

Climber dies
CHILAS (PPI): Spanish climber lost his life during an attempt to scale the world's ninth-highest peak, Nanga Parbat, according to a statement on Monday. A group of climbers was attempting to scale the Nanga Parbat, which at 8,125 metres (26,660 feet), the world's ninth-highest peak. The police said the Spanish mountaineer died at Nanga Parbat Base Camp number 5 due to a heart attack.

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PM to attend SCO meeting
F.P. Report
ISLAMABAD: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif will participate in the 23rd Meeting of the SCO (Shanghai Cooperation Organisation) Council of Heads of States in video-conference format today (Tuesday). Invitation to the Prime Minister to attend the meeting has been given by Indian Prime Minister in his capacity as the current Chair of the SCO.

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Shehbaz says joint efforts inevitable for country's progress

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday, calling the IMF agreement a "breather" and a "moment of concern", urged all the national institutions to make concerted efforts to rid the country of loans and put it on the course to progress.

The prime minister, in his remarks at the Federal Cabinet meeting chaired by him, said while remaining in their respective jurisdictions, the institutions should make a united effort for at least next 15 years to address the country's economic woes. He said Pakistan's deliverance from loans required a vision, unity, hard work and sacrifice by the affluent people.

"If we opt this course, no one can stop the country from achieving progress," he remarked. The prime minister thanked his all cabinet members, particularly Finance Minister Ishaq Dar and his team and Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari, and the Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF) for their respective roles to help Pakistan achieve the nine-month stand-by agreement of \$3 billion.

"I pray that this is the last IMF deal. But this is easier said than done," he commented and mentioned that the state-owned enterprises like the Pakistan Steel Mills, Pakistan International Airlines and others were eating up around Rs 600 billion annually. He said under the IMF deal, Pakistan would receive the first installment of \$1.1 billion in July.

He also thanked UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres for his role in the IMF agreement and offering his further role in the process, if needed. The prime minister spoke high of the Chinese support during last three months by rolling over \$5 billion of sovereign and commercial banks loans, which was unprecedented.

He said the situation would have been different, if China had not made the rollover. "The people of Pakistan should never forget this," he remarked. Similarly, the prime minister also thanked Saudi Arabia for committing \$2 billion, and the United Arab Emirates and Islamic Development Bank for \$1 billion each for Pakistan.

Calling it a teamwork, he particularly appreciated the role of Chief of

Cabinet briefed about \$3b IMF deal

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Federal Cabinet was briefed about the salient features of the \$ 3 billion deal with the International Monetary Fund on Monday. While chairing the cabinet meeting here, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said Pakistan was thankful to friendly countries, including China, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, the Islamic Development Bank and the Managing Director of International Monetary Fund (IMF).

The prime minister said a comprehensive solid waste management system for the Islamabad Capital Territory should be introduced. He instructed that under the solid waste management programme, responsibility should be given to companies which had experience in disposing off harmful and toxic waste in hospitals in Islamabad. The cabinet in principle approved sending of the Islamabad Capital Territory Solid Waste Bill to the Cabinet Committee for Legislative Cases (CCLC). It was given a detailed briefing about the solid waste management in Islamabad. It was informed under the project, two strategies would be formulated. Under the short term policy, waste collection had started from Islamabad, including the suburban areas, while under the long term one, tenders had been issued to hire services of high standard international companies. The prime minister sought details of incinerators for disposing off waste in hospitals in Islamabad.

On the recommendation of Ministry of Commerce, the cabinet allowed transit of a container of spare parts of vehicles from Karachi to Kabul. The spare parts would be for the vehicles of World Food Programme which was continuing its operation to provide food to Afghanistan. On the recommendation of Ministry of Federal Education and Professional Training, the cabinet approved in principle the Higher Education Commission Amendment Bill 2023. The approval of the amendment bill would bring innovation in the system of higher education according to the requirements of present era.

On the recommendation of the Education Ministry, the cabinet also sanctioned the Federal Urdu University for Arts, Science and Technology Amendment Bill 2023. The amendment would bring reforms in the university and promote research. On the recommendation of the Education Ministry, it also approved the National Commission for Human Development Amendment Ordinance 2002. The drafts of above three laws would be forwarded to the CCLC. The cabinet also sanctioned sending of the Private Security Services Regulatory Bill to the CCLC. Under the bill, a Private Security Services Regulatory Authority would be established to oversee the security system. It also approved legislation for establishing the Pakistan Land Port Authority, however, it directed that after consultation with the Ministry of Commerce the draft legislation should be sent to the CCLC.

the Army Staff General Asim Munir for his efforts to bring in the support of total \$3 billion from Saudi Arabia and the UAE. Prime Minister Shehbaz said during the remaining 40-42 days of the government's term, the cabinet members should make efforts to leave behind a policy framework providing a roadmap and a vision for future development.

He said the whole Muslim Ummah, including the government and the people of Pakistan, strongly condemned another incident of burning a copy of the Holy Quran in Sweden. "We demand immediate

action against the perpetrator. Unfortunately, this is not the first time as a similar incident had also taken place in the past," he remarked.

He also demanded of the Swedish government to take notice of the Islamophobic and hateful narrative against the Muslim population in their country. Prime Minister Shehbaz appreciated the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation for convening an urgent meeting on the issue and said Pakistan endorsed their meeting and decision, with a hope that such Islamophobic incidents did not recur in the future.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee General Sahir Shamshad Mirza called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif.

Pak Army a strong defence line, says PM

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif on Monday said the valiant soldiers of the Pakistan army were a strong defensive line in protecting the homeland against the enemy's evil designs.

The prime minister expressed these views after the six security personnel including Major Saqib Hussain were martyred in the Sherani and Kech districts of Balochistan. PM Sharif said the nation held the sacrifice of the soldiers in high esteem, which was a guarantee of the peace and security of the country.

He expressed an undeterred resolve to eliminate the elements that wanted to disrupt peace in Balochistan. He said the progress and development of Balochistan was a top priority for the government.

Meanwhile, the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif Monday congratulated mountaineers Naila Kiyani and Sameena Baig for scaling the world's ninth highest peak of Nanga Parbat.

The prime minister, in a statement, said besides summiting the world's highest peak of Mount Everest, both Naila Kiyani and Sameena Baig were the first Pakistani women to scale the most dangerous peak of Nanga Parbat and brought fame to country.

The two mountaineers were representatives of those brave women of Pakistan who were second to none in their pursuit of tenacity, ambitions and objectives as they had proved that their mettle, determination and intentions were "higher than the highest mountains", PM Shehbaz added.

Praying for their more successes in future, he said the daughters of the nation like Sameena Baig, Naila Kiyani and others should continue to project Pakistan's bright image across the globe. In May 2023, the prime minister conferred Sitara-i-Mitiaz on Naila Kiyani. After Sameena Baig, she is the second Pakistani woman mountaineer who has scaled the Mount Everest.

Khadija's remand extended

LAHORE (PPI): An anti-terrorism court (ATC) on Monday extended the judicial remand of Khadija Shah in the Askari Tower attack case. Ms. Shah was presented before the ATC judge after his judicial remand expired today. The court while extending her judicial remand for 14 more days, ordered police to file a challan of the case.

Khadija, a Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) activist and former finance minister Dr Salman Shah's daughter, is currently in jail on judicial remand. The daughter of the former finance minister was granted consular access at the request of US as she is holding dual nationality. Earlier this month, a US delegation met Khadija in Lahore's Kot Lakhpat Jail.

Pakistan, Japan agree to deepen bilateral ties

TOKYO (Agencies): Pakistan and Japan have agreed to further deepen their bilateral cooperation in diverse fields including trade, investment and Information Technology. This was stated by Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari at a joint press conference along with his Japanese counterpart Hayashi Yoshimasa in Tokyo on Monday.

He said the two sides also agreed to enhance cooperation in mutually beneficial people to people contact, human resource development, tourism and agriculture sectors. The Foreign Minister said Pakistan and Japan have further agreed to explore avenues for working together on targeted programs in domains of solarization, desalination, water purification and rebuilding of housing structure in the flood affected areas of Pakistan.

The two sides agreed to conduct language skills assessment tests for Japanese language in

Pakistan to facilitate export of skilled workforce. Bilawal Bhutto Zardari said we have also deliberated on scores of joint ventures by Japanese enterprise in Pakistan. He said Pakistan and Japan have cordial relations and are longstanding friends and share special bond, based on deep rooted linkages that go far in history and time. He said people of Pakistan carry deep sentiments of warmth and affection for Japan and its people.

The Foreign Minister said Pakistan attaches high importance to its relationship with Japan as both countries have also stood with each other in times of need. On the occasion, Bilawal Bhutto Zardari expressed his gratitude to his Japanese counterpart for hosting him and his delegation.

PPP Information Secretary Shazia Marri said on Monday that Aseefa Bhutto-Zardari, who has accompanied Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari to Japan, was on a

"private visit" and bearing her own expenses. Bilawal is on a four-day visit to Japan, where he arrived on Saturday, following an invitation from the Japanese government. A day ago, the foreign minister had met the Pakistani diaspora in Tokyo, where his sister Aseefa was seen alongside him.

After the meeting, Twitter was abuzz with questions over Aseefa's presence at the official visit, with a number of people calling it a misuse of taxpayer money. Jamaat-e-Islami Karachi chief Hafiz Naemur Rehman said there was nothing new in the picture.

"In dynasties, new masters of the enslaved nation are prepared at the expense of the people." "In this country, democracy is being killed day and night. Be it PPP or PML-N, they are families that have princesses and princes ... and other people of the party have the status of courtiers and nobles," he tweeted.

Israeli drone strikes kill 9 Palestinians in West Bank

WEST BANK (Agencies): As many as nine residents have embraced martyrdom as the Israeli army Monday conducted drone strikes in the West Bank's Jenin, injuring around 50 people with several in critical condition, according to the Palestinian health ministry.

The operation was conducted two weeks after a brutal Israeli army raid in the Jenin refugee camp claimed the lives of several people. The Israeli army said its forces had struck a "joint operations center" that served as a command post for the "Jenin Brigade," a local militant group.

The West Bank is controlled partially in the West Bank, including the Jenin area by the Palestinian Authority. Under Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu who took power in December with his ultra-nationalist allies, the violence by Israelis has increased the suffering of the Palestinians. The United Nations expressed concern over the escalating violence in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, calling for calm and restraint from all parties.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres said he was "deeply saddened" by the loss of life and injuries in the recent violence and called on Israeli and Palestinian leaders to "take immediate steps to de-escalate the situation." The recent violence has raised concerns that the situation could escalate and lead to full-scale violence.

The international community has called for an end to the violence and for both sides to return to the negotiating table to find a peaceful resolution to the longstanding conflict. The conflict between Israel and

Palestine has been ongoing since the Six-Day War of 1967, with Israel occupying the West Bank, home to around 490,000 Israelis living in settlements considered illegal under international law.

The Palestinians, who desire their own independent state, demand Israel withdraw from all land occupied in the Six-Day War and dismantle all Jewish settlements. However, Netanyahu has pledged to "strengthen settlements" and has shown no interest in reviving peace talks, which have been inactive since 2014. In another incident, a Palestinian youth was martyred by Israeli fire near the West Bank city of Ramallah.

The ongoing violence has claimed a number of lives including Palestinian civilians. As daylight broke on Monday, thick black smoke from burning tyres set alight by residents swirled through the streets while calls to support the fighters rang out from loudspeakers in mosques. The Palestinian health ministry confirmed at least three people had been killed in Jenin, while another man was killed in the city of Ramallah after being shot in the head at a checkpoint. The Israeli military said the target functioned as an "advanced observation and reconnaissance centre" and a weapons and explosives site as well as a coordination and communications hub for the militant fighters.

It provided an aerial photograph showing what it said was the target and which indicated the building hit was near two schools and a medical centre. Only days before last month's drone strike, the army used helicopter gunships to help extract troops

and vehicles from a raid on the city, after fighters used explosives against a force sent in to arrest two militant suspects. The escalating violence in the West Bank over the past 15 months has caused mounting international alarm, with regular army raids in cities like Jenin, a series of deadly attacks by Palestinians against Israeli settlements and rampages by Jewish settler mobs against Palestinian villages. Israel captured the West Bank, which the Palestinians see as the core of a future independent state, along with East Jerusalem and Gaza, in the 1967 Middle Eastern war. Following decades of conflict, peace talks that had been brokered by the United States have been frozen since 2014.

The Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) on Monday condemned an Israeli military operation in the Palestinian city of Jenin in the occupied West Bank. Nine Palestinians were killed by Israeli army fire early on Monday, including eight in Jenin, according to the health ministry. At least 50 Palestinians were also injured.

"This heinous crime constitutes an extension of crimes and organised state terrorism practiced by the Israeli occupation against the Palestinian people," the OIC said in a statement.

The Jeddah-based grouping held Israel responsible for "the repercussions of this heinous crime that calls for investigation and accountability." The OIC called on the UN Security Council to "take responsibility, enforce its relevant resolutions, put an end to this continuous Israeli terrorism, and provide protection for the Palestinian people."

Saudi summons Swedish envoy

RIYADH (Agencies): Saudi Arabia has summoned Sweden's ambassador to denounce a Quran burning outside a Stockholm mosque that sparked a diplomatic backlash across the Muslim world, state media reported early Monday.

The kingdom – home to the holiest sites in Islam, in Makkah and Madinah – had already condemned Wednesday's incident in which an Iraqi citizen living in Sweden, Salwan Momika, 37, stomped on the Muslim holy book and set several pages alight.

The foreign ministry summoned the ambassador on Sunday to urge Sweden "to stop all actions that directly contradict international efforts seeking to spread the values of tolerance, moderation and rejection of extremism, and undermine the necessary mutual respect for relations between peoples and states", the official Saudi Press Agency reported.

Momika's Quran burning coincided with the start of the Eid al-Adha holiday and the end of the annual Hajj pilgrimage in Saudi Arabia, triggering widespread anger. Countries including Iraq, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates and Morocco have also summoned Swedish ambassadors in protest.

Iran said on Sunday it was holding off on sending its new ambassador to Sweden because of the incident. At an extraordinary meeting on Sunday at its Jeddah headquarters, the Saudi-based Organisation of Islamic Cooperation called for collective measures to avoid future Quran burnings.

Swedish police had granted Momika a permit in line with free speech protections, but authorities later said they had opened an investigation over "agitation against an ethnic group", noting that Momika had burnt pages from the Islamic holy book very close to the mosque.



TOKYO: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto with his Japanese counterpart Hayashi Yoshimasa addressing a joint press conference.

Rabbani warns over proposing Karachi to be made as province

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) Senator Raza Rabbani on Monday censured the Senate's deputy chairman for suggesting making Karachi a separate province, warning that the "tinkering" with the 1973 Constitution will be a "disaster".

"The talk of the creation of new provinces is strongly opposed on historical, linguistic and ethnic considerations," the former chairman Senate in a statement said. He added that the creation of provinces on administrative bases was put forward by the state to counter the "demand for provincial autonomy and the nationalist movements".

"This to an extent was implemented through the local bodies during the Musharraf regime, it failed," Senator Rabbani said. He added that the suggestions are being made again "to roll back the 18th Amendment and the intro-

duction of a presidential form of government".

"The state must learn from the mistakes of the past and more so from the recent past," urged the senator. He also warned that any "tinkering with the Constitution" will be a disaster as "national census on constitutional issues particularly provincial autonomy will not be achievable". He further warned that it would also "create political instability leading to greater economic instability".

Rabbani's statement came after Senate Deputy Chairman Mirza Muhammad Afridi suggested carving out nine more provinces, including Karachi, as a solution for better administration. In an interview, the senator recommended forming three provinces each in Balochistan and Punjab, two in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and one in Sindh.

Afridi, an independent lawmaker, said that KP's

Hazara district and tribal areas (formerly Fata) be made separate administrative units. "The more provinces there are in Pakistan, the better it will be. If new provinces are formed in the country, the problems will be solved," Mirza Afridi said.

When asked about how the resources will then be shared, he said after the 18th amendment, the provinces would continue to get their share. The senator added that if new provinces are formed, they will continue to get a share under the NFC (National Finance Commission) award, lamenting that the government has not fulfilled the promises made with

Federally Administered Tribal Areas (Fata). "Even today the people of Fata have many concerns and are facing difficulties," the lawmaker said. Afridi further said that he has also raised the issue of funds with Finance Minister Ishaq Dar.

CM Naqvi approves shrines renovation, expansion in Punjab

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi approved a phased programme aimed at renovating and expanding shrines of Sufi saints across the province.

The decision was made during a meeting held at the Chief Minister's Office on Monday to discuss the renovation and expansion plans for shrines. Attendees included Provincial Minister for Aqaf Azfar Ali Nasir, secretary Aqaf, secretary C&W, famous architect Nayyar Ali Dada and Secretary (Coordination) to CM.

It was decided in the meeting that in the initial phase, the shrines of Hazrat Shah Shams Tabraiz in Multan, Hazrat Baba Bulleh Shah in Kasur, Hazrat Baba Fariduddin Masood Ganj Shakar in Pakpattan, and Hazrat Syed Azizuddin Peer Makki in Lahore would undergo decoration and expansion. The phased programme aimed to upgrade all shrines, providing enhanced facilities for the devotees.

The caretaker CM emphasised the importance of improving facilities such as food distribution centres, libraries, guesthouses, and washrooms for convenience

of the visitors. He directed the authorities concerned to promptly address all matters related to renovation and expansion of shrines, urging them to commence work on the programme as soon as possible. He stressed the need to initiate expansion project for Data Darbar Complex at the earliest and also expressed the desire to complete the expansion work for Bibi Pakdaman shrine before the month of Muharram.

CM inspects progress on Akbar Chowk flyover project: Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi conducted a late-night inspection of the ongoing Akbar Chowk flyover project to assess the progress being made and expressed satisfaction over the pace of work.

He emphasised the need to protect trees during the construction phase, said a handout issued here. The CM ordered working tirelessly and utilising all available resources to complete the project on time. The successful completion of the project will significantly improve the daily movement of around 250,000 vehicles and provide convenience to the residents of the surround-

ing areas, he added.

During the briefing by Commissioner Lahore/DG LDA Muhammad Ali Randhawa and Chief Engineer Israr Saeed, it was reported that 151 out of 153 flyover piles had been completed, with the remaining two in progress. Eight pile caps had already been completed, and work on the U-turn was progressing rapidly. Provincial Ministers Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, and others were also present.

Afterwards, CM Mohsin Naqvi addressed the media, emphasising that the health card scheme had not been terminated and reaffirming the government's commitment to providing treatment for those in need. He clarified that efforts were being made to prevent any misuse of the health card scheme, particularly mentioning that heart operations were never halted under the program. He highlighted that heart patients receive 100% free treatment in government hospitals and 70% free treatment in private hospitals through health cards.

The chief minister expressed his priority of completing ongoing projects on time and ensuring trans-

parency in every aspect. He pointed out the remarkable progress achieved in development projects within a short period. He acknowledged that there might be slight delays due to rainfall but assured that work on projects such as Shahdara continued even during the Eid holidays. The contractor was committed to his work and paid three times the labour to keep the construction ongoing.

The CM expressed confidence that Lahore would successfully meet the deadlines for project completion. He also mentioned obtaining technical clearance certificates from NESPAK for every development project and investigating any reported issues, such as stagnant water in the Kalma Chowk underpass, to take necessary action against negligence.

He commended the outstanding cleanliness arrangements made in Lahore during Eid-ul-Adha and extended his congratulations to Ministers Amir Mir, Azfar Ali Nasir, Commissioner Muhammad Ali Randhawa, and the deputy commissioner for their efforts in maintaining cleanliness in the city.



KARACHI: Governor Sindh Kamran Khan Tessori addressing a press conference along with different religious leader against the burning of holy Quran outside a Stockholm Mosque at Governor House.

Punjab cabinet approves new GOR for homeless employees

LAHORE (APP): The 19th cabinet meeting, chaired by caretaker Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi at his office on Monday, approved construction of a new government officers' residence (GOR) for homeless provincial government employees, as the CM ordered timely steps for development of a new residential colony.

The meeting lauded the exceptional cleanliness arrangements made during the Eidul Azha. Diligent efforts by the relevant bodies including ministries, departments as well as the Solid Waste Management Department were commended and the officials responsible for maintaining cleanliness throughout the province were acknowledged for their outstanding performance.

The cabinet approved inclusion of the SL-3 project of Lahore Ring Road and the elevated project from Niazi Chowk to Babu Sabu in the annual development programme. The expansion project of Data

Darbar was also approved, which will feature a state-of-the-art almonry and enhanced facilities for visitors. The chief minister said that the owners of the land, which is acquired for the expansion project, would be compensated at the market rate.

Meanwhile, the cabinet authorised signing of an agreement between the Local Government Department and the Punjab Information Technology Board for the "Your Municipality, Helpline 1198" project. Amendments to the Punjab Government Rules of Business, 2011 were approved to facilitate training of the public prosecutors at the Centre for Professional Development of Public Prosecutors.

Financial assistance was also approved for the affected children and families of deceased children in Ahmadpur East tehsil of Bahawalpur.

According to a significant decision, the cabinet granted financial autonomy to the medical superintend-

ents of all government hospitals in Punjab, enabling them to manage their finances up to 10 million rupees. The cabinet also approved the delegation of financial powers to the medical superintendents.

The establishment of the Nishtar Institute of Ophthalmology & Allied Vision Sciences (IOAVS) in Multan and the revised procedure for the appointment of principals to the government colleges was reviewed. The audit report for the fiscal year 2022-23 was also approved for the accounts of the Punjab government.

Approval was given for a draft agreement between the Excise & Taxation Department and the Punjab Information Technology Board regarding scanning of motor vehicle registration documents/files. The Okara Arts Council was transferred back to the Punjab Arts Council from the Lahore Arts Council. The meeting was attended by provincial ministers, advisors, chief secretary, the IG police, and others.

KP govt make online all affairs of Industry and Commerce: Adnan Jalil

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Minister for Industries, Trade and Technical Education Mohammad Adnan Jalil has invited the domestic and foreign industrial and business communities to openly invest in KP and clarified that Allah Almighty has enriched our province with valuable natural and human resources.

He said our province is also feasible for investment and industrialization and investors can be benefited of it at national and global level. Similarly, he revealed that the provincial government is making all the affairs of Industry and Commerce department online as he said so far 15 thousand files out of 45 thousand have been scanned and soon the entire system will be computerized after which citizens can use their mobile application to avail our services and facilities.

He expressed these views in Pakhtunkhwa Radio's program Pakhtunkhwa Online. Prof Dr. Abasin Yousafzai hosted of the program. Adnan Jalil said that we are connecting our industry and business activities with the Central Asia states,

wherein the employment and economic prospects will reach new heights. He said that providing facilities to domestic and small-scale entrepreneurs is the need of the hour for strengthening the economy, while continuous supply of electricity, gas and other facilities is also indispensable for increasing industrial production, to which our government is paying full attention.

He said that new customer services are being established for new investors in the province. He said the establishment of new and advanced technology based industries in Rashkai Economic Zone will increase employment opportunities. He said that in order to encourage investment in the province, steps are being taken to provide one-window facilities and other incentives including security to businessmen. The provincial minister said that for the promotion of business in the province, institutions like FPCCI have been taken on board in addition to the Federal Chamber of Industry and Commerce.

In response to a question, the caretaker minister said that nature has enriched our province with abundant natural resources and there is also the

most capable manpower available, so we will make full use of our resources through these intelligent people.

Adnan Jalil said that the continuity of policies is necessary for the promotion of investment, while it is not possible to achieve our goals without political stability. For this purpose, he said, all political parties and other stakeholders should be on the same page. In response to a question, he said that TEVTA is training the people going for employment in the Gulf countries, but now modernization has to be brought here as well.

To promote business in the province, he further revealed, SIDB is going to launch a project under which entrepreneurs will get easy loans and lease plots where they can set up their businesses. For this purpose, the government will provide electricity and gas supply along with other necessary facilities here. In response to a question, he said that steps are also being taken to attract businessmen of the province in the Swat tax free zone. Similarly, in order to attract all the youth towards technical education, facilities are being provided in technical educational institutions according to the requirements of the modern age.

Minister urges massive plantation

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Minister for Planning, Forests, Wildlife and Fisheries Bilal Afzal has said that this region is the most affected by climate change and major challenge can be tackled only by planting more and more trees.

He was chairing a departmental meeting at the office of DG Fisheries on Monday. Secretary Mudassir Waheed and other officers briefed him on the performance and problems of the department.

Bilal Afzal directed that the punishments for the protection of forests should be made more severe so that those who cut trees can be held accountable. He directed that a comprehensive plan should be drawn up for the success of the upcoming monsoon plantation campaign, likely to begin within a few days.

Bilal Afzal said that there are vast opportunities for shrimp and fish production in the province, therefore, a new policy should be formulated for it so that not only local demand of proteins can be met but also foreign exchange can be earned through exports.

