

Seven die in Thatta mishap

THATTA (INP): At least seven people died and 15 others sustained injuries in a van-truck collision on Mulla Katiar Bridge near Jhirk, Thatta, reported on Thursday. According to rescue sources, a passenger van from Hyderabad collided head-on with a truck. Two women, four men and a girl were among those who died in the accident. The injured and the bodies of the deceased were shifted to Civil Hospital, Jhirk.

@thefrontierpost

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

www.thefrontierpost.com

Vol. XXXIX

No. 216

Regd. No. 241

SAFAR 06 1445 -- FRIDAY, AUGUST 25 2023

PESHAWAR EDITION

12 PAGES

PRICE. 30

President not authorised to fix polls date, ECP tells Alvi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Chief Election Commissioner Sikandar Sultan Raja on Thursday informed the president that the discussion about selecting an election date would have "scant consequences" owing to recent changes in the election law. The CEC, in a two-page letter addressed to President Dr Arif Alvi, expressed the Commission's profound respect for the president's office.

"Meeting and seeking guidance on national matters from the president has always been regarded as an honour, where the circumstances are suitable. However, the Commission's view is that participating in the meeting will lead to negligible consequences," President Alvi wrote a letter to CEC Sikandar Raja on Wednesday, inviting him for a meeting to fix a date for general elections.

He asserted that since the National Assembly was dissolved on August 9, 2023, therefore under Article 48 (5) of the Constitution, he (as the president) was obliged to appoint a date not later than 90 days from the date of dissolution for the holding of general election of National Assembly. The CEC, in his letter, stated that since the Elections Act (Amendment) Bill 2023 was enacted into law, announcing the date for polls was the sole prerogative of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP).

He pointed out that Section 57 of the Election Act of 2017 had recently been amended and, unlike the previous position, now

President House seeks opinion of Law Ministry

ISLAMABAD (APP): The President House Thursday here sought opinion of Ministry of Law and Justice on the letter written by the Election Commission of Pakistan.

The President House asked for the opinion on the viewpoint of the Election Commission that only Election Commission had the authority to give a date for elections. The opinion was sought after the Election Commission replied to a letter written by the President on Wednesday. The President House addressed its letter to the Secretary Ministry of Law and Justice.

'Choosing future leaders is for Pakistanis to decide'

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): US Ambassador Donald Blome met Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja Thursday to reaffirm the US support for "free and fair elections", saying it would work to strengthen the US-Pakistan relationship with "whomever the Pakistani people choose".

"The United States remains committed to working to broaden and deepen the US-Pakistan relationship with whomever the Pakistani people choose", a statement from the US embassy's spokesperson read. Ambassador Blome's remarks came against a backdrop of uncertainty surrounding the general elections in Pakistan.

During the meeting on Thursday, the US ambassador reiterated that choosing Pakistan's future leaders is for the Pakistani people to decide, the statement added. Blome also reaffirmed that America would back transparent elections "conducted in accordance with Pakistan's laws and constitution".

the Commission was empowered to announce the date(s) for elections. "Article 48(1) of the Constitution stipulates that the president follows the prime minister's advice. Article 48, Clause (5), carries a non-obstante clause. Notably, the National Assembly dissolution was advised by the prime minister, rendering Article 48(5) inapplicable in this context," he asserted. Prior to the amendment of Section 57(1) of the Act, the CEC said, the president was required to con-

sult the ECP before appointing a date for election.

However, after the amendment in Section 57, the Commission had been empowered to announce the date or dates for the general elections. The CEC mentioned that the ECP was concurrently engaged in constituency delimitation.

It had also initiated the procedure of inviting prominent political parties to share their perspectives on the electoral roadmap, he added.

Bilawal calls PPP CEC meeting today

F.P. Report

KARACHI: PPP Chairman and former foreign minister Bilawal Bhutto Zardari has called a meeting of the party's Central Executive Committee (CEC) in Karachi on Friday. Party members from all over the country including Punjab have been invited to the CEC meeting and they were directed to attend the CEC meeting in their personal capacity.

No CEC member will take part in the meeting through video link. PPP Lahore President Ch Aslam Gill and Women Wing Punjab President Samina Khalid Ghurki will participate in the CEC meeting. National Assembly Speaker and PPP Punjab President Raja Pervaiz Ashraf, Qamar Zaman Kaira, Syed Hassan Murtaza, Chaudhry Manzoor, Tasneed Qureshi and others will also be in attendance.

Sources in the party said the CEC huddle will ponder over preparations relating to the general elections. Decisions are also expected to be taken regarding reactivating PPP organisations in Punjab and Lahore and to fill the vacant slots immediately.

Alvi briefed on Zainab Alert Act

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: President Dr Arif Alvi Thursday here was briefed on the implementation of Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Act. The briefing was attended by Secretary Human Rights and officials of Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Agency.

Amin Ansari, father of Zainab Ansari also attended the meeting.

The President called for coordinated steps for stopping the incidents of kidnapping and torture of children. He underlined the need for raising awareness to stop the incidents of disappearance of children.

"Awareness is needed to be provided to parents and teachers about protection of children and for saving them from disappearance," he added. He said strong coordination was very important among the law enforcement agencies and other stakeholders.

There was a need to create a system of effective coordination between the provincial police departments and relevant institutions, he said adding police had a critical role to play to stop incidents of disappearance of children and their early recovery by the local police. He asked police to ensure registration of cases of disappearance and kidnapping of children.

He said suggestions should be sought from non-governmental organizations in a consultative meeting to improve the system regarding reporting about disappearance of children. He welcomed the establishment of Zainab Alert Response and Recovery Agency (ZARRA) in Islamabad saying it would help in timely search of children and exchange of information.

Bugti, Solangi hold meeting

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Ministers for Interior and Information and Broadcasting Sarfraz Bugti and Murtaza Solangi on Thursday reaffirmed the government's commitment to assist the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) in holding General Elections.

The ministers expressed the resolve during a meeting held here at the Ministry of Interior. Upon arrival at the Ministry, the minister for interior accorded warm welcome to Muratuz Solangi. During the meeting, both the ministers discussed matters related to the assistance of the ECP in conducting the general elections in the country.



ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar awarding survivors of Battagram chairlift incident for their bravery at a ceremony.

PM commends heroes who rescued trapped chairlift passengers

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Thursday awarded commendation certificates to the valiant commandos, armed forces personnel and local residents who rescued eight trapped passengers of a dangling cable car in Battagram.

The prime minister, addressing the commemoration ceremony held at the PM Office, said the recognition was well-deserved by every individual involved, who exhibited remarkable prowess in orchestrating the mission to a triumphant conclusion.

He emphasized that the entire nation shared the concerns for the safety of the trapped children, who remained stranded on the chairlift for hours. He remarked that the successful endeavor was a collaborative achievement, acknowledging that recognition was also due to those who, from the confines of their homes, prayed for the safe and successful rescue operation. He said being a father, he could feel the pain of stranded children's parents but the teamwork based on prudent efficient planning ensured their safety. "Hats off to all of you who did an immaculate job. The biggest credit goes to those who were carrying out the planning," he remarked.

Sharing their emotions with the prime minister, the children said they were extremely worried but had a sense of satisfaction after coming to know that the Pakistan Army had launched the rescue operation. The prime minister said that the para-

mount duty of the state encompassed providing quality healthcare and education and an atmosphere for a dignified life.

Referring to the martyrdom of security personnel in South Waziristan, the prime minister said that those trying to obstruct the state's functioning through their ill intentions must remove their misunderstanding. He reiterated that the nation would never forget the sacrifices of the martyrs of the war against terrorism including politicians, police services, Pakistan Army, journalists, PAF, and common citizens. "This is our home. We know how to run it," he remarked. The prime minister said the pains of the terror victims' families could not be expressed in words.

He said the salaries being given to the security forces personnel were just meant to suffice their needs as their sacrifices could only be recognized through respect. "We rever them. We respect them," he commented.

Prime Minister Kakar reassured that the state affairs were in the hands of highly capable individuals. The caretaker setup had limited time and mandate to facilitate the forthcoming general elections, he added. Earlier, the prime minister also distributed commendation certificates among the security forces personnel as well as the local experts who took part in the rescue operation. The rescued children, who also attended the event, were also given souvenirs.

In his address, Chairman of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) Lt. General Inam

Haider Malik said the effective coordination among all relevant departments led to the success of the difficult operation. He said the safety audit of all the cable cars in the region had been ordered and a report would be presented to the prime minister.

He, however, emphasised the capacity building of the local rescue departments to deal with such emergency situations, which he said was also being worked out. Caretaker federal ministers Murtaza Solangi, Jalil Abbas Jilani, Jamal Shah, Sarfaraz Bugti, Anwar Ali Hyder, Ijaz Gohar and Madad Ali Sindhi also attended the ceremony.

Kakar briefed on foreign policy of Pakistan: Prime Minister Anwaar ul Haq Kakar visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and received a briefing on foreign policy of Pakistan. Upon arrival at the Ministry, the Prime Minister was received by Foreign Minister Jalil Abbas Jilani and senior officers. Foreign Secretary Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi briefed the Prime Minister about Pakistan's foreign policy.

The briefing covered Pakistan's external relations, the working of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, recent efforts to strengthen its diplomatic ties with other countries, and priorities for the future, especially in view of the regional and global developments. The Prime Minister was apprised of the steps being taken by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in coordination with the concerned Ministries and Departments, to facilitate Pakistani diaspora working and residing abroad.

SC adjourns hearing on Imran's plea till IHC issues verdict

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Thursday adjourned the hearing on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's plea challenging the Islamabad High Court's (IHC) decision in the Toshakhana case till the latter issues a verdict on the plea seeking the suspension of the sentence in the case.

A three-member bench headed by Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial heard the case as the IHC was hearing the former prime minister's plea against the Toshakhana verdict. At the start of the hearing, CJP Bandial lauded IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq for his efforts and it would be better if the high court issues its verdict.

The top judge then inquired if anyone from the attorney general's office was present in the courtroom as they wanted to know the situation about the condition in which the PTI chief, who was removed from the prime minister's office via a vote of no-confidence in April last year, was kept in jail. He also directed the authorities to submit a report on the facilities provided to the PTI chief in jail.

On this point, Khan's lawyer Sardar Latif Khosa told the court that they just presented their arguments before the IHC. CJP Bandial responded that your objection was that you were not being heard now all your arguments have been heard. "Hope from the high court that it gives a decision based on your points," remarked CJP Bandial.

