescue operation. Frontex is the EU's best-funded agency whose budget for 2022 was around \$823m. Yet, as stated in a damning Human Rights Watch report in 2021, it repeatedly fails "to safeguard people against serious human rights violations at the EU's external borders". On the day of the "tragedy", while people on the vessel were sending desper-

ate SOS messages to Alarm Phone, I was with a group of scholars and journalists at the Frontex headquarters in Warsaw, Poland. The visit was part of the "Border in Focus" seminar organised by the ZEIT-Stiftung Ebelin und Gerd Bucerius, Hamburg, within the scholarship programme, "Beyond Borders". After entering the tall, glass office building the agency is in, we were taken to a meeting room on the 14th floor to meet Frontex representatives.

We later learned that the operation room where Frontex executives monitored the "tragedy" in the Mediterranean was just a couple of floors below the room we were in. Our hosts likely knew what was going on. Throughout our two-hour meeting, however, they did not mention the still unfolding catastrophe. Instead, we were told about the "many misconceptions" people allegedly have about the organisation due to a lack of "research and understanding". Our hosts informed us that people (including many of us in that room) have been using the wrong terminology when speaking about Frontex activities due to their lack of knowledge or general ignorance. We were told, for example, that we should use the word "return" instead of "deportation" when talking about the tens of thousands of people Frontex removes from EU territories every year. We were also informed that we should not say Frontex agents are "above the law" just because there are agreements in place to protect them from being taken to court in non-EU countries where they conduct operations. "European courts are much better than the courts in these countries," our hosts kindly explained before further lecturing us on "European standards" and human rights. The agency's entire presentation was framed around an adage popularised by Marvel superhero, Spider-Man: "With great power

comes great responsibility." One Frontex official, determined to communicate all the supposed virtues of the organisation, repeated the mantra several times during our short meeting. Of course, there is no sign that Frontex is making any real effort to use the immense power it has over tens of thousands of vulnerable people on the move responsibly.

In fact, when we were listening to the Frontex representatives' diatribe against "misconceptions" and sales pitch about "power and responsibility", the people being slowly swallowed by the Mediterranean Sea were likely not even the only ones dying avoidable deaths under the watch of the agency. For example, during our meeting in Warsaw an activist in Serbia, where Frontex is very active, posted on Facebook about the recent death of an unnamed person, presumed to be a refugee, on train tracks near the country's border with Bulgaria. According to Serbian activists and media, this is a common occurrence. They say authorities often find bodies in these border areas and bury them anonymously, without even attempting to figure out their identities. Frontex has access to these areas and can easily ensure the safety of people on the move there. But it chooses to do nothing. Also on June 13, while the ship was slowly sinking off the coast of Greece under the watchful eyes of Frontex agents, a man from Afghanistan was buried in the Bosnian city of Tuzla.

He had died as he attempted to cross the river marking the border between Bosnia and Croatia. He got to have a funeral only because his brother survived the incident, and with the help of volunteers from both countries, found his body. We know many others who lost their lives trying to cross that river were not as lucky. Bosnian border towns are riddled with anonymous graves belonging to

people who died while on the move to find a better, safer life in the EU.

Frontex representatives did not mention any of these "tragedies" during our meeting. As they talked about "power" and "responsibility", they did not care to discuss the powerful agency's responsibility towards people it is desperately working to keep outside the borders of the EU. Frontex, and the governments behind it, have powerful tools in their hands that, if used responsibly, can prevent the Mediterranean Sea from becoming a mass grave for those who were denied safe entry into the EU. If they believed in responsibility, EU member states would spend the hundreds of millions they waste on building walls, investing in surveillance, and turning Europe into an impenetrable fortress instead on helping create a world in which everyone can live safely and with dignity. If they believed in responsibility, rather than introducing more and more draconian measures to deter "undesirables" from reaching the EU, they would focus on saving lives. If they believed in responsibility, instead of pushing refugees into dangerous situations, leaving them drowning in the sea and lost in forests, they would be working to eliminate the conditions that force these people to embark on such dangerous journeys in the first place. Sadly, those with power show no intention of acting responsibly - the criminalisation of migration has become normal, and the never-ending "fight" against so-called "illegals", "potential terrorists" and "rapists" is being used to justify even further fortification of the EU.

It does not have to be this way. If the mighty border security agency starts practising what it preaches, and starts using its powers responsibly, the European Union can become a true haven for all those in need - a place where human life is valued more than borders, documents and low migration numbers.

Aljazeera

Putin's evil new weapon could win him the war

IT is often said that **Hamish De Bretton-Gordon** **"the only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing". That maxim is about to be put to the test in the Black Sea. Following Russia's shock withdrawal this week from the deal brokered in July 2022 by the UN and Turkey guaranteeing safe passage for grain exports, sudden and deliberate Russian missile attacks on Ukraine's southern coast have destroyed 60,000 tonnes of grain and damaged vital storage infrastructure.**

This is a criminal act, threatening starvation in African countries and higher food prices around the world. Yet the West seems to be shrugging its shoulders, implying "there's nothing we can do" without the danger of escalation. If we accept this, then we risk all the progress Western powers have made in undermining Putin. For months, I have talked about the dangers of Moscow waging "unconventional warfare" - whether going nuclear via blowing up the Zaporizhzhia power plant, or attacking chemical facilities, or, indeed, food supplies. The eventual attention given to the nuclear threat arguably deterred Moscow on the first two risks for now, but on the latter Nato and the UN were complacent, assuming Russia would not withdraw from a deal giving them access to top-table discussions with world leaders. That neglect has now come at a heavy price.

If Putin is waging a vicious campaign to try to bring famine to Africa - one he can still try to blame on Western sanctions - it would mark yet another horrific war crime to add to the growing list. More than 50 million people across Somalia, Kenya, Ethiopia and South Sudan are in need of food aid due to successive years of failed rains. Thousands, perhaps tens of thousands, could now die. Furthermore, it would probably trigger a massive migration crisis into Europe, destabilising the Continent and advancing calls for an end to the war via a negotiated settlement. We must assume this is Putin's primary aim.

It would also drive a wedge between the alliance supporting Ukraine after the comparative unity of the Nato summit at Vilnius last week. We know some are less committed to a maximalist Ukrainian victory. The prospect of increased food prices as we enter two years of important elections, including in the UK, may lead some to break cover and try to work with Russia rather than isolate it. That the West can allow this should be unconscionable. For one, it would show to Putin that - once

warm to the idea in theory.

Whatever solutions we come up with, the vital thing to remember is that no level of depravity is off limits to Putin and his gangsters running this war. This is a global issue and not just between Russia and Ukraine. The grain crisis offers the West a chance to reach out to those countries who have, at times, leaned towards Moscow. Turkey has been humiliated and will be sympathetic. African nations are listening, with Kenya's government describing Russia's

For one, it would show to Putin that - once again - he can escalate this war without major consequence. How we respond to an incident like this will shape his strategy. Now it may be food, but next time it could be a tactical nuke. There is next to nothing that Putin will not do if he is allowed to do it; he operates in the space that is given to him. We should be thinking outside the box, invoking the spirit of the Berlin air lift in seeking to find extraordinary solutions. We could, for instance, try to protect grain ships through the formerly agreed boundaries of the deal, passing through international waters to Ukraine. The Montreux Agreement allows only warships from countries around the Black Sea to enter those waters, so a Nato flotilla to protect the grain ships would in theory be possible from Turkey, Bulgaria and Romania. Another option is to transport the grain across land via rail and road. Kyiv believes this is possible, and Germany is said to be warm to the idea in theory. Whatever solutions we come up with, the vital thing to remember is that no level of depravity is off limits to Putin and his gangsters running this war. This is a global issue and not just between Russia and Ukraine.

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The Telegraph

A successful decade of BRI's contributions to Africa

Ehizuelen Michael Mitchell Omoruy

THE Belt and Road Initiative, although proposed by China, is an inclusive infrastructure development program which welcomes everyone to join. As a result, more than 150 countries and over 30 international organizations have joined it in the 10 years since it was launched.

The 10th anniversary of the Belt and Road Initiative comes at a time when humankind is trying to overcome the impacts of the three-year COVID-19 pandemic and the Russia-Ukraine conflict, and China is further opening up its economy. Against the background of rising regional and global insecurity and instability, people are wondering how to handle the enormously risky issues which could lead to conflict between major countries. The good news is that China believes win-win cooperation and interdependency among countries are a guarantee for peaceful coexistence. The Belt and Road Initiative, combined with the Global Development Initiative, the Global Civilization Initiative and the Global Security Initiative, offers hope that working together the world can address the challenges facing the global economy.

In Africa, the Belt and Road Initiative is focused on removing the obstacles to the African countries' development, by helping build infrastructure, and providing

capital and skilled workers. Under the Belt and Road Initiative's framework, China has vowed to work with African countries to expedite the continent's economic development. And the results are there for all to see: many large-scale and economically beneficial infrastructure facilities such as roads, railways, ports and stadiums have been built in Africa in the past decade. In terms of transport, China has helped build more than 6,000 kilometers of railways, 6,000 km of roads and nearly 20 ports in Africa. Kenya's Standard Gauge Railway, the Abuja-Kaduna Railway, and the Addis-Ababa-Djibouti Railway connect neighboring countries and communities in Africa.

Well-organized, smooth-functioning infrastructure leads to increased productivity in both the agricultural and industrial sectors. Take Ethiopia for example. The economy of Ethiopia, a country wrecked by famine and poverty till the recent past, is growing at an average annual rate of 10 percent due to its own indigenous reforms and hard work and the valuable contributions of China. China has not only revolutionized hydropower production in Ethiopia but also helped build many large industrial parks which produce consumer goods, and even automobiles, for

both the domestic and foreign markets. The Addis Ababa-Djibouti Railway and the Djibouti Port, both built by China, have turned out to be the artery through which Ethiopia imports and exports goods.

While it imports materials such as fertilizers, it exports agricultural and consumer goods produced in the industrial parks. Besides, the Lekki Deepwater Port in Nigeria, which is the largest deep-water port in West Africa and was built by a Chinese company, is expected to yield overall economic benefit of about \$360 billion and create 170,000 jobs, adding new vitality to Nigeria's economy.

In terms of skill capacity building through education, more African students are studying in China than the United States and the United Kingdom. China is also establishing research and development centers in several African countries, especially for agriculture and medicine. And through the "Health Silk Road", China has helped boost the capacity of African countries to produce vaccines. While the above-mentioned projects represent just a few of those completed by China, they reflect the current and future impact of the Belt and Road Initiative on infrastructure connectivity in Africa and the continent's

overall economic development. As we look forward to another decade of the initiative, it is pertinent to mention that joint ventures have enabled Chinese enterprises to establish a presence in Africa, especially in three key economic sectors: free trade zones and related sectors, transportation including aviation, and oil and gas.

