

ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sanaullah has said that police serves as a frontline force for maintenance of law and order and protection of lives and properties of the people. Addressing the passing out parade of constables in Islamabad, he said policing is a sacred duty, expressing the confidence that the police personnel will dispense their duties with the spirit of serving the masses.



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# Shehbaz calls for extensive export policy

— assures all out support of Federal Govt

F.P. Report

KARACHI: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif on Wednesday stressed upon the formulation of a comprehensive export policy and assured that the federal government would make every effort to facilitate the exporters, traders, industrialists and businessmen.

He said that the port city of Karachi had always been a gateway and home to exporters, traders and entrepreneurs that served as the backbone for national economy. He was addressing at Karachi Chamber of Commerce (KCCI) Export Trophy Awards ceremony. The prime minister said that Karachi always been the place of main hub for revenues generation for the country and underlined that Pakistan required extensive efforts for boosting its exports by setting up industries and utilization of modern techniques to compete in the global market. The export quality must be competitive in global market, he added.

He also appreciated the contribution of exporters and industrialists for country's economy and said that despite difficulties, they made relentless efforts to increase exports. Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori, Chief Minister Syed Murad Ali Shah, federal ministers, provincial ministers, parliamentarians, office bearers of Karachi Chamber of Commerce and relevant authorities were present during the ceremony.

The prime minister also observed that when compared with the neighbouring countries with regard to booming industries and exports, they still lagged behind in this race. Enumerating various factors of the past, he said they required very serious deliberations to evaluate the factors including the successes, failures of the past government techniques and lack of modern techniques, and issues faced by the industrial sector etc.

"With mere blame-game, they will not get anything concrete as it would only cause damage and result in wastage of time.

## Shehbaz reviews ongoing rehabilitation, reconstruction of flood affected areas

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has chaired the third meeting of the International Partners Support Group to review the ongoing rehabilitation and reconstruction of the flood-affected areas in the country. The meeting of the Group, which was formed after the Resilient Pakistan Conference in Geneva, was held here on Tuesday to mark one year of the devastating floods that exacted a heavy toll on Pakistan. In a tweet on Wednesday, the prime minister said that in his speech during the meeting, he reiterated the coalition government's unwavering commitment to build back better under the Resilient recovery, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction (4RF) Framework.

"I appreciated all the international development donors, partners and friendly countries for their timely and generous assistance and assured them of transparent, effective and efficient utilization of foreign assistance duly audited by a third party of global repute," he added. He also thanked the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) that had carried out excellent coordination and collaboration between the government of Pakistan and the international community.

There should be a frank discussion as to how the challenges faced by the industry can be mitigated by the government by facilitating them," he added. The prime minister viewed the price of power and gas as vital factors behind industrial development. He said the country was blessed with natural resources and said this year, the country would produce a bumper crop as according to estimates, the cotton production could reach up to 10 million bales.

"Pakistan is blessed with natural resources and brilliant minds, but it cannot get place among the comity of nations if they keep on promoting rental businesses," he said and stressed for increase in production and setting up industries, that would take the country on path of rapid progress. The prime minister expressed the optimism that with restructuring, collective hard work and the government's sincere efforts, they would be able to put the country on track of progress and prosperity.

He also hoped that the Interim government and the upcoming government would take these initiatives forward. The prime minister also emphasised upon resolution of supply of

water for Karachi and said that the federal and provincial governments were making efforts in this regard. He felicitated the trade community and exporters for showing success in the export sector.

Speaking on the occasion, Sindh Governor Kamran Tessori said the government-business community strain should come to an end by joining hands to address the issues. He said the concerted efforts were a must to resolve the economic woes of the country. He lauded the prime minister's efforts for the economic revival and called for addressing the problems faced by the business community.

Chief Executive of TDAP Zubair Motiwala, in his presentation, appreciated the government's endeavors for economic reforms and devising long-term plans for agriculture, IT and mining. Highlighting the energy issues, he said owing to gas supply suspension, Karachi's industry remained closed every Saturday and Sunday. He said Karachi contributed 52% of country's exports but the power tariff was hurting the industry and could cause closures and unemployment.

## Electricity rate again rises by Rs1.81 per unit

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The National Electric Power Regulatory Authority (Nepra) has increased the cost of electricity by Rs1.81 per unit on account of the monthly fuel cost adjustment, according to a statement on Wednesday.

The Nepra will later issue a detailed decision and also a notification in this regard. The increase in the power price was approved on account of the fuel cost adjustment for the month of June. The latest hike in the electricity rate will help Nepra raise Rs24 billion from consumers. However, the increase in the electricity price will not be applicable to the K-Electric consumers.

The Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) had requested to increase the electricity price by Rs1.88 per unit. Nepra's latest decision came on the heels of its green signal to government's request to increase the electricity tariff by massive over seven rupees. The authority gave the go-ahead to the government on Tuesday to hike the electricity tariff by Rs7.50 per unit.

It sent the decision to the federal government for notification. However, the lifeline consumers will be exempted from the increase. The federal government made a request to Nepra for an increase in the basic electricity price. The price hike has been proposed to be implemented from July 1.

## Heavy rains claimed 150 lives

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Wednesday released a detailed report on the devastating loss of life and property caused by the recent monsoon rains across Pakistan.

According to the report, since June 25, a staggering 150 people have tragically lost their lives in various accidents directly related to the heavy rains, while 233 individuals have been injured across the country. Among the deceased, there were 62 men, 25 women, and at least 63 children. As for the injured, 99 were men, 62 were women, and 72 were children.

The provinces of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa have borne the brunt of the fatalities, with 66 and 41 lives lost, respectively. Additionally, Balochistan reported six fatalities due to the relentless downpours.

As the rains continued to wreak havoc, Sindh and Azad Kashmir also witnessed the loss of life – with 15 killed in Sindh and 6 in Azad Kashmir. Moreover, 11 people have been reported killed in the federal capital, Islamabad. The impact of the rains extended beyond the loss of lives, with hundreds of families suffering property damage.

According to the NDMA report, a total of 468 houses across the country were damaged by the heavy rains during this period. The monsoon season in Pakistan has always posed challenges in terms of flooding, landslides, and other natural calamities.

Minister reiterated Pakistan's support for international efforts for restoring the deal by addressing the concerns of all sides. The Foreign Minister informed his Russian counterpart on his discussions on BSGI with the Foreign Ministers of Ukraine and Turkiye, the US Secretary of State and the EU High Representative. Foreign Minister Lavrov shared Russia's perspective on the issue. The two Foreign Ministers agreed to remain in close contact on the matter.

importance of this initiative and its potential impact on disruption of global food supply chains causing food inflation and food-security-related challenges. Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari underscored the need for concerted efforts to find viable solutions that would in particular benefit developing countries already under economic strain.

He expressed the hope that all parties involved in the BSGI would engage in constructive dialogue to revive the Initiative. In this regard, the Foreign

## Bilawal, Lavrov discuss bilateral cooperation

MOSCOW (APP): Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari held a telephone conversation with Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov of the Russian Federation on Wednesday and exchanged views on bilateral matters and growing cooperation in diverse areas.

The Foreign Minister also renewed the invitation to Foreign Minister Lavrov to visit Pakistan, a press release issued by the foreign office spokesperson said. The two Foreign Ministers also discussed the Black Sea Grain Initiative (BSGI). Recognizing the



KARACHI: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif distributing cheques among successful candidates under PM Youth Business Loan Scheme.

## Election Act amended Caretaker govt gets more powers

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): A joint session of parliament on Wednesday approved amendments to Election Act 2017, granting additional powers to the caretaker government to take important decisions on the economy and engage with international institutions.

The bill titled "Elections (Amendment) Bill, 2023" was tabled in the joint session by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Murtaza Javed Abbasi which was approved with a majority vote. The sub clauses 1 and 2 of Section 230 of the election act related to the functioning of caretaker government have been amended.

Under the amendments, the interim setup will not have the authority to sign any new agreement and

make decisions on bilateral and multilateral agreements. The caretaker government will be able to exercise powers on matters related to the ongoing projects, according to the amendments.

Law Minister Azam Nazir Tarar told the joint session that the parliamentary committee on electoral reforms again held a meeting today and examined, specifically, Section 230 of the Election Act vis-à-vis the caretaker government. He said the objective of empowering caretaker setup is to ensure that the ongoing commitments with multilateral and bilateral do not face hiatus as it negatively affects the economy.

The bill empowers the caretaker government to take actions or decisions regarding existing bilateral

or multilateral agreements or the projects already initiated under the Public Private Partnership Authority Act, 2017, the inter-governmental commercial transactions Act 2022 and the Privatisation Commission Ordinance 2000.

The maw minister said that no new powers are being given to the caretaker government saying amendments in section 230 are aimed to ensure that the decisions already taken by the federal cabinet do not face any hurdles. The bill also envisages measures aimed at ensuring the timely compilation and announcement of election results. The joint session of parliament has been adjourned to meet again on the 7th of the next month at 11:30am.

## SC rejects Imran's plea to stop trial in Toshakhana case

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The Supreme Court of Pakistan on Wednesday turned down a petition filed by the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman, seeking an order to restrain trial in the Toshakhana case.

A two-member bench headed by Justice Yahya Afridi also sent the case back to the Islamabad High Court (IHC) to re-examine the case. The PTI chief and his legal counsel were also appeared before the bench. During the hearing, the court issued a notice to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), ordering it to submit its response today. Later, Amjad Parvez, the ECP lawyer, attended the hearing to submit the response.

After hearing arguments, the bench rejected the petition of the former prime minister. The former prime minister had petitioned in the apex court against the IHC's

directive to the trial court that had asked for a re-examination of the maintainability of the Toshakhana case within a week.

On May 10, the PTI chief was indicted in the case by Additional District and Sessions Judge Humayun Dilawar, who dismissed objections about the admissibility of the case. On July 4, the IHC nullified the decision of the trial court that had turned down the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman's plea challenging the admissibility of the Toshakhana case.

IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq announced the verdict reserved on June 23 after hearing arguments on the petition of the former prime minister against the trial court's ruling. The chief justice sent the matter back to the trial court, ordering it to again hear the arguments of the PTI. He gave the trial court seven days to

decide the PTI chairman's plea in the Toshakhana case. The petition had been filed after the PTI chief was indicted in the case on May 10 - two days after the high court had stopped criminal proceedings in the Toshakhana case.

Last year, a reference was filed against him by lawmakers from the ruling coalition accusing him of not sharing the details of gifts he retained from Toshakhana in his assets declarations and the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) had concluded in October last year that the PTI chief filed false statements regarding the gifts.

The electoral watchdog subsequently disqualified him for being dishonest and corrupt and approached the district and sessions court seeking criminal proceedings against the PTI chief for allegedly misleading officials about the gifts.

## Ex-PTI MPA's brother, nephew shot dead in Karachi

KARACHI (PPI): Ex-PTI MPA's brother and nephew were shot dead while several others injured after unidentified gunmen opened fire on the vehicle of an MPA's brother in Phase 7 of the Defence Housing Authority (DHA) on Wednesday.

Police said 67-year-old Akram Abro, a member of the Sindh Bar Council, and his son Shaharyar Abro, lost their lives. The suspects targeted the vehicle of ex-MPA Aslam Abro's brother. Aslam Abro had recently defected from the PTI. The suspects opened indiscriminate fire and fled the scene. The victims were heading to Jacobabad at the time of the incident.

The dead and the injured were shifted to a nearby hospital. Police and forensic teams arrived at the crime scene and lifted necessary evidence. Preliminary police investigations showed that the suspects sprayed the vehicle from three sides as at least 30 empty shells were found at the crime scene. Police said the motive behind the shooting is not yet known.

## Iranian FM arrives next week

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Iranian Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian will come to an official visit of Pakistan next week, sources said on Wednesday.

Iran's foreign minister is expected to arrive in Pakistan for a two-day visit on August 03, diplomatic sources said. Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian will hold meetings with Pakistani officials on August 03 and 04.

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto and Dr Amir-Abdollahian will hold formal talks during the Iranian foreign minister's visit, sources said. Both will address a joint press conference at the Foreign Office after negotiations.

## Cabinet approves E-Safety, Personal Data Protection Bills 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): The federal cabinet on Wednesday approved the E-Safety Bill 2023 (E-Safety Bill 2023) on the recommendation of the Ministry of Information Technology (IT) to protect user data and prevent illegal and illegal use of information systems.

Under this law, a comprehensive framework will be established to ensure the protection and unauthorized use of user data on all types of online services, online shopping, data provided to various companies, and social networking websites in Pakistan. After the approval of the bill, heinous crimes like online harassment, cyberbullying, and blackmail will be effectively prevented. The meeting of the cabinet was held here with Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif in chair.

The federal cabinet also approved in principle the Personal Data

Protection Bill 2023 on the recommendation of the Ministry of Information Technology and Telecommunication. Under this bill, the government will ensure the security of the user's personal information/data of various organizations and companies and prohibit sharing of the user's information/data with any company, individual, or government organization without their permission. Under the law, the National Commission for Personal Data Protection (NCPDP) will be established which will act as a civil court to protect the private documents/data of the users and redress the grievances of the complainants. The federal cabinet also gave assent to the draft amendment bill of the Investment Board Ordinance 2001 for the promotion of foreign investment in Pakistan.

The amendment will empower the

Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) as well as lay down its basic structure, working procedures, and cooperation mechanisms with various ministries and provincial governments. After the law is passed, the SIFC will ensure the speedy implementation of foreign investment projects in the country. PM Shehbaz said the government was implementing the Whole of the Government Policy to promote Foreign Direct Investment in the country.

The policy would help expedite the implementation process of the projects under foreign investment. The prime minister appreciated Minister of State for Petroleum Dr Musadik Malik for his successful efforts in finalizing the Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) agreement with Azerbaijan. "This agreement is not only an important step forward to promote bilateral trade ties with Azerbaijan but it will

also prove to be a milestone for the energy security of Pakistan," he added.

The federal cabinet, on the recommendation of the Ministry of Anti-Narcotics, established a ministerial committee under the chairmanship of Federal Minister for Defense Khawaja Muhammad Asif to finalize the contents of the National Cannabis Policy. In this regard, the committee will present its recommendation to the federal committee in the next meeting. The federal cabinet approved the reorganization of accountability courts on the recommendation of the Ministry of Law and Justice, under which 11 accountability courts will be changed into seven banking courts, two intellectual tribunals, a special court central, and a special court in Balochistan. This restructuring will not incur any additional costs. The federal cabinet also

approved the reorganization of the Board of Directors of Sui Northern Gas Pipeline (SNGPL) besides approving the appointment of members of the Selection Committee of Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority. The federal cabinet approved the National Adaptation Plan 2023 on the recommendation of the Ministry of Climate Change. Under the plan, the government, along with other partners, will take measures to protect climate-prone communities from the adverse effects of climate change.

On the recommendation of the Ministry of Climate Change, the Federal Cabinet approved to refer the Islamabad Nature Conservation and Wild Life Management Act, 2023 to the Cabinet Committee on Legislative Cases (CCLC) for the protection of wildlife and natural assets in Islamabad. The federal cabi-

net approved the inclusion and removal of names in the Exit Control List (ECL) on the recommendation of the Ministry of Interior.

Furthermore, the cabinet also approved the order that if the reason for the inclusion of the names in the passport control list and the exit control list is the same, then the name will be removed from the exit control list along with the name from the passport control list. The cabinet also gave assent to the decisions taken in the meeting of the Economic Coordination Committee held on July 24. The meeting approved the decisions taken in the meetings of the cabinet committee on Legislative Cases held on July 6, 7, 21, and July 25. The federal cabinet approved the decisions made by the cabinet committees on Privatization, and Inter-Governmental Transactions separately held on July 10.



### Three arrested, narcotics recovered

LAHORE (APP): Iqbal Town police arrested three drug peddlers and recovered 141-Kg narcotics worth Rs 2.5 million from their possession According to DSP CIA Muhammad Ali Butt, police arrested three drug peddlers, including a woman, and recovered 141-Kg narcotics.

On the directions of DIG Investigation, a special police team was constituted which conducted a raid and arrested the accused besides recovering 72-Kg hashish and 69-Kg opium. The accused have been identified as Saim, Muhammad Javed and Asia, wife of Mumtaz.

The accused are history sheeters from the ANF while police registered a case against the accused and started investigation.

### Railways reservation offices to remain closed on Saturday

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Railways reservation offices will remain closed on Saturday, Muharram 10, (July 29) on Ashura. According to the PR spokesperson on Wednesday, the offices will work as per schedule from Muharram 11.

### Seven killed, 1,000 injured in 953 accidents

LAHORE (APP): At least seven people were killed and 1,000 injured in 953 accidents in Punjab during the last 24 hours.

According to Rescue 1122, 516 drivers, 33 under-age drivers, 112 pedestrians, and 379 passengers were among the victims of road traffic crashes. The statistics showed that 219 accidents were reported in Lahore which affected 244 people placing the provincial capital at top of the list followed by 64 in Faisalabad with 60 victims and at third Multan with 63 accidents and 58 victims. According to data, 822 motorcycles, 64 rickshaws, 88 cars, 26 vans, 12 passenger buses, 26 trucks and 85 other vehicles besides slow-moving carts were among the accidents.

### Secretary ESD reviews emergency cover during Ashura

LAHORE (APP): Emergency Services Department (ESD) Secretary Dr. Rizwan Naseer reviewed arrangements of Rescue 1122 to provide emergency cover to mourning processions of Ashura in all districts of Punjab. He was chairing a video link meeting of all Districts Emergency Officers (DEOs) and senior rescue officers at Emergency Services Headquarters here on Wednesday. He reviewed monitoring and quick response mechanism of all districts control rooms and Provincial Monitoring Cell.

He directed all DEOs to restrict the leaves of the rescuers, implement Code Red on 9th & 10th of the Muharram to provide emergency cover. He asserted that the Disaster Response Force (DRF) stationed at Emergency Services Academy will be dispatched in case of any major emergency for backup support.

## CM chairs meeting regarding development projects in Lahore

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday chaired a meeting at his office in which he was briefed about ongoing development projects in Lahore.

The CM directed to accelerate the pace of work on public welfare projects and sought a plan for a sustainable solution to the water drainage issue in Lahore.

He emphasised the need for effective drainage systems on major roadways, such as Mall Road, Multan Road, Main Boulevard Gulberg, and others to ensure the timely draining of rainwater. The prompt completion of development projects in major cities was deemed indispensable, he added. Provincial Minister for Housing Azfar Ali Nasir, Chief Secretary, Chairman Planning & Development, secretaries of finance, housing departments, Commissioner Lahore and representatives of Lahore Development Authority attended the meeting.

**CM inspects post-rain situation in Bhawana tehsil:** Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi on Wednesday visited Bhawana tehsil of Chiniot district to assess the situation caused by rain.

He promptly instructed the administration to take immediate measures and use the necessary resources and machinery to drain out the accumulated water, said a handout issued here.

During his visit, he went to the emergency and other sections of Tehsil Headquarters (THQ) hospital, where he

inquired about the well-being of the patients and the availability of medicines. The patients and their attendants expressed their satisfaction with the provision of free medicines. The CM also inspected the cleanliness arrangements in the hospital.

Furthermore, the CM inspected the hospital's medicine store to ensure an adequate supply of medicines. He also assessed the THQ hospital's new building and urged the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) Health to expedite its completion. He assured that the number of doctors would be increased according to the patient load.

**CM visits affected village of Chiniot:** Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi reached Sambal affected Mouza of Chiniot in view of increase in the water level of River Chenab.

He made a detailed visit of Mouza Sambal being affected by the erosion of river and reviewed damages, said a handout issued here on Wednesday.

Mohsin Naqvi met with the affected people, listened to their problems and reviewed relief activities. He inspected the affected village due to river erosion and collapsed houses. Around 50 villages of Mouza Sambal were inundated permanently while all houses of a village were collapsed. The CM announced to build a protective embankment to save Mouza Sambal from river erosion and stated that funds were being released today for building the protective embankment. Mohsin

## Citizens to get municipal services through single click: Amir Mir

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Information and Local Government Amir Mir on Wednesday said that the Punjab government decided to decentralize all municipal services for the convenience of citizens.

To achieve the goal, the local government department established a complaints management and information system where citizens could access services with just one click.

In a statement, the minister said that as part of this system, preparations have been completed to launch a helpline number 1198 through which citizens could register complaints and obtain information related to municipal services. Caretaker Chief Minister Mohsin Naqvi would soon inaugurate this system for awareness and han-

dling of complaints about municipal services, he added.

With the complaints management and information system, complaints about municipal services could be lodged from the comfort of citizens' homes, he said and added that in addition to the helpline, citizens would also have an option to use a mobile app, online web portal and WhatsApp service for the purpose. Complaints received on the helpline number 1198 would be promptly addressed, he informed. The minister said the helpline of the complaints management and information system would be available 24/7. Citizens were encouraged to report municipal issues in their areas and fulfill their responsibilities, he added.

## Provide houses to the flood victims ceremony held

F.P Report

DADU: A ceremony was held in Khairpur Nathan Shah Tehsil of the flood-affected Dadu district on behalf of the Sindh government. The purpose of the ceremony was to provide houses to the flood victims and grant them ownership rights. Various dignitaries attended the event, including MNA and District President of the People's Party, Rafiq Jamali; MNA Irfan Zafar Leghari; MPA Abdul Aziz Junejo, and MPA Fayaz Butt. During the ceremony, 500 flood victims received house ownership rights certificates.

Speaking at the event, PPP MNA Rafiq Jamali emphasized the party's commitment to providing roofs to flood victims. He recalled the promise made by PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, who assured the people that houses would be built for them. Rafiq Jamali proudly stated that Bilawal Bhutto Zardari fulfilled his prom-



ise to the people of Sindh.

As part of the program, the Sindh government aims to build a substantial number of houses in various locations. Specifically, 50,000 houses are planned for Mehlar, another 50,000 in Khairpur Nathan Shah, 38,000 in Johi, and 18,000 in Dadu. This ambitious project aims to provide much-needed shelter and support to those affected by the floods in these regions.

Certificates were presented to the flood victims from all the tehsils

across the district during the ceremony.

During the ceremony, DC Dadu, Syed Murtaza Ali Shah, expressed that the Sindh government is dedicated to providing house construction and ownership rights to the flood victims. He highlighted that on this particular occasion, over five hundred flood victims in Dadu district were granted ownership rights for their houses. It was mentioned that a significant number of houses, precisely one lakh and sixty-four thousand, were impacted by the floods in the area.



PESHAWAR: DG NAB KP Waqar Ahmad Chohan hearing complaints at open hearing at NAB KP.

## Water accumulated during rains in sloping areas cleared: Wahab

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Wednesday said that we are aware of the problems of the people and making sure rainwater does not stay anywhere during the rains.

Visiting different areas of district central here, Mayor Karachi said that water accumulates during the rains in the sloping areas was cleared and the people who have posted pictures of rainwater on social media are nowhere now. Those who posted the pictures on social media can also see the pictures of the water cleared, he added. If the citizens have any complaints, they should inform, the teams of all the relevant departments, including Karachi Metropolitan Corporation, Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation, are present on the ground.

On this occasion, the Deputy Commissioner of Central District Taha Saleem, local leaders of PPP, officers of KMC, Sindh Solid Waste Management Board and other institutions were also present.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab visited and inspected the double drain at Shadman and UP drain which has been cleared by immediate action, Mayor Karachi

also inspected Nagan Chowrangi, UP Mor, Saleem Centre, Power House Chowrangi and adjoining areas where the rainwater drainage staff had completed the drainage work.

The Mayor Karachi said that in view of the problems faced by the citizens during the monsoon rains, we have taken such measures in advance, thanks to which not only the flow and level of the storm drains were maintained, but also the drainage work on the roads and streets was completed quickly. He said that the citizens of Karachi are seeing our work and efforts, they know that their problems can be solved not by mere statements, but by practical work. We believe in work, not criticism, he added.