Moving on, Justice Jamal Khan Mandokhail inquired about what was the result of the IHC hearing. To which Khosa responded that he was not a politician so he could not say much. "This is the beauty of the system that first a decision is made at the high court and then it comes to the Supreme Court," remarked the apex court's chief justice. While Justice

Mandokhail asked Khan's legal team that they should not criticise the judges of the Islamabad High Court. A day earlier, the Supreme Court which heard a petition challenging IHC's decision to remand the case back to the trial court judge who had convicted him, observed that the trial court had hastened the Toshakhana verdict.

It acknowledged the "procedural defects" in Khan's conviction but opted to wait for the IHC's decision on the former premier's plea seeking suspension of the three-year sentence. "Prima facie the decision by the additional sessions judge (ASJ) contains defects, but we will not intervene at this stage; rather [we will] wait for the outcome of the high court decision," CJP Bandial observed. When the IHC took up the petition again on Thursday it adjourned the hearing till today (Friday) at 11:30pm.

Two-member IHC bench comprising CJ Aamer Farooq and Tariq Memnhood Jahangiri conducted the hearing on the PTI chief's plea against the Toshakhana verdict on Thursday. On August 5, the former prime minister, who is currently incarcerated in Attock jail, was found guilty of corrupt practices in the case of misdeclaration of state gifts. The trial court in the federal capital had sentenced Khan to three years in prison upon conviction, a move which is likely to bar him from standing in elections due later this year.

However, the PTI filed an appeal in the IHC challenging the trial court's verdict and sentence against the party chief, requesting that the court declare the judgment "illegal" earlier this month. Challenging the trial court's verdict in the IHC, the PTI sought the suspension of his conviction by Additional District and Sessions Judge (ADSJ) Humayun Dilawar. "It is most respectfully prayed that the Hon'ble Court may graciously be pleased to set

aside the impugned judgment dated 05.08.2023, and declare the conviction and sentence imposed upon the Appellant to be illegal and without lawful authority and to acquit the Appellant of the charges framed against him," the petition read.

Besides the sentence of incarceration, the additional district and sessions judge also imposed a fine of Rs100,000 after finding Khan guilty of graft in the Toshakhana case. Following the arrest of the PTI chief, it was the third petition the party had filed. A day earlier, the PTI also announced to move the Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) against IHC Chief Justice Aamer Farooq for not suspending Khan's sentence.

Under the rules governing Toshakhana — a Persian word meaning "treasure house" — government officials can keep gifts if they have a low worth, while they must pay a dramatically reduced fee to the government for extravagant items. The Toshakhana has been under a microscope ever since the emergence of the allegations that Khan purchased the gifts he received as prime minister at throwaway rates and sold them off in the open market for staggering profits. The 70-year-old cricketer-turned-politician was accused of misusing his 2018 to 2022 premiership to buy and sell gifts in state possession that were received during visits abroad and worth more than Rs140 million (\$635,000).

The gifts included watches given by a royal family, according to government officials, who have alleged previously that Khan's aides sold them in Dubai. Moreover, seven wristwatches, six made by watchmaker Rolex, and the most expensive a "Master Graff limited edition" valued at 85 million Pakistani rupees (\$385,000), was also among the gifts.

Chairperson Department
of Anatomy and Histology
Prof Dr Hafsa Zaneb,
Director Veterinary
Academy Dr Muhammad
Asif Awan and few UVAS
faculty members attended
the signing ceremony.

Registrar
Shaheed Benazir Bhutto University Sheringal, Dir Upper,
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ph# 0944-885529-110

GOVERNMENT OF KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

COMMUNICATION AND WORKS DIVISION DIR UPPER

NOTICE INVITING E-BIDDING

(Single Stage Single Envelope E-Bidding System 2nd Time)

The C&W Division Dir Upper, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Invites Electronic Bids from eligible Firms /Contractors in accordance with KPPRA Rules 2014 amended up to 10.05.2022 & 22.08.2022 on Single Stage Single Envelope procedure for the following works.

S/No	Name of Work	Required Category of PEC	Bid Security	Tender Fee @ 0.03 %	Period of Completion	Last date of submission and time	Date of opening and time of Finance Bid Opening
ACCESS OF RURAL ROAD IN BARAWAL VALLEY, BIBYAWAR, DARORA, HATTAN, CHUKYATAN AND ROKHAN (15 KM) ADP NO.1510/220647 (2022-23)							
1	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Shaltalo and Shahi Kot Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 320000/-	Rs. 4200/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM
2	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Nasrat and Bln Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 320000/-	Rs. 4200/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM
3	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Noor Khell and Darikand Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 340000/-	Rs. 4500/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM
4	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Brwal Bandai Shingara and Gulhahar Sundrawal Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 280000/-	Rs. 3600/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM
5	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Tikarkot and sundrawal Kot Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 260000/-	Rs. 3300/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM
6	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Hattan Bagh Kakay and Dheri Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 420000/-	Rs. 5700/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM
7	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Surbat Ganori and Chukiatan Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 340000/-	Rs. 4500/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM
8	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Kotkay Nawo and Hayagi Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 280000/-	Rs. 3600/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM
9	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Kass Panakot and Qulaindi Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 250000/-	Rs. 3200/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM
10	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Dobando Rehankot and Shawa Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 179000/-	Rs. 2610/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM
11	Sub Head:- Const: of Road in NC/VC Kair Bibyawar Serai Gandigar Darora and Kattan Payeen Pk-12	C-6	Rs. 420000/-	Rs. 5700/-	As per work order	12-9-2023 at 12:00 PM	12-9-2023 at 12:30 PM

(1).....Bid Documents including instruction to Bidders can be downloaded from C&W website (www.cwd.gkp.pk) before the submission date/time. (2).....The bidders should submit their e-bids as per KPPRA Notification No. S.R.O(15)/ Vol:1- 20/2021-22 dated 10.05.2022 and Notification No. S.R.O (15)/ Vol:1-25/2022-23 Dated 22.08.2022. (3).....Complete Details of Bid Security in shape of CDR i.e Bank Name, CDR Number(s) and Date (s) must be submitted electronically along with E-bid on the E-bidding System. (4).....All bidders are required to be registered with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Revenue Authority under Finance Act No. XXI of 2013. (5).....Venue of Bids opening is Office of the Executive Engineer C&W Division Dir Upper.

EXECUTIVE ENGINEER

C & W DIVISION DIR UPPER

INF(P)2051/23



Governor take notices of power loadshedding

PESHAWAR (APP): The Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Governor on Thursday chaired a meeting of Peshawar Electricity Supply Company (PESCO) here at the governor house and expressed concerns over unscheduled and prolonged load-shedding in provincial capital.

The governor remarked that WAPDA should have to realize the public problems and sufferings due to load-shedding adding that people are very restless due to power outage in hot summer.

He noted that even the customers who pay 100 per

cent electricity bills were also facing the issue of power load-shedding. The Governor asked WAPDA and PESCO to ensure an uninterrupted supply of electricity to the consumers.

PESCO Chief Fazal Rabi informed the governor that work on Warsak Road Grid Station has been completed and only installation of transmission lines was remaining, adding that the up-gradation of Warsk Power House to be completed by August 28 would address the issue.

He said that power load-

shedding is being carried out as per the schedule issued by the Central Office.

The meeting was attended by Chief Engineer Operations PESCO Kashif Kamran, City, Superintendent Engr. Shahabuddin, Xens Peshawar Division, Cantt and Khyber Division, and representatives of WAPDA and relevant authorities.

The meeting discussed the hardships and difficulties being faced by the people due to unscheduled load-shedding in Peshawar city and suburbs including Warsak Road.

PHC accepts former MNA Sibghat Ullah's bail

PESHAWAR (APP): The Peshawar High Court (PHC) on Wednesday while accepting the bail application of former MNA, Sibghat Ullah, ordered his release from jail.

A two-member bench comprising Justice Sayyed Arshad Ali and Justice Dr Khursheed Iqbal was hearing the bail application case of former MNA from Dir, Sibghat Ullah.

The former MNA's advocate, Alam Khan Adenzai told the court that Sibghat Ullah was arrested from Dir on 5th August under 3-MPO and was still languishing in jail.

The Assistant Attorney General told the court that the former MNA had delivered a speech at the party meeting, after which he was arrested under 3 MPO.

The court in its remarks said delivering speech was not an offense and after squashing the former MNA's arrest order under 3-MPO, ordered his release from the jail.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan presiding over a meeting of civil officers.

RTS orders Secretary WWB to appear, CCPO to register FIR

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Right to Public Service Commission (RTPSC/RTS) ordered Capital City Police Officer (CCPO) Peshawar to register First Information Report and submit report within one month, on Thursday.

Chief Commissioner RTS Muhammad Salim Khan along with Commissioners Muhammad Asim Imam and Zakir Hussain heard four complaints while issued directives to concerned officials for redressal of public complaints.

RTS ordered CCPO Peshawar for registration FIR on complaint of a resident of Duranpur against his wife for remarriage without divorce from him and abduction of his six years daughter. The complainant informed that he visited police station multiple times but his FIR didn't register.

Another applicant named Muhammad Jan informed that his children has forcibly ejected him from home while now selling his 105 kanal land by

propagating as insane man. However, District Police Officer (DPO) Battagram submitted that after inquiry from local elders and residents it is found that complainant is insane person.

Although, RTS directed the complainant to bring complaint to bring local elders to probe contradiction between Muhammad Jan statement and DPO Battagram report in this regard because applicant claimed that he has been portrayed as insane.

A resident named Noor

Muhammad directed for producing land record to probe ownership of the property on the next hearing. Moreover, Secretary Worker Welfare Board to appear before RTS on Monday due his busy schedule yesterday (Thursday).

RTS stated that public services are a fundamental right of citizens while the commission is committed to ensure good governance by assuring delivery of services in stipulated timeframe as well as to ensure accountability of public servants.

State-of-the-art ORC at FIO hospital inaugurated



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The medical community gathered in unity and enthusiasm today at FIO Hospital to witness the momentous inauguration of the Ocular Research Center (ORC), a groundbreaking initiative poised to revolutionize the landscape of eye care research and innovation. The inauguration ceremony held, was graced by distinguished luminaries, including Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Islam, Prof. Dr. Noor Ul Iman, Prof. Dr. Naem Khattak, Prof. Dr. Lal Muhammad, Dr. Yousaf Jamal, Dr. Rab Nawaz, Dr. Noor ul Hussain, Dr. Adnan Alam, and Dr. Irum Jihan Afridi.