Therefore, African countries and China should enter into more joint ventures now that business travel between China and African countries is becoming easier, in order to further boost Africa's development. African countries, on their part, should encourage the employees of Chinese companies to learn the local languages and respect local customs and values when doing business with African governments or companies, while African government officials and companies' employees dealing with Chinese enterprises should learn the Chinese language, so they can better coordinate their actions and more easily reach consensus on issues. In conclusion, the Belt and Road Initiative has proved helpful for developing countries. We look forward to another successful decade of the initiative, during which the international community will hopefully promote peace, harmony and prosperity, and help unleash the global economy's development potential.

The China Daily

Despite the Kremlin's best efforts, Putin's facade has cracked

Joshua R. Kroeker

FOR the outside observer, Russian President Vladimir Putin appears to be riding high on a wave of national support and euphoria following the Wagner rebellion. Immediately after the June 23-24 mutiny, the Kremlin's PR team shifted into high gear to hide its weaknesses and demonstrate that everything - as always - is under control. Below the surface, however, it is growing increasingly apparent that much is not going according to plan.

On July 7, the independent Levada Center pollster published statistics from the end of June arguing that Yevgeny Prigozhin's mutiny and march on Moscow did not negatively affect the Kremlin's approval ratings, but may have even strengthened public opinion toward the Russian authorities. Though there are a number of methodological issues with wartime polling - and polling in Russia in general - the Levada Center numbers are likely representative of the success of the Russian authorities in controlling the media space and reclaiming the post-rebellion narrative. That being said, it is highly unlikely that little, if anything at all, will go back to normal. Firstly, Putin as an actor seldom reacts to the world around him. Rather, he weighs the possibilities brought to him by his advisers and the few remaining people that still have access to him, meticulously plan-

ning his next moves. Yet just days after the rebellion, Putin was walking amongst the crowds in Derbent, Dagestan, mingling with ordinary citizens, taking selfies, and acting as if he was on the campaign trail. For a president who has spent the past two years distancing himself from everyone around him, forcing those that he will see in person to quarantine for two weeks - and centering much of his rule above the common folk - descending into a crowd of thousands is a notable break with former praxis.

Being jostled from event to event, smiling and euphorically speaking to the public, armed forces, politicians, and business leaders, Putin is clearly on the defensive. This new, reactive Putin, in contrast to the former cool, distanced boss, is far more susceptible to manipulation from those around him. Putin's aloofness and detachment from most current events in Russia, including Ukrainian drone attacks on Moscow, could permit actors close to the president to push their own agendas, thereby escalating political infighting to new, destabilizing levels. Secondly, despite the severity of the crimes committed by Prigozhin and Wagner in rising up against the state, the Kremlin is hardly doing anything to punish those responsible for what amounted to the greatest threat to Putin's rule in 23 years. Exiling the

former and dissolving the latter may be effective in solving that problem, but they only lead to a weakening of Putin's image in the eyes of those around him - and those with grander aspirations. The Kremlin is taking a more forgiving tone in order to avoid further publicity and quickly move past the unfortunate - but not all too problematic - days of yore. This may be effective for the immediate future, but it is more likely to have the effect of emboldening actors within the siloviki looking for career advancement. In other words, Putin's recent actions have opened the doors to dissent among his inner circle and the country's security forces, which are in a permanent battle for influence. Over 23 years, Putin has created a system of rule in which the strongest comes out on top. Exhibiting weakness will not bode well for him.

Finally, Tatiana Stanovaya, a Carnegie Eurasia fellow and founder of R.Politik, argues that for Putin, his image has always been of second-rate importance. Though this is true, it is also an axiom that for countless Russians, the image of a strong, iron-willed leader is of primary importance. For decades Putin has cultivated the persona of the archetypal Russian man: tough, exacting, bare-chested, and even ruthless. Throughout Russia's war against Ukraine, and foremostly follow-

ing the Wagner rebellion and Putin's reactions, that image has begun to crack. If Putin can no longer project the image of a macho man who is in control of the situation and rules with an iron fist, but rather that of an aloof, reactive pensioner feebly responding to the world around him, his carefully curated persona begins to fall apart. Whether this is true or not is hardly relevant; for many Russians who are beholden to populism and the politics of imagery, disillusion is on the horizon. Stanovaya went as far as to refer to this as a "severe blow" to Putin and the state. In the end, for Putin's inner circle, Russians en masse, the entire Ukrainian army, and the West, Prigozhin's rebellion happened under Putin's watch. Tanks drove through Rostov-on-Don, Wagner soldiers marched to Moscow, and the world's largest country was brought to a standstill by a few hundred armed militants. Statistics will not mask that reality. Even Stalin's paintbrush will not be able to erase that blunder from the memories of Russians and anyone growing tired of Putin's outdated, weakened, and costly rule. Although this may not have immediate political implications, it opens the door to a significant challenge to Putin himself and his system of semi-totalitarian state control in the future. The once-infallible regime and the carefully choreographed imagery it created have begun to crack.

WHILE the Western leadership and the media has been obsessed with the conflict in Ukraine since early 2022 another military buildup is taking shape in North Asia. Describing Japan and its people at a "turning point in history" a few months back, the Prime Minister Fumio Kishida unveiled a \$320 billion military spending till 2027. Doubling the current military outlay to 2 percent of the GDP, bringing it at par with NATO members contribution, will make Japan the world's third biggest military spender after the US and China.

The new Defense Buildup Program under which this money will be spent signals the most significant changes to Japan's security strategy since the end of World War II. This reverses Japan's pacifist defense policy followed since 1946 under Article 9 of the constitution that mandated use of military only in case of an attack on Japan's territory or its people. Then prime minister Shinzo Abe obtained legislative approval in 2015 allowing the Self Defense Force (SDF) to engage in combat missions overseas. Japan therefore, feels the need to update its military potential to respond to what it perceives as deteri-

Sajjad Ashraf

orating regional and international security environment as well as "expectations from its longstanding ally the USA." No wonder, President Biden was quick to offer 'strong support for Japan's updated national security policies as a significant evolution that bolsters alliance's deterrence.' North Korea's missile testing and its increasingly threatening posture ostensibly makes Japan feel the need for possessing its independent missile arsenal and interceptors. Similarly, war in Ukraine has rattled Japan for it too has unresolved territorial disputes with Russia and China.

The Japan-US military alliance is the bedrock of Japan's defense strategy since 1951. But China and Japan have deep commercial relations (2022 trade \$333.40 billion) where the former is already Japan's biggest trading partner. In contrast growth in Japan - US economic relations (2022 trade \$230.46 billion) have been much slower. But despite these deep connections with China, Japan has activated the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (QUAD) alongside US, Australia and India through joint military exercises, intelligence sharing, mutual access to each other's military facili-

ties and high-level dialogue. In December 2022 Japan announced a joint program with Italy and UK to develop a new combat aircraft. With UK and Australia Japan has signed reciprocal access agreements, moves that China has criticized. Japan does not have a major dispute with China. They are not geo-political competitors. The American forces are stationed in Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, Australia and Guam. Why then is Japan raising the military stakes? Does this new military posture provide Japan with more security? Japan is ostensibly arming because of the threat it perceives from China, even though Beijing may have benign intentions. Japan's military rethinking bolsters, at least in the short term, the American led military buildup in the Western Pacific region. But given Japan's intimate commercial connections with China, what reaction it is likely to generate amongst China, Russia and other states in the region is doubtful. The international community needs to understand that China's rise is both natural and ongoing. It is unstoppable. Geopolitics is undergoing a huge change and the one thing that is for sure is that we have not reached the 'end of history'.



PSX witnesses bullish trend as index gains 134 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bullish trend on Monday, gaining 134.08 points, a positive change of 0.29 percent, closing at 46,054.81 points against 45,920.73 points the previous trading day.

A total of 299,076,070 shares were traded during the day as compared to 504,550,463 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs8.139 billion against Rs12.012 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 337 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 147 of them recorded gains and 175 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 15 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorkdCall

Telecom with 35,880,607 shares at Rs1.41 per share; K-Electric Ltd with 32,402,516 shares at Rs2.15 per share and Unity Foods Ltd with 31,484,303 shares at Rs27.40 per share.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum increase of Rs100.00 per share price, closing at Rs6,800.00, whereas the runner-up was Bhanero Tex with an Rs69.00 rise in its per share price to Rs989.00.

Al-Abbas Sugar witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs29.40 per share closing at Rs480,600, followed by Siemens Pak with Rs18.19 decline to close at Rs701.50.

Rupee sheds Rs1.11 against US Dollar

Pakistani Rupee on Monday witnessed Rs1.11 devaluation against the US Dollar in the interbank trad-

ing as it closed at Rs287.92 against the previous day's closing of Rs286.81.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market stood at Rs291.5 and Rs294 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by 12 paise to close at Rs319.01 against the last day's closing of Rs319.13, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese Yen gained 01 paise to close at Rs2.03, whereas an increase of 90 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs370.02 as compared to its last day's closing of Rs369.12. The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 30 paise and

29 paise to close at Rs78.38 and Rs76.76 respectively.

Gold rates up by Rs2,800 per tola

The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs2,800 and was sold at Rs225,600 on Monday against its sale at Rs223,800 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs2,143 to Rs193,158 from Rs191,015 whereas the price of 10 grams 22 karat gold went up to Rs177,062 from Rs175,097, All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of per tola and ten-gram silver remained constant at Rs2750 and Rs2357.68 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market increased by \$3 to \$1,965 from \$1962, the association reported.

IMARAT, Graana.com determined to provide affordable housing in collaboration with HBFC



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: IMARAT and Graana.com have joined forces with House Building Finance Company (HBFC) to bring affordable housing options to the people of Pakistan. This partnership aims to help countless Pakistanis achieve their dream of owning a home through Easy Monthly

Installments (EMI), making it easier for families across the country to have a place to call their own.

Housing affordability has been a long-standing challenge in Pakistan, and this new alliance is set to change the game by making homeownership more accessible. Graana.com and IMARAT, both well-known leaders in the real estate

industry, will combine their expertise to offer a wide range of projects that cater to the needs and preferences of aspiring homeowners.

"We are thrilled to begin this transformative journey with IMARAT and HBFC. Our goal is to redefine affordable housing by offering flexible EMI options that suit our valued customers' financial capa-

bilities," said Mr. Shafiq Akbar, Chairman IMARAT Group. "With IMARAT's exceptional projects and HBFC's financial expertise, we are confident in making homeownership a seamless and joyful experience for everyone."

Graana.com's group director, Farhan Javed said, "Our ultimate ambition is to extend the benefits of this initiative to every ordinary individual in Pakistan. We are committed to empowering every aspiring homeowner, as their success is our achievement."

As part of their commitment to social responsibility, Graana.com, IMARAT, and HBFC are dedicated to providing full support to customers throughout their homeownership journey. From financial counseling to project selection and timely possession, the alliance aims to create a seamless experience based on trust and transparency.

