

**Naval Chief calls on PM**  
**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Amjad Khan Niazi on Tuesday called on Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and discussed the professional matters pertaining to the Pakistan Navy. The Chief of Naval Staff informed the prime minister about the strategy of the local production of weapons and warships for the Pakistan Navy.

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**JUI-F chief visits LRH**  
**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI-F), Moulana Fazal-ur-Rehman Tuesday visited Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar and enquired after the health of Bajaur blast injured. He prayed for early recovery of injured and extended cooperation to families of blast victims. He said we would not discourage and budge from resolve by these acts of cowardice.

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PESHAWAR: Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir inquiring health of Bajaur bomb blast victims at CMH.

## SIFC to pave way for investors: COAS

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Chief of Army Staff (COAS), General Syed Asim Munir has said that the establishment of Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) through collective efforts of the government of Pakistan along with other institutions was aimed to bring the stakeholders single platform.

Addressing the Pakistan Mineral Summit here on Tuesday, he said that the SIFC had laid down new rules for 'ease of doing business' for domestic and foreign investors in the country. The Army Chief said, "We will ensure an investor-friendly system that avoids unnecessary delays and provides easy terms and conditions for business. There are vast mining opportunities in our country which will be realized through joint efforts."

He thanked the foreign delegates and investors for participating in the moot, which was the first such

event in the country. He also thanked Barrick Gold Corporation CEO and President Mark Bristow and Saudi Mining Minister Engineer Khalid bin Saleh Al Madifar and other investors.

The COAS stressed persistence for staying on the path of peace and prosperity and said the mineral-related projects were the stepping stone, which would eventually lead towards the development of the masses. Referring to natural resources of the country, he said: "Just look at your country, from the snow-capped mountains to the vastness of the deserts, from the coastline to the plains. What else is not there in this land?"

He said: "In Surah Rahman, Allah the Exalted has said: And which of the favors of your Lord will you deny?" The Army Chief noted: "If the nation has profound commitment, then the sky is the limit and its vastness awaits us." He specifically referred to the

Holy Qur'an: "Allah helps those who help themselves".

He also read Allama Iqbal's poem that underlined the need for an individual to remain steadfast in hard times and strengthen its faith in Allah Almighty to achieve his or her destination. "It is our social responsibility to play our collective role in the country's economy. We must never lose hope. Our land is endowed with many minerals and to fully utilize this potential, we invite foreign investors to play their role in discovering the hidden treasures of Pakistan," he said.

The Army Chief emphasized on optimism and full faith in Allah Almighty. He recited verses 155 and 156 of Surah Al-Baqarah of the Holy Quran: "And We will certainly test you with fear and hunger and lives and wealth and fruits. When any trouble befalls them, they say: Indeed, we are from Allah and to Him we must return."

## Petrol, diesel prices hiked by more than Rs19

**F.P. Report**

ISLAMABAD: Finance Minister Ishaq Dar on Tuesday announced a massive Rs19 per litre increase in the price of petrol and diesel, which he said was done in line with the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) demands.

The revised prices have come into effect immediately. The announcement was due on July 31, but the government did not issue new rates as the officials tried to maintain or reduce the rates — keeping in view the impact of the price hike on inflation-weary people.

Dar, who made the announcement as the finance minister for the last time as his government's term ends on August 12, said the increase was inevitable as Pakistan had agreed with the IMF on slapping petroleum development levy (PDL) to the rates. "...we tried to either reduce or see what could be adjusted in its working. But we all know about our commitments with the IMF on the petroleum development levy," Dar mentioned.

The finance minister said the government, had it not been in an agreement with the IMF, would have reduced the PDL to provide relief to the masses. Dar said he would not resort to moves that the previous government did as it decreased the petrol price and breached the commitments made with IMF.

The finance minister mentioned that the price of high-speed diesel had moved up significantly in the international market, resulting in the government's decision to hike local rates. "Keeping in mind national interest, it is crucial that we pass on the minimum [amount] which has been calculated," the finance minister added. The IMF has imposed stringent conditions to ensure that the \$3 billion Standby Agreement continues smoothly. One of the requirements of the agreement is to raise the petroleum levy to Rs60 per litre.

## Fawad submits written apology to ECP

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Fawad Chaudhry on Tuesday submitted written apology to the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in the ECP contempt case.

The ECP reserved its decision over the contempt case against former Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader. Talking to the media at the election commission, Fawad Chaudhry urged for a charter of democracy before general elections in the country. "How could the election be possible without addressing the issue of estrangement between chairman PTI and Nawaz Sharif," he questioned. "If elections held without addressing this estrangement nothing will be solved," he added. "Normalization of Pakistan is more needed than the election," he opined.

# The Frontier Post

## Shehbaz briefed on KP security situation — inquires health of injured at CMH

**F.P. Report**

PESHAWAR: Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif was briefed on the overall security situation in the province with special focus on Khar suicide blast here on Tuesday. Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif and COAS General Syed Asim Munir visited Peshawar on Tuesday.

During the visit, the Prime Minister was briefed on the overall security situation in the province with focus on the Khar Suicide Blast, status of investigations under process and counter terrorism efforts being undertaken to dismantle the terrorists' network by disrupting the linkages between planners, executioners, and abettors.

The Prime Minister noted with concern the involvement of the Afghan citizens in the suicide blasts and liberty of action available to the elements hostile to Pakistan in planning and executing such cowardly attacks on innocent civilians from the sanctuaries across the border. "Interim Afghan government should undertake concrete measures towards denying its soil to be used for transnational terrorism", the Prime Minister stated.

The Prime Minister also appreciated the emergency efforts undertaken by the Army in the evacuation of wounded personnel from Khar to Peshawar, saving many lives. Prime Minister and COAS also visited the wounded personnel under treatment at Combined Military Hospital (CMH) and inquired about their health.

The Prime Minister instructed the concerned authorities to render best possible healthcare services to the wounded patients until their full recovery. While interacting with the bereaved family members of the victims of Khar Suicide Blast, PM Shehbaz Sharif assured them that the entire nation stands with them in this hour of grief and shares the burden of

their losses.

"These cowardly attacks by terrorists cannot weaken our resolve to eradicate the menace of terrorism from Pakistan. Security Forces and law enforcement agencies with the support of the Nation will ensure that those responsible for the dastardly attacks are brought to justice as soon as possible", PM remarked. Earlier on arrival, the Prime Minister and COAS were received by Commander Peshawar Corps.

**PM underlines need to learn from past, explore precious natural resources properly:** Prime Minister Muhammad Shehbaz Sharif stressed the need to learn from the bitter experiences of past 75 years and move ahead with strenuous efforts, collaboration and dedication by exploring the untapped resources including the vast natural minerals and reserves and developing the agriculture, information technology and industrial sectors. Addressing a 'Dust to Development' summit, the prime minister referred to keynote addresses of various speakers and said if these suggestions and proposals were translated into letter and spirit, he was convinced that the nation would find its lost place in the next few years through hard work and untiring efforts.

The PM regretted that the country's journey of 75 years was dotted with bitter factors as they could not fully exploit the precious natural deposits estimated at worth \$6 trillion. "The day gives an opportunity to self-contemplation over a journey of last 75 years and the reasons due to which Pakistan landed into this situation with a begging bowl," he added.

Elaborating his viewpoint, he said with Russian support, Pakistan Steel Mills was established during the 70s while in Reko Diq a hefty penalty of \$10 billion was imposed on Pakistan and if it was enforced, the entire country's foreign reserves would have been depleted. The prime minister

referred to the 'Thar' coal mines reserves and said these were being converted for the development of Pakistan.

Due to the working of certain cartels, he said the natural resources were not explored in the past and cited that financial and political reasons were also involved in the delay which required deep introspection. The prime minister said the Chinot iron ores field belonged to the poor people of Pakistan, but it also showed another worst example of corruption.

He said without any bidding, it was handed over to an overseas Pakistani who had no business history, but when the matter was taken up by the subsequent government and landed in a court of law, it termed the entire matter as a manifestation of loot and plunder. But later, he said, nothing happened as NAB could not arrest those who had been accused of plunder, adding that it was a heart-wrenching story.

The summit was attended by federal ministers, foreign delegates, ambassadors, Chief of Army Staff General Syed Asim Munir, experts, relevant authorities, and investors. The prime minister further regretted that the previous governments should have dedicated themselves to the welfare of the poor people of Pakistan. He also praised the leadership of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the financial support worth 2 billion dollars which also helped in reaching an agreement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).

He said Pakistan and Saudi Arabia always stood together through thick and thin and supported each other at every forum. The prime minister said that NAB, unfortunately, created fears and harassed the business community and bureaucrats in the past as it was used as a tool for witch-hunting of political opponents.

(Continued on Back Page)

## Engagement in anti-state activities NA passes bill seeking up to 3-year jail term

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The National Assembly on Tuesday passed a bill to amend the Official Secrets Act Amendment Bill 2023 proposing up to a three-year jail term for engaging in anti-state activities.

The bill, titled "Official Secrets (Amendment) Bill, 2023", was presented by Parliamentary Affairs Minister Murtaza Javed Abbasi. According to the Statement of Objects and Reasons of the bill, it is imperative to amend the Official Secrets Act 1923 and make it more effective in view of the changing social milieu to ensure the safety and security of official documents.

The bill proposes the addition of Section 6A, according to which, a person "shall commit an offence who intentionally acting in any manner prejudicial to public order, safety, interests or defence of Pakistan, or any part thereof, discloses in such a manner that exposes the identity of such undisclosed persons in any manners the identity of the members of the intelligence agencies, or the informants or sources thereof". Those who commit an offence will face imprisonment of up to three years or a fine which may extend to Rs1 million or both.

The bill also proposed an amendment to Section 3 which suggests that a person shall commit an offence under this section if he intentionally for any purpose prejudicial to public order, defence, safety or interests of the State: Approaches, inspects, passes over or is in the vicinity of, or enters, attacks, destroys or otherwise undermines any prohibited place;

Makes any sketch, plan, model, or note which is calculated to be or might be or is intended to be, directly or indirectly, useful to an enemy; Obtains, collects, records or publishes or communicates to any other person any secret official code or password, or any electronic or modem device, sketch, plan, model, article or note or other document or information, in any manner whatsoever, which is calculated to be or might be or is intended to be, directly or indirectly, useful to an enemy of the State;

Gains unauthorised access to document or information from within or outside of Pakistan with or without use of electronic or modem devices; Causes an unmanned vehicle or device to access, enter inspect pass over or under, approach or be in the vicinity of a prohibited place;

Disclosure or retention of any activity, information, document, related to invention, research, development, production, maintenance, operation, storage and disposal of weapons, equipment or any capability of these forces, and access to or unauthorized disclosure of which is prejudicial to the safety and interest of Pakistan."

The bill also suggests inserting a new clause 8A, according to which, "any person who is directly or indirectly, intentionally or unintentionally working for or engaged with the foreign power, foreign agent, Non-State Actor, organisation, entity, association or group guilty of a particular act tending to show a purpose that is prejudicial to the safety and interest of Pakistan".

It also proposed substituting Section 9 (attempts for incitement to offences), by stating that anyone who "incites, conspires, attempts, aids or abets the commission of an offence would be punished with the same penalty and liable to be proceeded against in the same manner as if they had committed the offence."

Another insertion of Section 12A said that "An investigating officer under this Act shall be an officer of the Federal Investigating Agency not below the rank of BPS-17 or equivalent."

The said Officer shall be designated by the Director General, Federal Investigating Agency for the purposes of investigation. If the Director General, Federal Investigating Agency deems necessary, he may constitute a Joint Investigation Team, convene by such officer and consisting of such other officers of intelligence agencies as he may appoint. The Joint Investigation Team may co-opt any additional person from any Federal or Provincial institution or department as it deems appropriate for investigation."

It added that the FIA or JIT shall complete the investigation 30 working days. The bill also proposed including Section 12-B (admissibility of material collected) under which "all material collected during the course of inquiry or investigation, including electronic devices, data, information, documents, or such other material which facilitates the commission to any offence under this Act, shall be admissible".

Abbasi also moved the Toshakhana (Management and Regulation) Bill, 2023 and the Pakistan Airports Authority Bill, 2023. Both of them were passed by the House as the Senate has already approved both legislative proposals. The Toshakhana Management and Regulation Bill 2023 envisaged that the existing and future gifts to be received in Toshakhana shall be disposed of through an open auction. The proceeds of such an auction shall be kept in a separate account and will be utilized for promoting female primary education in the most backward areas of the country.

Three private members' bills passed by the House included the Promotion and Protection of Gandhara Culture Authority Bill, 2023; the Margalla International University Bill, 2023 and the Thar International Institute Bill, 2023.

## 2 policemen protecting polio team martyred

QUETTA (PPI): Two policemen were martyred in an attack on a police vaccination team in Quetta on Tuesday. The deceased cops were accompanying the polio vaccinators in Nawab Kalli area of the Balochistan capital when they were fired upon. The two policemen were identified as Shaukat Ali and Syed Mehdi.

The polio team was reported to be safe in the gun attack. A heavy contingent of police and FC personnel rushed to the site of the incident and cordoned off the area. Two to three policemen are posted with every polio team as part of the security measures in view of the rising threat against polio workers.

The attack came when a campaign was under way to administer polio vaccination to approximately 2.6 million children under five years of age across Balochistan. As many as 11,539 teams of health workers have been formed for the week-long campaign.

## Two Indians found dead

KASUR (PPI): Two Indian youth, swept by flooding Sutlej River water, landed in Pakistan from India, according to a report on Tuesday. Paramilitary Rangers arrested two young men of Ludhiana in India, who were swept by Sutlej flood water and stranded at Ganda Singh Wala across the border in Pakistan.

Arrested youth have been identified as Ratan Pal and Harvinder Sindh. Another person, drifted by the river water had earlier reached Pakistan, who is yet to be identified.

India had recently released over 2,00,000 cusecs water to Sutlej downstream in Pakistan after persistent rains in the catchment areas of the river. The country had discharged water from Harike and Ferozepur waterworks in River Sutlej to the downstream areas. It was in 1988 that Pakistan had witnessed worst flooding in the two eastern rivers — Ravi and Sutlej — which had devastated crops and livelihoods over thousands of acres.



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# Governor chairs meeting to discuss education related matters of Edwards College

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Haji Ghulam Ali here Tuesday chaired a meeting that was convened to discuss matters related to further improve education standard in historic educational institution, Edwards College Peshawar.

The meeting was also attended by caretaker ministers including Justice Retired Irshad Qaisar and Abdul Haleem Qasuria, Bishop Diocese Peshawar, Humphrey Sarfaraz Peter,

Legal Advisor, Ishaq Ali and concerned officials.

The meeting discussed measures to improve educational standard in the college allowing executive committee of the college to work for improvement of historic educational institutions. Participants also decided to convene Board of Governor to complete consultation.

Construction of college building according to cantonment board approved plan and formation of construction committee was also discussed and it was decided that two construction experts should be included in the committee.

Addressing the meeting, Governor recalled past glory of Edwards College and desired to make it a university adding that all the needed legal formalities would be completed for the purpose. He assured to cooperation to resolve problems of the college and said that we play our part to revive the educational standard for the sake of students.

He said that all the available resources would be utilized for improvement of educational institution and said that no compromise would be made on quality of education in Edwards College.

Bishop Diocese of Peshawar lauded efforts of Governor to improve education standard in the college and assured to make joint efforts for betterment of Edwards College.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Provincial Minister Hamid Shah and Special Assistant to CM Malik Mehar Elahi presiding over a meeting.

## Govt urged to finance Sehat Sahulat

PESHAWAR (INP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government has requested the federal government to finance the Sehat Sahulat programme and all other projects for newly merged districts till the time the National Finance Commission's share of NMDs is merged with KP.

A letter written by KP Advisor to Chief Minister for Finance Mihayatullah Khan and addressed to Federal Finance Minister Ishaq Dar said that the Executive Committee of National Economic Council (ECNEC) in its meeting held on July 19, 2023, recommended payment of Sehat Sahulat Card for ICT, AJK and Gilgit Baltistan by the Federal Government.

He said that keeping in view the financial situation of the province and till the merger of NFC for NMDs with KP the federal government should finance the Sehat Sahulat programme and all other projects for these districts.

## Imran defends Ph.D thesis



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph. D) in Education scholar named Muhammad Imran defended his thesis at Department of Education, University of Peshawar.

The scholar was supervised by Dr. Muhammad Butt during his research for Doctorate in Education from University of Peshawar.

The scholar Muhammad Imran declared his success to commitment of his teachers and prayers of parents.

## Minister lauds KPEZDMC for facilitating industries

PESHAWAR (APP): Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Sports, Youth Affairs, Industries and Commerce, Matiullah Marwat presided over a meeting of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Economic Zones Development and Management Company (KPEZDMC) here on Monday and reviewed the overall activities of the company in terms of facilitation of industries in the province and future plans in this regard.

Secretary Industries, Commerce and Technical Education Matiullah, Chief Executive Officer of

KPEZDMC Javed Iqbal Khattak and other relevant officers were also present in the meeting.

On this occasion, the CEO of KPEZDMC briefed the minister regarding the operational activities of the company and informed him in detail presentation, regarding the activities of the company for facilitation of the industries in various economic zones, throughout the province.

The minister was also informed regarding the future strategies for attracting the domestic and foreign investor for investment in various industrial

sectors in the province.

During the meeting, the caretaker minister said that for the development of industrialization, a conducive environment is needed in the province while in this connection, the KPEZDMC is playing a vital role to bring economic sustainability through the facilitation of industries.

He further said that, the province is favourable in various sectors for attracting foreign and local investors and steps will be taken to boost the industry and investment here as it can make a major source of our economic development.

## Importance, process of vote Civil Society to play role in educating people

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Civil Society should play their role in educating the people regarding importance and process of vote, it was stated by Deputy Director, Media Coordination/Spokesperson to Provincial Election Commissioner, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Sohail Ahmad here on Tuesday while addressing to an awareness session.

The District Election Commissioner, Khyber Shahid Ali and Assistant, Director Gender & Social Inclusion also attended voters' awareness session

which was arranged by CDPI Pakistan in collaboration with other organizations.

Female students, youth and government employees, transgenders, minorities and PWDs participated in the session.

Representative from CPDI Noor Alam and Zuber Ambia welcomed the guest speakers and facilitators briefed the participants about the purpose of session.

Sohail Ahmad and Shahid Ali gave their presentation in detail about the electoral process, importance of vote, composition

of ECP, constitutional and legal frame work and steps being taken for inclusive and credible elections.

At the end, demo regarding conduct of poll was also presented in order to educate participants about process of polling. Participants took keen interest in the session and asked many relevant questions which were addressed by the team of Election Commission.

Besides many female representatives shared their experience and presented some suggestions to maximize turn out in next general elections.



PESHAWAR: Provincial president PPP's Women Wing Senator Robina Khalid in a group photo with candidate of Tehsil Mathra. — F.P. photo

## PDA takes notice of illegal use of plazas' basements

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Development Authority (PDA) issued notices to several commercial buildings (plazas) of University Road on Tuesday for using their basements for other purposes than parking.

The step taken by the authority is aimed at resolving the parking problem on University Road and all the

owners of all those plazas, who are using the basements of their buildings in violation of the approved maps for other purposes.

In this connection, on the directives of the Secretary Local Govt & Rural Development, the authorities of Peshawar Development Authority has issued directives for issuance of a final notice to

the owners of all such buildings without any discrimination to clear the basements to use them for only parking purposes.

Through the notice, the owners of the buildings have been directed to restore their car-parking within a period of three days. Otherwise, the authorities with the assistance of district administration and police would seal all such buildings.

The commercial plazas issued with notices are included Marco Polo Hall, Alhaaj Plaza, Ali Tower, Sheikh Yasin Tower, Marhaba Tower, Aziz Market, Haji Awal Khan, Hamayun Tower, Azam Tower, Ittehad Plaza, Alhaaj Building and Zulfikar Tower.

## Asad inquires Bajaur blast victims

PESHAWAR (APP): Federal Minister for Communications Maulana Asad Mahmood visited Combined Military Hospital (CMH) here on Monday and inquired Bajaur blast victims in Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (Fazl)'s public meeting.

Federal Minister Maulana Asad Mahmood, made a visit to the injured victims, expressing his deep grief and sorrow and offered prayers for their speedy recovery.

Maulana Asad Mahmood assured the injured that every possible assistance and support would be provided for their recovery process.

He emphasized the resilience of the workers and the unwavering commitment of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (Fazl) to continue the democratic struggle in the face of such cowardly acts.

Maulana Asad Mahmood condemned the tragic incident, stating that the heinous attack has targeted

not just Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (Fazl), but also Pakistan's peace and security.

He asserted that such malicious acts would not deter JUIF's resolve to uphold the values of democracy and peaceful coexistence in the country.

Maulana Asad Mahmood said that the incident has deeply saddened and shocked the nation.

He praised the courage and determination of the workers, reiterating that no cowardly act could

obstruct Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (Fazl)'s path towards a democratic and prosperous Pakistan.

He said Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam stands united with its workers, offering unwavering support to those affected by the blast.

Maulana Asad Mahmood urged the nation to remain steadfast and resilient in the face of adversity, emphasizing that such acts of violence cannot hinder their pursuit of a peaceful and progressive Pakistan.

## JUI Chief visits LRH, inquires after health of victims

PESHAWAR (APP): Chief of Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI), Moulana Fazal-ur-Rehman Tuesday visited Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar and enquired after the health of Bajaur blast injured.

He prayed for early recovery of injured and extended cooperation to families of blast victims. He said we would not discourage and budge from resolve by these acts of cowardice.

JUI Chief said that our party would not be deterred by these acts that are meant to disrupt peace and serenity in the country. He said we praised the composure of party workers who remained calm despite facing the tragedy.

He said that JUI is a peaceful party that would abide by the norms of humanity in time of distress adding party workers would be helped and provided needed assistance.

## Ongoing NAB inquiry conducts at Peshawar

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The owners of All Pakistan Projects have defrauded the public by collecting billions of rupees by allegedly luring the public with illegal and unreal profits.

The National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Rawalpindi is probing All Pakistan Projects and its subsidiary companies for corruption, fraud and looting of funds from the public.

In this regard, the investigation team of NAB Rawalpindi, considering the convenience of the complainants, remains available at NAB office Peshawar till 4th August 2023 and the affected can visit NAB office Peshawar in person and contact the investigation team.

Further investigation will be conducted in NAB Rawalpindi office after Friday, August 4th, 2023.

## Universities guarantor of country's future: Caretaker Minister

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Provincial Minister for Law and Higher Education Justice Retired Irshad Qaisar said that despite the economic challenges the province is facing, we are trying to give best budget to the universities.