The esteemed Chief Guest, Prof. Dr. Zia Ul Islam, delivered an inspiring keynote address underscoring the significance of collaborative research in advancing the field of ophthalmology. Prof. Dr. Noor Ul Iman, the Guest of Honor and Principal of NWSM, echoed these sentiments and highlighted the potential of the Ocular Research Center to transform the academic landscape by fostering groundbreaking research in the realm of eye care.

FIO Hospital's CEO, Prof. Dr. Mushtaq Ahmad, extended a warm welcome to the distinguished guests, expressing his gratitude for their presence at this historic occasion.

He emphasized the pressing need for a dedicated research center in the domain of eye care, emphasizing FIO Hospital's commitment to pushing the boundaries of medical knowledge.

Director ORC, Dr. Rizwan Elahi, took the stage to present the comprehensive system and organogram of the Ocular Research Center, elucidating the center's innovative approach to interdisciplinary research and collaboration. With state-of-the-art facilities, cutting-edge equipment, and a multidis-

ciplinary team of experts, the ORC is poised to drive meaningful advancements in the understanding, diagnosis, and treatment of ocular conditions.

The distinguished guests collectively commended FIO Hospital's unwavering commitment to healthcare excellence and applauded the institution's expansion into the academic realm through the establishment of the Ocular Research Center. Each speaker acknowledged the significant impact that this initiative is poised to have on both medical education and patient care.

As the inauguration ceremony concluded, a palpable sense of anticipation and enthusiasm lingered in the air. The Ocular Research Center's inception signals a new era of scientific discovery and medical progress in the field of eye care, promising to elevate FIO Hospital's reputation as a trailblazer in healthcare and research.

By-elections on NC, VC seats on August 27

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Elections Commission has completed all preparations for the by-elections to fill vacant seats in 65 village and neighborhood councils across 21 districts on August 27.

Ballot papers for polling have been printed and handed over to the relevant District Returning Officers and Returning Officers. The 21 districts where elections will take place include Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Khyber, Mardan, Kohat, Bannu, Lakki Marwat, DI Khan, Tank, Abbottabad, Haripur, Mansehra, Butgram, Torghar, Swat, Shangla, Malakand, Dir Upper, Dir Lower, and Bajaur.

A total of 256 polling stations have been set up for the by-elections in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, including 102 male, 89 female, and 65 joint polling stations. These polling stations will have a total of 798 polling booths, and approximately 385,000 voters are expected to exercise their right to vote.

Weather in most district to be hot

PESHAWAR (APP): In most districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the weather is likely to be hot, humid and partly cloudy, said an official of the Department of Meteorology here on Thursday.

Chance of rain in Upper and Lower Dir, Bajaur, Swat, Buner, Shangla, Kohistan, Torghar, Butgram, Mansehra, Abbottabad, Haripur while Mardan, Swabi and Nowshera are likely to experience gusty winds and thundershowers and heavy rain at some places.

Chitral, Peshawar, Charsadda, Mohmand, Khyber, Kurram, Orakzai, Hangu, Kohat, Karak, Lakki Marwat, Bannu and North Waziristan districts are likely to experience gusty winds and thundershowers at some places.

Action to be taken against all schools with below 50% result in SSC

PESHAWAR (APP): The Department of Education Khyber Pakhtunkhwa has decided to take immediate action against all those educational institutions giving less than 50 percent results.

According to a notification issued here on Thursday, the department

directed all the Chairman of the Board of Intermediate and Secondary Educations (BISEs) including Abbottabad, Bannu, Dera Ismail Khan, Kohat, Mardan, Malakand, Peshawar and Swat to submit a list of all the schools, both male and female who

have below 50 percent result in the SSC Annual-I Examination-2023.

A notification further stated that action would be taken against all those schools, both male and female, with unsatisfactory performance in the matriculation examination.

The Chairman of the BISEs has given one week for the submission of the list of the educational institutes giving less than 50% results.

84 nanbais booked

PESHAWAR (APP): The district administration during a crackdown launched here against profiteers on Thursday booked 84 bakers (nanbais) from various areas of the provincial metropolis for selling the under-weight roti.

Raids were conducted against nanbais in various bazaars of Saddar, University Road, Hayatabad, Kohat Road, Ring Road, Faqirabad, Charsadda Road, and adjacent areas. Around 84 nanbais were found selling roti with less weight-- upon which the district administration officers booked them for facing legal action.

For the last many days, nanbais in Peshawar were selling less weighted roti according to their own-fixed rates.



PESHAWAR: President Islamia Collegiate School Teaching Staff Association Dr. Inayat-ur-Rehman and General Secretary Kafeel Ahmad congratulating Dr. Muhammad Haroon Khan as appointed Registrar ICU.

Implementation of Dengue Action Plan directed

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting regarding the implementation of Dengue Action Plan 2023 held here on Thursday with Commissioner Peshawar Division Muhammad Zubair in the chair.

The Deputy Commissioners (DCs) of all five districts of Peshawar Division, Peshawar, Nowshera, Charsadda, Tribal District Mohmand and District Khyber Deputy Commissioners, District Health Officers and administrative officers of other related institutions participated in the meeting.

He was informed that the situation in 2023 is more satisfactory than 2022 due to the timely measures taken throughout the year and as compared to the total cases of 760 in last year only 20 cases have been registered Peshawar division and the travel history

of all cases is available. 17 cases have been registered in Peshawar, 2 cases in Khyber and one case in Nowshera.

The Commissioner Peshawar Division Muhammad Zubair expressed his satisfaction with the measures taken to prevent dengue in all the five districts directed all deputy commissioners of the division to go out in the field to implement the Dengue Action Plan 2023 in the true sense and in this regard issued orders to make mutual communication with all the relevant departments more effective in addition to eradication of larvae and public awareness.

Directives for carrying out door-to-door visits by lady health workers in connection with the campaign were also issued.

He also issued directives

for immediate initiation of measures under the strategy for September and October and obtaining of Larva Clearance Certificate from the heads of public offices.

In order to achieve the better targets issued directives to Peshawar, Nowshera and Charsadda to get the services of 100 volunteers for each district from Pakistan Red Crescent (PRC) and signing of an early agreement with the organization in this regard.

He also issued directives to Capital Police Officer Peshawar to guarantee the cleanliness and ensuring fog spray in the police stations. Commissioner Peshawar Division Muhammad Zubair announced the direct supervision of all measures and called for a daily report regarding the implementation of the Dengue Action Plan 2023.

Overpopulation exerts pressure on water resources; time for construction of dams

PESHAWAR (APP): Besides food and socio-economic resources, the country's overpopulation, which crossed the psychological barrier of 240 million in May this year, have started exerting pressure on water sector in the country.

Highly vulnerable to climate change, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa's low lying areas people of Nowshera, Peshawar and Charsadda were exposed to drink poor quality of water after the last year devastated floods that adversely affected the quality of groundwater in these districts.

Inspite the fact that Pakistan had witnessed 22 high to very high floods during last 55 years, no attention was paid to construction of small, medium and large dams since long, which may result water scarcity, droughts and more flooding in future.

"I regularly go to Pabbi

tehsil by covering 10 kilometers distance to bring clean drinking water for my family after the ground water of my village Mohib Banda badly affected by the last year floods was not fit for human consumption," said Riazul Haq, former PST teacher of Nowshera district while talking to APP on Thursday.

He said water of the nearby areas was very heavy and its drinking may cause vomiting and other waterborne diseases. Like, Riaz, most people were bringing clean drinking water from Pabbi, Nowshera and Peshawar due to poor quality of the ground water.

Malik Riaz Khan, a senior children specialist at Govt Hospital Pabbi Nowshera said the use of contaminated water may caused diarrhea, cholera and others waterborne diseases that may prove fatal for weaker children. Besides stomach disorder and digestive problems, he said that use of polluted water often caused stunted growth and malnutrition in children and lactating mothers.

Professor Dr Muhammad Naeem of Economics Department, University of Swabi said Pakistan was ranked 14 out of 17 extremely high water risk countries in world due to overpopulation, lack of water reservoirs and climate change induced weather patterns. Citing reports, he said our country's population was expected to exceed 380 million by 2050 and the demand for water is likely to reach 274 million acre feet (MAF) as compared to 191 MAF supply of water by 2025.

Dr Naeem said water availability had plummeted from 5,229 cubic meters per inhabitant in 1962 to just 1,187 in 2017 in Pakistan.

He claimed that the country treats about one percent of wastewater, which was one of the lowest rates in globe and around 40 percent of water was lost due to spillage, seepage, side leakage, and bank cuttings along with irregular profiling of alignment of banks.

Approximately, 97 percent of Pakistan's freshwater is used by agriculture sector, he said, adding additionally 30 percent of land is expected to be water-logged while 13 percent to saline in next few years if new dams were not constructed on priority basis in Pakistan.

Tauheedul Haq, former Conservator of Forest said non construction of dams after Turbela had negatively impacted on water situation in the country.

He said, about 46,000 dams had been constructed across the globe including 22,104 dams by China, 5,334 by India, but unfortunately, Pakistan had built only about 150 small and large dams since its inception.

"Small dams could easily be constructed in KP in a short span of three years while big dams mostly require 10 to 15 years with more investment," he said, adding Pakistan would require additional 76 MAF water by 2050 which was only possible by constructing small dams to meet the growing water demand.

The National Water Policy (NWP) 2018 had revealed that Pakistan was heading towards a situation of water shortage due to lack of dams, which may lead to food insecurity for all living creatures in next few years.

According to the policy, the per capita surface water availability had significantly declined from 5,260 cubic meters per year in Pakistan in 1951 to around 1,000 cubic meters in 2016. This quantity is likely to further drop to 860 cubic meters by 2025, marking the country's transition from a water stressed to a water scarce.

KP Irrigation Department spokesman told APP that 24 small dams with storage capacity of 75,008-acre feet having 49,523 acres cultivated command areas were being constructed in the province.

Pezu dam in Lakki Marwat, Khattak Bandhan dam in Kohat, and Makh Banda dam in Karak completed by federal government.

Similarly, Ichar and Manchura dams at Mansehra, Chashma Akora Khel dam in Karak, Sarozai dam

in Hangu, Sanam dam in Lower Dir, Bada dam and Ulta dam in Swabi constructed jointly by the federal and provincial governments.

Seven medium dams including Bara dam in Khyber, Tank Zam in Tank, Shiekh Haider Zam, Chaudwan Zam, Daraban, and Kora Nullah in DI Khan and Larzan small dam in Tank with water storage capacity of 520,884 AF covering 171,748 CCA besides 31.5-megawatt power generation capacity were in design stage.