OICCI commends PM's leadership in securing IMF SBA

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Overseas Investors Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OICCI) has commended Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and his finance team for timely leadership and initiative in securing the IMF's Standby Agreement (SBA) of \$ 3 billion for next nine months to ensuring that the economy was not subjected to additional shocks.

"Together with the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) rapid lending of \$1.2 billion, the friendly countries have also helped uplift the foreign exchange reserves, thereby providing a significant step towards economic stability and

progress," OICCI President Amir Paracha said in a statement on Monday.

He said this sentiment was reflected in the developments at the Pakistan Stock Exchange, currency market and the business environment in general.

The OICCI president also appreciated the upgraded Pakistan's long term foreign currency Issuer Default Rating (IDR) to 'CCC' from 'CCC-' by the Fitch Rating agency. Pakistan Bonds in the international market had also rallied post the announcement, he added.

OICCI President underlined the need to introduce reforms in all the key state institutions.

Amir Paracha added, "Pakistan is attracting insignificant FDI well below its potential, whereas OICCI members continue to add substantial investment in Pakistan and over the past ten years have invested over \$ 22 Billion in expanding their footprint in Pakistan. OICCI members will continue to be a sincere long-term partner by positively supporting the government in realizing the economic and investment potential of the country."

The OICCI is the collective voice of major foreign investors in Pakistan. The over 200 OICCI members, from 31 different countries, have a presence in 14 sec-

tors of the economy and contribute around one-third of Pakistan's total tax revenue, besides facilitating transfer of technology and skills and providing employment to a sizeable number of people.

About one-fourth of OICCI member companies are listed on the Pakistan Stock Exchange and many members are associates of the Global Fortune 500 companies. Besides their business operations the OICCI members realize their corporate social responsibilities and are major contributors to various CSR activities benefiting 46 million persons from underprivileged communities.

Asian markets mostly gain ahead of key rate decisions

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Equities mostly rose Monday in Asia with investors gearing up for policy decisions at major central banks this week,

while concern over the Chinese economy continued to dampen sentiment.

With recent data releases suggesting inflation is now coming down after more than a year of interest rate hikes, hope is building that officials are close to bringing an end to their tightening cycles.

The key focus will be on the Federal Reserve, which is widely expected to announce another increase in borrowing costs, while traders are looking for guidance on its plans after that.

Debate is swirling about whether or not it will call it a day or keep going in order to bring inflation down to its target two percent, from the current three percent.

A string of positive data in recent months has given the Fed some room to take its foot off the pedal and allow the economy to avert a feared recession.

"The Fed should not signal another skip in September, as doing so for the June meeting really handcuffed the Fed at a time when it needed maximum flexibility," Win Thin, at Brown Brothers Harriman & Co., said.

"Given how firm the labour market remains, we believe the right thing for the Fed to do is to emphasise a more data-dependent approach and stress that a skip in September should not be assumed."

And Deutsche Bank economists wrote in a recent note to clients that they "see the line between mild recession and soft landing as increasingly fine and view the probabilities of the latter outcome undeniably on the rise".

Meanwhile, Goldman Sachs has cut its probability of recession in the next 12 months to 20 percent from 25 percent.

"Recent data have reinforced our confidence that bringing inflation down to an acceptable level will not require a recession," Jan Hatzius wrote in a note to investors.

After a tepid Friday on Wall Street -- though one that saw the Dow chalk up a tenth successive gain -- most of Asia rose.

Tokyo, Sydney, Seoul, Shanghai, Taipei, Manila, Jakarta and Wellington were all up, but Hong Kong

and Singapore retreated.

The yen strengthened slightly after taking a heavy hit against the dollar late last week following a report that said the Bank of Japan was unlikely to alter its ultra-loose monetary policy at Friday's meeting.

While inflation was on the rise, Bloomberg said officials had hinted the BoJ would stand pat on its yield curve control programme which sees it control the range in which it allows government bonds to fluctuate. The yen has tumbled against the dollar this year as the BoJ refused to tighten policy even as the Fed pushed its own rates higher.

The euro was slightly down against the greenback ahead of an expected hike by the European Central Bank this week. Investors continue to fret over the outlook for China's economy after last week's data showing slower-than-expected growth in the second quarter.

They will be keeping a close eye on a key Politburo meeting this week, hoping for some stimulus measures, with recent pledges of support seen as not going far enough.



PESHAWAR: Acting president SCCI Ijaz Khan Afridi and Director ORIC Bacha Khan University Charsadda Dr. Hamid Ali Khan signing MoU.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Gas carrier 'LPG-FSM' carrying 2,200 tonnes of LPG arrived at outer anchorage of the Port Qasim on 22nd July, 2023.

A total of 06 ships were engaged at POA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them four ships, Maersk Naysassa, Al-Areesh, Summer-Pleog and Sea-Ranger sailed out to sea on Monday morning (today), while another ship 'San-Antonio' is expected to sail on same day.

Cargo throughput of 68,986 tonnes, comprising 38,130 tones imports Cargo and 30,856 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 1,403 Containers (30 TEUs Imports and 1,373 TEUs export) was handled at the port during last 24 hours.

There are 04 ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them two ships, Nord Agano and Ellora & three more ships, Hafnia, MSC Levina and Lana carrying Coal, Mogas, Palm oil and Containers are expected to take berths at Bulk Terminal, oil Terminal, Liquid Terminal and Container Terminal respectively on 24th July, while two more ships, Maersk Kensington and MSC Elaine with container are due to arrive at Port Qasim on Tuesday, 25th July, 2023.

Gold imports increase by 35.48%

ISLAMABAD (APP): The imports of gold increased by 35.48 percent during the fiscal year 2022-23 as compared to last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

The gold imports during the July-June (2022-23) were recorded at \$30.651 million as compared to the imports of \$22.623 million during July-June (2021-22), according to the data.

In terms of quantity, Pakistan imported 496 kilograms of gold during the months under review as compared to the imports of 361 kilograms last year, showing growth of 37.40%.

Meanwhile on year-on-year basis, the gold imports into the country witnessed a decrease of 48.22 percent as these were recorded at \$3.273 million in June 2023 against the imports of \$3.641 million in June 2022.

In terms of quantity, the imports of the commodity declined by 11.86 percent, from 59 kilograms in June 2022 to 52 kilograms in June 2023.

Meanwhile, on month-on-month basis, the gold imports during June 2023 decreased by 4.33 percent when compared to the imports of \$3.421 million in May 2023.

It is pertinent to mention here that the overall trade deficit witnessed a decline of 43.03 percent during the fiscal year 2022-23 as compared to the previous year (2021-22).

The trade deficit during July-June (2022-23) was recorded at \$27.547 billion against the deficit of \$48.354 billion in July-June (2021-22), a decline of 43.03 percent.

The exports during the period were recorded at \$27.744 billion against \$31.782 billion last year, showing a decline of 12.71 percent. On the other hand, the imports witnessed a sharp decline of 31 percent by falling from \$80.136 billion last year to \$55.291 billion during the fiscal year 2022-23.

SCCI sign MoU with BKU Charsadda

— to strengthen industry-academia linkages

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A memorandum of understanding (MoU) was signed between Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) and Bacha Khan University (BKU), Charsadda.

In this regard, a signing ceremony was held at the chamber's house on Monday, in which SCCI's acting President Ijaz Khan Afridi and Director, Office of Research, Innovation and Commercialization (ORIC), Bacha Khan University Charsadda, Dr Hamid Ali Khan, Manager, Office of

Research Innovation & Commercialization (ORIC) Zia ur Rehman and SCCI's Secretary General Sajjad Aziz were also present during the signing event.

Ijaz Khan Afridi while terming the signing MoU with Bacha Khan University Charsadda as a milestone step toward strengthening industry-academia linkages said SCCI has started a series of MoUs with public and private sector universities.

He elaborated that the MoU aims at equipping graduates and young students' technical skills

besides completion of their academic career so that it will enable them to get instant employment opportunities in markets.

The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI)'s acting chief stressed the need to provide a proper platform to youth for utilization of their abilities efficiently and continue playing a role in the country's economic prosperity and progress.

Hamid Ali Khan on the occasion briefed about ORIC, administrative and academic matters of Bacha Khan University Charsadda in an elaborated manner.

ICCI calls for economic empowerment of women to reduce poverty

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (ICCI) on Monday called for favourable policy measures for the economic empowerment of women, which would pave the way for Pakistan to move towards sustainable economic development.

This was said by Ahsan Zafar Bakhtawari, President ICCI, while talking to a delegation of the Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry (IWCCI) during its visit to ICCI led by Rizwana Asif President.

Women are half of the total population of Pakistan, who are endowed with immense talents, but due to a lack of better

opportunities, women are currently unable to play an active role in the economic development of the country, he added.

Ahsan Bakhtawari emphasized to address the key issues being faced by women entrepreneurs on a priority basis and providing them with maximum ease in doing business so that more women feel motivated to start their own businesses, which would not only reduce poverty and unemployment the society, but the economy would also move towards fast recovery.

He assured that ICCI would cooperate with IWCCI to solve the problems of women entrepreneurs.

Speaking on the occa-

sion, Rizwana Asif, President, Islamabad Women Chamber of Commerce and Industry, said that getting a loan for business was the major problem for women, due to which many of them were unable to start their own businesses.

She urged the government to review the utility prices and bring down the interest rates to single digits, which would significantly reduce the cost of doing business and strengthen the economy by increasing business activities.

Dr. Sonia Saleem, Senior Vice President, Dr. Joharia Azhar, Sadaf Abbasi Executive Members of IWCCI and others were in the delegation.

PSGMEA conducts a seminar in collaboration with Trade Foresight

SIALKOT (APP): Pakistan Sports Goods Manufacturers and Exporters Association (PSGMEA), in collaboration with Trade Foresight, organised a seminar 'Empower Businesses on Trade Foresight', here on Monday.

Addressing the participants, Chairman Association Arshad Latif Butt shared that the aims of conducting effective seminars and training workshops for Small and Medium sized

Enterprises (SMEs) and entrepreneurs keep them up-to-date with the current E-commerce trends, fill knowledge gaps, and to provide learning opportunities at E-commerce platforms to start-ups to make them a successful business-to-business (B2B) seller.

Chairman PSGMEA said that seminar will be very helpful for enhancing knowledge of participants and growing their businesses.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Trade Foresight Dr. Ahsan gave a brief presentation on the benefits of working with Original Equipment Manufacturer/Original Design Manufacturer (OEM/ODM) and the importance of product knowledge.

The seminar was attended by General Secretary PSGMEA Mohsin Masood, Executive Committee Members and young entrepreneurs.

Tea imports reduces 9.13% in last fiscal year

ISLAMABAD (APP): Tea imports into the country during financial year ended on June 30, 2023 reduced by 9.13 percent as compared the imports of the corresponding period of last year.