Justice retired Irshad Qaisar said that we are trying to give the best budget to all the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa universities and help them financially. We are aware of the problems and financial deficits of the universities and are solving them. Universities should further improve their academic standards and also take their administrative affairs in the right direction so that more universities do

## KP's people made countless sacrifices in war against terrorism

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Caretaker Minister for Information, Auqaf, Haji, Religious and Minority Affairs Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel has praised and welcomed the Prime Minister of Pakistan and top political and military leadership to visit the victims of Bajaur blasts here at Peshawar and said that I appreciate the federal government's this step on behalf of the people of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, this

visit is likely to putting ointment on the wounds of the effected families.

Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel welcomed Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif and top political and military leadership on their arrival at CMH Peshawar and visited the injured of Bajaur blast along with them.

In a statement issued from his office, the Caretaker Information Minister Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel said that Prime Minister Muhammad Shahbaz Sharif's vi-

sit to Peshawar along with the top political and military leadership and inquiring after the injured of the Bajaur blast is a good step.

He said that the people of the province have made countless sacrifices alongside their police and security forces in the war against terrorism.

They shared the grief of the families of the martyrs of the Bajaur blast and prayed for the speedy recovery of the injured. The best medical care is being provided to the injured in various hospitals, he added.

## Legal fraternity condemns Bajaur blast KPBC argues govt to ensure constitutional obligation

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Bar Council (KPBC) argued government to ensure security of lives and property of every citizen as a constitutional obligation while condemning terror's attack at Bajaur occurred on Sunday and demanded identification and arrests of the culprits involved in the terrorism for placement exemplary punishment, on Tuesday.

Vice chairman KPBC Zar Badshah Khan and Chairman Executive Committee Syed Mubashir Shah in their condemnation statement issued to media. KPBC claimed terrorist

attacks are increased in recent past which is painful and fearful while the council condemned every act of terrorism.

KPBC stands with the bereaved families during aching time and catastrophe as victims of terrorism in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. KPBC prayed departed soul for highest place in Jinnah and for early recovery of injured persons in terrorist's attacks in the province, the statement stated.

The government has failed to protect lives and property of citizen because Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has put on fire by terrorist's attacks by scattering

Pakhtun's blood continuously, KPBC press statement argued.

KPBC argued Pakhtun elders and leadership irrespective of political difference to comprise a comprehensive strategy and take concrete steps for obtaining sustainable peace in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Vice chairman KPBC Zar Badshah Khan and chairman Executive Committee Syed Mubashir Shah argued that government has failed to uphold her constitutional responsibility of protection of live and property of every citizen which scattered by terrorist attacks including Bajaur blast.

## Sarhadi hails govt for allowing exchange companies to bring cash US dollar

PESHAWAR (INP): Zia ul Haq Sarhadi, former Senior Vice President of Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) has hailed the issuance of a circular by the government, allowing all exchange companies to

bring US dollars in cash into the country.

In a statement issued here on Tuesday, Zia ul Haq Sarhadi who is also Director Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PAJCCI) and central leader of the Customs Clearing Agents Association (PCAA) termed the decision as 'very timely' and welcoming.

He was of the view that in the prevailing circumstances such decisions needed to be taken for overcoming the problem of dollar scarcity in the country as a result of which import and export businesses are under severe stress.

The provision of importing dollars by exchange companies will help in reducing the difference between rates of the US

dollar in the interbank and open market, he added.

Sarhadi said due to the shortage of US dollars in the market, the business community especially exporters and importers were facing a lot of difficulties in the continuation of business.

Allowing exchange companies to bring dollars at the ratio of 50 percent under the head of export will help in the resolution of this problem.

He said all the public sector entities should adopt the policy of providing ease of doing business to the business community and take all decisions while keeping in view ground realities with the objective of bringing the country out of prevailing economic stress and constraints.



PESHAWAR: A WAPDA employee busy in repairing transformer in Kochi Bazaar.





## In brief

### Six killed in van-bus collision

QUETTA (INP): At least six people have been killed while ten others sustained injuries after a collision between a passenger van and a bus near Loralai district of Balochistan. According to the details, the incident took place near Barkhan Radashim Buzzdar petrol pump. Soon after the incident, emergency response teams and police rushed to the scene to provide immediate medical assistance to the injured and shifted the deceased to a nearby hospital. The victims have been identified as Shahzad, Muhammad Kashif, Mujeeb, Tabish, Ismatullah, and Muhammad Akram. Meanwhile, the police have initiated an investigation into the cause of the collision.

### Water level increased at Dam

#### F.P. Report

LARKANA: After the increase in the intensity of water in the river Indus, the pressure of water on the Aqil Dam in the suburbs of Larkana started increasing while 90 percent of the areas came under water. After reviewing the situation of the Gaya canals, he issued instructions to the officers and staff of the Irrigation Department, who practically started the work on the spot, while the Nusrat loop dam, Aqil Agani dam, Megli dams of Larkana were not released. The pressure started to increase due to which 90 percent of the raw area came under water, where the process of moving the victims to safe areas under their own help has also been accelerated, while the irrigation staff is completely unaware of this situation, on the other hand, Commissioner Larkana. Commissioner gave directions for pitching weak embankments with stones and making them completely secure, while the residents should continue the work of strengthening it by putting stones and mud on it in every possible way due to the alarming condition of the embankment at Gulli Embankment in Abad. Rescue efforts are ongoing.

### AGEGA elects new cabinet

#### F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Assistant Director Education Hafizabad Muhammad Nasir Amin, Principal government Muslim High School Hafizabad Muhammad Nageeb Nishat and Headmaster Elementary School Hafizabad Ch. Riaz Ahmad Tarar elected Chairman, president and General Secretary respectively (AGEGA) All Government Employees Grand Alliance Hafizabad district. Provincial President APCA Punjab Zafar Ali Khan has issued notification in this regard. Other office bearers are include: Fiaz Ahmad Warriach Senior Vice Chairman, Asif Masih Vice Chairman, Qamar Zaman Kambho Senior Vice President, Syed Shafiq Hussain Shah Senior Vice President, Mallik Attaullah Legal Advisor, Zaka Ullah, Rai 'Nasir Ali, Afzal Ahmad, Iftikhar Ahmad Vice Presidents, Rai Faisal Iran Additional Secretary, Pitras Masih Deputy General Secretary, Faisal Abbas Ansari Finance Secretary, Muhammad Asif Deputy Finance Secretary and Bashir Ahmad Library Clerk District Public Library Hafizabad Press Secretary. Meanwhile, President Awami Mahaz Hafizabad Rana Khalid Mehmood lauded performance of district administration and police to maintain peace and to ensure cleanliness in the district during holy month of Muharram-ul-Haram.



HYDERABAD: Children sitting with their households after increasing water level at Kotri.

## Father along with son drowns in Panjkora River

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: A man identified as Saleem 40 and his son Hurain 5, residents of Danwa village were drowned in the Panjkora river at Danwa in the jurisdiction of Timergara police station here on Tuesday.

The Rescue 1122 divers and emergency teams reached the spot and started a search operation. Both the victims were recovered and shifted to the district headquarters hospital Timergara where they were declared dead.

**Business company offer 10-marla plot and financial support to Indian lady Ms Anju (Fatima):** Chief Executive Officer of the Pak Star Group of Companies Muhsin Khan Abbasi handed over documents of a 10-marla plot and a cheque of Rs 50,000 as a gift to the newly wedded Ms Anju (Fatima) who reportedly married a Pakistani friend Nasrullah in Upper Dir a few days ago. In this regard Muhsin Khan visited the couple's house at Kulsho village in Upper Dir along with his team here the other day and met the couple and parents of Mr Nasrullah. In a simple function the PSG owner handed over a file of documents of a 10-marla plot at his Pak city near Islamabad and also presented a cheque of Rs 50,000 to Ms Anju.

He congratulated the couple. Later talking to local media on the occasion Mr Abbasi said the company also offered to make Ms Anju (Fatima) as his company's ambassador and she would be provided with a handsome monthly salary at home once her documents were cleared. He said that he travelled from Islamabad to congratulate the couple on its wedding and the embracement of Islam by Ms Anju who reached Upper Dir to meet her friend. The PSG owner said that everyone who travelled abroad had to face residential issues.

"Therefore we offer a 10-marla plot to Ms Anju (now Fatima) in our green city project near Islamabad", he announced, adding the company's board of directors had given the approval of the plot. Appreciating Ms Anju he said that she had left his homeland and religion just to gain her love, so all the Pakistanis should help and support her. He asked Ms Anju to consider Pakistan as her own home wherein she would face no financial problems. The PSG owner appealed to other philanthropists to back up the couple so that they faced no problems.

He also demanded the government and its agencies to facilitate Ms Anju in her legal processes and back her. Appreciating the beauty of Upper Dir, he said that natural beauties had the potential to attract tourists from abroad. He said that peace was essential for development and prosperity. He asked the locals to cooperate

with national agencies to maintain lasting peace in the region for the country's soft image.

Nasrullah, 29 told local journalists on the occasion to avoid meeting them. He said that they were fed up with the media as journalists not only from Pakistan but India too were frequently contacting them. He said that soon he would address a presser regarding the whole episode and would clear all speculations.

Another company also offered a 10-marla plot to the couple at University Town Peshawar and Umra tickets on clearance of Anju documents. The Indian lady Ms Anju Arvind Kumar and her lover Nasrullah from Upper Dir reportedly solemnized a court marriage on July 27 after which the lady was renamed as Fatima, official sources told this reporter. The lady who reached the Upper Dir district of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to meet her face-book friend Nasrullah, converted to Islam and married Nasrullah. One Qari Shamroz Khan tied the knot between the couple in the presence of two witnesses including Faridullah Khan and Muhammad Rahim. A local court had also recorded their statement about their marriage and conversion to Islam by Ms Anju.

Recording her statement before the court, Anju said that she had visited her friend on her own free will and she was pleased to marry Nasrullah. However when the news of their marriage went viral in the media, the couple denied the marriage.

Sirajud Din, a local journalist, told media that many people from all over the district were visiting the house of Nasrullah and presenting gifts to Ms Anju. He said the neighbours were also happy and supporting the Indian lady. Ebrash Pasha, a social activist working for women rights in Lower Dir told that the Indian woman Anju was a guest in Dir and should be treated like a guest and tourist. Mr Pasha said that he had legal documents of her visit and the media had to take extra care of her privacy and let her spend a good time here.

The activist said a week ago many foreign tourists had visited the Shandur festival via Dir but there was no such sensation. "India is our neighbour and people to people contact must remain and promoted", Ebrash Pasha said. He said that people of both the countries loved to visit the other side of the border as they shared history of thousands of years. The activist was of the view that there was a lot of potential for trade, tourism including echo, cultural and religious tourism on both sides of the border and both the governments must relax the policies to facilitate the citizens in people to people contact.

### Noor Muhammad defends Ph. D thesis



F.P. Report

NEWSHERA: A Doctorate of Philosophy (Ph. D) scholar in Education Noor Muhammad defended his thesis at Northern University Nowshera.

The title of Ph. D thesis as; "Examination of Secondary School Teachers and Students Intellect in Geometry" while Dr. Sajid supervised the scholar and co-supervised by Dr. Muhammad Naeem Ullah and Professor Dr. Rabia Tabbasum during his thesis.

However, internal examiner was Dr. Ishaq Hussain while external examiners were Dr. Nailsea Fleury from America and Dr. Alarak Nadi from Korea conducted the defense of Noor Muhammad for his Ph. D thesis.

### 2 teenagers drowned

MANSEHRA (INP): Two teenagers including a UK returned girl were swept away by the gushing waves of the River Kunhar in separate incidents, rescue sources said on Tuesday.

According to details, a 14-year old girl who had returned from UK to spend summer vacation during a visit to home of relative in Garhi Habibullah while taking selfie at bank of River Kunhar slipped, fell into the river and swept away by fast moving water.

## Ending unscheduled load shedding XEN WAPDA agrees with MCCI suggestion

F.P. Report

MARDAN: On the suggestion of Zahir Shah, President of Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI), XEN WAPDA Abdul Wahid announced the end of force load shedding from today, there will be no force load shedding. Only schedule load shedding is to be carried out, the time of which will be advertised in advance to all the business community and the public.

Abdul Wahid XEN Wapda and Akhtar Zaman SDO Wapda City-1 visited Mardan Chamber on the invitation of President of Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry Zahir Shah. On this occasion, the members of the executive committee, Chairman Ghulam Sarwar Saraf, G S Waqar Ali Bacha and the Presidents, General Secretaries of various markets and traders were present in a large number. President Mardan Chamber of Commerce Zahir Shah apprised the WAPDA officers about the unannounced load-shedding, over-billing, wrong meter reading of electricity in Mardan district for long hours which affecting the business community as well as the common residents because the business community has already been suffering from many problems and unannounced load shedding has completely eliminated the businesses.

MCCI Zahir Shah said that we are aware that the WAPDA department is confronted with many problems, but it is very important to sit together and solve these problems that are arising due to load shedding of electricity that is why this session is very important. We also realize that electricity load shedding is not regional but a national level issue, but there are some problems that we can solve together.

President MCCI Zahir Shah presented various suggestions to the WAPDA officials, which can be implemented to overcome many problems, including changing the timing of the electricity work permit, due to which the electricity remains off throughout the day, so that the business hours are not affected. Apart from this, a

joint committee was formed on the suggestion of President Zahir Shah, which will play its role in solving the problems in a timely and efficient manner.

The load of the overloaded feeders should be distributed, which can also reduce the load shedding duration. Along with this, meter reading should be done regularly which can control over-billing which can benefit the consumer a lot. President Zahir Shah also suggested that commercial bills should be done in installments which will benefit the traders as the traders already suffering from many problems and they also reiterated that it will cooperate with WAPDA in electricity theft.

The participants informed WAPDA XEN and SDO about the problems of various areas and markets including low voltage, frequent trapping, over-billing, in which Abdul Wahid XEN WAPDA thanked the President MCCI Zahir Shah that despite of so much busy schedule we met the traders. Abdul Wahid said that we realize that traders and consumers are facing issues like load shedding, overbilling and low voltage due to many reasons including line losses, power theft, overloading of feeders and work permits for development work is done but the consumer has to face load shedding but we have no other option because if we do not do the development work then how the electricity needs of the consumer will be met.

Apart from this, we also feel that there are corrupt people in our department against whom action is being taking according to the law, apart from this we also have shortage of staff due to which the work cannot be completed in time. Our top priority is to provide convenience and service to the consumer as much as possible. Abdul Wahid requested to cooperate with us against the electricity thief and said that whatever problem the businessmen have they can come to my office without hesitation on which President MCCI Zahir Shah expressed his gratitude by assuring full support on his behalf.

## Indian medicines recovered in Kohat

Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: Upon the directions of Dr. Azmat Ullah Wazir Deputy Commissioner Kohat, Drug Inspector Kohat along with Drug Control Kohat officials carried out inspection of different pharmacies/ Medical stores at OTS road, old Jail road, LMH road & Committee plaza Kohat city for compliance of the Drugs Act 1976 & rules framed there under.

Bulk of unregistered/Indian drugs and expired drugs stocked for sale were recovered from two different medical stores on LMH road, which were seized on Form-06. Cases are registered against the violators under the law. The supplied drugs and invoice bills of medicine suppliers were also taken into official custody from unlicensed business premises at Hospital road in order to make the suppliers as parties as well in the case.

The cases after completion of investigation will be sent to Provincial Quality control Board for initiation

of further legal action against the accused parties. One medicine sale outlet at old Jail road was inspected in response to the online application for grant of digital drug sale license.

Necessary directives were given to which the owner assured for compliance. Suspected spurious drugs samples were also taken on Form-05 from the premises, for test and analysis, which after receipts of Drugs Testing Lab Peshawar reports, further strict legal action will be initiated against the violators. Strict directions were given to the owners of the business premises to comply with good storage practices of the drugs and ensure availability of quality and warranted medicines in their stores for patients use, else strict legal action will be taken against the violators.

**Residents block road against custodial murders of two brothers:** The residents blocked Kohat-Hangu road in protest against killing of two brothers by Punjab police in their custody, on Tuesday.

According to details, Zeenat Ullah and Nageeb Ullah absconders from Punjab police while hand over by Hangu city police station following legal procedure from court. However, on 26th July both brothers were alleged killed by Punjab police in their custody.

The protestors chanted slogans against custodial murderers and demanded registration of First Information Report against culprits involved in the murders of inmates. The protestors threatened that if their demands will not fulfill then they will be compelled to arranged protests on larger scales across the country.

Moreover, the brother of deceased claimed that his brothers were hand-over to Punjab police on 5th July from Hangu city police while they were murdered in police custody. He argued that if they were involved in illegal activities then court should convict them neither police has right to murder citizen in their custody.

## Chitral flood victims awaiting financial aids

F.P. Report

CHITRAL: The devastating flood that occurred on July 22 had changed the map of Chitral. The level of the flood was so high that the water was flowing five feet above the river, which resulted in the loss of surrounding houses, shops, markets, workshops, standing crops, under cultivation land, orchards and fields. Due to the flood, irrigation and drinking water pipeline and canals were also flowed.

The drinking water pipeline, which costs about Rs 400 Million from Golden, is being destroyed every year due to floods. It is not known whether the department lacks technical and professional skills or lacking honesty and dedication with their job. Even when the pipeline was constructed, our team surveyed it and demanded the Public Health Engineering Department to take necessary steps to protect the pipeline on a regular basis from destroying, but nothing happened and a year later it was badly damaged by flood. After that it is badly affected in every flood.

Last year, the pipeline was mostly washed away in river and people were deprived of drinking water for a year, this pipeline was restored by spending millions of rupees, but due to poor planning and wrong design, this pipeline was once again flooded. It badly

affected and people have been deprived of drinking water since July 22, and the affected people are craving for one drop of water. On the contrary, the Angarghon Shah Shah Water Supply Scheme, which was constructed by Germany company 40 years ago, is still restored and at present the entire Chitral Town is provided water from the Angarghon water supply scheme.

Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry has visited Chitral immediately after flood and announced the implementation of an emergency. They were probably misguided by the concerned department or the district administration that drinking water supply has been restored and people are getting water even though the flood victims have been suffering from lack of drinking water for the last ten days and the Golden Pipeline is still blocked.

The largest vehicles workshops in Dinin is the entire market consisting of 120 shops also has several workshops, spare parts shops, service stations and a driving center. On July 22, the flood level was so high that the shops on the banks of the river broke the market and the floods were devastated here. People saved their lives, but the vehicles parked here are still trapped in the rubble and debris of the flood and no one has even bothered to evacuate them.

A mechanic named Ishaq and his father say that we have faced a loss of million of rupees, but so far as the victims have not received a kilo of flour from the administration and they never help these helplessness segment which need their help. He added that since the entire market was destroyed, they did not get food or any other relief package or compensation.

Asif Khan's house is located above the Dinan goal drain. He said that I have a disabled son and a few daughters. We ran away at night and spent the night under the open sky. He said that there is 10 -foot -high debris over my house and we try to clean it from the bullets and the cloak, but this is not our bus. He added that my disabled son's medicines were also buried under the debris of the flood and now I cannot buy medicines for this disabled son. He said that the flood destroyed my everything and my entire world.

The administration given them tent and twenty kilograms of flour and some food items, but I didn't even get a penny to rebuild my house. He said that even if the government gives Rs 1 million according to its policy, then this house can not be built in this period of inflation.

Kamal-ud-din is a businessman and social worker. He says that the shopkeepers and motor mechanics have been affected by flood they working all day in this

market. They are busy in removing the flood debris, but in the evening when the goes their homes without taking any thing their children are very disappointed. He said that the main reason for the flood is the contractor of the National Highway Authority, which, at the time of the construction and widening of the Booni Shandor road, he dropped the whole debris and heavy boulders in the river with large stones weight of so many tons.

As a result, surface of river raised and caused of tremendous flood. "We have submitted applications to 21 departments against of this contractor and we have just made a written application to the SHO police station Chitral to file a FIR, but it seems that he is high-hands and high influential one that no action was taken against him so far he added that no action was taken by any institution. He appealed to the Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and higher authorities to take strict legal action by investigating the NHA's relevant project director, relevant staff and the contractor because of their criminal negligence the devastating floods not only losted them million of rupees, but also damaged aquatic life by violating environmental law.

This scribe repeatedly called the concerned construction company, s project manager and tried to find out his version, but he denied from talking about this

issue by busying his phone every time. Floods have damaged several houses, shops and lands in Koghuzai, Kari, Orghuch, Ochosh Gahkat, Dinin, Chitral Town, and other areas. At this time, people have sown the maize crop and the stream and channels that are irrigating them have been washed away into the flood.

Naeem Anjum, president of the Tehreek-e-Tahafuzi Chitrali and his colleagues, going to affected areas and helping the victims and helping them to remove the debris from their homes. He also expressed his disappointment over the government's apathy that no one has yet been given by the administration in the Orghuch and other affected areas and there has been any help with them.

Ghulam Yusuf, who is affected by the ochhost drain, who lives in Shiaoqao Tech, his house has completely. He added that he was forced to stay in the house of a relative, including his family, but how long would he be a burden on others? He said that he had not yet received any help. He also demanded that he must be financed immediately so that he could rebuild his damaged house.

Ijaz Ahmad Khan is a councillor of Village Council Koghuzi. He says that when the floods came here two years ago, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) responsible people and Special Assistant to CM on

Minority affairs of KP Wazir Zada Kalash visited with his team to protect the area. He announced for providing of fund of Rs 2 Million its tender was also awarded and work order was issued but the practical work has not yet started and it was only a verbal promise and political statement.

Because of his false promises and announcements, we never approached another government or non-governmental organization and the PTI Govt did not provide funds and not started practically work, as a result we are also suffering. If we knew that these people were lying, we would ask for help from another institution or NGO. He added that many years ago a rocky stone was coming in this drain, which causes water every year to stop water. The affected people also complain that the government has imposed an emergency in both districts of Chitral but we are removing debris from our own destroyed houses on self-help basis and we have not been given any missionary, etc.

The victims have demanded from government agencies to immediately assist them financially so that they can rebuild their destroyed houses and provide their children to a place of shelter, as well as irrigation and drinking water pipes and channels should also be restored so that water supply to them can be ensured.





# Thousands mourn a Palestinian general, among 9 killed in camp

SIDON (AP): Thousands of mourners gathered in south Lebanon for the funeral of a Palestinian military general with the Fatah group, whose killing in a refugee camp in Lebanon fueled fierce sectarian street battles that have killed at least nine people. Three days of clashes between Palestinian factions at the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp have pitted members of President Mahmoud Abbas' Fatah party against Islamist groups accused of gunning down the general, Abu Ashraf al Armoushi, on Sunday.