At this hour of the night, he and his team and the PPP workers are on the ground which proves that we want to work, he said, adding that the citizens were given the impression that the areas where Jamaat-e-Islami was successful have rainwater. He said that it did not happen, even though the area where we are in the central district had rainwater and Jamaat-e-Islami was successful from here.

The water from this place has

been taken out by the teams of KMC and Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation and now this place looks clean.

Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab while inspecting the drain at Qalandria Chowk also reviewed the situation caused by rains in the area and visited Sakhi Hasan area where a new drain is being constructed at Qalandria Chowk for rainwater drainage.

On this occasion, the concerned officers gave a briefing to Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab and gave details regarding the ongoing work on the project.

The impact will be reduced, which will provide a lot of convenience to the citizens during the rains and the complaint of drain overflow will also be eliminated, he said. He said that the work of the rain drain at Qalandria Chowk is nearing completion and it will take another 20 days to connect the drain. Even in case of more rains, the situation of the overflow will not arise.

The Mayor Karachi on this occasion directed the concerned officers to speed up the development work and provide maximum facilities to the citizens.

## Loans of 30b distributed in five months; SAPM

KARACHI (APP): Special Assistant to Prime Minister (SAPM) on Youth Affairs Shaza Fatima Khawaja on Wednesday said the loans of Rs. 30 billion were distributed during the last five months under the Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme.

She stated this while addressing the ceremony held for the distribution of laptops and cheques under the Prime Minister's Youth Business and Agriculture Loan Scheme and Prime Minister's Youth Laptop Scheme 2023, respectively at the Sindh

Governor House.

The SAPM said the business loan programme was initiated by former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif in 2013.

She said loans amounting to Rs. 75 billion were distributed under the scheme in last 10 years.

Shaza Fatima Khawaja said the loan was being provided in three tiers. In the first tier, the loan of Rs. 0.5 million, in the second tier, Rs. 0.5 to 1.5 million and in the third tier, Rs. 1.5 million to 7.5 million is provided, she said. On the occa-

sion, the students, recipients of laptops, were presented Guard of Honor by a contingent of Sindh Police. The recipients of loans and laptops expressed their pleasure and thanked Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif.

Federal Minister for Information Technology Syed Ameen-ul-Haque, Federal Minister for Information and Broadcasting Marriyum Aurangzeb, Sindh Ministers Sharjeel Inam Memon, Nasir Shah, Mayor Karachi Murtaza Wahab, President of different banks also attended the ceremony.

### PFA stops production of food points

LAHORE (APP): The Punjab Food Authority's special operations teams on Wednesday stopped the production of a food point and penalized 42 eateries while carrying out an intensified inspection drive on cooking centers to ensure the provision of safe food for the public during Muharram. The PFA warned 485 cooking centers, asking them to improve their hygienic condition. PFA Director General Raja Jahangir Anwar said that special operations teams inspected 544 cooking centers across Punjab, including 61 in Lahore division, 149 in Faisalabad, 55 in Sahiwal, 26 in Rawalpindi, 72 in Gujranwala, 47 in Sargodha division, 28 in Bahawalpur, 40 in Multan and 68 in Muzaffargarh.

He said that all operation wings, vigilance, water and dairy safety teams had been divided into Muharram-ul-Haram special operations teams. He said that teams would thoroughly inspect cooking centers and Langar Khana (soup kitchen) besides 'sabeel' stalls also en route to Muharram-ul-Haram processions. Raja Jahangir said that only filtered water was being allowed to be used on 'Sharbat Sabeels' as well as the milk was being checked with lactoscan machines at milk sabeel stalls. Moreover, the use of substandard ingredients in food dishes and poor sanitation situations were being rectified on the spot, he added.

## Passing out parade of 38th Recruit Course held

ISLAMABAD (APP): The police here on Wednesday organized a ceremony to mark the passing out parade of the 38th Basic Recruit Course. Minister for Interior, Rana Sanaullah Khan attended the ceremony as chief guest, said a press release.

Islamabad Capital City

Police Officer (ICCPO), Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, senior police officers, representatives from civil society, and the newly inducted young recruits were present on the occasion. A smart contingent unit of the police force presented a guard of honor to the chief guest.

The minister said young

talent from various parts of the country was serving as members of the Islamabad Police force. He commended the inclusive recruitment process and emphasized the significance of upholding values like honesty, integrity, and service to the people as they started their duty to protect and serve the nation.



KARACHI: A view of Korangi Road has been closed for traffic due to flooding of Malir River.

HEADQUARTERS PAKISTAN RANGERS (SINDH) MUHAMMAD ALI JUNG 12 (K-25) LAHORE (PUNJAB) ROAD Karachi-6		
No. 10/IT/PRO/548/2023		
Dated 25-July-2023		
TENDER NOTICE		
1. Sealed tenders are invited from the manufacturers, distributors and knit agents for supply of following articles by Pakistan Rangers (Sindh). Tenders will be opened on: 11 August 2023 at 1430 hours in presence of concerned/ authorized firm representatives:-		
Ser	Nomenclature	Tender Fee (Rs)
a.	Camouflage Combat Uniform	500/-
b.	Camouflage Combat Trousers	600/-
c.	Shirt & Trousers (Green)	500/-
d.	Long Boot Gaiter	500/-
e.	Long Boot Sock	500/-
f.	Joggers Shoes	500/-
g.	Sleeping Bag	500/-
2. Manufacturers, Distributors & Sole agents desirous to participate in tender should be registered with Sales Tax, Income Tax Department, Action Tax Floor at FBR and having valid registration with Pakistan Engineering Council (as applicable).		
3. Tender forms can be obtained from Ordnance Branch Pakistan Rangers (Sindh) with valid form 37 July 2023 to 11 August 2023 from 11:00 AM to 12:30 PM daily (except Saturday and Sunday) Public Holidays) after payment of tender fee (non refundable) as mentioned against each in above of pay order/ bank draft from any scheduled bank in favour of DG Pakistan Rangers (Sindh). Tenders can be dropped in tender box till 11 August 2023 upto 1400 hours.		
4. Director General Pakistan Rangers (Sindh) reserves the right to accept or reject any or all tenders as per Public Procurement Regulatory Authority (PPRA) Rules 2004.		
5. For further details please contact on telephone # 66206285-7 (Extension # 3080).		
1 Assistant Colonel (in Director General (Muhammad Salah Uddin))		
PID (K) 27423		





# Educ to usher era of progress, development in tribal region: Afridi

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Excise and Narcotics Control, Haji Manzoor Khan Afridi has said that education will play a key role in the development of the merged districts and a new era of progress and development will begin in the region by paying special attention to it.

He expressed these views while discussing the education sector projects in merged districts during

a meeting with Education Adviser Rahmat Salam Khattak. Deputy District Education Officer District Khyber Shahid Ali Khan and other officials participated in the meeting.

The provincial minister said that the caretaker government is taking practical steps for promotion of education and besides the provision of facilities in educational institutions; scholarships are also being paid to both boys and girls students.

Furthermore, to fill the shortage of educational

institutions, work is also underway on the construction of schools, which will be completed soon.

Excise Minister Haji Manzoor Khan Afridi further said that work on educational reforms is also going on in all tribal districts including Khyber and best educational facilities will be available to the talented students there by completing the ongoing projects.

He said that the youth is valuable capital which will play a crucial role in the development of the coun-

try and our mission is to equip them with the best character building and education in line with the requirements of the modern era.

The provincial minister also apprised the advisor on education about problems in Khyber and other tribal districts.

The Advisor on Education issued directives and said that besides the problems of teachers in the entire province including merged districts are also being solved on an urgent basis.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan presiding over a meeting regarding law and order.

## PHC issues notice to KP govt on bail application of Ali Muhammad

PESHAWAR (APP): On Wednesday, a two-member bench of the Peshawar High Court (PHC) issued notice to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government on the bail application of PTI leader Ali Muhammad Khan.

The bench comprising Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Fazal Subhan adjourned the proceedings till Thursday and asked the government to submit its reply.

The counsel of the petitioner Ali Zaman Advocate told the court that Ali Muhammad Khan was arrested again on July 25.

He said that after 76 days, bail was granted but the petitioner was being arrested in one case and the other adding that Ali Muhammad was arrested for the eighth time.

He said the government had said that there was only one case against him.

Additional Attorney General argued that there was one case till morning.

The bench asked the government to submit its reply by tomorrow and adjourned the hearing.

## Ashraf assumes charge

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Special Assistant to KP Caretaker CM on Technical Education, Ashraf Dawar formally assumed charge of his responsibilities here on Wednesday.

Speaking at the occasion, the newly appointed special assistant said that he has been allotted the portfolio of technical education in the caretaker provincial government, saying at this time, the imparting of skills and technical education to youth of the province is the need of the hour.

He vowed to leave no stone unturned in the reformation and bringing improvement in the technical and vocational training institutes. The special assistant said that the importance of technical education cannot be ignored as in today's era the provision of employment to youth and manpower is a must to make them skilled.

# KPBOIT organized one day interactive consultation workshop

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Board of Investment and Trade (KPBOIT) organized a one day interactive consultation workshop with the collaboration of USAID- ERDA programme for private sector in tourism industry at Islamabad on the other day.

In the workshop, participants from different sectors of the industry engaged in discussion on business enabling environment, wherein, they highlighted the issues and challenges

being faced by the investors for promoting the industry while recommendations, recorded in the event, will be further discussed with government authorities for improvement in service delivery and governance.

During his speech in the workshop, Director Business Facilitation KPBOIT, Iqbal Sarwar briefed the forum on ease of doing business activities conceived by KPBOIT so far in the province and shared progress made by KP government in estab-

lishing a one stop shop facility for creating an enabling environment for private sector.

He said that all provincial and federal regulatory authorities will be available online under single window for creating, an interactive and business friendly environment for national and international investors in the province.

Participants of the event expressed their satisfaction and appreciation to KPBOIT for their efforts in facilitating business community of the province.

# DG holds open public hearing at NAB KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Director General, National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Waqar Ahmad Chaudhary held an open public hearing (Kuli Katchery) at National Accountability Bureau Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Peshawar accompanied by the concerned officers.

25 complainants were heard and appropriate orders on complaints were issued on the spot.

According to the statement issued by Mian Muhammad Waqar Director National Accountability

Bureau Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the complainants pertaining to misuse of authority, embezzlement/misappropriation of public money, accumulation of assets disproportionate to known sources of income, bribery, criminal breach of trust, cheating public at large and abetment were lodged.

Most of the complaints related to various housing schemes and marketing companies who are not delivering their promises despite lapse of many years.

It was decided by the National Accountability Bureau Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to take up this matter with the provincial government to tighten the control of regulatory bodies so that the innocent people are not defrauded by the nexus of developers and marketing companies.

The DG National Accountability Bureau Khyber Pakhtunkhwa also urged the public to invest their hard-earned money cautiously in housing sector and in Modarba & Musharka schemes etc.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Haji Ghulam Ali listening people's problems at his office.

# Film star Kanwal visit burnt Radio Pakistan Peshawar — demands strict action against May 9 rioters

PESHAWAR (APP): Renowned Film and TV artist and former Member Punjab Assembly, Kanwal Noman here Wednesday visited the burnt building of Radio Pakistan Peshawar and strongly condemned the ransacking and putting on fire of national broadcaster during May 9 vandalism.

She demanded strict action against rioters and attackers so that no one could dare to attack the national institutions and defence installations in future.

Deploing the burning of four storey building of Radio Pakistan's archives and auditorium, Kanwal said that a horde of a party on the behest of their leader had attacked Radio Pakistan Peshawar and burnt its entire building as

well as Chagi Mountains model constructed in memory of May 28, 1998 nuclear explosions.

She said Radio Pakistan was a national institution and its burning by horde of a party was tantamount to deprive people of entertainment, education and information.

Kanwal said the real face of the political leader that deceived people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on the name of change for nine years has been exposed before the entire nation on May 9 and demanded life-time against political elements involved in May 9 vandalism.

She said Imran Niazi's negative politicking, victimization of opposition leadership, provoking attitude and broken promises have led to the disintegration of Pakistan Tahrir

Insaf.

She said the politics of Imran Niazi was finished in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa after PTI was divided into different groups including PTI Parliamentarians and poor governance.

Kanwal said Imran Niazi politics has been restricted only to Zaman Park Lahore due to his politics of confrontation and hooliganism.

She said the political leaders guide people and give solutions to the country's problems rather instigate them to attack Govt institutions and defence installations after arrest in corruption case.

Kanwal said Pakistan had given us everything including jobs, identity and prestige and it was our collective responsibility to work for its economic

development.

She advised youth to serve their country in respective fields with devotion instead of visiting abroad and devote energies for prosperity of Pakistan.

Earlier, Station Director PBC, Ejaz Khan briefed her about history of the national broadcaster and gory incident of May 9 vandalism.

He said the ransacking of Radio Pakistan Peshawar building has caused about Rs250 million losses.

Later, Kanwal visited different sections of the burnt building of Radio Pakistan Peshawar and expressed solidarity with the staff.

Senior artists, Shazma Haleem, Eshrat Abbas and others welcomed the distinguished guest.

# ECP's officers imparted training on use of EMS

## F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: 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 concludes here on Wednesday.

During the workshop officers were briefed regarding technical aspects and knowledge about this app. The training/workshop which was started on Monday concluded on Wednesday in three phases.

All District Election Commissioners were divided in three groups. In Wednesday's last phase the

session was attended by Director (Els) & Director (LGE), Deputy Director (Admn), Deputy Director (Development), Regional Election Commissioner, D.I.Khan, Regional Election Commissioner, Swat, District Election Commissioner, Peshawar, District Election Commissioner, Kolai Palas, District Ele-

ction Commissioner, Kohistan Lower & District Election Commissioner, Kohistan Upper, District Election Commissioner, Swat, District Election Commissioner, South Waziristan Lower, District Election Commissioner, South Waziristan Upper, District Election Commissioner, North Waziristan, District Election Commissioner, Battagram, District Election Commissioner, Bajaur, District Election Commissioner, Tank and District Election Commissioner, Lakki Marwat.

The orientation session was organized by the Information System Wing of ECP with the collaboration of Sapphire (Soft Ware House).

At the concluding session Joint Provincial Election Commissioner (Elections) Javed Rehmat Khan awarded certificates among the participants.

# Tablets distributed among Afghan students at INU

PESHAWAR (APP): Afghan students pursuing digital marketing courses at Iqra National University (INU) Peshawar under its project Livelihood Improvement & Vocational Skills Training for Afghan Refugees Programme were provided with digital tablets for skill development.

The ceremony was held at INU Hayatabad Campus and organized by Pak Mission Society in collaboration with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), said a press release issued here on Wednesday.

A total of 23 Afghan students benefited from the scheme while more than 250 students mostly Afghans are studying vocational training courses free of cost from INU through its initiative of implementing combined skill development projects of UNHCR and NAVTTC.

The significant event marked a crucial milestone in the Livelihood Improvement & Vocational Skills Training for Afghan Refugees program, aiming to empower Afghan trainees pursuing courses in Digital Marketing and Mobile Repair, it added.

The guest speaker from Pak Mission Society and UNHCR highlighted the importance of vocational skills in providing refugees with a pathway towards self-reliance and improved livelihood opportunities.

The ceremony was filled with gratitude and hope, as both the organizers and beneficiaries expressed their appreciation for the

UNHCR's funding and support.

"This collaboration demonstrated the commitment of all involved parties to empower Afghan refugees particularly PWSN (Persons with Specific Needs) and provide them with opportunities for skill development, ultimately fostering self-sufficiency and socio-economic progress," observed Muhammad Akbar, Project Manager while speaking on the occasion.

The distribution of tablets to the Afghan trainees PWSN was a pivotal aspect of the initiative, recognizing the significance of technology in today's digital world, he added.

These tablets would serve as essential tools for the trainees to apply their knowledge and enhance

their practical skills in digital marketing and mobile repair.

"With access to technology, the Afghan trainees can explore remote working opportunities, start their entrepreneurial ventures and connect with a broader network to further their career prospects," commented Dr. Sheeraz, Dean Iqra National University.

Refugees and displaced persons often face significant challenges when it comes to finding employment and building a stable life in host countries.

Vocational training programs play a crucial role in bridging the skills gap and empowering these individuals to lead productive lives, Sheeraz added.

"By providing refugees with essential skills in digital marketing and mobile

repair, the UNHCR aims to enhance their employability and income-generating potential, ultimately promoting self-reliance and reducing dependency on humanitarian aid," Livelihood Manager UNHCR, Ashfaq Hussain.

The tablet distribution initiative is a crucial aspect of the Livelihood vocational training program. It aims to provide trainees with the necessary tools to acquire practical knowledge and hands-on experience in digital marketing and mobile repair.

CEO PMS, Adeel Rehmat said by equipping Afghan students with Tablets, the PMS and UNHCR seek to overcome barriers to access to technology and education, as well as open up opportunities for remote work and online learning.



PESHAWAR: A vendor preparing traditional summer drink "gond katira" to attract customers at Namak Mandi area.





## In brief

### DPO office inaugurated F.P. Report

KHAR: Efforts are being made by the security forces to enhance the capacity of the police in the tribal district of Bajaur. In this regard, the inauguration ceremony of the newly constructed DPO office was held in Khar. Chief guest Inspector General Frontier Corps North Major General Noor Wali Khan was presented guard of honour by police contingent. Major General Noor Wali Khan inaugurated the DPO office and while addressing he said that "the efforts of the police to ensure law and order in Bajaur are commendable". IGFC said that "Pakistan Army and Frontier Corps are paying special attention to the training of police in Tribal Areas. Officials of the district administration & security forces and local elders attended the inauguration ceremony."

### LEAs burns contraband items F.P. Report

JAMRUD: Due to the efforts of the Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) contraband items worth crores of rupees seized at the Torkham border during the last few years were destroyed in Shakas area of Khyber district. A special event was organized in this regard, which was attended by senior officials of Frontier Corps North, ANF, FBR, Customs and other organizations. Items burnt include cigarettes, cigarette paper, betel juice, chalya, snuff, foreign medicines and crackers. The recovery of narcotics and other illegal items by law enforcement agencies is reflection of the best strategy to not only catch people involved in trafficking but also punish them according to the law.

### Funds allocated for uplift F.P. Report

HAFAZABAD: The Punjab government spending billions of rupees to execute different development projects in the district Hafizabad to upgrade loving standard of the people while a sum of Rs. 4923 million is being spend on construction and rehabilitation of four roads sector schemes under RRP in the district Hafizabad for providing better communicational facilities to the people. This was stated by the Deputy Commissioner Umer Farooq Warraich while inspecting ongoing schemes in the district. Deputy Director Development Hafizabad Tawasar Abbas, ADCR Intiaz Ali Baig and other concerned officers were also accompanied by the DC. He said that Hafizabad-Khankhah Dogran Road, Pindi Bhattian-Cheniot Road, Hafizabad-Pindi Bhattian Road and Lahore-Sargodha Road would be rehabilitated with the cost of Rs. 4923 million. He said that completion of ongoing schemes according to specification and timely was top priority of the district administration Hafizabad. He warned the officers of nation building departments and constructors that use of substandard material while execution of the development schemes would not be tolerated at all. Meanwhile, AC Hafizabad Munawar Hussain has retrieved 10-acre government land in village Kot Sajana from two land grabbers. According to AC, Mehboob and Shahbaz Ahmad were occupied government land illegally and cultivated crops for many years. AC said that Revenue officers retrieved the occupied land worth Rs. 30 million and legal action was being taken against land grabbers.

# JI to provide 100 units electricity free of cost if come into power

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Jamaat-i-Islami chief Sirajul Haq has said that one dacoit cannot make another one into accountable as they always protect each other. He was addressing a public gathering as chief guest at a prize distribution function on the conclusion of Sheikh Abdul Rehman memorial volleyball tournament at Moranai Timergara here on Wednesday.

The JI district chief Izazul Mulk Afkari, former MNA Sahibzada Yaqub Khan, former tehsil nazim advocate Imranud Din, former district councilor Saiful Islam and others also addressed the function.

The JI chief said that the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa generated cheap electricity at Rs 2 per unit but the consumers were being charged Rs 50 per unit in return. Siraj said that the JI lawmakers had always raised voices for the general masses and worked for development of the areas from where they were elected. "We generate electricity in Dargai, Warsak and Turbela in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa but still we face power outage, low voltage, unemployment and scarcity of water", Siraj said, adding the government increased the power tariff each week.

The JI chief announced that poor people would be provided with free of cost electricity up to 100 units if they were given the opportunity to govern the country. He said the rulers were transferring national wealth abroad due to corruption and plundering. The JI chief complained that no one was ready to make the rulers accountable for their plundering and money-laundering. He asked the gathering to support the JI during the next general election so that the corrupt rulers could be made accountable. The JI chief also distributed trophies and shields among the winner and runner up teams and best players of the tournament.

**PTI leaders re-arrested:** The PTI former MNA Mahboob Shah and former MPA Humayun Khan were rearrested after their release from the district jail Timergara here on Wednesday. The former lawmakers were taken into custody by the anti-corruption department for the alleged irregularities in postings and development projects. An anti terrorism court had granted bail to them in the FC fort Chakdara vandalism case.

The PTI several activists including the Adenzai tehsil chairman Fairaz Shah, PTI district general secretary Ghulam Hussain, tehsil president Awal Khan, Nisar Hayat and Abdul Rehman were released from the Timergara jail after their bail plea was accepted. Talking to local journalists the PTI former lawmakers said that they would stand by Imran Khan whatever the situation was. They said that they would never leave Imran Khan alone.

**Diabetic patients take the disease not easy, say experts:** Speakers at a function held at Timergara said type 2 Diabetes was spreading fast in the country due to lack of

knowledge and patients' careless attitude. The Pakistan Endocrine Society in collaboration with a private pharmaceutical company arranged a day-long seminar for raising mass awareness and sensitizing the healthcare professional regarding the disease at the district headquarters hospital Timergara here on Wednesday. Local physicians, nurses, paramedics and hospital management participated in the seminar.

Prominent diabetologist Dr Rab Nawaz, senior medical specialist Dr Saeedur Rehman, Dr Ikramullah Qazi and others spoke on the occasion. The speakers said that Pakistan was on the top of the list as it had 33 million patients with diabetes.

Dr Rab Nawaz feared the disease was fast spreading in the Lower Dir district too and it was high time the people should be made aware of its consequences. He pointed out that the number of diabetic patients across the globe was 537 million while Pakistan had 33 million patients. He said there were 7 million diabetic patients only in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, which was an alarming figure.

The endocrinologist said that it was not easy to live with type 2 diabetes but people with it could live long and healthy with the help of an improved healthcare treatment. He said that healthy food and an active lifestyle could ward off the disease. Dr Rab Nawaz said that diabetes was a fatal disease and patients should not take it easy. He advised the people to regularly check their sugar level and make daily exercise their hobby.

The speakers shed light on the complications of diabetes and said it could lead to sight disorder, amputation, heart attack, brain damage, renal disorder, nervous problem, gum disease and even cancer if remain untreated. The speakers asked the physicians dealing with the diabetic patients to prescribe different kinds of medicines to cardiac patients, pregnant women, elderly citizens and youths.

**Unfair mean cases:** The controller of examination of the board of intermediate and secondary education Malakand Muhammad Naseem Khan has said the board's jury committee had finalized cases against 300 students for using unfair means during the secondary school certificate (SSC) annual examination. Talking to local journalists at Timergara here on Wednesday, he said a meeting of the committee headed by secretary board Prof Saeed Ahmad Sani was held in the board at Chakdara the other day.

He said that heads of different schools including Tahir Khan, Gul Rehman, Muhammad Ayaz, Salahud Din and board's officials attended the meeting. The meeting decided cancellation of papers and imposition of fine on students involved in using unfair means during the SSC examination. The controller said that over 300 students had been punished in order to curb the menace of cheating in examinations.

## KUST launches 'the journal of bioscience research'



F.P. Report

KOHAT: Kohat University of Science and Technology (KUST) proudly marked a momentous occasion by launching its first issue of the university's first-ever Research Journal "The Journal of Bioscience Research".