The designs of seven medium dams including Barwasa and Sher Dara Swabi, Sumri Payan Kohat, Surkhaway Mardan, Naki Nowshera, Shaheed Dam Charsadda and Tora Warae Hangu having the total accumulative water storage capacity of 13,014 AF with 14,935 acres CCA were completed.

As many as 37 small and medium dams were constructed in KP including 15 operated by KP government while 11 supervised by WAPDA and ten were constructed in merged districts having 0.1377 million-acre CCA and 0.3414 AF water storage capacity.

Besides completion of 108MW Golen Gol dam in Chitral, the federal government had accelerated work on Mohmand dam of 800MW with 1.293 MAF water storage capacity that after completion would supplement/irrigate 160,000 acres land and about 18,237 acres of new land with annual benefits of Rs.2.23 billion.

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



In brief

Cop killed in road mishaps

SIBI (INP): A sub-inspector of police was killed and another cop injured after hit by a reckless driven vehicle after they reached a scene of accident which left three people injured. Rescue sources said that a motorcycle overturned near Mithri leaving three including woman and child injured. A police team which reached the scene was hit by an over speeding vehicle coming from behind. As a result of accident, Sub-Inspector Jeevan Khan was killed on the spot while cop Mehbod was injured. The body and injured were shifted to civil hospital Sibi and police after registering a case into the incident.

Two killed in road accident

BAKHTIARABAD (PPI): Two persons were killed in a collision between a rickshaw Mazda in Bakhtiarabad Domki area on Thursday. According to rescue sources, a rickshaw collided with Mazda in Bakhtiarabad Domki area, resultantly, two men Irfan son of Shah Mir Gola and Allah Dita son of Sarung Khan Gola died on the spot. Their bodies were shifted to a local hospital where after completion of necessary medico-legal formalities, they were handed over to heirs. The incident has created a mourning atmosphere in the victim's families. Further investigation was being conducted by the concerned authorities.

Man poisons minor daughter

SARGODHA (INP): A merciless man poisoned her minor daughter to death in suburbs of Sargodha on Thursday, police said. According to the preliminary investigation, the accused had two daughters earlier and he was not pleased over birth of third daughter. Therefore, the pitiless accused fed the two and half year girl daughter with toxic syrup which resulted in her instant death. The police after registering a case into the incident have started an investigation.

Dacoits announce support for Pirs

RANIPUR (PPI): The dacoits have announced their support for the Pirs in the 10-year-old housemaid Fatima murder case and threatened journalists and Fatima's family with dire consequences, according to a report on Thursday. The dacoits sent their threats in video messages to the personal numbers of journalists and Fatima's family members. "Anyone who takes the name of Pirs and their haveli will regret it," they warned. "We will protect the Pirs and their havelis ourselves," they added. "It is a conspiracy of the rival party to target the custodians of Dastagir," they maintained. The dacoits could be seen carrying sophisticated weapons in their hands in the video messages. They openly announced their support to the Pirs.

Anti-dengue drive in Sukkur

SUKKUR (INP): Deputy Commissioner (DC) Sukkur, Dr Shahzad Thaheem on Thursday said that the district administration has ensured effective measures to control dengue while special teams under anti-dengue drive would inspect residential and commercial places and educate the citizens about the importance of sanitation, cleanliness and preventive measures against dengue. While pressing over a meeting at his office here, the deputy commissioner directed the District Health Officer (DHO) and other departments concerned to expedite anti-dengue activities in their respective areas.

PTI voters to back JI candidate in LG by-polls in Dir

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Pakistan Tahreek Insaf's local chapter on Thursday announced to support the Jamaat-i-Islami candidate in the local bodies' by-election to be held at Naway Kaly Timergara here on Sunday. The announcement was made during a joint meeting at a local hotel. The meeting was attended by local leaders of both the parties.

The meeting decided that the PTI voters would support the JI candidate Mian Shakirullah for a general council seat in the bye election of local bodies for the neighbourhood council Naway Kaly in Timergara.

Speaking on the occasion the PTI tehsil president Iqbal Tajik, district vice president Haji Muhammad Ali, JI tehsil chief Malik Sher Bahadar, JI district spokesman Shuiab Ahmad

and others said the Pakistan Democratic Movement (PDM) government was responsible for the whole mess and inflation in the country. The speakers said the current inflation, unemployment and lawlessness had disappointed common citizens and they would never vote for the PDM allied parties. The PTI leaders announced that their workers would fully support the JI candidate in the Aug 27 bye polls on a vacant seat in the council.

Meanwhile the district election commissioner and returning officer for the bye polls Muhammad Iqbal Tanoli told local journalists that the ECP had finalized all arrangements for the proposed bye election in three councils of the Lower Dir. He said the polling station had been provided with the essential materials. The official said that election officer Adnan Khan would

act as returning officer for the Timergara seat and assistant commissioner Noor Zali Khan for the Lal Qila seat. Two candidate one each from the PPP and JUI-F are in the run for the youth seat in Dherai Talash and two candidates; one each from the PPP and JI in the run for the Naway Kaly Timergara general councilor seat. The Awami National Party has announced to support the PPP candidate in the Timergara seat.

The JI local leaders including Malik Sher Bahadar and Shuyiab Ahmad on Thursday demanded the federal government to immediately reverse the increase in fuel and electricity prices. Talking to local journalists they said the poor people found it hard to feed their families as the government dropped bomb after bomb upon the nation.

RTI fundamental human rights accepted by UN

F.P. Report

SWABI: Right to Information (RTI) has been accepted as a fundamental human right by the United Nations. More than 123 countries have enacted RTI laws to facilitate their citizens with an easy access to government held information. This results in greater transparency, eradication of corruption, favoritism and nepotism in the system.

This was stated by Sayed Saadat Jahan, Deputy Director Communication, KP

Information Commission while imparting training on RTI Act for the PIOs of all the universities and Principals of selected colleges of Mardan Division at University of Swabi.

Syed Saadat Jahan imparted a detail presenta-



tion on KP RTI Act and enlightened the participants with the procedure of entertaining citizens request of information.

He also stressed on PIOs for proper indexation of public information in their institutions, which can be provide to citizens on their requests. He further said that citizens' access to

information should be ensured in public bodies, and role of PIOs is imperative in this regard.

The participants suggested the commission to write letter to the secretary education for installation of RTI awareness banners at all the educational institutions of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Outgoing RPO expresses gratitude to citizens

F.P. Report

D I KHAN: The outgoing Regional Police Officer (RPO) Abdul Ghafoor Afridi has expressed gratitude to citizens of Dera division for their exemplary cooperation in maintaining peace during his tenure.

"I am deeply grateful to the dignitaries of the area, scholars, businessmen and media for their cooperation during my tenure and I salute them for their sincere cooperation," the RPO observed while talking in a farewell meeting held at his office with Commissioner Dera Zafarul Islam

Khattak, former secretary DRC Hajiullah Bakhsh Sapal, former caretaker provincial minister Haji Abdul Haleem Khan Qasuria, Muhammad Nawaz and other notables of Tank, Dera and South Waziristan and local journalists.

The RPO who has been transferred from Dera range said there had been exemplary coordination among all institutions, which was a welcome thing and during the posting in Ismail Khan, the people of Dera Ismail Khan Division have always cooperated with the police and this was the reason

there was peace today.

He said that wonderful cooperation and love by the people of Dera Ismail Khan would always remain in his memories. On this occasion DC also presented a shield for his valuable services. Abdul Ghafoor Afridi said that the Khasadar force in South Waziristan had been merged into police force and its efficiency had been increased through the best training.

During his tenure, he said a lot of work was done on the elimination of drugs, major robberies were traced, peace was established.

Governor signs bill for setup of Larkana Varsity

F.P. Report

LARKANA: The Governor of Sindh has signed the Larkana University Bill, due to which the campus of the University of Sindh has now been converted into Larkana University, for which the long-standing demand of the residents of Larkana Division has been fulfilled and the students of the division are happy.

In this regard, it is known that in the last days of the previous Pakistan People's Party government, on July 24, the government presented a bill in the Sindh Assembly for the establishment of Larkana University, which was approved by a majority vote. The summary

was sent to the Governor House on August 7, which was signed by Sindh Governor Kamran Khan Tisori. There are chances that Prof. Dr. Azhar Ali Shah, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Sindh University Campus in Larkana, will be appointed as the Vice-Chancellor of Larkana University.

It should be noted that according to the proposal presented by Dr. Azhar Ali Shah, Pro-Vice Chancellor of Sindh University Larkana Campus, in the month of January, first a general university should be established in Larkana, in which all the public sector universities should be merged to establish the university. Which includes Sindh

University Campus Larkana, Quaid Awam Engineering University Campus Larkana, ZA Bahto Zarai College Dokri, and Shahid Benazir Bahto Law College Larkana, after the approval of the bill, the property and administrative affairs of the said educational institutions will be transferred to Larkana University. When contacted, the Pro Vice Chancellor of Sindh University Larkana Campus, Dr. Azhar Ali Shah said that with the establishment of Larkana University, the students of many districts, including Larkana Division, will benefit from the best education of the university in their region like other cities.

Donation for inmates handed over to Kohat jail

Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: Chairman Dostan Coal Company, Darra Adam Khel Malik Haji Muhammad Yousaf Afridi handed over donations of medicines, solar panels, fans and other essential items for the inmates of District Jail Kohat to the Deputy Commissioner Kohat Dr. Azmatullah Wazir.

Additional Deputy Commissioner Finance Ms. Reena Suhrwardy and Regional Sports Officer Kohat Sajid Afridi were also present on this occasion. He also announced water bore for Kohat Jail and holding of sports event for prisoners on behalf of Dostan Coal Company. He assured to play his role in the social welfare activities with the mutual coopera-

tion of the district administration in the future as well. Deputy Commissioner Kohat while eulogizing the spirit of Dostan Coal Company Chairman Malik Haji Muhammad Yusuf Afridi for poor and needy people thanked him for giving donations for the prisoners and assured his full support from the district administration for the welfare activities.



CHAKWAL: Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Muhammad Amjad Khan Niazi performing the ground breaking of Bahria Foundation College.

Two men shot dead in Drosh Jungle

F.P. Report

CHITRAL: At least two people were shot dead by unknown attackers in Shah Nigar Jungle of Drosh area in Lower Chitral, police informed on Thursday.

The police of Drosh area said, two men belonging to Shah Nigar area were in Kaldam Gol area of the Drosh jungle to collect firewood when unknown assailants shot them dead. Bodies of both the men, identified as Ehsan Uddin, son of Mehrab Uddin and Ashraf Ali, son of Gul Nayab were later placed by the relatives on Drosh Road, blocking it for vehicular traffic for hours.