A Lebanese lawmaker announced a cease-fire agreement late Monday, which appeared to calm the situation, but sporadic gunfire continued afterward. Earlier efforts to broker a cease-fire had failed to stop the shooting and shelling through the narrow streets of the Ein el-Hilweh camp in southern Lebanon. Armoushi's funeral was held in another refugee community, the al-Rashidieh camp where he had lived. "This heinous crime doesn't benefit anyone but the enemy, and that is the Zionists, because they are the primary and only beneficiary" of the carnage in Ein el-Hilweh said Jalal Abuchehab, a Fatah official at al-Rashidieh camp, during Armoushi's funeral. The violence began Saturday when an unknown gunman tried to kill Palestinian militant Mahmoud Khalil but instead fatally shot his companion. Full-blown clashes erupted Sunday when Islamic militants shot and killed Armoushi and three escorts as they were walking through a parking lot, according to a Palestinian official. The official spoke on condition of anonymity because he was not authorized to talk to the media. On Monday afternoon, after a meeting between Lebanese officials and security forces and Palestinian factions, Lebanese lawmaker Osama Saad, who represents the Sidon area where the camp is located, announced a new ceasefire agreement. Saad earlier told The Associated Press that officials are



"making extraordinary efforts to find serious, effective, lasting and stable solutions to the situation inside the camp."

On the ground, the intensity of the fighting decreased following the announcement, but sporadic shooting continued. A Lebanese army spokesperson confirmed Monday that at least nine people were killed at Ein el-Hilweh camp, while some reports gave higher figures. Two soldiers stationed outside the camp were lightly wounded, Col. Fadi Abou Eid said. The Lebanese army mans a checkpoint outside and typically does not enter the camp, which is under the control of the Palestinian factions. Some Lebanese officials have called for the army to take control of the camps in the wake of the clashes. Lawmaker Samy Gemayel, head of the Kataeb party, which during the Lebanese civil war allied with Israel against the Palestinian Liberation Organization, met with US Ambassador to Lebanon Dorothy Shea on Monday and called for "the disarmament of the camps and placing them in the custody of the Lebanese army," the state-run National News Agency reported.

On Sunday, Palestinian factions said in a joint statement that they had agreed to a cease-fire during a mediation meeting hosted by the Lebanese

Shiite Amal movement and the militant Hezbollah group in the city Sidon. But the cease-fire did not hold. Some residents in Sidon neighborhoods near the camp have fled their homes after stray bullets hit buildings and shattered windows and storefronts. The public Sidon General Hospital evacuated its staff and patients. A Fatah statement condemned the killing of its security official, saying the attack was part of a "bloody scheme that targets the security and stability of our camps." It vowed to hold the "perpetrators accountable." Rival faction Hamas issued its own statement Monday condemning the fighting and calling for dialogue to "spare the blood of our people and to preserve civil peace." It called for formation of an investigative committee to look into who was responsible for the clashes. Lebanese caretaker Prime Minister Najib Mikati and Abbas both issued statements Sunday decrying the violence.

There are nearly 500,000 Palestinian refugees registered with UNRWA in Lebanon, although the actual number in the country is believed to be around 200,000, as many have emigrated but remain on UNRWA's roster. Palestinians in Lebanon are restricted in their rights to work and own property, and the vast majority of them live in poverty.

## Russian opposition politician Kara-Murza loses appeal

MOSCOW (Reuters): Russian opposition politician Vladimir Kara-Murza on Monday lost an appeal against his 25-year jail sentence, the RIA state news agency reported. Kara-Murza, who holds Russian and British citizenship, was jailed for 25 years in April for treason and spreading "false information" about Russia's war in Ukraine.

The 41-year-old is one of a small number of prominent opposition figures who stayed in Russia and continued to speak out against President Vladimir Putin after the Kremlin sent tens of thousands of troops into Ukraine in February 2022. Kara-Murza was arrested two months after the war began, accused of spreading false information about the armed forces and declared a "foreign agent". His detention came hours after CNN broadcast an interview with him in which he said Russia was run by "a regime of murderers". He was later charged with treason over speeches he had made about the war, including one to the Arizona House of Representatives in which he said Putin was bombing Ukrainian homes, hospitals and schools.

Moscow says it does not deliberately target civilians, but thousands have been killed in Ukraine. During his trial, he compared the wording of the charges against him with that used by Soviet dictator Josef Stalin's secret police in the 1930s, when Kara-Murza's own grandfather was sent to a Gulag prison camp in Russia's far east. Kara-Murza was a close aide to Russian opposition leader Boris Nemtsov, who was shot dead in central Moscow in 2015. Twice, in 2015 and 2017, he fell suddenly ill in what he said were poisonings by the Russian security services, on both occasions falling into a coma before eventually recovering. Russian authorities denied involvement in the incidents. His lawyer has said he is in poor health and suffering from polynuropathy, a nerve disorder resulting from the poisoning incidents.

## Two killed in Senegal protests

DAKAR (Agencies): Two people have been killed in Senegal in protests sparked by the arrest of opposition figure Ousmane Sonko, according to the country's interior ministry. Two "lifeless male bodies" were discovered in the southern city of Ziguinchor, where 2024 presidential hopeful Sonko is mayor, the ministry said in a statement. The ministry called on the public to stay calm and said it was taking measures to "preserve peace and tranquillity in the country".

Demonstrators took to the streets on Monday as Sonko was remanded in custody on charges including plotting an insurrection and criminal association with a "terrorist" body. Senegal's Interior Minister Antoine Felix Abdoulaye Diome on Monday announced that the government had dissolved Sonko's Patriots of Senegal (PASTEF) party for inciting unrest during violent protests last month in the capital Dakar. The announcement marked the first time a political party had been banned in the West African nation since it gained its independence from France in 1960. A decree signed by Diome accused PASTEF of "frequently calling on its supporters to insurrectional movements, which has led to serious consequences, including loss of life, many wounded, as well as acts of looting of public and private property". PASTEF's supporters have accused Senegalese President Macky Sall's ruling party of trying to sideline his popular opponent, who came third in the 2019 presidential election, with trumped-up charges ahead of February's vote.

Sonko, a 48-year-old former tax inspector, has faced a series of legal problems that he claims have been engineered to make him ineligible to run for the presidency in 2024.

# Niger coup: Why some people want Russia in and France out

LONDON (BBC): In a sign of growing hostility towards the West since the coup in Niger, a businessman proudly shows off his outfit in the colours of the Russian flag in the traditional heartland of deposed President Mohamed Bazoum. Since the coup, there has been a war of words between the military and the West.

Mr Bazoum was a staunch ally of the West in the fight against militant Islamists, and was a strong economic partner as well. Niger hosts a French military base and is the world's seventh biggest producer of uranium. The fuel is vital for nuclear power with a quarter of it going to Europe, especially former colonial power France. Since General Abdourahamane Tchiani overthrew the president in a coup on 26 July, Russian colours have suddenly appeared on the streets. Thousands took part in a protest in the capital Niamey on Sunday, with some waving Russian flags and even attacking the French embassy.

It now seems this "movement" is spreading across the country. The businessman, based 800km (500 miles) away in the central city of Zinder, didn't want to give his name for safety reasons and asked that we blur his face. "I'm pro-Russian and I don't like France," he said. "Since childhood, I've been opposed to France. They've exploited all the riches of my country such as uranium, petrol and gold. The poorest Nigeriens are unable to eat three times a day because of France." The businessman said thousands had taken part in Monday's protest in Zinder in support of the military takeover. He said he had asked a local tailor to take material in the Russian

colours of white, blue and red and make an outfit for him, denying that it had been paid for by pro-Russian groups. Niger is home to 24.4 million people where two in every five live in extreme poverty, on less than \$2.15 a day. President Bazoum entered office in 2021 in Niger's first democratic and peaceful transition of power since independence in 1960. But his government was a target for Islamist militants linked to the Islamic State group and al-Qaeda who roam across parts of the Sahara Desert and the semi-arid Sahel just to the south. Under pressure from the Islamists, the armies in both neighbouring Mali and Burkina Faso, also former French colonies with considerable French interests, seized power in recent years, saying this would help in the fight against jihadists.

Like Niger, both these countries previously had significant numbers of French troops helping them but as the Islamist attacks continued, anti-French sentiment rose across the region, with people in all three countries starting to accuse the French of not doing enough to stop them. Once in power, the junta in Mali welcomed Russia's mercenary Wagner Group as they first forced out French troops and then pushed for thousands of UN peacekeepers to leave. Although Islamist attacks have continued in Mali, Burkina Faso's junta has also grown close to Russia and expelled hundreds of French forces. In Niger, anti-French protests were frequently banned by Mr Bazoum's administration. Several civil society groups began escalating anti-French protests in mid-2022, when Mr Bazoum's administration approved the redeployment of France's

Barkhane forces to Niger after they had been ordered to leave Mali.

Key among them is the M62 movement, formed in August 2022 by a coalition of activists, civil society movements and trade unions. They led calls against the rising cost of living, poor governance and the presence of the French forces. Various planned protests by the group were banned or violently put down by Niger's authorities with its leader Abdoulaye Seydou jailed for nine months in April 2023 for "disrupting public order". The M62 appears revitalised in the wake of President Bazoum's removal. In an unusual move, its members were quoted by state TV mobilising mass protests in support of the junta, as well as denouncing sanctions by West African leaders over the coup.

It is unclear if the group is linked to the junta known as the National Council for Safeguarding the Homeland (CNSP) or to Russia. But it was the umbrella group organising Sunday's protest, where smaller civil society groups such as the Coordination Committee for the Democratic Struggle (CCLD) Bukata and Youth Action for Niger were also present. Back in Zinder, the pro-Russian businessman is positive about how Moscow can help his homeland. "I want Russia to help with security and food," he said. "Russia can supply technology to improve our agriculture." But Moutaka, a farmer who also lives in Zinder, rejects this argument and says the coup is bad news for everyone. "I don't support the arrival of Russians in this country because they are all Europeans and nobody will help us," he said. "I love my country and hope we can live in peace."

# Myanmar military extends emergency, postpones election

YANGON (Agencies): Myanmar's military has officially postponed an election promised by August this year after extending a state of emergency it imposed in the aftermath of its 2021 coup. In a statement on state television, the military cited ongoing violence as the reason for the election delay. "In order to have an election that is free and fair and also to be able to vote without any fear, necessary security arrangements are still needed and so the period for the state of emergency has been extended," the statement said.

The announcement amounted to an admission that the military does not exercise enough control to stage the polls and has failed to subdue widespread opposition to its rule, which includes increasingly challenging armed resistance as well as nonviolent protests and civil disobedience. The state of emergency was declared when troops arrested elected leader Aung San Suu Kyi as well as top officials from her government and members of her National League for

Democracy (NLD) party on February 1, 2021. The military claimed widespread fraud in the election held in November 2020, which returned the NLD to power, for its power grab. The takeover reversed years of progress towards democracy after five decades of military rule in Myanmar. The military originally announced that new polls would be held a year after its takeover and later said they would take place in August 2023. But coup leader, Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, told the meeting that extended the state of emergency on Monday that the poll could not take place amid continued fighting in the Sagaing, Magway, Bago and Tanintharyi regions as well as Karen, Kayah and Chin states.

"We need for a time to continue our duty for systematic preparation as we shouldn't hold coming elections in a rush," he told the military-backed National Defence and Security Council (NDSC), according to the MRTV broadcaster. Monday's report did not specify when the polls

might be held, saying only that they would occur after the goals of the state of emergency are accomplished. The emergency, which is being extended for a fourth time, allows the military to assume all government functions, giving Min Aung Hlaing, who heads the governing council, legislative, judicial and executive powers.

Nay Phone Latt, a spokesperson for the National Unity Government (NUG) - a group that calls itself the country's legitimate government - said the extension of emergency rule was expected. "The junta extended the state of emergency because the generals have a lust for power and don't want to lose it. As for the revolutionary groups, we will continue to try to speed up our current revolutionary activities," he told The Associated Press news agency. The military labels the NUG and its armed wing, the People's Defense Forces, as "terrorists".

In response to the military's announcement, the United States said extending the state of emergency

would plunge Myanmar "deeper into violence and instability". "Since overthrowing a democratically elected government two and a half years ago, the military regime has carried out hundreds of airstrikes, burned down tens of thousands of homes, and displaced more than 1.6 million people," said State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller, using an alternate name for the country. "The regime's widespread brutality and disregard for the democratic aspirations of the people of Burma continue to prolong the crisis," he added. The military's crackdown on dissent has killed more than 3,800 people and seen more than 24,000 arrested, according to a local monitoring group.

The military says more than 5,000 civilians have been killed by "terrorists" since it seized power. Diplomatic efforts to end the conflict led by the United Nations and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations regional bloc have, meanwhile, stalled, with the military refusing to engage with its opponents.

# UN chief welcomes Kenya's offer

UNITED NATIONS (AP): The United Nations chief welcomed Kenya's offer to "positively consider" leading a multinational police force to help combat Haiti's gangs and improve security in the violence-wracked Caribbean nation. Haiti's Prime Minister Ariel Henry sent an urgent appeal last October for "the immediate deployment of a specialized armed force, in sufficient quantity" to stop the gangs. UN Secretary-General António Guterres has been appealing unsuccessfully since then for a lead nation to help restore order to Latin America's most impoverished country.

Kenya's Foreign Ministry said Saturday said its offer includes a commitment to send 1,000 police to help train and assist the Haitian National Police "restore normalcy in the country and protect strategic installations." The ministry said it was responding to a request from the Friends of Haiti group of nations. "Kenya stands with persons of African descent across the world, including those in the Caribbean, and aligns with the African Union's diaspora policy and our own commitment to Pan Africanism, and in this case to 'reclaiming of the Atlantic crossing,'" the ministry said. Haiti's gangs have grown in power since

the July 7, 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moise and are now estimated to control up to 80% of the capital. The surge in killings, rapes and kidnappings has led to a violent uprising by civilian vigilante groups. UN deputy spokesman Farhan Haq said Guterres "welcomes Kenya's positive response to his call" and expresses gratitude to Kenya for its "solidarity."

The secretary-general calls on the UN Security Council to support a non-UN multinational operation in Haiti "and encourages member states, particularly from the region, to join forces from Kenya" in supporting the country's police, Haq said. Kenya's Foreign Ministry said its proposed deployment will crystallize once the Security Council adopts a resolution giving a mandate for the force, and other Kenyan constitutional processes are undertaken. A Kenyan task force plans to undertake an assessment mission to Haiti within the next few weeks which "will inform and guide the mandate and operational requirements of the mission," it said. Haiti's Foreign Minister Jean Victor Génésus said: "Haiti appreciates this expression of African solidarity, and looks forward to welcoming Kenya's proposed eval-

uation mission in the coming weeks."

Guterres, who visited Haiti in early July, called afterward for a robust international force to help the Haitian National Police "defeat and dismantle the gangs." He said the estimate by the UN independent expert for Haiti, William O'Neill, that up to 2,000 additional anti-gang police officers are needed is no exaggeration. O'Neill, who concluded a 10-day trip to Haiti in July, is an American lawyer who has been working on Haiti for over 30 years and helped establish the Haitian National Police in 1995. The Security Council unanimously adopted a resolution on July 14 asking Guterres to come up with "a full range of options" within 30 days to help combat Haiti's armed gangs, including a non-UN multinational force, a possible UN peacekeeping force, additional training for the Haitian National Police and providing support to combat illegal arms trafficking to the country. Compounding the gang warfare, which has spread outside the capital, is the country's political crisis: Haiti was stripped of all democratically elected institutions when the terms of the country's remaining 10 senators expired in early January. The Security Council resolution, co-spon-

sored by the United States and Ecuador, "strongly urges" all countries to prohibit the supply, sale or transfer of weapons to anyone supporting gang violence and criminal activities. US Secretary of State Antony Blinken spoke to Kenyan President William Ruto on Monday including about Kenya's positive consideration to leading a multinational force in Haiti. State Department spokesperson Matthew Miller said. The United States takes over the rotating presidency of the UN Security Council for August on Tuesday, and Miller said the US and Ecuador, as a first step, are going to introduce a resolution to authorize a non-UN multinational mission.

The second step is an assessment mission by Kenya, "which they plan to do in the coming days," and then there will be talks with other countries about what additional assistance is needed, he said. "We are committed to finding the resources to support this multinational force," Miller said. "We've been a large humanitarian donor to relief efforts in Haiti for some time, and we have worked behind the scenes to find the lead nation to run this multinational force and are pleased that that has been successful."

## Australia welcomes lifting of UNESCO threat to list Great Barrier Reef

CANBERRA (AP): The Australian government on Tuesday welcomed a draft UNESCO decision to a lift a threat of downgrading the Great Barrier Reef to an endangered World Heritage site. The UN cultural agency and the International Union for Conservation of Nature recommended in November of last year that the world's largest coral reef system be added to the List of World Heritage in Danger due to threats including rising ocean temperatures.

But UNESCO issued an updated a report in Paris on Monday that said it would be appropriate to re-evaluate whether the famed tourist attraction off Australia's northeast coast fitted the World Heritage in-danger criteria. The report recommended Australia submit a progress report to the World Heritage Committee by February on its commitments to make environmental improvements. The

World Heritage Committee will consider the draft recommendation in September.

Prime Minister Anthony Albanese took the draft UNESCO decision as a vote of confidence in his center-left Labor Party government that was elected last year. "This confirms my government is working hard to protect the reef, is acting on climate change and that the rest of the world has taken notice," Albanese told reporters. Albanese's government and the previous conservative government had lobbied against UNESCO downgrading the World Heritage status given to the reef in 1981. There are fears that a World Heritage in-danger listing would damage a tourism industry that revolves around the reef and employs more than 64,000 people. The Labor government was elected in May last year, two months after a 10-day UN fact-

finding mission that visited the reef. The new government argued that UNESCO's criticisms of government inaction were outdated. The new government has committed Australia to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by 43% below the 2005 level by 2030. The previous government only committed to a reduction of 26% to 28% by the end of the decade.

Marine ecologist Lissa Schindler said the UNESCO report found that Australia needed to do more to address climate change and water quality threats to the reef, including more ambitious greenhouse gas emission reduction targets. "I think that they've started off and done a really good job and there's more to do," Schindler told Australian Broadcasting Corp. of the government's performance. Global warming is the greatest threat to coral reefs around the world.



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# Lives yet unchanged but hopefully will change

CHINESE Vice Premier He Lifeng has said that the multibillion-dollar China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) proved as a win-win cooperation between Islamabad and Beijing as it has significantly changed the lives of Pakistanis. While addressing a ceremony in Islamabad to commemorate a decade of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor, the Chinese Vice Premier noted that the flagship project is an important part of Beijing's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), which became a corridor of progress and prosperity, involving huge investment and creating immense job opportunities, with the completion of various key projects thus transforming the local economy. Under the CPEC, a network of regional connectivity was initiated under a principle of extensive cooperation for mutual interests, social and economic uplift of Pakistan. While sharing stage with Chinese Vice Premier, Addressing the ceremony, PM Shehbaz informed the gathering that the two countries are entering the second phase of CPEC which would help promote investment, progress and prosperity not only for Pakistan but also for the entire region.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), is a marvellous project of the two long standing friends and first-door neighbors, whose all-weather strategic friendship proved its worth against all odds and challenges throughout history. The China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) was the flagship project of Chinese President Xi Jinping's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) which aims at enhancing global peace, friendship, and economic partnerships across Asia, Eurasia and Africa. Initiated in late 2013, the CPEC has completed a decade of successes, and achievements by creating a network of ground and sea lines of communication, energy projects, Special Economic Zones (SEZs), skill development, health-care, education, and cultural exchanges through people to people contacts between the two nations.

The Chinese and Pakistani leadership has high confidence and good faith regarding the untapped potential and economic prospects of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which has been conceived to change the fate of the people of Pakistan. Visiting Chinese Deputy Premier has also expressed high hopes and jubilated the construction of the CPEC that had further cemented the historic Pak-China friendship and Strategic cooperation over the past decades. Undoubtedly, the CPEC is a game changer initiative and a win-win cooperation between Islamabad and Beijing, however the Pakistani nation could not harvest its economic and monetary benefits so far despite the fact that this magnificent endeavor has completed one decade of its inception. The people of Pakistan are gradually losing their faith in the fairy tale of a prosperous future due to enhanced regional connectivity, tour and tourism, trans-nation trade and lucrative revenue generation from movement of trucks and transportation of goods from western China to Karachi/Gwadar and vice versa. So far, no such prophecy came true and this multi billion dollar project could not bring any pivotal change in the lives of common Pakistanis over the past ten years, except providing livelihood to a few thousands of labourers and other leg workers. The widely advertised Gwadar deep water port, and huge road infrastructure still await movement of convoys running between Chinese border regions and Pakistani warm water ports of Gwadar and Karachi, prolonged electricity shortages still exists despite completion of several energy projects under the CPEC, Special Economic Zones (SEZs) are not operationalized that might realize the dream of an economic and industrial revival in a crisis hit nation if implemented in true letter and spirit.

After a decade-long journey, the CPEC has entered its second phase with the completion of preliminary road, energy and industrial infrastructure, while our Chinese friends and Pakistani political and military leadership predict the unimaginable outcome of the ongoing development schemes under the CPEC. The western think tanks commonly term the massive Chinese investment a debt trap and spreading poisonous propaganda against the CPEC unceasingly. Relentless western conspiracy and uncertain situations on the ground cast serious doubts among the masses regarding the future of the CPEC projects in the country. Amid doubts and apprehensions, the unflinching faith of Pakistani leaders and repeated assurances from the Chinese leadership regarding continued support and backing for Pakistan are the ray of hope for the poor Pakistanis, who have currently left nothing to scarfify except their lives.

Historically, the CPEC faces unprecedented challenges and opposition from home and abroad while invisible enemies and powerful western blocs are actively working to sabotage this landmark economic deal between Pakistan and China. Foreign conspiracies and local terrorist groups corroborated this purely development scheme that aimed at social uplift and economic prosperity of the people of Pakistan and the entire region. Currently, the Pakistani leadership must take lead in internationalising the CPEC projects and attracting foreign investment, to initiate business and trade activities in the country. Meanwhile, the bilateral and multilateral deals with China and other regional and extra regional states would be crucial for initiating transit trade through Pakistan's road and sea routes that will ultimately lead to regional growth and prosperity. Although the CPEC has not yet brought any significant improvement in the lives of common Pakistanis, hopefully this endeavour will bring pivotal change in the future.

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For "Most suitable" cartaker PM..



# CPEC: A decade of transformative cooperation

Qaiser Nawab

THE year 2023 marks a significant milestone for the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor as it celebrates its 10th anniversary since its inception. As a flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative, the CPEC has emerged as a transformative force, reshaping Pakistan's economic landscape and strengthening bilateral ties between China and Pakistan.