Governor demands Sweden to take action against vandals desecrated Holy Quran

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori has demanded of the Sweden government to take strict action against the vandals, who desecrated the Holy Quran. While addressing a press conference at Governor House here on Monday, he said that if the action was not taken against the vandals, the Sweden

would have to face a dire reaction. Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori said, 'The desecration of the Holy Quran will never be tolerated.' The Governor said that a letter had been sent to the Ambassador of Sweden to Pakistan against the vandals. Kamran Tessori demanded of the Sweden government to give an exemplary

punishment to the vandals. Governor Mohammed Kamran Khan Tessori said that the response of the Sweden government was disappointing and she should take strict action against those, who were responsible. He further said that the desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden had enraged the Muslim Ummah.

‘200 acres land allocated for new graveyard in Kemari district’

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab on Monday said that the lack of cemetery places in the city will be met as 200 acres of land, has been allocated for the new graveyard in Kemari district, where development works will be started very soon.

He said this while presiding over a meeting in his office regarding the current situation of cemeteries in the city and the construction of new cemeteries.

He said that a place for another cemetery is being acquired soon in Malir district. On this occasion, Deputy Mayor Karachi Salman Abdullah Murad,

Deputy Commissioner District Kemari Ghulam Qadir Talpur, Focal Person Minister of Local Government Sindh Karamullah Waqasi and other relevant officials were also present.

Deputy Commissioner Kemari gave detailed briefing to the Mayor on graveyard. The Mayor Karachi said that the construction of a model graveyard in Kemari will be started soon and preliminary work in this regard is going on. This cemetery will meet the needs of the people of Kemari and other adjacent districts and all the facilities will be provided for burial here, he added.

He said that during his visit to different areas of Karachi, citizens have identified the shortage of places in graveyards and solving the problems of the citizens is our first priority, that is the reason why work has been started on the project of two new model cemeteries in Karachi.

He said that the condition of the existing cemeteries in the city will also be improved and the boundary walls of the cemeteries will be constructed and repaired and water and lighting arrangements will be made there so that the citizens can attend the burial without any difficulty.

He said that improving the internal condition of the cemeteries is also necessary to make the surrounding area better and cleaner, especially on the occasion of Shab-e Barat and Eid.

A large number of citizens visit the cemeteries, therefore, it is necessary to make the roads leading to the graveyards better and brighter, therefore every possible effort will be made to provide maximum facilities to the citizens in this regard, he said. He said that with the increase in the population of the city, due to the establishment of new settlements it is necessary to build new cemeteries.

Kh Saad orders revival of Sibi-Harnai train operation

LAHORE (APP): Federal Minister for Railways Khawaja Saad Rafique has directed the authorities concerned to ensure revival of Sibi-Harnai train operation. He presided over a meeting here on Monday in which various matters pertaining to railways came under discussion. The minister expressed satisfaction over the pace of work on Sibi-Harnai train section.

The meeting reviewed progress on Main Line-1 project and future strategy was also discussed. Meeting also gave update on branding and direction was given to start branding work of 15 coaches during current month as a pilot project. An Electric Arc Furnace would be installed in Steel Shop Mughalpura by July 25, the meeting was told. The working of furnace would help in increasing production of steel shop besides improving quality.

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Ramin Sultan with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Shahid Rahman citizen number 1620202198735 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.
1.Ramin Sultan (Mother)2.Asiya Naz (Sister)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA SWABI-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Munif with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Zareen citizen number 1350325512335 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.
1.Chan Mehraj Waheed (Daughter)2.Mehnaz Malik (Daughter)3.Nargis Bibi (Daughter)4.Naila Faisal (Daughter)5.Shakeela Bibi (Spouse)6.Khan Afsar (Son)7.Ali Afsar (Son)8.Muhammad Munif (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MANSEHRA-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Ishfaq with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Muhammad Rafiq citizen number 1350306216045 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.
1.Riffat Bibi (Daughter)2.Farhat (Daughter)3.Ishfaq Ahmed (Son)4.Muhammad Ishfaq (Son)5.Nisar Ahmed (Son)6.Muhammad Zaeher (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU


PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Mehwish Majid with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Jannat Khatoon citizen number 1310127823120 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.
1.Shama Naz (Daughter)2.Kinza Bashir (Daughter)3.Mehwish Majid (Daughter)4.Saima Gulshad (Daughter)5.Bashir Muhammad (Spouse)6.Aamir Basheer (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Maroof Khan with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Imroz Khan citizen number 1730177834501 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.
1.Naseem (Daughter)2.Naseema Begum (Daughter)3.Shaheen Gul (Daughter)4.Yasmeen (Daughter)5.Maroor Khan (Son)6.Sarfraz Khan (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA MEGA CENTER PESHAWAR-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Parveen Akhtar with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Fazzal Din citizen number 1330203919949 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.
1.Parveen Akhtar (Daughter)2.Zeenat Bibi (Daughter)3.Gul Sher Bibi (Daughter)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA HARIPUR-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Qaisar Khan with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Wajahat Khan citizen number 3740580543827 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.
1.Naheed Bibi (Mother)2.Qaisar Khan (Father)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA HARIPUR-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Ms. Shagufta Bibi with regards to moveable & immoveable assets of deceased Mr. Saleem Khan citizen number 1310123472409 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs.
1.Nusrat Bibi (Daughter)2.Sehrisht Saleem (Daughter)3.Shagufta Bibi (Daughter)4.Kalsoom Bibi (Spouse)5.Waris Ali (Son)
On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
P/D/01/11/23
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU



Environmental Impact Assessment Report

The notice is published for the information of all stakeholders and general public that KP EPA has admitted the application of the following Project to accord environmental approval required under Section 13 (1) KP Environmental act 2014.

NAME OF PROJECT	LOCATION	DISTRICT
EIA OF NORTHERN BOTTLING CO. PVT. LTD.	Plot No.15, 15-A, 15-B, 15-D, 16 And 16-B-1, Hayatabad Industrial Estate, Peshawar	PESHAWAR, KP

All Stakeholders and General Public are invited to submit their comments for or against the grant of environmental approval. The comments may be submitted to Director General Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar within the duration of 15 days from the date of publication of this notice.

Copy of environmental impact assessment report submitted by the proponent of the project is available at office of Director General EPA Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Peshawar for the review of stakeholders/general public.

The public hearing will be conducted as per the following schedule:

DATE	DAY	TIME	VENUE
19/07/2023	Wednesday	11:00 AM	Plot No.15, 15-A, 15-B, 15-D, 16 And 16-B-1, Hayatabad Industrial Estate, Peshawar

All stakeholders and general public are invited to attend the public hearing proceeding to share their proposal suggestions.

Director General
EPA Peshawar
3rd Floor, SDU Building,
Khyber Road, Peshawar Cantt.
Ph: +92(91)9210263

Mr. Izhar Ahmed Kanwal
Manager Admin
Northern Bottling Company Pvt Ltd.
Plot No. 15, 15-A, 15-B, 15-D, 16
and 16-B/1, Hayatabad Industrial
Estate, Peshawar. 0345-9001689



Shah: PTI's problem not political but psychological

PESHAWAR (APP): President Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Ali Shah Bacha has said that the problem of Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) was not political but psychological as according to him the PTI leaders have lost their minds after losing power both in Center and provinces.

In a statement to the media on Monday, he said all the conspiracies of PTI were destined to fail and the party will not come in

power again through elections or selection. The PTI, he added, has now become a lost story. The PTI leadership was now seeking selection rather than election but their every attempt to gain power will fail.

He said prior to coming in power, the PTI leader Imran Khan promised to give 10 million jobs and 5 million houses to people but he totally failed to honor the pledges he made with the people. In fact, he said Imran Khan deceived the people through his hol-

low slogans. Shah said PPP never came to power through the back door.

He questioned what PTI did for the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during their long 10-year tenure and added that PTI only utilized national resources for their sit-ins and rallies.

The PTI always lied to the people and misused the social media platform.

The performance of PTI was just limited to social media as it had hired more than 1500 social media

influencers only in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to promote their false performance.

The salaries of these social media influencers were being paid from the provincial exchequer and that was why the province was faced with Rs 1000 billion debt after their departure.

He asked why Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf (PTI) was reluctant to answer questions regarding their male-practices and corruption in BRT, Billion Tree Tsunami and Malam Jabba projects.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Minister Muhammad Adnan Jalil responding people's online questions from studio of Pakhtunkhwa Radio Peshawar.

CBP kicks-off renovation of Saddar Road



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The renovation project of Saddar Road Peshawar Cantt kicks-off while Station Commander/President Cantment Board Peshawar Brigadier Mohammad Usman inaugurated the project, on Monday.

Cantment Executive Officer Ali Irfan Rizvi, Deputy Cantment Executive Officer Aamir Sohail Barki, Vice President Cantment Board Peshawar Yadullah Khan Bangash

and various ward members of Peshawar Cantment including Faizan Khan Nazim, Mohammad Usaid Sethi, Youth Member Ali Jan, Minority member Andreas Sharif and presidents of Anjuman Tajran, media representatives participated in the inauguration ceremony.

The Station commander shared the details of the project while talking to the media representatives. The project includes the development works of underground transmission of

electricity system, foot-paths, widening of roads, car parking and renovation.

The business community appreciated the project and assured full cooperation in this regard. Traffic police support for traffic problems and traffic flow/congestion.

Uninterrupted power supply has also been ensured and discussions have been held with WAPDA/PESCO in this regard so that traders and shopkeepers do not face any power interruption during the project.

72% work on Kurram Tangi dam completed

PESHAWAR (APP): A senior official of Wapda here Monday said that 72 per cent construction work on multipurpose Kurram Tangi dam has been completed and its first stage would be inaugurated by November next year.

Engr Zahoor Hussain, Director Projects, Wapda (North) said that 72 per cent work on multipurpose Kurram Tangi (Stage-1) spread on lands of Bannu and North Waziristan was completed and is expected to be inaugurated in November next year.

Former Prime Minister Muhammad Nawaz Sharif had laid the foundation stone of Kurram Tangi dam on March 3, 2017.

He said the design and feasibility studies of its stage-II was under process that would be completed with a loan assistance of the Asian Development Bank. Engr Zahoor said that 1.2 million acres feet water would be stored and 80.9MW electricity to be generated from Kurram Tangi Dam.

Over three million people of southern districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa would be directly benefited.

Besides completion of 108MW Golen Gol dam in Chitral, the government has accelerated work on Mohmand dam of 800MW with 1.293 MAF water storage capacity that after completion would supplement/irrigate 160,000 acres of existing land and about 18,237 acres of new land with annual benefits of Rs2.23 billion.

Likewise, 300 million gallons water per day will also be provided to Peshawar for drinking purpose with benefits of Rs.957 million from Mohmand dam.

Mohmand dam would save Peshawar, Charsadda and Nowshera from floods having annual benefits in terms of flood mitigation was estimated at Rs1.467 billion besides producing 2.86 billion units of environment-friendly electricity to the National Grid every year with annual revenue of Rs. 45.76 billion. The overall annual benefits of the project stand at Rs. 51 billion.

He said these projects would help address problems of energy shortfall and bring green revolution in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

12 drugs rehabilitation centres established

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has established 11 drugs and narcotics rehabilitation centres in the province. These centres were setup at Mardan, Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Kohat, Karak, Swabi, Swat, Malakabd and DI Khan districts.

Its aimed was provision best treatment and psychological services to patients at their door steps, said spokesman of social welfare department while talking to APP on Monday.

He said inclusive plan was chalked out to strengthen these rehabilitation centres in terms of equipment, medicines and healthcare services providers.

Under the plan, numbers of beds at Peshawar Drugs and Narcotics Rehabilitation Centre would be increased to 500 from existing 120.

He urged philanthropists to come forward and play role in rehabilitation of drugs victims.

Desecration of Holy Quran: KPBC observes black day, announced strike

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council (KPBC) has observed black-day on Monday while announced strike from court proceedings today (on Tuesday) against the desecration of Holy Quran in Kalyas area of Charsadda and Sweden.

The legal fraternity wear black strip as protest to mark Monday as Black Day for Muslims against the

desecration Holy Quran in Kalyas and Sweden while demanded concrete steps to eliminate offense in the future.

KPBC vice chairman Zar Badshah Khan and chairman Executive Committee Syed Mubashir Shah announced the strike on Tuesday from court proceedings while argued legal fraternity to condemned the heinous crime. They condemned Swedish government for allowing such act

and demanded stern actions against the culprits because the act has hurt emotion billion Muslims across the globe.

KPBC argued government of Pakistan to uphold the issue to brotherly Muslim nations and initiate collective efforts from Organization of Islamic Countries platform to compel west and others for stopping such act in future.

Moreover, Peshawar Bar Association also con-

demned desecration of Holy Quran and demanded to call back Ambassador from Sweden as well as curtain relationship with the Swedish government.

Peshawar High Court Bar Association president Tariq Afridi, Lajbar Khan, PBA president Ishfaq Khalil and Iftikhar Samandar along with other condemned the act while claimed that it is provocation of Muslim Ummah.

SACM Salma Begum calls on Speaker NA

PESHAWAR (APP): Special Assistant to Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for Zakat Ushar, Social Welfare, Special Education and Women Empowerment Salma Begum on Monday called on Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Raja Pervaiz Ashraf in his office.

During the meeting, various issues including Pakistan's current economic situation and constant peace and others were discussed in detail while fair and transparent disburse-

ment of zakat funds in among the deserving of KP also came into brief discussion. Special Assistant Salma Begum informed Speaker National Assembly regarding the procedure of zakat funds among needy of the province.

She said that the zakat funds are distributed through zakat committees of the KP Zakat Ushr Council, adding tenure of the said council is three years and after completing the tenure, a new committee is formed for next three

years.

She asked the federal government to release zakat funds of the current financial year for KP as released the previous year so that poor, needy, widows, orphans and deserving people will get benefit from zakat funds.

Speaker National Assembly of Pakistan Raja Parvaiz Ashraf assured Special Assistant Salma Begum and said the federal government will fully cooperate with KP government in this regard.



PESHAWAR: Mayor Haji Zubair Ali in a group photo with officials of Capital Metropolitan at his office.

Al-Khidmat Foundation distributes sacrificial meat

PESHAWAR (APP): Al-Khidmat Foundation, one of the country's leading charity organization, has distributed meat of sacrificial animals worth Rs. 174.7 million among needy people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa during the recently observed Eid-ul-Azha.

This claim has been made by President Al-Khidmat Foundation Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Khalid Waqas during a press conference here at Peshawar Press Club on Monday.

Sharing details of 'Qurbani Project 2023' of Al-Khidmat Foundation, Khalid Waqas said that a total of 8694 cattle and 276 rams were slaughtered for

distribution of meat among deserving people who cannot do sacrifice on this religious festival.

The meat of sacrificial animals was distributed among widows, orphans, students of religious seminaries, deserving Afghan refugees, patients admitted at drugs rehabilitation centers, prisoners, patients at different hospitals, street children, patients of thalassemia, transgender, artists and others.

Around 268,000 people benefited from Qurbani project of Al-Khidmat Foundation throughout the province, Khalid added.

He said the organization had arranged collective sacrifices in all the 36 districts

of KP where slaughtering continued for three consecutive days.

For ensuring proper distribution of sacrificial meat, a central camp was set up in Peshawar while coordinators were appointed for contact with district presidents.

The volunteers of Al-Khidmat organization also made arrangements for collection of animal hides and a record collection is made this year, Khalid Waqas added.

He thanked all the donors at national and international level for reposing confidence in Al-Khidmat Foundation in proper distribution of their sacrificial meat.

Volunteers donated blood for Thalassemia patients

PESHAWAR (APP): Blood donations for thalassemia patients at Hamza Foundation Welfare Thalassemia Hospital continued during Eid-ul-Azha vacations while blood donation camps were also organized in different localities of Peshawar and Khyber wherein volunteers donated blood for the affected children, said a press release issued here on Monday.

In this connection, one-day donation camps were organized on Dalazak Road at Faqirabad locality wherein 30 healthy volunteers donated blood for thalassemia and haemophilia patients.

Similarly, another blood donation camp was organized at Jamrud, district Khyber wherein 43 volunteers donated blood. On

this occasion, the people were also briefed about the spread of the disease and its prevention.

These patients required fresh blood after the period of 15 days.

Speaking on the occasion, founder of Hamza Foundation, Ijaz Ali Khan said that they have 1463 registered patients which include thalassemia and other similar diseases.

Chinese Cultural Center to hold seminar

PESHAWAR (APP): An international seminar on the completion of 10 years of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) will be held here on July 5 under the auspices of Chinese Cultural Center China Window.

Papers on the usefulness of CPEC will be presented in the seminar, being organized in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Investment Board and IM Sciences.

The seminar will have four sessions in which prominent personalities from different fields of life will express their views on the mega project of Pakistan-China friendship.



PESHAWAR: Vendor displaying mosquito net to attract customers at Qissa Khawani Bazaar.



In brief

RPO for chalking out security plan F.P. Report

D I KHAN: Regional Police Officer (RPO) Dera Division Abdul Ghafoor Afridi on Monday ordered the quarters concerned to chalk out a foolproof security plan for peaceful observance of Muharram ul Haram. According to police spokesman, the RPO said no new processions or programs except traditional and licensed ones would be allowed to organize. The sectarian harmony would be the top priority and no spark of malice and hatred will be allowed under any circumstances, he said. The RPO said the practical steps should be taken for establishment and stability of peace during Muharram as it was done on the holy festival of Eid-ul-Azha. He said the persons whose name will be on the no entry list for any district would not be allowed to enter in that specific district. Moreover, those who are banned to address in any area would not be allowed to address. He said anyone who violates these orders will be dealt under law immediately. The RPO Dera said the series of meetings regarding maintaining peace during Muharram would be held on a daily basis.

2 bothers shot killed in Hangu F.P. Report

HANGU: Two brothers were shot killed over family dispute while one injured from the rival side in the premises of City police station. The deceased identified as Muhammad Wisal and Arshad while Faizur-Rehman was injured critically in the firing. Police has registered First Information Report (FIR) while started investigation in this regard. Meanwhile, three tourists were injured at Samana spot due to drowning of vehicle. The local residents, Rescue 1122 rescued the tourists and shifted the injured to hospital.

ANF seizes narcotics

QUETTA (PPI): Anti Narcotics Force (ANF), Balochistan on Monday claimed to have seized narcotics from the hidden cavities of a vehicle in an operation conducted in Lakpass area of Balochistan province. One alleged accused was also arrested during the operation. According to a statement issued by the spokesperson for ANF, Balochistan, ten (10) kilo hashish and five (5) kilo ice, which were to be smuggled to Quetta, were recovered from the hidden cavities of a Quetta-bound vehicle coming from Dalbandin in an operation conducted at Lakpass area of Balochistan. One alleged accused was also arrested during the operation. Spokesman for ANF added that ANF remains fully vigilant to thwart the smuggling of narcotics in Balochistan.

Two killed, three wounded

KASHMORE (INP): Two persons were killed while three others wounded in an armed clash between two groups of Kosh and Shar clans in Gehlpur katcha area of Kashmore on Monday. Police said the deceased as well as the wounded belonged to Kosh tribe. The Force further said those who lost their lives in the incident were identified as Mehwal Kosh and Allah Bachayo Kosh while three people, including Dilo Kosh and Babal Kosh, were wounded. The bodies were still lying at the crime scene, police informed, adding cops could not go there since it was a 'no go' area.

JI claims victory on majority of seats in next elections

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Local leaders of the Jamaat-i-Islami have claimed their party will win a majority of seats in Malakand division in the next general elections due to its previous performance and failure of the ruling elites.

Addressing an Eid-Milan party at Kalpani Talash here the other day, the JI tehsil chief Sher Bahadar Khan, Dr. Muhammad Rasool Khan, Mufti Iftikhar, JI candidate for PK 15 Shad Nawaz Khan, former tehsil councillor Muhammad Raziq, Dr. Noor Muhammad, former tehsil nazim advocate Riaz Muhammad and others asked party workers to forge unity in their ranks and prepare for the upcoming general election. Appreciating the substantial success of the 'Dastak campaign' launched by the party in Lower Dir; they urged the workers to convey the message of Jamaat-e-Islami to every house and

every citizen in the district. "All other political parties have been tried and rejected by the people. Now the JI is the center of attention for the people", Sher Bahadar said and added that the party workers should work hard to convince the voters.

Police action: Another young man identified as Jan Muhammad, 33, a resident of Ouch drowned in the Panjkora River at Daron Saddo area in the jurisdiction of Timergara police station here on Monday, residents and Rescue 1122 officials said. They said the victim was a local tourist and wanted to take a bath in the river. The Rescue 1122 divers reached the spot and started a search operation. The bodies of two women are yet to be recovered from the river who drowned three days ago.

A total of five people including two women were drowned in the river in different areas of Lower Dir during the last five days despite a complete ban on bathing. The district admin-

istration has imposed section 144 on bathing in the river and camping on the riverbed but people specially the tourists don't take care, an official says.

Meanwhile taking notice of the public complaints the Lower Dir police on the directives of district police officer Ziaud Din raided different spots in the Panjkora River and took into custody several youths for violating the section 144.

Meanwhile, nine people including three women were injured when two cars collided at Saddo in the jurisdiction of Timergara police station here on Monday. The injured were identified as Masood 21, Shahid 26, Muhammad Waris 21, Usman 12, Mudassir 14, Yar Mula Khan 15 and three women. The Rescue 1122 emergency team shifted the injured to the district headquarters hospital Timergara. The Timergara police registered a case and started investigations.

Rs12.500m to be release for irrigation channel

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Awami National Party (ANP) central spokesman and former tehsil nazim Zahid Khan has said the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa finance department has agreed to release Annula Developmental Project (ADP) fund amounting to Rs 12.500 million for the improvement and extension of Balambat Irrigation Channel in the Lower Dir district after he contacted the relevant authorities.

Talking to local journalists at his residence here on Sunday, the former lawmaker said the irrigation department had now released water in the channel for irrigation purposes that would help resolve a major issue faced by local farmers. He said the government had stopped the supply of water to the farmers due to extension and

improvement in the channel.

He said the farmers had suffered hard for the last two years as the government had not released enough funds for it. He said the ANP always raised its voice for rights of the Dir people and it would continue its struggle to make the district at par with other districts.

Five injured in road mishap: Five people including a woman were injured in different road accidents here on Sunday, residents and Rescue officials said. They said that three youths were injured when a motorcycle and a car collided head on at Chakdara.

The injured were shifted to the tehsil headquarters hospital Chakdara. Similarly, a woman and a youth were injured when a motorcycle was hit by a car

on the Sar Lara road in Samarbagh. The injured were shifted to the THQ hospital Samarbagh.

Meanwhile a boy identified as Hassan 14 s/o Sadiq, a resident of Teerona Khadagzai was drowned in the River Swat at Khadagzai when he was taking a bath. The Rescue 1122 divers reached the spot and started a search operation for the dead body. The rescuers also continued a search for the bodies of two women who had drowned in the Panjkora river at Tarai here the other day.

The district administration has imposed section 144 on bathing in the river but it has not been implemented, complained a resident. He demanded of the administration to launch a crackdown against the violators in this regard to save more precious lives.

Seminar held at Women University Swabi

F.P. Report

SWABI: Seminar on the topic of understanding inheritance laws in Islam was organized by Department of Law in collaboration with the Department of Islamic Studies at Women University Swabi. Dr. Shams ul Husain, Associate Professor and Chairperson Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies was the key speaker. He said that in Islamic law, the principles of inheritance are outlined in the Quran and further elaborated upon in the Hadith.

While the specifics of inheritance laws can vary across different interpretations and legal schools within Islam, there are general principles that emphasize fairness and the rights of women. He said that one key aspect is that women have the right to inherit from their family members, including parents, spouses, children, and other

relatives. The Quran specifically mentions the entitlement of daughters, sisters, mothers, and wives to inherit.

The share of inheritance for women may differ based on the relationship and the presence of other heirs, but the underlying principle is to ensure that women receive their fair share. Dr. Alia Bibi, Lecturer Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, not only spoke about the historical perspective of these laws but also shed light on the distribution scheme of Inheritance under Islam.

She said that it's important to note that interpretations and practices regarding women's inheritance rights within Islam can vary based on cultural, regional, and legal contexts. Islamic scholars and legal authorities play a crucial role in applying these principles to specific cases and providing guidance to ensure fairness and justice.

Fatima Murad, lecturer Department of Law, also discussed the significance of inheritance laws and said that Islamic inheritance laws also prioritize the care and support of widows, granting them a share of their deceased husband's estate.

Five outlaws arrested

SARGODHA (INP): Police claimed to have arrested five accused and recovered narcotics and weapons from their possession here on Monday.

Police said that during continued drive against drug peddlers and criminals, the teams of different police stations conducted raids within the areas and arrested five outlaws and recovered 540 gram hashish, 20 liters of liquor, three pistols 30 bore from them.