During the period from June-July, 2022-23 about 231,449 metric tons of tea costing \$556.043 million were imported as against the imports of 253,748 metric tons valuing \$626.195 million of same period last year, according the data of Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

Meanwhile, imports of sugar decreased by 97.06 percent during 12 months of last fiscal year as 6,205

metric tons of sugar valuing \$0.0546 million million imported as compared the imports of 312,477 metric tons costing \$191.720 million of same period last year.

In last fiscal year spices imports into the country also decreased by 30.04 percent as 147,193 metric tons of different spices worth of \$151.240 million were imported during the period under review as compared the imports of 138,413 metric tons valuing \$216.183 million of same period last year.

It is worth mentioning here that food group imports into the country during the period under

review decreased by 0.88 percent as compared to the imports of the corresponding period of last year.

During the period from July-June, 2022-23, the country spent \$8,936 billion on the import of different food commodities as compared to the imports of \$9.016 billion in the same period last year in order to fulfill the local requirements.

On the other hand the exports of food commodities from the country decreased by 7.25 percent as it was recorded at \$5.0222 billion as against the exports of \$5.415 billion of the corresponding period of last year.

Court Notice

In the Court of Tazeen Wisal Civil Judge VII/ Judicial Magistrate/Alaqa Qazi Buner at Daggar. Suit No. 287/1, Institution 2022, date of hearing 9/9/2023. Mst. Miraj Khan Vs Muner Khan etc. Notice No. 1. Muner Khan. 2. Anwar Khan sons of Ibrahim Khan resident of Kulyaray Buner at present in Siya Tehsil Kannod District Dewes Madyya Pardesh India. Whereas, in the above mentioned case the mentioned defendants cannot 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 8:00 a.m., dated 9/9/2023, the proceeding will be taken ex-parte. Given under my hand and seal of this Court.



In brief

Pak women defeat Guamanian team

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan women tennis team defeated Guam 2-1 in the Billie Jean King Cup at Kaula Lumpur, Malaysia on Monday. According to information made available here, by Pakistan Tennis Federation (PTF), in the first singles match Ushna Suhail overpowered Sydney Packbier by 6-1, 6-2. But in the second singles, Sarah Ibrahim fell to Fremont Gibson 3-6, 4-6 in a well-fought encounter. However, in the doubles, Sarah and Ushna outwitted Fremont Gibson and Sydney Packbier by 4-6, 6-0, 7-6(2). President of PTF, Senator Salim Saifullah Khan and the Executive Committee of PTF extended their felicitation to players on their initial success. They expressed the hope that the team would display much better results with full zeal and enthusiasm in the next matches.

West Indies v India Test delayed by rain

TRINIDAD (Agencies): Steady rainfall has wiped out the prospect of any play before lunch on the final day of the second and final Test between the West Indies and India at Queen's Park Oval in Trinidad on Monday. West Indies are set to resume at 76 for two in their second innings having been set a victory target of 365. However with the inclement weather forecasted to linger for much of the day, the window for an outright result may already be closing. India lead the series 1-0 after a crushing innings and 141 runs triumph in the first Test in Dominica in three days. However the two-time World Test Championship finalists would be favoured to complete a 2-0 sweep and will be hoping for at least a full session for their bowlers to claim the eight wickets needed for 12 more WTC points at the start of the new cycle. West Indies' chances of getting the remaining 289 runs for a famous series-leveling victory were always unlikely and the longer play is delayed means that the remote prospect of overhauling the target will be effectively eliminated.

Al Hilal can talk to Mbappe

OSAKA (Agencies): Paris Saint-Germain have given Saudi club Al Hilal permission to speak to Kylian Mbappe after tabling a 300-million-euro (\$333 million) bid, a source close to the negotiations said on Monday. The Riyadh-based club has made a formal offer by letter, but such a transfer could only be made with the agreement of the player. "PSG have given Al Hilal permission to negotiate with Kylian Mbappe about a transfer for 300 million euros," the source said. Mbappe has one year left on his contract with PSG, who want him to leave now rather than for nothing next summer. The bid for Mbappe would make him the most expensive football player in history, overtaking the \$262 million PSG paid for Neymar, who joined from Barcelona in 2017. The offer represents Saudi Arabia's most ambitious move yet as part of a determined recruitment drive to lure the game's biggest players to the country. After Cristiano Ronaldo agreed to join Al-Nassr in December, Saudi teams have gone into overdrive by targeting leading names from Europe's top leagues. Real Madrid great and current Ballon d'Or holder Karim Benzema signed for Saudi champion Al-Ittihad last month and has been joined by 2018 World Cup winner N'Golo Kante.

Abdullah and Abrar put Pakistan on top in 2nd test vs Sri Lanka

COLOMBO (AP): Pakistan's new aggressive approach paid dividends as it bowled out Sri Lanka for 166 before racing to 145-2 in reply on day one of the second cricket test on Monday. Pakistan, 1-0 up in the two-match series, was in complete control despite losing the toss and made to field first at the Sinhalese Sports Club. At one stage, the tourists were scoring at 6.5 runs an over, with the 50 coming up in 50 balls and the 100 arriving in 101 deliveries.

Abdullah Shafique needed only 49 deliveries to reach his fifth test half-century while Shan Masood raced to his seventh half-century in just 44 balls.

Asitha Fernando claimed the first Pakistan wicket, removing Imam-ul-Haq for 6, and his second spell got Masood caught at wide mid-on for 51. Shafique, who was dropped by Prabhath Jayasuriya off his own bowling on 42,

reached 74 not out at stumps, with captain Babar Azam unbeaten on 8.

Earlier, leg-spinner Abrar Ahmed took 4-69 and fast bowler Naseem Shah claimed 3-41 as Sri Lanka was skittled out by a Pakistan side bowling with aggressive fields.

"We expected to bat better than this," Sri Lanka batting coach Naveed Nawaz said. "The SSC is a wicket where you can make lots of runs once you get a start. Their field settings were good and tempted the batters and we made the wrong choices. It's a matter of poor execution."

Opening batsman Nishan Madushka was run out for 4 in the third over. Captain Dimuth Karunaratne pushed the ball into the covers and attempted a single but Masood threw down the stumps with a direct hit.

Pakistan was excellent in the field and Masood also

ran out tailender Jayasuriya with a direct hit, but the damage for Sri Lanka was done in the morning session when it slumped to 36-4.

Sri Lanka was guilty of throwing away wickets. Kusal Mendis hit one straight to cover on 6, Angelo Mathews was caught behind for 9 and Karunaratne dragged the ball onto the stumps after attempting an expansive drive on 17.

An 85-run stand for the fifth wicket steadied the innings before Dinesh Chandimal, who had been peppered by short bowling, hit Naseem straight to mid-wicket on 34. Dhananjaya de Silva, who shared the big partnership with Chandimal, top-scored with 57 before falling to Abrar.

"The pitch is good to bat on so we are pleased to have bowled them out for 166," Naseem said. An hour's play was lost in the morning due to rain and 13 overs were lost in the day.

Mardan, Peshawar secure wins in PM Youth Talent Hunt Women Football League



PESHAWAR (APP): Mardan and Peshawar recorded victories against their respective rivals in the ongoing Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Women Football League being played at Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex Charsadda on Monday.

Pakistan Muslim League (N) Youth Coordination Engr. Arif Rawan was the chief guest on this occasion. Director Sports Bacha Khan University Charsadda and Organizing Secretary International athlete Shahbana Khattak, District Sports Officer Charsadda Tahseen Ullah, former national athlete and selector Musawar Khan, national football selector Fahim Butt, Director Sports KUST Wajid Ali, officials and players were also present.

Speaking on this occasion, Engr. Arif Rawan appreciated the Special Assistant of Prime Minister Sheza Fatima, Engr. Amir Muqam, Director General Sports Higher educa-

tion Commission Javed Memon for their untiring efforts in holding the Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Program in which female players could take part in 10 different events while the male could be part of 12 different Games.

He said through such a program more talented youth would come up at the grassroots level and after going through different games leagues, training and coaching under qualified coaches these players could reach national and international levels.

He said the government was providing A-class facilities to the players during the league including the provision of complete kits, and shoes besides cash prizes after victory. He said the Prime Minister Youth Talent Hunt Program is vital in promoting different sports activities across Pakistan including Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He said players from Chitral to Dera Ismail Khan

including the merged area are now part of the Program which is the actual success of the PML-N government. Engr. Arif said that the players who are now part of the league would represent their respective provinces in the National League besides making an international tour for gaining international exposure.

Earlier, Mardan defeated Swat by 3-2. It was a vital victory for Mardan as after defeating Swat, Mardan would face Bannu and Hazara in their matches. Mardan played well and their main forwards Amina, Lubna, Iqra scored one goal each while for Swat Haleema, Sumayyah scored one goal each.

In the second match, Peshawar stunned Hazara by 4-0. Kalsoom, the skipper of Peshawar, scored a hat-trick, the first one of the League in the first session through field attempt while Javeria scored the fourth goal through field attempt.

Peshawar Zalmi Management congratulate the young cricketers for making Sindh Trials a success



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Peshawar Zalmi Management has expressed its gratitude to the young cricketers of Karachi and Sindh for the successful organization of Zalmi Talent Hunt Sindh in Karachi.

On the last day of the talent hunt at Rashid Latif Cricket Academy Gulberg Karachi, Zalmi Management celebrated Pakistan's victory over India in the Emerging Asia

Cup final by cutting a cake with the young cricketers who came for the trials.

President of Peshawar Zalmi Inzamam-ul-Haq said that During the four-day trials, nearly ten thousand Cricketers arrived despite the intense heat and then the rain, and they congratulate the young cricketers for making Sindh Trials a success.

Inzamam-ul-Haq said that the young cricketers from small and big cities of Karachi and Sindh were

very impressed, the short-listed Cricketers will be provided with monthly stipends and cricket equipment.

He said that after Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Sindh, trials will also be held in other provinces and cities, after the trials across Pakistan, six teams will be formed and the final event will be held in Peshawar, and the best young cricketers will be fully supported to advance in PSL and Pakistan Cricket.



COLOMBO: Babar Azam and Naseem Shah celebrate the fall of Angelo Mathews.

M Haris reviews Pakistan Shaheens' title triumph in Sri Lanka

LAHORE (PPI) Pakistan Shaheens have departed from Sri Lanka today after successfully defending ACC Men's Emerging Teams Asia Cup title. Shaheens defeated India A in the final by a comprehensive 128-run margin at the R Premadasa Stadium in Colombo on Sunday evening.

The star of the final was the right-handed batter Tayyab Tahir, who scored a match-winning century.

Eight teams featured in the 50-over tournament which was held in Colombo from 13 to 23 July. The teams were divided into two pools, with Afghanistan A, Bangladesh A, Oman A and Sri Lanka A forming Group A, while Pakistan Shaheens along with India A, Nepal and UAE A, were in Group B.

Shaheens finished second in their group, beating Nepal and UAE A by four wickets and 184 runs, respectively. In the third fixture, Shaheens went down against India A by eight wickets.