Over the past decade, the corridor has witnessed several major achievements, including the development of Gwadar Port City, energy projects, transportation infrastructure, and industrial cooperation. It has also paved the way for enhanced people-to-people exchanges, fostering cultural understanding and diplomatic cooperation between the two nations.

The essence of the CPEC's significance lies in its role as a potent catalyst for Pakistan's economic growth. One of its most remarkable achievements has been in the energy sector, where it has effectively tackled the country's persistent energy shortages. Through strategic investments in diverse energy projects, such as coal-fired power plants and hydropower stations, the CPEC has ushered in thousands of megawatts of electricity into the national grid.

This resolute effort has resulted in a significant reduction in power outages, fostering a conducive environment for thriving businesses and industries. In a noteworthy feat, a total of 14 power projects under the CPEC have been successfully commissioned, boasting a collective installed capacity of 8,000 megawatts, thus effectively addressing Pakistan's long-standing power scarcity. The stable energy supply has also caught the attention of foreign investors, enticing industries to establish their operations in Pakistan.

Furthermore, the development of transportation infrastructure has opened new avenues for economic growth and regional connectivity. The construction of modern roads, highways, and motorways has facilitated the movement of goods and people across different regions of Pakistan. The improved transportation network has reduced travel time, lowered transportation costs,

and encouraged trade and commerce between various provinces.

Additionally, the proposed up-gradation of the Peshawar-Karachi railway line, one of the oldest and most critical rail links in Pakistan, will further enhance transportation efficiency, making it easier to move goods and raw materials.

Central to the CPEC's objectives, industrial cooperation takes center stage in attracting foreign investment and propelling industrial growth. The establishment of Special Economic Zones further enhances the allure for businesses by offering enticing incentives such as tax breaks and simplified regulatory processes, thereby encouraging a surge of industries to establish their operations in Pakistan. The SEZs play a pivotal role in generating employment opportunities, nurturing innovation, and facilitating the transfer of cutting-edge technologies. One remarkable success in this endeavor is the Rashakai Special Economic Zone, which has already completed its first phase and promises to be a formidable force driving regional economic growth.

Located at the southern end of the CPEC, Gwadar Port City stands as a shining gem in the crown of this transformative project. It has emerged as a strategic hub for international trade, presenting Pakistan with a golden opportunity to become a regional economic powerhouse. Gwadar's deep-water port and strategic location at the crossroads of three continents hold immense potential for economic growth and prosperity. The development of the port and its associated infrastructure has paved the way for new trade routes and seamless connectivity with global markets.

The upcoming Gwadar International Airport, a project generously funded by China, further solidifies the city's position as a thriving trade and logistics hub. Its airbase infrastructure was inaugurated on July 27, 2023, heralding a new era of enhanced connectivity and trade prospects for the region. With Gwadar's strategic location and state-of-the-art facilities, it is poised to unlock its true potential as a gateway to international trade and commerce.

merce.

Beyond its economic endeavors, the CPEC has woven a rich tapestry of people-to-people exchanges, enriching the cultural understanding between China and Pakistan. Educational and cultural collaborations have become the cornerstone of fostering mutual respect and trust, infusing warmth and strength into the bond of friendship that binds the two nations. As a result, the youth from both lands now enjoy more extensive avenues to immerse themselves in each other's cultural heritage, exploring the depths of traditions, language, music, and delectable cuisine. These interactions have ignited a spark of camaraderie, sparking a deeper sense of diplomatic cooperation that transcends borders and nurtures a lasting friendship. While the CPEC has achieved remarkable success, it also faces challenges that must be addressed to ensure sustainable growth and mutual benefits. The success and sustainability of the corridor depend on ensuring a secure environment for all projects and personnel involved. The security dimension remains a critical concern, requiring continuous collaboration between Pakistan and China to safeguard the corridor from potential threats.

To sustain the momentum of economic growth, Pakistan must focus on technological advancements and human resource development. Embracing digital transformation and adopting innovative technologies can enhance the efficiency and productivity of industries, attracting further investments. Investing in vocational training and skilled manpower will ensure that Pakistan has a competent workforce to meet the demands of modern industries.

Creating a conducive business environment is essential for attracting foreign investors. Pakistan must continue its efforts to improve the ease of doing business, address regulatory issues, and provide a stable policy framework. A business-friendly environment, transparent regulations, and a predictable policy framework are crucial for instilling investor confidence and promoting economic growth. The CPEC has

undoubtedly been a catalyst for economic development in Pakistan, but it also presents an opportunity for the country to diversify its economic base. By focusing on sectors such as agriculture, technology, and tourism, Pakistan can leverage the benefits of the corridor to achieve long-term sustainable development. Strengthening agriculture and promoting agri-based industries can create employment opportunities and increase export potential. Similarly, investing in technology and innovation can lead to the emergence of a knowledge-based economy and drive further economic growth.

Looking beyond its borders, Pakistan must explore opportunities to enhance regional connectivity through the CPEC. The corridor's extension to Afghanistan and potential further expansion to Central Asia can foster regional economic integration and strengthen connectivity across borders. Enhanced regional connectivity can lead to mutual prosperity and stability, promoting peace and cooperation in the region. As the curtains draw on the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor, its profound impact on Pakistan's economic development and the deepening of diplomatic ties between China and Pakistan cannot be overlooked. As it commemorates its remarkable ten-year journey, the CPEC remains an embodiment of collaboration and mutual benefit, with notable achievements in infrastructure development, energy initiatives, industrial partnerships, and enriching people-to-people exchanges. However, to ensure sustainable growth and prosperity, Pakistan must confront security challenges, embrace technological advancements, invest in human capital, and cultivate economic diversification.

By fully embracing the opportunities presented by the CPEC, Pakistan can position itself as a regional economic and trade hub, fostering stability and prosperity throughout the broader region. As the CPEC embarks on its next chapter, the path ahead brims with boundless potential for continued transformative cooperation between China and Pakistan, ushering in a promising era of shared prosperity and lasting camaraderie.

# Financial institutions aid climate action

LotteSchou-Zibell

CLIMATE change is hitting Asia and the Pacific hard, with many countries ill-prepared to deal with the crisis. However, financial institutions stand poised to make a difference by promoting sustainable practices and receiving the right support. People in Asia and the Pacific are on the front lines of climate change. Many developing Asia-Pacific countries are among the hardest hit by the climate emergency, and yet they are also among the least equipped and resourced to respond.

Financial institutions have a unique opportunity to help address this situation. They can advise and guide their customers toward sustainable financial choices, promoting the adoption of low-carbon alternatives. These choices can have an impact on achieving net zero, defined as when a country's carbon emissions are offset by an equal amount of emissions being reduced. Financial institutions can use their wealth of financial data to provide insights into sustainable spending practices and track customers' progress in reducing their carbon footprints. They can also promote investment in renewable energy and energy-efficient technologies by offering lower interest rates or extended loan repayment terms. By harnessing digitalization in their financial services, they can encourage eco-friendly spending decisions through prompts and gamification techniques. With two-thirds of adults worldwide making or receiving digital payments, financial institutions can significantly facilitate positive change toward sustainability, including in developing countries where digital payment usage has increased from 35 percent in 2014 to 57 percent in 2021.

Besides, it is important that small and medium-sized enterprises transition to net zero-aligned operations to build a net zero economy, because they make up about 99 percent of all businesses worldwide. In fact, several initiatives are already supporting SMEs in this effort, and they include United Overseas Bank's Carbon Insights feature, which provides tailored carbon information based on spending and savings habits. While IDLC Finance in Bangladesh offers green finance for green products and sustainable finance for cottage, micro, small and medium-sized enterprises, agriculture, and socially responsible projects, Sri Lanka's Commercial Bank of Ceylon has launched green development loans for SMEs at below-market rates.

And specialized non-bank financial institutions, such as the Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited, are promoting renewable energy and energy efficiency projects, aligning with national net-zero emission targets like India's 2070 goal. Financial institutions can offer many solutions but

they also face significant challenges. Yet the real estate sector, responsible for nearly 40 percent of carbon dioxide emissions, can also contribute to climate action. Green mortgages, for instance, incentivize borrowers to buy or upgrade properties meeting specific environmental standards through reduced interest rates or higher loan amounts.

IIFL Home Loans in India has identified a gap in the market between the availability of new energy conservation methods throughout a building's life cycle and highlighted the need for increased knowledge about green building concepts among potential developers across the country. To address these issues, IIFL Home Loans has introduced the "Green Value Partner" program with the aim of reducing negative environmental impacts by supporting the development of green, affordable housing. Similarly, CIMB in Malaysia offers preferential "green building index" rates for customers purchasing green-certified residential properties. And Maybank, also in Malaysia, launched the "Go Green with #MaybankHomeFinancing" campaign in 2021, providing eco-friendly prizes, such as solar panels, energy-efficient refrigerators and vertical farming systems, for homebuyers of green-certified properties, along with options for installing solar panels at a reduced cost. Maybank Singapore, too, launched the "Green Home Loan" campaign in early 2023, offering e-voucher rewards to buyers of "Green Mark Certified" homes in support of sustainability and digitalization initiatives. Moreover, payment platforms such as Alipay's Ant Forest can be powerful tools for climate action. By gamifying low-carbon lifestyle choices and reforestation efforts, these platforms can encourage users to develop more sustainable behaviors. Since its launch in 2016, Alipay Ant Forest has encouraged 650 million online users to make low-carbon lifestyle choices. Similar initiatives, such as the GForest in the Philippines' GCash app, are contributing to reforestation efforts. Among other major challenges facing green financing are the need for accurate data and measurement, the lack of consensus on net zero's definition, transitioning of portfolios away from high-emitting sectors, dearth of suitable low-carbon investment opportunities, uncertain regulatory and policy environments, and difficulty in engaging stakeholders in the transition process.

In other words, financial institutions can harness sustainability-enriched data and digitalization to inform customers about the environmental impact of their activity and promote behavioral change. By making sustainable behavior more enjoyable and convenient, these institutions can contribute significantly to a more sustainable future.

The China Daily

# The changing Republican electorate could upend this basic rule of politics

Mike Shields

A proverb often attributed to baseball legend Yogi Berra is, "It's difficult to make predictions, especially about the future." And yet, the entire industry of politics is built around trying to do just that. Fortunately, Republicans now have sophisticated data tools to help guide us in making extremely educated guesses about what is to come. But even when data points us in a clear direction, we sometimes don't want to believe what we are seeing.

Case in point, many still believe an old theory that Republicans fare better in midterm elections when voter turnout is traditionally lower, and that Democrats fare better in presidential election years when voter turnout is traditionally higher. Yet recent elections suggest a new trend is emerging, and we need to pay attention to it. The great realignment

of American politics, which began with the House of Representatives' Republican freshman class in 2010 - and was boosted by the candidacy of Donald Trump in 2016 - has given us critical new data points about American voters. The tectonic polarization of the electorate along education, income and geographic lines isn't just reshaping the parties, it is also reshaping voter turnout models. The new, or perhaps still emerging Republican coalition has more blue-collar, non-college educated and rural voters - similar to the expansive coalition that former President Ronald Reagan built in the 1980s. It has more voters who didn't take part in many previous elections because they didn't believe anyone cared about them or that their vote made a difference. In fact, we now have enough election data to confidently say many of them are more

likely to stay home in a midterm election and more likely to participate in a presidential election - upending decades of political science orthodoxy.

Further exacerbating this phenomenon is the Democratic Party's move toward a much higher-income, White coastal voter base, and with it, a more left-wing progressivism that is alienating significant segments of Hispanic and Black voters. The upshot is, to paraphrase Berra, when Republicans come to a fork in the road, they should take it. GOP candidates considering a run for political office in 2024 should not fear presidential turnout; they should embrace it. This trend began to emerge in the 2016 election cycle and became clearer in 2018 and 2020. For simplicity, let's compare the most recent midterm cycle,

2022, with the most recent presidential cycle, 2020.

In 2020, Republicans gained 15 seats in the House, losing zero incumbents, even while losing the presidential election. Yes, a large part of this is due to the stellar job House Speaker Kevin McCarthy and then-National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) Chairman Tom Emmer did in recruiting. Every single pickup we had in 2020 was a woman, a veteran or a minority candidate. (Current NRCC Chairman Richard Hudson is executing the same game plan, trying to recruit an even more diverse class in 2024.) But another large part of that success was due to the new turnout trend in presidential cycles. In 2024, according to NRCC data models, which took 2020 congressional vote totals and grouped them by their new

congressional district lines for 2022, two-thirds of battleground districts look likely to be more favorable to Republicans in a presidential cycle than they were in a midterm cycle.

According to the NRCC analysis of final vote tallies, there are 19 districts in which Trump's 2020 performance was greater than the Republican congressional candidate in 2022.

In an additional eight districts, the 2020 GOP congressional candidate outperformed the GOP congressional candidate in 2022. That's 27 congressional seats that benefited from a presidential election year lift. Examples from NRCC historical election analysis show that in top target districts like North Carolina's 13th District, Trump's 2020 margin overperformed the 2022 GOP congressional candidate's margin by 1.5 percentage points; by 0.5 points in Michigan's 10th

District; by 4.7 points in Michigan's 7th District; by 5.3 points in Pennsylvania's 8th District; and by a whopping 16.2 points in Ohio's 9th District.

Similarly, in seven targeted congressional races occupied by a Republican, either Trump's margin or the Republican congressional candidate's margin in 2020 overperformed the Republican congressional candidate's margin in 2022 within the current district lines.

As the 2024 campaign gets underway, political pundits may again predict the doom of Republicans in the House - and many will use presidential election year turnout as a reason why. My advice to Republicans - ignore them. They will be as wrong next year as they were in 2020 and 2022. As Berra and others used to say, "The future ain't what it used to be."

CNN



# Palestinians a glaring omission from debate on Israeli democracy

Chris Doyle

A week ago, in defiance of mass protests, 64 members of the Israeli Knesset landed their first blow on the Israeli judiciary. This dramatic onslaught on the Israeli political system has even attracted criticism from the US president. But what is extraordinary is that those who may land up being the greatest victims of this political vandalism - the Palestinians - barely get a mention.

The conventional narrative is merely that Benjamin Netanyahu et al want to protect themselves. The beleaguered prime minister, as weak as he ever has been in more than 15 years in power, is determined to avoid jail. He has been indicted on three charges. Added to that, Netanyahu may wish to restore former Interior Minister Aryeh Deri to that role after the Supreme Court had deemed his appointment as "unreasonable in the extreme," owing to his 2022 conviction for tax fraud. But these are minor issues compared to the bigger picture, Israeli Jews have plenty to protest about, particularly those of a democratic or liberal bent. It is an assault on the rule of law and the independence of the judiciary. This is the vital third pillar in the Israeli political system and every effort should be made to prevent it becoming subservient to the executive and the legislature.

For 30 weeks, hundreds of thousands of Israeli Jews have made their voices known. Their struggle is laudable. They have faced down Israeli police who have been willing to use force to restrain them, albeit only a fraction of that deployed whenever Palestinians dare to engage in nonviolent protest. It is a contest of power that is bound to continue. It will determine the trajectory of Israel's future, to what extent it will become more akin to a theocracy. The secular business world of Israel, largely along the coast, is up against the more religious-nationalist sector, which is mostly found in Jerusalem and the settlements.

What much of the media fails or refuses to grapple with is the extent to which the Palestinian citizens of Israel are totally uninvolved, as well as the degree to which much of this judicial sabotage is driven by the settler movement and those

who wish not just to perpetuate the occupation but to eradicate the Palestinians as a meaningful political presence in the Occupied Territories. Palestinian citizens of Israel simply do not regard the Supreme Court as being for their benefit. Yes, they will use it, but burdened with low expectations. As for Palestinians from the Occupied Territories, whenever they opt for the Supreme Court, they encounter an occupier's law,

have always known. Occupation and annexation lie at the heart of these moves. Skeptical? Yariv Levin, the Israeli justice minister and architect of this judicial assault, was very clear from the podium in the Knesset. He picked out five examples of when the Supreme Court had acted unreasonably. Did he cite one example that related to the inner workings of Israel? No. All five of his examples related to Israel's treatment of

of approval to illegal activity. The settlers and their supporters crave more Palestinian land and fewer Palestinian people. They are impatient. Their extremism has even led Tamir Pardo, a former head of Mossad, to compare the Israeli right, including those in government, to the Ku Klux Klan.

Levin, alongside Netanyahu, wants the formal annexation of the West Bank. Palestinians will formally become noncitizens in the state of Israel, allowed to continue to exist in semi-autonomous Bantustans. The forced displacement of Palestinians from rural areas into crowded cities will be accelerated. In recent months, three Palestinian communities have decided to abandon their villages because the settler violence and aggression had become too much. The Supreme Court is slow as far as the settlers are concerned. It means delays. Legal arguments take time. Take Masafer Yatta in the South Hebron hills. The settlers have been fighting to get the Supreme Court to evict more than 1,000 families for years. Of course, they did eventually win in May. At some point, the Israeli army will forcibly evict them. International pressure has, like the Supreme Court, on occasions acted as a temporary brake. The same could be said for many Palestinian communities in Silwan, Sheikh Jarrah and Khan Al-Ahmar, to name just a few. Inside Israel, a court ordered a community of 500 Bedouin to leave their unrecognized village of Ras Jrahah in the Negev.

Another current far-right initiative is to pass a law that would prevent the Supreme Court from overruling the Knesset elections committee. What has the elections committee consistently done? Made decisions to ban Palestinian parties, which the Supreme Court has then rejected. It is time for a more informed and honest debate. Israel has only ever had a chimera of democracy. How could it be a democracy while enforcing military law on Palestinian populations in Israel until 1966, maintaining a settler-colonial regime in the Occupied Territories since 1967, and passing a whole bevy of laws privileging Jews above non-Jews and discriminating against Arabs?

*In fact, some of the Israeli protesters are only now just beginning to understand this, or are perhaps beginning to admit to themselves what they have always known. Occupation and annexation lie at the heart of these moves. Skeptical? Yariv Levin, the Israeli justice minister and architect of this judicial assault, was very clear from the podium in the Knesset. He picked out five examples of when the Supreme Court had acted unreasonably. Did he cite one example that related to the inner workings of Israel? No. All five of his examples related to Israel's treatment of Palestinians - two about Palestinian entry into Israel, including a decision to overturn the denial of entry into Israel of a Palestinian American student who backed the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement; one about stopping an Israeli army decision to expel three Palestinians; and the final two related to Israeli activists who sought to challenge the occupation.*

with the odds stacked against them. At best, they can delay a proposed eviction or land confiscation. They experience no justice and no "reasonableness."

The wider world refuses, for the most part, to acknowledge the systemic discrimination Palestinians endure, whether in the Occupied Territories or even inside Israel. For Palestinians, the talk of Israeli democracy means nothing; it is a fantasy, a sick joke. But perhaps what is more startling is the misreading by the outside world of why this is happening. In fact, some of the Israeli protesters are only now just beginning to understand this, or are perhaps beginning to admit to themselves what they

Palestinians - two about Palestinian entry into Israel, including a decision to overturn the denial of entry into Israel of a Palestinian American student who backed the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement; one about stopping an Israeli army decision to expel three Palestinians; and the final two related to Israeli activists who sought to challenge the occupation.

Levin and the others who back this assault have not been shy in explaining their reasons. The Supreme Court, never a champion of Palestinian rights and frequently part of the oppression, has, for these extremists, become an obstacle. It has typically given a stamp

## Civil service pay cuts reflect China's economic struggles

Bo Gu

**EVEN as their nation emerges from three years of COVID-related lockdowns, many Chinese are facing a new source of economic hardship - steep cuts in earnings for the country's millions of civil servants. "My year-end bonus will be reduced by at least 20,000-30,000 Yuan [roughly \$2,800-\$4,200]," said a 38-year-old local housing authority employee in the eastern city of Nantong, who asked to be identified only as Chen for fear of retaliation by authorities.**

Like everyone in China, Chen and his wife and two sons had a difficult time during the past few years. Strict COVID pandemic control made his family live an almost hermit life - limited social activities, no vacation, even visiting relatives became rare. The harsh pandemic controls were finally lifted late last year, but now Chen must cope with a significant loss of income attributed to the slower-than-expected recovery of the Chinese economy.

The nearby city of Suzhou, known for its economic development and prosperity, is slashing its year-end bonuses even more steeply, according to Chen. "Public servants in Suzhou will probably lose 50,000-60,000 Yuan [roughly \$7,000-\$8,500] of bonus [money]," he said. As with many public servants in China, Chen's official paycheck, providing him with the equivalent of about \$1,000 a month, represents only part of his income. He and others are compensated in many other "hidden" ways including bonuses, special subsi-

dies and cheap meals at work canteens. Chen is entitled to 15 days of paid leave per year, but throughout his career has received an annual reward of about \$2,500 for working instead. "Now I only get like \$1,300 of compensation for not taking leaves," he said. He added: "This pay cut, in bonus or in other forms, is a nationwide trend."

Reports about wage reductions for civil servants began appearing in 2021 as local governments, stressed by a troubled real estate market and colossal debts, saw their problems exacerbated by three years of brutal pandemic controls. Posts went viral on China's social media platforms early this month saying, "Guangdong province is cutting 25% off its public servants' paychecks." The local government in Guangdong, one of the most prosperous provinces in China, never confirmed or denied the information. However, the postings sparked discussions and complaints online. Many civil servants shared their experiences of bringing home less cash. A user from Hunan province said on Weibo, China's biggest social networking site: "My friend, a government worker in Hunan, lost a quarter of his yearly bonus. Now he only gets paid \$600 a month." Another public servant in Shijiazhuang, capital of the northern province of Hebei, told VOA Mandarin via text message that her employer is struggling to pay its workers. "We've been borrowing money to pay the civil servants for a long while. Now there's no

money to borrow anymore." Not everyone is sympathetic, however. "No matter how much pay cut these people get, they still earn more money than we do! Their housing fund is probably as much as my whole salary," wrote one Weibo user under the pseudonym "surgeon lancet."

Another user wrote: "Wage cut? That's a joke. We all know their money all comes from bonuses and subsidies." A China-based economist who spoke to VOA on the condition of anonymity for fear of retaliation said the pay cuts reflect wider budget problems facing local governments across China. "To ease unemployment the government has to hire people, but they're with limited budget now, so it's a must to reduce wages," he told VOA Mandarin. "I give them credit for at least trying to feed more people." Frank Xie, a professor at the School of Business Administration at the University of South Carolina in the United States, said that in some localities, civil servant pay has been not only reduced but stopped completely. "In recent years the tax revenue for many local governments [has] reduced or stalled," he told VOA Mandarin. "The revenue on land sales also disappeared. The size of the civil servant team is huge and all of them have to be fed. This is a rampant, sober, dire situation." While local governments struggle, the central administration in Beijing has been busily pushing out new programs to try to stimulate economic growth, many of

them aimed at encouraging private investment.