BUNER: The grave of Prince Feroz Shah son of last Emperor of Mughal Dynasty Bahadur Shah Zafar seeks attention of authorities concerned for restoration as well as establishment of monument to educate local populace on indigenous history located at Malka area of Tehsil Mandanr. — F.P. photo

Traders call for boycott from Swedish products Shafi Ullah

MINGORA: Malakand Division Traders Federation President Abdul Rahim, General Secretary Zawar Khan has said that the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden is an unforgivable crime.

According to details, traders of Malakand Division announce a boycott of Swedish products, the Government should raise this important issue at the international level and play the right to represent the Muslims of Pakistan. If they do not fulfill their responsibility in this regard, then the business community of Malakand division will strongly protest.

Talking to media personnel he warned that the Quran is a holy book for us, and we will not allow its sanctity to be violated, he said. Abdul Rahim warned that if those responsible do not fulfill their responsibility in this regard, then the business community of Malakand division will strongly protest, he said that in fact, this heinous act causes great anger among Muslims all over the world. Therefore, in this regard, the Government of Pakistan should have the right to represent Pakistani Muslims.

Teenager killed in road mishap

MUZAFFARGARH (INP): A teenager was killed by hitting a speeding bus at Muzaaffargarh-Multan Road, a rescuer reported Monday.

Bilal, 15, son of Nawab succumbed to head injuries on the spot. The body was shifted to a nearby hospital with the police of the concerned jurisdiction informed.

As per the last information, the deceased's relatives took the victim from the hospital to their house. The accident occurred on account of the bus driver's negligence who escaped the scene. The vehicle was taken into custody while a search of the fleeing driver was underway.

Serving public during Eid Secretary ESD appreciates Rescue staff

Saqib Mushtaq

B A H A W A L P U R : Secretary Emergency Services appreciated the Rescue staff who remained on duty even on Eid to provide emergency services to the citizens of Punjab. The Provincial Monitoring Officer briefed the Secretary Emergency Services that Rescue 1122 responded to 22725 emergencies in all Districts of Punjab during Eid holidays.

These emergencies included 6460 road traffic crashes with 45 deaths, 12693 medical emergencies with 430 deaths, 37 drowning emergencies with 28 deaths, 225 Fire emergencies, 635 delivery emergencies, 463 falls & slipping cases with 4 deaths, 228 cases of electric shock, 345 occupational injuries, 44 burn cases, 08 structural cases, 701 miscellaneous emergencies and even 242 animal rescue operations were performed.

While chairing the Zoom meeting of all District Emergency Officers, Secretary ESD appreciated the rescuers who sacrificed their Eid to perform duties during Eid Holidays. However, he expressed his serious concern over the loss of precious human lives and disabilities due to road traffic crashes, electric shock and drowning emergencies during Eid holidays.

PMO informed that the

highest number of emergencies took place in Lahore with 3015 emergencies, followed by Faisalabad with 1444 emergencies, Multan with 1244 emergencies, Gujranwala with 1064 emergencies, Bahawalpur with 1055 emergencies and lowest number of 198 emergencies in Chakwal. During the video link meeting District Emergency Officer Sahiwal briefed about a major road crash of hi-ace van due to Tyre burst in which 7 injured including one dead body shifted to hospital, District Emergency Officer Jhelum informed that six people drowned in two separate drowning emergencies and their bodies were successfully recovered through rescue operation, District Emergency Officer Murree informed that three people drowned in two separate drowning emergencies and their bodies were successfully recovered.

District Emergency Officers Lahore, Sheikhpura, Bahawalnagar, Gujranwala, Kasur, Khanewal, Mianwali, Multan, and Rajanpur briefed drowning incidents in their respective districts during Eid holidays. After a detailed review of the emergencies data, Dr Rizwan Naseer expressed his serious concern over 45 deaths in road crashes, 28 in drowning emergencies and 13 of electrocution during Eid holidays.



ing Eid holidays.

Secretary ESD accoladed the selfless services of rescuers who provided prompt emergency care to the victims of emergencies during Eid days while sacrificing their own holidays. Their dedication and swift actions have made a significant impact in life saving service and providing timely emergency care to the victims. He urged the citizens to avoid swimming in rivers sides, canals, and any other water recreational sites without safety gadgets.

He added to refrain from touching electric wires during rain, particularly electric switches, electric bells, pedestal fans, outdoor electric panels, and other electrical appliances. He mentioned that emergencies related to electrocution can be prevented by adopting safety measures. The Secretary urged caution while driving inclement weather and requested dialing of Rescue Helpline 1122 immediately in case of emergency.

First ever female tribal journalist applies for membership

F.P. Report

KHYBER: First ever female filed application for getting membership in Landi Kotal press club on Monday. Jamaima Afridi formally visited the local press club and handed over her membership application to the President of the press club.

Jamaima Afridi is the resident of tesil Landi Kotal and her father is retired Khasadar Subedar Major. She has done BS in Law and work as free-

lancer with many national and international media organizations. Human rights, violation and especially the women rights is the main beat of journalism.

Speaking on the occasion she said that the main cause of joining journalism was to highlight problems being faced by the womenfolk in the tribal society in addition with to encourage and to provide an opportunity to those willingly local females to obtain an affective platform in form local press club.

Being resident of Landi Kotal she prefers to get membership in the local press club, she said and added her family was the lonely source that gave confidence and guided in her every decision of her career. Jamaima Afridi further said that journalism was the valuable platform where she voiced for the rights of tribal women and she would leave no stone unturned to work for the betterment of them.

MMC serves dozens of patients including 172 new born children

F.P. Report

MARDAN: Mardan Medical Complex (MMC) served as many as 9 thousand and twenty-eight patients while conducted seven thousand seven hundred and eighty-three different tests during Eid-ul-Azha vocation, on Monday.

This was revealed in performance report issued by MMC administration. According to report, eight thousand four hundred and seventy patients obtained assistance for stomach, temperature, headache and other similar diseases.

MMC also provided medical assistance to 297 victims of traffic accidents while two thousand two hundred and sixty-two patients reached the hospital for X-ray, CT Scan and MRI. However, 172 children were born and 122 dialysis were conducted in the hospital.

JUI-F held protest against desecration of Quran: Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam(JUI) (F) District Mardan Organized by a protest was held in front of Mardan

Press Club against the desecration of Holy Quran in Sweden, led by Maulana Amanat Shah Haqqani, Maulana Aqil Ansari, Maulana Qaiseruddin, Qari Niazi Ali And Maulana Taj-ul-Amin Jabal was doing.

Addressing the participants, the speakers said that they strongly condemn the desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden. Even lives are sacrificed for the sanctity of the Holy Quran. Islam teaches peace. The government should respond at the official level and from Sweden. Give proof of being an Islamic country by terminating all diplomatic relations.

A complete boycott of Sweden products should be done. The burning of the Holy Quran in Sweden is a very heart-breaking act that has hurt the sentiments of Muslims all over the world. The government of Pakistan should immediately expel the ambassador of Sweden and terminate relations.

Meanwhile, Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) District Ameer Ghulam Rasool has said that the desecra-

tion of the Quran in Sweden is regrettable and condemnable. The leader of PDM Maulana Fazlur Rehman and his government did not get the opportunity to condemn this incident. He said we strictly reject the silence of Islamic World over the incident. The government should immediately expel the Swedish ambassador, said Ghulam Rasool.

He was addressing the participants of the Eid Milan Party organized by JI in Mardan. On this occasion, the district leaders of Jamaat-e-Islami, JI Youth, Khidmat Foundation and the workers of Islami Jamiat Talaba were present in large numbers. District Ameer said that he will soon announce a protest demonstration against the indifference of insensitive rulers and desecration of the Quran at the Mardan level.

JI Emir claimed that the people of Pakistan are Islamophobic and religious while the rulers are religion-averse and there is no relation between them. He said that PDM is a bunch of incom-

petents political leaders which are imposed on the country who don't care about anyone except themselves and their families.

He further said that the public will not be able to bear the inflation that will come as a result of the new agreement with the IMF. Targeting to PDM chief Maulana Fazlur Rehman, he said that being a PDM leader, his silence on the desecration of Islamic rituals is a proof that he has nothing to do with Islam. Gulam Rasool said that your work is limited to ministry and facilitations only and your terrible face will be shown to the public. Ghulam Rasool said that the axis of Jamaat-e-Islami's struggle is Islamic revolution and we will try till death by bringing Islamic revolution in this country.

WSSCM disposes 2362 tons sacrificial animals remaining: The Water and Sanitation Services Company Mardan (WSSCM) completed three days Eid ul Adha operations. During the operations 2362 tons of sacrificial animals waste safely dis-

posed.

On Eid 1st day the waste disposal operation was started from College chowk and continued till 3rd day of Eid. Additional Deputy Commissioner Syed Shahzeb along with General Manager wsscm Engineer Muhammad Khalil Akbar inaugurated Eid ul Azha Operations.

According to the WSSCM, The Management and Sanitation Staff were on duty during Eid days, 600 numbers workers performed duties in the Eid operations and 70 various size of vehicles were deployed for collection and disposal of animal's offal. 55 Complaints were received during Eid days which were immediately resolved.

The water supply staff of the company also ensured uninterrupted supply of clean drinking water to the citizens while team also carried out disinfection sprays in different areas of the city.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance and Planning Sami ur Rahman

reviewed the ongoing cleanliness operation of wsscm in Mardan city and also distributed sweets among the workers. He also visited the complaint cell of the company and issued instructions for immediate redressal of the complaints. ADC Sami ur Rahman has said that provincial government is committed to provide clean and green environment to the citizens.

General Manager Engineer Muhammad Khalil Akbar stated that 1265 tons of waste was collected and disposed on Eid day, 782 tons on 2nd day and 315 tons of waste safely disposed on third day and the operations successfully concluded.

ADC Finance and Planning Sami ur Rahman paid tribute to all the staff of the company for their excellent cleanliness, and said that WSSCM workers worked day and night to provide clean environment to the citizens of Mardan. He lauded the efforts of WSSCM team and thanked the citizens for their cooperation.



Tuesday, July 04, 2023

Russia launches first drone strike on Kyiv in 12 days and all are shot down

KYIV, Ukraine (AP): After a relative lull, Russia launched a drone attack on Ukraine's capital, Kyiv, officials said. It was the first such attack of the war in 12 days. All of the Iranian-made Shahed exploding drones were detected and shot down, according to Serhii Popko, the head of the Kyiv city administration. In addition to the city itself, the surrounding Kyiv region was targeted. Kyiv regional Gov. Ruslan Kravchenko reported that one person was wounded by falling debris from a destroyed drone.

Officials in the Ukrainian capital didn't provide an exact number of drones that attacked the city. But Ukraine's air force said that across the country, eight Shaheds and three Kalibr cruise missiles were launched by the Russians. Further south, a 13-year-old boy was wounded in overnight shelling of Ukraine's partially occupied southern Kherson province, said Oleksandr Tolokonnikov, spokesman for the Ukrainian administration of the province. The child was wounded when the Russian army shelled the village of Mylove on the banks of the Dnieper River in the Beryslav district, Tolokonnikov said. "The child was hospitalized, there is no threat to his life," Tolokonnikov added," he said on state TV.

Shelling of Kherson province continued, wounding four people in the regional capital, also called Kherson. The regional prosecutor's office said that a residential area of the city was targeted by Russian troops operating in the Russia-occupied part of the Kherson province. "At least four citizens were wounded, two of them due to a targeted strike on a high-rise building," the office wrote on Telegram. Meanwhile, Ukraine's military reported that the most intense fighting continued in Ukraine's indus-

trial east, with attacks focused around Bakhmut, Marinka and Lyman in the country's Donetsk province, where 46 combat clashes took place. Ukrainian forces were advancing amid a "massive offensive" on the southern and northern flanks of the destroyed city of Bakhmut, Ukraine's Eastern Group of Forces spokesman Serhii Cherevaty told Ukrainian state television. But he didn't mention how much progress they made. The details, he said, would be disclosed once Ukrainian forces had analyzed the situation and consolidated their positions. The General Staff said that over the previous 24 hours, Russia had carried out 27 airstrikes, one missile strike and around 80 attacks from multiple rocket launchers, targeting regions in the north, northeast, east and south of the country.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy visited the Black Sea port city of Odesa - the day the country honors its navy - to hear a report from the navy commander, discuss prospects for the development of a naval drone and missile program, as well as present awards to service members. In Russia, local officials reported that air defense systems shot down a drone over the Belgorod region, which borders Ukraine, while the neighboring Kursk region faced shelling attacks. No casualties or damage were reported. Following the drama of Wagner chief Yevgeny Prigozhin's rebellion last week, Russian authorities remained defiant. Vyacheslav Volodin, speaker of Russia's lower house of parliament, the State Duma, said that Russian President Vladimir Putin came out of this situation "having strengthened his position even more both in the country and in the world." Russian society, he said, "having passed this test, has shown its maturity."

According to Volodin, there was "not a single example of someone supporting the rebellion."

But Gen. Sergei Surovikin, the deputy commander of the Russian group of forces fighting in Ukraine, was believed to have been detained days after the mutiny. It's not clear whether Surovikin, who has longtime links to Prigozhin, faces any charges or where he is being held, reflecting the opaque world of the Kremlin's politics and uncertainty after the revolt. Writing on Telegram, Volodin said that the Russian president "did everything to prevent bloodshed and confusion," including explaining to Wagner fighters "the real state of affairs." "(Putin) suggested that those who want to defend Russia continue their service with weapons in their hands. As far as I know, many of them agreed to this," Volodin said. In addition, the speaker of the State Duma said that he had analyzed the "challenges" Russia faced in the past, affirming that if "someone like Putin" had been leading the country in 1917 and 1991, there wouldn't have been a revolution in Russia, and the USSR wouldn't have collapsed. But independent observers and analysts say that Putin may come out politically weakened after first announcing that Wagner would face harsh repercussions, only to later say that the group's forces wouldn't face prosecution. Prigozhin was also allowed to leave Russia for Belarus.

Polish Interior Minister Mariusz Kaminski said that Poland would send 500 police officers to join 5,000 border guards and 2,000 soldiers already on the country's border with Belarus. It follows an announcement earlier this week that Poland would strengthen defenses on its eastern border after the relocation of Wagner fighters to Belarus.

Yoon tells unification ministry to be less soft on NK

SEOUL (Reuters): Having appointed a new unification minister days earlier, South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol said that the ministry had focused too much on providing aid for North Korea in the past and needed to change. The new minister Kim Yung-ho is a conservative scholar and outspoken critic human rights abuses in North Korea, which Yoon has sought to spotlight amid rising tensions on the Korean Peninsula.

The Unification Ministry has been acting like the ministry of North Korea aid and it is wrong," Yoon was quoted as telling staff in a statement issued by his press secretary. "It's time for the unification ministry to change." Yoon also urged the ministry to stand up for liberal democratic values and said unification should bring a "better and more human life" to people in the South and North. In 2019, Kim wrote in an online column that the path to unification would open once North Korean leader Kim Jong Un's "regime is overthrown and North Korea is liberated."

Fighting reignites between Sudan army, RSF

KHARTOUM (Agencies): Fierce fighting between the Sudanese army and the paramilitary Rapid Support Forces (RSF) shook the capital Khartoum, as disease and malnutrition threatened the rising number of displaced people. Reporting from Omdurman - Khartoum's twin city - Al Jazeera's Hiba Morgan said the fighting started in the northern part of the city. "People in the area say that the RSF tried to attack Sudanese army positions, and this is near an army air base where the fighter jets that have been targeting the RSF have been taking off," she said.

Air strikes were launched in northern parts of the capital, Morgan reported, and heavy artillery was used in the city's east. "The RSF said it downed a Sudanese army fighter jet in the city of Bahri," she said. Bahri, also known as Khartoum North, is one of three cities that make up Greater Khartoum. Battles since April 15 between forces loyal to army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan and the RSF have killed nearly 3,000 people. Another 2.2 million have been forced from their homes inside the country with almost 645,000 fleeing across borders for safety, according to the International Organization for Migration. A record 25 million people in Sudan need humanitarian aid and protection, the UN says.

"The situation is grave," the medical charity Doctors Without Borders, known by its French initials MSF, said in a statement detailing the hardships of displaced Sudanese stuck in nine camps in the White Nile state which borders South Sudan. In addition to the capital, the worst fighting has been in the western region of Darfur where residents, as well as the United Nations, United States and others, say civilians have been targeted and killed for their ethnicity by the RSF and allied Arab militias. The death toll is believed to be much higher than recorded, with the World Health Organization saying about two-thirds of health facilities are "out of service" in combat-affected areas. Many wounded are unable to reach hospitals and bodies lie rotting in the streets of Khartoum and Darfur. "We're terrified, every day the strikes are getting worse," said Nahid Salah, 25, who lives in Omdurman. The Sudanese Doctors Union accused the RSF of raiding the Shuhada hospital, one of the few still operating in the country, and killing a staff member. The RSF denied the accusation.

The Combating Violence Against Women Unit, a government agency, said it recorded 88 cases of sexual assault - which it said was a fraction of the likely real total - in Khartoum, El Geneina, Nyala, capital of South Darfur, with victims in most cases accusing the RSF. The war has smashed the country's already fragile infrastructure, leaving residents short of water and electricity in the oppressive heat.

Heavy rains flood Chicago roads



CHICAGO (AP): Heavy rains flooded Chicago streets, trapping cars and forcing NASCAR officials to cancel the last half of an Xfinity Series race set to run through the city's downtown. The National Weather Service warned the flooding could be "life-threatening," with numerous impassable roads, overflowing creeks and streams and flooded basements across the Chicago area. Up to 6 inches of rain fell in suburban Cicero and Berwyn by midday, according to the NWS website. Flood warnings had mostly expired by evening.

The Illinois State Police said parts of Interstate 55 and Interstate 290 have

been closed because of flooding, with at least 10 cars trapped in water on Interstate 55 near Pulaski Road, a major north-south thoroughfare in the city. Trains were stopped in some parts of the city as well. Katera Fisher's car "just started floating" when she tried to drive through high water. "So, my first reaction was to try and get out of the car. I opened the door, and the water started flooding my feet," Fisher told WLS-TV.

NASCAR officials had planned to complete the last half of an Xfinity Series race through the city's downtown after suspending action due to lightning. They announced around midday they had

decided to cancel the race because of the rain and declared Cole Custer the winner. NASCAR's Cup Series race started running through downtown. The start of the Chicago Cubs' afternoon game against the Cleveland Guardians at Wrigley Field remains delayed. Ricky Castro, a meteorologist in the NWS' Chicago office in suburban Romeoville, said a storm system was pinwheeling over the area rather than moving east, giving it time to pull moisture from the atmosphere and leading to heavy rainfall. All of the concrete in the metropolitan area prevents the rain from seeping into the earth, resulting in flooding, he said.

UN chief says Haiti urgently needs aid

PORT-AU-PRINCE (AP): UN Secretary-General António Guterres visited Haiti and again called on foreign governments with strong security forces to help the struggling country fight a surge in gang violence. The appeal was made after Guterres met with Prime Minister Ariel Henry, civil society leaders, UN staff and the heads of various political parties during his one-day trip.

"Now is not the time to forget Haiti or weaken our solidarity with its people," he said. Guterres met with reporters at Haiti's international airport in Port-au-Prince, who pressed him on whether an international security force would be deployed as requested by the prime minister last October. Guterres said he spoke about the issue with Henry, as well as the need to hold credible elections. "I am not here to tell Haitians what to do. I am here to listen to them and to encourage them to build consensus as broadly as possible to move the transition process forward," he said. Henry, who has been running the country since the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, has been under pressure to hold elections. But experts have noted it is impossible to do so given the current level of violence in the country, with gangs controlling an estimated 80% of the capital.

There are no democratically elected institutions left in Haiti, with the country failing to hold legislative elections since October 2019. "Haiti must return to democratic order as soon as possible," Guterres said. He also said Haiti urgently needs more humanitarian aid as poverty deepens and starvation cases spike. Gangs are preventing the movement of goods and people and controlling access to water, food and health care as civilians attempt to fight back via a violent uprising. "I felt all the exhaustion of a population that has been facing for too long a cascade of crises and unsustainable living conditions," Guterres said. "One in two people in Haiti live in extreme poverty, face hunger and lack regular access to drinking water." Guterres' visit came just days after the UN's human rights expert in Haiti visited the country and also called for an international security force and a weapons embargo. Guterres is scheduled to attend a summit in Trinidad and Tobago held by Caricom, a Caribbean trade bloc.

Ukraine battles Russian onslaught

MOSCOW (Agencies): Kyiv's forces are fighting a fierce onslaught by Russian troops in parts of northeastern Ukraine, even as they make advances in the area around Bakhmut and in the south, Ukraine's deputy defence minister has said, describing the situation as "complicated". Hanna Maliar said that Russian troops were advancing near Avdiivka, Marinka, Lyman and Svatove. "Fierce fighting is going on everywhere," Maliar wrote on social media, adding: "The situation is quite complicated".

Russian accounts of the front-line fighting reported success in containing Ukrainian troops in the northeast and said its forces had pushed back Ukrainian attacks near villages ringing Bakhmut and in areas further south, particularly the strategic hilltop town of Vuhlehar. Ukraine's military has been engaged in a counteroffensive to recapture areas of the east and south seized by Russia since it began its full-scale invasion in February 2022. Initial Ukrainian advances have focused on taking back clusters of villages in the south, but have so far

failed to produce a major breakthrough. Maliar said Ukrainian troops were advancing with "partial success" on the southern flank of Bakhmut in the east and near Berdyansk and Melitopol in the south.

In the south, she said Ukrainian forces faced "intense enemy resistance, remote mining, deploying of reserves" and were only advancing "gradually". "Everywhere, things are hot," she said. General Oleksander Tarnavskiy, responsible for the southern front, said Ukrainian forces were "systematically destroying the enemy" and reported the deaths of several hundred Russian forces over the last 24 hours.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy and Ukraine's commander-in-chief, General Valery Zaluzhnyi, have reported steady, if slow, advances in the campaign. The president has acknowledged the relatively limited progress but said the fight is "not a Hollywood movie" with instant success. Ukraine has also had to endure persistent Russian air attacks on cities, although the Kremlin denies attacking civilian targets. Ukrainian

writer Victoria Amelina died from injuries sustained when a Russian missile hit a busy pizza restaurant in the eastern city of Kramatorsk last week. The attack killed 12 people, some of them children, and injured dozens. Amelina's death raises the death toll to 13.

"With our greatest pain, we inform you that Ukrainian writer Victoria Amelina passed away on July 1st in Mechnikov Hospital in Dnipro," PEN Ukraine said in a statement on its Facebook page. The 37-year-old, who was also a war-crimes investigator, had been in the city with a delegation of Colombian journalists and writers, PEN said. Her novel "Dom's Dream Kingdom" was published in 2017 and shortlisted for the UNESCO City of Literature Prize and the European Union Prize for Literature, according to PEN. Her poems, prose and essays have been translated into English, German, Polish and other languages. Since 2022, she had been working to document Russian war crimes since the invasion and advocate for accountability, PEN said.

Yellen to visit China this week in mission to help stabilise ties

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Janet Yellen, the United States's Treasury secretary, will visit Beijing this week in the second trip by a top official in a matter of weeks as the world's two biggest economies try to repair frayed ties. Yellen will travel to Beijing from July 6-9, the US Treasury Department said in a statement. The visit was also confirmed in a statement by China's Finance Ministry on Monday morning.

Yellen is expected to discuss the importance for both countries "to responsibly manage our relationship, communicate directly about areas of concern, and work together to address global challenges," the Treasury Department statement said. Yellen's visit comes just weeks after US Secretary of State Antony Blinken met China's President Xi Jinping, leading diplomat Wang Yi and Foreign Minister Qin Gang in Beijing in June. Blinken was the highest-ranking US official to visit the Chinese capital in nearly five years and reached an agreement with Xi to stabilise ties and ensure rivalry did not veer into conflict.

China protested loudly when US President Joe

Biden subsequently referred to Xi as a "dictator", but analysts say the remark had little impact on efforts to improve ties. In Beijing, Yellen will meet senior Chinese officials and leading US firms, a Treasury official told journalists without going into specifics. A second administration official told the Reuters news agency that Yellen was expected to meet the Chinese Vice Premier He Lifeng. One clear area of concern involved China's new national security and espionage law, which came into force on July 1, and the potential implications for foreign and US firms, the official added. "We have concerns with the new measure and how it might apply, that it could expand the scope of what is considered by the authorities in China to be espionage activity," the official said, citing possible spillovers into the broader investment climate and the economic relationship.

Ties between the US and China have deteriorated over a range of issues from the origins of the COVID-19 pandemic to the crack-down on the mostly Muslim Uighurs in Xinjiang, to trade and supply chain

issues as well as the self-ruled island of Taiwan, which Beijing claims as its own. The discovery of an alleged Chinese spy balloon flying across the US, which was eventually shot down, further exacerbated tensions. While the US seeks to secure its national security interests and protect human rights, actions to this effect are "not intended to gain economic advantage over China", the official added, saying that Yellen would be aiming to build longer-term channels of communication with China. For the US, discussions with officials from the world's second-biggest economy "are important to help spur stronger global economic growth and to tackle the mounting debt problem of the Global South", Wendy Cutler, the vice president at the Asia Society Policy Institute, told the AFP news agency when discussing the Yellen visit.