Top two teams from each group qualified for the semi-finals held on Friday, 21 July. Sri Lanka A, table-toppers from Group A, took on Pakistan Shaheens, while India A, who finished at the top of Group B, played Bangladesh A.

TT Singh wins Futsal c'ship

FAISALABAD (APP): Toba Tek Singh team won the All Punjab Inter-District Futsal Championship, played at Kaleem Shaheed Indoor sports Complex, Ghulam Muhammad Abad.

Chairman District Futsal Association Naseem Ahmad said here on Monday that Futsal teams from Faisalabad, Sargodha, Hafizabad, Khushab, Gujrat, Jhang, Toba Tek Singh and Chiniot participated in the championship, which started on Sunday, July 23, 2023.

The final match was played between teams of Toba Tek Singh and Chiniot, but the match remained undecided. Later, each team was provided a chance of penalty kicks during which Toba Tek Singh defeated the rival whereas Gujrat was declared third in the tournament.

District Sports Officer (DSO) Sajida Latif witnessed the final match as the chief guest and later she also distributed cash prizes and trophies among the position-holder teams. The winner team was awarded cash prize of Rs 15,000, whereas Rs 10,000 was awarded to runner-up and Rs 5,000 to third position holder team.

A player, Rana Nauman, was declared the man of the match and he was also awarded a cash prize of Rs 5000. Chairman Pakistan Futsal Federation Sardar Rafiq Sajrani, President Pakistan Futsal Federation Hajji Tariq Mehmood, Secretary General Mubashshar Sanjrani, Hajji Muhammad Rafi, Principal Punjab College Tandiawanwala, Khalida Parveen and others were also present.

Air chief congratulates Hamza for winning World Jr Squash C'ship

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Chief of the Air Staff, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu on Monday congratulated Hamza Khan on winning the World Junior Squash Championship 2023, held in Melbourne, Australia.

The young squash player Hamza Khan won the title by defeating Mohamed Zakaria of Egypt with a score of 3-1 during the final match played in the coastal city of Melbourne, said a Pakistan Air Force news release.

The Air Chief expressed his felicitations to the young champion for bringing the title back to Pakistan after a gap of 37 years. He further said that this victory has evoked memories of Jan Sher Khan's triumph in the 1986 World Squash Championship and termed it a revival of Pakistan's glory in the game of squash.

The Chief of the Air Staff further said that the entire nation takes pride in the outstanding performance by the talented player, which has raised the national flag high in the sport of squash.

Being the President of Pakistan Squash Federation, Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu, Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force said that the PAF has been tremendously contributing for the promotion of Squash in the country and reiterated his resolve that he would continue to support young talent to bring more such victories for the nation.

He also lauded the unwavering commitment of the

Senior Vice President of Pakistan Squash Federation, Air Vice Marshal Kazim Hammad and the Contingent Manager, Air Commodore (Retired) Aftab Sadiq Qureshi in making utmost efforts for the provision of quality training and supporting the talented youth to excel in the game of Squash.

The Air Chief appreciated the hard work put in by the coaching staff for providing international standard training and coaching facilities to the young players. He also lauded the PSF's management in making concerted efforts for bringing back the lost glory in the game of squash.

Women's squash premier league 2023 kicks off at Mushaf Complex

ISLAMABAD (INP): The inaugural edition of Pakistan women's squash premier league 2023 was kicked off at the Mushaf Squash Complex Islamabad on Monday during which talented deaf and dumb squash player Sana Bahadur thrashed Pakistan number one squash player Noor ul Ain in the first round by 3-2.

According to event organiser Sadia Gul, who is also national women coach said that the two days event will provide an opportunity to local players to improve their game as first time girls from Quetta also participating in the premier league organised by the Pakistan Squash Federation (PSF) with the collaboration of Women in Sports (WinS) and Serena Hotels.

Sadia Gul said that the women's premier league is not just a tournament but it aims to promote and inspire the young girls to showcase their talent and to excel in the game of squash. She said that 16 players are divided into four teams namely Warriors, Tigers, Shaheen and Panther. On day one Sana Bahadur of team panther's beat national ranking top player Noor ul Ain (Warriors) by 3-2 to upset them in the premier league. Noor ul Ain led the match by 11-13, 11-8, 11-9 but Sana Bahadur gripped the game and never allowed Noor ul Ain to come back in the game and won the last two games by 13-11 and 11-8.

Faiga Fida 9 years old girl belongs from team Shaheen also beat Farwa Batool of Warriors by 11-7, 6-11, 11-8, 11-9 while Quetta girl Irum Zehra of team Panthers beat Zayna Zuabir (team Warriors) in close match by 9-11, 11-2, 9-11, 11-4, 11-2 Another close match was witnessed between Mehwish Ali of team Tigers and Sana Bahadur of panthers which were won by Mehwish by 11-9, 9-11, 7-11, 11-5, 11-7 respectively.

Popp bags brace as Germany smash Morocco 6-0 to start title bid

MELBOURNE (Agencies): Talismanic striker Alexandra Popp scored twice as Germany thumped debutants Morocco 6-0 to launch their Women's World Cup title charge in ominous fashion on Monday.

Popp's 12th-minute header set the Germans on their way in Melbourne and she collected another before the break as the two-time champions romped to the biggest win of the tournament so far.

Klara Buehl added a third in Germany's first attack after the restart before own goals from Hanane Ait El Hajj and Zineb Redouani.

A last-minute strike from substitute Lea Schueller completed the rout as Morocco's piece of history — the first Arab team to play at a Women's World Cup — ended in humiliation.

On paper it was the biggest mismatch of the group stage, with 70 places separating them in the world rankings, and the gulf was apparent from the off.

The Atlas Lionesses showed glimpses of magic and had a goal disallowed. However, a fairytale win never looked likely in front of 27,256 fans at Melbourne Rectangular Stadium, a near full-house.

Germany, who won the World Cup in 2003 and 2007, went out in the quarter-finals four years ago.

But since then coach



Martina Voss-Tecklenburg has overseen impressive progress, shaping a dynamic, front-foot team which finished runners-up at last year's Euros to England.

They are among the favorites to bag a third title and had their first look at goal when Buehl's low freekick fizzed wide.

They kept pressing and opened their account when Wolfsburg's Popp climbed unmarked to head in her 63rd international goal from a pinpoint Kathrin Hendrich cross.

Morocco were on the back foot but skipper Ghizlane Chebbak had a sniff midway through the half, only for her long-range strike to be comfortably collected.

Lyon's Sara Daebritz found the back of the net with a tidy finish soon after as Germany probed for an inevitable second, but the goal was ruled offside.

The second came seven minutes before the break

with Popp, facing away from goal, shouldering home after Buehl's menacing corner.

Buehl then pounced for their third seconds after the restart with Morocco still asleep, rifling home the rebound after Lina Magull hit the woodwork.

In end-to-end action, Anissa Lahmari was denied a historic first World Cup goal for Morocco when she was adjudged offside, before play switched back to the other half and Ait El Hajj's own goal.

The defender turned the ball into her own net after a defensive header ricocheted off her shin, with the second own goal coming as Redouani desperately tried to clear off the line.

Schueller made it six from close in as the clock ticked down, with a seventh denied by the offside flag.

Colombia and South Korea are also in their group and play on Tuesday.



In brief

IRSA releases 503,900 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 503,900 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 650,900 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1528.74 feet and was 130.74 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 370,900 cusecs and 294,200 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1216.95 feet, which was 166.95 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 80,300 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 301,600, 362,500, 167,800 and 129,500 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 82,000 cusecs of water were released at Nowshera and 101,400 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

Commissioner for Smog Rules 2023

RAWALPINDI (APP): Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaquat Ali Chhatta here on Monday directed the authorities concerned to ensure full implementation of Smog Rules 2023. The Government of Punjab had implemented Smog Rules 2023 across the province from June 06 this year, he said and directed the departments concerned to start a thorough public awareness campaign about the rules. The smog rules prohibit the use of weak engines, burning of solid waste and tires, he said adding, the kilns without zigzag technology and factories creating pollution would not be allowed to work. Burning of crop residues and smoke emitting vehicles are strictly prohibited under the rules, the Commissioner added. Violation of the rules could result in immediate closure of the business, fine up to one million rupees and registration of FIRs against the violators, Liaquat Ali Chhatta said. He also directed the departments concerned to actively participate in the plantation campaign to prevent smog and control diseases spread as a result of this air pollution. He said, "Trees are a precious gift of nature which beautifies the environment and they are also natural factories of oxygen. With the help of the plants, not only the natural environment can be maintained, but also the severity of natural disasters can be reduced."

Power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) has issued a power suspension programme for Tuesday in various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 08:00 AM to 1:00 PM Islamabad Circle, Anguri, NCP, Mangyal, Shahdara, Shahpur, Khayaban Iqbal, Peer Suhawah, Quaid-e-Azam University, Bri Imam, Mandala, Athal, NIH Feeders, From 07:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Islamabad Circle, New Waheedabad, Tramri Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Rahmatabad-I, Kahota City-II, Hanif Shaheed, Old Rawat, New Rawat, CWO, AOWHS, Sparco, Defense Road, Askari-14 Sector-D, Humayun-1, Kalyal, Adwala Feeders, Chakwal Circle, Malhal Mughlan, Sarkal Feeders, Jhelum Circle, Mankayala Feeder, Attock Circle, Pind Pran.



ISLAMABAD: Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf in a meeting with Federal Minister for Law & Justice Senator Azam Nazir Tarar.

Pakistan Ulema Council, Church of Pakistan leadership to hold crucial meeting today

ISLAMABAD (APP): In response to the recent incidents of burning the Holy Quran in Sweden and Denmark, the leadership of the Pakistan Ulema Council and the Church of Pakistan are set to convene a significant meeting on Tuesday.

The anticipated gathering aims to address and announce key decisions pertaining to the alarming desecration of the Holy Quran, which has sparked international outrage. Leaders from both the Muslim and Christian communities will come together to deliberate on the gravity of the situation and explore measures to foster interreli-

gious harmony in the wake of these distressing events.

Pakistan Ulema Council Chairman Hafiz Muhammad Tahir Mahmood Ashrafi will be in attendance, alongside President of the Church of Pakistan, Bishop Azad Marchal, and distinguished Ulema and Mashaykh and representatives from various faiths.

Following the pivotal meeting, Ashrafi and Marchal will address a press conference alongside other religious leaders. The press conference is expected to shed light on the outcomes of the gathering and outline the proposed initia-

tives to address the issue at hand. The meeting stands as a testament to Pakistan's commitment to religious tolerance and unity, and it is hoped that the decisions taken will contribute to fostering greater understanding and respect among diverse religious communities both within the country and on the international stage.

As the world watches closely, the collaborative efforts of the Pakistan Ulema Council and the Church of Pakistan are anticipated to mark a pivotal step towards promoting global harmony and religious coexistence.

ANF seizes 37 kg drugs in six operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) in its operations against drug-traffickers managed to recover 37 kg narcotics and arrested four accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman.