However later, on assurance by the police to arrest the killers as soon as possible, the relatives unblocked the road. Police said both the men were shot from a close range from behind adding that the deceased had no enmity with anyone in the area.

Chairman of the village council Shah Nigar, Waqar Ahmad said it was the first time in Chitral that people blocked the road by placing dead bodies on it. He said the killing of two innocent men was an attempt to sabotage the peaceful atmosphere of the area and demanded early arrest of the perpetrators to avoid recurrence of such incidents in future. Bodies of the deceased were later shifted to Drosh Hospital for medico legal procedure.

Farewell ceremony for DPO hosted

F.P. Report

TANK: A farewell function was held for District Police Officer (DPO) Waqar Ahmed who has been transferred from the Tank district. The ceremony was held at Deputy Commissioner Office Tank in where DC Muhammad Shoib and other senior officials praised the outgoing DPO for his contribution towards strengthening the district police.

They highlighted the services of the DPO and his initiatives that boosted morale and performance of police jawans. They said that Waqar Ahmed had always endeavored to live up to the expectations of the people and ensure the rule of law and discharge duties with honesty, dedication and courage.

Later, DC presented a traditional turban and souvenir to the outgoing police chief. Additional Deputy Commissioner General Tanvir Khan, Assistant Commissioner Aminullah, Assistant Commissioner Tribal Sub division Inam Wazir and Additional assistant commissioners Jamshed Alam and Shohab Ahmed also presented souvenirs to him.

Tareen visits Jaranwala

FAISALABAD (INP): Istehkam Pakistan Party (IPP) Chairman Jehangir Tareen visited Jaranwala on Thursday and met Christian community members, whose houses and churches were burnt by mob on August 16.

Other leaders of the party including former provincial minister Chaudhry Zaheeruddin and Noman Langryal accompanied him. Tareen announced Rs 10 million financial support for the victim families.

KPCIP to improve living standard of citizens

F.P. Report

MARDAN: City Mayor Himayatullah Mayor on Thursday said that upon completion of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Cities Improvement project (KPCIP) the living standards of the citizens would be improved. He made these claims while chairing a meeting regarding KPCIP ongoing project.

On the occasion, he expressed that under KPCIP Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP), Green Urban Spaces (GUS) and Scientific Sanitary Landfill site (SLF) would be established for fourteen Urban Councils of Mardan. He disclosed that 8.5 billion rupees had been allocated for the construction of STP which was in progress.

Besides, the construction of GUS project will be carried out through 58 million rupees and SLF will be established in Mardan with an allocated budget of 3.5 billion rupees, he added.

Chief Engineer Cities Implementation Unit Mardan Engineer Muhammad Khalil Akbar briefed the participants of the meeting. Tehsil Municipal Officer Mardan Sarfaraz Khan, Tehsil Officer Finance Ayaz and Tehsil Officer Infrastructure Haroon Khan were also present. The City Mayor was informed that under the KPCIP project sewerage treatment plant, Green Urban Spaces and Modern Scientific Sanitary Landfill Site will be established in Mardan. The sanitary landfill site has been framed for the efficient management of municipal waste while sewerage treatment plant will cater the issues related to waste water management and green urban spaces will provide environmental benefits and aesthetics to the beauty of Mardan city.

Under this project the municipal waste will be collected from every household within Mardan city and will be reused for other environment friendly purposes. He said through the Sewerage Treatment Plant (STP) project the domestic sewerage connections of six urban union councils will be connected with STP for treatment and reuse for irrigation purpose. The green urban spaces project will cater the issues regarding environmental pollution and beautification. Himayatullah Mayor

shown satisfaction over the ongoing development projects of KPCIP, and stated that these projects will be completed in consultation with all the stakeholders. He said that all the available resources will be utilized to provide best sanitation services for the citizens of Mardan. He said that provision improved service delivery to the citizens of Mardan is our top priority.

Electricity prices devastated poor, destroyed businesses: President Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry (MCCI) Zahir Shah On Thursday has said that Electricity bills have brought out the cries of the poor people, businesses have been destroyed.

Prosperity is all dependent on commercial development. Traders are the backbone for the stability of the country's economy. The government should give relief to the people. These views were expressed by the Provincial General Secretary of the Central Organization of Traders and President of Mardan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Zahir Shah in a conversation with the media. He said that the electricity bill of the middle class has come from 20 thousand rupees to 35 thousand rupees.

It is difficult for the poor to earn two daily bread. The poor people are suffering from mental depression. In such a worst inflation where the people are barely able to make ends meet, the monthly electricity bills of thousands of rupees is no less than a punishment for them.

Due to the daily increase in the price of electricity and new taxes, the prices of electricity bills are skyrocketing. Putting income tax and sales tax in household bills is beyond understanding. Pakistan, a resource-rich country, has been rendered resourceless.

Instead of giving relief to the people, the rulers are bent on extracting their money. Zahir Shah demanded that the price of electricity should be reduced immediately and the cruel taxes should be abolished and the long bills of the people should be fixed and the electricity prices should be reduced for the poor man. If the demands are not accepted If we go, we will give the call of central organization of traders and provincial leaders to sit in Islamabad.

Plan for agriculture, industries concluded

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Provincial Minister of Industries and Commerce, Agriculture SM Tanveer has said that under the leadership of Chief Minister Punjab, the problems of industrialists and traders are being solved across the province. The work of providing interest-free loans to industrialists and businessmen has been started for the promotion of the industry. The draft of the first skills policy of the province 2023 has been approved under which 5 lakh youth will be trained every year.

The provincial minister expressed these views while talking to the media and addressing the ceremony on the occasion of the inauguration of the office of Hafizabad Chamber of Commerce. Former Federal Minister Saira Afzal Tarar, Deputy Commissioner, President of Hafizabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry Chaudhry Muhammad Saleh Ranjha, Senior Vice President Shafqat Hussain Tarar, Vice President Abdul Jabbar Raza and other leaders were also present on the occasion. The provincial minister said that under the leadership of Caretaker Chief Minister Punjab, master plans are being prepared for the provision of relief to the people and development and promotion of various sectors.

A mega master plan is also being prepared for the improvement of agriculture and industry sectors. The provincial minister said that work is being done on modern technology for the

development of the agriculture sector. Modern agricultural machinery, drones and other technologies are being procured. Steps are being taken for the promotion of agriculture, paying special attention to the Cholistan region of Punjab.

SM Tanveer said that steps are being taken for the profit of fish farming landlords. For the first time under the leadership of Chief Minister Punjab, the rate of cotton has been set at 8500 per maund. Modern technology and satellite system are being used for the promotion and improvement of cotton crop and the water supply in the cotton producing areas is being monitored with modern satellite system.

A strict crackdown is on against the manufacturers of substandard and fake agricultural medicines so that the continuous hard work of our land farmers does not get wasted due to the use of these fake pesticides. He said that canola was cultivated on 8 lakh acres across Punjab. With the efforts of the caretaker government, its cultivation has been increased and now 15 lakh acres of canola can be cultivated, which will also solve the problem of shortage of edible oil in the country. He said that per maund price of wheat has already been increased and God willing, thanks to modern technology, the production of wheat per acre will increase further.

The provincial minister said that the Punjab government will make 5 lakh youth skilled every year, so that

they will be able to earn employment in a dignified manner. For skill development, three technology parks will be established across the province, while laboratories of technical education institutions will be equipped with modern equipment. He said that he congratulates all the officials on the establishment of the office of Hafizabad Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The establishment of such institutions helps in solving the problems of the business community, he added.

NADRA office inaugurated: A new State of the Art NADRA office have been established at Hafizabad. Director General NADRA Sargodha Region Muhammad Fahim Khan inaugurated the officer. Zonal Head Faisal Javed, and other officers and officials of NADRA were also present on the occasion.

Zonal Head Faisal Javed told on the occasion that 8 counters equipped with modern technology and other all necessary facilities have been setup in this State of the Art Office. He said that this office would open at 7: 30 AM to 3 PM where people could get new CNIC, "B" Form, Family Registration and other NADRA facilities.

DG Sargodha Region directed the staff of this office to provide maximum relief to the people and laxity in service delivery would not be tolerated. He also directed that deal all visitors politely without any discrimination and address problems of people only on merit.



African Union suspends Niger over coup as 12 troops die in attack

JOHANNESBURG (AFP): The African Union said that it had suspended Niger's membership in the wake of a military coup, but responded cautiously to a threatened military operation to restore its ousted president, as Nigerien TV said 12 soldiers were killed in a new attack by suspected jihadists.

National guards carrying out an anti-jihadist operation in the southwestern region of Tillabéri were ambushed, the broadcaster Tele Sahel said, adding that the troops inflicted "heavy losses" on the enemy. Niger's armed forces, struggling with an eight-year jihadist insurgency, have lost at least 29 men since officers toppled elected president Mohamed Bazoum on July 26.

The coup -- justified by its leaders over Bazoum's alleged failure to stem the insurgents -- triggered a bustup with France, Niger's staunchest ally, and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). ECOWAS has imposed trade sanctions on Niger and approved the deployment of a "standby force to restore constitutional order" in Niamey. The bloc is hazy about the plan in detail but insists it will intervene if attempts at a diplomatic solution ultimately fail. As the crisis neared the end of its fourth week, the AU said that it was suspending Niger from its ranks but indicated reservations about the ECOWAS threat following strong differences among its members.

The AU said its Peace and Security Council had asked the body's Commission to carry out "an assessment of the economic, social and security implications" of deploying

the force. The coup has heightened international worries over the Sahel, which faces growing jihadist insurgencies linked to Al-Qaeda and the Islamic State group. Niger is the fourth ECOWAS nation since 2020 to suffer a coup, following Burkina Faso, Guinea and Mali. The country's new military ruler, General Abdourahamane Tiani, has proposed a three-year transition back to democracy, a call rejected by ECOWAS, which sent a delegation to visit Niger on the weekend in a renewed diplomatic push.

Unlike a previous ECOWAS mission in early August, the envoys held talks with Tiani and also met Bazoum, who is being held with his family at the presidential palace. Delegation chief and former Nigerian president Abdulsalami Abubakar gave a positive assessment of the talks.

"I must say that our visit to Niger has been very fruitful and that it has opened an avenue to start talking, and hopefully we'll get somewhere," he said. But Abdel-Fatau Musah, ECOWAS commissioner for politics and security, described the three-year transition proposal as "a joke" and said the bloc would "never accept it".