On Beijing's part, officials are "looking for concrete steps taken by the US to show that 'decoupling' and holding back China is not the ultimate goal of the United States", Cutler added. Blinken's reception in Beijing has been seen as a symbolic sign of lowering temperatures.

Clouds hover over Wagner's operations in Africa

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies): Many observers in Western and Central Africa watched with piqued attention as the Wagner Group mutiny unfolded in Russia, curious about its significance on the mercenary force's vast operations on the continent. Since 2018 when Wagner arrived in Central African Republic (CAR) to fight off a rebel uprising, the armed group has expanded its footprint, later launching operations in Mali, Sudan and Libya. For African governments struggling to deal with escalating domestic insecurity, Wagner became a lifeline.

After the mercenaries helped CAR's President Faustin-Archange Touadéra in 2018 against rebel forces, Russian became an official language taught in the country's schools, and Wagner leaders became dignitaries in the capital Bangui. In Mali, the military lost patience in a decade-long collaboration with former colonial master France in tackling insecurity from armed groups linked to al-Qaeda and ISIL (ISIS) and signed up with Wagner instead. But after last week's attempted Wagner mutiny, a cloud is hovering over not only the armed group's foreign activities, but also the bilateral relationships between

Russia and African nations that employ the mercenary outfit. Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov said last week that "several hundred servicemen" in CAR working as "instructors" at the behest of the government would continue their efforts.

Yabi Gilles, founder of West Africa Think Tank (WATHI), told Al Jazeera the comments came as no surprise. "The declaration of Lavrov was a clear indication of what was quite obvious. Wagner is not just a mercenary company. Wagner is a company that has been tolerated by the Russian government and has been acting in the interest of Russia, especially outside of the country," Gilles said. "For Mali and CAR, what is important for is to have the assurance that cooperation with Russia will continue."

Military options also exist if Wagner is pulled out of the continent as other private military contractors have begun operating in Africa in recent years. "The managers of these new companies are former Wagner employees with a deep knowledge of Wagner's activities in Africa, and the Russian state could easily use these men to help retake all of Wagner's activities, especially in Central Africa,"

said Charles Bouessel, senior analyst on Central Africa Republic for the International Crisis Group. Still, the uncertainty has caused concern for governments reliant on Wagner's security expertise. "We have seen a little bit of stress from the authorities. We see this kind of stress because they are not 100 percent sure what will happen, whether Wagner will survive in the next few months or not," said Bouessel. But much like for the Kremlin, the Wagner rebellion has proved to be a cautionary tale for African governments.

African nations will now be extremely cautious as the Wagner revolt against Moscow could easily play out at home, said Bakary Sembe, regional director at the Timbuktu Institute Africa Centre for Peace Studies. "They have to stop thinking about outsourcing their security. It is not a viable strategy and now, regarding the new situation, African countries will be more careful when it comes to using Wagner," he said. Despite Moscow's assurances, Mali and CAR are in an uncomfortable position. "Mali and other countries that are linked to these non-state elements are now caught between Wagner's weapons and Moscow's wrath," Sembe said.

Two killed, dozens wounded in Baltimore mass shooting

BALTIMORE (Agencies): A manhunt is under way after two people were killed and 28 others wounded in a mass shooting at a neighbourhood street party in the city of Baltimore, the latest deadly incident of gun violence in the United States. The attack took place in the Brooklyn Homes area in the southern part of the city. Richard Worley, the Baltimore Police Department's acting commissioner, told reporters at the scene.

Among the 28 who were hurt, about half were under the age of 18, Worley added. Baltimore television station WBAL-TV, an NBC affiliate, reported that the ages of those injured ranged from 13 to 32. An 18-year-old woman was killed at the scene and a 20-year-old man was pronounced dead at a hospital shortly afterwards. Three people were in hospital in critical condition, with six others also admitted.

The shooting took place as hundreds of people had gathered in the area for an event known as "Brooklyn Day", featuring pony rides, dancing and refreshments. No arrests were made immediately after the attack and Worley said police were looking for multiple suspects and to determine a motive for the shooting. "This is an extensive crime

scene, our detectives are going to be here quite a while," he said. The shooting probably ranks among Baltimore's largest single acts of gun violence since 2014 in terms of the number of victims, according to the Baltimore Sun newspaper, which cited the earliest data kept by the nonprofit Gun Violence Archive.

The extent of the carnage was notable even for a city that has long grappled with some of the highest levels of murder and other violent crimes in the US. The shooting comes amid gatherings around the country leading up to the US's Independence Day holiday, which falls on July 4 and is usually marked with barbecues, fireworks and parades. Elsewhere in the country, seven people were wounded in a shooting in Kansas, while two people were admitted to hospital after being trampled as people rushed out of a nightclub.

Terry Brown, a neighbourhood resident, told the Baltimore Sun he was standing outside his home when he heard gunfire followed by a stampede of people fleeing in panic. "It was chaos," Brown said. "Parents were running around looking for their children, hollering and screaming, and don't know if their child has a bullet in them." Lakell Nelson, another

resident who was at the party, said there had been several false alarms during the evening with people mistaking the sounds of fireworks for gunfire. However, by the time she was getting to her car, the actual shooting began. "The shots were just going on and on and on," the 54-year-old said.

That is when two young women approached her and said they had been shot. "I kinda didn't believe them at first because they were walking up the street. I said, 'Show me' and the girl was like, 'I was shot in my butt,'" she said. "When she turned around, I saw the hole through her shorts." Another witness told TV station Fox 45 that they heard as many as 30 gunshots. Baltimore Mayor Brandon Scott, speaking to reporters at the crime scene, condemned the shooting.

"This is an absolute tragedy that did not have to happen," he said. "It again highlights the impacts and the need to deal with the over-proliferation of illegal guns on our streets and the ability for those who should not have them to get their hands on them. "We will not stop until we find those cowards who decided to just shoot dozens of people, causing two people to lose their lives."

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OIC failed response to Stockholm incident

THE Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) has emphasised the crucial need for collective measures to prevent the desecration of the Holy Quran. The 57 member Muslim bloc issued a statement on behalf of 1.5 billion Muslims across the globe after an extraordinary meeting in Jeddah Saudi Arabia to discuss the regretful incident occurred on Wednesday. According to the Secretary General OIC, the bloc must send constant reminders to the international community regarding the urgent application of international law, which clearly prohibits any advocacy of religious hatred. Meanwhile, the OIC was considering to convene an extraordinary meeting of it's Council of Foreign Minister (OIC CFM) to address this issue, most probably the session will coincide with the Ministerial Meeting of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement in Baku, Azerbai-jan in the coming days.

The second largest Intergovernmental Organization and 57 member bloc of the Muslim countries issued a condemnation statement on fifth day of the desecration of the holy Quran outside a Mosque in Stockholm, Sweden that attracted a worldwide outrage from the Muslims across the globe while multiple nations including Pakistan, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, the United States even the 27 member European bloc criticised the burning of a copy of the Holy Quran and termed it disrespectful and provocative that hurt the religious beliefs of over 1.5 billion Muslims in the world. The United Nations categorically condemned that heinous act and the head of the UN Alliance for Civilizations (UNAOC) termed the desecration of the Holy books, places of warships and religious symbols unacceptable and violent.

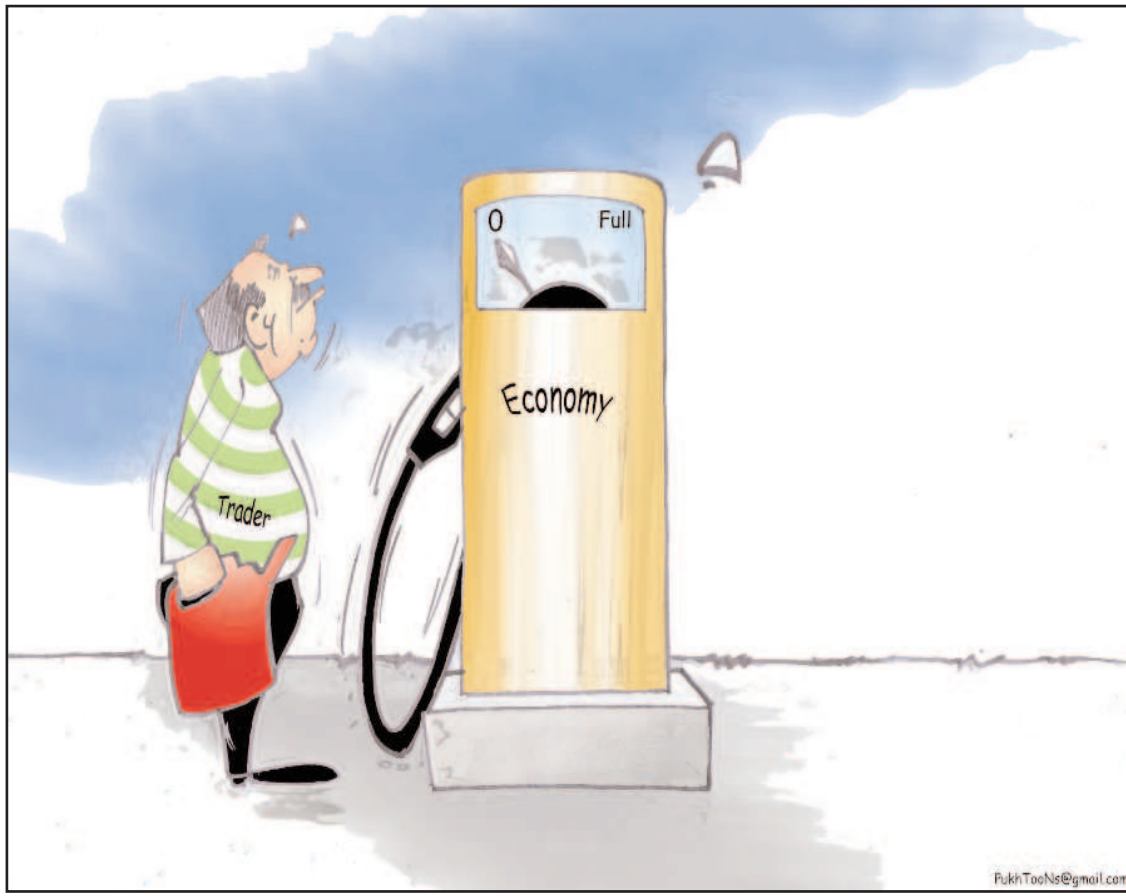
Historically, the politicians around the world particularly far-right leaders in Europe and India incite hate, create division and play with public sentiments to boost their politics and get public approval in election. Therefore, anti-Muslim, and anti-immigrants sloganeering is common in Europe and America, while the introduction of discriminatory legislation, baning of scarfs, criticism of Islamic dress code, curb on immigration from Muslim countries as well as employment segregation is common in western nations. Presently, far right Swedish Prime Minister expressed dismay over protesters attack on Swedish Embassy in Bughdad, however he views the desecration of the Holy Quran as legal but inappropriate. In fact, bias and bigotry has no limit, because there had been countless cases of desecration of Holy Quran and Islamic verses in certain European nations including Sweden, Norway, France and others but not a single event of burning Bible, Bhagavad Gita, Torah or Atharvaveda had ever been happened in Europe, America, India or rest of the world. Therefore, such disgraceful acts should not be viewed as a mere freedom of expression, hatespeech, or act of extremism but those acts are deep rooted in History and Western ultra-nationalists are taking revenge of Muslims' conquests in Europe, Africa and Balkan regions during the Medival period from the current day Muslim generation through vague incursions, direct attacks as well as through cultural, knowledge and missionary agressions against innocent Muslims, who are currently embattled with internal disunity, economic challenges and technological setback.

Currently, Muslim Ummah is divided into sectarian, political and regional blocs, while powerful Monariches in the Middle East are currently embracing liberalization and more loyal to their political and economic interests than spiritual and religious philosophy. Awfully, It took several days to the OIC to condemn this heinous act and demonstrate a collective response of the Muslim Ummah because of Eid Holidays as the majority of the Envoys of member countries were not available for the meeting. Apparently, the representative organization of 57 Muslim nations could not sufficiently protect core political interests of Muslim Ummah. It also completely failed to connect it's member countries in economic and trade bonds, free visa regime, travel and tourism, along with ensuring a collective security and joint defense of the Muslim nations in the world.

It is high time that the OIC mobilize it's resources and offer a concrete and coordinated response to Swedish government that is still defending this grave crime in the garb of freedom of expression and human rights. The OIC must demand stern action against the perpetrators of this heinous crime otherwise the forum and all member states should severe all kinds of relations with Stockholm along with closure of Swedish Embassies in their capitals and vice versa. So, the world nations understand the seriousness of this issue and avoid occurrence of such incidents in their country. After that, no selfish leader will ever dare to stage such political stunt in the future.

Important Notice

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Iraq's militias: Double the size, double the money, double threat

Baria Alamuddin

MUSHROOMING funding for the Tehran-backed Al-Hashd Al-Shaabi paramilitary movement in Iraq has almost doubled their size to 238,000 personnel and nearly \$3 billion of the budget, according to the Iraqi parliament's finance committee. When the Hashd movement's institutional structure was established by Prime Minister Nouri Al-Maliki in mid-2014, it had one specific purpose - to combat Daesh. Daesh today scarcely exists in Iraq beyond a smattering of attacks in a handful of localities. Yet Prime Minister Mohammed Shia' Al-Sudani has resolved that the Hashd needs to double in size. Why?

While Iraqi MPs were debating the budget, they undoubtedly had one eye on news footage of the Rapid Support Forces in Sudan and the Wagner uprising in Russia - showing the catastrophic destruction wreaked when militias are allowed to expand and outgun the regular army. Yet still they raised no objections to this monstrous diversification of public money. This immense expansion was approved with so little objection because the Hashd has consolidated its hold over Iraqi institutions at all levels. It would probably have made its share of the budget share even larger, if it thought it was possible to expand any faster. In the post-Daesh era, there is no suggestion that the Hashd exists to confront any conceivable threat from Iraq's neighbors. Consequently, the only justifications for the Hashd's expansion are, as has been frequently threatened, to combat US forces or to act against Iraqis themselves. Hashd forces have a long record of massacres, atrocities and sectarian cleansing against Sunnis, although in recent years they have more often been used in anger against fellow Shiite citizens.

Around the 2018 elections, the Hashd's strategy focused on winning power via the ballot box. But following the brutal suppression of Shiite protesters after those elections, the movement's popularity plunged. Consequently, its only strategy for retaining power can be the use of naked force. We caught a

glimpse of this when rival Sadrist and Hashd forces amassed in Baghdad in mid-2022 in gatherings that could easily have escalated into armed confrontations. These incidents occurred because the Hashd, despite having won minuscule numbers of seats in the 2021 election, demanded the right to dominate the government. Remarkably, they succeeded - and even unashamedly seized a significant swath of additional parliament seats after the Sadrists walked out. Expect

One Kata'ib Hezbollah commander referred to eight Hashd brigades that "represent the Islamic resistance," and said Iraq's leadership "cannot touch them, their salaries or their equipment." Meanwhile a sizable chunk of the budget is inevitably syphoned off for the corrupt, nefarious purposes of the Revolutionary Guard and Hashd leaders. On paper, Iraq's army exceeds 300,000 personnel, although the military had to be rebuilt almost from scratch after its spectacular collapse against Daesh in mid-2014. Numbers of operational and effective brigades are actually rather small, particularly when the rampant phenomenon of ghost soldiers is taken into account.

future power grabs to be even more blatant and brutal. It isn't possible to know the actual size of the Hashd movement. Along with semi-independent factions and sizable affiliated criminal elements, many shadowy "resistance" forces - such as Ashab Al-Kahf, Kata'ib Karbala and Kata'ib Saifullah - aren't even officially on the state payroll. Such entities continually appear and disappear for specific purposes, and are probably composed of the same pool of radical Hashd elements repeatedly resurfacing under different guises to stage attacks against the Americans, Arab states and Iraqi rivals.

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equipment." Meanwhile a sizable chunk of the budget is inevitably syphoned off for the corrupt, nefarious purposes of the Revolutionary Guard and Hashd leaders. On paper, Iraq's army exceeds 300,000 personnel, although the military had to be rebuilt almost from scratch after its spectacular collapse against Daesh in mid-2014. Numbers of operational and effective brigades are actually rather small, particularly when the rampant phenomenon of

ghost soldiers is taken into account. Considerable segments of the army are effectively under the control of Hashd warlords such as Hadi Al-Amiri; and through these militias' post-2003 dominance of the Interior Ministry, a high proportion of the security forces are essentially an appendage of the Hashd. Through imposing their choice of prime minister, in Sudani the Hashd possesses a malleable puppet, overseeing a state budget of \$152 billion, who can grant them everything in their wildest dreams while ordinary Iraqis are submerged in poverty, unemployment, power cuts, pollution and non-existent public services. The prime minister's announcement that new permanent Hashd military camps would be established around the edges of major cities sounds unsettlingly

like encirclement by a conquering army. If these immense funds are considered insufficient, Sudani has furthermore approved the launch of a Hashd-controlled business conglomerate named after assassinated Hashd leader Abu Mahdi Al-Muhandis, enjoying preferential access to government tenders. Sudani has benevolently awarded this Al-Muhandis General Company vast areas of land throughout southern Iraq. One segment of these Hashd territories, described as half the size of Lebanon, straddles Iraq's border with Jordan and Saudi Arabia. The Hashd already dominates much of the Iraq-Syria border region and controls the movement of goods coming from Iran. Sudani has effectively surrendered the entirety of Iraq's borders to the Hashd, even after a former finance minister warned that 90 percent of Iraq's customs revenues were being pocketed by these militias. The Hashd can additionally easily double its already swollen on-the-books revenues through the movement of narcotics, munitions and other clandestine goods. If Sudani is sincere about his professed desire to rebuild relations with Arab states, establishing armies of hostile forces on the borders with Saudi Arabia and Jordan raises questions about whose agenda he is really following. A militia force that has expanded to nearly the same size as the Iraqi army is a time bomb waiting to detonate, particularly given their wholesale takeover of Iraq's political, economic and social domains. Long-suffering Iraqi Shiites have demonstrated their repeated fearless readiness to mobilize en masse to demand the downfall of these hated agents of a hostile foreign power. Just as Wagner fatally overplayed their hand in Russia, the likes of the Hashd have signed their own death warrant by making Iraqis' lives so hellish that they will reach a point where it doesn't matter whether these brutal thugs turn their guns on protesting women, youths and ordinary citizens. At that moment, it will be of little consequence whether the Hashd is 200,000 or 500,000 strong - because 50 million Iraqis will be telling them to pack their bags and head for Tehran.

Arab News

Israel becoming an apartheid state

Dr. Dania Kolelat Khatib

BE N J A M I N Netanyahu, the Israeli prime minister, last month made a revelation. He reportedly told lawmakers in a behind-closed-door meeting that Israel "needs to crush" the Palestinian ambition for an independent state, while he also stressed the need to continue dealing with the Palestinian Authority. He added that he would not allow the PA to collapse and expressed a willingness to aid the Palestinians "economically."

While it has long been clear that Israel's objective is to deny the Palestinians their state, this is the first time that a prime minister has declared it so clearly and bluntly. Of course, Ariel Sharon always said that Jordan was for the Palestinians, but never before has a prime minister talked of eradicating their ambition for statehood. The statement of Netanyahu shows the futility of normalization with Israel.

While one of the promises of the Abraham Accords was to stop a controversial plan to extend Israeli sovereignty to large parts of the West Bank, Netanyahu soon told his constituency that he would not let up on his drive to expand the settlements. In fact, he has now advanced plans for 5,700 new settlement units.

Ebtesam Al-Ketbi, president of the Emirates Policy Center, last month stated that the behavior of Israel was causing embarrassment, adding that no other Arab state would normalize with Israel. However, this seems to be of little relevance, as Netanyahu's main objective is to keep his coalition together and stay in power in order to avoid the same fate as former Prime Minister Ehud Olmert and end up in orange pajamas. Israel has reached a level of arrogance that means it does not even conceal its objectives or pay lip service to anyone. They do not seem to care about what the US Jewry, which is the prime supporter of that country's maintenance of the state of Israel, thinks. They have an ideological project and they are determined to achieve it. In fact, National Security Minister Itamar Ben-Gvir last week said that Israel needs to kill "thousands of terrorists," while calling for the government to immediately approve the Eiyatar outpost as a settlement. The political discourse has never been so crude, but the current government does not seem to care.

However, Netanyahu's premise does not work. It has been tried before by former Defense Minister Moshe Dayan. After 1967, when Israel took control of the West Bank, the policy was to allow economic prosperity, hoping that the Palestinians would forget about their political rights. However, 20 years later, the First Intifada erupted. In his famous 1989 book, "From Beirut to Jerusalem," Thomas Friedman described the relationship between the Palestinians and their occupier as like a couple that had lived together for 20 years. In the end, instead of asking for marriage, they wanted to break up. The First Intifada tells us one important piece of information: The Palestinians will not

exchange their political rights for economic perks. They have a developed sense of peoplehood and they want their own state. The more the extremists try to refer to Palestinians more broadly as Arabs, denying their right to have a state of their own, the more adamant they become about demanding their statehood. However, a Palestinian state is also in the best interest of Israel. Previously, Israel was able to evade the issue of a Palestinian state by entering into lengthy and futile peace negotiations that led nowhere. That was a good show. The negotiations were aimed at convincing the world that Israel had the intention of giving the Palestinians a state, but at the same time it continued its settlement expansion, which is the main stumbling block facing any prospect of a Palestinian state. The aim of Israel was to prolong the status quo.

Now that Israel has admitted it does not want to give the Palestinians a state, what is the solution? What will be the political status of the Palestinians? Given that Israel is supposedly a democracy, it should answer this question. Can they just be masses of people living without any rights? Controversial so-called thinker Edy Cohen, who constantly addresses Arabs on social media, advocated that Palestinians can live and have individual rights but no political rights. However, in a modern state, this does not hold. Israel is becoming an embarrassment to Jews worldwide with these totally undemocratic ideas, which are becoming mainstream in the country. However, what Netanyahu and his ilk do not realize is that, if they eradicate the idea of a Palestinian state, these people need to be the citizens of another state; most likely the state that occupies the lands on which they live: Israel. Does Israel want that? Does Israel want to join the Arab League any time soon, as it would have far more Arab citizens than Jewish ones? Most likely, Israelis do not want that. The entire premise of Israel is that the Jews want a state of their own. However, all the policies that have been implemented contradict this objective. When David Ben-Gurion established the state of Israel, he knew that Israel could not be Jewish, democratic and on the entire land of Palestine. He knew the settlers needed to make a choice that would shape the character of the state. Ben-Gurion knew that, despite the brutal evacuations and the ethnic cleansing, the Jews could not have the entire land of Palestine for their own.

Now, the undemocratic people of the Netanyahu government, who are blinded by ideology, want an undemocratic Jewish state on the entire land of Palestine.

They are fine with an apartheid regime, as long as their ideology is fulfilled. Nevertheless, an apartheid state is not sustainable. The stage that follows an apartheid state is a state with equal rights for everyone; this is when the Jews will become a minority in Israel, thereby killing the concept of the Jews having a state of their own.

Syria's recovery likely to be very long and difficult

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

It is unrealistic to argue that Syria's socioeconomic recovery will be smooth and swift. There are several reasons and obstacles that point to the premise that there is going to be a long road ahead for Syria as it seeks to implement a meaningful and substantial recovery that will benefit the majority of the Syrian people.

As a result of recent developments, some scholars, policy analysts and politicians may have set their expectations too high when it comes to Syria's socioeconomic recovery. It is accurate to say that Damascus has been seeing some positive changes recently. For example, the Arab League in May readmitted the country, ending its decade-long suspension. Secondly, Syria's bilateral relationships with the Gulf states have been improving as well. Other positive developments to point out include the phone call between UAE President

Sheikh Mohammed bin Zayed Al-Nahyan and Syrian President Bashar Assad on bilateral ties between the two nations. In addition, Saudi Arabia has made the important decision to resume the work of its diplomatic mission in Syria.

While Syria's readmission to the Arab League and the latest diplomatic rapprochements between Damascus and the Gulf states are indeed steps in the right direction, a lot of work remains to be done if the Syrian government truly desires to lead its nation into peace and prosperity. First of all, the conflict in Syria has not yet fully ended. Some parts of the country remain very unstable and insecure. This is particularly true of the southern areas of Syria, including the city of Deraa, which was the birthplace of the Syrian uprising and is also considered one of the most strategic places in the country. Deraa is close to the border with Jordan, as well as Syria's

Golan Heights region of Quneitra. There is also a major route from Deraa to the capital Damascus. Four members of Syria's internal security forces were last week killed in an armed ambush by militants in the town of Muzayrib, which is located 11 km to the north-west of Deraa. During June, several people, including a 12-year-old boy, were killed by "unidentified assailants."