Vice Chancellor, Professor Dr. Sardar Khan, inaugurated the ceremony, showcasing the institution's commitment to promoting academic excellence and research endeavors. The ceremony was attended by Registrar, Deans, Directors, Head of Departments, sectional heads and members of editorial board. The Research Journal serves as a platform to facilitate the dissemination of cutting-edge research and innovative discoveries across vari-

ous academic disciplines in the field of biological sciences.

This peer-reviewed publication aims to foster a culture of knowledge sharing and collaboration within the academic community, both at national and international levels. In his address, Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Sardar Khan expressed his profound pride in the University's collective efforts to establish the Research Journal "The Journal of Bioscience Research", emphasizing its crucial role in encouraging intellectual growth and contributing to the advancement of research in diverse fields.

VC also lauded the dedication and perseverance of the editorial board, faculty, researchers, and students whose hard work made this endeavor possible. The edi-

torial team led by Dr. Abdul Rehman, Managing Editor/Assistant Professor, Department of Microbiology, KUST, comprised of distinguished faculty members and researchers ensured that each publication adheres to the highest standards of academic excellence.

KUST continues to make strides in the pursuit of knowledge and academic excellence, the Journal of Bioscience Research stands as a testament to the University's dedication to nurturing scholarly pursuits and providing a platform for intellectuals to make a lasting impact on society. The Issue 1 of "The Journal of Bioscience Research" is now available for public access and can be viewed at <https://jbr.kust.edu.pk/index.php/jbr>.

## SBBMU employees hold protest

F.P. Report

LARKANA: Due to the tension between the management and employees of Shaheed Benazir Bahto Medical University (SBBMU) of Larkana, the employees staged a protest demonstration against the administration block in front of the administration block and raised provocative slogans.

Welfare Association President Noor Mohammad Halio, Mansoor Kalhoro, Mashuq Imrani and others said that last Monday, the influential students of

Shaheed Benazir Bhutto Medical University, Farman Ali, Masroor Tonio Nabi Bakhsh Soho and others attacked the clerk of the hostel without justification. After vandalizing it and damaging the office equipment and furniture, university employees Javed Soomro, Hafeez Chandio, Ehsan, Muhammad Ayub and Syed Imanuddin Shah were subjected to severe torture since the evening when such complaints were received by the university administration. They have done injustice to us by suspending 4 employees of Alta

University, Ehsan Chandio, Rauf Mashuri, Ehsan Shah and Abdul Hafeet Chandio, which is clearly evident that the management is crushing the employees like ants, considering them as their personal servants. It cannot be tolerated in any case.

He has demanded from the higher administration and said that the university administration should take notice of the violence of the influential students on the employees and remedy the injustice with the employees, otherwise we will be forced to take very important steps.



QUETTA: A view of closed road during 7th Muharram-ul-Haram procession.

## AD&SJ grants bail to alleged culprit F.P. Report

KHYBER: Additional District and Session Judge (AD&SJ) Khyber Aziz Khan has granted bail to alleged culprit involved in attempt to murder offense, on Wednesday.

According to prosecution, Masri Khan has opened firing over land dispute in which seven year of age girls along with Zubair were injured. First Information Report (FIR) was registered Tirah police station.

The alleged culprit has approached court pleaded for bail while Liaqat Ali Afridi advocate appeared before court on behalf of petitioner. AD&SJ Khyber Aziz Khan has granted bail to alleged culprit Masri Khan and ordered his release after conclusion of arguments.

## Thieves steals tube-well solar panels F.P. Report

LANDI KOTAL: Unknown robbers stole five solar panels from the tube well here in Shiekhmal Khel village of tehsil Landi Kotal district Khyber. Yar Shah, owner of the tube well said that late night hours on Tuesday unidentified thieves broke into the tube well building and took five of the solar panels.

Due to non-functioning of the water supply scheme, the problem of scarcity of potable water arose in the locality and the residents had no other option but to buy water from private water tankers. The local flayed the heinous crime of the unknown robbers that deprived them of easy supply of drinking water and asked the police officials to forthwith trace the culprits and bring them to books. They also demanded of the philanthropist to extend every possible financial support to resume the tube well.

## Girl drowns to death F.P. Report

BUNER: A 12 years old girl named Haya Bibi daughter of Nor Rahim of Ambela drowned to death when she stuck in the water contaminated with the marble factory.

The locals were rescued her body and shifted to nearby hospital where the health staff declared her already dead. Additional AC Mandanr Mohammad Khan the Nazim Mandanr Naseeb Khan and the TMO Mandanr paved visit to the spot and directed an inquiry into the matter to find facts and rest responsibility on the shoulders of the concerned quarters to book and bring before the law so as to ensure justice to the bereaved family and console the soul of late Haya Bibi.

It's pertinent to mention here that the marble factories waste was pouring to running water channels throughout the district and the contaminated water caused life threat to see life cattle animals crops and human being as well but due to negligence of the responsible circles the dominant marble factories mafia never bothered to make sure safety tanks as per law due to which all of living things and the environment was facing serious threat and bleak future fortune of new generation like late Haya Bibi.

## SCCI protest against imposition of taxes

Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: Swat Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) protested against high inflation and imposition of taxes in Malakand division and argued the government to review the recent accord with International Monetary Fund (IMF), on Wednesday.

SCCI argued competent authorities to relieve the common people from economic distress and taxes, the participants alleged that the PDMA deliberately issued flood warnings in Swat, which is badly affecting the tourist season, these view expressed by President of swat chamber of commerce Rahat Ali Khan, Trade Federation spokesman Dr Khalid Mahmood, Swat Petroleum

and CNG Association General Secretary Zahoor Iqbal, and others addressed a crowded press conference at Swat Press Club.

The speakers said that the common people are being badly affected by the recent price escalation in the country, and the middle class will be severely affected by the increase in the domestic budget of the common people due to the recent agreement with the IMF. They said that the government should review the agreement with the IMF with mutual consent and take positive steps to provide relief to the general masses.

The participant said that the recent increase in electricity bills has become a headache for them, the government should play its role

in providing relief to the people in terms of electricity. They suggested that the government ministers, armed forces, judiciary, bureaucracy and public representatives should save the country from economic crisis and chaos by reducing unnecessary expenditure.

The participants accused the PDMA of deliberately affecting the tourism of the area by issuing flood warnings in Swat, adding that all the rivers of Swat were flowing normally and tourists should come to visit the area with an open heart and enjoy the beautiful views here. They said that If our demands not met and implemented seriously by the current govt we will be forced to stage protests at Swat and Malakand division.

## Provision of clean drinking water right of every citizen

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Mayor Mardan Hamayat Ullah Mayar has stated that the city government is committed to providing the best sanitation facilities at the doorstep to the citizens. The authorities in Mardan district are taking solid measures to convert waste into usable materials.

He expressed these views during a meeting at Press club Mardan organized under the Integrated Regional Support Program (IRSP), focusing on promoting the Solid Waste Management Policy/Plan City Wide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS) throughout the city. The meeting was Attended by the Executive Director of IRSP, Shah Naseer, officials from various government departments, including representative of Water and Sanitation Services Company (WSSC), Elected Chairmen and Civil society Representative.

The aim of the meeting was to prepare a list of rel-

evant stakeholders and identify essential steps to ensure the effective implementation of the CWIS by WSSC. Under the umbrella of the Integrated Regional Support Program (IRSP), this meeting aimed to foster cooperation and collaboration among various stakeholders to address the significant challenges of sanitation in Mardan city.

During the consultative session, a detailed exercise was conducted to map out key decision-makers and stakeholders included in the CWIS plan. This mapping exercise is vital in developing a comprehensive perspective that incorporates diverse viewpoints and expertise required to achieve desired outcomes.

With the inclusion of all relevant stakeholders, the City Local Government Mardan hopes to establish a strong alliance that can effectively address issues related to the foundational structure of sanitation, waste management, healthcare practices, and accessibility to sanitation services.

These collaborative efforts will facilitate the implementation of inclusive policies that prioritize the needs of marginalized communities and promote equal access to clean and safe sanitation facilities.

The alignment with the IRSP-FANSA (Freshwater Action Network South-Asia) to Create Task force to further strengthens the commitment to oversee the effective implementation of the CWIS. This task force ensures the continuous involvement of all stakeholders and fosters coordination among different agencies and organizations.

Moving forward, the monitoring of CWIS implementation will be carried out through regular evaluations and consultations to address emerging challenges and adapt operational strategies as needed. The City Administration remains resolute in promoting transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement throughout the entire process of implementing the CWIS.

## Commissioner commits to pave way for Reading Club

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Commissioner Mardan Division Yousaf Rahim has said that a number of activities are being organized from the platform of Reading Club to restore the broken connection of students with books, which are showing positive results. He was addressing a special function organized by the Reading Club at his office on the occasion of distribution of cash prizes to the position holders of the spelling bee competitions held the other day.

Additional Commissioner Mardan Naem Akhtar Additional Deputy Commissioner (General) Engineer Shahzeb, Reading Club Focal Person Assistant Commissioner Mardan Ayesha Tahir, AAC Khola Haqdar, students, teachers and parents participated in the ceremony.

Commissioner Mardan said that there are more than 37,000 books on various topics in the Mardan Public Library and new books on modern sciences and arts are being added to this library while efforts are underway for keeping the public libraries of Mardan and Swabi open for readers

for expanded hours. He said that in order to further expand the activities of the Reading Club, work is also underway to develop it on an institutional basis.

Commissioner Mardan Yousaf Rahim said that in the first phase reading club has been organized in five boys and five girls schools of Mardan and soon it is being implemented in more schools in urban and rural areas so that in this age of social media and mobile phones we may be able to re-establish the relationship of students with books. He appreciated the role of the parents, teachers, Dist Youth Office, administrative officers and the participating students in the spelling bee competitions.

Later, Commissioner Mardan awarded Rs 30,000 in cash to Mohammad Ehtesham, a student of Sudham Children's Academy Rustum, who won the first position. Nawal, a student of Iqra Montessori School, Sawalddhir, who won the first runner up position, was given a cash prize of Rs. 20,000 and Ummi Salma of Cadet College Mardan got a cash prize of RS.10,000 for bagging second runner up position in

the competition.

## Shopkeepers fined

F.P. Report

TIMERGARA: Food Department imposed fine on dozens of shopkeepers for violation on special instructions of Deputy Commissioner, on Wednesday.

District Food Controller Kashif Ehsan, Riaz Ahmed Assistant Food Controller and Food Inspector Shabir Ahmed made a surprise visit to Khal Bazar where he took action against various hotels, general stores, milk vendors and bakers shops in the market for violating the official price list, not displaying the official price list at a suitable place, keeping overdue items and poor sanitation. Due to the situation, heavy fines were imposed on several shopkeepers under the Food Act. On this occasion, he warned the shopkeepers to avoid hoarding and ensure compliance with the official price list. He said that artificial inflation is not tolerated. The inflation mafia will be dealt with iron hands and no concession will be made to anyone in this regard.





Thursday, July 27, 2023

## West Africa recorded over 1,800 terrorist attacks

UNITED NATIONS (AP): West Africa recorded over 1,800 terrorist attacks in the first six months of the year resulting in nearly 4,600 deaths with dire humanitarian consequences, and a top regional official said that's just "a snippet of the horrendous impact of insecurity."

Omar Touray told the UN Security Council that half a million people in the 15-nation Economic Community of West African States known as ECOWAS are refugees and nearly 6.2 million are internally displaced. If there isn't an adequate international response to the 30 million people ECOWAS assesses need food right now, he said, the number of people in need will increase to 42 million by the end of next month.

Touray, who is president of the ECOWAS Commission, singled out the following drivers of insecurity in the region: terrorism, armed rebellion, organized crime, unconstitutional changes of government, illegal maritime activities, environmental crises and fake news. He said the region is worried about the resurgence of the military, with three countries - Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea - under military rule.

"The reversal of democratic gains runs parallel to insecurity that West Africa and the Sahel have been facing for some time now," he said, and insecurity continues to inflict pain and suffering on millions of people. For example, Touray said, the 4,593 deaths in terrorist attacks between January and June 30 include 2,725 in Burkina Faso, 844 in Mali, 77 in Niger and 70 in Nigeria. He added that terrorist attacks in Benin and

Togo which have coastlines on the Atlantic Ocean are a "stark indication of the expansion of terrorism to littoral states, a situation that poses additional threat to the region." Touray said there have been a multiplicity of initiatives to tackle terrorism and insecurity which have had an impact on the ground, but there is a lack of coordination and ECOWAS wants to integrate the various initiatives into a regional plan of action.

ECOWAS military chiefs of staff have held consultations to strengthen a regional standby force "in a manner that will enable it to support member states in the fight against terrorism and against threats to constitutional order," he said. Touray said the military chiefs proposed two options, establishing a 5,000-strong brigade at an annual cost of \$2.3 billion or deployment of troops on demand at an annual cost of \$360 million. He reiterated the African Union's request for African peace operations to receive funding from the UN regular budget, to which all 193 UN member states contribute.

Touray said the military staff recommendations were made before Mali's military junta demanded that the more than 15,000-strong UN peacekeeping force in the country leave, which was followed by the Security Council's unanimous vote on June 30 to immediately end the mission. Mali has brought in mercenaries from Russia's Wagner Group to help fight an Islamic insurgency. Touray told the council that ECOWAS leaders "have reflected on the possible adverse impact of the withdrawal on the region and have

decided to convene an extraordinary session on peace and security by the end of August." Ahead of that meeting, he said, Benin's president will visit Mali, Burkina Faso and Guinea and press for "an expeditious return to constitutional order."

The Security Council was also briefed by the new head of the UN office for West Africa, Leonardo Santos Simão, who said the security situation in the central Sahel, especially the border region of Burkina Faso, Mali and Niger, "has deteriorated further, with multiple attacks against civilians and defense and security forces." He also said "the southward expansion of insecurity remains a potent threat." Simão appealed for "robust and decisive support" for the ECOWAS action plan to eradicate terrorism in the region and for the African Union and efforts by countries to stem insecurity in the Sahel.

US deputy ambassador Robert Wood told the council "the United States remains gravely concerned by democratic backsliding across the region" and is "deeply concerned by the spread of instability in coastal West Africa." He accused the Wagner Group of "committing human rights abuses and endangering the safety and security of civilians, peacekeepers and UN personnel." Russia's deputy ambassador Anna Evstigneeva called the security situation in West Africa and the Sahel "difficult," pointing to increased activity by fighters from the Islamic State extremist group, subversive activities by Boko Haram, and the spread of terrorist activity to coastal West African countries.

## Ghana parliament votes to abolish death penalty

GHANA (BBC): Ghana's parliament has voted to abolish the death penalty, joining a long list of African countries that have done so in recent years. The country currently has 170 men and six women on death row, whose sentences will now be replaced by life imprisonment. The last execution took place in 1993.

Execution has been the mandatory sentence for murder in Ghana. Opinion surveys suggest that most Ghanaians approve abolition. Last year seven people were sentenced to death in Ghana - but none were executed. Treason has also been punishable by death in Ghana. The bill to amend the Criminal Offences Act was put forward by MP Francis-Xavier Sosu and had the backing of the parliament's Committee on Constitutional, Legal and Parliamentary Affairs. A London-based campaign organisation, the Death Penalty Project (DPP), had worked with Mr Sosu to get the law changed. A statement from DPP says Ghana is the 29th African country to abolish the death penalty, and the 124th globally.

In recent years many African states have abolished the death penalty, including Benin, Central African Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Sierra Leone and Zambia. Mr Sosu said that "on death row, prisoners woke up thinking this could be their last day on earth. They were like the living dead: psychologically, they had ceased to be humans. "Abolishing the death penalty shows that we are determined as a society not to be inhumane, uncivil, closed, retrogressive and dark." He added this would pave the way to a free and progressive society reflecting "our common belief that the sanctity of life is inviolable".

## Judge blocks limits on asylum at US-Mexico border

WASHINGTON (AP): A federal judge blocked a rule that allows immigration authorities to deny asylum to migrants who arrive at the US-Mexico border without first applying online or seeking protection in a country they passed through. But the judge delayed his ruling from taking effect immediately to give President Joe Biden's administration time to appeal.

The order from US District Judge Jon Tigar of the Northern District of California takes away a key enforcement tool set in place by the Biden administration as coronavirus-based restrictions on asylum expired in May. The new rule imposes severe limitations on migrants seeking asylum but includes room for exceptions and does not apply to children traveling alone. "The Rule - which has been in effect for two months - cannot remain in place," Tigar wrote in an order that will not take effect for two weeks.

The Justice Department immediately appealed the order and asked for it to be put on hold while the case is heard. The agency said it's confident the rule is lawful. Immigrant rights groups that sued over the rule applauded the judge's decision. "The promise of America is to serve as a beacon of freedom and hope, and the administration can and should do better to fulfill this promise, rather than perpetuate cruel and ineffective policies that betray it," American Civil Liberties Union attorney Katrina Eiland, who argued the case, said in a statement.

The ACLU and other groups had argued the rule violates a US law that protects the right to asylum regardless of how a person enters the country. The groups said it forces migrants to seek protection in countries that don't have the same robust asylum system and human rights protections as the United States. They also argued that the CBP One app the government wants migrants to use doesn't have enough appointments and isn't available in enough languages.

## Kim visits Chinese mily cemetery ahead of Victory Day

SEOUL (Reuters): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited a cemetery for Chinese soldiers who fought in the Korean War, state media KCNA reported on Wednesday. His visit, accompanied by his powerful sister, Kim Yo Jong, comes ahead of the celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Korean War truce on Thursday, which is celebrated as "Victory Day" in North Korea, often with a grandiose military parade.

The move comes as the nuclear-armed, reclusive state has been gearing up for the upcoming ceremony, inviting Chinese and Russian delegations as the first such public visitors since the start of the pandemic. South Korean and US intelligence authorities were "closely monitoring" the situation and there had been an increase in manpower and equipment, South Korea's Joint Chiefs of Staff told a briefing when asked about the ceremony. Kim also visited the Fatherland Liberation War Martyrs Cemetery, KCNA reported, as he touted the soldiers as "inflicting defeat" on US imperialism.

The Great Fatherland Liberation War is a name used by Pyongyang to refer to the Korean War. After years of pandemic isolation, North Korea has invited its friends back this week, hosting senior Chinese and Russian delegations for 70th anniversary commemorations of the Korean War and the struggle against the United States and its allies. The visiting dignitaries, which include Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu and Chinese Communist Party Politburo member Li Hongzhong, are expected to be presented with one of North Korea's signature events: a massive military parade showcasing its latest weaponry. Analysts say the spectacle will likely include the North's nuclear-tipped missiles banned by the United Nations Security Council, where Russia and China are permanent members.

The visits are the first known foreign delegations to visit North Korea since the COVID-19 pandemic began, and come as Pyongyang has looked to deepen its ties with Beijing and Moscow, finding common ground in their rivalries with Washington and the West. Thursday's holiday, in which North Korea celebrates what it sees as a victory over US-led allied forces in the 1950-1953 Korean War, provides a chance for Pyongyang to highlight the Cold War days when North Korean troops fought with Chinese and Russian support. North Korea is still technically at war with the US-led alliance after fighting ended in an armistice, rather than a formal peace treaty.

"North Korea inviting delegations from both countries seems to be a case of history rhyming, whereby Pyongyang is gearing up to stand up



against the West, but perceives the need to maintain relatively balanced ties with both China and Russia," said Anthony Rinna, a specialist in Korea-Russia relations at Sino-NK, a website that analyses the region. Only time will tell if the visits signal a broader easing in North Korea's bans on international travel, which could in theory provide an opening for US officials to negotiate the release of US soldier Travis King, who crossed into North Korea last week, Rinna said. However, it seems unlikely that Pyongyang will seek to engage with Washington any time soon, and may consider itself to be in a full-scale New Cold War with the United States, he added. Images from Russia's defence ministry and North Korean media showed Shoigu being greeted by North Korean defence minister Kang Sun Nam and Russian ambassador Alexander Matsegora at the airport, and rows of North Korean and Russia troops.

The United States has accused North Korea of providing weapons to Russia during the war in Ukraine, including an arms delivery of infantry rockets and missiles to the Kremlin-backed Wagner mercenary group in November 2022. Pyongyang and Moscow have denied those claims, but Kim has vowed to bolster strategic cooperation between the nations. The military parade in Pyongyang is likely to include as many as 15,000 personnel, and possibly feature new designs of nuclear-capable weapons, said Yang Moo-jin, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul. Commercial satellite imagery over recent weeks have shown participants practicing, including in downtown Kim Il Sung Square where the event will take place, with large formations showing the number "70" and other slogans, said Dave Schmerler, a researcher at the James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies (CNS).

## Nearly 100 pilot whales strand themselves on beach

PERTH (AP): Nearly 100 pilot whales stranded themselves on a beach in western Australia, and about half had died by Wednesday morning, despite the efforts of wildlife experts and volunteers to save them. The pod of long-finned pilot whales was first spotted swimming near Cheynes Beach east of Albany.

As the day progressed, the pod began moving closer to the beach, sparking the concern of conservation officers. By 4 p.m., a large stretch of the shoreline was covered in beached whales. Western Australia state's Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions set up an overnight camp to monitor the whales. Peter Hartley, a manager from the department, said they had counted 51 whales that had died overnight. "We still have 46 whales still alive, and that will be our focus today - to get them back into the water and encourage them

to head off into deeper water," he told the Australian Broadcasting Corp. "We are optimistic that we will save as many as we can." The team tasked with helping the whales includes Perth Zoo veterinarians and marine fauna experts. They have been using specialized equipment, including vessels and slings.

Hundreds of volunteers also offered to help out. So many, in fact, that officials said they had enough registered volunteers and urged other members of the public to stay away from the beach. Drone footage released by the department showed the whales clustering and forming into a heart shape before stranding themselves on the beach. "This is just an amazing event," Joanne Marsh, the owner the Cheynes Beach Caravan Park told the ABC. "We've never seen anything quite like this."

Wildlife experts said the

unusual behavior of the whales could be an indicator of stress or illness within the pod. Pilot whales are highly social animals and often maintain close relationships with their pods throughout their lives. Macquarie University wildlife scientist Vanessa Pirotta said the drone footage could suggest the whales had become disoriented, although she said the exact reasons for mass strandings remain unclear. "The fact that they were in one area very huddled, and doing really interesting behaviors, and looking around at times, suggests that something else is going on that we just don't know," she said. She said she thought it unlikely the whales were trying to avoid a predator. "They often have a follow-the-leader type mentality, and that can very much be one of the reasons why we see stranding of not just one but many," Pirotta added.

## Court convicts suspects over role in Brussels attack

BRUSSELS (Agencies): A Brussels court has convicted six men of murder and attempted murder for their role in the 2016 bombings in the Belgian capital that killed 32 people and injured more than 300.

The two coordinated attacks at Brussels Airport in Zaventem and at Maelbeek metro station in central Brussels were claimed by the ISIL (ISIS) armed group.

The verdict marks the final chapter in the country's biggest trial in judicial history, which counted more than 900 plaintiffs and unfolded over more than half a year in a special court to address the exceptional case. Twelve jurors had been deliberating since early July over some 300 questions the court asked them to consider before reaching a

verdict. Among those convicted was Salah Abdeslam, the main suspect in a French trial over earlier attacks in Paris, who was seized four days before the Brussels attacks.

Abdeslam is already serving a life sentence without parole in France over his role in attacks that hit Paris cafes, the Bataclan theatre and France's national stadium in 2015. He was the only survivor among the ISIL members who struck Paris in November 2015 and were part of a Franco-Belgian network that went on to target Brussels four months later. Oussama Atar, a childhood friend of Abdeslam and a Brussels native who walked away from Zaventem airport after his explosives failed to detonate, was tried in

absentia.