"We want constitutional order to be restored as soon as possible," he told Al Jazeera in an interview broadcast. "Military action is not off the table," he warned. In Johannesburg, on the sidelines of the BRICS summit, China's Wu Peng, Africa affairs director-general at the foreign ministry, emphasised Beijing's policy of "non-interference". "This kind of problem in Niger should be solved through peaceful dialogue through

ECOWAS and the African Union," he said. The AU communique said it "strongly rejects any external interference by any actor or any country outside the Continent... including engagements by private military companies."

Russia's Wagner group is the most prominent paramilitary group active on the continent. The UN's World Food Programme (WFP) warned last week that sanctions and border closures were crimping vital food and medical supplies into Niger. ECOWAS has imposed sanctions while Benin and Nigeria have closed their borders. However, the juntas in neighbouring Burkina Faso and Mali have said that any military intervention in Niger would be considered a "declaration of war" against their countries. Around 300 trucks arrived in Niger's capital of Niamey from Burkina Faso, most of them carrying food, the Nigerien authorities said. The Sahel state ranks among the most turbulent and poorest countries in the world, often lying at the bottom of the UN's Human Development Index, a benchmark of prosperity.

In an article for France's conservative Le Figaro newspaper, Bazoum's Paris-based daughter Zazia Bazoum Mohamed said her father, in refusing to resign, had "decided to fight to save democracy", while urging his release. Bazoum's election in 2021 was a landmark, opening the way to the country's first peaceful transition of power. He survived two attempted coups before finally being toppled in what marked the fifth putsch since Niger gained independence from France in 1960.

Kim visits tractor factory amid food crisis

SEOUL (Reuters): North Korean leader Kim Jong Un visited the Kumsong Tractor Factory alongside his powerful sister, Kim Yo Jong, amid the ongoing food crisis, state media KCNA reported on Thursday. The visit, accompanied by senior officials, saw the leader urge the factory to play an important role in solving the food crisis which he described as an important business for the country's future.

Kim also called for goals to be set to modernize the country's agricultural machinery production process and for it to reach the "world-class" level, the report said. North Korea has been pushing agriculture amid growing concerns over food shortages. Some analysts have said the factory may also manufacture parts for missile launch vehicles. South Korea's unification minister, charged with handling relations with its neighbour, said earlier this year that the food situation in the North is "still bad" despite a small increase in trade with China.

The North has suffered serious food shortages in recent decades, including famine in the 1990s, often as a result of natural disasters, and international experts have warned that border closures during the COVID-19 pandemic worsened matters. Earlier this week, Kim criticized top officials over their response to flood damage including over 270 hectares (667 acres) of rice paddies, news agency KCNA said. Last week, KCNA also reported that Kim had inspected typhoon-hit farmlands after tropical storm Khanun swept over the Korean Peninsula.

Kim praised the military's efforts to salvage crops and said the troops were mobilised because they cannot lose a patch of farmland "to the natural rampage on the agricultural front directly related with the people's living," the report said.

New Thai PM takes office

BANGKOK (AFP): Thailand's new prime minister vowed to bring four years of change to the kingdom as he took office at the head of a controversial coalition including pro-military parties linked to former coup-makers. The appointment of former property mogul Srettha Thavisin -- of the Pheu Thai party long associated with billionaire ex-premier Thaksin Shinawatra -- ends months of political deadlock following May's general election.

The 61-year-old was confirmed by parliamentary vote, just hours after Thaksin returned to the kingdom from 15 years of exile and was immediately jailed on old graft charges. Srettha received King Maha Vajiralongkorn's official written command to form a government in a ceremony at Pheu Thai headquarters at 6:00 pm (1100 GMT). "The good of the country is my highest priority. I am confident the next four years will be years of change," Srettha said after accepting the royal endorsement, pledging to work "tirelessly".

"The government under Pheu Thai will work hard to... create happiness for all people equally and make Thailand a land of hope for the young generation." Outgoing prime minister Prayut Chan-o-cha -- a former army chief who overthrew the last Pheu Thai government in a coup -- congratulated Srettha and wished him luck. Prayut suffered a heavy defeat in May's polls as the upstart progressive Move Forward Party (MFP) rode a wave of youth and urban discontent with nearly a decade of military-backed rule to win the most seats.

But MFP's push to reform royal insult laws and take on powerful vested business interests spooked the kingdom's elite and saw leader Pita Limjaroenrat blocked from becoming prime minister. This opened the way for election runners-up Pheu Thai to build a coalition that includes Prayut's party and another linked to the generals who ousted Thaksin in 2006 and his sister Yingluck in 2014.

Thaksin is reviled by the country's royalist and pro-military establishment, which has spent much of the past two decades trying to keep him and his allies out of power.

Pheu Thai's Srettha Thavisin was approved as prime minister yesterday -- the party's first premier since Thaksin's sister Yingluck was thrown out in a coup in 2014. Property mogul Srettha heads a controversial coalition that includes the parties linked to the coup-maker generals who ousted Thaksin and Yingluck. The new coalition shuts out the upstart progressive Move Forward Party (MFP), which rode a wave of youth and urban discontent at nearly a decade of military-backed rule to score a shock victory in the May election.

Philippine supply boats breach a Chinese coast guard blockade

ABOARD BRP CABRA (AP): As a United States Navy plane circled overhead, two Philippine boats breached a Chinese coast guard blockade in a dangerous confrontation in the disputed South China Sea to deliver food and other supplies to Filipino forces guarding a contested shoal. Two Philippine coast guard vessels escorting the supply boats, however, were blocked by at least four Chinese coast guard ships for about five hours in the tense standoff near Second Thomas Shoal.

The dangerous encounter is the latest flare-up from the long-seething territorial disputes in the busy sea that involve China, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Taiwan and Brunei. It's regarded as an Asian flashpoint and has become a delicate fault line in the US-China rivalry. The Philippine coast guard invited a small group of journalists, including two from The Associated Press, to join its ships that secured the supply boats as part of a new strategy aimed at exposing China's increasingly aggressive actions in the South China Sea, which Beijing claims virtually in its entirety.

One Chinese coast guard ship came as close as 46 meters (50 yards) as it crossed the bow of BRP Cabra to block the Philippine coast guard ship, which maneuvered fast to avoid a collision, said a coast guard officer onboard the Cabra who could not be named because of official policy. The Cabra and another coast guard ship, the BRP Sindangan, were surrounded by four Chinese coast guard ships and four suspected militia vessels and forced to stop as the other two Philippine boats delivered supplies to the Filipino forces at Second Thomas Shoal, more than 7 kilometers (4 miles) away. All the Philippine vessels sailed away without further incident after the supplies and a fresh crew of Filipino sailors were delivered to the military outpost on a long-marooned Philippine navy ship at the shoal.

"We're happy that the resupply mission succeeded despite all the dangerous blockings and other actions," Cmdr. Emmanuel Dangate of the Cabra told AP. Coast Guard spokesperson Commodore Jay



Tarriela condemned the Chinese coast guard blockade and other perilous maneuvers as a violation of international regulations aimed at avoiding sea collisions. The coast guard would provide a report to the Department of Foreign Affairs in Manila for a possible diplomatic protest against China, he said. The hostilities started, when a Chinese coast guard ship started tailing the Philippine vessels. Both sides asserted their territorial rights in a flurry of radio message exchanges with a man identifying himself as coming from the one of the Chinese coast guard ships, warning at one point: "To avoid miscalculation, leave and keep out, otherwise, you will bear full responsibility for all the consequences."

When the Philippine ships did not back away, the Chinese radio caller warned that, because of such continued "infringement and provocation, we will take countermeasures." Chinese coast guard ships repeatedly crossed the bows of the two Philippine coast guard ships at close range. Up to three later positioned in front of the Cabra, which remained stationary.

The Chinese ships also moved dangerously close to the wooden-hulled supply boats, but the two smaller vessels managed to dart cross the shallows toward the shoal. Chinese officials at the embassy in

Manila did not immediately comment on the encounter. It was not immediately clear why the US Navy deployed the surveillance plane that flew for more than three hours overhead as the Chinese ships blocked and shadowed the Philippine vessels off Second Thomas Shoal. When asked about the deployment of the Navy plane, US Embassy spokesperson Kanishka Gangopadhyay in Manila said he could not provide specifics. "What I can say is that all of our military activities in the Philippines are conducted in full coordination with our Philippine allies," he said.

Filipino security officials have said they've received intelligence information and surveillance images taken in the disputed waters from their American and other foreign counterparts in the past as part of security cooperation. The United States lays no claim to the South China Sea but has declared that freedom of navigation and flight, as well as peacefully resolving disputes, are in its national interest. After a Chinese coast guard ship used a water cannon against a Philippine supply boat on Aug. 5, Washington renewed a warning that it's obligated to defend its longtime treaty ally if Filipino forces, aircraft and vessels come under an armed attack, including in the South China Sea.

Climate change could bring year-round heatwaves: UN

UNITED NATIONS (AFP): As Europe and other regions swelter, a UN researcher cautioned that climate change was enabling increasingly intense and long-lasting heatwaves, which in some areas could soon begin to hit year-round. Extreme heat has dominated the headlines in recent weeks, from the current "heat dome" cooking much of Europe, to heat-fuelled wildfires raging in Greece, Spain, Canada and Hawaii, and soaring temperatures in the middle of the South American winter.

Heatwaves are beginning earlier, lasting longer and becoming more intense, John Nairn, a senior extreme heat advisor at the UN's World Meteorological Organization (WMO), told AFP in an interview. "It's the most rapidly emerging consequence of global warming that we are seeing in the weather systems," he said, stressing that this was in line with scientific predictions. "People are far too relaxed about the signs," he lamented.

"The science has been

saying this is coming your way. And this is not where it stops." "It will only get more intense and more frequent." One reason, he explained, was that global warming appears to be leading to a weakening of the global jet streams -- air that flows high in the Earth's atmosphere. As the jet stream waves grow slower and wavier, they allow weather systems to "become parked" in one spot for longer. "You can get a summertime situation where you get persistent heatwaves, and the heat just builds and builds and builds, because the wave is not moving on," Nairn said.

If you look at the planet as a whole, he said you could see that "these heatwaves are appearing in each of those same wavelengths around the globe". "The slowing down and parking of the weather patterns is setting us up so that North America, parts of the Atlantic ocean, Europe and Asia are simultaneously sitting in the (wave) ridges, getting caught." Heatwaves are among the deadliest natural hazards, with hun-

dreds of thousands of people dying from preventable heat-related causes each year. Nairn called for the conversation around heat to become "smarter". Among other things, he said, there should be far more focus on rising overnight minimum temperatures than on the maximum day temperatures that grab headlines. Repeated high nighttime temperatures are particularly dangerous for human health, since the body is unable to recover from the heat it suffers through during the day.