One reason for the rising violence in southern Syria is drug smuggling. There has been a surge in drug trading and smuggling recently. A report published last year by the Center for Operational Analysis and Research stated of southern Syria: "While violence has plagued the region since its recapture by government forces in 2018, such violence is evolving as it becomes increasingly tied to the uptick in the drug trade, which is likely to overlap with related illicit activi-

ties that have a long track record in Syria: extortion, kidnapping for ransom, human trafficking, mercenarism, and arms trafficking. Syria's drug trade will not go anywhere soon, and while coverage to date has focused on the impacts that will be felt in destination markets far afield, its cost in blood is likely to be borne most heavily by Syrians in Syria, especially in the south." In addition, Daesh has not completely vanished from Syria and operates in scattered areas such as Deraa and the Syrian desert. In order to generate revenue, the terror group attempts to operate in places where there are vital resources such as oil. Daesh's activities have also been seen recently in the northeastern city of Hasakeh, as well as Deir Ezzor. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that Daesh has lost significant influence in Syria, since at one point it was controlling

nearly a third of the country's territory. But years of offensives by the antiterrorism coalition have inflicted significant damage on its power in Syria. In addition to heightened insecurity and the drug smuggling issue, it is critical to note that Syria's path to recovery is multifaceted and complex. For one thing, the economy is crippled after years of conflict, which has inflicted an unimaginable degree of devastation. Syria's gross domestic product has shrunk by more than half and its currency has lost a significant portion of its value, leading the World Bank to rank it as a low-income country. Syria is facing an unprecedented economic crisis. Several factors have contributed to this problem. For example, the internal conflict, which began more than 12 years ago, has had a negative impact on the nation's economy.

We should be realistic about the recovery of a

nation that has endured such a long civil war. Civil wars can inflict devastating damage on infrastructure and, more importantly, disrupt production and manufacturing processes. For example, Syria's currency, which was trading at about 47 pounds to the US dollar just before the unrest erupted in 2011, recently hit an all-time low and \$1 is now worth about 9,000 Syrian pounds. Inflation also hit 139 percent in 2022. This placed it fourth in the world in terms of highest inflation rates, only ranking behind Venezuela, Sudan and Lebanon, according to World Population Review. In a nutshell, in spite of the fact that Syria has recently been experiencing positive developments, such as being readmitted into the Arab League and improving its ties with the Gulf nations, Damascus' route to full socioeconomic recovery is going to be extremely difficult and will most likely take a very long time.

Prigozhin’s mutiny will have consequences in Russia

RUSSIAN mercenaries from the Wagner Group led by Yevgeny Prigozhin last week initiated a quasi-rebellion, but fortunately it was short-lived. President Vladimir Putin's quick reactions prevented the collision of two armies both formed of Russian fighters. However, though the crisis was short-lived, its consequences may remain on the agenda for a relatively long period.

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenko mediated between Russia and Prigozhin. This serious incident could have spiraled further out of control if Prigozhin had not decided to order his mercenaries to stop their march toward Moscow. The most important aspect of the crisis is that it proved the validity of several questions that were previously known by everyone but not voiced publicly. They include a plethora of problems caused by the Ukrainian war, the strained relations between Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and Prigozhin, and the economic problems that have been exacerbated by the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

When a powerhouse grows out of proportion, it has to be duly dealt with. In Wagner's case, there were multiple reasons for the rivalry. One of them was a personal feud between Prigozhin and Shoigu. Prigozhin frequently used belittling and insulting language toward Shoigu, especially after the Ukrainian war started to go wrong and many Russian mercenaries were killed. Another reason for the strained relations was that Wagner was not supplied with sufficient weapons or ammunition. This negatively affected Wagner's performance in

its fight with the Ukrainian army. Now that the heat of the crisis is over, we will have to see what the future holds for both Russia and Prigozhin. It is highly unlikely that Putin will forget or forgive Prigozhin. They know each other well enough to take their respective positions for the future. The Russian army has much better potential to deal with Wagner than the other way round. However, Prigozhin's acceptance of a move to Belarus will not be the end of the story.

A few days after the crisis ended, Lukashenko said he and Prigozhin spent the first half-hour of their conversation swearing at each other. In order to prevent a potential attempt on Prigozhin's life, he was being accommodated in a hotel room with no windows. Everyone knows what this means in Russia. In similar cases, Putin's opponents have been eliminated one way or another. His hands can easily extend to a friendly country like Belarus. Prigozhin's settling in Belarus will probably only be a provisional arrangement. The final arrangement will be what Putin decides. Global markets were not greatly affected by the Putin-Prigozhin clash. However, the international oil market was an exception. It was affected more by the crisis because Russia is an important player in the oil market. The value of the Russian ruble went down less than expected because Prigozhin spread his capital across as many areas as possible, so that if one of his businesses sinks, the other will continue to float.

In the period of good relations between Putin and Prigozhin,

Yasar Yakis

Wagner benefited greatly from attractive contracts in various fields. Now that this period is over, Prigozhin cannot be expected to benefit from such favors. He was Putin's favored caterer and this helped him to finance the operations of the Wagner Group, first in the Donbas, Ukraine, then in many regions in Africa and the Middle East. In 2018, Wagner attacked US-backed Kurdish forces in Syria. The US forces retaliated and killed about 100 of the mercenaries. In August 2022, the Wagner Group was using billboards to recruit new members in Russia. The following month, Prigozhin was reported to be recruiting Russian convicts to fight in Ukraine. He also admitted for the first time that Wagner mercenaries were involved in fights with Arab countries, as well as African and Latin American states. In order to praise the Wagner forces, Prigozhin said last October that his forces were making progress in the fight against Ukraine. And during the fall of the Ukrainian city of Bakhmut, Prigozhin used his performance in Ukraine to reap monetary and political advantages as a result of his mercenaries capturing the city on behalf of the Russian government.

Last week's move by Prigozhin will have consequences both inside and outside Russia. Domestically, those who were active on Prigozhin's side will be hunted down one way or another. And Putin will grow more sensitive about similar incidents. Security measures will be tightened. Anti-government protests will be more closely controlled and more severely punished. Additional measures will be taken to prevent similar inci-

dents. The concept of mercenary armies may be redesigned and their size may be limited. Further lessons will be drawn from America's Blackwater mercenaries. Prigozhin's dirty linen and possibly even that of Putin may be leaked to the media and we will learn about another set of clandestine and unlawful affairs. Lukashenko and Putin will cooperate more closely in order to decide Prigozhin's future.

Hiring mercenaries is a practice that dates back to antiquity. For example, Nicomedes I, the king of Bithynia from 278 B.C. to 255 B.C., was disputing the throne with his brother. He hired 20,000 Galatian mercenaries, split them into two armies and one crossed to Anatolia through the Bosphorus, the other through the Dardanelles. The area of security is regarded as sacrosanct in almost every country. Today, many intelligence organizations use paramilitary services to carry out certain specific services. They are integrated into state organizations to carry out their mission. This favoritism provides them a status that others envy, allowing them to be exempt from certain rules. In Russia, Prigozhin overplayed his closeness to Putin. The money that was not supposed to be used in the security bureaucracy was used by paramilitary services. Sometimes, the companies that work as subcontractors in such services consider themselves to be above any sort of auditing. Many members of such companies use their status to quickly climb up the commercial hierarchy. We may also presume that the intelligence services of the Euro-Atlantic community may have facilitated Prigozhin's misguided decisions.

China, Myanmar and now Darfur ... the horror of genocide is here again

Simon Tisdall

IT'S happening again. In Darfur, scene of a genocide that killed 300,000 people and displaced millions 20 years ago, armed militias are on the rampage once more. Now, as then, they are targeting ethnic African tribes, murdering, raping and stealing with impunity. "They" are nomadic, ethnic Arab raiders, the much-feared "devils on horseback" - except now they ride in trucks. They're called the Janjaweed. And they're back.

How is it possible such horrors can be repeated? The world condemned the 2003 slaughter. The UN and the International Criminal Court (ICC) investigated. Sudan's former president, Omar al-Bashir, was charged with genocide and crimes against humanity along with his principal allies. The trial of one suspect, known as Ali Kushayb, opened last year. Yet Bashir and the guilty men have evaded justice so far. It's a familiar story. Throughout history, genocide, the most heinous of crimes, has often gone unpunished. The UN's 1948 Genocide Convention defined it as "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group". It is universally proscribed. States are legally bound to prevent it. Yet there's a tendency to look away. In Xinjiang, Myanmar and elsewhere,

nor deterred present-day emulators. "Never again" never works. The denial of recognition and justice to genocide's historical victims helps explain today's political and moral blindspots. In a powerful essay in the New York Review of Books last month, Ed Vulliamy, a former Guardian and Observer Bosnian war correspondent, highlights one such case of "invisibility": the 19th-century drive to exterminate California's Native American tribes. "They were totally deprived of land rights. They were... treated as wild animals, shot on sight... enslaved and worked to death... Their life was outlawed and their whole existence was condemned," an official report later admitted. Nowhere were efforts to destroy Indigenous peoples' lives and culture more "methodically savage" than in California, Vulliamy writes. Yet who remembers now? Who even knew?

To his credit, the state's governor, Gavin Newsom, has sponsored a California Truth and Healing Council to collect descendants' testimony and formulate proposals for recognition, recompense and restorative justice. Newsom is clear about what happened. "It's called genocide... No other way to describe it," he said when setting up the council. Such candour is rare. Most European countries, Britain especially, formerly exhibited genocidal tendencies. Australia, too. The genocide of the Herero, Nama and other Aboriginal peoples by early 20th-century German settlers in what is now Namibia is another instance of obliterated history recently brought painfully to light. Thousands were machine-gunned by the colonists. Pornographic photographs of sexually-abused women were sent home as postcards. Foreshadowing Nazi atrocities, macabre medical experiments were conducted on prisoners. In 2021, a belatedly apologetic Germany agreed reparations with Namibia's government. But the deal is on hold. Victims' groups object, saying they were not consulted. As in other historical genocides, like that suffered by Ottoman-era Armenians in 1915-17, facts are disputed, responsibility is repudiated, and

reconciliation remains elusive. Referred pain is just too powerful. Genocide prosecutions make gradual advances. Last week, a court in Paris jailed for life a Rwandan military policeman, Philippe Hategikimana, for his role in the slaughter of 800,000 people, mostly minority ethnic Tutsis, in 1994. Following the Bosnian war, former Yugoslav president Slobodan Milosevic and the Bosnian Serb leaders, Radovan Karadzic and Ratko Mladic, were tried for genocide.

But national courts in Germany and France exercising "universal jurisdiction", the much-undermined ICC (the US, Russia and China reject its authority), special courts (as in Sierra Leone) and ad hoc, Yugoslavia-style international tribunals, such as that urged for Ukraine, are struggling to keep up with the sheer scale of atrocious behaviour around the world. Why, for example, is Syria's dictator, Bashar al-Assad, not prosecuted for attempted genocide of Kurdish and Sunni groups under the terms of the 1948 convention? Russia's Vladimir Putin should surely face similar action over Ukraine - in addition to the ICC's war crimes warrant. Last week's pizza restaurant bombing in Kramatorsk could be exhibit A, though in truth there are not enough letters in the alphabet to list all Putin's crimes. Treating genocide as a rare, usually historical occurrence is nonsense. It's happening today in Darfur. It's happening in Myanmar, where minority Rohingya are persecuted and displaced by a vicious military junta. And it's happening in China with the documented mass detention, forced labour, involuntary sterilisation, family separation and religious persecution of Uyghurs in Xinjiang.

As the US government says, such cruelty exactly fits the definition of genocide with intent. So why not indict President Xi Jinping? The UN Human Rights Council's shameful vote to ignore its own damning Xinjiang investigation shows why this suggestion is impractical to the point of absurdity. It shows the depth of the problem with genocide denialism that the world still faces. It's why impunity rules. It's why the killers keep killing. It's why the Janjaweed ride again.

Time to act on China’s surveillance threat

THE world leader in artificial intelligence, China, already uses the technology in a range of systems, including the surveillance of minority groups such as Uyghur Muslims in Xinjiang and Tibetans. Here, data from security cameras, mobile signal trackers, and people's spending habits are passed through sophisticated AI software to determine their risk profiles. If they are caught in the dragnet, the consequences can be severe. But it is when combined with genomic surveillance that AI's potential becomes truly dystopian.

Iain Duncan Smith

enhance soldiers' performances at high altitude, while also operating as the country's national gene bank and key government laboratory. With investigations into the origins of the Covid-19 outbreak exposing the extent of China's biological weapons programme, any state-affiliated genomics company with links to the People's Liberation Army (PLA) must face greater scrutiny. It is the dual-use nature of the genomics industry that makes China's dominance so dangerous. BGI developed prenatal tests in partnership with the PLA, which are, astonishingly, sold in private clinics throughout the world including the UK.

These tests, used to determine any abnormalities, allow access to the genomic data of both mother and foetus. Women taking the tests sign a waiver where, buried in the small print, it states samples can be reanalysed. Possessing someone's genomic data equates to knowing everything about them. It reveals their ancestry, probable height, eye and hair colour, susceptibility to certain diseases and appropriate drug reactions, and even aspects of their character, such as addictive tendencies. The implications of the CCP harnessing this information and applying AI technology to it are staggering.

Extrapolating this scenario to a population level and combining bulk DNA data with sophisticated AI analysis, China could predict which countries would require specific

Wagner mutiny stirs panic, uncertainty

AS members of the Wagner mercenary outfit launched their "march of justice" to Moscow early on June 24, residents of the Far Eastern republic of Sakha (Yakutia) thousands of kilometers away gathered outside the regional capital to celebrate Yhyakh, the New Year marked by indigenous Sakha peoples. Though many Sakha locals boycotted this year's government-sponsored celebration due to its pro-war message, the two-day outdoor festival still attracted more than 230,000 participants.

"Anti-war-minded people didn't go there, but people supporting the war and the government went. They had no idea what was happening [in the news]," said Sargylana Kondakova, co-founder of the region's largest anti-war movement, the Free Yakutia Foundation. Some 800 kilometers east of the capital Moscow - which had imposed a counterterrorism regime - authorities in the republic of Tatarstan, too, went ahead with the traditional Sabantuy summer festival, while neighboring Bashkortostan held lavish Youth Day celebrations. "It is unfortunate we couldn't visit the Sabantuy! It was very lively there based on the pictures," Stepnoy Dozor, the largest pro-government Telegram channel in the Far East republic of Buryatia, wrote of a similar festival held in the region that day. Each of these region's leaders conspicuously avoided commenting on the events unfolding in central Russia.

"Speaking about ethnic festivals during a revolt is similar to broadcasting Tchaikovsky's 'Swan

Lake'," said Buryat activist and analyst Mariya Vyushkova, referencing the looping broadcast of the legendary ballet on Soviet state TV during the attempted coup d'etat of 1991. The sudden instability that gripped the federal government in Moscow during last week's Wagner mutiny has sown confusion and panic among the leadership of Russia's ethnic republics, according to experts and activists interviewed by The Moscow Times. Unable to take a side in the unfolding standoff in central Russia and unsure of what message to broadcast at home, most local heads chose to carry on with business as usual, hoping the situation would simply resolve on its own.

"These people already had no agency and they were forced to make important political decisions. It forced them into [the state of] panic and fear," Tatar political expert and journalist Ruslan Aysin told The Moscow Times. "It was required - as they viewed it - to pledge allegiance to one of the two," said Aysin. Behind the scenes of ornate Yhyakh celebrations in the republic of Sakha, the local government's apprehension forced all state-linked media into silence for the entire duration of the rebellion taking place far to the west. "Our government got really scared, especially when the news of Putin's inner circle fleeing Moscow emerged," Kondakova of Free Yakutia told The Moscow Times. "Some people in the republic believed that our il darkhan [head of the republic Aysen Nikolayev] might also get on the plane and

Leyla Latypova

vanish."

Prompted by orders from Moscow on Saturday morning, regional heads and governors issued a stream of statements in support of the Kremlin. Yet likely unnerved by the uncertainty of the stand-off's outcome, many leaders of the ethnic republics still fell short of declaring unequivocal support for the Kremlin. The brief statement issued by Tatarstan head Rustam Minnikhanov was published by an array of pro-government media but never appeared on his official website or social media pages. Even the leader of the North Caucasus republic of Chechnya, close Putin ally Ramzan Kadyrov, did not react to the mutiny until some 16 hours after it started, announcing he was sending armed units to help put down the rebellion. According to Chechen human rights lawyer Abubakar Yangulbayev, the Chechen strongman's delayed reaction was possibly linked to his deteriorating health - which has been speculated, but not confirmed - rather than to a weakening faith in Putin. "Everything started at night and he was probably asleep or physically unable [to react earlier]," Yangulbayev told The Moscow Times.

The head of Buryatia - the republic with one of the highest casualty counts in the war in Ukraine - addressed Wagner fighters directly in a video message. "You know our people are worrying about their loved ones equally...no matter if they are listed in the Armed Forces...or Wagner. We are watching all your ups and downs equally," said Buryatia head

Alexei Tsydenov. Analyst Vyushkova said Tsydenov's message was "the most favorable toward Wagner" - a surprising turn given that a comparatively small number of Wagner recruits is believed to hail from the Siberian republic. While regional leaders were noticeably reluctant to take a side, many people in the ethnic republics categorically opposed both Prigozhin and Putin and saw the rebellion as an opportunity to make a change at home, according to activists and analysts interviewed by The Moscow Times. In Sakha, 70% of about 600 residents surveyed by the Free Yakutia Foundation said they were disappointed that Prigozhin's rebellion didn't succeed, but only because they expected it to fundamentally alter the course of the invasion of Ukraine. This sentiment was particularly pronounced in Chechnya, where many high-ranking members of Wagner fought on the side of Moscow during the Second Chechen War. Wagner commander and Nazi sympathizer Dmitry Utkin is believed to be responsible for committing multiple war crimes in Chechnya, according to Yangulbayev.

"People in Chechnya believe Prigozhin is worse than Putin because he is a Nazi, a fascist and a thug...But some saw in this an opportunity to make changes within Chechnya," said Yangulbayev, who recently co-founded the Chechen multidisciplinary project Kost. "Their [the peoples'] reaction was 'may those Putinists and Wagnerites kill each other and leave us alone'."

The Moscow Times

Pizzerias, shops, train stations: Russia is bombing civilian targets

PLEASE, not that place": that was our first reaction to the Russian missile strike on Kramatorsk's Ria pizza restaurant, which took 12 lives and wounded more than 60 people. Kramatorsk is the biggest, safest and most accessible town close to the Russian-Ukrainian frontline. Before the full-scale invasion, up to 200,000 people lived there; 80,000 now remain, including military personnel coming for a break, volunteers and journalists. Still, the services on offer are limited, so a central, well-run restaurant with quality wifi, space for meetings and quick meals will always be crowded. I remember Ria's young waiters always providing perfect service, knowing that everybody was in a rush. Some of them are now among the dead.

The second thought after this new attack was: who was there? One visitor, Victoria Amelina, a famous Ukrainian writer, was taken to hospital in a critical condition. We learned yesterday that she has died. Amelina was a war crimes researcher - last Sunday, a day before her Kramatorsk trip, she was at the Arsenal book festival in Kyiv moderating a panel on "What kind of crime is Russia committing?" at my invitation. Beforehand we prepared together, chatting about how hard it is for us to travel outside Ukraine, and how we drum up the strength and spirit to carry on. We felt defiant. The book festival was our celebration of Ukrainian resilience.

Reading of a friend's death

makes you feel numb, powerless. You can't stop thinking: what if they hadn't been there? The Ukrainian government has identified the Russian agent whom they suspect of reporting the exact location of the restaurant. Everybody knew that it was always full of civilians, media, military on leave. But it was very unlikely that senior commanders would have been there.

It is not a military target. Speaking on a major propaganda talkshow on the state-run Russia-1 Channel, the head of the Duma defence committee, Colonel-General Andrei Kartapolov, saluted the attack on Kramatorsk, saying: "I take my hat off to those who planned it, who carried it out. My old military heart rejoices when I see how many of these kids' bodies are being dug up, sometimes with tattoos, sometimes with emblems." Among the bodies there are those of the 14-year-old twins Yulia and Anna Aksenenko.

I visited the restaurant this April after the anniversary screening of our film about the attack on Kramatorsk train station on 8 April 2022, still one of the deadliest of the invasion: 3,000 people were at the station, 63 of whom died, and more than 100 were wounded. As part of the Reckoning Project, which documents war crimes, we echoed what human rights organisations and Ukrainian prosecutors had already said: that despite Kremlin claims that it was targeting military equipment at the sta-

Nataliya Gumenyuk

tion, this was a direct strike on civilians by Russia. The weapons used were Tochka-U missiles, banned by more than 100 nations, which are designed to cause severe injuries to humans, and would not have been chosen had the intention been to destroy weapons. At the time, the world was focused on the Russian atrocities in Bucha, and the residents of Kramatorsk were left alone with their wounds. Showing the film in a safe basement in Kramatorsk to witnesses - including the railway and rescue workers, the police, the mayor and the governor - it was clear how hurt they were even a year on. This has been the most horrific day of their lives.

As we ate in the pizza restaurant afterwards, observing people chatting and eating, we enjoyed seeing the return of life and normalcy. After the liberation of Izium, in September 2022, the risk of occupation of Kramatorsk, 40 miles to the south, had shrunk away. The city was healing. Exactly a year before the attack on the restaurant in Kramatorsk, Russia attacked a shopping mall in Kremenchuk - far from the frontline - killing 21 people, mainly employees. We've just published the investigation: the Ukrainian prosecutors identified that the types of missiles used here were used in subsequent civilian attacks, killing at least 21 people near Odesa and 46 sleeping at home in Dnipro. A picture is building of brutal, targeted civilian attacks.

For legal experts, a buildup of evidence like this leads to more action, a stronger case. It's the opposite for the media. The more often these attacks happen, the more attention wanes. Talking to international media while working on war crimes documentation, I mention how reporters and editors - intrigued by "a newer type of crime" - are getting bored as long as I mention victims of the missile attacks. "But isn't that just how war works?" they ask. Russia has managed to normalise these civilian missile strikes, and even though it's possible to identify the type of weapon and prove that something was a civilian target, lawyers are hesitant to engage when public pressure is lacking.

Strikes against civilians are treated as inevitable tragedies of the war. But they are also crimes that must be investigated, whatever our political views and stance on the conflict. Answering Amelina's questions at the panel about war crimes, colleagues focused on accountability for these crimes. As a Ukrainian who, like many others these days, feels powerless, numb and devastated because someone we know and love is injured, I am focused on prevention. We must demand an investigation so that instead of a salute from a general Russian servicemen will receive an arrest warrant for these kinds of attacks. We can't save those who have already died, but at least this plague of impunity may be punished. And, just maybe, it will prevent another attack.

The Guardian

The Telegraph



PCJCCI urges govt to invest in solar PV projects

LAHORE (APP): A Chinese delegation discussed the importance and need of advancement in solar projects with office-bearers of Pakistan-China Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PCJCCI) here at the joint chamber's Secretariat on Monday.

PCJCCI President Moazzam Ghurki said that currently, out of US\$144 million foreign investment in solar PV plants in Pakistan, US\$125 million was from China, accounting for nearly 87 per cent of the total investment. Among the 530MW cumulative generation capacity in Pakistan, 400MW (75 per cent) was generated from Quaid-i-Azam Solar Park, the first-ever power plant capable of generating solar energy in Pakistan, owned by the Punjab government, and built by a renowned Chinese company.

Chinese companies were also major suppliers to many PV projects in Pakistan such as Mini Solar grids in KP and ADB Access to Clean Energy Programme. He added that Pakistan solar energy market was expected to record a CAGR (Compound Annual Growth Rate) of 2.5 per cent from 2022 to 2027.

One of the representatives of delegation said that until now, the average utilisation rate of the operational solar PV plants was merely 19 per cent, far from the over 95 per cent utilisation rate in China, representing huge opportunities to be tapped. As experienced PV plants investors in Pakistan, Chinese companies were more likely to further leverage their learning in the solar industry. They could also benefit from China's pledge to move away from coal-

based energy generation and promote green energy in developing countries. She added that Chinese companies expected a supportive government attitude to investment in solar PV plants in Pakistan and the cooperation would complement both countries' commitment to the socioeconomic development of the whole region.

The PCJCCI president said that in Pakistan, the insufficiency of power which led to surging electricity tariffs and foreign exchange expenditure on imported energy was aggravating the necessity for the country to be more self-sufficient in power generation. If solar was installed on every roof, those who suffer from heat and load-shedding could generate their own electricity at least all day, and if some surplus electricity was generated,

they could sell it to the grid.

PCJCCI Secretary General Salahuddin Hanif said that according to the World Bank, Pakistan required only 0.071 per cent of its total land area (mainly in Balochistan) to achieve the benefits of solar power. If this potential was utilised, he said, all of Pakistan's current energy needs could be met with solar power alone.