He has been identified as a possible organiser of the deadly attacks on both Paris and Brussels. He is believed to have died in ISIL's final months of fighting in Iraq and Syria. Osama Krayem, Mohamed Abrini, Ali El Haddad Asufi and Bilal El Makhroukhi were charged with murder, attempted murder and participation in the acts of a "terrorist" group. The morning rush hour attacks on March 22, 2016 at Zaventem airport and on the Brussels subway's central commuter line deeply shook the city-headquarters of the European Union and NATO - and put the country on edge. In addition to the 32 people killed, nearly 900 others were wounded or suffered serious mental trauma.

## Ruto offers to meet leader of Opp protests

NAIROBI (Agencies): Kenyan President William Ruto has said he is ready to meet opposition leader Raila Odinga "anytime" after months of anti-government protests that have sparked international alarm and calls for dialogue. "As you have always known, am available to meet one on one with you anytime at your convenience," Ruto said in a post addressing Odinga on Twitter. Critics accuse Ruto of raising taxes as the country buckles under spiralling inflation and of rowing back on promises made during the August 2022 election campaign, when he declared himself the champion of impoverished Kenyans and pledged to improve their economic fortunes.

Ruto's government argues higher taxes are necessary to help deal with growing debt repayments and to fund job creation initiatives. Since March, Odinga's Azimio coalition has staged nine days of street protests against the government, with the rallies sometimes degenerating into looting and deadly clashes between security forces and demonstrators.

Odinga accused the police of using violence against demonstrators. "We are witnessing unprecedented police brutality," Odinga told a press conference in the capital Nairobi. "Police and hired gangs have shot and killed or wounded scores of people at close range," he said. The opposition leader called off demonstrations in April and May after Ruto agreed to dialogue, but the talks broke down, prompting the Azimio coalition to organise several rounds of protests this month.

In a statement, the coalition asked "Kenyans to come out and light candles and lay flowers, preferably white, in remembrance of and respect for the victims." Odinga's team had called for another round of demonstrations on Wednesday but said they were changing tack to hold "solidarity parades and vigil for victims of police brutality".

## Putin plans to visit China in October, Kremlin says

MOSCOW (AP): Russian President Vladimir Putin plans to visit China in October, a top Kremlin official announced. Russian news agencies quoted Putin's foreign policy adviser, Yuri Ushakov, as saying the trip will be timed to coincide with a "One Belt, One Road" forum in China. Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative involves infrastructure projects to connect Asia with European and African countries.

Ushakov said Putin also plans to travel to Turkey at some point to fulfill a promise to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, although the dates for that visit have not been decided yet. In addition, the Kremlin received an invitation for Putin to participate in a Group of 20 summit in India in September, he said. The Russian leader's in-person attendance has not been ruled out, although the format of Putin's participation is still "unclear", Ushakov said. The announcement of Putin's

travel plans came days after South African officials said he had agreed to skip an economic summit in their country next month because of an arrest warrant the International Criminal Court issued against him. The ICC has accused Putin of personal responsibility for the abductions of children from Ukraine.

As a signatory to the treaty that established the international court, South Africa would either be obligated to arrest the Russian leader if he set foot there or put in a position of flouting its responsibility. Staying away from the summit could be viewed as embarrassing for Putin, who is now expected to be the only leader of a country in the BRICS bloc of developing economies not to attend. Moscow has dismissed the warrant and said it doesn't recognize the ICC's jurisdiction. China, Turkey and India are not signatories to the Rome Statute, so Putin can travel to those countries more easily. An October

visit would take Putin to China seven months after Chinese President Xi Jinping came to Moscow on a three-day visit. The two also met in person in September 2022 on the sidelines of a regional summit in Uzbekistan. Before that, Putin met with Xi while attending the opening of the 2022 Beijing Winter Games, weeks before he sent troops into Ukraine.

China has sought to project itself as neutral in the Ukraine conflict, even while it has refused to condemn Moscow's actions and declared last year that it had a "no-limits" friendship with Russia. Beijing has denounced Western sanctions against Moscow, and accused NATO and the United States of provoking Putin's military action. China has also proposed a peace plan that was largely dismissed by Ukraine's allies, who insisted that Moscow must withdraw its forces from the neighboring country as a condition for peace.

## Toll from Ecuador jail riots hits 31 as army wrests back control

ECUADOR (Agencies): Dozens of people have died from a wave of violence in Ecuador's most dangerous prison, officials said, hours as President Guillermo Lasso imposed a 60-day state of emergency across the country's penitentiary system. The prosecutor's office raised the toll from 31 to 18 after some 2,700 soldiers were deployed to take control of the over-crowded Guayas 1 prison in the port city of Guayaquil.

Battles between the rival gangs there had left 14 wounded, it said. The government, via its communications secretariat Segcom, said "total control" has now been regained at Guayas 1, which houses more than 5,600 inmates. It said some 120 prison officers had also been freed after being held hostage in six jails around the country. There was no official information about hunger strikes allegedly taking place at some prisons. Earlier, Guillermo ordered police and military forces to assert control

over the South American nation's prisons, saying in a decree that inmates in Guayaquil used firearms during the unrest and set fire to facilities using gas tanks. The decree said that at least one of the dead in the violence had been beheaded.

"With effort, commitment and continuous work, we will move forward and recover the peace that organised crime has taken from us," Lasso later said in a post on the social media platform X, formerly known as Twitter. "We have to be more united than ever to win this battle." Hours after the decree, a new wave of violence was reported in the city of Esmeraldas, where 15 prison guards and two other staffers were being held hostage at a local jail, the government said. In Esmeraldas itself, a police unit was attacked, explosives were placed at gas stations and several cars were burned. The attorney general's office said on

social media that one civilian was hurt in a Molotov cocktail attack on its office there. The latest emergency is the second that Lasso has declared in the last 24 hours.

The president imposed a state of emergency in the provinces of Los Rios and Manabi, as well as in the city of Duran, after the mayor of Manta, a port city about 400km (250 miles) southwest of the capital of Quito, was shot and killed. Conditions in Ecuador's prison system have long drawn concern from officials and human rights groups. The Guayas 1 prison can hold 9,500 people but it exceeded that capacity by about 3,000 during the first quarter of this year. It is considered the most dangerous detention facility in Ecuador and fighting between rival gangs in 2021 killed 119 prisoners. A committee appointed by Lasso to look into prison conditions last year found that the country's penitentiaries were akin to "torture centers".



## The Frontier Post

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# Cipher conspiracy, an examination of the mayhem

**D**URING the news briefing at the US State Department, the rigmarole of the cipher conspiracy against former Pakistani Prime Minister Imran Khan and an alleged role of the United States in toppling the PTI government created an interesting scenario when The Frontier Post Managing Editor Jalil Afridi raised concerns of the millions of Pakistanis about alleged US role in domestic politics of other countries. Matthew Miller, the Spokesperson for the US State Department responded in a humorous tone that whether he should hold a sign saying the US had no role in overthrowing the government of Imran Khan and that those allegations are untrue.

The saga of cipher conspiracy and the alleged role of the United States in the ouster of the PTI government surrounds serious doubts and confusion not only in the Pakistani public but foreign media and political analysts because of contradictory statements and haphazard policies of the Pakistani state institutions who failed to adopt a consolidated stance over the issue. The PTI Chairman and former Prime Minister Imran Khan revealed the cipher conspiracy during a public rally in Islamabad on March 27, 2022, without naming the US government. Later, the National Security Council, the top civil-military joint national forum convened a meeting chaired by then-Prime Minister Imran Khan, that condemned the undiplomatic remarks of senior US Diplomat Donald Lu and expressed concerns over the US interference in the country's internal affairs. Meanwhile, in light of the NSC decisions, the Foreign Office issued a demarche to the US Charged affairs in Islamabad and expressed Pakistan's displeasure over the events surrounding the cipher scam. Interestingly, the succeeding PDM government again convened a meeting of the NSC and issued a vague statement that was primarily meant to cover up the issue. Interestingly, the PTI Chairman has accused his political rivals, then Army Chief, and several other individuals of conspiring against him and playing a role in the alleged regime change operation allegedly orchestrated by the US, while a large faction of the society and his opponents charged the PTI Chairman of hatching a false story and spoiling foreign relations with the United States in the furtherance of his political interests.

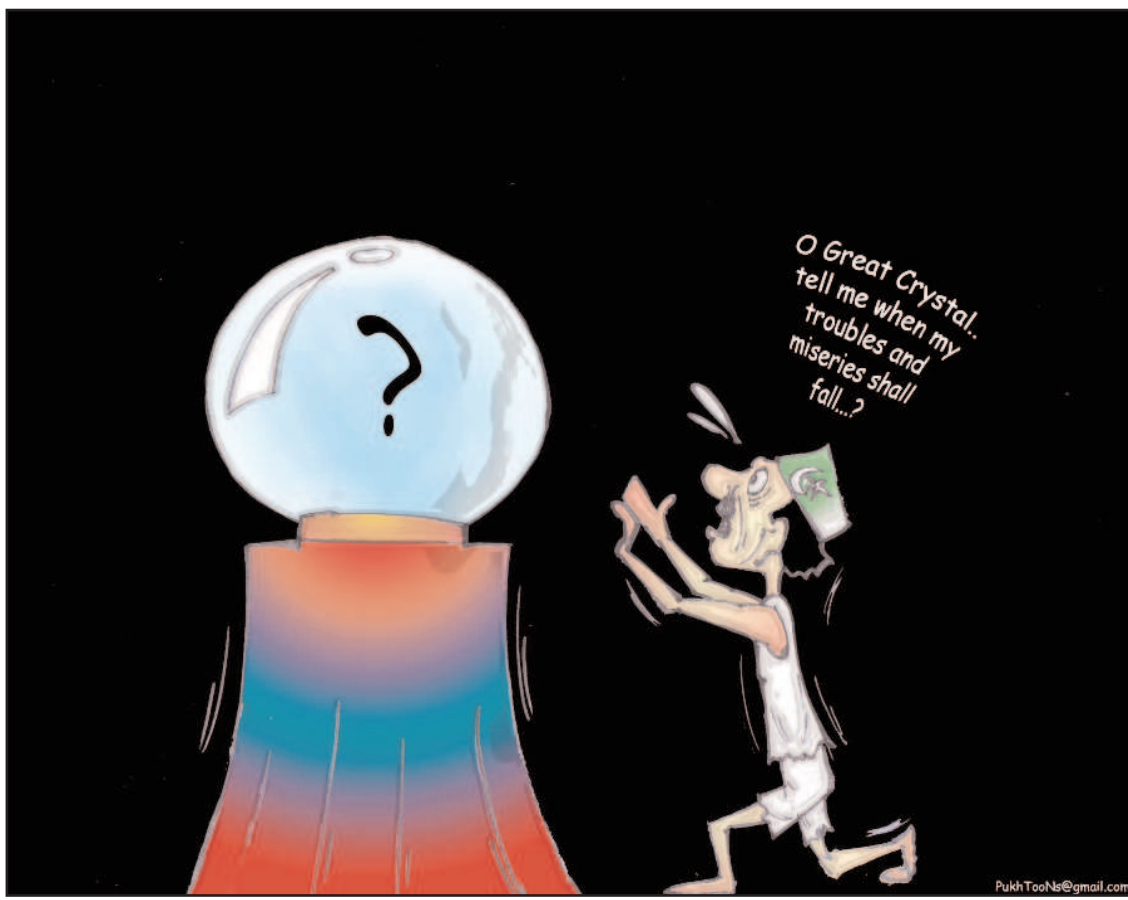
Thus the disagreement between Matthew and Jalil about the reality of Cipher's diorama could not be bridged up over the past months. Matthew keeps on saying Donald Lu didn't use any undiplomatic language regarding removing a democratically elected PM of Pakistan, while, Afridi of The Frontier Post wonders how the top most Pakistani forum misled the entire nation about the cipher scam. Mathew believed that the US does not have a policy of intervening in the domestic affairs of friendly nations and Washington has no favorite politician or political group in Pakistan or any other country in the world. But seasoned Frontier Post news hawk was not ready to forget US's open involvement in Guatemala, Chile, Argentina, Cuba, and Bolivia, as well as secret attempts for regime change in Iran, and other nations in the Middle East and North African regions.

Historically, the Frontier Post is a mouthpiece of the voiceless people of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Erstwhile FATA, who had paid a heavy price for unceasing US hostilities in the region which encompasses the Afghan Jihad against the former Soviet Union and so-called War on Terrorism that cast lives of millions of Pashtuns and over eighty thousands of innocent Pakistanis including brave military men, women and children. The menace of terrorism shook the Pakistani nation and billions of dollars in economic loss pushed the South Asian economy to the verge of impending economic default. Therefore, the bereaved Pashtun journalist, who personally experienced the miseries of wars and terrorism is currently not ready to accept the assertion of an American diplomat, who is fundamentally unaware of the methodologies commonly used by the Pentagon and Langley during their secret missions in other nations around the globe. At the helm of heightened US-China rivalry, this epic seems to be more relevant in the case of Pakistan which acts as a fulcrum in projecting Beijing's influence in adjoining regions.

Realistically, the issue of cipher conspiracy and the lyric of regime change has badly split the Pakistani nation into two factions, while this puzzle was unlikely to resolve in the near future. It would have long-lasting effects on domestic politics and social life in the country. At the same time, it has a lesson for powerful countries not to intervene in the domestic affairs of other nations which could be counterproductive for them or hurt their interests otherwise. Apparently, the debate between Afridi and Miller will pick up the threads time and again until the event down the road reveals facts of the history at any time in the future.

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## An Israeli civil war?

Marwan Bishara

**I**SRAEL'S decades-long colonial and religious war against the Palestinians has culminated in what appears to be Jewish civil strife bordering on civil war. As hundreds of thousands continue to march in the street against the government, the president has warned of standing at the edge of an abyss, while leading commentators warn that a civil war has already started.

This heating conflict is mainly between two types of Zionism, the pre and post-1967 Zionism; in other words, between the more liberal and secular Zionism and more fanatic and fascist Zionism. While these types of Zionism had managed to reconcile their differences throughout the past five decades, Israel's deepening occupation-cum-apartheid system of Jewish supremacy has provided huge momentum to the extreme elements within the Israeli society. It has also culminated in the establishment of a new governing coalition of six parties, five of which are "religious" - either ultra-Orthodox, ultra-Zionist or both. The government is one of the most extreme and racist elements of Israeli society; one that is determined to transform the Jewish communitarian democracy into a fanatical Jewish autocracy, by subjugating Israel's judiciary to its parliamentary majority, which in turn paves the way to changing its system of government.

A bit of history may help clarify. Since its inception in 1948 as a settler colonial state, Israel's leaders have followed in the footsteps of other settler states like the United States, Canada and Australia, by managing the tensions among its different immigrant communities through legal democratic processes. It was the only way to reconcile the differences between, say Iraqi and Polish, or Moroccan and Russian immigrant communities. Needless to say, that has not applied to the Palestinian citizens of Israel, who suffered under direct military control through 1966. Throughout that period, the secular Ashkenazi elites - concentrated in the Labour movement that created and led the earlier settlement of Palestine - had an advantage over the more conservative Sephardic immigrants and religious groups, and became the masters of

the land. But the 1967 war changed that. The occupation and settlement of East Jerusalem, and the rest of the newly occupied territories, have given vigour and momentum to messianic, fanatical, and hyper-nationalist Israelis ever since.

Their movement rose to power for the first time in 1977, supported by the marginalised Sephardic Jews and more than a few Labour leaders dreaming of

pogroms against

Palestinians in the occupied West Bank, "Hebrew neo-Nazis".

All of which begs the question, why are the more secular and less fanatical Israelis who are filling the streets unwilling or unable to see the link between the deepening apartheid and rising messianic fascism? The short answer, many are unwilling and many more are incapable. Those unwilling may worry that linking fascism with apartheid will fracture the movement and weaken its momentum. Those incapable of seeing the link want to continue to have their cake and eat it too; they insist that Israel can and must be secular, liberal and democratic while maintaining its Jewish supremacy and oppressive occupation of Palestine. Judging by the makeup of the Israeli parliament, the latter camp makes up the majority of the opposition to the government and they have a large following among the military brass and the corporate elites. If it were not for the person of Netanyahu, whom they terribly distrust, the likes of National Unity, Yisrael Beytenu and even Yesh Atid parties might have enthusiastically joined a more secular coalition government led by any other leader of the radical right party, Likud.

These parties may in fact end up reaching a compromise with the coalition government on its proposed legislation to somewhat safeguard the system's liberality towards Jews while allowing it to push ahead with its racist agenda towards the Palestinians within Israel and in the occupied territories. This may calm the situation, end the street protest, and restore appearances of normality. For a while anyway. But make no mistake, the genie is out of the bottle, and the fanatics, who have moved from the margins to the centre of power, and who feed on conflict and war, will not stop until their messianic redemption is complete, come what may. Preferably apocalyptic. I do not know where the flaring secular-religious conflict will eventually lead Israel to. But those in the West determined to stop Iran from going nuclear, need to stop their support for an increasingly fanatical nuclear state - Israel, increasingly at war with itself.

A Greater Land of Israel or total control of all of historic Palestine. From then on, American complicity in the form of economic and military support has provided the radical Israeli Right with much-needed momentum. And lately, Arab and Palestinian appeasement of fanatical Israel further hardened its racism. The Palestinian Authority has been repressing its own people in order to provide protection to Israel's entrenching apartheid, rendering its survival an Israeli necessity. Likewise, the willingness of autocratic Arab regimes to ditch the "land for peace" formula, and to sign up for unconditional peace and normalisation with colonial Israel, has provided Netanyahu and his fanatical allies with the legitimacy and the rationale to double down on their fanatical expansionist

Minister of National Security Itamar Ben-Gvir follow through on his call to carry arms, those weapons will not only be used against Palestinians - but also against secular, liberal Israelis they abhor no less. This was hardly unexpected. In fact, more than five decades ago, the late Prof Yeshayahu Leibowitz, one of Israel's leading sages, foresaw how after the 1967 war, racism, violence and hatred originating in a religious-messianic worldview and fuelled by the occupation and settlement enterprise, would lead, in his words, to the "rise of Judeo-Nazis". And a decade ago, a leading Israeli writer, the late Amos Oz, called the violent "hill-top" Jewish fanatics, in the occupied territories, who are the hardcore supporter of today's government ministers and who are carrying

## Israel at an inflection point after Netanyahu's Pyrrhic victory

Osama Al-Sharif

**V**ICTORIES, on the battlefield and in political arenas, can often be short-lived or, even worse, they can easily turn out to be Pyrrhic. This is almost certainly what happened on Monday, when the ruling Israeli coalition passed the first item in a controversial judicial overhaul that, critics believe, will undermine the independence and oversight of the judiciary over government policies.

The far-right coalition, led by Likud leader Benjamin Netanyahu, scored its first victory after a six-month-long battle to undermine the power of the Israeli Supreme Court and move the 75-year-old state closer to becoming an authoritarian one. This is the opinion of almost half of Israelis, who, in their tens of thousands, have protested against the so-called judicial overhaul since it was first unveiled in January. For outsiders, the legislative quarrel may seem arcane and unfathomable, but for most Israelis, on both sides of the divide, it is a matter of absolute survival: Whatever happens next will decide the identity of the Israeli state. This should matter not only to Israelis, but also to all those who have vehemently supported Israel since its onset.

Israel's founding fathers envisioned a secular, liberal and socialist state. First Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion was quoted as saying: "Since I invoke Torah so often, let me state that ... I am not religious, nor were the majority of the early builders of Israel believers. Yet their passion for this land stemmed from the Book of Books ... (The Bible is) the single most important book in my life." One Israeli critic said that Ben-Gurion planted the roots of a secular state but at the same time sowed the seeds of its destruction - the seeds of religious-messianic evil. Another historian wrote in Haaretz that Ben-Gurion was a pragmatic politician and, to realize his life's ambition, the establishment of the state, he enlisted religious messianism because nationalism alone is an empty shell that needs something juicy inside to muster enthusiasm. He no doubt thought he would be able to control the wild weeds that would grow in his garden. These weeds are now flourishing in the state of Israel. Israel has been hijacked by a coalition of far-right parties, each with its own agenda. A politically affiliated Netanyahu is leading a coalition of fanatics who are certain to take Israel from the secular, liberal and democratic state that it projected itself as to the world for many years into an unknown ultra-Orthodox entity. It will certainly not be liberal, nor will it be democratic. The followers of Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich have something else in mind. While the two once-fringe politicians may not agree on everything, they both want to see a new Israel: One that is ultranationalist and ultrareligious with an

agenda that seeks to recreate a biblical Israel.

Netanyahu, now 73 and with signs of failing health, may have never wanted to lead such a coalition. It is doubtful that he can now rein in his two rebellious partners, Ben-Gvir and Smotrich. Most analysts forget that the entire judicial overhaul scheme was concocted by Likud Justice Minister Yariv Levin, who is seen by critics "as leaving the indelible impression that he was not seeking to improve the judicial system but to eviscerate it." For Netanyahu, who has been a political player since the mid-1990s, the main objective is to save his career and himself. He faces a number of serious charges, including bribery and corruption. The judicial overhaul amendments would neutralize the judiciary and provide him with a way out - but at what price?

Pundits believe that Netanyahu has become a hostage to his coalition partners. No one knows what Israel would become if the far-right, ultrareligious, ultranationalist alliance fully sidelined the Supreme Court. Trying to understand what the religious far right wants is tricky. The secularists warn that liberal democracy is in danger. The Haredi influence on Israeli politics has become substantial. Moreover, Israel is a political mosaic, with 12 political parties represented in the Knesset and more than 100 out there in total. The fall of the Soviet Union, leading to the immigration of tens of thousands of Jews to Israel, altered the demographic map of the country.

The most crucial test of Israel's unity is taking place as we speak. The far right wants to change the nature of the country - from a liberal, secular and openly democratic state to a religious entity that is no different from what Daesh wanted to create. It will be a homophobic, misogynistic, ultranationalist society. This is not what Netanyahu really wanted. But he is being held hostage by a coalition that has an extremist agenda. That includes annexing the West Bank and creating an Eretz Israel, with which Netanyahu agrees. But the price he has to pay for colluding with the extremists may be too high. The impact of Monday's events will go viral. There will be mass demonstrations and hundreds, if not more, army and air force reservists will stay at home. There is a consensus among the security and senior army cadres that Israel will suffer and that the military establishment may even crumble; something that has never happened before in the history of the state.

The Histadrut, the largest labor union, may soon declare a nationwide strike. Israel is at a juncture. The myth of a liberal democracy is at an inflection point and moving forward will expose the country for what it is - an apartheid state that is normalizing an isolationist, fascist and ultrareligious system.

## Right decision to fight aggression, assist DPRK

Liu Qian

**J**ULY 27 marks the 70th anniversary of the armistice agreement that put the Korean War (1950-53) on hold. Eight months after the founding of the People's Republic of China, the Korean War broke out in June 1950. The flames of war soon reached the border river of Yalu, and US planes repeatedly bombed Northeast China's border regions. On Oct 19, 1950, responding to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea's request for assistance the Chinese People's Volunteers army crossed the Yalu River to aid the DPRK's fight there until the armistice was signed in 1953.

Some people have questioned China's decision to aid the DPRK and resist US aggression, and have questioned whether the cost in lives was worth it. It is not difficult to

answer these questions if we consider the situation at that time. Although it was at the request of the DPRK that China's leadership decided to send the Chinese People's Volunteers force to the peninsula, China also had to safeguard its own national security. With the intervention of Washington, the fighting did not stop at the 38th Parallel, along which a buffer or demilitarized zone had been established. As the US bombed border cities and towns on the border between China and the DPRK, it posed a threat to China's national security, with some in the US calling for the war to be extended into China.