Higher overnight temperatures also mean that the energy accumulated during the day has nowhere to go, pushing temperatures even higher the next day. The fact that minimum temperatures are rising faster than maximums is thus pushing excess energy "into longer periods of higher temperatures", Nairn said. "It's cumulative... So heatwaves are becoming much more dangerous." And as the climate continues to change, the situation is due to get worse, Nairn said. He

voiced particular concern over the situation in the tropics and subtropics, pointing to the record heat seen in South America, with temperatures up towards 40 degrees Celsius in the middle of what is supposed to be their winter.

Looking forward, he cautioned that "we're going to see a lot more heatwaves across a much longer period of the year". In the tropics and subtropics, "unfortunately, the indications are that severe and extreme heatwaves are likely to be able to occur anytime (of year) before the end of the century". Less sunlight means year-round extreme heatwaves are not expected at other latitudes, but Nairn stressed that there too we will be seeing more "unseasonably warm periods" even in winter. Asked what could be done to rein in the rampant heat, Nairn stressed that "all of us have the capabilities to actually turn this around". "We need to electrify everything... and stop burning fossil fuels. It's not harder than that."

Inside El Salvador's mega-prison holding 12,000 alleged gangsters

SAN SALVADOR (AFP): Humanitarian organizations have questioned the treatment of alleged gang members. The UN denounced that among the tens of thousands of detainees across the nation's prisons there are at least 1,600 minors. The prison was built to hold some of the more than 72,000 alleged gang members detained under an emergency regime decreed in March 2022 by Congress at Bukele's request, in response to an escalation of violence that claimed the lives of 87 people in just three days. Authorities accuse nearly all of the Tecoluca prisoners of belonging to the violent rival Mara Salvatrucha (MS-13) and Barrio 18 gangs with origins in the streets of Southern California four decades ago. "When you are a child, anyone lies to you and sweetens you up, you fall into a mistake, and when you grow up... you realize it," says Nelson Velasquez, a 37-year-old prisoner who

has "MS-13" tattooed on his head.

Velasquez spoke during a visit to the facility by El Salvador's Human Rights Ombudsman, Raquel Caballero, and the country's human rights commissioner, Colombian national Andres Guzman. Some 60 to 75 inmates live in each cell of about 100 square meters (1,000 square feet). They share two toilets and two sinks with running water for washing, as well as two containers with drinking water. With his hands bound, dressed like the rest of the prisoners in a T-shirt, shorts and a white mask, Velasquez said that he has already served two sentences for different crimes totaling 15 years, but now awaits a new trial.

The prison cellblocks have a curved roof to ensure natural ventilation for the prisoners, as well as skylights to illuminate a courtyard that separates the blocks. Some inmates have gone free. "To date, a few more than 7,000 have been

released," Security Minister Gustavo Villatoro said.

To build the prison, the state bought 166 hectares (410 acres) of land. Consisting of eight cellblocks, the complex is surrounded by a 2.1-kilometer (1.3-mile) concrete wall, which stands 11 meters (36 feet) high, in addition to electrified wire fences. After talking to inmates in different cells, Caballero, the human rights ombudsman, said that the inmates complained that there was a lack of food. "They complain that the food is insufficient" and "that they are idle, they do nothing because they are locked up," Caballero told AFP. The prison has dining rooms, rest areas, a gymnasium and ping pong tables, but only for the use of the guards. There are also dark, windowless "punishment cells" for inmates who engage in misconduct. There are rooms for virtual court hearings so that prisoners do not have to leave the prison.

Heavy rain helps douse wildfires in Columbia

KELOWNA, British Columbia (AP): Firefighters in a scenic region of British Columbia said that heavy rain overnight helped douse wildfires that forced the evacuation of thousands of people from the Canadian province, as the cost of the devastating fires became clearer.

Officials in southern British Columbia said 174 properties were partially or totally damaged by the fires that raged for days in the Okanagan Valley threatening towns in the Kelowna area, a summer destination about 90 miles (150 kilometers) north of the US border. "I'm happy to report in the north we've received rain, and a lot of it," said Chief Ross Kotscherofski of the North Westside fire rescue department. "This, with lower temperatures, is going to really help with mopping up this fire."

Kotscherofski said 90 properties in his firefighting region were damaged or destroyed, although some, including the Lake Okanagan Resort, consist of multiple structures. West Kelowna fire Chief Jason Brolund said a total of 84

properties were partially or totally damaged in West Kelowna and the Westbank First Nation. "I'm feeling some optimism based on the weather," Brolund said. "My priority now becomes returning people to their homes. I ask for your continued patience." More than 25,000 people in British Columbia have been under evacuation orders, with 37,000 more under alert to be ready to evacuate on short notice.

Bowinn Ma, British Columbia's emergency management minister, said people who defy evacuation orders are putting at risk the "unified strategy" for battling the destructive blazes. More than 500 firefighters are currently battling the blazes around Lake Okanagan. Drenching rainfall is also in the forecast for much of British Columbia's fire-ravaged interior, where up to 80 millimeters of rain was expected.

The forecast also includes warnings of potential localized flooding and "debris flows" as rains hit the scorched landscape. Officials said a website will be launched to let home-

owners in West Kelowna, Westbank First Nation and the Central Okanagan Regional District if their properties have been damaged or destroyed. "In a perfect world our preference, without question, would be to personally call every single homeowner and be with them when they receive what is probably the worst news they have ever received," said Sally Ginter, Central Okanagan Regional District chief administrative officer. "But today we live in a day of social media and photos and information that is flying around faster than we can ever begin to think we can manage," she said. To the north, in Northwest Territories, the mayor of Yellowknife said it's not safe for residents to go home to the territorial capital, but she notes city officials are working on a return plan. A fire continued to burn about 15 kilometers (nine miles) away from the city. Most of the 20,000 residents left by air or road late last week. Canada has seen a record number of wildfires this year that have caused choking smoke in parts of the US.

Thailand's Thaksin moved to hospital after exile return

BANGKOK (AFP): Thailand's former premier Thaksin Shinawatra was moved from prison to a police hospital, officials said, a day after he was jailed on his return from 15 years in exile. The 74-year-old, twice Thai prime minister and ousted in a 2006 coup, is suffering from multiple health complaints, officials said, and was moved from prison quarantine to a police hospital shortly after midnight.

Thaksin's homecoming came on the same day his Pheu Thai party returned to government in a power-sharing agreement with pro-military parties, prompting widespread speculation of a deal to cut his jail time. Sithi Sutivong, a corrections department spokesman, said in a statement that, prison medical officers reported Thaksin

was suffering from sleeplessness, high blood pressure and low blood oxygen. "He has several diseases that need to be taken care of -- in particular heart diseases, and the prison hospital does not have the right equipment," Sithi said.

"The doctor said that to avoid the risk that could endanger his life, he should be sent to the Police hospital." Immediately after landing in Bangkok by private jet, the billionaire ex-PM was taken to court and ordered to serve jail sentences passed during his absence from the country. He had long argued the cases were politically motivated but said he was willing to face justice in order to return home and see his grandchildren in his old age. Loved by millions of rural Thais for his populist policies in the early 2000s,

The Frontier Post

JALIL AFRIDI
Managing Editor

Printed and published by Mahmood Afridi at
Moraka's Printers, 27 Abdara Road, University Town,
Peshawar.

Peshawar Office: 091-5700095, 0300- 9009001

Peshawar Fax: 091-5703687, Post Box No. 573

E-mail: fppeshawar@thefrontierpost.com

Lahore Office: 0335-4026284

Email: fplahore@thefrontierpost.com

Islamabad Office: 0321-5066253

Email: mahmoodafridi@thefrontierpost.com

Karachi Office: 021-32213411, 0300-8340907

Email: fpkarachi@thefrontierpost.com

*USA and Canada Toll Free Number 1-800-5905747

Sehat Saulat and legacies of the rulers

THE Caretaker Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Azam Khan, has taken notice of the suspension of free treatment facilities under the Sehat Card Plus scheme. The Chief Minister has directed the relevant authorities to prioritize the restoration of these free-of-cost treatment facilities and ensure the immediate payment of dues to, State Life Insurance Company which had been a major implementing partner in impressive healthcare initiative. According to the reports, after instruction from the Provincial head, the State Life Insurance has operationalized its province-wise healthcare operation in designated hospitals by resuming free treatment facilities to the people of Erstwhile FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa under the Sehat Card Scheme.

The Sehat Card Plus Scheme was the magnificent pro-poor initiative of the PTI government that was initially launched in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in late 2020. It was a government-sponsored micro health insurance program under the Prime Minister's Sehat Insaaf initiative that was later expanded to other provinces then ruled by the PTI and its coalition partners except Sindh which was governed by PPP at that time. The PTI government funded several hundred billion rupees while enabling poor patients to get free-of-cost treatment for major diseases including heart surgery, blood dialysis, radiotherapies, and other serious ailments including cancer. Each adult citizen or household was authorized to expand one million rupees on indoor treatment from designated hospitals in a fiscal year. Historically, a total of 1100 state-of-the-art hospitals have been providing free treatment services across the country except Sindh, while 9.78 million families were registered under the program. Millions of people benefitted from that magnificent project for almost two years until the State Life Insurance Company stopped its operation due to the nonpayment of dues by the treasury in April this year.

Realistically, the people of Pakistan were helpless over the past years, as the headline inflation touched 42% while pushing the nation into extreme poverty and unemployment. The unrestricted price hikes seriously affect all aspects of public life from agriculture to industry and education to healthcare which has become out of reach for poor masses. Meanwhile, thousands of poor patients embattled with chronic diseases have been mourning the incumbent rulers for their inhumanity and cruelty. Recently, the caretaker Chief Minister took notice of the plight of poor patients and ordered the authorities to pay the pending amount to State Life to resume free-of-cost indoor treatment in the province.

About a century ago, the creators of Pakistan had perceived the idea of an independent, Muslim democratic welfare state comprising Muslim-majority regions in South Asia. But, that same idea was hijacked by feudal, military generals and corrupt politicians immediately after the independence from British imperialism. Unfortunately, Pakistani rulers traded the legacies of Qauid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah and Dr. Allama Muhammad Iqbal over the past seven decades only to mislead the nation, fulfil their nefarious political agendas, and prolong their rule in the country. Therefore, Pakistan could not achieve the core national goals of political stability, sustainable growth, and socio-economic uplift, while the nation further plunged into unceasing political, social, and economic depletion over the past decades.