As a renewable energy source without fuel requirements, Solar PV was significantly cost-effective when compared to imported energy, RLNG, and gas. He further said that by investing in such projects, it was expected that the reliance on solar energy would increase to 13 per cent and the reliance on imported coal and RLNG was expected to decrease to 8 per cent and 11 per cent, respectively.

Using its recycled plastic Shell Pakistan builds road



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Shell Pakistan introduces a plastic infused road in Karachi by recycling discarded Shell lubricant bottles. The organization collaborated with start-up BRR Enterprises and local authority District Municipal Corporation South to construct the road, which helps reduce plastic waste materials and promote environment friendly practices.

Over 2.5 tons of discarded Shell lubricant bottles were recycled for the construction of a 730 feet long and 60 feet wide road on which Shell House is located in Karachi. The discarded Shell lubricant's plastic bottles were incorporated in the construction of the asphalt road using the dry process method, reducing

plastic waste. Plastics pose threat to nature by being non-biodegradable and toxic. According to research, a simple plastic bag can take up to 500 years to decompose while a plastic bottle can take around 300 years.

Plastic roads offer higher flexibility, durability and a lifespan almost three times longer than regular roads. Moreover, the construction materials for regular roads are more expensive, whereas plastics are practically free, taking down construction costs by several folds. The innovation is considerably more sustainable. And most importantly it contributes to helping our social problem of plastic waste.

The Chief Executive and Managing Director of Shell Pakistan Limited, Waqar Siddiqui, inaugurated the

newly built road in Karachi and stated, "This is the first time we have used our discarded lubricants bottles to make a road and I'm amazed to see the result. This innovative method helps reduce plastic waste and can provide an environmentally friendly option for future infrastructure projects in Pakistan. Innovative solutions such as this need to be tried and tested, and I hope will be adopted to contribute to building a cleaner society."

Shell provides energy in a responsible way; we aim to limit any impact on the environment and support the transition towards a lower-carbon future. We recognise the importance of climate change, along with our role in helping people to achieve and maintain a good quality of life.

IMF program to boost economic stability

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Executive Officer Pakistan Furniture Council Mian Kashif Ashfaq on Monday said if implemented effectively, an International Monetary Fund (IMF) program will serve as a catalyst for economic stability, growth, and long-term development.

Chairing a PFC board of directors meeting, he said an IMF bailout package will offer several benefits to Pakistan and its primary benefit is the provision of immediate financial support to address a country's balance of payment crisis and economic instability, said a press release.

The package provides a substantial infusion of foreign exchange reserves, which can stabilize the currency and prevent a further decline in its value.

"This stability fosters confidence among investors, both domestic and foreign, and helps fortify economic stability."

By implementing economic reforms, such as fiscal consolidation measures, tax reforms, privatization of state-owned enterprises, and improvements in governance, Pakistan can achieve long-term economic stability and sustainable growth", he added.

He said an IMF bailout signals the international community's support for the country's economic policies and can enhance investor confidence. This confidence attracts foreign direct investment (FDI), as investors view the country as more stable and less risky.

He said increased FDI can spur economic growth, create jobs, and enhance productivity in various sectors, contributing to long-term development.

Mian Kashif Ashfaq said the package will also improve a country's access to other sources of financing, such as multilateral development banks and international capital markets. By demonstrating a commitment to economic reforms and meeting IMF program targets, Pakistan can enhance its creditworthiness and attract additional funding from other sources.

SBA with IMF crucial for economic stability, says RCCI

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry (RCCI) has termed the Stand-By Arrangement (SBA) with International Monetary Fund (IMF) crucial for economic stability and welcome news for Pakistan's ailing economy.

The yield will not only send a positive message to investors but the risk of default had also been averted, said RCCI President Saqib Rafiq in a statement.

He also applauds the PM office and Finance Ministry's engagements with IMF and after their tireless efforts, Pakistan managed to secure an IMF deal.

Saqib Rafiq further remarked that the SBA of \$3 billion will not only provide a breathing space in the recovery of Pakistan's creditworthiness but also enable the resumption of dollar inflow from various bilateral and multilateral

lenders. He said that the business community hopes that the industry reforms introduced by the government in the budget would be implemented.

The framework for the development of five Es, Energy, E-Pakistan, environment, equity and empowerment would be shared with the business community and stakeholders will be taken on board, he added.

However, Chamber President urged the government to improve financial management and discipline.

Given preference to lesser-known and non-conventional sectors to increase exports, Saqib said and added that the Chamber had also submitted a nine-point economic plan to the Ministry of Finance and FBR in its budget proposals.



ISLAMABAD: Charge'd Affairs of People's Republic of China to Pakistan Ms. Pang Chunxue meeting Federal Minister for Finance and Revenue Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar at Finance Division.

Iftikhar highlights population challenges in South Asia

ISLAMABAD (APP): SAARC Chamber of Commerce and Industry former President Iftikhar Ali Malik said South Asia is confronted with a large population, with countries like India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh being among the most populous in the world-devouring plenty of resources.

Chairing a round table conference on the "Impact of population explosion on the economy", he said the issue of poverty in South Asia is complex and cannot be attributed to a single factor, said a press release.

He said the sheer number of people puts pressure on resources and infrastructure, making it challenging to ensure economic oppor-

tunities and adequate living conditions for everyone.

Lack of access to quality education is a significant factor contributing to poverty in South Asia, he added.

"Education equips individuals with the necessary skills to improve their livelihoods and participate in economic activities. However, many people in the region face barriers such as inadequate school infrastructure, high dropout rates, gender disparities, and limited access to vocational training", he added.

Iftikhar Ali Malik said South Asia experiences high levels of unemployment and underemployment as the region's economic growth has not been

able to keep up with the increasing population, resulting in limited job opportunities.

He said some countries in South Asia have experienced political instability, and internal conflicts, which disrupted economic activities, damaged infrastructure, displace populations, and hinder poverty alleviation efforts.

He said a substantial proportion of the population in South Asia relies on agriculture for their livelihoods.

However, agricultural productivity in the region is often low due to factors such as outdated farming techniques, lack of access to credit and modern technology, and vulnerability to

climate change and natural disasters said adding that these challenges contribute to income instability and poverty among rural communities.

He said this region is also plagued with weak governance, make practices, corruption, social inequalities, gender disparities, caste-based discrimination, and ethnic divisions that limit opportunities for certain groups and perpetuate cycles of poverty.

These factors impeded poverty reduction efforts and exacerbate income disparities. He said efforts to address overpopulation and poverty in the region require comprehensive strategies that tackle the multiple inter-related factors involved.

Kabeer Naqvi elected new Chairman of PMN

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Pakistan Microfinance Network (PMN) is delighted to announce the appointment of its newly elected Chairman, Mr. Kabeer Naqvi. This accomplished individual brings a wealth of experience and expertise to lead PMN towards even greater heights in promoting financial inclusion and empowering underserved communities across Pakistan.

Mr. Naqvi, also the President & CEO of U Microfinance Bank since 2015, has played a pivotal role in the remarkable turnaround and expansion of the bank. He represents a

new breed of bankers who have successfully driven the evolution of banking while remaining steadfast in their commitment to serving the underserved and excluded population of the country.

Mr. Naqvi has been a prominent figure in the microfinance industry for several years, showcasing a deep commitment to poverty alleviation and sustainable economic growth. His visionary leadership, strategic thinking, and proven track record make him the ideal candidate to steer PMN's mission forward.

As the Chairman of PMN, Mr. Naqvi will assume the responsibility of overseeing the network's initiatives, fostering collaboration among member

organizations, and driving the collective effort to expand access to financial services for the unbanked and underprivileged segments of society. His leadership will play a vital role in strengthening PMN's advocacy for inclusive policies and regulatory frameworks that support the growth and development of the microfinance sector in Pakistan.

PMN firmly believes that under Mr. Kabir's guidance, the organization will achieve remarkable milestones and foster innovation, enabling millions of individuals and small businesses to thrive and contribute to Pakistan's socioeconomic progress. His appointment reflects PMN's unwavering com-

mitment to excellence, transparency, and sustainable impact in the field of microfinance.

On behalf of PMN and its members, we extend our warmest congratulations to Mr. Naqvi on his new role as Chairman. We have complete confidence that his dynamic leadership, unwavering passion for social change, and unwavering dedication to PMN's mission will inspire and empower our stakeholders, partners, and beneficiaries alike.

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to Mr. Naqvi as the new Chairman of Pakistan Microfinance Network. Together, we will work tirelessly towards building a more inclusive and prosperous Pakistan.

\$881m earned from travel services' export: PBS

ISLAMABAD (APP): The country earned US \$881.250 million by providing different travel services in various countries during the first ten months of the fiscal year 2022-23.

This shows a growth of 90.29 per cent as compared to the US \$463.100 million worth same services provided during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year 2021-22, PBS reported.

During the period under review, personal travel services increased by 89.80 per cent, from US \$460.820 million last year to US \$874.640 million during July-April 2023. Among the personal services, the exports of health-related expenditure surged by 16.23 per cent to US \$3.580 million from US \$3.080 million while the education-related expenditure also rose by 0.32 per cent from US \$ 9.430 million to US \$9.460 million.

Meanwhile, the PBS data revealed that the exports of business services grew by 189.91 per cent, from US\$ 2.280 million to US\$ 6.610 million.

It is pertinent to mention here that the exports of services from the country, witnessed an increase of 1.46 per cent during the first ten months of the current financial year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period of last year, it added. The exports of services during July-April (2022-23) were recorded at US\$ 6,009.87 million against the exports of US\$ 5,923.19 million during the same period of last year.

OGDCL enhances energy production

— focus on community uplift in Jhal Magsi



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: In a significant move towards meeting the country's growing energy demands, Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL), the leading exploration and production company in Pakistan, has revived Jhal Magsi Gas project.

The state-of-the-art gas processing plant, with a daily capacity to produce 13.7 MMSCF process gas and 45 BBL/day condensate, will mitigate escalating energy needs of Pakistan. The installation of this plant is a testament to OGDCL's commitment to furthering the exploration and production of oil and gas resources in the

region. Besides the commercial operations, the company has underscored its dedication to transforming the lives of the local community in Jhal Magsi through a series of social welfare initiatives in the areas of education, health, water, and infrastructure.

As part of its efforts to enhance healthcare facilities, OGDCL has provided ambulances to the District Headquarter Hospital (DHQ) in Jhal Magsi. Additionally, OGDCL has installed a Reverse Osmosis (RO) plant, recognizing the importance of clean drinking water.

Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) is actively con-

tributing to the socioeconomic development of Jhal Magsi district by combining their commitment to meeting the country's energy requirements with community-focused initiatives. Their multifaceted approach, dedicated to securing a reliable energy supply and enhancing the quality of life for residents, is a significant milestone in Pakistan's pursuit of energy security and sustainable progress. OGDCL's installation of the gas processing plant, along with their community development endeavors, showcases their dedication to the welfare of the local population and sets an example of responsible corporate citizenship in the country.



In brief

Amir claims Sumaira 'blackmailed' him

LONDON (Web Desk): Amir Khan, a British-Pakistani boxer, claimed that an Asian bridal model tried "blackmailing" him and "sold" her tale to a British newspaper after he refused to pay her £20,000. Khan retaliated after Asian bridal model Sumaira accused him of cheating on his British-Pakistani wife Faryal Makhdoom. Khan, who resides in Dubai with his wife and three children, said Sumaira had erased a number of messages and only sent a small sample to The Sun, which published the original report in which the model accused the boxer of being unfaithful. The boxer said Sumaira started approaching him on social media and informed him that she disliked her family and was avoiding them. The boxer claimed that he asked her about her tattoos and whether her faith approved of them. The boxer claimed that Sumaira began emailing her intimate photos and then talked about wanting to undergo augmentation procedures. Khan claimed that she didn't request any images and that the model's actions weren't very impressive. Over the "I can't stop looking" comments, the boxer said that did that because she asked him to in order to make her happy and to give her a compliment. The boxer disclosed that Sumaira subsequently demanded £20,000 from him. The model informed the boxer that she wanted it to "fix her hand as one of her hands is bigger due to some problem and she always hides it" when the fighter inquired why. He said "The reason she went to the paper was I didn't want to give her money. Her story about her family disowning her did upset me but I knew she's on the money thing and is a liar. I stopped messaging her."

Netherlands thump Oman

HARARE (Agencies): Vikramjit Singh's maiden century, paired up with Aryan Dutt's 3/31 kept the Netherlands in contention to qualify for the ICC Men's World Cup 2023 with a statement 74-run victory over Oman in the CWC Qualifier on Monday. Put into bat first, the Netherlands accumulated a massive total of 362/7 in a must-win CWC Qualifier match against Oman at the back of sensational knocks by Vikramjit Singh and Wesley Barresi. The Dutch openers Vikramjit Singh and Max O'Dowd laid a solid foundation for a massive total as they raised 117 runs for the first wicket. Their calculated opening partnership lasted in the 22nd over when Ayaan Khan finally got rid of O'Dowd, who played a cautious 35-run knock from 64 deliveries. Singh then joined forces with Barresi and added a further 80 runs to the Netherlands' total before perishing in the 34th over briefly after amassing his maiden ODI century, which came in 102 deliveries. He smashed 11 boundaries and two sixes on his way to a 109-ball 110 and remained the top-scorer for the Netherlands. Following Singh's departure, Barresi put on a brief partnership with skipper Scott Edwards (4) before receiving subtle support at the other end in the form of Bas de Leede. The fourth-wicket partnership between Barresi and de Leede saw them adding 57 runs to the total before the latter fell after a quickfire cameo of 39 runs from just 19 deliveries. Barresi then also accelerated and bolstered the Netherlands' score in the last phase of the innings but had a heartbreaking end to his brilliant knock as he fell just three runs short of his second ODI century.

Climber Asif Bhatti stranded at Nanga Parbat due to snow blindness

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's climber Asif Bhatti, who had proceeded for final summit push of the treacherous Nanga Parbat (8,126m) mountain was stranded with snow blindness, the Alpine Club of Pakistan (ACP) said on Monday.

"Asif is stuck at camp 4 with snow blindness at altitude 7,500-metre to 8,000-metre. He needs help," ACP Secretary Karrar Haidri told APP.

According to Haidri, a number of outfits were attempting the peak and some of their members had



conveyed the message that Asif was suffering from snow blindness.

"A helicopter will be needed to pick him up but for that he will have to come

down to around 6,000-metre to 6,500-metre," he added.

Asif along with renowned Pakistani mountaineer Lt Col (R) Dr Jabbar Bhatti, Dr Naveed, Saad Muhammad and Faheem Pasha had departed for the expedition a few days back. "His other team members have not yet begun their final summit push," Haidri said.

With a death probability of 21%, Nanga Parbat continues to claim its place among the top five most dangerous mountains in the world. Till now 85 of the climbers have died while attempting it.

SBP to host Pak-UAE Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series

LAHORE (APP): The Sports Board Punjab (SBP) will host two-match Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series between Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) under the auspices of Pakistan Rugby Union from Tuesday, July 4, to Saturday, July 8.

In this regard, SBP Director General Dr Asif Tufail and Additional Secretary Sports Ms Nabeela visited the Punjab Stadium on Monday to review arrangements. The SBP director general directed the ground staff to make top-level arrangements for the mega series.

Dr Asif Tufail said that

holding of Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 at the Punjab Stadium was a good omen for the future of the game in our country. "The two-match Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series will play a key role in the promotion of rugby among young generation".

He welcomed the guest UAE rugby team in Lahore. "We are quite upbeat that the rugby fans will enjoy the exciting game of rugby during the Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series," he added.

Pakistan will take on United Arab Emirates (UAE) in first encounter of two-match Asia Rugby

Men's Division 1 series at Punjab Stadium on Tuesday (July 4) while the second match will be played at the same venue on July 8.

A 29-member rugby contingent including 25 players and four officials from UAE have reached Lahore to participate in the two-match Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series. The international match officials from Hong Kong, Singapore, Malaysia, Qatar and Japan will supervise the two-match Asia Rugby Men's Division 1 series. Asia Rugby has also appointed Rizwan Malik as the Citing Commissioner for the entire tournament.

Nathan Lyon ruled out of Ashes with calf injury

LORD'S (Agencies): Australia off-spinner Nathan Lyon will miss the rest of the Ashes series against England with the calf injury he sustained in the second Test at Lord's.

Lyon, who has 496 Test wickets, suffered the injury on day two of the encounter.

The 35-year-old's absence was confirmed as Australia left him out of their squad for the remaining three Tests because of a "significant calf tear".

Batter Matthew Renshaw has also been omitted from the Australia squad. Australia lead the series 2-0 having won by 43 runs at Lord's and by two wickets in the first Test at Edgbaston.

Spinner Todd Murphy, who took 14 wickets on a tour of India earlier this year, could replace Lyon for the third Test, which starts at Headingley on Thursday. "As you saw [on Sunday], at

certain times, we had to do it differently without Nathan Lyon down the other end, which we've been so used to," said Australia coach Andrew McDonald.

"At times it looked a little bit chaotic so we do like to have that spin option."

Murphy, 22, had only played seven first-class matches before his Test debut against India in February. "His stock ball is good enough in international cricket," said Lyon. "We have seen that in India in arguably the hardest place to bowl spin."

"It will be a different challenge with the England batters. "If they do come at him, it provides Todd with a decent challenge. But a chance to leave his footmarks here in England. It is a big Ashes series, he is excited by the opportunity."

This isn't career-defining - Lyon career-defining - Lyon took eight wickets

in Australia's victory in the first Test at Edgbaston. He dismissed opener Zak Crawley at Lord's to take his 496th Test wicket when he was playing his 100th consecutive Test.

He then sustained his injury on day two of the second Test when he pulled up as he ran to field a ball. Lyon hobbled out to bat for his side on day four and scored four runs as he added 15 with Mitchell Starc.

"I've been extremely lucky with injuries. I've been around since August 2011 and we've had 126 Test matches and I've played 122 of them," said Lyon, who is unsure if he will stay in England for the rest of the Ashes series or return home for rehabilitation.

"This is just a little speed bump in the road. This isn't career-defining. I am hungrier than ever to get back out there."

Pakistani racer Enaam Ahmed battles slick track to earn top eight finish

ISLAMABAD (APP): British-Pakistani racer Enaam Ahmed earned another top 10 result this past weekend in the IndyNXT by Firestone race, battling against top drivers and a treacherously wet track in the process.

The seventh round of the 2023 season took place from the Mid-Ohio Sports Car Course, and the track, which has so many elevation changes that it resembles a roller coaster, was lined with many American fans camping in their tents and trailers cheering on the action.

Ahmed started the Mid-Ohio Grand Prix in 11th, and immediately began fighting his way towards the front of the field. Before the first lap was even completed, the Pakistani Panther had moved his way into the top 10 and was looking for more.

The track had received a heavy rain just hours before the race began, and the track was not yet dry when Ahmed was fighting for position at 180 miles per hour. To make things even more difficult, light mist began falling in the middle



of the race and made the track surface slicker still.

The 23-year-old Ahmed was not daunted by the challenge, and continued to attack for position at every opportunity. At one point he was nearly pushed into the wet grass by Rasmus Lindh, and smartly backed out of the encounter.

If he would have so much as touched the wet grass lining the track, his purpose-built race car would have become stuck and his race would have been over immediately. Ahmed regrouped and was able to pass Lindh a few laps later, using his unmatched pace on a restart to gain another position.

Track conditions worsened near the end of the race, and multiple other drivers slid off into the grass even though they are all the most talented racers in America.

Ahmed was more than happy to take the positions given up by those that

crashed, taking care to keep his Cape Motorsports car on the racing surface. As a British Formula F3 champion, Ahmed has learned a lot about how to race in cool and rainy conditions, and it showed this weekend.

"I capitalized on the first laps of the restarts," said Ahmed, describing the strategy he used to gain positions. "Every time there was a restart I was overtaking, so that was good. It was very, very slick out there."

"The team are making good improvements on the car, it's just that we get there too late at the weekend. But that's just because of our lack of experience. The Cape Motorsport guys, it's their first year doing IndyNXT, and we're against teams that have been doing this for 10-20 years."

"It's only a matter of time before we get it right, and once we're at the front I know we can win." This weekend was the third time Ahmed has scored a finish in the top eight, even though he's just a rookie himself. There is still half of the 2023 season left for him to show what he's capable of.

LHC allows elections for PCB chairman slot

LAHORE (PPI): Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday allowed elections for the slot of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman as it withdrew its stay order.

Justice Anwar Hussain announced the ruling on a petition filed against the PCB chairman election, which was scheduled to take place on June 27.

The petitioner argued that PCB election commissioner had illegally made changes in the board of governors formed by the interim management committee. He pleaded the court to declare the election commissioner's action illegal, voiding his move to form the new board of governors.

During the hearing, the PCB lawyer said several petitions against the PCB elections were also pending with Justice Shahid Karim, adding that the judge had not issued any verdict.

After hearing arguments, Justice Anwar withdrew the stay order issued on June 28. He also sent the matter to the LCH chief justice, asking him to club all the cases against elections of the PCB chairman. On June 27, the Balochistan High Court (BHC) had also stopped the PCB from holding elections for the chairman slot.

Eight Pakistan players to participate in Zim Afro T10

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Former Pakistan pacer, Mohammad Amir, has joined the Durban Qalandars for the upcoming inaugural edition of the Zim Afro T10.

Alongside Amir, the Qalandars have also enlisted the talents like Craig Ervine, Asif Ali, Tahir Baig, Hilton Cartwright, Tim Siefert and Tayyab Abbas, adding strength to their batting lineup with powerful hitters.

Meanwhile, Pakistan pacer, Shahnawaz Dahani, has signed with the Harare Hurricanes for the tournament. The Hurricanes is co-owned by Bollywood actor, Sanjay Dutt.

Meanwhile, Usman Shinwari and Mohammad Hafeez have been drafted by Johannesburg Buffaloes.

The Zim Afro T10 will feature five teams competing for the championship, including the Durban Qalandars, Cape Town Samp Army, Bulawayo Braves, Harare Hurricanes, and Joburg Buffaloes.

Pakistan players in Zim Afro T10 League 2023:

Durban Qalandars Asif Ali, Mohammed Amir, Mirza Tahir Baig and Tayyab Abbas

Harare Hurricanes Shahnawaz Dahani Johannesburg Buffaloes Usman Shinwari and Mohammad Hafeez Cape Town Samp Army Mohammad Irfan.

Bangladesh compensate trio for choosing national team over IPL

DHAKA (Agencies): Bangladesh's cricket authorities said Monday they had compensated three senior cricketers a total of \$65,000 for choosing to play for the national team rather than in the lucrative Indian Premier League this season.

"This is just a small gesture on our part," Bangladesh Cricket Board cricket operations chief Jalal Yunus told AFP, with the cash to be split three ways between Shakib Al Hasan, Taskin Ahmed and Liton Das.

"They did not demand any money from us formally, but we felt they should be at least partially compensated, if not fully".

Jalal said this would not be a regular practice.

"We believe playing for the national team should be unconditional," he added. "But our board will consider it case-by-case, as players' well-being is also one of our priorities".

Shakib Al Hasan was picked up by the Kolkata Knight Riders for this year's IPL, but the all-rounder pulled out of the competition, which clashed with Bangladesh's series against Ireland at home and away. The BCB denied clearance to Test captain Shakib and vice-captain Liton until they played the one-off Test against Ireland in Dhaka from April 4 to 8.



LONDON: Novak Djokovic plays a forehand against Pedro Cachin in the Men's Singles first round match on day one of The Championships Wimbledon 2023.

Pakistan's Ayesha Ayaz wins three medals in Int'l Taekwondo C'ship

BANGKOK (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's young athlete Ayesha Ayaz, 12, on Monday surprised the world by winning three medals at the International Taekwondo Championship being held in Bangkok, Thailand.

The 12-year-old — who belongs to Sawat — stunned the audience with her exceptional skills during the championship by winning the medals in the Under-12 category.

In the 42kg class, she defeated players from three countries and bagged one silver and two bronze medals. More than 2,200 athletes from 40 countries participated in the event.

It must be noted that Ayesha won a gold medal at the Al-Fujria International event in Dubai earlier this year, including a total of seven medals she has won at the international level. She was the only girl from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to go to Thailand to participate in the championship.

Yesterday, a fourteen-member Pakistan taekwondo team was announced to represent the country in the



19th Asian Games to be held in Hangzhou (China) from September 23.

Out of fourteen, the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) will sponsor 10 while the Pakistan Taekwondo Federation (PTF) will look after the travelling expenses of the rest of the four members.

According to the details available with The News, two officials, Lt Col (ret) Raja Wasim Ahmad (President PTF) and Omar Saeed (CEO TF) trips will be self-sponsored.

Male athlete Mazhar Abbas and lady athlete Fateemah Tuz Zahraa will be sponsored by the taekwondo federation.

The PSB will sponsor ten athletes and officials. These include Yousef Karami (coach from Iran), Saba Shamim (team head),

Seongoh Choi (Korea coach), and Najia Rasool (female coach).