On July 19, the State Council and the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party jointly issued a statement titled, "Opinions on Promoting the Development and Growth of the Private Economy." The 7,000-word statement listed 31 guidelines aimed at building a more friendly environment for private businesses, which have suffered from years of pandemic restrictions and lackluster foreign sales. On July 24, the National Development and Reform Commission, China's macroeconomic policymaker, followed up with a "Circular on Further Efforts to Promote Private Investment in an Effort to Mobilize Private Investments." This document pledged to make the private economy "bigger, better and stronger" and to cultivate a "close and clean" relationship between businesses and the government. After decades of rapid growth, private investment in China has leveled out in recent years, recording an increase of just 0.9% in 2022 and a decline of 0.2% in the first half of 2023, according to the Chinese news website, Caixin. The private sector accounted for 54.2% of all investment in China last year. "China's sagging economy has forced authorities to come back to the private sector for help," said Xie. "Private businesses' outright state-owned enterprises in terms of tax revenue, number of jobs, and contribution to foreign trade. Fifty million private enterprises are now not investing, and this is causing a very big problem for tax revenue," he said.

VOA

## UK is work-from-home capital of Europe. Now let's work on getting it right

Christine Grant

**MORE than two years on from the end of the last Covid lockdown, the UK has embraced working from home - to the extent it is now the work-from-home capital of Europe. A recent survey showed UK employees work from home for an average of 1.5 days a week, compared with an international average of 0.9 days. In 2019, about 12% of UK employees were working from home to some extent; by 2022 it was between 25% and 40%, depending on the time of year.**

In other areas, the British workplace isn't particularly flexible or easygoing: we consistently report some of the longest working hours in Europe. So how have we managed to end up in top position? It's likely to be a combination of factors. First, the UK was already within the top five countries for remote working before the pandemic. By 2021, more than half of Brits were saying they'd like to work from home at least some of the time - and given the UK's low unemployment rate, employers are

incentivised to offer remote or hybrid working where possible to attract and retain staff. In a recent LinkedIn poll, a third of UK office workers said they would quit if they had to return to the office full-time. Meanwhile in Spain, where unemployment is at 11.6%, workers do an average 0.9 days from home. It has helped, too, that trade unions and organisations such as Acas and the NHS have shown their support for working from home, and provided resources and guidance.

Caution should be exercised, however, in comparing mandatory working from home during the pandemic to WFH when employers have more time to work closely with individuals to ensure that the practical and psychological needs of home working are fully considered. Post-pandemic, hybrid working (working partly on site and partly from home) is the most common - at 28%, whereas 16% of people are working from home only. Eight in 10 of those who

worked from home during the pandemic indicated they planned to continue in a hybrid pattern. There are well documented concerns about WFH full-time - from fuel bills to social isolation. Younger workers are more likely to prefer travelling into work to meet people, and to benefit from networking and mentoring.

A hybrid approach can help those issues and retain productivity alongside wellbeing for workers. But it also requires managers and leaders to adapt, and poses some challenges for employers in terms of ensuring staff are fully transitioned and trained to work in this way. Line managers, who are key to the success of managing and monitoring working from home, need to focus on developing trusting relationships and utilising all types of communication methods, including on- and off-site training, and appropriate accommodations where necessary.

What has been ignored with the recent demands from CEOs for

workers to return to the workplace full-time is the impact this can have on a more inclusive and diverse workforce and culture. For those with disabilities, working from home either partly or fully has been enormously helpful in terms of flexibility and control over their working environment. In an NHS survey of disabled staff, 84% wanted to retain at least some form of flexibility and remote working.

Technology, including virtual means to communicate, artificial intelligence and other new tools, are likely to add to the ability to work across many locations and at any time. Getting the mix of home and office working right for different groups of workers can provide a means to be inclusive, improve wellbeing and ensure the organisation benefits from employees' strengths and talents. The future will bring even more different and perhaps radical ways of working; now is our chance to look forward, rather than yearning for old styles of working that no longer fit our society.

The Guardian

## Israel protests are at the heart of Zionism's internal conflict

Ramzy Baroud

**THE late Israeli commentator Uri Avnery once wrote: "I am increasingly worried that the Israeli-Palestinian struggle ... is assuming a more and more religious character." At first glance, this statement may seem baffling. If Israel is supposedly a "Jewish state" that serves as a "homeland" for all Jewish people, everywhere, does it not follow that the "struggle," at least from an Israeli viewpoint, is essentially a religious one?**

If only it was that simple. Israel's dichotomy is that it was founded by an ideology, Zionism, which purposely conflated religion and nationality. "The Zionist movement was non-religious from the start, if not anti-religious," Avnery wrote. He went on to cite a famous quote by the founder of Zionism, Theodor Herzl, that "we shall know how to keep (our clergymen) in their temples." Clearly, Herzl's descendants could not keep the clergymen in their temples. The once-marginal impact of Israel's religious Zionists has long exceeded the margins allocated to them by their liberal brethren. It is the likes of Itamar Ben-Gvir and Bezalel Smotrich, Israel's far-right ministers of national security and finance, respectively, who are the new kings of the hill. The days of Chaim Weizmann, David Ben-Gurion, Levi Eshkol and even Shimon Perez are long gone, most likely irreversibly so.

The irony and the source of confusion is that all past and current leaderships of Israel - liberal, conservative or religious - have been proud Zionists who see Judaism as a centerpiece in the Israeli identity. But how can one then understand the current layers of religious, class, ethnic and, ultimately, ideological conflicts at work in Israel? The simple explanation of Israel's ongoing protests is that nearly half of the Israeli population objects to judicial reforms championed by an extremist right-wing government under the leadership of Benjamin Netanyahu. Protesters say that the mass mobilization aims to save Israeli democracy from the likes of Ben-Gvir and others. However, there was no such mobilization when Israel passed its Nation-State Law in 2018. This legislation defined Israel as the

"national home of the Jewish people, in which it fulfills its natural, cultural, religious and historical right to self-determination." The truth is that most Israeli Jews have no qualms about a law that exists to discriminate against the Palestinian citizens of the country. This should hardly be a surprise, as Israel is a settler-colonial state whose very existence was made possible by the expulsion of most of the native Palestinian population. The Nation-State Law, however, not only canceled the rights of the Palestinians, it also ensured some kind of balance between the competing Jewish Israeli groups.

Writing in Haaretz in 2017, Shlomo Sand asserted that Zionism was a national movement that "rebelled against historical Judaism" and that it "was mainly atheistic." In this context, atheism did not simply translate to the denial of God's existence, but also to the rejection of all religious myths, notions and beliefs affiliated with traditional Judaism. It is no wonder that religious Jewish organizations and communities in Europe initially rejected Zionism and perceived early Zionist leaders as heretics. Yet terms such as "Jews" and the "Jewish people" remained essential to atheistic Zionists because such references were not only strategic and functional, but actually critical to the very survival of the ideology.

For the atheistic Zionists, God was dead and, therefore, the Holy Land became the homeland," Sand argued, describing how Zionists converted Judaism from a religion to a national movement. This is why the Nation-State Law was phrased in such a way. When the terms "natural," "cultural," "religious" and "historical" are combined, they produce a relatively modern definition of nationhood - though an exclusivist and racist one.

The same way that liberal Zionists redefined religion according to nationalistic lines, religious Zionists are now redefining nationality according to religious beliefs. Armed with a legally binding definition of Israel as an exclusively Jewish state, many Israelis would like to see the religious component of the state become the dominant one, thus challenging the liberal Zionists' peculiar definition of "democracy."

## Developed world should do more to bring Earth's temperature down

Xin Ping

**WE are witnessing history again. This July might be the hottest single month on Earth on record and possibly in more than 100,000 years. "We are hurtling towards disaster; it is time to wake up and step up", the United Nations chief António Guterres said, calling for immediate global action to avert climate "catastrophe".**

Global warming is now an indisputable fact. Human beings have lived on the planet for a long time, yet the climate problems seem to have taken a sharp turn for the worse just in the centuries closest to our day. However, the long-standing failure of developed countries to shoulder their responsibilities and the delay in fulfilling their commitments have led to the slow progress of the current climate agenda, raising growing concerns in the international community. Developed countries bear historical, legal, and moral responsibility for climate change, while developing countries are the greatest victims. As Brazilian President Lula said at "Power Our Planet", "who polluted the planet in these last 200 years were those who made the industrial revolution". According to the Center for Global Development, the historical concentration of industry and wealth in developed countries means that they are responsible for 79 percent of the emissions from 1850 to 2011. The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Paris Agreement. Recent research led by the University of Leeds shows that almost 90 percent of excess carbon emissions come from developed countries such as the United States, who could be liable to pay \$170 trillion in climate reparations to low-emitting countries to ensure targets to curtail climate breakdown are met. Climate change is a global challenge that calls for a global response. In recent years, there has been a regression in the climate policies of some developed countries, and fossil energy consumption and carbon emissions have increased rather than decreased, affecting the global climate governance process. The United States, frequently criticizing others for not being "transparent" or "accountable", lacks a coherent, consistent, or accountable policy to address climate change. Unwilling to ratify the Kyoto Protocol and the Convention on Biological Diversity, withdrawing

For that to happen, the country's political, educational, judicial and military systems would have to be entirely revamped to adhere to a religious messianic code and priorities. Now that the most right-wing government in Israel's history has a comfortable majority, the next step is to remove the main obstacle from its path: the judicial system and, in particular, the Supreme Court - the only entity capable of blocking or reversing the government's decisions. The media's presentation of Israel's mass protests as a fight for democracy is misleading, at best, as it fails to address the historical, ideological and, ultimately, class-based divides in Israeli society.

When the state of Israel was established on the ruins of historic Palestine in May 1948, it was liberal and atheistic Zionists who declared its independence, invented its founding myths and labored to give it international legitimacy. References to Jews, Judaism and the Jewish people were enough to give it a religious facade and appeal, but not enough to hand the keys over to religious Zionists. The latter group proved critical to liberal Zionists, as they became the backbone of Israel's colonial enterprises in the Occupied Territories following the 1967 war. Not until the late 1970s did right-wing, revisionist Zionism become more relevant, and not until recently did religious Zionists become the power brokers, dominating the Israeli government and some of the most critical political institutions. It seems that the balancing act of liberal Zionists, of being both Jewish and democratic, has failed. This strange equation has served Israel well with its Western allies, which not only believed this perplexing reasoning but defended it as well.

Thus, without "Jewish" and "democratic" together in the same sentence, the idea of Israel will become even more indefensible in the future. Ideological shifts do not appear and disappear overnight. Regardless of the outcome of Israel's protests, the ideological shifts in Israel are seismic and long-lasting. For now, liberal Zionists and their Western allies must accept the historical truth that Herzl's clergymen have escaped the temples and are now running the country.





# CPI inflation slides down to 28.3% in July

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Consumer Price Index (CPI)-based inflation came down to 28.3 percent during the month of July 2023 as compared to 29.4 percent recorded during June 2023, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported Tuesday. According to PBS data, the CPI based inflation during the same month of last year was recorded at 24.9%.

On month-on-month basis, it increased to 3.5% in July 2023 as compared to a decrease of 0.3% in the previous month and an increase of 4.3% in July 2022.

The CPI inflation Urban increased to 26.3% on year-on-year basis in July 2023 as compared to an increase of 27.3% in the previous month and 23.6% in July 2022. On month-on-month basis, it increased to 3.6% in July 2023 as compared to an increase of 0.1% in the previous month and an increase of 4.5% in July 2022.

CPI inflation Rural increased to 31.3% on year-on-year basis in July 2023

as compared to an increase of 32.4% in the previous month and 26.9% in July 2022. On month-on-month basis, it increased to 3.3% in July 2023 as compared to a decrease of 0.8% in the previous month and an increase of 4.2% in July 2022.

Meanwhile, the Sensitive Price Indicator based inflation on YoY increased to 29.3% in July 2023 as compared to an increase of 34.9% a month earlier and 28.2% in July 2022. On MoM basis, it increased by 2.8% in July 2023 as compared to an increase of 0.2% a month earlier and an increase of 7.3% in July 2022.

The Wholesale Price Index based inflation on YoY basis increased to 23.1% in July 2023 as compared to an increase of 22.4% a month earlier and an increase of 38.5% in July 2022. On MoM basis, it increased by 2.5% in July 2023 as compared to a decrease of 0.3% a month earlier and an increase of 2.0% in corresponding month of last year (July

2022).

The core inflation measured by non-food non-energy (NFNE) Urban increased to 18.4% on (YoY) basis in July 2023 as compared to an increase of 18.5% in the previous month and 12.0% in July 2022. On (MoM) basis, it increased by 1.2% in July 2023 as compared to an increase of 0.7% in previous month, and an increase of 1.2% in corresponding month of last year i.e. July, 2022.

The core inflation measured by non-food non-energy for rural increased to 24.6% on (YoY) basis in July 2023 as compared to an increase of 25.2% in the previous month and 14.6% in July 2022. On (MoM) basis, it increased by 1.2% in July 2023 as compared to an increase of 0.9% in previous month, and an increase of 1.6% in corresponding month of last year i.e. July, 2022 are given below

On YoY basis, the top few commodities which varied from corresponding month of previous year i.e. July, 2022 are given below

included cigarettes (123.46%), wheat flour (102.43%), tea (97.26%), rice (68.87%), wheat (66.58%), potatoes (60.66%), chicken (58.13%), sugar (56.45%), wheat products (55.96%), beans (47.5%), gur (44.57%), pulse moong (43.82%), pulse mash (41.06%), milk fresh (30.00%), fresh vegetables (25.07%), fresh fruits (24.02%), gram whole (21.75%), besan (19.55%), meat (18.25%), cooking oil (10.62%), stationery (63.56%), gas charges (62.82%), communication apparatus (39.77%), motor vehicles (35.66%), construction input items (35.15%), newspapers (32.77%), personal grooming services (30.87%), solid fuel (30.37%), accommodation services (27.89%) and construction wage rates (15.24%).

The commodities that witnessed increase in prices included onions (28.18%), pulse masoor (7.72%) and vegetable ghee (0.34%) and liquefied hydrocarbons (1.85%).

## SNGPL's shareholders approve 40% cash dividend for FY 2021-22



### F.P. Report

LAHORE: The 58th Annual General Meeting of Sui Northern Gas Pipelines Limited (SNGPL) was held on Tuesday, August 01, 2023 at Pearl Continental Hotel, Lahore. The shareholders of the Company Approved the Annual Accounts for the FY 2021-22 with profit before tax of Rs. 15.50 billion, profit after tax of Rs. 10.37 billion and Earning Per Shares of Rs.16.34. The shareholders also approved Cash Dividend of 40% i.e. Rs. 4.0 per share on the recommendations of the Board of Directors of SNGPL. The Shareholders of the Company also re-appointed M/s. Yousaf Adil, Chartered Accountant as Auditors of SNGPL for FY 2022-23.

Shareholders of the Company also approved the circulation/dissemination

of Annual Audited Financial Statements through QR-enabled code and web-linkas notified by the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan.

The Chairperson, Ms. Roohi Raees Khan, apprised the shareholders that despite numerous economic and financial challenges, SNGPL continued to deliver excellent results. She further announced that the Company has declared dividends for the sixth consecutive year. Chairperson appreciated the efforts of the Management and UFG Control. She also appreciated the staff, and skilled manpower for their dedicated efforts for achieving the ambitious targets set by the Board.

A detailed interactive session was held. A number of queries from the shareholders were responded to by the Management to their satisfaction.

Ms. Roohi Raees Khan, Chairperson, Mr. Manzoor Ahmed, Dr. Sohail Razi Khan, Mr. Mohammad Haroon, Directors, Mr. Amer Tufail, Managing Director, Mr. Faisal Iqbal, Chief Financial Officer and Mr. Imtiaz Mehmood, Company Secretary were present in person while Mr. Ali Tahir, Mr. Shahbaz Tahir Nadeem, Syed Akhtar Ali, Directors attended the meeting via video link. Senior Management of the Company was also present at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

The Chairperson, in the presence of the esteemed Board of Directors, expressed sincere appreciation for the exemplary endeavors undertaken by the Board Members, Management, and Staff. Particular acknowledgment was extended to the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) for their steadfast support and

invaluable guidance throughout the course of operations.

Mr. Amer Tufail, MD while acknowledging the support of the Board and the Ministry of Energy (Petroleum Division) informed the shareholders that the sustainability of the Company's results had been possible with the able guidance of the Board and dedicated efforts by the team.

## Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Seven ships scheduled to load/off-load Containers, Cement, Palm oil, Chemicals, Coal and Gas oil, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal, Liquid Terminal, Engro Terminal, Bul Terminal and FOTCO Terminal respectively on Monday.

Meanwhile three more ships, carrying Containers, Palm oil and LPG also arrived at outer anchorage of the Port Qasim during the last 24 hours.

PQA berths engaged by nine ships during the last 24 hours, out of them, two ships, MSC Mumbai VIII and Al-Maersk Brooklyn left the port on Tuesday morning and other ship Khitira is expected to sail on same day.

A cargo volume of 207,653 tonnes comprising 144,653 tonnes imports cargo and 63,205 tonnes export cargo including containerized cargo carried in 2,873 Containers (2,569 TEUS imports and 2,909 TEUS export) was handled at the Port during last 24 hours.

Three ships five ships are at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them, two ships, PGC Petreas and Maersk Santos & another ship MSC United VIII carrying LPG and Containers are expected to take berths EVTL and QICT respectively on Tuesday.

## BMW raises 2023 outlook on strong orders

FRNAKFURT, Germany (APP): German automaker BMW on Tuesday lifted its 2023 earnings forecast on the back of strong orders and improved availability of its premium models.

The group said it now expected a pre-tax profit margin (EBIT) of 9 to 10.5 percent, compared with 8-10 percent previously.

Car deliveries are expected to see "solid growth", it added, after earlier pencilling in only "slight growth".

The more optimistic outlook comes after BMW released preliminary results showing a "solid" performance in the first half of this

year. The company delivered 1.2 million vehicles over the first six months, a 4.7 percent increase on last year. The group achieved an EBIT margin of 10.6 percent, helped by "a positive price situation".

Like other carmakers, BMW struggled last year with a global shortage of semiconductors and other supply chain disruptions that curbed production in the automotive sector.

The group nevertheless reported an increased net profit of 18.6 billion euros (\$20.4 billion) for 2022, as higher prices for its luxury models helped offset a 4.8

percent drop in deliveries.

With supply issues gradually easing, BMW said it "expects positive momentum in the business during the second half of the year". "This is built on the ongoing strength of the order bank and an expected improvement in the availability of its premium vehicles," it added.

The company warned however that it was bracing for "higher expenses for suppliers" due to inflation.

Lingering supply issues will also "continue to be a headwind", it added.

BMW will publish its detailed results for the first half of 2023 on Thursday.

## China unveils detailed measures to bolster private economy

BEIJING (APP): China's top economic planner on Tuesday unveiled a series of detailed measures including tax reductions and cutting red tape to boost the private economy after a general guideline was released last month.

The measures ranging from fair market access to stronger financial support and better government services are designed to tackle prominent problems facing private enterprises and boost their confidence, according to a notice from the National Development and Reform Commission and several other government agencies.

Private firms will be encouraged to participate in major national projects

that are profitable and mature, issue Real Estate Investment Trust products for infrastructure projects, and lead technological programs in key areas, such as industrial software and artificial intelligence.

"Green light" investment cases will continue to be published to promote the sound development of the platform economy.

Companies will enjoy an easier process of tax reduction in research and development spending, shorter time in export rebates, and strengthened inclusive financial support.

In terms of legal guar-

antees, regulations and official documents violating the principle of equality for enterprises of various types of ownership

will be abolished to protect the development of the private economy. The government will improve its services to help private businesses solve difficulties, cut red tape in administrative approval, clear arrears owed to small and medium-sized enterprises, and actively engage with entrepreneurs during the policymaking process.

The Communist Party of China Central Committee and the State Council issued a guideline on boosting the growth of the private economy last month, promising to improve the business environment, enhance policy support, and strengthen the legal guarantee for its development.



ISLAMABAD: Chairman Senate Standing Committee on Aviation Senator Hidayat Ullah presiding over a meeting of committee at Ministry of Aviation.

## Pharmaceutical goods' export increased

ISLAMABAD (APP): The export of pharmaceuticals goods from the country has witnessed an increase of 21.98 per cent during the fiscal year (2022-23) as compared to the corresponding period last year.

Pakistan exported pharmaceutical products worth US\$ 328.208 million during the period from July-June (2022-23) as compared to the export of US\$ 269.070 million during July-June (2021-22), showing a growth of 21.98 per cent, according to the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

In terms of quantity, the export of pharmaceutical goods also rose by 85.62 per cent from 29,593 metric tons to 54,929 metric tons, the data revealed.

## PSX stays bullish, gains 195 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) continued with bullish trend on Tuesday, gaining 195.91 points, a positive change of 0.41 percent, closing at 48,230.51 points against 48,034.60 points the previous trading day.

A total of 556,930,694 shares were traded during the day as compared to 491,874,957 shares the previous day, whereas the price of shares stood at Rs 15,946 billion against Rs 17,884 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 357 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 223 of them recorded gains and 107 sustained losses, whereas the share price of

27 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Telecard Limited with 39,642,890 shares at Rs 8.72 per share; Cnergyco PK with 37,858,029 shares at Rs.3.51 per share and WorldCall Telecom with 33,223,087 shares at Rs 1.35 per share.

Raffhan Maize witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 147.97.00 per share price, closing at Rs8,797.97 whereas the runner-up was Nestle Pakistan with an Rs 50.00 rise in its per share price to Rs 7,000.00.

Colgate Palm witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs 79.34 per share closing at Rs 1,461.62, followed by Khyber Textile with Rs

67.57 decline to close at Rs 833.43.

**Gold rates remain constant at Rs222,200 per tola**

The per tola price of 24 karat gold remained unchanged at Rs.222,200 on Tuesday. All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price of 10 grams of 24-karat gold and 10 gram 22 karat gold also remained stagnant at Rs.190,501 and Rs.174,626 respectively.

The price of per tola and ten-gram silver remained unchanged at Rs2,800 and Rs2,400.54 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market decreased by \$9 to \$1,950 from \$1,959, the association reported.