He informed that in an operation, ANF recovered 1.5 kg Ice drug being sent to a foreign country through a parcel booked at International Mail Office Rawalpindi. Ice was concealed in Hot Pots.

In another operation, one kg Ice drug was recovered from the possession of an accused resident of Peshawar, travelling in public transport. The accused was arrested near M-1 Motorway Toll Plaza.

On the accused's information, the co-accused, a resident of Islamabad, was also arrested along with a vehicle from the Khanapul area in Islamabad.

In the third operation, 17.7 kg of hashish concealed in a plastic bag was recovered from the area of 'Jarubi' Zakhakhel Khyber'. 10.2 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused resident of Karachi arrested near Mirpur Road Karachi.

11 netted for carrying illegal arms

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested 11 illegal arm holders and recovered arms, ammunition and dagger from their possession during crackdown here on Monday.

According to police spokesman, Airport police recovered 01 pistol of 30 bore from Musawar Ali, 01 dagger was recovered from Waqas Ahmed and 01 pistol of 30 bore was recovered from Faisal.

Similarly, Wah Cantt police nabbed Ramzan and recovered 01 pistol of 30 bore from his possession.

While conducting raid Gujjar Khan police recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from Kashif and 01 pistol 30 bore was recovered from Usman and 01 pistol 30 bore was also recovered from Shahzad. Following operation, Jatali police recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from Nauman. Dhamyal police recovered 01 pistol 30 bore from Rizwan and 01 pistol 30 bore was recovered from Sharaft. Rawat Police recovered 01 knife from Waleed. Police have registered separate cases against the accused and further investigation was in progress.

Law Minister calls on NA Speaker

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Law and Justice Azam Nazeer Tarar Monday called on Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf in his office to discuss matters related to pending legislative business.

The delegation of Lawyers' community of Gujjar Khan Bar Council was also present in the meeting, said a news release issued here. The meeting discussed the issues being faced by the lawyers' community in Gujjar Khan.

The speaker said resolving the problems being faced by the lawyers of Gujjar Khan Bar Council had been his top priority. He said that the role of the lawyers' community was of key importance for ensuring rule of law, supremacy of the constitution and promotion of democracy in the country.

The speaker said that it was very encouraging that the 15th National Assembly was about to complete its con-

stitutional term.

He said that the current National Assembly of Pakistan had held regular sessions during the last 14 months to discuss issues of public importance along with enacting important legislation and proposed their solutions.

He also appreciated the cooperation of the Ministry of Law and Justice in this regard. The pending legislation was also discussed in the meeting and it was agreed to bring the pending bills to the House for consideration. The minister appreciated the Speaker's keen interest in supporting and enacting public friendly legislation. He also assured all possible cooperation from the ministry. The minister also appreciated the role of the Speaker National Assembly for ensuring smooth proceedings in National Assembly. He said that the tenure of 14 months of National Assembly would be remembered as far as legislation was concerned.

NDMA holds special NEOC session

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Acting

Chairman, National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Brigadier (Approved Major General) Naiknam Muhammad Baig on Monday presided the special National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) session with key stakeholders on current monsoon situation. The session was attended by DG Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD), representatives of Federal Flood Commission (FFC), provincial disaster management authorities (PDMAs), State Disaster Management Authority (SDMA), Gilgit Baltistan Disaster Management Authority (GBDMA), Armed Forces and PCIW, a news release said.

The Acting-Chairman NDMA reviewed restoration of roads and bridges, monsoon-related incidents and rescue & relief operations in parts of country including Chitral, Gilgit Baltistan and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) in the past two days.

He instructed relevant departments to prepare resource contingency plans, implement early warning systems and disaster mitigation interventions in hazard-prone areas by learning from the experiences of Floods 2022. He noted that proactive measures are essential in mitigating disaster impact and called for tangible actions

before disaster strikes.

The DG PMD briefed on rainfall data in last 24 hours and upcoming monsoon spell. He informed that next monsoon spell is expected to bring heavy rains in the upper parts of the country from July 31st to August 6th, triggering urban flooding in major cities, flash flooding and landsliding in hilly regions.

He apprised of major reservoirs including Tarbela and Mangla which are nearly full at 79% and 74% respectively. It was mentioned that two Indian dams Pong & Thein are also close to capacity and there is a possibility of flood flow from India into River Indus, which may affect Lahore adversely. The FFC informed that all major rivers are currently within normal limits. The PDMAs, GBDMA, and SDMA presented details of rescue and relief operations and restoration work of blocked communication infrastructure in their respective regions. The Acting-Chairman NDMA directed Provincial Authorities to undertake public awareness on all media channels and social media to maximise general public's knowledge on risk associated with monsoon season and make arrangements for allocation of their resources according to PMD's weather projections.

Police hold flag march

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police conducted a flag march across the city to maintain peace, harmony during Muharram ul Harram here on Monday. According to a police spokesman, the flag march was organized in different areas of the city under the supervision of SP Saddar.

District Police, Elite Force, Traffic Police, Dolphin Squad and other law enforcement agencies participated in the flag march. The purpose of holding the flag march was to express the determination of the Rawalpindi Police to establish peace, law and order and promote harmony and unity during Muharram. The flag march started from Pasban Ground, Rawalpindi Race Course area and passed through various routes of the city and ended at starting point. City Police Officer (CPO) Khalid Mehmood Hamdani said that implementation of the code of conduct and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) policy will be ensured during Muharram. CPO said that foolproof security arrangements are being made for the peaceful observance of Muharram. No one will be allowed to take the law into their hands, he added. CPO expressed the peace-loving citizens of Rawalpindi will cooperate with the police and administration in ensuring law and order during Muharram.

Traders urge extraordinary security measures for Muharram

RAWALPINDI (APP): Trade bodies of the city have urged the government to take extraordinary steps for maintaining law and order during Muharram.

Remembering the "disaster suffered by local traders of Madina Market and Al-Umer Plaza in 2013" on Ashura day in Raja Bazar, President Markazi Anjum Tajran Sharjeel Mir on Monday urged the government to take stringent security measures for ensuring peace and security in the city. Mir said though the district administration was doing its best for creating an atmosphere of religious harmony and brotherhood by taking all stakeholders on board, he urged for more extraordinary measures by intensifying snap checking and patrolling, effective monitoring of the city's entry and exit points, deployment of additional police force and Rangers, installation and repair of CCTV cameras and other security steps so that all processions and other religious activities conclude peacefully.

"We cannot afford any further loss of

life and property as it takes years to recover and restore businesses which were put on fire by the angry mob on November 15, 2013," he said.

He called for taking the business community of the concerned bazaars into confidence regarding the security plan devised for various routes of Muharram processions so that shopkeepers and traders could adhere to the security plan and schedule their business activities accordingly. When contacted, the City Police Officer Syed Khalid Hmadani assured that foolproof security arrangements were being made to provide security to mourners as well as traders to feel a sense of security. He said that meetings with Ulema of all sects and the business community were being held regularly to maintain the law and order situation in the city.

Hamadani said that the Muharram Code of Conduct and Standard Operating Procedures were also being ensured strictly and no one would be allowed to disrupt the peaceful environment of the district.

Chandio directs accelerating work on Sasta Bazars in Capital

ISLAMABAD (INP): Senator Mousa Bux Chandio on Monday chaired the meeting of sub-committee of the Senate Standing Committee on Interior at Parliament House. During the meeting, the Secretary Poverty Alleviation provided an update on the progress of the CDA's Sasta Bazars, which received a total of 1590 applications for Stalls. The data from these applications was shared with BISP for assessment,

data revealed that 280 applicants were registered with BISP, out of which 24 were classified as very poor. Following the discussion, the Secretary Poverty Alleviation recommended the immediate issuance of allotment letters to 180 applicants. It was mutually agreed during the meeting that the first phase would involve handing over 180 allotment letters for Stalls on Wednesday. Furthermore, the allocation process for

the remaining applicants will be completed soon. The chair directed to expedite the construction work for Sasta Bazars on five identified sites in Islamabad. The committee strongly recommended to exclusively mentioned women in the next advertisement in order to encourage them to apply for the program as well.

Senior officials from both Poverty Alleviation and CDA were present at the meeting.

China culture center kicks-off The Yellow River Tourism Overseas Promotion

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: China Cultural Center launched 2023 Yellow River Tourism Overseas Promotion Season in Pakistan on their various social media platforms including Facebook Official Page, Wechat, Channels, Twitter account of Cultural Counsellor and Director China Cultural Center in Pakistan H.E Zhang Heqing. The event will run from July through September, 2023.

The Promotional Season is organized globally under the guidance of the Bureau of International Exchange and Cooperation, Department of Industrial Development, Department of Resource Development of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, and the Department of International Cooperation of the State Administration of Radio and Television, the Center for Chinese and Foreign Cultural Exchanges (CCCE), in cooperation with nine provincial and regional departments of Culture and Tourism of Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Shandong, Henan, Sichuan, Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai and Ningxia. The Yellow River Tourism Overseas Promotion Season 2023 comprises

of number of different exhibitions and documentaries such as documentary series "The Great Yellow River Delta", "Singing along the Yellow River", Photography Exhibition "Explore the Yellow River, Discover Beautiful China", tourism and cultural resources of Shanxi, Inner Mongolia, Shandong, Henan, Sichuan, Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai and Ningxia and much more.

In addition, nine selected routes highlighting the various attractions worth seeing in each region will be launched during the Yellow River Tourism Season, covering the nine provinces through which the river flows. Five selected rural tourist routes that take visitors deep into the villages along the Yellow River have also been introduced. The regions along the Yellow River, the cradle of ancient Chinese civilization, have made significant progress in recent years in terms of coordinated industrial development, ecological protection, and promotion of Yellow River culture. The event's objectives include providing a complete picture of the Yellow River, learning about its cultural significance, reviving its cultural heritage, promoting cultural exchanges, and better communicating the Yellow River's history to Pakistani audiences.

Capital Police issued 2,330 fine tickets to the traffic rules violators

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Islamabad capital police has expedited stern legal action against the traffic rules violators and issued 2,330 fine tickets to road users during the last 24 hours, a police public relations officer said.

Following the special directions of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCPPO) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, Islamabad capital police expedited stern action against traffic rules violators and took stern action in order to imple-

ment the traffic rules and maintain the smooth flow of traffic in the federal city.

Various police teams issued 2,330 fine tickets to road users over violation of traffic rules in which 371 challan were issued over lane violation, 38 for red signal violations, 53 for using mobile phone during driving, 32 for amateur driving, 01 over violation of one-way, 14 for violation of zebra crossing, 03 vehicles for having pressure horns, 44 for having tinted glasses, 51 for

having fancy number plates, 568 bikers for riding without helmets and 57 motorists for violations of different traffic rules. The Chief Traffic officer (CTO) Dr. Syed Mustafa Tanweer said that strict action would be taken against traffic rules violators. Islamabad capital police personnel have been directed to ensure implementation of traffic rules irrespective of status and rank and demonstrate patience while issuing traffic violation tickets to the road users.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani presiding over a Senate House business advisory committee meeting at Parliament House.