Haroon Khan, Mohammad Arbaz Khan, Hamza Omar Saeed, Naqash Hamdani, Naila, and Aqdasullah Qadeer — all these six athletes will be sponsored by the PSB.

The fourteen-member squad includes six officials and eight athletes meaning only 55 per cent of the contingent members will fight for medals at the Games. Pakistan have a remote chance of winning a medal at the Asian Games taekwondo event as they have never won any medal at the Asian Games level.

Considering the vast support from the Ministry and PSB in the shape of finances and camp training, it is hoped that the team will go on to make an impression at the 19th Asian Games.

As many as 13 gold medals will be at stake in the 19th Asian Games Taekwondo event to be staged at the competition to be held at the Lin'an Gymnasium Lin'an District.

Wimbledon 2023

Iga Swiatek wins opener, Jessica Pegula advances

LONDON (Agencies): Top seed Iga Swiatek laid down a marker on day one at Wimbledon with a dominant performance over China's Zhu Lin.

Swiatek won 6-1 6-3 against the world number 34, who was one of the highest-ranked players she could have faced.

Poland's Swiatek, 22, is considered one of the favourites for the women's title but has never managed to go beyond the fourth round on the grass in SW19.

However, the French Open and US Open champion began her quest to add another major on another surface in style.

In the build-up to Wimbledon, Swiatek talked about her intention to become an all-court player and believed she is now better prepared to challenge at the All England Club than she has been in previous years.

"Last year was a little bit more tricky because I felt rusty mentally, in terms of the focus tennis-wise, because I didn't play any matches on grass," said Swiatek, who won the junior title at Wimbledon in 2018. "I think this year is much more comfortable for me."

The evidence from her opening match certainly pointed to that.

Since lifting her fourth major title on the Roland

Garros clay last month, Swiatek has been spending time on the trickier grass surface and reached the semi-finals of a warm-up tournament in Germany last week.



Swiatek withdrew from her last-four match on Friday through illness, but showed no signs of any after-effects as she started strongly against Zhu.

After fighting off a break point in the first game, Swiatek moved a double break up at 5-0 and, after Zhu finally got on the board after 31 minutes to a huge ovation, sealed the opener with her third set point.

The second set was not as straightforward for the world number one. The pair exchanged breaks for 2-2 but Swiatek broke again for 3-2 shortly before they were forced off court by rain.

When they returned, Swiatek quickly wrapped up victory by breaking

again in the ninth game and finishing off with another stylish winner. Pegula through after being fired up by line call Swiatek is joined in the second round by American fourth seed Jessica Pegula and French fifth seed Caroline Garcia.

Pegula, 29, beat fellow American Lauren Davis 6-2 6-7 (8-10) 6-3, while Garcia won 6-4 6-3 against another American player, Katie Volynets. Like Swiatek, Pegula is a top player whose success has come away from the grass courts, having never gone past the third round at Wimbledon.

In a tight battle with 46th-ranked Davis where both players struggled with the windy conditions, she was unable to convert three match points in the second-set tie-break and had to dig deep in the decider.

Falling a break down early on, Pegula instantly put the set back on serve - after being fired up by a line-call ruling from the umpire which she thought was "significantly out".

Pegula fought back from 30-0 to break and took Davis' serve again for 5-3 before closing out the match. "I was able to find a little moment there where I was able to get myself going a little bit, just for the fact I was a little annoyed with that point, that circumstance," she said.



In brief

IRSA releases 316,200 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Monday released 316,200 cusecs of water from various rim stations with an inflow of 396,100 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, the water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 114.06 feet and was 152.06 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam were recorded as 201,200 cusecs and 180,100 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1182.80 feet, which was 132.80 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded at 68,800 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 192,000, 187,600, 130,300 and 64,100 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 56,700 cusecs of water were released at Nowshera and 42,400 cusecs were released from River Chenab at Marala.

One killed over land dispute

RAWALPINDI (APP): A man was killed while another was injured over a land dispute in the Dholiyal area of Chontra police station here on Monday. According to initial reports, the incident took place over a land dispute between the two parties. The deceased was identified as Arshad and the injured was named as Zubair. All aspects of the incident are being investigated, evidence is being collected from the spot. SP Sadder said that the accused involved will be arrested and brought to justice. City Police Officer (CPO) Syed Khalid Hamdani has taken notice of the incident of killing a man and injuring another, adding he directed to immediately arrest the accused involved in the incident.

Police recovered illegal arms, knife

RAWALPINDI (APP): Police have arrested four illegal arms holders and recovered arms, ammunition and a knife from their possessions here on Monday. According to the police spokesman, Waris Khan police held three arm holders Farhan, Qasim, Mohsin and recovered 3 pistols of 30 bores from their possessions. Similarly, Dhamyal Police recovered knife from Shakeel. Police have registered separate cases against the accused and further investigation was in progress. SSP Operations commended police teams adding that strict action will be continued against those carrying illegal weapons.

Power suspension programme

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Electric Supply Company (IESCO) on Monday issued a power suspension programme for Tuesday for various areas of its region due to necessary maintenance and routine development work. According to the IESCO Spokesman, the power supply of different feeders and grid stations would remain suspended for the period from 07:00 AM to 12:00 Noon, Islamabad Circle, FHS, I-8/4, Service Road, Muslim Town Feeders, Rawalpindi City Circle, People's Colony, Azizzabad, Misaryal Road, Madina Colony, Askari-XI, Race Course, Iqbal Road, Subhan Shaheed Feeders, Rawalpindi Cantt Circle, Kahota City-II, Hanif Shaheed, Old Rawat, New Rawat, CWO, AOWHS, Sparco Feeders, From 09:00 am to 02:00 pm Islamabad Circle, Upper Topa, Patriata, TDCP feeders and surrounding areas.



ISLAMABAD: Senator Danesh Kumar called on the Acting-President, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Sherry praises security forces for maintaining law and order

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Federal Minister for Climate Change Sherry Rehman on Monday complimented the security forces for maintaining the law and order situation in the country.

Sherry condemned the cowardly terrorist attack in Shirani, Balochistan.

"Condolences to their bereaved families and prayers for the departed souls." "The terrorists should know that Pakistan will keep defeating them," she added. Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) leader Faisal Karim Kundi on Sunday claimed that with the support of

the majority of voters, Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari will be elected as the country's premier. Kundi fired a broadside at Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) leader Hafiz Naeemur Rehman and his party. "We won't allow the JI to use politics to spread anarchy in the country."

HEC bans new affiliations to colleges, institutions

ISLAMABAD (PPI) The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has announced a complete ban on granting new affiliations to colleges and institutions by universities, including affiliations in programmes, to ensure the quality of education. The decision comes as part of HEC's ongoing review of the Affiliation Policy/Criteria aimed at enhancing the standards of higher education in the country and curbing the practice, noted with concern, of certain public sector universities granting affiliations to colleges and institutions lacking adequate infrastructure, faculty, and auxiliary facilities despite clear directions issued by HEC.

In view of the foregoing, all public sector HEIs having the authority to grant affiliations are hereby instructed to immediately cease granting new affiliations to any college or institution as well as programmes, until the revised criteria are issued. However, the extension of affiliation for already affiliated programmes and colleges/institutions is permissible, provided that an HEC nominee is part of the Affiliation Committee for renewal. Furthermore, public sector HEIs are required to promptly withdraw any advertisements related to granting affiliations that have been published in print and social media.

Failure to comply with these directions will result in the non-recognition and non-attestation of degrees issued by the non-compliant HEIs, and HEC will be compelled to initiate appropriate actions in accordance with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The move follows HEC's authority under Ordinance No. LIII of 2002 (Amendment Act No. XXI of 2021 and Second Amendment Act No. XXII of 2022), Section 10-1(a), to establish policies, guiding principles, and priorities for HEIs to promote the socio-economic development of Pakistan. Section 10-1(d) empowers HEC to prescribe conditions for the opening and operation of institutions, including those not part of the state educational system.

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Monsoon rains set to lash different areas of country

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Met Department issued a countrywide advisory of heavy rain from today Monday night, with hailstorms resulting in urban flooding. The advisory cautioned district administrations to remain alert to avoid flood-like situations. The weather system is expected to last till July 8. The moist currents from the Arabian Sea are likely to penetrate the upper parts of the country and a westerly wave is also likely to enter the region, said the advisory.

Rain spells and thunderstorm with scattered hailstorms are expected in Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Murree, Galliaty, Attock, Chakwal, Jhelum, Kashmir, Gilgit-Baltistan, Chitral, Swat, Mansehra, Kohistan, Abbottabad, Haripur, Peshawar, Mardan, Swabi, Nowshera, Kurram, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, Kohat, Mianwali, Sargodha, Hafizabad, Mandi Bahauddin, Sialkot, Narowal, Lahore, Gujranwala, Gujrat, Sheikhupura, Faisalabad, Jhang and Toba Tek Singh. Downpour advisory issued for all provinces, GB; hill torrents may hit Balochistan.

Rain is also predicted in Barkhan, Loralai, Sibbi, Naseerabad, Kalat, Khuzdar, Zhob, Lasbela, Awaran, Musakhel, Dera Ismail Khan, Bannu, Karak, Waziristan, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rajanpur, Multan, Bhakkar, Layyah, Kot Addu, Bahawalpur, Bahawalnagar, Sahiwal and Okara from July 5 to 8.

From July 7 to 8, Sukkur, Jacobabad Ghotki, Shaheed Benazirabad, Larkana, Mithi, Chhor, Padidan, Nagarparkar, Tharparkar, Umerkot, Sanghar, Mirpur Khas, Dadu, Thatta, Badin, Hyderabad and Karachi are expected to receive rain.

The advisory warned that heavy rain may cause urban flooding in low-lying areas of Islamabad, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Gujranwala and Lahore and trigger landslides in vulnerable areas of Murree, Galliaty, Kashmir, GB and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa from July 4 to 7. Downpours may cause flash floods in areas of D.G. Khan and adjoining areas of northeast Balochistan from July 6 to 8. Farmers and tourists have been advised to plan activities according to the weather forecast.

RWMC cleanliness drive continues after Eid in Murree

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) on Monday said that the cleanliness drive was in full swing in Murree while heavy machinery and excavators were being used to remove rubbish from the roads.

Talking to media persons, he said that the Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) was making all-out efforts to keep the hill station clear for tourists. He said that a large number of tourists visited Murree on the eve of the Eid festival which increased the responsibility of RWMC staff besides lifting animal waste. Rana said that RWMC continued its cleanliness drive at the hill station despite heavy rains during Eid days.

Meanwhile, he added that RWMC removed over 9,000 tons of animal waste from the district during three days of Eid-ul-Azha. He said that a comprehensive cleanliness plan, in accordance with the policy of the Punjab Government, was chalked out for Eid-ul-Azha to get rid of entrails of animals under which 4,052 sanitary workers with 463 vehicles worked day and night during the Eid holidays.

He said the waste was shifted to 17 permanent and 43 mobile transfer stations

from where it was moved to the landfill site at Losar through dumpers. Rana said the Caretaker provincial Minister for Health Dr Jamal Nasir, Commissioner Rawalpindi Laiqat Ali Chhatta, Deputy Commissioner Hasan Waqar Cheema, and RWMC officials visited several district areas and supervised the entire operation. He said all available resources were utilized to fulfil the task during the Eid days.

The CEO said holidays of the sanitary workers and officials had been cancelled to ensure cleanliness during the Eid days.

Giving details of the cleanliness operation, he said that RWMC had deployed around 3575 sanitary workers in Rawalpindi, 140 in Murree, and 337 in tehsil Taxila, Kalar Syeda and Kahutta to keep the areas clean during Eid-ul-Azha. The CEO added that 463 vehicles including 389 for Rawalpindi, 13 in Murree and 61 in other tehsils of the district were also part of the special drive to remove the remains from every nook and corner of the district. 17 permanent collection points and 43 mobile transfer stations had been set up for the convenience of the public in the district and the residents had been directed to contact Helpline number 1139 or 051-9291108 about any complaints, Rana said.

More than 14,000 copies of Quran distributed

ISLAMABAD (APP): Saudi Arabia's Ministry of Islamic Affairs, Dawah, and Guidance continues its distribution of the Holy Quran, generously provided by the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, to pilgrims departing from King Abdulaziz Airport in Jeddah after completing the Hajj rituals.

As of today, a total of 14,100 copies have been distributed since the commencement of the distribution process. On average, 8,740 copies are distributed daily, which includes interpretations of the Holy Verses in various languages such as English, Indonesian, Urdu, German, Persian, Turkish, Malayalam, and Bengali. Upon arriving at King Abdulaziz Airport, the departing pilgrims expressed joy and gratitude for completing the Hajj rituals in a spiritually uplifting environment.

8 held, over 37 kg drugs recovered

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan in their ongoing operations against drug traffickers on Monday, nabbed eight accused including a woman, and recovered over 37 kg of drugs from their possession, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman.

He said, in an operation at Islamabad International Airport, 1694 grams charas was recovered from the possession of a Sharjah-bound passenger, resident of Bannu, going on flight no ER-703. In another operation near Tarnol Phatak, ANF intercepted a rickshaw and a car and arrested three accused, residents of Islamabad and Peshawar, and recovered 11 kg charas from their possession.

In the third operation in the Lakpass area in Quetta, 10 kg charas and five kg Ice drug were recovered from secret cavities of a car. Drugs were being smuggled to Quetta from Dalbandin. ANF also recovered an accused, resident of Mastung. In the fourth operation at GPO Office Lahore, 1050 grams of Ice drug concealed in ladies' suits were recovered from a parcel booked for Australia. The spokesman informed that in the sixth operation conducted near Shahapura, Sialkot, 2.4 kg charas was recovered from the possession of two motorcyclists, residents of Sialkot.

‘Timely elections need of hour’: Tanveer

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Education Rana Tanveer Hussain Monday stressed for timely elections within sixty days which is need of the hour to overcome the chaos and instability in the country.

"The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) is actively preparing for the elections under the leadership of three-time prime minister Nawaz Sharif", he said while talking to a private news channel.

PML-N supremo Nawaz Sharif will return from London and lead the party's poll campaign soon, he added. About

the exact date of the elections, he said, it was the duty of the Election Commission of Pakistan to announce a date for general elections but we want early elections.

The minister further called upon for ensuring free and fair general elections in the country and giving supremacy to the parliament, to move the country forward. Replying a question about PML-N leadership reshuffling, he said that party senior leadership would decide the matter after the arrival of former Prime minister Nawaz Sharif, adding, it is part of politics.

PDM came to power just to clear corruption cases of its leaders: AML chief

RAWALPINDI (PPI): Awami Muslim League (AML) chief Sheikh Rashid Ahmed on Monday expressed surprise over silence adopted by the Pakistan Peoples Party on recent loan deal with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

Taking to Twitter, the former interior minister said the PPP had not given any reaction to the deal, saying: "This means there is something wrong with it". He said the government would impose an additional burden of Rs415 billion taxes on the inflation-hit people, fearing that prices of electricity, gas and other commodities would go up

from July 12 when the IMF would make written announcement regarding the bailout package.

Calling next 45 days crucial for economic stability and political future of the country, Mr Ahmed said the whole world had set eyes on Pakistan as it was an important country in the region. He said economic stability was linked to political stability.

He said the survival of the country did not lie with the 13 parties but the whole nation. Hitting out at the ruling parties' ongoing meetings in Dubai, he said the countdown had begun for the government which, he said, would be exposed

by Aug 13.

The former minister also hit out at Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari for his foreign trips, saying: "The foreign minister has now visited Japan which was unvisited by him". He said overseas Pakistanis should be given the right to vote instead of delivering addresses. He said Pakistan was not a property of "rejected politicians," adding that the PDM government had come into power just to clear corruption cases of its leaders. He also warned the ruling coalition of public reactions. He urged the government to call back its ambassador from Sweden over the Holy Quran desecration.

Ashrafi urges Int'l community for urgent legislation to prevent rising incidents of Islamophobia

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chairman of Pakistan Ulema Council Allama Tahir Ashrafi Monday strongly condemned the "despicable act" of the public burning of a copy of the Holy Quran in Sweden on the occasion of Eid ul Adha and urged the international community for taking urgent measures to legislate for the prevention of the rising incidents of Islamophobia.

Talking to a private news channel, he said the

world community should "take unified and collective measures to prevent the recurrence of incidents of desecration of copies of the Quran". "The act of blasphemy against the holy book has tarnished religious tolerance," he said, adding, "Freedom of expression must be exercised in a responsible manner."

"Misusing of freedom of expression for such behavior would just only incite extremism, he said, adding, there is a dire

need to give an awareness among people in the world to control extremism".

He said respecting the Holy Quran is an integral part of every Muslim's faith, adding, such an incident is extremely unbearable in the name of freedom of expression." The Muslim world should prevent the repetition of such anti-Islamic behavior and not let the perpetrators of hurting the feelings of Muslims go unpunished, he added.

Secretary Housing reviews preparations for Monsoon

RAWALPINDI (APP): Secretary of Housing and Urban Development Punjab, Sajid Zafar Dall here on Monday reviewed the preparations finalized by Water and Sanitation Agency (WASA) for Monsoon. During the visit, the Secretary also inspected the cleaning work of Nullah Lai at Gwalmandi bridge. After the recent forecast from the Meteorological Department, all the departments concerned need to be alert, said Sajid Zafar Dall.

He said that WASA Rawalpindi had made extensive preparations for the Monsoon, including timely cleaning of major drains and sewage lines of the city along with Nulla Lai. While giving instructions to Managing Director (MD) WASA, the Secretary said that the next two months are very important during which there is a need to be alert all the time and work in full coordination with the Meteorological Department. All possible precautionary measures should be adopted particularly in low-lying areas, he said adding, machinery and staff should also be deployed so that in case of urban flooding, relief and rescue operation could be kicked off within the shortest possible time frame.

The Secretary further said that the Punjab

government had provided timely funds for the annual cleanliness operation, due to which WASA had completed the clean-up measures in Rawalpindi on time and it is hoped that the citizens would not face any difficulty during Monsoon season. He said that Commissioner Rawalpindi Liaquat Ali Chhatta is personally monitoring the entire process and all institutions are working with the district administration under a comprehensive strategy. He informed that Caretaker Minister for Housing and Urban Development Syed Azfar Ali Nasir and Chief Secretary of Punjab Anurag Verma had also visited Rawalpindi and expressed satisfaction over the arrangements for Monsoon.

Earlier, MD, WASA Muhammad Tanveer while giving a briefing informed the Secretary that the agency had completed all preparations before Monsoon. The Punjab government had released funds for the cleanliness work of Nullah Lai and 11 other drains of the town. The cleaning work of Nulla Lai had been completed from Katarian Bridge to Murree Road, but the machinery is working to remove the obstructions from Nullah Lai after the heavy rains of the past few days and this process would continue during Monsoon, he said.



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery being used to expand lanes for smooth traffic on Islamabad Expressway.

Japan to provide scholarships

KABUL (Agencies): The Embassy of Japan in Afghanistan announced that it will grant scholarships to Afghan students for master's and doctoral courses. The embassy said that students' selection will be done in cooperation with the Aga Khan Foundation. Criteria to qualify for the program include students under 35 years of age, sufficient proficiency in English or Japanese and excellent school achievements. Successful applicants will travel to Japan in April 2024.

The Frontier Post

Zil-Hajj 15, 1444 — Tuesday, July 04, 2023

Police arrest 12 criminals

KUNAR (Agencies): Twelve people were arrested on charges of criminal offenses in Kunar province of Afghanistan on Monday by Afghan police. The individuals have been arrested in the last few days from the city and some districts of Kunar province. The police media office said that the detainees were involved in robbery, drug trafficking, and murder. Kunar police announced the increase in efforts to fight against crimes.

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

UN announces 2023-25 strategic framework for Afghanistan

KABUL (TOLONews): The United Nations has announced its Strategic Framework for Afghanistan for the period 2023-2025, outlining the priorities of the organization in support of the Afghan people.

The UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said in a statement that the UN Strategic Framework articulates the UN's approach to addressing basic human needs in Afghanistan.

The Strategic Framework, the statement said, is "prioritizing the needs and rights of those most vulnerable, including women and girls, children and youth, internally displaced persons, returnees, refugees, ethnic and religious minorities."

"Our Strategic Framework is a robust offer of assistance to the people of Afghanistan to address their basic human needs and complement the ongoing delivery of lifesaving humanitarian assistance," said Roza Otunbayeva, the UN Special Envoy for Afghanistan.

Meanwhile, head of the Islamic Emirate's Political Office in Qatar, Suhail Shaheen, said that the humanitarian issues should be separated from political issues.

"To end poverty and create job opportunities, the UN may start development projects and end economic sanctions and separate humanitarian issues from political issues," he said.

Economists suggested that humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan should be continued. "The women lost their jobs and the educational departments are closed for the girls, the (UN) can help them and also in general help the Afghans, and this will benefit the Afghan economy," said Nazukmir Ziarnal, an economist.

The political analyst Najibullah Shamal suggested that the interim government help the UN and international organizations in aid delivery.

"It is necessary that the current government helps the UN and other international aid organizations to attract aid so that further aid can be allocated to the Afghans," said Najeebullah Shamal, political analyst.

The UNAMA statement said that the United Nations Country Team and partners have identified three complementary and mutually reinforcing joint priorities as it supports the basic human needs of the Afghan people:

- Sustained Essential Services
- Economic Opportunities and Resilient Livelihoods
- Social Cohesion, Inclusion, Gender Equality, Human Rights, and the Rule of Law

Over 4,000 Afghan refugees returned to country from Iran

KABUL (Khaama Press): Iranian border security officials said at least 4,000 Afghan refugees were returned to Afghanistan through Zabol crossing point over the past 24 hours.

According to Iranian border official Parwiz Qasimzada, these Afghan migrants were arrested and returned to Afghanistan due to the reasons for illegal entry and stay and the expiration date of their passports.

Qasimzada further added in order to enter, stay and exit Iran, foreign nationals will have to use legal channels. He stressed that those foreign nationals who are illegally entering Iran will face legal action from the border guards.

Previously, the head of refugees in Iran's Razavi Khorasan province had said over the past year, nearly 90,000 Afghan refugees were returned to Afghanistan through the Dogharun border.

Since the return of the Taliban to power in August 2021, millions of vulnerable Afghan families migrated to the neighboring countries including Iran and Pakistan.

Earlier, Ali Kazimi, Deputy Justice Minister of Iran had said that roughly 63% of refugees in the country are from Afghanistan.

The International Organization for Migration in its latest report highlighted that 3.6 million Afghans migrated to the neighboring countries in the past two years, 70% of them to Iran, 18% to Pakistan, 11% to Turkey, and 2% to other countries.

This comes as the Islamic Regime of Iran has forcefully deported thousands of Afghans to the country over the past months.

Taliban officials have repeatedly reported the return of Afghan nationals from Iran in the past months. It is believed that some of these refugees willingly and others forcefully returned to Afghanistan.

Kabul again pledges to prevent use of Afghan soil against others

KABUL (TOLONews): Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi called on the US to "positively engage" with the interim Afghan government, arguing that the Islamic Emirate has remained committed to the fulfillment of its pledge to not allow the use of Afghan soil against others.

In an interview with Al Jazeera, while referring to US President Joe Biden's remarks about al-Qaeda in Afghanistan, Muttaqi said that Biden's statement means an "understanding of realities."

"The remarks of the US president that there is no armed group in Afghanistan in facts shows that the realities have been understood and it denies the recent report of the UN," he said.

Earlier, US President Joe Biden in response to a question about "mistakes in Afghanistan withdrawal", said: "Remember what I said about Afghanistan? I said al-Qaida would not be there. I said it wouldn't be there. I said we'd get help from the Taliban. What's happening now? What's



going on? Read your press. I was right."

In early August 2022, US President Joe Biden in a live address said: "Justice has been delivered" in a US strike killing al-Qaida leader al-Zawahri; "this terrorist leader is no more."

The strike happened in the Sherpur area of Kabul. "Al-Qaeda was first the enemy of the US and it (the

US) therefore, eliminated the (first) government of the Taliban, and then there was emphasis in Doha to cut relations with al-Qaeda. Today, they say that these relations have ended by the Taliban. Thus, there is another game by the US with the Taliban," said Aziz Maarji, a political analyst.

do not mean that the US should engage with the interim Afghan government, but they were to save himself from allegations in the withdrawal process," said Moeen Gul Samkanai, political analyst.

Earlier, the Islamic Emirate said that they have not found any details to prove that Zawahiri was killed in Afghanistan.

Islamic Emirate bans women's beauty salons in Afghanistan

KABUL (TOLONews): The Islamic Emirate's leader in a new verbal decree banned women's beauty salons in Kabul and other provinces across the country, a spokesman for the Ministry of Vice and Virtue, Mohammad Akif Mahajar, told TOLONews.

The Ministry of Vice and Virtue also ordered the Kabul municipality to bring the new decree of the Islamic Emirate's leader into effect and cancel the licenses of women's beauty salons.

"The men are jobless. When men cannot take care of their families, the women are forced to work in a beauty salon to find a loaf of bread. If they are banned there, what can we do?" said Raihan Mubarez, a makeup artist.