## 'Hike of Rs20/ltr in POL prices proves Russian oil was only political slogan'

KARACHI (INP): The Central Executive Committee of the Pakistan Business Forum (PBF) on Tuesday while rejecting the recent hike in petroleum prices by the government has said that said that the high inflation caused by surge in petroleum prices made it hard further for the common man to bear it and questioned where is the relief from the Russian oil which was projected by the petroleum minister before the media.

The committee said that the Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif should immediately withdraw the price of petroleum products to save people of Pakistan from the sky-high inflation.

Central Vice President's of PBF Jahanara Wattoo and Chaudhry Ahmad Jawad said price hike not only affected the commoners but also the business community and also said the decision would prove detrimental to the industries due to high cost of doing business and will also open the floodgates of inflation.

Similarly the electricity bills costlier and unafford-

able for the consumers; now the unexpected hike in oil prices would escalate prices of all household goods being widely used across Pakistan, they added.

Ahmad Jawad said that Pakistan's industry had been harmed by the high cost of doing business, which discouraged investment in capacity and capability and called for easing the burden of heavy taxes on the power sector.

He said that the economy of Pakistan, particularly the SMEs are striving to deal with the economic crunch and need to get support. Instead of providing subsidies or waivers, it is unjust to overburden the industries with a hike in the cost of production. An increase in petroleum products costs will further weaken the economic environment which is already under threat on various fronts.

Jahanara Wattoo said that the oil rates have been on the declining trend in the international market now, but the government instead of passing on this benefit to the public especially after the arrival of

Russian oil, had increased their rates again, which is very unfortunate.

If fuel would be heavily taxed, the entire economy would suffer unprecedentedly, he said, adding that petrol and HSD are two major products that generate most of the revenue for the government because of their massive and yet growing consumption in the country. The economy is already in a precarious situation, this constant back and forth will only increase volatility, when we ought to be heading for stability, she added.

She said that the cost of doing business and cost of production have shot up to the level of un-competitiveness. The cost of borrowing was huge and capital financing has become more expensive.

Chairman Balochistan Engr. Daroo Khan Achakzai said Pakistan exports cannot compete with China, Bangladesh and India where power tariffs were 7-9 cents, as the country's exports have been witnessing a major setback in present days due to the high cost of electricity, which has

become a major stumbling block in industrial development and boosting exports.

He said that fuel and electricity are regarded as the lifeline of any economy and play a pivotal role in the socio-economic development of a country.

Chairperson Sindh Shabnam Zafar said that industries need low-cost energy to bring down their cost of production, keeping their goods competitive in the international market. She said that the government, in present circumstances, would have to reduce the price of electricity along with the cut in the prices of petroleum products to bring down the cost of doing business and to promote industrial activities.

PBF leaders said that business activities were already in decline and in this situation the government should take serious steps to cut the cost of doing business, as yesterday hike in oil rates would further enhance the cost of production, making transport more expensive and life of common man will be more miserable.

## TDAP secretary visits SCCI

SIALKOT (APP): Trade Development Authority of Pakistan (TDAP) Secretary Dr Fareed Iqbal Qureshi visited the Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) on Tuesday.

On this occasion, President SCCI Abdul Ghafoor Malik acknowledged the role of the secretary TDAP in facilitating the business community of Sialkot as evidenced by approvals of a number of trade delegations and international exhibitions.

In an appeal to the secretary, Malik sought expedited processing and execution of essential projects, urging the provision of expedited support from the esteemed trade and investment officers.

The president SCCI expressed a desire to empower the local TDAP office, enabling it to competently handle matters concerning Sialkot's value-added sectors.

## CDNS collects Rs15 billion through Islamic investments in July 2023

ISLAMABAD (APP): The

Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) has collected an investment of Rs15 billion in the month of July 2023-24 through Islamic investment bonds.

The directorate has set a target of Rs 75 billion for the new financial year 2023-24 for Islamic finance bonds, a senior official of CDNS told APP here on Tuesday. Replying to a question, he said the CDNS's aim was to introduce new dimensions in

the Islamic finance sector.

He informed that CDNS had reviewed and set a target of Rs 60 billion in the fiscal year (2022-23) for Islamic investment to introduce the new products in the market.

"Islamic finance has a very important role in the global financial sector at this time, and a large part of the economy of many major countries currently includes Islamic finance," he said.

Replying to another

question, he said the CDNS has set a target of Rs 1743 billion for the current Fiscal Year 2023-24, to promote the saving culture in the country.

This is Rs 443 billion additional annual targets than the target of Rs1300 billion for the previous financial year 2022-23 he said. He informed, "The Central Directorate of National Savings (CDNS) attained the target of issuing Rs 1.48 trillion in fresh bonds in the current fiscal year (2022-23)."

### COURT NOTICES

In the court of SAJJID KHAN SENIOR Family Court Civil Judge, Danna, Mst: Rabia vs Raynat Khan. Family suit No.234/F.C. Instituted on 22-09-2022 Next date of hearing: 21-09-2023 To: Raynat Khan son of Mohbar Khan R/O Mari Kala Mansud Khel Tehsil and District Danna presently Abroad. The defendants are informed through this notice to appear in this court on 21.09.2023. After this no excuse would be accepted and ex-parte proceedings shall be initiated against you. Given under my hand and seal of this court.

In The Court of Samina Sahar Civil Judge-ix Danna, Suit No.144/1, institution 26.09.2022, Next date of hearing is 05.09.2023. Title: Ghulam Daud Khan Bangush VS Secretary Revenue etc To: Defendant No. 8 Ghulam Mustafa Khan Bangush Son of Malik Fauzdar Khan Bangush presently R/O Parer Khoni Khel Danna, presently (U.A.E.) The defendants are informed through this notice to appear in this court on 05.09.2023. After this no excuse would be accepted and ex-parte proceedings shall be initiated against you. Given under my hand and seal of this court.

In The Court of Jam Aisha Civil Judge XIII Danna, Suit No. 767/F.C. institution 26.06.2023, Next date of hearing is 14.09.2023. Title: Rabia Bibi VS Hazrat Bilal To: Hazrat Bilal son Muhammad Ismayel R/O Bahadar Sher Kala Mamash Khel Anary Pal Chuk Dawdan Tehsil & District

Hanna, presently Abroad. The defendants are informed through this notice to appear in this court on 14.09.2023. After this no excuse would be accepted and ex-parte proceedings shall be initiated against you. Given under my hand and seal of this court.

In The Court Of Shafiqat Qandeer Civil Judge-XIV, Hanna, Suit No. 145/1 institution 06.01.2023 Next date of hearing is 06.09.2023. Title: Mikael Khan vs Hqadad Khan etc To:4/1.Fazal ar Rehman 7/3. Akhtar Ali Sons Sher Wali R/O Payinda khel Tehsil Dandi District Danna, presently Abroad. The defendants are informed through this notice to appear in this court on 06.09.2023. After this no excuse would be accepted and ex-parte proceedings shall be initiated against you. Given under my hand and seal of this court.

In The Court Of Sumas Razaq Civil Judge.VI Danna, Suit No. 111/1 institution 04.03.2023 Next date of hearing is 07.09.2023. Title: Hamayun Khan etc vs Sarfraz Khan etc To: 1. Sarfraz Khan son Wala Khan a/o Fazal Khan Mustaf District Danna presently Abu Dhabi. (U.A.E.) The defendants are informed through this notice to appear in this court on 07.09.2023. After this no excuse would be accepted and ex-parte proceedings shall be initiated against you. Given under my hand and seal of this court.





In brief

Street Child Football team lauded

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani Ambassador to Norway Saadia Altaf Qazi has lauded the performance of Pakistan Street Child Football team in the ongoing World Youth Football Cup 'Norway Cup'. According to details, the Ambassador meet the players of the Pakistan Street Child Football team and appreciated their performance in the extravaganza. The team management also accompanied the players in the meeting. On the occasion, the management of Pakistan team thanked the Ambassador for her all-out support. She was also awarded an honorary shield and Pakistani flag on behalf of the Pakistan team. Pakistani squad includes Forwards: Tofail Shinwari, Faisal, Shamir Ali, Saud; Midfielders: Abdul Wahab, Muhammad Ali, Ali Asif, Ahmed Raza; Defenders: Muhammad Adeel, Abid Ali, Obaidullah, Asad Nasir; Goalkeeper: Abdullah, Sahil. It may be mentioned that Pakistan Street Child Football team has been the runner-up in the Street Child Football World Cup held in Qatar and has secured the second position in Norway Cup 2015 and third position in Norway Cup 2016.

PSB approves participation

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Pakistan Sports board (PSB) has approved the participation of the Pakistani Contingent in the 7th Commonwealth Youth Games to be held in Trinidad and Tobago from August 4 to 14. It was approved in the 28th meeting of PSB held here on Tuesday. This would provide a remarkable opportunity for young athletes to showcase their skills on an international platform. During the meeting, multiple crucial agendas were discussed and approved. The Board also unanimously approved the regularization of daily wages employees, taking a significant step towards promoting fairness within the organization. To support sports initiatives and improve facilities, the Board approved the budget estimate for the Pakistan Sports Board for the upcoming financial year 2023-2024. The Board also granted permission for the Pakistan Contingent to participate in the 2nd Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Games scheduled to be held in Belarus from August 4 to 14. This would foster greater sports diplomacy and cooperation with other nations. Moreover, the Board approved Pakistan's participation in the 18th Asian Games set to take place in China from September 23 to October 8. In an effort to make sports accessible to all, the Board took a positive step by rationalizing the rates of the PSB facilities for its members. This measure aims to encourage wider participation and engagement in various sporting activities. The Board also granted permission for the revision of the Constitution of the PSB. This would streamline and strengthen the organization's operations, ensuring effective governance and support for athletes and sports enthusiasts.

## Ali Asfand, Arafat Minhas orchestrate sensational win

DARWIN (Monitoring Desk): A stunning display with the ball scripted Pakistan Shaheens' second win in as many days. Shaheens successfully defended a small target of 94 by bowling out Melbourne Renegades on 85 in 19.4 overs at the TIO Stadium in the Top End T20 Series on Tuesday.

With three wickets each from their four overs, Ali Asfand, who conceded only eight runs and bowled 16 dots, and Arafat Minhas, who conceded 15 and bowled 15 dots, spearheaded Shaheens defence. Sajjad

Ali, Faisal Akram and Ahmed Khan took a wicket each. Dylan Brasher's 20-ball 19 was the highest score in the innings.

Shaheens were bowled out for 93 in 18.5 overs after they elected to bat. Shawaiz Irfan top-scored with 32-ball 34 and hit two sixes and a four. The next best scores were of 13 by Basit Ali and Faisal Akram. Ruwantha Kellapotha was the pick of the bowlers with three wickets for 15. Fergus O'Neill and Tom Rogers picked up two wickets apiece.

Shaheens play the next match tomorrow, against

Melbourne Stars, at the same venue. The first ball of the match will be bowled at 1830 local time.

Scores in brief:

Pakistan Shaheens beat Melbourne Renegades by 8 runs

Pakistan Shaheens 93 all out, 18.5 overs (Shawaiz Irfan 34; Ruwantha Kellapotha 3-15, Tom Rogers 2-18, Fergus O'Neill 2-21)

Melbourne Renegades 85 all out, 19.4 overs (Ali Asfand 3-8, Arafat Minhas 3-15)

Player of the match – Ali Asfand (Pakistan Shaheens)

## Pakistan Sports Board approves key agendas in 28th board meeting

ISLAMABAD (NNI): The 28th meeting of the Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) took place marking an important milestone in advancing the nation's sports sector.

During the meeting, multiple crucial agendas were discussed and approved.

The Board unanimously approved the regularization of daily wages employees, taking a significant step towards promoting fairness within the organization.

To support sports initiatives and improve facilities, the Board approved the budget estimate for the Pakistan Sports Board for the upcoming financial year 2023-2024. The Board approved the participation of

the Pakistan Contingent in the 7th Commonwealth Youth Games to be held in Trinidad and Tobago from 4th to 14th August 2023. This provides a remarkable opportunity for our young athletes to showcase their skills on an international platform.

The Board granted permission for the Pakistan Contingent to participate in the 2nd Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Games scheduled to be held in Belarus from 4th to 14th August 2023. This will foster greater sports diplomacy and cooperation with other Commonwealth nations.

Moreover, the Board approved Pakistan's participation in the 18th Asian

Games set to take place in China from 23rd September to 8th October 2023.

In an effort to make sports accessible to all, the Board took a positive step by rationalizing the rates of the PSB facilities for its members. This measure aims to encourage wider participation and engagement in various sporting activities.

Lastly, in a significant move to adapt and improve, the Board granted permission for the revision of the Constitution of the PSB. This will streamline and strengthen the organization's operations, ensuring effective governance and support for athletes and sports enthusiasts.

## Air chief hails World Jr Squash Champion, says nation proud of Hamza

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief of the Air Staff, Pakistan Air Force (PAF), Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu has lauded the brilliant performance of young Squash sensation Hamza Khan saying the nation was proud of the WSF World Junior Squash champion.

Hamza, who returned to Pakistan on Tuesday following a remarkable triumph in World Junior Squash Championship in Melbourne, Australia, called on Air Chief Marshal Zaheer Ahmed Baber Sidhu during his visit here at Air Headquarters, said a press release.

Speaking on the occasion Chief of the Air Staff, who was also the President of the Pakistan Squash Federation, lauded the brilliant performance of the young Squash star.

"The nation is proud of Hamza Khan who brought laurels to the country by winning the World Championship after 36 years. Such players are an asset to the country and a beacon for other youngsters to emulate. We have introduced a systematic profiling process of young talent which would go a long way in professional grooming of

our squash players through assessment of their physical and technical skills, as well as their mental and emotional attributes," he said.

Air Chief also gave special instructions to the Director General Administration to provide all-out logistic and administrative support to the rising star in order to facilitate his training as per modern parameters to prepare for the upcoming World Squash Championship in the month of November 2023.

Air Chief wished Hamza Khan all the best for World Squash Championship and hoped that Hamza would be able to replicate his success in the upcoming tournament as well.

Chief of the Air Staff reiterated his resolve that the Pakistan Squash Federation under the patronage of Pakistan Air Force would continue to take revolutionary steps for the promotion of Squash in the country.

Air Chief Marshal commended the hard work put in by the coaching staff for providing international standard training and coaching facilities to the young players.

He also appreciated the efforts of the Pakistan

Squash Federation (PSF) in making concerted efforts for bringing back the lost glory in the game of Squash and hoped that Pakistan, with the sheer hard work and sincere efforts of its players like Hamza Khan, would once again rule the world of Squash.

The Chief of the Air Staff also thanked and appreciated the Chief of Army Staff for taking a special interest in the uplift of sports in Pakistan.

Hamza expressed his gratitude towards the Chief of the Air Staff for his support in revitalizing the sport of Squash and making his dreams a reality.

During the meeting, Hamza also commended the innumerable initiatives undertaken by PSF for the promotion of the game, which included the development of state-of-the-art sports infrastructure, the provision of quality coaching and the establishment of prestigious squash academies.

He said these strategic initiatives patronized by Pakistan Air Force have played a pivotal role in reclaiming the sport's prominence and achieving significant milestones at the international level.



ADELAIDE: Alex Greenwood of England and Wu Chengshu of China compete to head the ball during the FIFA Women's World Cup Australia & New Zealand 2023 Group D match between China and England.

Nothing is impossible, if you have 'sheer will': Naila

ISLAMABAD (APP): Woman climber Naila Kiani who has become a trendsetter for Pakistani women in mountaineering wants to encourage females towards the sport, saying nothing was impossible if you have the 'sheer will' to achieve your dreams.

Naila, who has submitted eight peaks in two years, said still people were not that much aware of mountaineering.

"We need to be aware people of mountaineering as we have got a lot of talent in the country. We also need support from the private sector," she said in a press conference here on Tuesday.

Naila, who was also the first Pakistani woman to ascend Broad Peak, complete the climb of all five 8,000-meter peaks in Pakistan, and scale eight 8,000-meter peaks worldwide, said she plans to complete all of the World's 14 highest peaks in the coming future.

Naila, who hails from Rawalpindi, said when a woman from Pindi who has no family background in mountaineering can submit the highest peaks then other women can also do that.

"We need to put our focus on mountaineering if we want to succeed and improve in the sector. As compared to Nepal we need to improve the mountaineering sector to benefit from it," she said.

She also lauded the Alpine Club of Pakistan for their support and was all-out praise for Prime Minister (PM) Shehbaz Sharif for approving the conferment of the national civil award Sitara-e-Imtiaz for her, in recognition of her achievements.

Naila had submitted the legendary Everest, the difficult K2, the commanding Lhotse, the perilous Annapurna, the elusive G1 and the G2, and the majestic Nanga Parbat. Numerous mountaineers and adventure fans all over the world are inspired by Naila's unwavering resolve, unmatched abilities, and unwavering attitude.

## Sindh Men's, Women's Hockey Teams announced

KARACHI (NNI): Two men's and two women's hockey teams from Sindh have been announced to participate in the Prime Minister's Youth Program Talent Hunt, National Youth Sports Hockey League.

The National Hockey League will be held at the National Hockey Stadium, Lahore from August 5 to August 11. In this regard, the Chairman of the five-member Selection Committee, Olympian Hanif Khan and Akbar Qaimkhani, announced the names of the players. All four teams of Sindh will participate in the National League.

Men's Green included Abdul Rafi (captain), Ali Iqbal Afridi, Azeen Anil, Babar Saadat, Hammad Ayaz, Hammad Rizwan, Hasan Mujtaba, Mohammad Haris Naseer, Mohsin Nawaz, Mohammad Qais, Mohammad Ramzan,

Nouman Khan, Mohammad Talha, Rian ur Rahman, Shahzeb Arbaaz, Sultan Mehmood, Syed Muhammad Saad Ali and Muhammad Hamza. The team officials included Farooq Khan as Manager, Ali Azlan Khan, and Mahmood Khan as Coaches.

Men's White has Mohammad Rohan (captain), Abdul Bari, Abdul Qadir, Ali Raza Memon, Ali Hussain, Mir Hamza Bugti, Haris Sarfaraz, Jawad Ahmed, Kamran Ali, Khurshid A. Maher, Mohammad Ayaz Ahmed, Meseem Abbas, Mohammad Naeem, Nabil Akhtar, Sarim Hussain Kazmi, Taqi Raza, Osama Babar and Veenay. Officials included Askari Kazmi as Manager, while Junaid Aslam and Obaidullah Bhutto as Coaches.

Women's Green included Dua Khan (captain),

Alisha, Amna Khan, Anshara Khanum, Huma Maya, Iqra Iqbal, Khushbu Khalil, Momal Sukina, Muqaddas Rafiq, Raafia Khanum, Romisa Khan, Saima Ghulam, Sahrish Sabir, Shazma Naseem, Saleha Malik, Sundas Siddiqui, Yumna Fatima and Zam Zam.

The officials included Saeeda Khanum as Manager, and Kushmala Batul and Ayesha Khan as Coaches.

Women's White has Nabila (captain), Amna Ali, Azra Batul, Baby Asiya, Shiza Saleem, Dza Sheikh, Farwa Jafri, Faza Shahid, Hasina, Iqra Memon, Kainat Baloch, Mehwish, Mishal Baloch, Nasreen Jamali, Resham Khatun, Rutab Ali, Saba Khokar and Suhana Taj. Officials included Salma as Manager, while Erum Baloch and Arif Mahmood Coaches.

## Pakistan team reaches India for Asian Hockey Champions Trophy

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan men's team reached India on Tuesday to partake in the upcoming Asian Hockey Champions Trophy, scheduled to commence on August 3.

According to the details, the national team will travel to Amritsar via Wagah Border before flying out to Delhi and then Chennai where the continental event will take place.

Pakistan Sports Board (PSB) last week, issued a No-Objection Certificate (NOC) to the national men's Hockey team to partake in the tournament.

Last month, the Pakistan Hockey Federation (PHF) selection committee unveiled an 18-member squad for the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy.

The 18-member squad with seven stand-by players were finalised after the conclusion of two-day trials and was approved by PHF President Brigadier Khalid Sajjad Khokhar. Umar Bhutta will continue to lead the national men's hockey team while Abdul Waheed Ashraf

will serve as his deputy in the Asian Champions Trophy.

The recently-announced squad includes Akmal Hussain, Abdullah Ishtiaq Khan, Muhammad Abdullah, Muhammad Sufyan Khan, Ehtisham Aslam, Osama Bashir, Aqeel Ahmed, Arshad Liaquat, Muhammad Imad, Abdul Hanan Shahid, Zakaria Hayat, Rana Abdul Waheed Ashraf (vc), Muhammad Umar Bhatta (c), Roman, Muhammad Murtaza Yaqub, Muhammad Shahzaib Khan, Afraz and Abdul Rahman.

Meanwhile, Ali Raza, Muhammad Baqir, Muhammad Nadeem Khan, Abdul Wahab, Waqar Ali, Muhammad Arsalan and Abdul Qayyum have been included in the stand-by players' list. Last month, the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) unveiled the schedule of the upcoming Asian Hockey Champions Trophy.

As per the statement released by the AHF, the six-team tournament will run from August 3 to 12 in Chennai. The tournament will begin with Korea and

Japan playing the first game, while hosts, India will play the third game of the opening day when they take on China.

The six-team tournament will see Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, Japan, China, and India battle it out for top honours. All the participating teams are placed in one pool and the positions on the points table will be decided by a league system.

Pakistan will start their Asian Hockey Champions Trophy campaign against Malaysia on August 3 before taking on Korea on August 4, Japan on August 6 and China on August 7.

The green shirts will then lock horns with arch-rivals India in their last round fixture on August 9.

The final of the Asian Hockey Champions Trophy will be held on August 12.

Notably, Pakistan and India are the most successful sides of the tournament, having won the title thrice each while Korea will participate in the upcoming edition as the defending champions, who won the previous edition in 2021.

# Stunning James goals power England into last 16

HINDMARSH (Agencies): Lauren James produced a sensational individual performance as England entertained to sweep aside China and book their place in the last 16 of the Women's World Cup as group winners.

It was a display worthy of their status as European champions and James once again lit the stage alight in Adelaide with two sensational goals and three assists.

The 13,497 in attendance were treated to a masterclass from Chelsea's James, who announced her arrival at the World Cup with the match-winner against Denmark on Friday.

She helped England get off to the perfect start when she teed up Alessia Russo for the opener, and later slipped the ball through to Lauren Hemp to coolly place it into the bottom corner.

It was largely one-way traffic as England dominated and overwhelmed, James striking it first time into the corner from the edge of the box to make it 3-0 before another stunning finish was ruled out by video assistant referee (VAR) for offside in the build-up.

China knew they were heading out of the tournament unless they responded, so they came out with more aggression in the second half, unnerving England slightly when Shuang Wang scored from the penalty spot after VAR picked up a handball by defender Lucy Bronze.