Since the expansion of the war into China would have had severe consequences for the newly founded People's Republic, Chairman Mao Zedong announced that China needed to restore

peace on the Korean Peninsula. Some people think the hostilities ended a stalemate because after the signing of an armistice, the two sides returned to their respective pre-war positions separated by the 38th Parallel. But the fact that the ill-equipped Chinese People's Volunteers force, who made huge sacrifice during the war, did not retreat in face of the US-led forces, which had the most advanced weapons and equipment shows that the Chinese side was the victor in the war. When the fighting finally ceased around the 38th Parallel, the Chinese volunteers force had advanced about 300 kilometers from the China-DPRK border, at one stage even reaching near the 37th Parallel.

Yes by participating in the war, China succeeded in building a peaceful

environment that boosted the morale of the Chinese people and facilitated the country's economic development. China repeatedly warned the US-led forces preparing to cross the 38th Parallel to continue their offensive that the Chinese people love peace but are not afraid to fight a war against aggression, and it would take counteraction if the US forces crossed that line. Washington ignored these warnings as it believed that Beijing had neither the ability nor the courage to confront the powerful, well-equipped US-led forces.

By pushing the US-led forces back to the 38th Parallel from close to the Yalu River and exacting an armistice from the US, the Chinese People's Volunteers force demonstrated its brave spirit and excellent tactics, and cre-

ated a significant strategic buffer zone for the country.

If China had not won the war, it would have faced great military pressure with the US forces crossing the Yalu River. China paid a great price by being forced to participate in a war to resist US aggression for it won the peace alongside the DPRK, safeguarding its territories, creating opportunities for its economic development and peaceful rise.

By fighting the war, China also minimized the risks of military attack or military interference in its internal affairs at the height of the Cold War. Therefore, China should commemorate the victory of the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea and laud the Chinese leadership at that time for making the hard but wise decision that in the long run was crucial for the

country's development, and to the Chinese People's Volunteers force and civilians, who made great sacrifices to secure peace on the peninsula. Over 197,000 Chinese people had died in the war.

The War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea showed that although China is a peace-loving country, it will not hesitate to fight if forced to safeguard its territories and protect its people.

Some countries led by the US are hyping up the "China threat" theory nowadays as part of their strategy to contain China. China is not a threat to any country, it pursues a defensive defense policy. However, should its sovereignty, national security and development interests be threatened, the spirit of the Chinese People's Volunteer force will inspire the people to firmly defend the motherland.



# What we learned from recent calls for a Russian nuclear attack

Andrey Baklitskiy

**DOES Russia have the right to carry out a nuclear first strike, and has the time come to launch one? These questions have been the subject of recent public discussion in Russia - unprecedented in tone and content - right up to the level of Russian President Vladimir Putin. The world has learned nothing new about Russia's nuclear arsenal, the conditions Moscow sees as necessary for going nuclear, or the chances of this happening. Instead, the discussion became one about Russia's current position in the world.**

It was Sergei Karaganov, honorary chairman of Russia's Council on Foreign and Defense Policy, who kicked off the debate. In an article published in the middle of June, he contended that "this military operation [in Ukraine] cannot end with a decisive victory without forcing the West to retreat strategically, or even surrender." Therefore, he said, it is necessary to scare the West with Russia's willingness to use nuclear weapons, and then possibly "hit a bunch of targets in a number of countries in order to bring those who have lost their mind to reason." Karaganov summarized his point by saying that, in a war, the winners are not judged. Previous calls to use nuclear weapons in Ukraine have been made by Chechen leader Ramzan Kadyrov. Former Russian president Dmitry Medvedev also regularly hints at such a scenario. But the direct advocacy of a nuclear war by Karaganov - a member of Russia's mainstream expert community - obliged other members of that community to weigh in.

The opinions of most other experts can be gleaned from the titles of their articles: "A Preemptive Nuclear Strike? No!," "Why We Won't Be Able to Sober Up the West with a Nuclear Bomb," and "Nuclear War Is a Bad Way to

Solve a Problem." One argued that Russia could achieve all its goals with conventional weapons and that Karaganov's proposal only played into the hands of the West; another highlighted the unpredictable consequences and unacceptable costs of nuclear weapons. The only significant public figure to support Karaganov was Dmitry Trenin, a professor at Moscow's Higher School of Economics. Even Putin waded into the debate on the use of tactical nuclear weapons. Answering a question at the plenary session of the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum, Putin said: "First, we see no need to use them, and, second, considering this even as a possibility factors into lowering the threshold for the use of such weapons."

Indeed, analysis of the texts penned by the first strike proponents reveals that they are actually seeking a way out for Russia from the difficult position in which it finds itself in Ukraine. Trenin, for example, wrote that "nuclear deterrence, which many in Moscow relied on as an effective means of ensuring the vital interests of the country, has turned out to have much more limited uses." That's a fair point. Russia's nuclear power status does of course restrain the West from direct intervention in Ukraine (although it's unclear whether, even without that deterrent, Western countries would want that). But it in no way prevents them from supporting Kyiv with arms, intelligence, training, and sanctions.

By and large, Western countries do not assess the likelihood of Russia using nuclear weapons as high. They believe it would mean many deaths, the destruction of infrastructure, and, perhaps most significantly, massive reputational damage for the Russian authorities. Nor is it a given that a nuclear

strike would help Russia achieve its goals. Either way, the risks of escalation and a nuclear response would be very high. It's calculations of this sort that explain why nuclear weapons have not been used on the battlefield since 1945. Instead, their use has been reserved for exceptional circumstances, when the very existence of a state is threatened. The question is, what exactly are "exceptional circumstances?"

The West mostly refuses to believe that, for Moscow, those circumstances could be military defeat and a return to the borders of 2014 (before the annexation of Crimea) on the basis that if Russia existed within those borders before, it can do so again. This logic is backed up by the fact that after Putin pledged he would use "any means" to maintain the country's territorial integrity following the annexation of four Ukrainian regions last year, he then approved Russia's retreat from Kherson, the capital of one of those regions. The Russian leadership is obviously struggling to find a way in which nuclear threats could strengthen its position in Ukraine and give it an edge in the confrontation with the West. The Russian Foreign Ministry, for example, regularly states that a military escalation could trigger a nuclear war. But it is unable to provide any details on the chain of events that would lead to such an outcome.

Indeed, most in the West believe the nuclear threat from Russia is insignificant. If Karaganov wanted to be taken seriously, he needed - at the very least - to explain why a nuclear outcome was desirable for Russia. Yet that part of his article was severely lacking. Karaganov had nothing to say about the targets of a nuclear strike, the conditions for taking a decision to go nuclear, or Moscow's famous "red lines." All he has are contentious claims

that the use of a nuclear weapon would force the West to back down.

Upon closer inspection, the nuclear weapons discussion is actually a discussion about whether there are more important things for Russia, its leaders, and its people than winning a war with the West. In the world described by Karaganov and Trenin, the answer is "no." They see the standoff with the West as existential and argue that, as Moscow has fewer resources than its enemies, a first strike is logical. This position is not just unacceptable to Russian nuclear policy experts, however, but also - as far as it is possible to judge - to the Russian leadership. On top of the obvious counterarguments and risks, there is an understanding that Russia has other national interests and that, while the current situation is unpleasant, it shows no sign of leading to the country's total destruction - unlike the use of nuclear weapons.

Advocates of a nuclear first strike like Karaganov and Trenin have not only failed to scare their foreign opponents, but, as the recent discussion illustrates, have not even succeeded in winning over their colleagues. Ordinary Russians are likely similarly opposed: a recent survey by the independent pollster Levada Center revealed that 86% of Russians believe nuclear weapons should not be used in Ukraine under any circumstances. Of course, none of this guarantees that nuclear weapons will not be used. That decision will be taken by one person: the Russian president. And he will be informed and advised by a group of people that does not include the experts who took part in the recent discussion. We can only hope that the consensus of Russia's expert community and the views of ordinary people count for something.

The Moscow Times

# Sudan is heading towards complete state collapse

Abdelwahab El-Affendi

**As a result of a series of bloody conflicts, bad leadership, endemic corruption, long periods of complete international isolation and chronic economic vulnerability, Sudan has been classified as a failed or fragile state in academic literature and media reports for decades. The Fund for Peace's Fragile State Index, for example, has ranked Sudan among the world's 10 most fragile/failed states every single year since its launch in 2006 (and placed it in the top five for 12 consecutive years). Nonetheless, in large part thanks to the Sudanese people's resilience and determination to achieve true democracy, the country always managed to avoid complete state collapse and a descent into deadly anarchy - until now.**

Today, Sudan is under attack from an ISIL-like rogue militia and with the international community seemingly unwilling to take the necessary steps to protect the country's fragile institutions, it is facing imminent state collapse - a possibility that could prove catastrophic not only for the long-suffering people of Sudan but the entire region.

The Rapid Support Forces (RSF), a paramilitary group formed in the 2000s to help Sudan's longtime ruler Omar al-Bashir hold on to power, now controls large swathes of territory across the country. The militia, mostly made out of ethnic Arab fighters from across the region, has taken over most of Darfur, including West Darfur, where it embarked on a campaign of ethnic cleansing against the Masalit people indigenous to the area. Many Masalit judges, lawyers, doctors, teachers, aid workers and other professionals have reportedly been killed in what appears to be a systematic effort to murder potential leaders. West Darfur's governor, Khamis Abakar, was also brutally killed, and his abused body gruesomely exhibited, after accusing the RSF of "genocide" in a televised interview and making an appeal for international intervention. Reports say that members of his security detail were also hacked to death.

In the seven Darfuri cities currently under the control of the RSF, fighters have burnt and looted all food stores, attacked and intimidated civilians and cut all communication lines with the outside world. One can only imagine the horrors still taking place in these localities, hidden from the gaze of the international community. The capital Khartoum, where the RSF has been fighting against the Sudanese military and state since April 15, is also in ruins. Militia men have occupied public facilities, including hospitals, and looted almost every store. Government and civilian offices and businesses in the city centre, as well as homes in middle-class neighbourhoods, have also been looted and left in ruins. The terror RSF is inflicting on the city has brought state institutions

to a complete halt. No government service, from rubbish collection to medical aid, is available in the city and surrounding areas. There are no traffic controls or functioning courts. Essential documents, like birth or death certificates and passports, cannot be obtained.

Most civil servants, educators, doctors and other essential workers have left the city for safer destinations abroad or elsewhere in the country. Schools and universities are closed, and most public buildings have either been destroyed or are being used as barracks by the militia. Now the Sudanese state only has a ghostly presence in the capital, and it is barely functioning in other regions.

Sure, this is not Sudan's first existential crisis. The country has been plagued with composite crises and serious threats to its viability since at least the late 1980s. It went through many deadly famines, several episodes of near bankruptcy, and debilitating civil conflicts. It never, however, came as close to experiencing a sudden and absolute dissolution of state sovereignty as it is today. Even in the early noughties, when conflict was raging both in the South and in Darfur, and al-Bashir's oppressive regime was suffocating the nation on multiple fronts, Sudan remained a largely functioning country. Its GDP growth, for example, averaged 6.5 percent between 2000 and 2007.

Of course, the grave state of affairs today is the direct result of past mistakes. It was decades of bad, short-sighted leadership, both at national and sub-national levels, that finally brought Sudan to the brink of collapse. After all, the current crisis has its roots firmly in the al-Bashir era - the former president not only personally created and empowered the RSF, but also cultivated the culture of impunity, military dependency and civilian erasure that laid the ground for the tragic events we are witnessing today.

Since al-Bashir's ousting in 2019, those leading the transition into democracy failed to get the country on a better path and eventually came on the verge of turning decades of premature predictions about state failure into reality. The dominant political parties concluded a problematic deal with the military, of which the RSF was a core component, instead of broadening the civilian consensus. Rather than focusing on constitution-making and preparing the country for democratic governance, those in positions of power wasted time wrangling over issues not essential to the transition.

As civilians missed their window for taking charge of the process, the influence the military had over the country increased exponentially. The emergence of the military as a leading power in a so-called democratic transition led to a comparable increase in the power of the RSF militia, which came to

be seen by many as the only counterforce against an untrustworthy and power-hungry military. Emboldened by its newfound prominence, the RSF is now openly waging a genocidal war against the people of Sudan. And the Sudanese state, perhaps for the first time, is fighting for its very survival.

All this leaves the regional and global powers who had long been predicting the "failure" of the Sudanese state facing difficult choices. These actors, of course, can abandon their illusions about the RSF being a useful actor in the democratic transition, accept that it is nothing more than a feudal crime syndicate hellbent on genocide, and stage a wide-ranging (and likely costly) intervention to save the Sudanese state.

So far, however, key actors insist on simplistically categorising the ongoing crisis as an unfortunate conflict between two equally culpable generals and ignoring Sudanese calls for meaningful, constructive intervention. Britain, for example, recently joined the US in sanctioning the Sudanese military alongside the RSF for the ongoing violence. And at the recent IGAD meeting in Addis Ababa, which Sudan boycotted, Ethiopian PM Abiy Ahmed called for a no-fly zone over Sudan and a ban on the use of heavy artillery - moves that would have robbed the beleaguered Sudanese military of its slim advantage over the RSF, and ensured immediate state collapse, exposing the civilians in Khartoum and the rest of the country to the same genocidal targeting to which Darfur is currently being subjected.

While the prospects of a meaningful international intervention are almost non-existent, thankfully, there are (albeit insufficient) efforts to give the Sudanese state a fighting chance against the RSF. The UN Security Council, the International Criminal Court and the US government, for example, have all expressed interest in investigating and exposing the atrocities being committed by the RSF in Darfur. Exposing the violence of the militia would not only bring its victims closer to finding justice but will help delegitimise it, helping the Sudanese state fight for survival.

Leaders from Sudan's seven neighbouring countries, meanwhile, recently came together at a summit in Egypt and expressed their commitment to preserving the Sudanese state and the integrity and viability of its institutions - this means supporting the military, which in the current dynamic is the backbone of Sudanese statehood. However, while commendable, these efforts are not nearly enough. If the international community wants Sudan to avoid a catastrophic collapse, leading global and regional powers should stop wasting time with well-meaning statements and expressions of support and take meaningful action to eliminate the RSF threat.

Aljazeera

# Britain is a poor country determined to get even poorer

Sam Ashworth-Hayes

**As the birthplace of the Industrial Revolution, Britain led the world into modernity. Today, it seems determined to do the opposite, its politicians happier mouthing platitudes about net zero than they are with getting on with growth. Nowhere has this been more clearly illustrated than in the response to Michael Gove's housing speech, which dangled the prospect of a new Cambridge quarter filled with beautiful, dense housing and lab space; a fitting gift for one of the world's finest cities.**

And how was this vision met? With objections so short-sighted they were almost comical. Anthony Browne, a local Tory MP, swore he'd do "everything I can" to block it. Cambridge has "run out of water", and new reservoirs will take 20 years to build. Speeding this up by waving through plans and buying extra buckets and spades is apparently beyond the ken of man.

These objections are a perfect example of why Britain is poor - and apparently wants to be poorer. The Hungarian sinologist Étienne Balazs once described imperial China as "a regime of paperwork and harassment, endless paperwork and endless harass-

ment". At times, this feels like the state that Britain has chosen to model itself on. Every attempt to build or innovate is choked off. As a result, we are slipping behind countries we once considered our peers. We invest far less of our GDP in machinery and buildings than other rich countries, and the effects are showing. Throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, the prosperity of Australia and the United Kingdom tracked one another. Today, Australians produce in real terms \$8,000 more than their British counterparts.

Americans, meanwhile, might as well be living on a different planet; the gap in output per person between Britain and America is twice as large as the gap between Britain and Romania. And the rest are catching up. Poland, a country once ravaged by communism, is growing so quickly that, if you project pre-pandemic growth rates forward, it overtakes the UK's GDP per capita in ten years' time. It's no mystery why, Cambridge should be a shining star in the economy of the South East, churning out biotech unicorns and building on its deep heritage of academic expertise to forge the industries of the future. Yet its expansion is choked off by

regulation that seems actively hostile to economic growth.

Prosperity comes through people, in the right place and the right jobs. Our own history shows how much this matters. In 1700, Manchester was a market town of around 10,000 people. As cotton spinning took flight, the economy grew and by 1850 some 300,000 people called it home. The city was dubbed "Cottonopolis", filled with warehouses described in Dickens's Household Words as "fit for the Town Hall of any respectable municipality". Would that growth be permitted today? Economists have estimated that loosening planning constraints in just three US cities would let people work in better jobs, boosting GDP by around 9 per cent. Lifting housing constraints in England's South East could have a similar effect.

The Cambridge plan was put forward because past attempts to boost building have failed. But despite the economic case and the intent to build for beauty, people are still finding ways to object. At this point, if the UK is utterly determined to become the world leader in degrowth, we might as well pack it in and move to France - where they do at least build houses.

# Europe's wait-and-see policy on Syria will not work

Dr. Dania Koleilat Khatib

**THE European Parliament this month issued a joint motion for a resolution on Lebanon. The statement stressed "that conditions are not met for the voluntary, dignified return of refugees in conflict-prone areas in Syria." At the same time, the motion acknowledged that the situation in Lebanon is dire. What we can conclude from the statement is that the EU is adopting a wait-and-see attitude, with no solution on the horizon. However, this does not work because the situation is not sustainable.**

The status quo in Syria is that the country is de facto divided into three areas. In the northeast, the main force is the Syrian Democratic Forces under American protection. In the northwest, Hayat Tahrir Al-Sham rules under Turkish influence. And the rest of the country is with the regime, either under Iranian or Russian influence. The Ukraine war has added a layer of complication to the conflict and increased the stagnation. The West now does not want to start a conversation with Russia. And since the Wagner boss Yevgeny Prigozhin's mutiny, Western leaders are under the impression that Russia is severely weakened, ensuring they will not want to engage in a conversation such as the one on Syria, in which Moscow will be given legitimacy and importance.

Regarding Bashar Assad, although the international community has the backing of UN Security Council Resolution 2254, no one has the stamina or is willing

to use their political or military capital to put it into effect. Hence, Europe abides by the resolution but does nothing to enforce it. On Syria, the EU faces a dilemma. On the one hand, it realizes that removing Assad would be a difficult task, so it has given up on this project. On the other hand, Brussels knows that there will be no stability while Assad is in power. Assad cannot be trusted with any aid. Any funds that go into Syria will go toward solidifying the regime and its iron grip over the people - they will not be used to improve the situation for ordinary Syrians.

To solve this problem, the EU believes that maintaining the status quo is the best option. The thinking is that the refugees will stay where they are and everybody can wait and see, Russia is getting weakened, the economic situation in Syria is deteriorating and, at some point in time, Assad will have to make concessions. However, this is mainly driven by wishful thinking rather than realism.

The Europeans do not realize that the refugees' situation is not sustainable. Turkiye is already sending refugees back to Syria. While people thought that President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's promise to repatriate refugees was an election stunt, it has turned out to be a real policy. While Erdogan announced last week that 1 million refugees had "voluntarily" returned, various media accounts show that many of those returns may have been involuntary.

Regardless of the dynamics behind this campaign, one thing is very clear: The refugee issue is not sustainable.

The same applies to Lebanon. It is true that the refugees are not the cause of the crisis the Lebanese are witnessing, with the disaster instead being self-inflicted. However, the aversion toward refugees has reached the point where it cannot be contained anymore. It needs to be addressed. The EU can no longer turn its back on the problem and think that it can go away. It needs to seriously think about a solution, otherwise a clash is bound to happen and that will result in a new wave of refugees reaching European shores. Europe definitely does not need that. However, dealing with Assad or recognizing him is not a solution. If Europe accepts Assad, he will use this as bait to extort funds from the EU; funds that definitely will not go toward improving the lives of the people of Syria, but rather to consolidate his regime and to extend his influence.

So far, those who have normalized with him have got nothing in return. Captagon, the deadly drug, is still flowing to Arab states and the wider world. This means Europe needs a dose of realism in terms of dealing with the Syrian conflict. The European policy toward Syria is living on borrowed time - sooner or later, the Europeans will need to act. They need to have a real policy and not a tactic of appeasement. The Europeans do not want to talk to

the Russians because of the Ukraine war. However, the Europeans should engage with their allies, or at least those with whom they can talk effectively in order to reach a solution. They should encourage the Saudi-Iran rapprochement and push it toward an operational agreement on Syria that will allow the return of refugees, while also putting in place a mechanism to monitor and ensure their safe and dignified return.

Also, Europe should engage with Turkiye and make sure that the Erdogan government, which includes the Nationalist Movement Party, makes a concession and accepts a reconciliation with the northeast. In this respect, Turkiye would need a perk, as it perceives that it can use coercive measures to keep the Kurds of that area under its thumb. The 2016 agreement between the EU and Turkiye pointed to visa-free entry for Turkish nationals to the Schengen area. However, this has not come about. According to the Europeans, Turkiye failed to abide by certain criteria regarding border controls and human rights. Maybe it is time for the EU to give Turkiye this incentive to convince Erdogan and his government, especially his ultranationalist allies, of the benefits of normalizing with Syria's northeast. However, the starting point to any practical policy the EU might adopt is an awareness that the current situation of refugees in neighboring countries is not sustainable.

Arab News

# Pakistan expresses satisfaction with CPEC development

Muhammad Zamir Assadi

**THE two-day International conference, organized by the Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives in collaboration with the Embassy of the Republic of China, concluded on Tuesday with the goal of continuing to implement the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) for the country's prosperity.**

The conference Decade of CPEC and Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), themed "From Vision to Reality", was organized by the Ministry of Planning Development & Special Initiatives in collaboration with the Republic of China to bring together policymakers, scholars, practitioners and other stakeholders to exchange ideas and insights related to the economic, social, environmental and geopolitical impacts of CPEC and BRI.

Federal Minister for Planning Development & Special Initiatives Ahsan Iqbal not only emphasized the importance of saving and investment in his address, but also shed light on the significant development projects that have been undertaken within the context of CPEC & BRI. Highlighting the

ongoing and upcoming development projects under CPEC, the Minister elaborated on their potential to transform Pakistan's infrastructure and economy. He underlined that these projects are not merely about physical connectivity but also aim to uplift the lives of the people and boost socio-economic development across the country.

Ahsan Iqbal specifically mentioned several key projects that have been identified as vital components of the CPEC. These include major energy infrastructure projects, such as power plants and transmission lines, aimed at addressing Pakistan's energy needs and promoting industrial growth. He also emphasized the significance of transportation and connectivity projects, such as the development of road networks and modernization of ports, to enhance regional trade and economic integration. During the last day of the conference, four sessions were held which included Security and Geopolitical Implications, Innovation, Technology and

Global Value Chains, Challenges to Regional Connectivity and Integration, Artificial Intelligence & Labor Market Dynamics.

The Conference has received 435 extended abstracts from more than 85 national and international institutes including universities, government departments, practitioners, think tanks and entrepreneurs. Following a rigorous evaluation, 310 abstracts were shortlisted to be further scrutinized by the scientific committee and the Committee accepted 110 abstracts for full paper submissions. Furthermore, the Minister highlighted the importance of the Gwadar Port, a strategic project under CPEC, which is set to become a key maritime gateway connecting Pakistan with the rest of the world. The development of Gwadar Port and its associated free zone is expected to attract foreign investment, stimulate economic activities and create job opportunities in the region.

Minister Ahsan Iqbal also underscored the need to align these development projects with

sustainable practices and environmental considerations. He stressed that environmental conservation and ecological sustainability are crucial aspects that must be integrated into every phase of project planning and implementation. The Planning Minister encouraged both local and foreign investors to actively participate in these development ventures, emphasizing the government's commitment to providing a conducive and investor-friendly environment. He assured that all stakeholders' interests will be safeguarded and transparency will remain a cornerstone of the entire development process.

Minister Ahsan Iqbal urged everyone to carry forward the lessons learned, the connections made and the spirit of collaboration. He emphasized the potential of joint efforts to shape a brighter and more inclusive future, founded on the principles of shared prosperity and mutual respect. Later, he presented souvenirs to both Pakistani and Chinese companies who participated in the CPEC project.