KABUL (Agencies): Acting Energy and Water Minister, Mullah Abdul Latif Mansoor met with Afghanistan's ambassador to China, Sayed Mohiuddin Sadat, in his office in Kabul. The two sides discussed the development of cooperation between the two countries and inspiring Chinese investors to invest in Afghanistan and implement water and energy projects in the country, according to a statement issued on Tuesday.

Muharram 06, 1445 — Tuesday, July 25, 2023

KABUL (Agencies): The Afghan Red Crescent Society (ARCS) distributed tents, blankets, tarpaulins, water barrels and 13 kitchen utensils to 53 flood-affected families in Paghman district of Kabul. According to a statement from ARCS, deputy head of the Society, Mullah Nuruddin Torabi visited Arghandi area of Paghman district, which have suffered financial and human losses as a result of the recent floods.

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

More than 900 houses were either partially or completely destroyed in the floods, said Shafiullah Rahimi, a spokesperson for

In the meantime, the Islamic Emirate has pointed out that they will use all

The weather service estimates as much as 40 mm of rain can be expected in some areas.

**2,000 people
work in**

Trade fair wraps up with 50m AFN in sales sealed

"About 50 million afghanis have been traded, and about 500 memorandums of understanding have been signed between Afghan and foreign businessmen, which are worth \$45 million," said Khairuddin Mayel, the Vice Chair of ACCI.

They said that the local officials have continually

Deputy Prime Minister Abdul Salam Hanafi praised the sacrifices of the Sar-e-Pul people in Jihad against foreign invaders which resulted in the freedom of Afghanistan, saying that the Islamic Emirate has many development plans that will be implemented in all parts of the country in a balanced manner.

The discovering of new mines, inspiring domestic and foreign investors, contracting new mines, reassembling the processing within the country, and making efforts related to major mining economic projects, are the important plans of the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum for this year, according to the officials of the Ministry.

Tayeb said that the mar-

At the same time, an increase in the price of domestic products was also

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Based on the findings of the study, the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation of Afghanistan should take the following steps to improve the honey market:

The project seeks to increase access to education for people by using Miraç TV programs,

in the country and said that TIKA's commitment to supporting distance education circumstances

Though the Taliban administration said it would be temporary, it has been almost two years since the girls were barred from their fundamental human rights amid a dire humanitarian crisis.

21 killed, many injured in KP, Quetta rain incidents

E.P. Report

PESHAWAR / QUETTA: At least nine people were dead and eight others were injured as heavy rains continued to lash Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, a report issued by Provincial Disaster Management said on Monday.

According to reports so far, 37 houses were partially damaged and 7 houses were completely damaged due to floods and rains across the province.

On the instructions of the Relief Department, District Administration, PDMA, Rescue 1122, Civil Defence, and related institutions are on alert, a spokesman of the Relief Department said here. Relief materials were provided to the affected families of Chitral Upper and a detailed assessment of the damage will be started as soon as the flood waters recede in Lower Chitral, spokesman of the Relief Department added.

Sensitive communities in Chitral Lower had already been shifted to safer places with food items (dry ration) being provided to the affected families and Dir Lower road has been cleared for traffic by the district administration. The district administration mobilized heavy machinery for the speedy restoration of the roads and the road has been cleared for traffic at Koghuzi, the spokesman said. A one-way road has been opened by the district administration of Dir Upper.

PDMA had issued a letter to all concerned institutions and district administration besides giving on-the-spot instructions to take precautionary measures regarding rains, flash floods, urban flooding, and flooding in rivers.

Meanwhile, monsoon rains lashed southern parts of the country during the past 24 hours, killing 12 people and injuring 15 others, as flash flooding disconnected many towns and settlements from the rest of the country. Rainwater and deluge in local streams and smaller rivers submerged a vast area, damaging houses, businesses and infrastructure amid heavy downpour in Sindh and Balochistan. The desert region of Cholistan and other parts of southern Punjab also received torrential rains.

According to the Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA), six deaths and injuries to 13 others have so far been reported in Balochistan. On the other hand, three family members – a mother and two of her children – were killed and two persons injured after a landslide hit a road in Gilgit-Baltistan.

The deluge entered Basima – a town in Washuk district of Balochistan which borders Iran – and the nearby area of Patak, washing away several houses, shops and restaurants while damaging standing crops. A similar situation was being witnessed in Awaran – a small city and district headquarter in southern Balochistan southeast of Washuk – where a dyke protecting the town from a local stream was in threat of being breached amid severe flooding.

On the other hand, the Kirthar Mountains in eastern Sindh – which runs in south-north direction along the Sindh-Balochistan border in Jamshoro and Dadu districts – too received downpour, triggering flash flood as rainwater threatened the villages in the low-lying areas east of the mountain range. In a tragic incident, three people were swept away after flash flood hit the Kachho area which is spread over two districts of Dadu and Qambar Shahdadkot. The locals managed to recover the bodies after hectic efforts.

Separately, two persons, including a woman, lost their lives in an incident of roof collapse during heavy downpour at Miandad Khoso – a village near Sukkur's SITE area. Mirpur Khas, Hyderabad, Badin, Thatta, Sujawal, Khairpur, Sukkur and other parts of Sindh too were hit by downpour where rainwater accumulated in many localities because of being a plain region.

Earlier, heavy rains caused flash flooding in several parts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Kashmir, forcing the administration to announce emergency in Lower Chitral and Upper Chitral – a region prone to flash flooding just like other parts of Malakand and Hazara divisions. Both Sindh and Balochistan had received record-breaking rains during the last

monsoon season and caused unprecedented floods. The most worrying factor was and still remains that the drainage system in Sindh failed to cope with the amount of water, again showing the poor planning and execution of the Left Bank Outfall Drain – a system built with the World Bank assistance.

However, even more alarming threat for Pakistan is any shift in rains pattern during the monsoon season due to climate change – more accurately described by the term global warming – as being witnessed during the recent years. So the upper parts of the country are receiving less monsoon rains while the amount and intensity are increasing sharply in the south where the topography, unlike in the north, can't sustain extreme weather phenomenon.

Moreover, the infrastructure – ranging from residential and commercial structures to roads, bridges and civic amenities – isn't designed to deal with the heavy and intensive rains. At the same time, the extreme weather events are becoming a routine – a huge amount of rain falling in a short span of time. It happened on a large scale in Sindh and Balochistan last year. And this year, Lahore has so far witnessed three such days where more than 200mm of rain was recorded in less in six hours.

The official data shows that the heaviest rain during the last 24 hours [till 8am] in Sindh was recorded at Padidan 120, Dadu 75, Mirpur Khas 72 and Sakrand 53. Figures for some other cities are given as: Punjab – Murree 45 and Khanpur 42; Kashmir – Muzaffarabad (Airport 31, City 18); Khyber Pakhtunkhwa – Balakot 16 and Kakul 14; Balochistan – Sibbi 15 and Lasbela 13.

According to the Met Office, heavy rains may cause flooding in local streams of DG Khan in Punjab and northeast south Balochistan from July 24 to 26. There is also a threat of landslides in the vulnerable areas of Kashmir and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the same period. Meanwhile, the low-lying areas in the plains of Sindh will witness waterlogging today (July 24).



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Ambassador-designate to Ethiopia Mian Atif Sharif exchanging views with President Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

PPP says no decision yet regarding Caretaker PM

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Federal Ministers Sherry Rehman and Faisal Karim Kundi on Monday rejected rumours of finalizing the name of Ishaq Dar as Caretaker Prime Minister and confirmed that no decision has been taken in this regard.

They made rejection while addressing a press conference in Islamabad. Both the ministers categorically stated that Pakistan People's Party (PPP) did not receive Ishaq Dar's name as Caretaker Prime Minister from Nawaz League. Sherry Rehman said yesterday someone was crowned caretaker prime minister by fake news but the reality is that no name was presented to PPP nor her party agreed on any name. She said neutrality is a basic thing for a caretaker government and there will be agreement on some name or the other as the consultation takes time.

She added that a three members committee has been formed for consulting the name of the caretaker prime minister. The minister further said PPP wants a level playing field in the election and the national stability is possible only with timely elections.

ECP issues warrants for PTI chief

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) on Monday issued non-bailable arrest warrants for PTI chief. The capital police was ordered to arrest him and present at 10am before the electoral watchdog. The ECP will hear the plea tomorrow. The commission issued warrants over his non-appearance.

Earlier, a three-member bench of the Supreme Court on Monday barred the law-enforcement agencies from arresting the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chief till next date of hearing on Aug 9 in lawyer Abdul Razzaq Shar murder case. The three-member bench, headed by Justice Yahya Afridi, also comprises Justice Musarrat Hilali and Justice Mazhar Ali Naqvi.

The PTI chairman was also present in court at the time of hearing. Lawyer of the petitioner did not attend court. The Advocate General Balochistan sought court order for the PTI chairman to join the investigation process and report to the investigation officer. The Supreme Court adjourned hearing of the case till Aug 9 asking the PTI chief to attend the court on next hearing date.

The IGP Balochistan submitted the investigation report to the Supreme Court in lawyer Abdul Razzaq Shar murder case. The report said the victim was being threatened over a petition filed in the apex court on Article 6. In the report submitted by the IGP, the apex court was told that during the investigation, a seven-member JIT was formed by the Ministry of Interior under the chairmanship of CTD DIG on June 8, which has held eight meetings.

The report stated that it was decided to call the suspects in the first meeting of the JIT. Summons were sent to the PTI chairman on June 19. Despite several notices, the PTI chairman did not join the investigation. It was decided to include four suspects including the PTI chairman in the investigation. According to the report, statements of the deceased's wife and two brothers had also been recorded.

Missing person cases PHC grants last chance for submission of report

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) has granted last chance for submission reply in missing person's cases otherwise Secretary Defense should appear before court on next hearing, on Monday.

PHC's Justice Ijaz Anwar ordered during hearing of cases regarding 25 missing persons from different areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa while Shabbir Hussain Gigayani along with other advocates appeared before court on behalf of applicants.

The counsel argued that two year ago Nasir Shah was picked-off from his home while Abdul Qadeer also picked from residence's gate while no one know about their whereabouts. Muhammad Amir was picked-off from Airport while one Muhammad Ali is acquitted by Anti-terrorism court (ATC) but pick-offed from gate jail.

However, an accused in murderer case named

Muhammad Rafiq was enforce disappeared following his bail from honorable court in Section 302 of Criminal Procedure Code, the counsel argued. The counsel argued that all applicants still missing while families didn't aware about their whereabouts as well as their health and living conditions. The family can't able to contact or visit the beloved enforced disappeared.