But James was not done yet - she volleyed Jess Carter's deep cross past helpless goalkeeper Yu Zhu for England's fourth before substitute Chloe Kelly and striker Rachel Daly joined the party.

England, who had quietly gone about their business in the group stages, will have raised eyebrows with this performance before their last-16 match against Nigeria on Monday, which will be shown live on BBC One at 08:30 BST. China are out of the competition after Denmark beat Haiti to finish in second place in Group D.

England prove worth without Walsh

Manager Sarina Wiegman kept everyone guessing when she named her starting XI, with England fans anxiously waiting

to see how they would set up without injured midfielder Keira Walsh. Wiegman's response was to unleash England's attacking talent on a China side who struggled to match them in physicality, intensity and sharpness.

James oozed magic and unpredictability, Hemp used her pace to test China's defence and captain Millie Bright was ferocious in her tackling, winning the ball back on countless occasions. After nudging past Haiti and Denmark with fairly underwhelming 1-0 wins, England were keen to impose themselves from the start. Although China had chances in the second half, they were always second best.

Goalkeeper Mary Earps will be disappointed not to keep a clean sheet, but she made two smart saves to deny Chen Qiaozhu. While England are yet to meet a side ranked inside the world's top 10 at the tournament, this will help quieten doubts that they might struggle without the instrumental Walsh.

"We're really growing into the tournament now," said captain

Bright. "We got a lot of criticism in the first two games but we were not concerned at all.

"It's unbelievable to be in the same team as [the youngsters]. It feels ridiculous and I'm quite proud. Players feeling like they can express themselves on the pitch is what we want."

James given standing ovation

The name on everyone's lips following England's win over Denmark was 'Lauren James', and those leaving Adelaide on Tuesday evening will struggle to forget her performance against China any time soon. She punished China for the space they allowed her on the edge of the box in the first half and could have had a hat-trick were it not for the intervention of VAR.

Greeted on the touchline by a grinning Wiegman, James was substituted with time to spare in the second half and went off to a standing ovation from large sections of the stadium. "She's special - a very special player for us and for women's football in general," said Kelly. "She's a special talent and the future is bright."

She became only the third player on record (since 2011) to be directly involved in five goals in a Women's World Cup game.

**Harder stars as Danes beat Haiti to book last-16 spot:** Denmark booked their place in the World Cup last 16 with a 2-0 win over Haiti to finish second in Group D behind England.

Haiti were undone by a penalty for a third game in a row, with Pernille Harder scoring from the spot after Dayana Pierre-Louis' handball. Sanne Troelsgaard sealed the Danes' progression to the knockout stages with a second goal deep into injury time.

Denmark face Group B winners and co-hosts Australia in Sydney on Monday. It will be Denmark's first World Cup knockout match in 28 years, since they lost to Norway in the quarter-finals of the 1995 tournament.

Ranked 13th in the world, the Danes were guaranteed of a place in the round of 16 with a win and a better outcome than China's result against England in the other match in the group.

Haiti, meanwhile, needed a

victory and the Lionesses to beat China if they were to have any chance of reaching the last 16.

Denmark, who failed to get out of their group at last summer's European Championships, raced out of the blocks in Perth.

Simone Boye thought she had netted the opener after just five minutes, but after a Video Assistant Referee delay, her effort was eventually chalked off for offside. VAR did not come to Haiti's rescue, though, when the ball struck Pierre-Louis' arm in the penalty area and referee Jeong Oh-hyeon pointed to the spot without the aid of the pitch-side monitor.

Harder, who signed for Bayern Munich earlier this summer, sent goalkeeper Kerly Theus the wrong way in the 21st minute as she scored the 100th goal of this year's tournament. The former Chelsea forward shone throughout for Denmark, finding the back of the net on two more occasions, only for both to be ruled out - the first was flagged for offside while the second was ruled out by VAR after Signe Bruun's late challenge on Theus.





## In brief

### IRSA releases 304,300 cusecs water

ISLAMABAD (APP): Indus River System Authority (IRSA) on Tuesday released 304,300 cusecs water from various rim stations with inflow of 393,300 cusecs. According to the data released by IRSA, water level in River Indus at Tarbela Dam was 1537.79 feet and was 139.79 feet higher than its dead level of 1,398 feet. Water inflow and outflow in the dam was recorded as 218,600 cusecs and 172,300 cusecs respectively. The water level in River Jhelum at Mangla Dam was 1229.35 feet, which was 179.35 feet higher than its dead level of 1,050 feet. The inflow and outflow of water was recorded 52,700 cusecs and 10,000 cusecs respectively. The release of water at Kalabagh, Taunsa, Guddu and Sukkur was recorded as 198,800, 357,500, 443,400 and 144,900 cusecs respectively. Similarly, from River Kabul, a total of 49,900 cusecs of water released at Nowshera and 60,700 cusecs released from River Chenab at Marala.

### 18 Corona cases reported

ISLAMABAD (APP): Health officials on Tuesday said that 18 new Coronavirus cases were reported during the last 24 hours across the country. As per the data shared by the National Institute of Health (NIH), the case positivity ratio was 0.24 percent while one patient was in critical condition. One death was reported from the Coronavirus in the last 24 hours while 7,358 Covid-19 tests were conducted. Meanwhile, Minister for National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination, Abdul Qadir Patel said the government has strengthened the role of Border and Health Services in Pakistan to deal with any sub-variant of Covid-19. The minister said there was a surveillance system at all entry points of the country including airports. He added over 90 percent of the country's population already got the Covid-19 vaccine. "An efficient system with a proper management team is fully functional in the country to remain vigilant and is ready to make an emergency plan to deal with any sub-variant of Covid-19," the minister added. He said the Border and Health Services Pakistan was ensuring the implementation of international health regulations. He said that in case of any untoward situation, the health system was fully prepared to deal with any sub-variant of the Omicron variant of Covid-19 including BF.7 in the country.

### ANF recovers over 33 kg drugs

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting three operations recovered over 33 kg drugs and arrested three accused, said an ANF Headquarters here on Tuesday. He informed that in a joint operation conducted by ANF and ASF at Islamabad International Airport, over 10.2 kg heroin was recovered from the possession of a Sri Lankan passenger. The accused was departing for Sri Lanka by flight number QR-613. In another raid, five kg hashish and one kg heroin were recovered from a vehicle intercepted in Mangopir area of Karachi. Two accused residents of Karachi were also arrested during the operation. In third operation, 17 kg hashish concealed for the purpose of smuggling was recovered in Jarobi, Zakhakhel area of Khyber. Separate cases have been registered against the accused while further investigations are under process, he added.



ISLAMABAD: UN Resident Coordinator to Pakistan, Julien Harneis calls on Speaker National Assembly Raja Pervez Ashraf at Parliament House.

## Dr Jamal directs to suspend Director Labour over anti-dengue negligence

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Primary and Secondary Health Care Punjab Dr Jamal Nasir on Tuesday directed the officials concerned to issue the suspension orders of the Director Labour Department, Rawalpindi over his negligence from duty.

Presiding over a meeting to review anti-dengue arrangements along with Commissioner Rawalpindi Division Liaqat Ali Chatha, he said that dengue was a national issue and no negligence would be tolerated in this regard.

The minister directed the allied departments to ensure their performance satisfactory up to 100 per cent during the next two weeks else strict action would be taken against them. Taking notice of the fake entries, he directed to issue show cause notices to those involved in the bogus activities reports.

Dr Jamal Nasir further directed the Chief Executive Officer of Rawalpindi Waste Management Company to spray insecticides daily in 3,400 garbage bins placed across the city and send the proposal of constructing at

least three transfer stations in the city immediately.

Speaking on the occasion, Commissioner Liaqat Ali Chatha informed that the grubbing of 150 graveyards by the District Council and 75 graveyards by the Municipal Corporation had been completed to control the larvae breeding sites.

Apart from this, due to the timely desilting of the Nulla Lai, the favourable environment for dengue larvae was also reduced due to the drainage of rainwater. He said that 102 encroachments on Nullah Lai and 79 encroachments identified on the tributaries were being removed. He said that a third-party validation team from Lahore had arrived at Rawalpindi which will issue a detailed report soon on which institutions or officials' negligence would be held accountable.

Liaqat added that only 37 confirmed cases had been reported in the district so far which were less than compared to other districts.

However, he directed the relevant officials to expedite anti-dengue surveillance at graveyards and junkyards which were vul-

nerable palaces for dengue larvae breeding.

He said that the availability of necessary medicines was being ensured at the government health facilities and asked the health department to create awareness among the people about the use of mosquito repellents to avoid mosquito bites. On the occasion, health official briefed the meeting that the health authority in collaboration with allied departments, had registered 492 FIRs, sealed 150 premises, issued Challans to 312, and a fine of Rs 727,000 imposed on violations of dengue SOPs from January 1 to date.

He informed that two Union Councils including Gulistan Colony and Chamanzar Colony had been declared high-risk areas for dengue spread as 13 cases had been reported from these areas. Deputy Commissioner Dr Hasan Waqar Cheema, Additional Commissioner (Coordination) Syed Nazarat Ali, Director General RDA Saif Anwar Jappa, Chief Health Officer, Director Health Dr Ansar and heads of allied departments participated in the meeting.

## National moot on 'Digitization and Women in Pakistan' begins

ISLAMABAD (APP): Federal Minister for Human Rights Riaz Hussain Pirzada has underlined the need of creating an inclusive and equitable digital environment for women in Pakistan.

He was addressing the opening session of the two-day national conference on 'Digitization and Women in Pakistan' here on Tuesday.

The moot was organized by the National Commission on the Status of Women (NCSW) in collaboration with UNDP, UN Women, UNFPA and Jazz to create a national policy framework for women.

Addressing the conference, NCSW Chairperson Nilofar Bakhtiar said women in Pakistan are facing significant challenges in accessing and utilizing digital technology, which limits their access to education, employment, and economic empowerment.

In his keynote address, Senator Faratullah Babar shed light on the importance of gearing women in Pakistan with essential digital tools and skills.

Senator Seemi Ezdi, who had moved the resolution in the Upper House of the Parliament to equip women and girls with digital skills spoke on the importance of a unified vision while formulating relevant policies and implementation guidelines.

## Sanjrani welcomes Saudi investment, keen interest in mining, natural resources sector

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani has said that Balochistan is the heart of Pakistan's mineral wealth and this treasure needs exploration.

The Chairman Senate was exchanging views with a delegation of Kingdom of Saudi Arabia led by Eng. Khalid Saleh Al-Modaifer, Vice Minister of Industries and Production at a local hotel here in Islamabad on Tuesday. Chairman Senate while welcoming the delegation said that this visit is a testament to the strengthening ties between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia.

He admired Saudi Arabia's achievements and expertise in the field of mining and expressed hope to find avenues of collaboration and mutual benefits.

He said that Saudi Arabia has always stood by the side of Pakistan through thick and thin. "Our ties are deep rooted and our brotherhood is unique", the

Chairman Senate said.

He observed that the province of Balochistan is blessed with reserves of copper, gold, coal, sulfur and other natural resources. Investment in these sectors will not only be beneficial for Saudi investors but would also play a critical role in uplifting the economic condition and quality of life in Balochistan and Pakistan at large.

The province of Balochistan due to its geo strategic location and Gwadar Port has the potential to become a hub of commercial activities in the region. He especially thanked the Saudi leadership, the King and the Crown Prince for various initiatives aimed at enhancing multi-sector investment in Pakistan.

Leader of the Saudi delegation agreed with the views of Senate Chairman and said that the friendship between the two countries is time tested. He greeted Pakistani leadership for

hosting an important mineral summit to bring together international investors on a single platform and enter into possibility exploring investment opportunities.

The Saudi Leader also termed the establishment of a Special Investment

Facilitation Council a huge success which will help attract foreign investment in the country. The Saudi Vice Minister further expressed his felicitations on the Reko Diq settlement. He hoped that both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia would benefit from the investment opportunities offered by the mineral sector of Balochistan province. Chairman Senate expressed his well wishes to the Saudi Leadership including the King Salman Bin Abdul Aziz Al-Saud, Crown Prince Mohammad Bin Salman Al-Saud while appreciating Saudi willingness to engaging fruitful partnership and working towards a most prospers future.

## CTP launches awareness campaign on traffic rules

RAWALPINDI (APP): City Traffic Police (CTP) Rawalpindi on Tuesday launched an awareness campaign to educate the citizens about traffic rules.

Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Taimoor Khan said the students of different schools, colleges, universities and other citizens were being educated to follow traffic rules and regulations in real spirit.

The students were also being informed about the traffic rules and road safety measures, he said adding, the mobile Education Unit of CTP was arranging special briefing sessions.

In this regard, CTP had also displayed banners to guide the road users about traffic rules on important roads of the town, he added. In order to make the campaign more effective

and meaningful traffic wardens and officers had been issued special instructions, he said and informed that the Education Wing of Traffic police had been making efforts to spread awareness so that the road journey could be made safe and sound. Traffic rules should not be violated as such violation with negligence driving may lead to fatal accidents, he added.

## Healthcare establishments asked to provide rate list

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority (IHRA) has issued directives to Healthcare Establishments (HCEs) for provision of a price list of offered services in the Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT).

According to IHRA, the direction was issued to all public and private healthcare establishments on the observation during the

inspection of the HCEs and the redressal of the complaints.

It was observed that there are major discrepancies in the initial rates which are communicated to the patients at the time of admission and in final billing, causing mishaps related to the patients, it added. In view of such observations, Islamabad Healthcare Regulatory Authority directed all the

HCEs of ICT that the price list of all the services being provided should be duly available at the reception of all HCEs and will be provided to patients and attendants on demand. The price list should be legible and readable for the attendants of the patients, it added. Similarly, all the HCEs have been directed to share a copy of tariff list to IHRA within five days.

## ‘Punjab Govt setting up IT Hub in Rawalpindi to facilitate freelancers’

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief Secretary Punjab, Zahid Akhtar Zaman here on Tuesday said that the Punjab government was setting up an Information Technology (IT) Hub in Rawalpindi to facilitate the freelancers and provide IT opportunities to the youth of the twin-cities, Rawalpindi and Islamabad.

Addressing participants of a signing ceremony of the IT Hub, the Chief Secretary said that the hub was being built to facilitate the freelancers. 800 youth would be benefited daily in two shifts in the IT Hub, the Chief Secretary said adding, the freelancers who were doing IT-related work at home would have all the facilities available at the IT Hub.

61 per cent of women were involved in PITB's e-employment programs, the Chief Secretary said

and informed that the board was working on several projects related to the IT industry.

Punjab government was working day and night on IT and agriculture industry, the Chief Secretary said adding that Punjab government was working on many advanced projects particularly in agriculture sector.

Punjab Information Technology Board (PITB) and Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi (MCR) here today signed an agreement to set up the first Information Technology Hub in Rawalpindi.

On the special directives of Chief Minister Punjab Mohsin Naqvi, Commissioner Rawalpindi under the supervision of Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman accelerated efforts to set up an online freelancer IT hub in Rawalpindi.

Commissioner Rawalpindi Division, Liaquat Ali Chhatta and DG, PITB Board, Sajid Latif signed the agreement. Deputy Commissioner Rawalpindi Hasan Waqar Cheema, Chairman Rawalpindi Education Board, Muhammad Adnan, President Rawalpindi Chamber of Commerce and Industry and others were present on this occasion.

The Commissioner informed that the administration was working on IT Hub project for the last three months. The building for the IT hub was ready and the workplaces had also been created, he said. When the youth would get the workstation and workplace, more employment opportunities would be created, the Commissioner said. IT hub would generate foreign exchange as well as employment opportunities, the Commissioner added.



ISLAMABAD: A vendor displaying national flags to attract customers at Koral chowk.

## ‘CPEC to boost largest foreign direct investment in Pakistan’

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan People's Party (PPP) senior leader Sharmila Faruqi Tuesday said that the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) would attract the largest foreign direct investment in Pakistan. "The project will play an important role in facilitating the development of the country's economy and in creating millions of new jobs in coming years," she added. Under CPEC, the two countries initiated and completed multiple projects including energy, transport infrastructure, port, airport development, and digital connectivity, she said while talking to a private news channel.

"Under Phase II of CPEC, both countries will now further expand cooperation to new areas including rural revitalization, agricultural development, industrialization, green development, and science and technology," she mentioned. "The friendship of both countries is going to prosper further in the coming years," she said. "CPEC is a game changer for the econom-

ic and social development of the region." It was unfortunate that work on this important project of economic and social development was stalled by the previous government of PTI, she regretted. Sharmila highlighted that the Chi-na was a time-tested and trusted friend of Pakistan who had supported Pakistan in difficult times.

Replying to a question, she said that PPP was the first government that had initiated the multi-billion dollar project CPEC but some elements started negative propaganda against the project but failed to scare our future Chinese partners. To another question, she appreciated that Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari was playing a leading role in reviving the foreign policy of Pakistan which was ruined by past governments and he represented young Pakistani talent in the field of global diplomacy. Chairman Bilawal Bhutto Zardari's visits in various countries had taken world leaders into confidence and his diplomatic efforts in a short span of time are appreciable, she hailed.



### Instructions issued

KABUL (Pajhwok): Passport Department said children without parents, those on no fly-list and those convicted by courts of crimes will not be issued the travel document. Passports will not be issued to those prohibited from leaving by relevant agencies due to non-fulfillment of debts or other commitments. Those convicted by courts in criminal, civil and commercial cases, children without parents or legal counsel will not be issued the document.

## The Frontier Post

Muharram 14, 1445 — Wednesday, August 02, 2023

### Top graduates recruited

KABUL (Agencies): The Ministry of Finance has tested 320 top graduates of public universities in a recruitment campaign to fill vacant positions at the ministry. Acting Finance Minister Mohammad Nasser Akhund said tahr the Ministry of Finance wants the Ministry of Higher Education to introduce to us the people who have become top (scorers) in universities. So this is an honor. It is the blessing and mercy of Allah Almighty that he has given knowledge to students.

# IEA welcomes WB's report on Afghanistan's economic situation

KABUL (Agencies): The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan has welcomed positive indicators published Monday in a World Bank report on Afghanistan's economy. In a statement issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for Economic Affairs, the IEA "sees this as a clear indication of Afghanistan's actual economic development and mobility."

The report stated that the prices of food and oil have dropped, the value of the afghani currency against foreign currencies has remained stable, there has been a significant increase in exports, the salaries of government employees have been paid on time and

there has been an increase in the level of national income.

"The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan believes that if the restrictions in the banking sector are removed and the frozen capital of Afghans released, the economic situation will be even better and it will take firm steps towards consolidation as much as possible, and the international community's responsibility towards Afghanistan will also decrease," the statement read.

The Islamic Emirate has asked all international organizations to remind the world about the progress and developments that have taken place in Afghanistan,

especially in the economic sector, so that the world can be aware of the real situation in Afghanistan.

"The Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan requests all international organizations and aid agencies to cooperate with Afghanistan in the financing of development projects, based on which the level of unemployment will decrease and have more positive effects on the country's economic situation," read the statement.

Also, the Islamic Emirate has asked the World Bank to resume and complete projects that were financed by the organization, but were left unfinished after the IEA regained control of the country.

## Natural disasters kill 700 in past year in Afghanistan

KABUL (Khaama Press): At least 700 people have died, and hundreds more have been injured due to natural disasters in the past solar year across Afghanistan, officials from the State Ministry for Disaster Management said during their annual accountability report.

Shafiuallah Rahimi, a spokesperson for the Ministry, said at a press conference that natural disasters killed almost 700 people and injured more than 700 others during this period.

Rahimi also noted that more than 20,000 residential houses have been completely and partially destroyed due to natural disasters in the country.

Moreover, he added, "We have implemented 120 emergency and restorative projects."

According to the Ministry's report, natural disasters, including floods, have affected 20 provinces, and four others experienced earthquakes over the past year.

"This Ministry has recognized the natural disasters in the districts and 20 provinces faced high threats from floods, and four provinces faced earthquakes, Bamian, Daikundi, Badakhshan, Ghazni, Parwan and Baghlan witnessed avalanches," he said.

Afghanistan is one of the most vulnerable countries in the world regarding natural disasters, including floods, earthquakes, avalanches, landslides and drought.

The lack of a proper management system and access to vulnerable areas has increased the destruction and effect of natural disasters in Afghanistan.

## Lack of women's presence in meetings criticized

KABUL (TOLONews): Women have criticized the lack of female presence in the meetings discussing the situation of Afghanistan.

Some of these women who were interviewed by TOLONews said that women's representatives' presence is necessary in the meetings related to Afghan conditions.

"The women who are in Afghanistan should be invited to this meeting because the main suffering of the women in Afghanistan today is felt by these women. They feel the pain better than the women abroad," said Hamir Farhangyar, who has worked in the field of human rights and female education for several decades.

Farhangyar stressed that the actions of other countries toward the issues of women in Afghanistan have not been beneficial.

Heather Barr, associate director of the Women's Rights Division at Human Rights Watch, referring to the meeting of the US-Afghan interim government in Doha, said that the human rights issue should be at the top of the agenda.

"It is urgently important that human rights be at the top of the agenda for those meetings. Now we trust that would be the case given that is the core mandate for Rina Amiri," she said.

Meanwhile, the Islamic Emirate said that there is no problem with the presence of women's representatives in the general meetings on Afghanistan.

"If it is a legal discussion, or a discussion about women and their rights, under such conditions, we think about how to facilitate a Sharia and Islamic environment. But we see that some of our senior officials are meeting women again and again" said Zabituallah Mujahid, Islamic Emirate's spokesman.

"The women want a meeting in which the decisive decisions should be taken for the destiny of women and people of Afghanistan," said Suraya Paikan, a female defender.

# US envoys in Doha meeting call for IEA policy change



DOHA (TOLONews): Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West and Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls, and Human Rights Rina Amiri tweeted that in the meeting they discussed the removal of restrictions on women and girls, including access to education and work; release of detainees; end to corporal punishment, and crackdowns on media and freedom of expression.

"We emphasized that respecting human rights is central to achieving security, economic progress & stability; maintaining hope & human capital; & improving standing with the international community."

Special Representative for Afghanistan Thomas West also tweeted:

"Concluded two days of meeting with senior Taliban representatives & Afghan technocrats in Doha re: critical interests in Afghanistan. We discussed the country's economic situation, human rights, humanitarian needs, security commitments, inclusivity, & counter-narcotics issues."

Meanwhile, some officials of the Islamic Emirate said the meetings were useful.

Suhail Shaheen, head of the Political Office of the Islamic Emirate in Qatar, said the Islamic Emirate delegation had fruitful discussions with the US team in Doha.