"We will not get out of the home if men (of the family) have jobs. What can we do? We should starve to death, what should we do? You want us to die," said a makeup artist.

This comes as the Islamic Emirate has banned girls and women from going to schools, universities and working at NGOs as well as going to public areas such as parks, cinemas and other recreation

areas. "The government should make a framework for it. The framework should be in a way that neither Islam would be damaged nor the country," said Abdul Khahir, a resident of Kabul.

The imposition of restrictions on Afghan girls and women by the interim government has sparked reactions at both the national and international level.

50,000 tourists visited Bamiyan for Eid, says officials

BAMIYAN (TOLONews): Local officials in Bamiyan said that in the last four days, nearly 50,000 domestic tourists visited the ancient and recreational places of the province.

"From the first day of Eid until four days later, 50,000 domestic tourists visited tourist attractions of Bamiyan province," said Saif Rahman Mohammadi.

Some tourists that came from other provinces said they came for Bamiyan's ancient and recreational places. "People wish to come to Bamiyan and visit Band e Amir because it has good views and weather," said Sifat Ullah, a Kabul resident. "Security is good in Bamiyan and also there are ancient and recreational places, it's a good place for holidays," said Hamed-ullah, a Paktia resident.

Meanwhile, a number of tourists demanded that officials of the Islamic Emirate



provide more facilities in the recreational and historic parts of this province.

"Prices are so high here compared to other provinces and hotels are not standard and need to be

rebuilt," said Mohammad Ewaz, a Samangan resident. "There are some things that need to be done in Band e Amir, our wish is to implement some things so that facilities are provid-

ed for more people," said Mustafa, a Kabul resident.

Band e Amir in Bamiyan, with an area of 41,000 hectares of land, was introduced as the first national park in 1388 (solar year).

Nearly 260 injured in Herat in last five days



KABUL (Agencies): Officials at Herat Regional Hospital say around 260 people have been injured as a result of traffic incidents in this province over the last five days.

"In the last five days, we had 259 injured traffic accidents and unfortunate-

ly three deaths," said Ahmad Farhad Afzali, head of Herat Regional Hospital emergency department.

According to Afzali, the majority of the injured are teenage and young people.

Meanwhile, doctors in this hospital said that most

traffic accidents occurred on Eid days, and the number of injured people was twice as high as on normal days.

Reckless driving, over-speeding, decline to follow traffic rules are said to be the main reasons for road accidents.

Tourists visited historical sites of Laghman, Nangarhar in Eid days

NANGARHAR-LAGHMAN (Agencies): Thousands of domestic tourists visited the historical sites and natural attractions of the eastern provinces of Nangarhar and Laghman.

"Thousands of tourists from various provinces of

the country traveled to Mamand area of Spin Ghar district on Eid days, where 8 years of ISIS atrocities have passed and it was the front line of the war," a statement from the Information and Culture of Nangarhar said.

Meanwhile, the head of

Information and Culture of Laghman Mawlawi Abdul Noor Rasuli said that several high-ranking government officials and thousands of domestic tourists visited the Farishghah, Chakla, and Nawiya areas of Dawlat Shah District during the three days of the

Eid al-Adha, according to the statement.

Dawlat Shah District's geographical structure, natural beauty, and clear flowing water are the best places for tourists to enjoy.

Meanwhile, several tourists have expressed their pleasure and they were very happy that the provinces are hosting more tourists compared to previous years, the statement added.

Better security and tourist facilities have caused an increasing number of tourists to visit the historical sites and natural attractions of the provinces.



Students accepted at Indian varsities lack visas

KABUL (TOLONews): Afghan students who succeeded to study in Indian universities complained that New Delhi has not issued their visas to attend classes in India.

Some of these students interviewed by TOLONews said that the Indian govern-

ment stopped issuing visas for Afghan students after the fall of the former government.

Ibrahim Niazipour, a lecturer at Kabul university, said that he was studying for a Ph.D. in India.

"In 2021, due to Covid-19 and also because my

instructor asked me to collect further research, I came to Afghanistan. The political changes happened here and after that India invalidated our visas," he said.

The students urged the interim government to consider their problems.

"We call on the Islamic

Emirate to clarify our destiny and give us a visa and help us to get back to India, said Shirzad, a student.

Meanwhile, IEA spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid said they are in contact with Indian officials. "There is a problem with the issuance of Indian visas. We have talked

to them many times to facilitate this because some patients and our traders as well as our students are going to study there. This problem has been created by them and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is in contact to find a solution for this issue," he said.

Possible killing of 80 Afghan civilians by SAS under investigation

KABUL (TOLONews): At least 80 Afghan civilians may have been victims of summary killings by three separate British Special Air Service (SAS) units—that were operating in the country between 2010 and 2013—the Guardian reported, citing lawyers who represent the bereaved families.

The report said that the fresh claims are cited in a document submitted by the law firm Leigh Day, based on previous Ministry of Defense court disclosures, to a new public inquiry into allegations of war crimes

committed by SAS soldiers in Afghanistan.

Leigh Day argues that there were "at least 30 suspicious incidents which resulted in the deaths of more than 80 individuals" between 2010 and 2013, but until now there has been no independent public investigation of what happened.

TOLONews interviewed a relative of the victims in the southern province of Helmand.

"They were also asking us very tough questions then. There was both fear

and hardship then and they were telling me that we killed your brother and tortured him and we are going to torture and kill you as well," said Abdul Hameed, a resident of Babaji district of Helmand.

Some of the family members of the war victims in Helmand called for the perpetrators who committed war crimes to be held accountable.

"My father went out. The foreigners came, they had weapons. My father hugged me, and the armed individual pulled me down

from my father. They beat my father. Then they put black hoods on my father and uncle. Now when I see any armed individual, I feel fear and I hate them," said Hayatullah, a resident of Helmand.

"We want those people who conducted these crimes to be punished. They should be held accountable for why this happened. These people should be paid with compensation," said Shah Mohammad, a resident of Helmand.

According to the

Guardian's report, one of the British elite soldiers is believed to have "personally killed" 35 Afghans on a single six-month tour of duty as part of an alleged policy to terminate "all fighting-age males" in homes raided, "regardless of the threat they posed."

Afghans were often killed after allegedly producing weapons when separated from their wider family by SAS soldiers, but there were five incidents where the number shot dead exceeded the number of weapons found, the

report said.

The Islamic Emirate's spokesman, Zabiullah Mujahid, said that the war crimes committed by NATO forces in Afghanistan have been widespread.

"They martyred thousands of innocent Afghans with various excuses. Those countries who had security forces in Afghanistan, all of them committed crimes. This was not a crime to be committed by some soldiers, but it was a pre-planned issue," he said.

A political analyst, Aziz Maarji, suggested a commission should be formed to pursue such cases. "This issue will not be investigated in its own way and there will be no compensation until the Afghan nation appeals and the Afghan nation should form a commission," he said.

The Guardian also quoted a British Defense Ministry's spokesman as saying that it would be up to the inquiry how it conducts its work.

"It is not appropriate for the MoD to comment on

cases which are within the scope of the statutory inquiry, and it is up to the statutory inquiry team, led by Lord Justice Haddon-Cave, to determine which allegations are investigated," the spokesman said as quoted by Guardian.

In May, Australia's defense chief said that the United States warned him in 2021 that allegations of Australian special forces soldiers killing prisoners and civilians in Afghanistan may trigger a law prohibiting assistance from the United States.

Zelensky calls Putin ‘weak’ and says Putin’s power is ‘crumbling’

KYIV (Agencies): Vladimir Putin’s response to the armed Wagner rebellion was “weak” and the Russian President is losing control of his own people, Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky told CNN in an exclusive interview.

Putin faced the greatest threat to his authority in two decades last month when the head of the Wagner paramilitary group, Yevgeny Prigozhin, launched a short-lived uprising, claiming control of military facilities in two Russian cities and marching toward Moscow before he agreed to stand down. “We see Putin’s reaction. It’s weak,” Zelensky told CNN’s Erin Burnett in Odesa, in an interview.

“Firstly, we see he doesn’t control everything. Wagner’s moving deep into Russia and taking certain regions shows how easy it is to do. Putin doesn’t control the situation in the regions.” “All that vertical of power he used to have is just crumbling down.” Some Russians cheered on Wagner fighters as Prigozhin led the unprecedented challenge to Putin’s authority. Video geolocated and verified by CNN showed crowds cheering as the Wagner boss’ vehicle departed the southern city of Rostov-

on-Don on June 24.

Zelensky said Ukrainian intelligence reports showed the Kremlin was measuring support for Prigozhin, and he claimed that half of Russia supported the Wagner boss and the paramilitary group’s mutiny. The interview with Zelensky comes at a critical time – not only in the wake of Prigozhin’s failed insurrection, but also weeks into Ukraine’s slow push to recapture territory occupied by Russia.

That effort has come under intense scrutiny from Western allies and on Saturday a US official told CNN the head of the US Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), Bill Burns, had visited Kyiv recently and met with Zelensky and Ukrainian intelligence officials. Zelensky told CNN he was “surprised” to see his meeting with Burns reported in the media. “My communication with the CIA chief should always be behind the scenes,” he said. “We discuss important things – what Ukraine needs and how Ukraine is prepared to act.”

Burns, a veteran diplomat, has become a trusted interlocutor in Kyiv, and has made several trips to Ukraine during the war. “We don’t have any secrets from CIA, because we have

good relations, and our intelligence services talk with each other,” Zelensky said. “The situation is pretty straightforward. We have good relations with the CIA chief and we are talking. I told him about all the important things related to the battlefield which we need.”

Burns traveled to Kyiv before Prigozhin’s rebellion, which was not a topic of discussion, the US official told CNN. Speaking at a news conference in Kyiv Saturday, Zelensky said Prigozhin’s rebellion had “greatly affected Russian power on the battlefield” and could be beneficial to Ukraine’s counteroffensive. While the thrust of Kyiv’s efforts have focused on recapturing territory in the south and east of Ukraine, Zelensky told Burnett that his ultimate goal was to liberate Crimea, the peninsula annexed by Russia in 2014 in violation of international law. “We cannot imagine Ukraine without Crimea. And while Crimea is under the Russian occupation, it means only one thing: the war is not over yet,” he said. Asked whether there was any scenario under which there could be peace without Crimea, Zelensky said: “It will not be victory then.”



ISLAMABAD: Workers of Jamat-e-Islami holding a protest outside Sweden Embassy against burning of Holy Quran in Sweden.

Quran desecration: JI announces protest

ISLAMABAD (INP): Jamat-e-Islami (JI) on Monday announced a protest in front of the Swedish embassy in Islamabad, expressing strong condemnation over the recent desecration of the Holy Quran in Sweden.

Nasrullah Randhawa, a prominent leader of JI, conveyed the party’s concerns during a press conference held in Islamabad. Randhawa expressed deep dismay that the individuals responsible for the Quran desecration were not only shielded by the Swedish court but also protected by the local police. He called upon the Pakistani government to send a resolute message regarding this grave matter, asserting that mere statements would not suffice.

He emphasized that repeated incidents of this nature were becoming normalized and needed to be addressed with urgency. “The Holy Quran is the red-line of the Muslim Ummah, and its desecration cannot be tolerated,” stated Randhawa, stressing the sentiments of two billion Muslims worldwide who were deeply hurt by the incident. He underscored that the desecration had deeply affected Muslims globally and called for stronger action to prevent such acts from recurring.

The JI leader further highlighted the timing of the incident, which occurred during the Eid festivities when people around the world were exchanging messages of love and goodwill. He also expressed concern over the arrest of individuals who protested against the Quran desecration outside Stockholm’s central mosque.

Inflation reaches 29.40%

QUETTA (PPI): Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported the monthly inflation rate reached 29.40 per cent in June, indicating a slight decline as compared to May, 2023, according to a report on Monday.

According to the latest data released by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS), the inflation rate for the month of June was recorded at 29.40 per cent, representing a significant increase of 8.1 percent compared to the previous year. Meanwhile, the inflation rate of May was reported at 38 per cent, indicating a slight decline in June. However, despite this marginal improvement, the country remains mired in a high inflation environment that is eroding the purchasing power of citizens.

Digging deeper into the statistics, the report reveals that the urban areas experienced an inflation rate of 27.3 per cent, while, the inflation rate stood even higher at 32.4 per cent, reflecting the vulnerability of agricultural communities to the rising cost of living. Comparing the current situation with that of the previous year, the Bureau of Statistics reveals that the inflation rate in June last year was 21.3%. This indicates a substantial year-on-year increase, further indicating the severity of the current inflationary crisis.

Greece boat disaster FIA to try traffickers under AML Act

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) has decided to try suspected human traffickers involved in the Greek boat tragedy under the Anti-Money Laundering Act (AML Act). As per the FIA official, the agency has decided not only to freeze the bank accounts of the traffickers but also to blacklist their ID cards and passports.

A statement issued by the FIA spokesperson on Monday said FIA Director General (DG) Mohsin Hasan Butt and North Additional Director General (ADG) Rana Abdul Jabbar visited the agency’s Lahore Zone where they were briefed on the progress in the shipwreck investigation by Lahore Director Sarfraz

Virk and Faisalabad Director Rai Ijaz Ahmed.

The Lahore and Faisalabad directors informed the senior FIA officials that five inquiries had been opened and 149 cases registered so far in their zones, while 41 human traffickers were arrested. The raiding teams are in constant contact with the families to arrest the human traffickers, they added. Subsequently, the DG FIA ordered the formation of more teams to immediately arrest the suspects involved in the incident, adding that the raiding teams were in constant contact with the families to arrest the traffickers.

He said that all resources should be used to make the arrests. FIA Director General issued an order to

act under the Money Laundering Act against the suspects involved in the incident. “The identity cards and bank accounts of the agents involved in the boat accident should be blocked immediately,” he said adding that the passports of the human smugglers should be blacklisted.

Mohsin Butt directed the officers posted at all the airports of the country to keep a close watch for the arrest of the agents involved. Last month, an Italy-bound fishing trawler reportedly carrying at least 800 people — including approximately 350 Pakistanis — capsized off Greece. The incident led to a day of mourning along with the launch of a nationwide crackdown on human smugglers with many subsequently arrested.

Russia claims to have foiled an assassination bid

MOSCOW (Agencies): Russia has claimed to have thwarted a Ukrainian assassination attempt on Sergey Aksyonov, the Russian-installed head of Crimea. The Federal Security Service (FSB) said in a statement on Monday that it had arrested a Russian national recruited as an assassin by Ukraine’s SBU intelligence agency, alleging the suspect had undergone explosives, reconnaissance and sabotage training in Ukraine.

There was no immediate comment from Ukraine on the Russian allegation. It came amid Russian media reports that security has been stepped up in Crimea, the Black Sea peninsula which Russia annexed from Ukraine in 2014, and that additional security checks are being made on people wanting to cross a bridge from Russia’s southern Krasnodar region into Crimea. The FSB statement added that the plan had been to blow up Aksyonov’s car, but the agent was detained as he

tried to retrieve an explosive device from a hiding place.

The agency did not name the man it detained, but said he was in his mid-30s and had entered Crimea in June. He was being investigated on suspicion of “attempting to commit a terrorist act” and “illegally possessing explosives”. Aksyonov thanked the FSB for stopping what he called an attempt on the lives of the “Republic of Crimea’s leadership” and said he was sure the individuals who ordered the foiled attack would be found and punished.

Ukraine has pledged to retake full control of Crimea and areas in the east and south of the country that Russia claims to have annexed since launching its invasion in February 2022. Kyiv has repeatedly said it will not negotiate any peace agreement until every Russian soldier has been removed from Ukrainian territory. On Monday, Ukraine said its forces had reclaimed 37.4 square kilometres (14.4

square miles) of territory along the eastern and southern fronts in its counter-offensive against Russian troops.

Deputy Defence Minister Hanna Maliar said forces were advancing in the Bakhmut direction, adding that Russian troops were attacking in the Lyman, Avdiivka and Mariinka directions in the Donetsk region. “Heavy fighting is going on there now,” Maliar said on Telegram. Maliar added that “as a result of improving the operational [tactical] position and aligning the front line”, 9sq km (3.5sq miles) over the past week along the eastern front were reclaimed.

President Volodymyr Zelenskyy also said Ukraine’s military was progressing despite difficulties. “Last week was difficult on the front line. But we are making progress,” he wrote on Telegram. “We are moving forward, step by step! I thank everyone who is defending Ukraine, everyone who is leading this war to Ukraine’s victory!”

Key Balochistan highways blocked by protesters

BARKAN (PPI): Important roads in Balochistan were blocked by people in separate protests for acceptance of their demands on Monday. In Barkhan, Balochistan National Party (BNP) blocked the N-70 highway connecting Balochistan to Punjab against the ongoing extortion and lawlessness in Balochistan. The protesters burnt tires on the national highway and blocked it, demanding the arrest of Shafiqur Rahman, the leader of the death squad in Balochistan.

“Our protest and demonstration will continue until Shafiqur Rahman, the killer of the oppressed and helpless Baloch people is arrested,” BNP central committee member Malik Gaman Khan said. “We will speak at every forum against the ongoing cruelty and brutality in Balochistan. The province has always been kept backward on purpose,” Naurez Baloch said. “The inhabitants of the province, rich in mineral resources, are living below the poverty line even in the 21st century,” Siddique

Khetran lamented. The vehicles lined up in long queues due to the closure of the highway.

In Qalat, the BNP workers protested and blocked the Quetta-Karachi highway. “Some elements want to lead the political affairs of Wadh tehsil to a tribal conflict. Attempts are being made to punish BNP chief Sardar Akhtar Jan Mengal for demanding rights over coastal resources,” they said. People were stranded in long queues of vehicles due to the closure of the national highway.

In Zhob, the All Parties Action Committee (APAC) and others held a sit-in in front of the commissioner’s office against the martyrdom of policemen at Shirani Dana Sar Checkpost. The protesters set up a tent in front of the commissioner’s office and placed the dead bodies on the road as a protest. Their protest continued in the extreme heat on the second day. The families of the martyred policemen said that they would continue their protest until their legitimate demands were

met. Meanwhile, a complete shutdown was also announced in the entire city on Monday. All small and big shops, markets and business centres remained closed.

ATC extends bail of PTI leader

ISLAMABAD (INP): Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) extended the bail of the prominent Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader Ali Afzal Sahi, who was booked in a case at Golra Sharif police station on Monday.

PTI leader Ali Afzal Sahi, accompanied by his lawyer, appeared before the Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) today to address the charges brought against him.

During the hearing, Ali Afzal Sahi’s legal team requested interim bail, which was granted by the ATC. The court extended his bail until July 5, giving Sahi temporary relief from potential custody.

Imran’s disqualification: PHC disposes off writ

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: A divisional bench of Peshawar High Court (PHC) comprising of Justice SM Attique Shah and Justice Waqar Ahmad has disposed-off writ seeking disqualification of Former Prime Minister Imran Khan on non-maintainability, on Monday.

The writ filed by Inam Ullah Khan seeking disqualification of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan on false statement submitted in nomination form for NA-35 Bannu. PTI chairman didn’t disclosed his daughter Trian in nomination form for NA-35 in 2018 election.

The petition argued that PTI chairman didn’t a trustworthy (Amin) and truth-speaker (Sadiq) under Article 62 and 63 Constitution of Pakistan. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman counsel Qazi Muhammad Anwar Advocate argued that it is the election complaints while it should be heard in Election Tribunal and cannot maintainable under writ jurisdiction.

The counsel informed Peshawar High Court (PHC) and argued that Supreme Court of Pakistan has granted detailed judgement in Javed Hashmi case in identical petition. Peshawar High Court (PHC) declared that Imran Khan has vacated NA35 constituency while retain Miawali seat while disposed-off writ petition due to vacating the seat.

LHC allows holding of elections for PCB chief slot

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore High Court (LHC) on Monday allowed elections for the slot of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) chairman as it withdrew its stay order. Justice Anwar Hussain announced the ruling on a petition filed against the PCB chairman election, which was scheduled to take place on June 27.

The petitioner argued that PCB election commissioner had illegally made changes in the board of governors formed by the interim management committee. He pleaded the court to declare the election commissioner’s action illegal, voiding his move to form the new board of governors. During the hearing, the PCB lawyer said several petitions against the PCB elections were also pending with Justice Shahid Karim, adding that the judge had not issued any verdict.

After hearing arguments, Justice Anwar withdrew the stay order issued on June 28. He also sent the matter to the LCH chief justice, asking him to club all the cases against elections of the PCB chairman. On June 27, the Balochistan High Court (BHC) had also stopped the PCB from holding elections for the chairman slot.

Dar appreciates Chinese support to Pakistan

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar on Monday appreciated the Chinese support to Pakistan on multiple fronts, and specifically thanked for the cooperation of Chinese Financial Institutions with Pakistan during last few months.

He expressed these views during meeting with Ms. Pang Chunxue, Charge’d Affairs, Embassy of the People’s Republic of China who called him at Finance Division. Finance Minister Senator Muhammad Ishaq Dar warmly greeted the Charge de Affairs and appreciated the deep rooted historical bilateral relations between Pakistan and China.

The Finance Minister fur-

ther informed the Charge de Affairs about the progress on the 9th review with IMF stating that Pakistan has successfully reached the staff level agreement. He also apprised the Charge de Affairs about stability in the economy and how the government is making efforts to preserve this economic stability and move the economy towards growth. Additionally, he appreciated the Chinese support to Pakistan on multiple fronts, and specifically thanked for the cooperation of Chinese Financial Institutions with Pakistan during last few months. Ms. Pang Chunxue reciprocated the sentiments about the deep-rooted friendly relations between both countries. She also appreciated the efforts of

the Government of Pakistan to bring economic stability in the country despite difficult economic circumstances. She further assured the Finance Minister that the Chinese Government will continue to support Pakistan.

The two sides also discussed the various avenues available for both countries to deepen bilateral relations in economic, trade, and financial sectors in order to expand the exiting cooperation to unprecedented levels.

In the end, Finance Minister Mr. Ishaq Dar expressed gratitude to Ms. Pang Chunxue, Charge’d Affairs for all the support and cooperation Pakistan has always been receiving from the leadership in Beijing.



ISLAMABAD: Motorists are on their way at Murree Road during heavy rain fall of pre-monsoon spell.

Iran flays MEK rally in Paris as support for ‘terrorism’

TEHRAN (Agencies): Iran has lashed out against France for allowing a meeting and rally by the black-listed Mojahedin-e Khalq (MEK), or People’s Mujahidin Organization, which Tehran says amounts to support for “terrorism”.

French officials need to “make up for their past mistakes” in backing the “murderers of Iranian people” and focus on the country’s “deep internal crisis” and discriminatory behaviour against its own citizens, Iranian foreign ministry spokesman Nasser Kanani said in a statement. Kanani was referring to nearly a week of violence and unrest in the European nation since the killing of a teenager by a French police officer.

“Instead, they create the grounds for a rally of terrorists whose drumbeat of ignominy in Albania was recently heard by the whole world,” he said, warning Paris of “political and legal” ramifications if it continues to accommodate the dissident group. The MEK’s main camp in Albania, which is home to several thousand members, was raided by security police last month after a court order was issued to investigate unsanctioned political activities that went against a 2014 United States-brokered agreement that

allowed its members to reside in the West Balkans nation.

The group said one of its members died, which Albanian police denied was a result of the raid, and electronics were confiscated. Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama said the group cannot use the country to fight the establishment in Iran, which the MEK has said it aims to overthrow. The organisation, based on Islamic and socialist ideology, used to be on the US and European Union “terrorist” list before being delisted more than a decade ago. Experts have said it operates like a “cult”.

At the weekend, it held a meeting on the outskirts of Paris as a group of its supporters rallied inside the city. Former US Vice President Mike Pence, who is running in the 2024 presidential election, and short-time former United Kingdom Prime Minister Liz Truss addressed the MEK gathering outside Paris. Pence said the “Iranian regime has never been weaker than it is today” after protests that erupted in September and presented the MEK as an alternative, according to media reports.

Pence, one of many senior US politicians who have supported the dissident

group over the years, also met MEK leader Maryam Rajavi in Albania last year. Tehran, which has blacklisted the group, has also sanctioned a number of US officials for their support of the MEK. Truss was quoted as saying: “Now is the time to turn our backs on accommodation and appeasement” as “authoritarian” governments rise across the world, including in Iran.

France had briefly drawn the ire of the MEK last month when it banned the group’s rally due to potential tensions with other Iranian factions and the risk of an armed attack. But a Paris court overturned the ban last week, allowing members to congregate in Place Vauban in the French capital. Relations between Iran and Albania remain strained after Tirana cut diplomatic ties with Tehran with US and EU support after accusing it of a major cyberattack. Iran denies the allegation.

But in a statement on Sunday, the Iranian intelligence ministry thanked the Albanian government for “confronting terrorists” with its raid on the MEK camp, something it called a “step forward”. The ministry said it continues to be in contact with European intelligence services to warn them of MEK operations.