In the meantime, Justice Ijaz Anwar observed that Legal Officer consecutively demanding for provision of time for submission of report but didn't submit the reply. Justice Ijaz Anwar observed that it is last chance for submission of report otherwise Secretary's defense should appear before court on next hearing. Legal Officer assured submission of report before next hearing while PHC has adjourned further hearing with orders for submission of comments in missing person's cases.

Meanwhile, PHC's divisional bench comprised of Justice Sahibzada Asadullah and Justice Kamran Hayat has ordered to submit record of cases and inquiries against former Advisor Chief Minister Shakeel Ahmad till today (on Tuesday).

The counsel Malak Muhammad Ajmal Khan advocate requested for provision of record of cases and inquiries initiated against Shakeel Ahmad because applicant arrested seven times after obtaining bails from courts. The counsel argued that the applicant case is identical with former Federal Minister Ali Muhammad Khan and added that both belonging to same party while stated that both are victimizing on political affiliations. PHC's divisional bench comprising of Justice Sahibzada Asadullah and Justice Kamran Hayat has ordered provincial government to submit record till today (Tuesday) before court.

Ties with Ethiopia needed to be strengthened: Alvi

E.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr. Arif Alvi has said that bilateral trade and economic relations between Pakistan and Ethiopia needed to be strengthened through facilitating and enhancing interactions between business communities of the two countries.

Speaking during a meeting with Pakistan's Ambassador designate to Ethiopia Mian Atif Sharif who called on him in Islamabad on Monday, he called for increasing trade volume with Ethiopia by reaching out to Ethiopian businesspersons for the import of Pakistani products. The President said

Pakistan-Ethiopia bilateral ties are marked by common history, interests, and support for each other on various international fora. He said that the bilateral relations between the two countries needed to be further cemented by taking the mutual trade volume to its fullest potential.

President Alvi also called for enhancing cooperation in the field of education and people-to-people contacts, adding that students in Ethiopia could benefit from online/video educational materials/courses of the Virtual University of Pakistan and Allama Iqbal Open University to enhance their skill sets.

He stated that Pakistan's

offer of training young Ethiopian Diplomats at the Foreign Service Academy and scholarships for banking courses would further help improve bilateral ties with Ethiopia. Dr Arif Alvi asked the Ambassador to create awareness in Ethiopia about the rising tide of Islamophobia in the world and the need for collective efforts to promote inter-faith harmony and mutual respect.

He also urged the newly-appointed envoy to highlight the human rights violations and atrocities being committed by India in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK) as well as the maltreatment of minorities in India.

Plot certificates distributed among flood victims

E.P. Report

LARKANA / JOCABABAD: In order to make the families affected by flood in the rains of 2022 prosperous in Jacobabad district and in recognition of love for Sindh, the ceremony of housing plot certificates and funds for construction of houses under the Sindh Walijabad (Housing Scheme) Act 1987 Commissioner Larkana Gehanur Laghari Sahib, Deputy Commissioner Jacobabad Muhammad Yusuf Sheikh and Mir Liaquat Ali Khan Lashari, President Pakistan Peoples Party Jacobabad, President Ladies Wing Dr. Farkhanda, General Secretary PPP Jacobabad A.S. Arbo Day and others distributed certificates for the construction of funds for the rights of 500 affected men and women in the first phase in Gaon Abad



as per the instructions of the Sindh government.

Expressing their views, the affected women in the affected area expressed their gratitude to the Sindh government, district administration and political leadership. Masmat Rukhsana said that Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah came to her relief camp in October and promised to build houses

es and give us the right to own houses.

He further said that in the first phase more than 500 families of Jacobabad district have been given ownership rights and the construction of new houses has been started. On this occasion, the flood victims also praised the wonderful works of the Sindh government.

Fazl likely to visit to Dubai

ISLAMABAD (INP): Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F) and Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman is likely to visit Dubai to hold meeting with Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) Nawaz Sharif and former president Asif Ali Zardari for discussing the caretaker setup in the country.

As the date of end of sitting assembly draws nearer, the contacts between Pakistan People's Party, Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam are gearing up. Sources said that Nawaz Sharif and Asif Ali Zardari have contacted Fazlur Rehman after which he is likely to visit Dubai to meet both the

leaders. The three bigwigs will 'finalise' the names for the caretaker governments. Earlier, the ruling coalition parties, Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam Fazl (JUI-F) rejected receiving any suggestions from PML-N regarding Ishaq Dar for caretaker prime minister's (PM) slot.

Judicial remand of 3 PTI leaders extended

LAHORE (PPI): The judicial remand of three leaders of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI), including former Punjab governor Omer Sarfaraz Cheema, Mehmoodur Rasheed and Ejaz Chaudhry, was extended for 14 days in different cases of arson and vandalism, on Monday.

The judicial remand of Omer Sarfaraz Cheema was extended for 14 days in the Jinnah House attack and vandalism case. The Punjab ex-governor had been brought to an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Lahore in a wheelchair due to illness.

Jinnah Hospital Medical Superintendent (MS) Dr Yahya Salman presented the medical report of Omer Sarfaraz Cheema in the court which ordered the provision of good treatment facilities to the Punjab ex-governor. Police requested the court to extend the judicial remand of Omer Sarfaraz Cheema. "The challan of the Jinnah House attack case is in the process of preparation. The judicial remand of the accused should be extended," the investigation officer pleaded with the court.

ATC Administrator Judge Abhar Gul Khan conducted the hearing. Case No. 96/23 was registered against Omer Sarfaraz Cheema and others at Sarwar Road police station. Similarly, the judicial remand of Mehmoodur Rasheed was extended for 14 days in the case of setting fire to Shadman police station and police vehicles in Gulberg. The court ordered the PTI leader to reappear on August 7 next.

Mehmoodur Rasheed walked himself to the courtroom. He had suffered a heart attack in jail and was admitted to the Punjab Institute of Cardiology (PIC). "Rumours of his death were also spread. A report about his illness should be sought from the hospital," Mehmoodur Rasheed's lawyer pleaded with the court. "The court has already issued orders for the treatment. The jail authorities are providing the treatment. You can go yourself and get a fresh report from the PIC about the treatment. Don't get the court involved in these matters," the court advised the lawyer.

Similarly, the judicial remand of Ejaz Chaudhry was extended for 14 days in the Jinnah House attack and vandalism case. The court ordered him to reappear on August 7 next.

Ogra approves increase in tariff of gas

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority (Ogra) hiked the tariff for the Sui Northern Gas by 50 per cent and the Sui Southern Gas by 42pc on average, according to a report on Monday.

It means a Sui Northern gas consumer is going to pay an additional amount of Rs415.55 per MMBtu (Metric Million British Thermal Unit) while the increase in the case of Sui Southern stands at Rs417 MMBtu.

The move follows the federal cabinet last week approved a massive hike in electricity base tariff – Rs3.50 to Rs7.96 per unit – through circulation as Pakistan is moving ahead to meet the harsh IMF conditions under the \$3 billion deal reached a stand-by arrangement.

Earlier, the National

Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) had recommended at Rs4.96 increase in power base price and sent the summary to the Ministry of Energy for necessary action – a move that will place an additional burden of Rs3,495 on consumers.

On Monday, the regulatory authority approved the gas price hike and sent the matter to the government for issuing a notification as the IMF has made it clear that Pakistan would have to bridge the gap between the cost and revenue while stopping the practice of subsidizing the consumers.

The approval means the per MMBtu price for the Sui Northern consumers would reach Rs1,238.68 with the corresponding rate for Sui Southern standing at Rs1,350.68.

After the government

notification, the tariff hike would come into effect from July 1, affecting all consumers – from domestic to commercial and industrial. The regulator determines the oil and gas prices on the basis of recommendations of distribution companies under sections 3 and 8 of the Ogra Ordinance and forwards the matter to the government for final approval.

It was in June that the proposal about the increase in the prices after determining the revenue needs for the year 2023-24 was originally sent to the government which had approved the hike and sent the matter to the Ogra for formally incorporate the new tariff. Now the government will notify the latest increase in the gas tariffs after the regulator acted accordingly.

Modern farms to benefit small farmers: COAS

E.P. Report

RAWALPINDI: Chief of Army Staff (COAS) General Syed Asim Munir on Monday said the government of Pakistan in collaboration with the Army would create modern farms like Khanewal model farm that would benefit the small farmers and spread the scope of Green Pakistan Initiative (GPI) across the country.

On the occasion of the opening ceremony of the Khanewal Model Agriculture Farm, the Chief of Army Staff gave an important speech to the participants. The inauguration ceremony of Khanewal Model Agriculture Farm, a flagship project of Green Pakistan Initiative was attended by the Federal Minister for National Food Security and Research as the Chief Guest whereas the COAS attended the event as Guest of Honour.

The Ceremony was also attended by Chief Minister Punjab, Government officials, agricultural experts, notable farmers and Senior Army Officials. The Army Chief vowed to pull out Pakistan of the current crisis. "Pakistanis are a proud, zealous and talented nation. All Pakistanis have rejected the beggar's bowl. Allah Almighty has bestowed Pakistan with all blessings. No power in the world can stop us from progressing. Agricultural revolution shall come in Pakistan, Inshallah," the Army Chief said.

He said a state was like a mother, and the relationship between the people and the state was that of love and respect. The COAS underscored that security and economy go hand in hand, whereas there was no concept of economy without security and vice versa. Addressing the participants of the ceremony, the Army Chief read Allama Iqbal's poetic verses and emphasized on the importance of every member of the society in the development of nation.

"The destiny of nations is in the hands of individuals. Every individual is the star of nation's destiny," he remarked. According to details, subsequent to the establishment of 'Land Information Management System - Centre of Excellence', Launching of 'Green Pakistan

Initiative at National Seminar on Food Security, today's inauguration of flagship farm was undertaken to ensure that Pakistan not only becomes food secure, it also produces enough surplus for exports, thereby contributing towards the national economy.

Agriculture experts including those from field crops, orchard, speciality corps, textile and livestock sectors appreciated the Government's wholeheartedness and Pak Army's assistance towards revolutionizing the agriculture sector. This is being done by promoting contemporary technology, collaboration of public and private sectors and trickling down dividends to the local farmers. The participants hailed the event and the presence of experts, government representatives, academia, industry and potential investors at the event.

Senate Body asks to refer recovery of \$32m to FIA

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Senate Power Committee meeting held under the chair of Senator Saifullah Abro at Parliament House on Monday discussed at length the matter of the recovery of amount of damaged GT-14 (747 MW) from GE and after being dissatisfied on the briefing by the acting CEO GHCL directed the Power Division to refer the matter to the FIA as amount of US \$32 million is in question.

The Senate Body Committee also directed the Power Division to refer the matter of the constitution of the new Members of BoDs and also recommended to appoint fresh Members of BoDs as per qualification and merit. The Committee while discussing the matter inquired on the action taken regarding the three letters issued by Power Division on 31-3-2022 on the recovery amount to which the acting CEO, GHCL apprised the Committee that the letter issued by the Power Division and the actions to be taken therein were rejected by the BoD, GHCL as the BoD did not approve of the allegations therein.