The China Daily



# Ahsan inaugurates historic ‘FUTURE E-Commerce Operations Center’

ISLAMABAD (APP): Minister for Planning, Development, and Special Initiatives Professor Ahsan Iqbal on Wednesday inaugurated a historic ‘FUTURE E-Commerce Operations Center, calling upon the younger generation to embrace e-commerce and information technology as pivotal components of Pakistan’s economic growth.

The event marks a significant milestone for Pakistan, as it celebrates the 10th anniversary of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and showcases the country’s remarkable progress over the years, a news release said.

Addressing the inaugural ceremony, the minister highlighted the essence of nation-building, emphasizing that unity and cooperation formed the bedrock of any successful nation.

He drew attention to China’s remarkable progress, attributing it to three fundamental pillars including political stability, policy continuity and peace.

“Political stability in China played a pivotal role in fostering an environment of peace, enabling the nation to channel its efforts towards growth and prosperity,” he said stressing the importance of policy continuity, as it had been instrumental in sustaining China’s progress over the years. He said no country could progress without a system that prioritized

peace, stability and policy consistency.

Ahsan Iqbal made a crucial point that no matter how qualified and exceptional the individuals in government may be, “political uncertainty, turmoil, or divisive politics hinder a country’s path to success.”

He urged for the prioritization of peace and stability above all else, as it formed the bedrock of a nation’s strength.

In light of Pakistan’s 75th anniversary of independence, the minister called for a collective embrace of unity and progress. “Learning from our nation’s history, the current generation must acknowledge the significance of sustained policies and shun experimentation.”

By working together, the minister said Pakistan could move on the path of a stable and peaceful future, securing national prosperity. He highlighted that CPEC became a global brand, attracting attention from major international players, including the United States, Britain, Japan, and Europe. The influx of foreign investment was a testament to Pakistan’s potential for growth and development.

With the support of China, he said the country achieved significant milestones, including the addition of 11,000 megawatts of electricity in just three and a half years, transforming the energy landscape of

Pakistan.

Speaking about the importance of continuity in policies, the minister stressed the need for political stability and unity to achieve sustained progress.

He urged the youth to envision a prosperous Pakistan, emphasizing that the nation’s greatest strength lies in its skilled and hard-working workforce.

He called upon the younger generation “to embrace e-commerce and IT as pivotal components of Pakistan’s economic growth.”

Highlighting the potential of the youth, he encouraged them to become brand ambassadors for Pakistan on the global stage.

With a skilled and dedicated workforce, the minister said Pakistan could attract private sector investments from China and beyond, positioning itself as a favorable destination for businesses looking to relocate due to rising labor costs in China.

Ahsan Iqbal emphasized the vital role of the current generation in shaping Pakistan’s future, saying “Our youth hold the key to the nation’s economic growth, akin to how an atomic bomb represents our defense.”

He said the potential of youth was boundless, and “we must empower them with essential skills and quality education to unleash their entrepreneurial spirit. By removing obstacles that hinder their

progress, we can pave the way for a brighter future.”

The minister expressed unwavering belief in the exceptional talent and capabilities of Pakistani youth, asserting that they stood among the best in the world.

“In today’s global landscape, branding plays a significant role in a nation’s success,” calling upon the youth to create a unique brand that showcased Pakistan’s extraordinary human resources to traders worldwide.

“Their hardworking, honest, and intelligent traits make them an unparalleled asset on the global stage, positioning Pakistan as a force to be reckoned with.”

The FUTURE E-Commerce Operations Center stands as a testament to Pakistan’s progress and the untapped potential of its youth.

The minister applauded the efforts of the private enterprise behind the center and expressed hope for the establishment of similar centers across the country to empower the youth and foster economic growth.

In conclusion, Ahsan Iqbal expressed his belief that with collective efforts, Pakistan would realize its dream of becoming one of the world’s top economies.

He called upon the youth to embrace hard work, integrity, and innovation, building a prosperous future for Pakistan.



ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar chairing meeting of Economic Coordination Committee (ECC) of Cabinet.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): PQA shipping activity was recorded at the port where seven ships namely, Lana, Maersk Kensington, MSC Denisse, MSC Elaine, Oriole, Prabhu Parvati and Al-Jassasiya carrying Container, Coal, Chemicals, and LNG, berthed at Qasim International Container Terminal, Bulk Terminal, Engro Vopak Terminal, and Gas Terminal respectively on Tuesday.

Meanwhile five more ships, BBC Plata, Young Chang Shun-hang, BW Kobe, Star Pisces and Chem-road Echo also arrived at outer anchorage of the Port Qasim during the last 24 hours.

A total of 11 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them two ships, Hafnia Turquoise and Prabhu Parvati sailed out to sea on Wednesday morning (today) on 26th July, while five more ships, Ellora, Maersk Kensington, MSC Denisse, Lana and Nord Agano are expected to sail on afternoon same day.

The cargo throughput of 223,394 tonnes, comprising 196,194 tones of imports Cargo and 27,200 tonnes of export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 5,990 Containers (4,390 TEUs Imports and 1,600 TEUs export) was handled at the port during the last 24 hours.

There are eleven ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them four ships, BW Kobe, Asia Inspire, Flagship Privet, and Southern Quokka carrying Canola, Palm oil, Mogas, and Chemicals are expected to take berths at FAP, LCT, FOTCO, and EVTL respectively on 26th July, while four more ships, EM Astoria, CMA CGM Butterfly, Navios Lapis and MSC Tia-II carrying containers are due to arrive at Port Qasim on Thursday.

## Vietnam’s economy faces headwinds

HANOI (APP): Vietnam’s economy is facing headwinds stemming from the global economic slowdown and challenging financial and monetary conditions, prompting it to take comprehensive measures to promote economic growth.

To achieve the GDP growth target, Vietnam needs to tackle the economy’s internal problems by measures such as speeding up public investment disbursement, stimulating demand, and improving the business climate to attract investment, the newspaper reported, citing Vo Tri Thanh, director of the Institute for Brand and Competitiveness Strategy.

Noting that interest rate cut was not a one-size-fits-all solution to promote economic growth, Thanh urged comprehensive measures, including expanding the market for enterprises and offering new business opportunities.

According to Nguyen Van Than, chairman of the Vietnam Association of SMEs, about 25 percent of the association’s member companies were facing difficulties in accessing credit.

Noting that lowering rates was just a prerequisite to increase the capital absorptive capacity of enterprises, Thanh said enterprises need to improve their competitiveness, corporate governance capacity, and financial transparency to be able to access credit.

Currently, lending rates in Vietnam were 0.5 to 2 percent, which is lower than the end of 2022, with short-term rates for production and business loans at around 5 to 9 percent per year and long-term rates at around 8.5 to 11 percent per year, according to the reports.

# PSX stays bullish, gains 265 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Wednesday, gaining 265.19 points, a positive change of 0.57 percent, closing at 46,682.53 points against 46,417.34 points the previous trading day.

A total of 429,515,564 shares were traded during the day as compared to 319,893,485 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 14.137 billion against Rs 10,259 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 352 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 212 of them recorded gains and 121 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 19 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Ltd with 58,856,601 shares

at Rs 2.30 per share; WorldCall Telecom with 22,244,922 shares at Rs.1.41 per share and Pak Refinery with 18,394,805 shares at Rs 16.93 per share.

Reliance Cotton witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 31.88 per share price, closing at Rs 456.88, whereas the runner-up was Attock Refinery with an Rs 12.27 rise in its per share price to Rs 225.45.

Mehmood Tex witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 28.69 per share closing at Rs 699.00, followed by Pak Services with Rs 20.01 decline to close at Rs 749.99.

**Rupee gains Rs 1.49 against US Dollar**

Pakistani Rupee on Wednesday gained Rs 1.49 against the US Dollar in the interbank trading as it closed at Rs 287.03 against the previous day’s closing

of Rs 288.52.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of dollars in the open market stood at Rs 291.5 and Rs 294 respectively.

The price of the Euro decreased by Rs 1.22 to close at Rs 317.76 against the last day’s closing of Rs 318.98, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged to close at Rs 2.04, whereas a decrease of 32 paise was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs 370.38 as compared to its last day’s closing of Rs 370.70.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal decreased by 41 paise and 39 paise to close at Rs 78.14 and Rs 76.52 respectively.

# FFC announces half yearly financial results 2023

## F.P. Report

KARACHI: Fauji Fertilizer Company Limited (FFC) has announced its half yearly financial results for the period ended June 30, 2023 in its Board of Directors’ meeting.

By the Grace of Allah SWT, the Company has posted highest ever six monthly profitability of Rs 13.08 billion compared to Rs 9.60 billion last year, despite the high level of inflation, devaluation of

current and imposition of additional super tax. Earning per share stood at Rs 10.28. The profitability in dollar terms however declined by 8% to USD 48 million compared to USD 52 million last year.

The increased profitability is attributable to significant cost optimization measures and operational efficiency enhancement initiatives implemented by the management.

The Company produced 1,278 thousand tonnes in

line with last year.

It is pertinent to mention that selling prices of urea varied significantly within the fertilizer industry, with FFC marketing urea at the lowest price of Rs 2,565 per bag, compared to average market prices of around Rs 3,000 per bag and international price of Rs 5,700.

The Board of Directors of FFC also announced second interim dividend of Rs 3.15 per share for the period with an aggregate distribution of 7.41 for the period.

# Lucky Cement receives KCCI Export Trophy

## F.P. Report

KARACHI: Lucky Cement Limited, Pakistan’s leading producer and exporter of cement, received the KCCI Export Trophy Awards for its outstanding achievements in the international market. Mr. Muhammad Ali Tabbba, the CEO of Lucky Cement Limited, was honored with the prestigious KCCI Platinum Export Trophy Award for the company’s exceptional performance in the cement sector during the year 2020-21.

Lucky Cement Limited has successfully exported its cement to several international markets and regions such as South Asia, South East Asia, Middle East, and Africa. Lucky

Cement Limited takes pride in its state-of-the-art storage terminal situated at the Karachi port, which boasts an impressive storage capacity of 24,000 tons.

This modern facility allows the company to excel in exporting not only break bulk and containerized shipments but also loose cement from Pakistan.

The recognition received by Lucky Cement Limited serves as a testament to its unwavering dedication to providing premium-quality products and maintaining the highest standards across all aspects of its operations. The company holds prominent ISO certifications, including ISO 9001:2008, 14001:2004, 45001:2018, and 27001:2022, reflecting its unwavering dedication

to quality, environment, health, safety, and information security.

Mr. Muhammad Ali Tabbba, CEO of Lucky Cement Limited, expressed his gratitude for the recognition, stating, “We are immensely proud to be acknowledged by the KCCI.” He further added, “Our focus is on implementing advanced manufacturing technologies aimed at enhancing technical capabilities and operational efficiencies. Our diversified business portfolio has helped us strengthen the country’s industrial base, enabling us to develop a larger manufacturing footprint and seize opportunities for growth both in local and international markets”.

# Stocks advance cautiously ahead of central bank rate moves

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): European and US stocks mostly made cautious advances on Tuesday as investors awaited central bank rate decisions, while stimulus pledges by Chinese leaders dominated Asian trading.

Hong Kong stocks jumped over four percent after China’s Politburo signaled it would step up support for the stuttering economy. “The enthusiasm hasn’t filtered through to Europe and the US though, perhaps due to the lack of

detail currently on the stimulus measures, but also the distraction of the central bank meetings over the next 48 hours,” said market analyst Craig Erlam at trading platform OANDA.

Progress on inflation could mean both the US Federal Reserve and European Central Bank are about to announce their final rate hikes of the tightening cycle.

“The question is will they acknowledge that or maintain a hawkish position over the rest of the summer?” said Erlam. The Fed is due to announce its decision on Wednesday and the ECB on Thursday.

Wall Street indices advanced, with the Dow eking out a 0.1 percent increase for its 12th straight positive session.

Earlier, Europe’s leading markets finished mostly higher after wobbling, with

Paris shedding 0.2 percent.

Frankfurt edged 0.1 percent higher despite a key survey showing German business sentiment has fallen for the third month in a row, as pessimism about the state of Europe’s largest economy deepened. The Ifo institute’s closely-watched confidence barometer, based on a survey of 9,000 companies, fell to 87.3 points in July from 88.6 points last month.

Data released Monday showed eurozone economic activity shrank at its fastest rate for eight months in July, owing to cuts in manufacturing.

Sentiment was supported by the IMF lifting its 2023 global growth forecast by 0.2 percentage points to 3.0 percent.

In corporate news, General Motors shares fell 3.5 percent despite the car-maker lifting its full-year

forecasts after posting a huge jump in second quarter profit and sales.

The company must soon renegotiate a labor contract with the United Auto Workers.

Shares in Spotify fell by 14.3 percent after the music streaming service reported a huge bump in its operating loss despite increasing the number of paid subscribers and raising prices.

In China, with recent data showing growth stuttering and business activity slowing, top leaders signaled a fresh push to get the post-Covid recovery back on track -- particularly for the troubled property sector, which accounts for a major part of the economy.

The announcement “keeps a supportive tone,” which can provide some boost for the recovery and may help market sentiment, said Erin Xin at HSBC.

## Lost & Found

I have lost original DIT Diploma of Peshawar Board, under Roll # 169892 Year 2020. If anyone finds please return it to Majid Mahmood S/o Ashiq Hussain R/o Garhi Atta Khan District Kohat.





## In brief

## Five day U-16 Football Camp ends in Kohat

FOOTBALL: 5 Day U-16 Football Camp ends in Kohat Sports Complex. The ongoing 5 Day Under-16 Football Camp jointly arranged by the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF) and Candy Land Company (CLC) in collaboration with the Sports Department Khyber Pakhtunkhwa concluded at Kohat Sports Complex. The concluding session was attended by District Sports Officer Kohat Sajid Afridi, officials of PFF and CLC and football players. The said camps beside Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilgit Baltistan were also being conducted at Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Punjab, Sindh and Baluchistan. In these camps 200 players will be selected from the entire country. The PFF and CLC organizers thanked the DSO Kohat for extending his support for holding successful trails of U-16 Football players and appreciated his role in promotion of sports particularly Football. DSO Kohat said that promotion of all games was his priority and his department will extend all out support for promotion of all games and patronage of players in his jurisdiction.

## Hafeez scores 31 of 11 deliveries

HARARE (INP): The Joburg Buffaloes put on a fantastic display under the floodlights at the Harare Sports Club, as they kept a calm head and defeated the Bulawayo Braves by 14 runs. The Buffaloes put on an all-round performance whilst under pressure, and move up to fourth on the points table. Asked to bat first, the Joburg Buffaloes had a slow start as they lost their opener Milton Shumba (0) very early on. Soon after, Tom Banton, who has been in good form recently, was run out for 8 with the score reading 40/2. At this point, Mohammad Hafeez was looking dangerous and had Yusuf Pathan for company. The two experienced batters were coming off the back of a couple of good outings, and once again looked set to play a big role with the bat for the Buffaloes. But before they could do much damage, Hafeez was dismissed for 31 off 11 deliveries, having hit 2 sixes and four boundaries. The Buffaloes reach 97/4 in their quota of 10 overs. Yusuf finished unbeaten on 36 while Rahim added 13 to the cause. In response, the Bulawayo Braves took a while to get through gears as they lost three early wickets in Kobe Herft (1), Ben McDermott (10) and Beau Webster (0). However, their captain and the backbone of the batting order, Sikandar Raza was still there and going strong at his end. Raza, who has scored a couple of half-centuries so far in the tournament, wasn't throwing in the towel anytime soon. Right on half-way though, Burl had his middle stump knocked over by Hafeez, who finished his spell with one wicket. At that point, the score read 42/4 from 5 overs, and the Braves needed 56 more to win. In the final over, the Braves needed 16 more, but Junior Dala bowled brilliantly and conceded just 1 run and bagged the wickets of Jack Prestwidge (0) and Patrick Dooley (0), to help register a comprehensive win. Brief Scores Joburg Buffaloes – 97/4 (Yusuf Pathan 36\*, Mohammad Hafeez – 31; Patrick Dooley – 2/14, Farwaz Akram – 1/19) Bulawayo Braves – 83/8 (Sikandar Raza – 26, Thisara Perera – 24; Blessing Muzarabani – 2/15, Usman Shinwari – 2/19)

## Shafique double ton puts Pakistan in command of 2nd Test



COLOMBO (Agencies): Opener Abdullah Shafique's maiden double century and an unbeaten 132 by Agha Salman put Pakistan in the box seat Wednesday on day three of the second Test against Sri Lanka.

The tourists reached 563-5 at stumps, leading Sri Lanka by 397 runs in their first innings at Colombo's Sinhalese Sports Club.

Salman and concussion substitute Mohammad Rizwan, on 37, were batting in an unbeaten stand of 95 after Shafique's departure on 201.

Salman played attacking cricket to reinforce Pakistan's new aggressive style in this series and reached his second Test ton with a boundary.

"Pakistani batsmen are employing the same batting tactics of the teams playing in the Ashes trying to maintain a run rate of four runs an over," Sri Lanka's spin bowling coach Piyal Wijetunge told reporters.

"They were helped by the wicket becoming easier and our bowlers not bowling at 100 percent."

Shafique led the mammoth reply in response to Sri Lanka's 166 as he put on three century stands including a 124-run sixth-wicket partnership with Salman.

Shafique, who began the day on 87, reached 200 in the final session with a single off Asitha Fernando, taking off his helmet and pointing to his name on the back of his jersey.

But he was soon caught out at deep mid-off by left-arm spinner Prabath Jayasuriya, who also had skipper Babar Azam for 39 earlier in the day. Fernando cut short Saud Shakeel's knock on 57 in the afternoon session to take his wicket tally to three.

The fast bowler came around the wicket to trap the left-handed Shakeel lbw and end a 109-run partnership with Shafique.

Wicketkeeper-batsman Sarfaraz Ahmed made 14 before he retired hurt after feeling dizzy, likely due to a blow he received on his helmet on the first ball faced from Fernando.

He was finally substituted by Rizwan.

Shafique passed 150 for the second time against Sri Lanka with a single off Ramesh Mendis, and then went past his previous Test best of 160 not out.

Pakistan resumed on 178-2 after Tuesday's downpours restricted the action to just 10 overs. Shafique started cautiously but soon hit two successive boundaries off Fernando before a single got his hundred.

Azam added 11 to his overnight 28 before being trapped lbw, with the decision upheld by the third umpire after review. It was the sixth time Azam had been dismissed in Test cricket by Jayasuriya, who bowled unchanged from one end in the first session. Pakistan won the first Test in the two-match series by four wickets.

## Pakistan Shaheens depart for Australia



LAHORE (Monitoring Desk): Rohail Nazir-led Pakistan Shaheens departed for Australia in the wee hours of Wednesday to feature in Top End T20 Series and two 50-over matches in Darwin which is being organised by Northern Territory Cricket (NTC) from 30 July to 9 August.

Australian Capital Territory's ACT Comets, Melbourne Stars, Melbourne Renegades, Papua New Guinea (PNG) and NT Strike will participate in the six-team tournament along with Shaheens in a T20 format with the top-two sides making it to the final. Following the T20s, Shaheens will also play two 50-over matches against PNG and NT Strike on 8 and 9 August, respectively.

21-year-old Rohail Nazir has captained Pakistan Shaheens in the past during their tour to New Zealand in December 2020. He was also a part of the Shaheens squad in the recent tour to Zimbabwe, where the team featured in two four-dayers and six 50-over matches.

Rohail, who played for Pakistan U19 in the ICC U19 World Cup in 2018 and 2020 editions, will have the services of four players – Ahmed Khan (2022), Ali Asfand (2022), Mohammad Irfan Khan (2020 & 2022) and Syed Zeeshan Zameer (2022) – who had represented Pakistan U19 in the ICC U19 World Cup before.

Apart from these four players, Amir Hassan, Arafat Minhass, Azan Awais, Sajjad Ali, Shamil Hussain and Wahaj Riaz recently played for Pakistan U19 in the tour to Bangladesh in April/May this year.

Rohail, who was among the non-traveling reserves for Shaheens that clinched the ACC Emerging Men's Teams Asia Cup title in Sri Lanka, told PCB Digital:

"Many congratulations to Pakistan Shaheens for winning the Emerging Asia Cup. We all had put in a lot of effort in the camp held in Lahore under the coaches and the results are visible to everyone."

"It is a huge opportunity for me to lead the side. I have represented and captained Shaheens in the past. I am really excited to lead and play in Australia where I had played in the past as well. I have played alongside many players present in the squad and few of them are from my city Islamabad so I know a few of them."

"It's a great opportunity for each member of the team to perform in Australia. Such tournaments are really helpful for players to learn and improve their skills."

"For me, the tour is an opportunity to perform and get a chance to play for Pakistan in the upcoming Test series in Australia later this year."

**Pakistan Shaheens squad:**  
Rohail Nazir (captain), Aaliyan Mahmood, Ahmed Khan, Ali Asfand, Amir Hassan, Arafat Minhass, Azan Awais, Basit Ali, Faisal Akram, Sajjad Ali, Mohammad Irfan Khan, Shamil Hussain, Shawaiz Irfan, Syed Zeeshan Zameer and Wahaj Riaz

Player Support Personnel – Muhammad Masroor (head coach-cum-manager), Hanif Malik (batting and fielding coach), Umar Rashid (bowling coach) and Imtiaz Khan (physiotherapist)

Schedule of Pakistan Shaheens' matches:  
30 Jul – vs NT Strike (T20)  
31 Jul – vs ACT Comets (T20)  
1 Aug – vs Melbourne Renegades (T20)  
2 Aug – vs Melbourne Stars (T20)  
4 Aug – vs PNG (T20)  
6 Aug – Final  
8 Aug – vs PNG (50-over)  
9 Aug – vs NT Strike (50-over).

## Peshawar Region clinch PM Youth Talent Hunt Women Football League title

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Region claimed Prime Minister Mian Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif Youth Talent Hunt Women Football League title after securing solitary goal victory against Swat in the last leg of League match played at Abdul Wali Khan Sports Complex on Wednesday.

Former International Athlete and Director Sports Bacha Khan University Shahbana Khattak was the chief guest on this occasion who distributed trophies and cash prizes. The winner awarded trophy and Rs. 180,000 as cash prize, (Rs. 10,000) each of the 18 players, runners-up Mardan got trophy and Rs. 90,000 (Rs. 5000) each player and Swat took (Rs. 54000) as cash prize with each player took Rs. 3000.

Skipper of Peshawar Region declared as best player of the League by awarding a trophy and Rs. 10,000 while the best emerging players Shahana, hailing from Chitral, represented Swat Region, took a trophy and Rs. 10,000 cash prize.

Former national athlete Musawar Khan, District Sports Officer Charsadda Tahseen Ullah Khan, Chairman Charsadda Press Club, officials, players and spectators were also present during the last League match played between Swat-Chitral (Region) and Peshawar (Region) teams. Swat Region, which is



mixed with players from Chitral as well, played excellently and gave a tough time to the strong Peshawar team, which remained unbeaten in the League. The players of both Peshawar and Swat gave each other a tough fight with some excellent and thrilling attacks were also witnessed.

Peshawar front line including skipper Kalsoom, Aysia, Maria Khan, Saira and Aiman played well and made some good rallies of attacks. Peshawar goalkeeper also played well and did not concede a single goal in the whole of the League wherein Peshawar played four matches and won all.

After a goalless draw with Swat Region, Peshawar Region succeeded in taking the lead in the 56th minute when Aysia netted a fine goal through a field goal. Aysia took a ball from right winger Saira

Khan and zoomed quickly in netting a fine goal on the field attempt.

After taking the lead, Peshawar tried hard to consolidate their lead but they failed due to tight marking by Swat Region players. The players of Swat Region including goalkeeper Asifa with a front line featuring Gulfida, Shahana, Summaya, Fazila, Kainat, Mumtazia and Anna played well.

Peshawar remained unbeaten, beating Bannu (9-0), Hazara (4-0), Mardan (4-0) and Swat (1-0) taking first position, followed by Mardan with three wins against Hazara (3-0), Swat (3-2), Bannu (3-0) and lost to Peshawar (0-4), taking second position.