Earlier, Abdul Qahar

Balkhi, spokesman for the Foreign Ministry said that the issues of trust-building and practical actions toward this, blacklists and the removal of sanctions, the release of Afghan assets, the continuance of economic stability of Afghanistan, counter-narcotics, and human rights were discussed.

The Doha meeting on Afghanistan ended yesterday (Monday) with the presence of a delegation of Islamic Emirate officials led by Acting Foreign Minister Amir Khan Muttaqi and US representatives for Afghanistan, including Thomas West and Rina Amiri.

## In Zaranj, tailoring training workshop opens for girls

ZARANJ (Pajhwok): A woman in northwestern Nimroz province has established a training workshop, where dozens of girls above sixth grade are being taught the tailoring vocation.

Sohaila Alizai, the founder and director of the Zaranj Tailoring Workshop, told Pajhwok Afghan News she opened the workshop three months ago with a capital of 150,000 afghanis in the provincial capital.

To the workshop, she has appointed 10 female trainers, who teach 100 girls. Most of the participants are students of the sixth grade.

Alizai claimed it was the first-ever workshop for girls and women. "We used to have small vocational training projects of 3-6 months duration and they are not useful."

Although the number of aspiring trainees was high, she noted, they could not accept more than 100 girl trainees due to insufficient budget and sewing tools.

**Girls happy with learning tailoring**

Last year, when the academic year began, the Islamic Emirate suspended middle and high school education for girls, saying it was working on a draft law. On its finalisation, the government had promised, schools for girls would be reopened.

Dozens of girls attending the tailoring training workshop in Zaranj expressed disappointment with the closure of schools for them. Having joined the workshop, they are now being trained as tailors.

Breshna Barakzai, one



of the trainees, recalled she was an eighth-grade student when girls' schools were shut. But Barakzai was happy over being chosen as a trainee, believing she would learn the basics of a profession.

She said: "Many girls like me are interested in learning how to sew and this we can do through the workshop. We can support our families financially with our sewing skills."

Citing the current situation of girls and women, she praised the initiative and said: "The closure of schools for girls has disappointed us all."

"However, we are happy with the organisation of this workshop. We girl are busy here learning the profession of tailoring."

Benafsha, another participant of the workshop,

says: "I was in the 11th grade when schools were closed for us. During two years of closure, we have suffered a lot. At this workshop, we are learning how to sew different items."

**She wants schools for girls reopened**

With the arrangement of this workshop, 10 widows and poor women have been appointed to different jobs.

Sohaila Alizai, organiser of the workshop, said: "We give priority to widows and poor women and attract them to work. Widows and heirs of martyrs are also given priority in appointments so they can become self-sufficient after training."

According to her, of 100 students, five were educated for free with financial assistance from the International Organisation

for Migration (IOM).

She said each trainee paid a 500afs fee per month to fund teacher salaries. She hoped number of trainees would go up to 4,000 in the future.

Feriba, an instructor at the workshop, is a widow and sole breadwinner for a family of five. She was happy over training workshop participants. She asked government institutions and to support the workshop, the safest place for professional training for women in the province.

Meanwhile, the Nimroz Chamber of Commerce CEO said women had been able to start small and big businesses with different methods and solutions. Najibullah Khashrodi promised the chamber had plans to support women's trade and business activities.

## Uzbek delegation to visit Kabul, says Ambassador

KABUL (TOLONews): Yagdar Shadmanov, Uzbekistan's ambassador to Afghanistan, said that a high-level delegation will come to Kabul in the coming days to hold discussions with officials of the Islamic Emirate.

In an interview with RTA, Shadmanov said that if the current Afghan government accept the demands of the international community, it will be recognized by Uzbekistan and other countries.

"We will host a large Uzbek delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister Djamshid Anvarovich in Afghanistan in the near

future, and following the delegation's arrival in Kabul, a large meeting will be held between the leaders of the two countries," the ambassador said.

Shadmanov, regarding the recognition of the Islamic Emirate, said: "If the current Afghan government seriously considers the establishment of an inclusive government and the provision of women's rights and finds a solution for it, it will be recognized not only by Uzbekistan but also by the international community and the world."

The ambassador of Uzbekistan in Kabul added that the embassies of

Uzbekistan, Qatar, Turkey, China, Pakistan, India, Turkmenistan, Kazakhstan and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation are active in Kabul and the relations of the current Afghan government with them are improving.

The Islamic Emirate has not yet commented about the visit of the Uzbek delegation to Afghanistan.

Political analysts emphasized the need to accept the demands of the international community.

"In my opinion, if the education issue is resolved, we will get rid of the demands of the world, and then the issue of recogniz-

ing the Islamic Emirate will be clear," said Sayed Akbar Agha, a political analyst.

"If the world's demand, which the Afghans also emphasize, is accepted, then it will open the way for the recognition of the Islamic Emirate," said Fazl Hadi Wazin, a university lecturer.

Among the requirements that the international community has set for interaction with the Islamic Emirate are the formation of an inclusive government, upholding human rights, especially of women, and preventing the use of Afghan land against other nations.

## Annual report of Ministry of Borders and Tribes



KABUL (TOLONews): The acting minister of Borders and Tribes said in an annual report that based on the decree of the leader of the Islamic Emirate, within the framework of the Border Oversight Commission, a plan to modernize the border signs and symbols with the countries of Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, and China has been implemented.

Noorullah Noori added that, according to the plan, to preserve the territorial integrity along the Durand line, more than one thousand kilometers of the area

have been checked.

"In cooperation with ethnic elders and religious scholars in various provinces of the country, 130 major conflicts and 300 small conflicts between tribes and several families, over land and various issues, in which 691 people were killed and hundreds of others were injured, were resolved through traditional jirgas (meetings) in the light of Islamic principles," said Noorullah Noori, acting minister of Borders and Tribes.

According to Noorullah

Noori, the rights of all minorities are guaranteed in the country and the Islamic Emirate is committed to the rights of all minorities and majorities.

"Every minority in Afghanistan has rights, and the rights of all minorities are protected in the Islamic system, and we are committed to the rights of minorities and majorities," said Noorullah Noori.

According to the Borders and Tribe's Ministry, of the projects proposed in the year 1401, 28 projects have been completed.

## European cyclists starting to include Afghanistan in their travels



KABUL (Agencies): Three foreign cyclists have recently taken in the sites of Herat province as part of their mammoth journeys across numerous countries.

Marco, from Germany, has spent months cycling through the region and said he was excited to include Afghanistan in his travel plans.

He said he hopes to see as many tourist attractions and places of interest in the country as possible.

"I was really impressed by the warm hospitality of the people and some things are special here; Europeans complain a lot about the situation here, while people here smile and try to live as best as possible," he said.

Another recent visitor to Herat was Nikla, a Muslim from Italy.

He said he has been cycling across Europe and Central Asia for the past

year with the aim of visiting as many Islamic countries as possible. He said he wants to learn the customs and traditions of Muslims around the world.

"As I have written on my bicycle, Salam Alaikum [Peace be upon you], I wish that peace will be established in all Islamic countries and that there will be no more war and no war against Muslims," he said.

Michel is another tourist and a German citizen who has also traveled an enormous distance to reach Herat by bicycle. Already however, he has cycled through Kabul and Balkh provinces and hopes to experience life in other provinces across Afghanistan.

"I came to Afghanistan to see the real life, the real nature and the current situation of Afghanistan closely, not what is published in

the newspapers. I am happy to see the real life," he said.

Officials from Herat's Directorate of Information and Culture meanwhile report a significant increase in foreign tourists in Herat this year.

"The number of tourists in Herat has increased this year compared to last year, and even two weeks ago there were tourists who came from the neighboring country of Iran and came by bicycle, who liked all the places to tour Afghanistan by bicycle," said Rahmatullah Mohammadi, the head of Herat's tourism office at the Department of Information and Culture.

Herat dates back to the Avestan times and has a number of historic sites, including the Herat Citadel and the Musalla Complex and is a popular tourist attraction.





ISLAMABAD: Pakistan's High Commissioner-designate to Malaysia, Syed Ahsan Raza Shah called on President Dr. Arif Ali, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

## Formation of full bench Military courts case

# Apex court reserves judgment on plea

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The Supreme Court on Tuesday reserved the verdict on a plea seeking the formation of a full court in military courts trial case.

A six-member Supreme Court (SC) bench reserved the verdict on a fresh petition seeking the formation of a full court to hear pleas challenging the trials of civilians in military courts. The bench comprises Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Ijazul Ahsan, Justice Munib Akhtar, Justice Yahya Afridi, Justice Sayyed Mazhar Ali Akbar Naqvi and Justice Ayesha A. Malik.

Earlier, the apex court had rejected the federal government's plea to constitute a full court. During the hearing today, CJP Bandial discussed the petition with other petitioners and then reserved the verdict on senior counsel Faisal Siddiqi's plea. The apex court would announce the decision tomorrow. Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP) Mansoor

Usman Awan presented a list comprising the names of 102 suspects in the military's custody before the court.

According to the list, seven people were under custody for breaking General Headquarters in Rawalpindi, four suspects attacked the army institute, 28 suspects attacked the Lahore corps commander's residence, 15 people were involved in attacks on army garrisons in Multan and Gujranwala, eight suspects attacked an ISI office in Faisalabad while five were involved in the attack on the PAF Air Base in Mianwali. To this, the CJP said that there should be an independent body to review if the arrests were made on the basis of solid evidence or not. He then directed the AGP to seek directives from the government before presenting arguments on his appeals.

In the month of May, the government decided to try the suspects accused of attacking military installations on May 9 under army laws. Violent clashes broke

out across Pakistan after the former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) was arrested from the premises of the Islamabad High Court (IHC) on May 9. Army installations, Corps Commander's house in Lahore and General Headquarters (GHQ) in Rawalpindi came under attack during a protest by PTI workers.

Following the arrests made in connection with the violent riots that erupted across the country on May 9, the government announced its decision to hold military court trials of those found guilty of damaging and attacking military installations — a move both the government and the army considered a low blow.

In light of this decision, PTI Chairman Imran Khan, former chief justice Jawwad S Khawaja, legal expert Aitzaz Ahsan, and five civil society members, including Piler Executive Director Karamat Ali, requested the apex court to declare the military trials "unconstitutional".

## Revolutionary poet Shams Buner passes away



F.P. Report

BUNER: Eminent Pashto language nationalist, progressive, revolutionary poet, writer, scholar and former Secretary Culture ANP, Shams Buner passed away on Tuesday.

His funeral prayers will be offered at Ghazi Khana (Buner) on Wednesday at 11:00 A.M. Due to his revolutionary, resistance poetry and political activities; he remained in exile in Afghanistan for several years and also imprisoned in various prisons of the country.

In Pashto literature, Shams Buner was also known as the 'Poet of the Prison'. With his sad demise an important chapter of revolutionary and resistance poetry closed while ANP lost a sincere, state-forward, ideological worker and scholar.

## Four killed in Haryana clashes

NEW DELHI (Agencies): After Manipur, violence, this time against Muslims, has gripped another Indian state, Haryana, where four people including an Imam were killed and several police personnel were injured in the ongoing clashes in the state.

Two people, including an Imam, were attacked by a Hindu gang on Monday night outside an under-construction mosque in Gurugram area. A gang of four men attacked Imam Mohammad Saad and Khurshid with sticks. Khurshid was also shot in the leg and he is said to be critical, while Saad was killed in the attack.

According to some of the eye witnesses, around five people were present in the under-construction mosque when the attack happened. Others had to hide themselves. The violence initially erupted in Haryana's Nuh during a religious procession on Monday. Shortly afterwards, the violence spread to Sohna.

## UN chief flays Bajaur blast

NEW YORK (Agencies): UN Secretary-General António Guterres has strongly condemned the deadly suicide bombing at recent JUI-F convention in Bajaur in Pakistan.

A UN information said on Tuesday, at least 54 people were killed, and 83 injured, in the attack, which occurred in Bajaur district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. International media reported that the Islamic State has claimed responsibility.

Speaking that day in New York, UN Deputy Spokesperson Farhan Haq said the Secretary-General extended his heartfelt condolences to the families of the victims and wished a prompt recovery to the wounded.

# FM calls for promoting inter-faith harmony

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Foreign Minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari on Tuesday said that through extensive engagement with the international community, Pakistan achieved substantially on the diplomatic front during the past fifteen months.

Addressing a ceremony at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after launching 'Digitised system under Foreign Minister's Change Management Reforms', the foreign minister said that through intensive engagements with the international community, they could now claim "diplomacy is back". It was also an appropriate response to those who were touting about Pakistan being isolated at the global level, he added.

The foreign minister said that due to consistent global engagements under his stewardship, and with the countries in the Middle East, the United States, China, and other members of the United Nations, they had increased Pakistan's outreach and viewpoint on different issues, leading to success at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) after the country was removed from the grey list and climate change issue. He said during the floods last year and afterward, in the post-flood scenario, the international community came to support Pakistan in the relief and rehabilitation efforts.

The UN General Assembly members focused on Pakistan during the relief efforts and subsequently, they successfully arranged the Climate Resilient Pakistan summit in Geneva receiving 'a substantive and qualitative response'. Foreign Minister Bilawal, to a media query, reiterated that Pakistan was not keen to join the 'blobs policy' and would take decisions in the larger national interests.

Pakistan had stressed upon resolu-



tion of all world issues through dialogue and diplomacy, he added. Responding to another question regarding terrorist organizations, he maintained that writ of the state would be established at all costs and the government would not take steps to appease the militant or terrorists outfits. He said that he had suggested to the prime minister to convene an Apex Committee meeting to address the issue of terrorist and criminal incidents in the country.

He said that there was an increase in the terrorist incidents after the fall of Kabul. The latest arms and ammunition left behind by the foreign forces had fallen into the hands of terrorist outfits and criminal organizations, and even with the dacoits which posed a challenge to the government, he added. The foreign minister, to a question, further said that they expected the Afghan interim government to take actions against the terrorist organizations and honour their commitment made with the international community not to allow their soil for terrorist activities against any country under the Doha Agreement.

He said Pakistan's stance was clear and it had demanded the Afghan interim set up to curb terrorism, as cooperation against the menace of terrorism was in the interest of both countries. Afghanistan had no standing army, anti-terrorists force or border management force which caused the capacity issues to face terrorism, he opined. "In the past, we had faced the threats and together will face them," he added, Pakistan, he said, was ready to assist them as they had the capacity issues to deal with such threats.

The foreign minister, to another question, said that the Pakistan Peoples Party believed that decisions regarding the interim set-up and elections should be taken to strengthen the civilian institutions and the democratic system in the country. They believed that all issues confronted by the country could be addressed through a democratic dispensation which would ensure the political and economic stability, he said, adding the general polls should be held on time so that the people could exercise their right.

About reforms introduced in his ministry, the foreign minister said that different initiatives under the key four components were launched which would improve functioning of the ministry by making it more agile, nimble and efficient to face the new emerging challenges. He said a total of 51 initiatives were taken at different work streams among which 19 were completed, three were partially implemented while 29 were in on the track to completion.

The ceremony was also attended by Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Hina Rabbani Khan, diplomats, officials, and Pakistan's ambassadors abroad through video link. Later, the foreign minister also inaugurated solarization of the ministry.

## Judge's wife granted bail in maid torture case

ISLAMABAD (PPI): District and Sessions Court in Islamabad on Tuesday granted pre-arrest bail to Somalia Asim, wife of a civil judge, who had allegedly tortured her 14-year-old maid Rizwana, until August 7.

Additional Sessions Judge Dr. Abida Sajjad ordered main suspect in the case to deposit a surety bond of Rs100,000. Earlier on the same day, Somalia had filed a pre-arrest bail application in Islamabad's District and Sessions Court, reported 24NewsHD TV channel. In her application, she said that contents of the FIR registered against her were all fabricated. She further said that Rizwana worked at her home with the consent of her parents, and that she never tortured her.

Somia vowed to prove all allegations against her wrong. She claimed that Rizwana was 17, and not 14-year-old. "I have always given her affection just like I have given affection to my three kids," she said, adding, "There was no complaint of torture against me prior to the incident in question."

health, the head of the medical board, Professor Jodut Saleem, informed the media that the young girl's health had notably improved since yesterday.

"Thanks to the application of oxygen, Rizwana's breathing difficulties have significantly decreased, and she is now able to communicate. Professor Jodut Saleem disclosed that Rizwana had been facing complications due to infection, but her condition had shown positive progress. The medical team's attentive care and treatment have helped alleviate some of the immediate health concerns.

"Today, Rizwana has even expressed her desire to eat solid food," Professor Jodut Saleem stated, highlighting the encouraging strides the young girl is making in her recovery. In addition to solid food, Rizwana has also been started on a soft diet to aid her recuperation. The medical board has been providing Rizwana with juices and water to maintain her hydration levels during the healing process.

the incident of alleged violence against the housekeeper, Rizwana, who served at the residence of the Administrative Officer of Islamabad Judicial Complex, had sparked outrage and concern across the nation. During a crucial meeting held at Lahore General Hospital to assess Rizwana's

## Buzdar among 22 PTI leaders expelled

LAHORE (PPI): The Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) expelled on Tuesday the 22 leaders from South Punjab for violating the party policy.

In this regard, a notification was issued under the signature of PTI Secretary General Omar Ayub. Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) terminated the membership of former Punjab Chief Minister Sardar Usman Buzdar, Sardar Muhammad Khan Leghari, Khusró Bakhtiar, Javed Akhtar Ansari, Farooq Azam Malik, and Muhammad Akhtar Malik.

Syed Nadeem Shah, Ehtishamul Haq, Bahawal Khan Abbasi, Sabeen Gul, Mian Shafi Muhammad, Syed Muhammad Asghar Shah, Mian Tariq Abdullah, Muhammad Afzal, Ehsanul Haq, Saleem Akhtar, Muhammad Zaeheeruddin Khan Alizai, and Salman Khan were also expelled from Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI). Akram Kanu, Mohiuddin Solangi, Makhdoom Afkarul Hassan, and Raja Muhammad Saleem were also terminated from the party.

On Saturday, the PTI terminated the membership of 22 leaders, including former Punjab chief minister Mahmood Khan. The development came after Khattak formed the break-away faction, Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) parliamentarians. Other leaders who had been expelled from the party were Shafiq Afridi, Ziaullah Bangash, Ishia Umar, Iqbal Wazeer, Yaqoob Sheikh and Wilson Wazeer.

The notice was issued by Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) secretary general Omar Ayub Khan to the defected members. Earlier this month, Khattak formed his own political party after parting with the original party.



QUETTA: Paramedical staff standing around the body of a policeman who was killed on security duty of polio vaccination team.

# Shehbaz briefed on KP security situation

(Continued from Page 1)

He said the present government focused on building a strong nation. He reiterated that Pakistan was keen to maintain friendly ties with all the countries for the mutual benefit of their people. Without naming India, he maintained that they were ready to talk to their neighbors, if there were serious matters on the table as wars were no solution to issues. The prime minister said three wars were imposed on Pakistan in the last 75 years and said these had generated more poverty and lack of resources which otherwise, had been spent on the development and prosperity of their people.

"The neighbours have to understand that unless abnormalities are removed, normalcy cannot take place and the serious issues should be addressed through serious discussions," he emphasized. The prime minister said that the incumbent government would complete its term in the current month. The society had been bitterly divided, he said, adding unless they show unity and discipline,

they could not succeed in their efforts, he added.

The prime minister said the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) was set up for the first time in the country including all the stakeholders that would collaborate and facilitate the execution of the development projects. On the occasions, different speakers including foreign delegates also spoke on the occasion and highlighted the need for exploration of the natural resources of Pakistan by utilizing the latest technologies and offered different suggestions and proposals for facilitation to lure foreign investments.

**SIFC to ensure immediate, uninterrupted execution of foreign investment projects:** Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif said that the Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC) would ensure the immediate and uninterrupted completion of the projects of foreign investment in Pakistan.

The prime minister, in a meeting with a Saudi delegation led by Saudi Deputy Minister for Mining, Industries and Minerals Khaled bin Saleh Al-Mudaifer, said there existed immense investment opportunities in Pakistan, particularly in the mining sector. Welcoming the delegation, the prime minister said Pakistan was thankful to the Saudi government and people for supporting Pakistan in every need of the hour.

"Pakistan is your second home. The brotherly relations between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia were of special significance. The whole Pakistani nation was grateful to Saudi King Salman and Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman for supporting Pakistan in every difficult time," he remarked. The prime minister assured the delegation that not only the interim government but also the next elected government would keep on facilitating the investors.

He said the solar power project of

10,000 megawatts announced by the government was also a good opportunity for investment. The Saudi minister said that the establishment of SIFC was a positive message to foreign investors in Pakistan. Saudi Arabia was keen to invest in the vast opportunities of investment in the mining sector of Pakistan, he added.

The Saudi minister appreciated the prime minister for the pro-investor measures particularly the establishment of the SIFC as it would lead to economic development. Calling Pakistan his second home, the Saudi minister assured that Saudi Arabia would continue to support Pakistan. Federal Minister Engineer Khurram Dastgir, Minister of State for Petroleum Musaddik Malik, Special Assistant to PM Tasnim Ahmed Qureshi and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.

**Reko Diq project to prove a game changer; usher a new era of progress:** Prime Minister Shehbaz

Sharif said that Reko Diq project would prove to be a game changer for the development of Balochistan and region besides ushering a new era of progress and prosperity.

The prime minister, talking to a delegation of Barrick Gold led by CEO Mark Bristow which called on him, said Pakistan was rich with immense resources of minerals. The government was taking measures on priority to take maximum advantage of the said resources, he added. According to a PM Office statement, the Barrick Gold agreed to make the payment of Pakistan's share of investment in Pakistani rupees.

The prime minister said the participation of Barrick Gold and other international firms in Pakistan Mineral Summit held earlier on the day manifested the revival of investors' confidence in Pakistan. This revival of the investors' confidence including that of Barrick Gold in Pakistan was made possible conse-

quent to the formation of Special Investment Facilitation Council. In the meeting, Mark Bristow apprised the prime minister of progress in the ongoing development works in Reko Diq.

Prime Minister Shehbaz said that the Reko Diq project agreement would prove to be beneficial for both the parties. He instructed all the relevant institutions to fulfill their responsibilities regarding the execution of Reko Diq project. The meeting was told that a Community Development Committee had been formed in the Reko Diq which identified actions for uplift of Balochistan and its people.

It was told that the local elders in the committee identified the projects aimed at the prosperity of the people of Balochistan. Under the project, the skilled local people were being provided employment opportunities and a huge amount would be spent on development of the area. Minister of State for Petroleum Musaddik Malik and special assistants to PM Jahanzeb Khan and Tariq Bajwa, and relevant senior officers attended the meeting.