Hazara Region got third position by playing against Swat (1-1), lost to Peshawar (0-4), Mardan (0-3), and secured win against Bannu (4-0), took fourth position by playing

a draw match against Hazara (1-1), and lost to Mardan (2-3), secured victory against Bannu (4-0), and lost to Peshawar (0-1), Bannu lost all matches against Peshawar (0-9), Swat (0-4), Mardan (0-3), Hazara (0-4)

Talking to APP, Shahbana Khattak said that the League played without any break and all the female players got full facilitation according to the break-up sent in by DG Sports HEC Javed Memon.

She said open trials were held and even representation has been given to the female players of Chitral wherein she along with the selection committee also paid a visit to Chitral. She was amazed to see the talent that female players of Chitral have. She said some people have given baseless reports on social media about selection of the players, DA or TA

allowances.

Every player has been paid in hands of Rs. 1500 as DA and Rs. 2000 as TA. How can I give the same money to either coach or manager of the team instead of players, she said. "I have given DA & TA to players," she informed. "I being a former international athlete, am well aware of the fact that such officials included players of one district in teams of other districts, ignoring the rights of the players of that particular district," she said.

As far as the funds are concerned we have received a complete break-up from HEC and accordingly worked, looking after the break-up only," she said. "I have also been approached to hand over the rights of social media news which I refused so I think the same people are buying against her running fake reports on social media through their respective account. "I will challenge such reports legally," she warned.

"I do not have anything with the selection," a selection committee constituted by HEC has selected players," she clarified.

"I will take legal action against those carrying baseless reports during the Women League, which is being organized in a befitting manner. These people are misleading the players on social media without taking her point of view according to the norms of journalism, she said.

## Inayatullah wins Late Bird tournament of World Scrabble C'ship

ISLAMABAD (Monitoring Desk): Pakistani scrabble player Muhammad Inayatullah emerged victorious at the main event of the World Scrabble Championship (WESPAC) that concluded on Tuesday.

The scrabble tournament took place in Las Vegas, United States, spanning from July 21 to 25.

Inayatullah's incredible performance in the championship's Late Bird tournament, a one-day event, saw him succeed in all his games against a highly-competitive field.

The Pakistani scrabble player began his day beating former world champion Joel Wapnick of Canada and remained the only unbeaten player in the tournament. Meanwhile, Ade Tomiwa of Nigeria finished second in the global competition.

The third position, however, was claimed by England's Sumbul Siddiqui — a Pakistani immigrant who migrated to the United Kingdom a few years ago.

Sumbul was the only female player to win a position at the championship this year.

Australia's David Eldar and Harshan Lambadasurya from England will play in the final of the premier category in the tournament. Pakistan's Waseem Khatri, on the other hand, has finished in the 33rd position.

Ahead of the championship, Khatri was off to flying colours in the Early Bird tournament after he claimed a win and became the only Pakistani to do so. Last year, Waseem finished second in the tournament.

Meanwhile, Pakistan's Hammad Hadi Khan has won in the Diamond category with three games to go.

## Pakistan to host international women's volleyball C'ship

ISLAMABAD (INP): Pakistan Volleyball Federation (PVF) in partnership with Empower Sports Academy is planning to host the first ever international women's volleyball invitational championship to increase the playing standard and develop interest of young girls in the country.

Chairperson PVF women's wing, Malika Junaid said that with the collaboration of Empower Sports Academy and Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) PVF are also focusing to encourage girls to play Volleyball.

The purpose to host the international event is to provide the opportunity to women players to improve their game as it will be first time in the history of Pakistan that teams from USA and Europe will be taking part in the women's volleyball competitions, said PVF women's wing chairperson Malika Junaid.

She said that we are also planning to send the Pakistan women's team for a training tour to Turkey this year as well aims to promote and inspire the young girls to showcase their talent and to excel in the game of volleyball.

PVF Women's wing chairperson said that Islamabad will be host city for the international championship which is planned to be held in the first week of January next year as we are expecting five international teams to visit Pakistan

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for this historic event.

On the other hand Founder of Empower Sports Academy Alisha Junaid is also busy coordinating with the foreign teams to finalise all other arrangements as Empower Sports Academy advisor Tim Kelly visited Pakistan last week to witness the preparations and training camp of the national women's volleyball team.

Tim Kelly, who is also based in the USA spared the time for Pakistan from his busy schedule to review the venue and locations where Empower Sports Academy will host their very first international volleyball tournament in collaboration with the Pakistan Volleyball Federation.



PERTH: Adriana Leon of Canada, 19, celebrates after scoring her side's second goal during the FIFA Women's World Cup 2023 Group B match between Republic of Ireland and Canada.

## Canada fight back to end 'proud' Ireland's World Cup dreams

PERTH (Agencies): Manchester United forward Adriana Leon ignited Canada's Women's World Cup campaign on Wednesday with the winner in a 2-1 victory to end Ireland's hopes.

The pressure was on Olympic champions Canada after being held to a goalless draw against Nigeria but they fought back in Perth after the worst start possible.

They were left stunned in the fourth minute when Arsenal midfielder Katie McCabe scored direct from a corner, much to the delight of the 17,065 fans, most of whom were loudly cheering for Ireland in the rain.

But Canada clawed back through an own goal from Megan Connolly just before half-time before Leon provided the winner in the 53rd minute.

Canada moved top of Group B with four points and took a step closer to the last 16, with Australia facing Nigeria in Brisbane on Thursday in the

group.

"That could be the making of us," Canada coach Bev Priestman said.

"We wobbled in the first-half. Our bravery wasn't there. I felt we played a little scared... I reminded them at half-time that we are Olympic champions."

In a concern for Canada ahead of their next match against Australia, captain Christine Sinclair -- who had come on as a second-half substitute -- appeared to be limping late in the contest.

"I haven't had a medical update yet. I'll have to get an understanding of that and find out what's next," Priestman said.

The result ended Ireland's hopes of progressing on their World Cup debut.

"Very, very disappointing we couldn't get back in the game after going down 2-1," coach Vera Pauw said.

"But I'm so proud of what we showed tonight." - McCabe stunner -

Canada were boosted by the return of Chelsea midfielder Jessie Fleming after a calf injury and she took the captain's armband from Sinclair.

Evelyn Viens was preferred in attack after sparking Canada as a substitute against Nigeria. Ireland were forced into a late change when Florida State forward Heather Payne suffered a hamstring injury during the warm-up and was replaced by Aine O'Gorman.

With their tournament hopes on the line, an aggressive Ireland ran Canada ragged in a spirited start.

They had goalkeeper Kailen Sheridan scrambling in the third minute when a cross from Lucy Quinn was almost met by Kyra Carusa.

McCabe scored on the subsequent corner with her vicious left-footed in-swinger bamboozling Sheridan, whose outstretched fingers only managed to deflect the ball onto the right post and into the net.

McCabe tried something similar against Australia without success in their 1-0 opening defeat, but after spotting Sheridan slightly off her line she made no mistake this time.

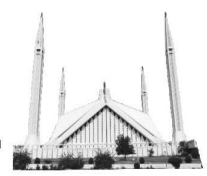
Canada had their first clear opportunity on the half hour, but Vanessa Gilles missed from close range after being on the end of a clever flick from Kadeisha Buchanan.

As the rain cascaded down in Perth, Canada's persistence was rewarded just before half-time when a cross from Julia Grosso on the left side deflected off Connolly for an own goal.

Priestman made three changes to start the second-half, including bringing on Sinclair, and it did the trick with Canada playing with more intent.

They went ahead when a superb through ball from Sophie Schmidt found Leon, who fired past goalkeeper Courtney Brosnan.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 463,700 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Wednesday released 463,700 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 547,200 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1531.00 feet and was 133.00 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 307,200 cusecs and 278,700 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1220.25 feet, which was 170.25 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 65,000 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 324,600, 372,100, 295,600, and 218,300 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 73,700 cusecs of water released at Nowshera, and 79,200 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### Poet Ibn-e-Safi remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Famous fiction writer, novelist and Urdu poet Ibn-e-Safi was remembered on the occasion of his birth and death anniversary which incidentally fall on the same date. Born on July 26, 1928, in Allahabad, his real name was Asrar Ahmed. His father's name was Safiullah and he adopted the pen name of Ibn-e-Safi meaning Son of Safi. He first started writing in the 1940s. After the partition, he shifted to Pakistan. His main works were the 125-book series Jasooosi Dunya (The Spy World) and the 120-book Imran Series, with a small canon of satirical works and poetry. His novels were characterised by a blend of mystery, adventure, suspense, violence, romance and comedy, achieving massive popularity across a broad readership in South Asia. Ibn-e-Safi died on July 26, 1980, of pancreatic cancer at age 52. He was buried in Paposhnagar graveyard in Karachi.

### Mehfil-e-Musalama held at PAC

RAWALPINDI (APP): Punjab Arts Council (PAC) on Wednesday organized a Mehfil-e-Musalama in the memory of great sacrifice of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS), the ceremony was presided over by Muhammad Izharul Haq. Speaking on the occasion, Izhar-ul-Haq said that the incident of Karbala drew a boundary between right and wrong, oppressor and oppressed, which cannot be erased for the rest of the world. He said that Hussain's mission was free from any worldly interest and greed, adding "Karbala is the story of Imam Hussain and his Ahl al-Bayt truthfulness, bravery, principles and self-sacrifice, which was written with their blood." Director of Arts Council Waqar Ahmad said that the incident of Karbala teaches that instead of bowing in front of tyranny, "We should stand against it because supporting oppressors is a crime in itself." The incident of Karbala was a story of human pride and exaltation. Assistant Director PAC Muhammad Suleman said that the martyrdom of Hazrat Imam Hussain (AS) awakened consciences and paved the way for the revolution of the hearts instead of the mind. Imam Hussain's beliefs and actions were the best source of character-building through Musalama poets. "Day of Ashura is a day of greatness and boundless events of history are connected with it," he added.



ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif visits the residence of former Mayor Rawalpindi and PML-N leader Sardar Naseem to express condolences upon the demise of his mother.

## Civil society call for new charter of democracy

ISLAMABAD (APP): Civil society has emphasized the need for new charter of democracy in order to initiate dialogue and meaningful deliberation for the inclusion of all political parties and stakeholders in the democratic process. The civil society tabled the proposal of strengthening democracy in the country during a National Dialogue on New Charter of Democracy organized by Pakistan Development Alliance (PDA), Pakistan Federal Union of Journalists (PFUJ) and the National Press Club (NPC).

Speaking on the occasion, President National Party Balochistan Dr. Abdul Malik Baloch said that all political parties considered as the nurseries of democracy and their vibrancy and inclusiveness enrich nations' democratic experiences. "We call upon the political parties to consider creation of

'National Commission for Democracy' as envisaged in the CoD-2006 to support civic education, study circles and training of future leaders and cadre through the political parties," he added. He also stressed the political parties to ensure that all citizens irrespective of their gender, class, economic background and creed should be valued and equally involved in the affairs of the party.

National Convener Pakistan Development Alliance Zia ur Rehman emphasized the cohesiveness of all political parties and said the dialogue between all political parties could only pave the way for developing the country.

He said that all political parties should adopt proposed COD2.0 as their party manifesto.

Constitutional Expert ZafarUllah Khan emphasized the importance of centrality of Parliament

and demanded that constitutional supremacy should be accepted by all.

Secretary General Pakistan People's Party, FarhatUllah Babar said that article 32-36 of the COD 2006 were not given priority in the past years.

The political parties should focus on leftover clauses of COD 2006 in new COD. PFUJ President Afzal Butt stressed the need for independent accountability commission and free and independent media in order to foster democracy in the country.

During the session, other participants also stressed on the effective role and centrality of parliamentary institutions to offer a better legal framework, oversight mechanisms, taxation and pro-people resources appropriation as well as increased role of Parliamentary Committee for Judicial appointments.

### Sherry Rehman felicitates Asif Zardari on birthday

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Climate Change Senator Sherry Rehman on Wednesday felicitated former President and Co-Chairman Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Asif Ali Zardari on his birthday.

In a statement issued here, the Minister extended her heartfelt congratulations and best wishes to Asif Ali Zardari calling him the man of freedom and king of politics on his birthday. Zardari, she said had done significant services for the country and the people. He had saved the country from disintegration by chanting the slogan of Pakistan Khape (Pakistan is Ours), she added. By passing the 18th Constitutional Amendment, giving rights and authority back to the provinces, President Zardari transferred presidential powers to Parliament, Sherry Rehman said.

## Pak-Turk friendship everlasting, says Turkish Ambassador

ISLAMABAD (APP): Ambassador of Turkiye to Pakistan, Prof. Dr. Mehmet Pacaci on Wednesday said that Pakistan and Turkiye always helped each other in every difficult time, be it earthquakes or floods, the governments and people of both countries actively helped each others.

He was addressing a certificate distribution ceremony of the two-week summer camp organized by Allama Iqbal Open University (AIOU) in collaboration with Yunus Emre Institute, Turkiye.

Dr. Mehmet Pacaci lauded efforts of the IUI vice chancellor for organizing this summer camp for Pakistani children to learn the Turkish language.

The ambassador also interacted with the children in the Turkish language.

In this 2-week summer camp, Prof. Dr. Halil Tokar, Head, Department of Urdu, Istanbul University, trained the children in Turkish language, calligraphy, artificial intelligence, archery, and the Turkish traditional game Mangala.

VC AIOU, Prof. Dr. Nasir Mehmood

said that Pakistan and Turkiye had excellent political, historical, and cultural relations. He said that educational relations between the two countries would be further strengthened as AIOU had signed several MoUs for educational, research, and exchange programs with Turkish universities and institutions in the field of education and research.

Dr. Nasir said that now was the time we must share the language, literature, history, and traditions of the two countries with the new generation. Dr. Halil Tokar said that Turkish people love were very much affectionate with Pakistanis. Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences, Prof. Dr. Abdul Aziz Sahir said that Turkish was a very beautiful language like Urdu and both languages shared some common words too. He said that many people in Turkey spoke Urdu very well. Director, International Collaboration and Exchange Office, Dr. Zahid Majeed, and Director, Center for Language and Translation Studies, Dr. Ghulam Ali also addressed on the occasion.

## ANF seizes over 158 kg drugs in seven operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country managed to recover 158 kg drugs and arrested seven accused, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman.

He informed that ANF recovered 98 heroin-filled capsules from the possession of a Sharjah-bound passenger, resident of Khyber, who was going on flight no PK-181, arrested at Islamabad International Airport. In another operation, 91.2 kg hashish and 28.9 kg opium were recovered from a vehicle intercepted near Ravi Motorway Toll Plaza Lahore. Two accused residents of Rawalpindi were arrested

during the operation.

In third operation, four packets of opium were recovered from the possession of a motorcyclist, resident of Multan rounded up near Band Bosan Road Multan. While on the pointation of the accused, eight more packets of opium were also recovered from his house. A total of 16.8 kg of opium was recovered from the accused. In fourth operation at Allama Iqbal International Airport, 89 Ice-filled capsules were recovered from the possession of a Doha-bound passenger, resident of Multan, going on flight no PK-0279. In fifth operation,

20 kg of hashish concealed in a deserted area of Jarobi Zaka Khail, Khyber was recovered.

In sixth operation conducted by ANF, 1.5 kg hashish was recovered from the possession of an accused, resident of Quetta, arrested near Jatik Stop Quetta.

An attempt to smuggle drugs on Pak-Afghan border in Chaman area was foiled, 14,400 intoxicated tablets were recovered from the possession of the accused, a resident of Qilla Abdullah.

Separate cases under the Anti-Narcotics Act had been registered against all the accused and further investigation was started.

## PM&DC holds first meeting of Academic Board

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: PM&DC held its first National Medical & Dental Academic Board meeting on July 26, 2023, at its head office. The 21-member National Medical and Dental Academic Board (NMDAB) was notified by the Ministry of National Health Services (NHS) on July 14, 2023, to oversee the policy to maintain quality of education in undergraduate and postgraduate medical and dental institutions across Pakistan.

The Pakistan Medical & Dental Council (PM&DC) being the sole healthcare education regulator in Pakistan, aiming to improve healthcare delivery and education standards, sets excellence standards and implements them in all medical and dental institutes for undergraduate and postgraduate education.

The Board primarily functions are to frame Medical & Dental undergraduate Accreditation standards, including curriculum, standards of medical Education / CME / CPD, academic standards of foreign institutions and examination standards, including the MDCAT, National Registration Examination and National Equivalence Board Examination.

It is pertinent to mention that since the Academic Board was not constituted, PM&DC adopted the policies framed by the previous academic board in the broader interest of the students and doctors, which included the MDCAT/ NRE and NEB examinations. The Academic Board has unanimously approved the National Medical and Dental curriculum for this year 2023 to 2024, and it will be reviewed.

The Academic Board unanimously has decided to constitute commit-

tees to review all the Regulations and matters referred to the Board entrusted under Section 13 of PM&DC Act 2022. Chairman HEC and President CPSP extended their full cooperation and assistance with the PM&DC Council to achieve quality of medical education in Pakistan to further upgrade the standards across the world.

The Academic Board will formulate the first ever criteria, regulations and proforma for CME/CPD which will help to reinvigorate our doctors. CPSP has also ensured full support to assist and share measures taken this regard at their end. The Committee will also devise CME/CPD credit hours for general and specialist medical/ dental practitioners which further renewal of their PM&DC licenses.

The efforts of President PM&DC Prof. Dr. Rizwan Taj along with its team were appreciated for taking significant step towards international recognition by applying to the World Federation for Medical Education (WFME) for its accreditation program in due time along with organizing workshops to improve relations with medical and dental colleges for recognition of WFME. The Academic Board is constituted with highly qualified professionals from all provinces of Pakistan, known nationally and internationally. The 21-member board will serve a four-year term in terms of section 11 of PM&DC Act 22. The meeting was presided by the Chairman Academic Board Prof. Dr. Zahid Aman Dean Khyber girls medical college Peshawar. Dr. Syed Azhar Ali Shah assisted the August forum as Secretary to the Board. The meeting was attended by all the respectable members of the

Academic Board who participated in the meeting. Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed (Chairman Higher Education Commission), Prof. Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal (President College of Physician and Surgeon), Maj. Gen. Muhammad Suhail Amin (Principal Army Medical College Rawalpindi), Prof. Dr. Muhammad Umar (Vice chancellor Rawalpindi Medical University), Prof. Dr. Imran Hassan Khan (Principal Sahiwal Medical College Sahiwal), Prof. Dr. Aysha Shaikat (Principal Continental Medical College Lahore), Prof. Dr. Waheed ul Hameed (Principal de'Montmorency College of Dentistry Lahore), Prof. Dr. Waqar Hussain (Principal Baktawar Amin Medical & Dental College Multan), Prof. Dr. Saba Sohail (Principal Dow Medical College Karachi) Prof. Dr. Arshad Abro (Professor of Surgery Liaquat University of Medical & Health Sciences Jamshoro, Prof. Dr. Rizwan Khan (Associate Dean of postgraduate medical education at the Aga Khan University Karachi), Dr. Permandan (Principal Bhitai Dental & Medical College Mirpurkhas), Prof. Dr. Zia ul Haq (Vice Chancellor Khyber Medical University Peshawar), Prof. Dr. Syed Nasir Shah (Dean Khyber College of Dentistry Peshawar), Dr. Zia ul Islam (Dean Mardan Medical College Mardan), Prof. Dr. Ghulam Rasool (Principal Rehman Medical College of Dentistry Peshawar), Prof. Dr. Shamsullah Bazai (HOD Ophthalmology Bolan Medical College Quetta), Prof. Dr. Hanif Mengal (HOD Pathology Bolan Medical College Quetta), Prof. Dr. Rukhsana Majid (HOD Community Medicine QIMS Quetta), Prof. Dr. Syed Abdulah Rauf Shah (HOD Oral and Maxillofacial Bolan Medical College Quetta).

## Encroachment clearance in river beds, public awareness on Monsoon risks

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Acting Chairman National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) during a NEOC session with key stakeholders on Wednesday emphasized undertaking encroachment clearance in and around river beds and conducting public awareness campaigns to maximize the general public's knowledge of risks associated with the monsoon season.

The Acting Chairman NDMA presided National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) session with key stakeholders on the current monsoon situation, a news release said.

He also underscored the news to enhance vigilant monitoring of rivers and

reservoirs during monsoon season. The session was attended by representatives of PMD, FFC, PDMA, SDMA, GBDMA, FFD, Provincial and Irrigation Departments, SUPARCO and PCIW.

The Acting Chairman NDMA reviewed the situation of major Dams and the regulation of river flows during ongoing monsoon spells.

The PMD briefed about the heavy rainfall observed in the areas of Sindh and Punjab and the expected heavy rainfall in the Northwestern Parts of Balochistan and in the Northern parts of Punjab, Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa from 26 July to 1 August.

The PDMA highlighted the rescue and relief work carried out in the respective areas after the recent spell of rain.

The FFD reported that Tarbela and Mangla Dams are at 81% and 77% of the storage capacity respectively and further highlighted that encroachments in Ravi river bed around Shahdara Bridge area and downstream Mangla Dam should be cleared timely by provincial authorities.

The Acting Chairman NDMA instructed relevant departments to strengthen coordination among all relevant departments to streamline disaster mitigation and contingency plans.

## Four-day road safety workshop

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Police (Education Wing) organized a four-day Road Safety Workshop at COMSATS University Islamabad which emphasized the importance of observing road safety and traffic laws, not only for one's own safety but also for the safety of others.

More than 50 drivers and other staff members participated in the workshop, where they were educated about road safety and cautious driving. On this occasion, special guest SP (Traffic) Chaudhry Abid Hussain emphasized the importance of observing road safety and traffic laws, not only for one's own safety but also for the safety of others. He urged everyone to act responsibly while driving, follow traffic rules, and encourage others to do the same. He emphasized that being a responsible citizen means adhering to the law and avoiding negligence, which ensures our safety and the safety of others. Protecting the lives and property of citizens is our foremost duty, he added.

According to the police spokesperson, the special instructions of Capital City Police Officer Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, Islamabad Capital Police organized a 4-day Road Safety Workshop at COMSATS University Islamabad, where more than 50 drivers and other staff members participated. The participants were educated about

road safety, cautious driving, and other traffic laws. This initiative was carried out by the SP Traffic Education Wing, In-charge Sub-Inspector Muhammad Shafique Bajwa, and his team.

The workshop covered topics such as the dangers of using mobile phones during driving, the importance of seat belts and helmets, the risks of driving without helmets on motorbikes, the consideration of the rights of other road users, the use of the headlight beam, the use of zebra crossing, dangers of speeding, and other traffic laws. At the end of the ceremony, In-charge (Admin) Muhammad Sajid Rasool and Azhar-ul-Hassan from the Transport section were honoured with commemorative shields, and certificates were distributed among the participants who completed the Road Safety Workshop successfully. They, along with other partners, appreciated the initiative of Islamabad Capital Police and highlighted the importance of such workshops.

They stated that such workshops are essential as they provide valuable knowledge about various aspects of road safety that many were not aware of. The Education Wing's officer encouraged the participants to follow traffic laws and drive with responsibly to ensure the safety of themselves and others on the road.



ISLAMABAD: Interior Minister Rana Sana Ullah Khan addressing during the passing out ceremony of 38th Basic Recruit Course at Police Lines.



215 army corps takes exam

KABUL (Agencies): An exam for 500 Mujahedin has been conducted for their recruitment as new members in the ranks of Special Forces of the 215th Army Corps. The Ministry of National Defense commander of the Special Forces, Mohibullah Nasrat Haji LaLa, who was present at the examination site, stressed that the process was transparent and those securing better scores will be recruited within the Special Forces ranks.

Future plans discussed

KABUL (Agencies): The Acting President of ARCS, Mawlawi Mati-ul- Haq Khales, met with Vice President of International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent, Dr. Miguel Villarreal. The two sides talked about the ARCS's activities, achievements, challenges and future plans. Mawlawi Mati-ul- Haq Khales requested Dr. Villarreal to help the ARCS overcome its problems and provide more assistance to the vulnerable communities in Afghanistan.

## Efforts underway to find solution for girls' schooling: Haqqani



KABUL (TOLONews): The acting Interior Minister, Sirajuddin Haqqani, said that efforts are underway to find a proper solution for the reopening of schools and universities for the girls. Haqqani made the remarks at a gathering of religious scholars, private sector representatives and tribal elders in Herat, where he arrived on Monday alongside a senior delegation of the Islamic Emirate, led by Abdul Hakim Haqqani, head of the Supreme Court. Haqqani said that the issue of girls' schools and universities takes some time. "Efforts are underway for a logical solution on these issues. The problem we see is that when an issue

becomes controversial, it needs some time in order to not cause dispute," he said. Haqqani said that despite the Afghan private sector having faced various challenges over the past two years, it has played an important role in the improvement of the situation. Some private sector representatives who participated in the gathering also mentioned the need to reopen girls' schools. "The conditions that the government is deciding, the schools and universities will be reopened based on those conditions, so the investment is not directed outside of the country," said Torialai Ghawsi, deputy head of the Afghanistan Chamber of Industry and

Mines of Herat. "The mental pressure should not be imposed on us, and our youth should not be slapped in the face in the corners of the cities, the women or girls should not come under pressure of the governmental authorities," said Abdullah Dashedi, deputy head of Chamber of Commerce and Investment of Herat. The participants also called for security and the Islamic Emirate's engagement with the international community, saying that Afghanistan should be dragged out of political isolation. "We have heard your problems. Those issues belong to me, I will certainly pay attention to them," Haqqani said.

## Miramor residents decry inadequate health services

NEILI (Pajhwok): A number of residents of the Miramor district of central Daikundi province complain about the lack of health facilities and services.

In habitants of Ashto Giro area, where more than 400 families live, have no easy access to the local health centre — at a distance of more than two hours.

Hussain Rahimi, an influential figure of the area, told Pajhwok Afghan News one of the most serious problems of the people was inadequate health services.

According to him, the health centres are distant and emergency patients die on the way to hospital.

"Nearly 400 families live in Ashto and our basic problem is the absence of a clinic that can treat at least normal and minor illnesses," he remarked.

He grumbled residents of Rak, Asro, Waimah and Shena localities had long been faced with inadequate access to health services.

According to him, there is one health centre only in Nike locality, but it is difficult for the people to cover the long distance.

Most of patients were taken to the Iskan Hospital, which was three hours away, Rahimi added.

"The government should pay attention to the issue as we don't have access to a health centre with equipment and professional doctors. People also suffer financially and cannot rent a car to reach there,"

Mohammad Yar Samim, a resident of the area, said the families living in Giro had been deprived of the required health services.

"In this area, there is a clinic that has neither medicine nor specialist doctors. But the government refuses to pay any attention to our problem."

Samim complained there were no doctors in the area to treat people, who were forced to travel to a far-off clinic.

He said the road to the Nika health centre remained closed for three months during the winter and it is difficult even for dwellers of the same area to reach the facility.

Samim explained because of the distance, proper pre- and post-natal care was not provided for women and babies.

Most of women in the area give birth in their homes and were deprived of due medical care, with little focus on babies' well-being.

He urged the government to pay attention to addressing the plight of residents of remote villages.

Meanwhile, public health officials acknowledged there were problems in some areas, including Ashtavi Miramor, due to their locations.

## Over 33.1b afs collected in revenue last year: DABS



KABUL (Pajhwok): Da Afghanistan Breshna Shirkat (DABS) has recovered 748 acres of its land from grabbers and collected 33.1 billion afs in revenue last year.

Officials of the power utility, speaking at an accountability week gathering here on Tuesday, provided a report on their activities and achievements in the past year.

DABS spokesman Hikmatullah Maiwandi said 748 acres of land was wrested back from usurpers in Kabul, Nangarhar, Parwan and Baghlan

provinces. In addition, 46 DABS buildings were also recovered in Kabul and Balkh.

Maulvi Abdul Rahman Rahmani, business head of the company, said they collected over 33.17 billion afs revenue from customers during the year.

DABS also converted more than 70,000 digital energy metres into analog ones during the period, he announced.

In the past, the income of DABS was collected according to an offline system in 28 provinces of the country. But that system

has now been converted into a low-cost online arrangement, Rahmani explained.

Safiullah Ahmadzai, operational head of the power utility, said 500 million KW of electricity was generated from domestic resources and DABS collected about 3.5 billion afs from its sales.

The extension of a 170-km power transmission line from Kajaki dam in Helmand to Kandahar was completed at a cost of \$3.5 million. Work on the Chintal substation has been finalised and it will

be inaugurated in near future.

About ongoing load-shedding in the country, especially in Kabul, Ahmadzai said the reason was increased power consumption in the summer.

To further strengthen the power supply system, a bidding package has been prepared at a cost of 1.7 billion afs and will soon be announced.

According to officials, DABS has paid off the cost of imported electricity. Currently, they claimed, Afghanistan was not indebted to any country.

## Modern education not obligatory: Shaheed

KABUL (TOLONews): Mohammad Hashim Shaheed Wror, General Director of the Invitation and Guidance Directorate (an independent body that determines religious policies within the interim government), said that modern education is not obligatory but Islamic education is obligatory for both men and women.

"The education that we say is obligatory at every stage for both men and women is religious education, not other education," he said.

Speaking at a gathering in Kabul, Shaheed Wror also said that the necktie originated from the Christian cross and that it is "ordered in Shariah that you should break it and eliminate it."

"The history of (the necktie) is obvious in Islam. What is a tie? It is the cross. The cross looks like this. It is ordered in Shariah that you should break it and eliminate it,"



he said. "The cross is a symbol of pagans. The cross is the symbol of Jesus' martyrdom. They say Jesus was hung like this."

Meanwhile, speaking at the same gathering, the deputy Minister of Higher Education, Mohammad Tahir Ahmadi, said that learning modern education is also obligatory and that the Afghans need to learn it.

"The education that this Muslim nation needs is obligatory and through it the people can be saved from poverty, misery and

other problems, so getting an education that rescues a human from misery is obligatory," he said.

"An educated human is thousands of times better than an individual who is not educated," said Amir Jan Saqib, deputy head of the Academy of Science.

Mohammad Hasham Shaheed Wror also said that doctor's lack Islamic lessons and they perform haram acts and that the treatment of women by the male doctors is haram (prohibited).

## AWCC inaugurates new service center in Kabul

KABUL (Agencies): Afghan Wireless Communications Company (AWCC) officially opened another sales and service office in Kabul as part of their ongoing quest to roll out improved cell phone and internet services across the country.

AWCC officials said the company is committed to providing quality services that meet international standards. In addition to providing a decent service to the people, the ongoing expansion plan also focuses on creating job opportunities for Afghans across the country.

"We are also working on providing more infrastructure. Wherever a telecommunication site is established, jobs are provided for our people. Our goal is to have a balanced development, to provide timely services to the people, and to provide work for our people in the country," said Aliullah Sarwari, the head of AWCC.



Meanwhile, officials from Kabul municipality, welcomed the opening of this center, and emphasized the need for AWCC to expand services to remote parts of the country.

They also appealed to the company to lower the cost of services.

"Afghan Wireless Company has provided services in every corner of

Afghanistan, and the internet prices of this network are relatively reasonable compared to other companies, and again, we ask this company to reconsider its prices," said Habib-ur-Rahman Mansour, Social and Cultural Affairs deputy head of Kabul Municipality.

"We are happy to once again participate today in

one of the great achievements that is very effective," said Wali Gul Jawad, head of cultural affairs of Kabul municipality.

AWCC officials meanwhile said there are plans to roll out services to Wakhan in northern Badakhshan province. This will mean people in the extremely remote region will get connectivity for the first time.

## Saffron exports decreased, says National Saffron Workers Union

KABUL (TOLONews): The National Saffron Workers Union (NSWU) said that saffron exports have decreased.

According to the officials of the NSWU, due to the suspension of many flights from Afghanistan, the country's saffron do not directly reach the European and American markets as in the past.

"There are barriers to exporters, we have many problems, one of which is

the restriction on flights, which means we cannot export to all countries, especially Europe, America, and other countries. In the past, we used to export normally," said Bashir Ahmad Bashiri, head of the NSWU.

Meanwhile, Denmark, by launching a project worth more than one million dollars, is trying to provide the basis for the sale of Afghan saffron in the European and American

markets.

"Currently, the country's saffron does not have a market, nor is it exported to our neighboring countries; our current focus is on how we can find a market for the country's saffron in European markets," said Khalid Wadan, an official of the supportive organization.

According to some of the saffron workers in Herat, due to the challenges in the country's banking system, it has become diffi-

cult to receive money for saffron exported from different countries.

"The problem is with money for Afghanistan. We exported before the last political changes, but, so far, our money has not been transferred to the bank account, and all companies have this problem," said Jalil Ahmad Karimi, head of a saffron production company in Herat.

"In the field of marketing, we have a lot of problems, and we have very little access to these markets because air and ground transit are currently closed," said Kamalddin Alizai, head of a saffron production company in Herat.

"If selling takes place outside the country, exports will increase," said Baser Ahmad Tayb, head of the agriculture department in Herat.

Based on the statistics of the National Union of Saffron Workers, more than 90% of the country's saffron is produced in Herat.

This year, more than ten tons of saffron have been obtained from nearly eighteen thousand hectares of land.

## Flash floods kill nine

PARWAN (Khaama Press): At least nine people were killed, and seven others were injured due to flash floods in Parwan province of Afghanistan, a provincial official said on Wednesday.

According to provincial government spokesperson Sayed Hekmatullah Shamim, the floods swept through several villages in the Siagard and Shimorti districts on Tuesday afternoon due to heavy rains.

Meanwhile, the floods had human and financial losses, including destroying 200 residential houses, 1,000 acres of agricultural lands, 36 km of road, some water canals and scores of animals, Shamim added.

Within the last four days, more than 30 people have died, and several others have been injured due to flash floods in Afghanistan, according to the disaster ministry's official statement.

According to Mohammad Shafi Rahimi, the ministry's spokesman, at least 26 people died in the Jalrez district due to heavy rains and their houses were destroyed.

Meanwhile, he said four people had been killed in Kabul due to flooding, 70 people had been injured, and 40 were still missing.

## Kabul residents complain of low quality medicine



KABUL (TOLONews): Residents of the nation's capital said that ow-quality medicine has increased in Kabul and is creating problems. They called on officials to prevent the sale of low-quality drugs.

"Afghanistan's doctors are the best and most qualified doctors in the world. The only problem that we have is low-quality drugs," said Yahya, a resident of Kabul.

"Make the quality of the medicine very high. its quality is low. When some-

one gets sick, they take the medicine, and they blame the doctor," said Ibrahim, a resident of Kabul.

"If our medicine is of good quality, why should we go to Pakistan, and why should we benefit a foreign land?" said Gelender Shah, a resident of Kabul.

Meanwhile, the Afghanistan Food and Drug Authority said that in the last month, they have destroyed 250 tons of low-quality food and medicine.

"159 tons of food and medicine were destroyed in

Nangarhar on Saturday, and we also destroyed approximately 8 tons of food and medicine in Khost province, and more than 300 tons of other materials are ready to be destroyed in Kabul," said Jawed Hazhar, spokesman of the Afghanistan Food and Drug Authority.

Based on the numbers of the National Drug and Food Authority, 147 pharmacies have been closed in the capital in the past month due to the sale of low-quality drugs, high prices, and lack of night service.





# Sherry unveils first-ever National Adaptation Plan

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Federal Minister for Climate Change and Environmental Coordination Senator Sherry Rehman Wednesday unveiled the country's first-ever National Adaptation Plan unanimously approved by the federal Cabinet to enhance nation's resilience against adverse impacts of climate change and environmental degradation.

The minister flanked by Additional Secretary, Ministry of Climate Change, Syed Mujtaba Hussain briefed the media persons over the landmark achievement that remained unaccomplished due to poor interest of the previous regime. She said the country needed adaptation and resilience as after 2022 floods the devastation and scale of the disaster underscored its significance for the future of the nation.

The minister alleged said the adaptation plan had reportedly started in 2019 but she did not find any record of the document in the ministry. The team under the leadership of Additional Secretary Mujtaba Hussain worked extensively to create first ever adaptation plan which was a home grown plan and had been prepared with the input of the line ministries and provincial ministries, she added.

The minister informed that detailed consultations with all the provinces including the Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK) and Gilgit Baltistan (GB) in the process of preparing the National Adaptation Plan as the ownership of the plan was important. She noted that it was the job of the ministry to prepare projects, policy and planning in the ambit of climate change and environment.

However, she said Sri Lanka and Bangladesh had already made their National Adaptation Plan in the region whereas some 40 countries all over the world had submitted their plans to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The minister said the plan was an important document that would be submitted to the UNFCCC.

On growing impacts of global warming on the region, she said climate stress was becoming like an emergency owing to the multiplying impacts of climate change. "We flagged 'climate justice' slogan at COP-27 [in Egypt]. Our greenhouse gas emissions are below one percent. We made it acknowledged across the

world that Pakistan is in the frontline of global warming and it has been established world over," Senator Rehman said.

The minister mentioned that currently the situation across the world showed forest fires going rampant which had been the case in Pakistan during the past year due to heatwaves. "Pakistan is having 53 degrees Celsius and it maintained this high temperature consecutively for three years," she said.

Deliberating on the chapters of the Plan, she said a special chapter on risk and vulnerabilities was made as the country had been repeatedly among the top climate vulnerable countries' ranking of the German Watch. She said no one could stop heatwaves but the associated risks like drought, hydro-meteorological events, glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs) etc. were manageable through timely interventions.

Pakistan had the world's largest glaciers outside the polar region that were melting at a fast pace whereas in delta there was drought and salinity, she added. Moreover, the plan also discussed flooding and agriculture whereas the water and food nexus was established in the plan to study that how to maintain food security for the population, she said.

The minister underscored that Pakistan would go water scarce by 2025 that needed urgent focus whereas other areas like urban development, air pollution, land, water and others had also been focussed in the plan. She said that the plan had ministry and province specific strategies to achieve climate adaptation goal at the grassroots level as the local governments were the core of any adaptation plan. The ministry's job was to guide provinces and therefore had developed partnerships in the plan and identified interventions as one province or ministry alone could not implement it, she added.

Senator Rehman highlighted that the planning and development of public sector development programme would be defined by the National Adaptation Plan. "We have also ensured permanent inclusion of women and marginalized communities whereas detailed guidelines have been prepared whereas it is an international standard document. The development planning would have the Adaptation Plan embedded in it," she said. The minister said the plan had a focus on nature-based solutions like Living Indus initiative, Recharge

Pakistan, mangroves plantation, afforestation and others. "It is all science and evidence based with the objective of leaving no one behind. It will be the slogan of next COP meeting," she remarked. The minister informed that the people in Sindh affected by 2022 floods were being given housing and ownership of property.

The climate based development models would improve the country's resilience towards natural disasters, she added. The minister said there was a lack of coordination among the ministries whereas all of them would have to work in cooperation and collaboration due to the crosscutting issues of environmental degradation. She said the first priority in the plan was agriculture water nexus as clear objectives were set in the document.

It also addressed areas like urban resilience as Pakistan was the most urban region of South Asia and 50% of its population was living in urban areas, she added. The minister said land use management, natural capital, gender, youth and social inclusion, disaster risk management, financing of National Adaptation Plan implementation strategy were also part of the document. She proposed the next government to form National Adaptation Plan Secretariat at the ministry to ensure institutional arrangements for implementing the plan.

The government would also support provinces to develop their adaptation plans, she said adding, "The ministry is recommending an expert group under the Pakistan Climate Change Council which is an important for a quarterly, monthly or as per the case review of the Plan's implementation including monitoring and evaluation." It was a technical document, a framework and road map for the provinces, she said.

At the end, she acknowledged the entire team for its efforts and also the World Bank who supported in the design and rewriting of the document as per international language. She appreciated that the prime minister also swiftly approved the plan without any debate and noted that the it was a consensus based approved document. Additional Secretary, Climate Change Ministry Syed Mujtaba Hussain said the document had a whole of country approach with line ministries, provincial departments and others on board making it a holistic document with whole of society approach.



ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to Tunisia Javed Ahmad Umrani called on President Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## KP CM reviews law, order situation

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Expressing concerns over recent incidents of terrorism, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa caretaker Chief Minister Azam Khan here Wednesday directed the authorities concerned to take effective measures for improvement of the law and order situation in the province.

He was presiding over a high level meeting about law and order situation in KP. The meeting reviewed overall security situation of the province. Information Minister Farooz Jamal, Chief Secretary, IGP KP and others senior officials attended. The caretaker Chief Minister stressed the need for special focus on security measures in sensitive districts and places during Muarram and said that special measures in this regard was inevitable for which all stakeholders needs to play effective role. The caretaker Chief Minister held sacrifices of security forces and police in high esteem.

## Ali Muhammad Khan arrest under MPO

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice Fazal Subhan ordered provincial government to submit reply till today (Thursday) against arrest of Former Federal Minister for State Ali Muhammad Khan under section-3 of Maintenance of Public Order (MPO), on Wednesday.

The counsel Ali Zaman Advocate argued that Ali Muhammad Khan was rearrested following acceptance of his bail plea and added that the petitioner is behind bar from 76 days. The counsel added that Ali Muhammad Khan arrested for eight time consecutively following acceptance his bail pleas but rearrested in other cases.

However, Justice Ijaz Anwar remarked that he has observed earlier that may some other case will be raise because (government) diagnosing from vain that how much endurance you have? As per government record Ali Muhammad Khan obtained bail in last case but the petitioner was rearrested at the time of release from prison under 3MPO on Tuesday, the counsel argued.

Additional Advocate General informed that till morning only one case was pending against Ali Muhammad Khan, however, PHC ordered provincial government to submit reply while declared that court will resume on the plea today (on Thursday).

Meanwhile, another PHC's divisional bench comprised of Justice Waqar Ahmad and Justice Fahim Wali issued notice to Anti-corruption Establishment to submit record of cases registered against former Federal Minister Shehryar Afridi while adjourned further hearing till 2nd August.

Assistant Advocate Barrister Yasir Raza informed PHC that Deputy Commissioner Kohat didn't appeared due to security of Muharram while Additional Deputy Commissioner (ADC) is present and produced case's record.

Assistant Advocate General added that there is no First Information Report (FIR) registered against Shehryar Afridi, however, petitioner's counsel Arshad Ali advocate argued that there is no FIR but Anti-corruption cases are booked against former federal minister.

New cases are registering against former Minister on the same day following acceptance of bail pleas by honorable courts, the counsel stated. In the meantime, Justice Waqar Ahmad observed that court issuing notice to Anti-corruption for submission of record of cases and pending inquiries against former Federal Minister Shehryar Afridi.

PHC's divisional bench comprised of Justice Waqar Ahmad and Justice Fahim Wali issued notice to Anti-corruption for submission of record of inquiries against Former Federal Minister Shehryar Afridi while adjourned till 2nd August.

## President calls for close ties with Tunisia

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi on Wednesday emphasized the need for promoting greater economic collaborations with Tunisia to boost bilateral trade. The president, talking to Pakistan's Ambassador-designate to the Republic of Tunisia, Javed Ahmed Umrani, who called on him, also called for increasing interactions and exchanges between the Chambers of Commerce and Industry of both countries.

He said that Pakistan greatly valued its historical and brotherly ties with Tunisia and both countries had commonality of views on various issues. He asked the envoy to play his role in further strengthening bilateral relations with Tunisia by increasing cooperation in the fields of education, culture, and defense. President Alvi acknowledged Tunisia's vision for making OIC a substantive platform for advancing inter-faith harmony as well as cooperation in addressing international issues such as the Jammu and Kashmir Dispute, Palestine and Islamophobia.

The president asked the ambassador-designate to highlight at various fora the issues of Islamophobia as well as the mistreatment of minorities in India. He stated that India was committing gross human rights violations and persecuting Muslims in the Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), adding that the real face of India needed to be exposed to the world.

## Indian govt faces no-confidence vote

NEW DELHI (Agencies): India's parliament on Wednesday authorised a no-confidence vote against Narendra Modi's government by an alliance of opposition parties, to force the prime minister to address in detail concerns about ethnic clashes in the northeastern state of Manipur.

Modi's Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has a clear majority of 301 members in the 542-seat lower house of parliament, so the no-confidence vote will not affect its stability. The opposition instead wants to trigger a debate about violence in the remote, BJP-ruled Manipur state, where more than 130

people have been killed and 60,000 displaced since it began in early May.

Approving the opposition motion, lower house speaker Om Birla said he would soon decide when the debate and vote would take place. The ethnic tensions in the small state of 3.2 million people are seen as a rare security and political failure by Modi's government, which will face a national election by May 2024.

Further incidents of arson and the destruction of some abandoned houses, government offices and vehicles by armed mobs were reported from at least two districts of

Manipur on Wednesday, a local police official said, asking not to be named. Modi had not commented in public about the violence until last week when videos showing two women being paraded naked and molested by a mob in Manipur sparked national outrage.

Modi condemned the mass assault as "shameful" and promised tough action against the perpetrators. Opposition parties have, however, disrupted the monsoon session of parliament which began last week, to demand a detailed statement by Modi on Manipur in parliament, followed by a debate.



KARACHI: Pakistani fishermen, who were released by the Indian government, greeted with their family members after arrival in the Port City.

## PM successfully navigates Pakistan's complex landscape: Arab News

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif, after facing significant challenges, inheriting a country on the verge of financial default, has been able to successfully navigate this complex landscape by engaging coalition leaders, the defence leadership and key foreign partners.

As a result, Pakistan is now stable enough to transition smoothly toward a caretaker setup, which will hold the next general election, according to an article published by the Saudi Arab based daily newspaper "Arab News". "A new staff-level agreement with the International Monetary Fund, worth \$3 billion for a period of nine months, was concluded in June.... and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor stands revived, while relations with the US are also back on track," the

article said adding most notably, the civil-military collaboration has expanded to the economic sphere, giving renewed momentum to Pakistan's economic partnership with the leading GCC economies.

Since 2019, Saudi Arabia, China and the UAE have offered concessional loans worth several billion dollars to shore up Pakistan's foreign reserves. These loans have subsequently been rolled over to meet the IMF demand. The latest IMF deal became possible after Saudi Arabia deposited an additional loan of \$2 billion in the State Bank of Pakistan, the daily added. Writer of the article Dr, Ali Awadh Asseri has served as Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Pakistan from 2001 to 2009.

The article said the Kingdom has always stood by Pakistan through

thick and thin. The Special Investment Facilitation Council offers a viable pathway in this respect. Its establishment indicates that Pakistan's civilian and military leaders understand the risk of dependency on foreign loans. And they are preparing to lay down a solid economic base through attracting investment from friendly countries. The article added that political instability results in frequent changes of government and the consequent lack of continuity in economic policies. These issues have plagued major investment commitments by Saudi Arabia, the UAE and Qatar in the recent past. While visiting Islamabad in 2019, Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman pledged \$20 billion of investment in the energy, minerals and mining sectors.

## GOVERNMENT OF SINDH TAKES ANOTHER HISTORIC STEP

### BY PROVIDING HOMES AND LAND TITLES TO THE DISPLACED FLOOD AFFECTEES

The Government of Sindh remains committed to restoring hope and normalcy in the lives of **2 million** families affected by the devastating floods of 2022. In addition to financial assistance, the government has taken a significant step forward by granting land titles to the beneficiaries.

**In the first phase of the historic initiative, flood affected families in district Jacobabad have received land titles to their climate resilient houses.**

**SINDH GOVERNMENT**  
AT THE FOREFRONT OF SERVING ITS PEOPLE

INF/KRY/3281/2023