Although, the country is passing through a crucial period of history, yet the public has no role in making up for those catastrophic situations that ruined our homeland. The nation has paid a heavy price for the poor governance, mismanagement and corruption of its leaders who always demanded sacrifice from the public but filled their bank accounts and increased their assets in the country and abroad. It has gone beyond all limits and the public is not ready to live within such conditions until and unless Pakistani leaders review their course and bring pivotal changes in their policies. So, the nation comes out of persistent economic degeneration and resumes its journey toward socio-economic opulence and prosperity.

Private militias and civilized world

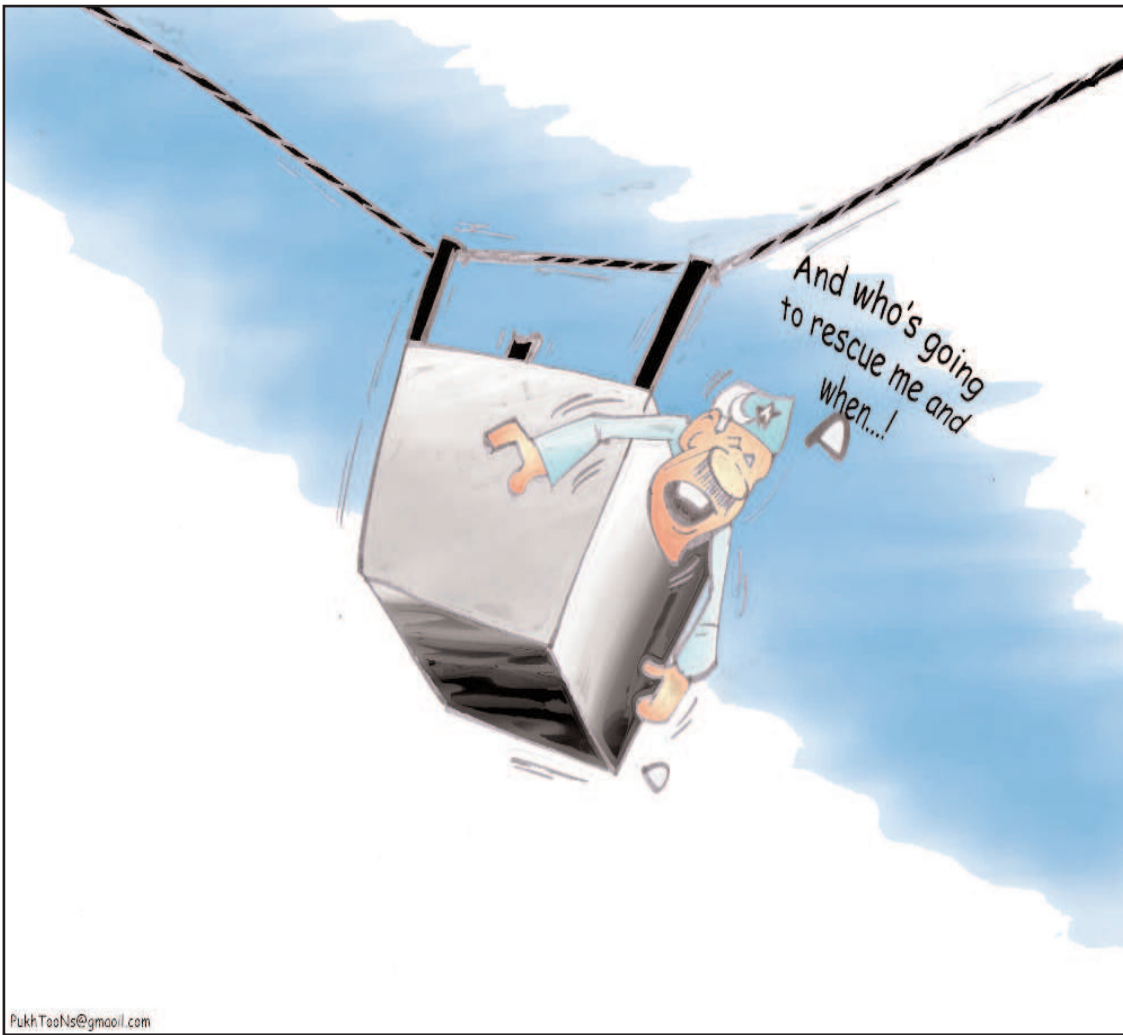
YEVGENY Prigozhin, head of the Russian mercenary force, the Wagner Group, was reportedly killed among 10 other passengers in a private jet crash North of Moscow on Wednesday. The Russian aviation authorities had confirmed that Yevgeny was on board along with other seven Wagner mercenaries, however, his dead body has not been recovered during the ongoing search operation so far. According to Flightradar 24, the aircraft descended and ascended its height multiple times a few minutes after the takeoff and finally nose down to the ground leaving nobody alive to narrate the story of the dreadful incident.

Almost two months after Wagner Chief announced his disobedience to the Kremlin and turned its guns on the Russian Federation by ordering an invasion against Moscow. Although Yevgeny immediately reversed his orders and laid down arms in a bid to wash out his guilt, however, seasoned Putin perceived his weakness and planned to tactfully handle this issue without bloodshed and further strategic loss. Presumably, the events during the short fight indicate that the notorious FSB used its famous nerve agent against the cabin crew to destroy the plane during the flight. Yevgeny's plane crash reminded us of the tragic incident of the Pakistani C130 Hercules involving multiple deaths including then Army Chief and President General Zia-ul-Haq on August 17, 1988, who met a similar fate a few minutes after taking off from Bahawal Pur in suspicious conditions.

Historically, private militias and mercenary groups had been founded by the competing major nations and other countries in the garb of contractors and security firms to undertake extra-legal actions against their opponents while bypassing the global laws and multilateral forums including the UN. Thus, Black Water, Wagner Group, Zee, and several other political and armed movements had been carved out by powerful countries to protect their hidden and unlawful interests in their nations and across the globe. Realistically, founding terror groups, hiring assassins or creating a group of religious fanatics is an old-age practice by the states that has badly failed in several nations including India, Pakistan, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United States, Russia, and Libya. Interestingly, feeding snakes for malicious intent does not guarantee the safety and security of their handlers. In fact, Wagner's mutiny and killing of Yevgeny have a great lesson for other nations who fund mercenaries in the ploy of national interest and attempt to cure cancer with poison, which is factually digging a ditch for themselves and their future generations. Hence, as early as this course is recast would be better otherwise such events would be repeated in human history again and again.

Important Notice

The Frontier Post will not be responsible for the comments in the articles and letters. The Frontier Post requests the writers of articles and letters to please make sure that they write their email addresses and mention the names of the cities, towns, districts or tehsil of their residences at the bottom of their articles and letters.



RukhTash@gmail.com

Sanction elites to stop Lebanon from becoming a failed state

Sami Halabi & Leonora Monson

LEBANON is four years into one of the worst financial crises in modern history, and in that time the country's powerbrokers - the politicians, bankers and sectarian leaders - have been actively taking steps to speed the country's descent into the abyss.

To be clear: Lebanon's dissolution will entail rising radicalisation, expanded Iranian influence, and profound instability and criminality that will spread well beyond the country's borders. If the West would like to avoid such a disaster at Europe's doorstep, now is the time for expansive, coordinated financial sanctions to reign in the Lebanese elite who are driving the country off the cliff. Since 2019, the value of Lebanon's national currency, the lira, has collapsed 98 percent. The value of personal savings and earnings has evaporated. More than 80 percent of the population has been plunged into multidimensional poverty. Inflation is among the highest in the world. Public service delivery is in tatters. Most of the population now survives on aid handouts or money that they receive from family members living abroad.

While the elites who brought the nation to the verge of bankruptcy cannot agree on most things, they have found "political consensus in defence of a bankrupt economic system," according to the World Bank, which has dubbed the continuing Lebanese crisis "the Deliberate Depression." Since 2019, we have seen political henchmen from various parties stall and derail the reforms needed to implement an IMF rescue plan, the central bank establish a parallel financial system to protect the wealthy, and an informal, cash economy, fertile for illicit activity, expand rapidly. In parallel, the political class has eluded culpability for the 2020 Beirut blast - the largest non-nuclear explosion since World War II - and sought to undermine the last vestiges of representative democracy in the country.

Riad Salameh, Lebanon's former central

bank governor, is the only prominent figure against whom international action has been taken. Earlier this month, the United States, the United Kingdom, and Canada slapped sanctions on the disgraced central bank governor for gross abuse of power. The measures also target four of his "close associates" who helped "conceal and facilitate" a plethora of financial crimes, according to the US Treasury statement. This is a step in the right direction. Nevertheless, Salameh and his underlings did not build Lebanon's financial house of cards on their own. The net of international censure must be cast much wider to bring Lebanon's elite to heel. In July 2021, the European Union announced a framework for targeted sanctions that provides for the possibility of imposing sanctions on those who "undermine democracy or the rule of law in Lebanon". As the first significant Western policy aimed at addressing Lebanon's "grave financial, economic, social and political crisis" the framework should have helped keep elite misconduct in check. But despite conditions for sanctions repeatedly and blatantly being met by so many, the sanctions never came.

Recently, the EU Parliament passed a, non-binding, resolution calling on the EU Council to apply the sanctions framework, as well as extend it for another year. Lebanese civil society has also been extremely vocal on the sanctions issue, furnishing Brussels with ample evidence to support sanctions. Europe, however, appears unable to appreciate threats beyond the war in Ukraine and refugees that are "over there, and not here," according to one high-level Brussels diplomat. The lack of real action is nothing less than disgraceful, with the recent renewal of the EU sanctions framework's serving as a hollow gesture of solidarity with ordinary Lebanese. For the moment, Brussels seems to be betting on the resumption of a political process whereby a new Lebanese president

will be elected, though that seems unlikely after coordinated obstruction in parliament resulted in the 12th failed attempt this June. European passivity has handed Lebanon's politicians and bankers - whose assets can be found all over the continent's capitals and marinas - a green light to continue to pillaging their country as it dies.

Amid soaring public debt totalling more than \$102bn for an economy of \$20bn, hopes for an IMF rescue plan are hanging by a thread. Negotiations have stalled, with the IMF unimpressed with the persistent refusal of Lebanon's ruling class to accept political and financial reforms. The elite's obstinance is blatantly self-interested. The proposed reforms would dismantle the financial status quo by tearing down an arcane banking secrecy regime, restructuring the banking sector, reforming state-owned enterprises, implementing tax reforms, and cleaning up the civil service. None of these moves would bode well for Lebanon's elites who are masters at playing at the margins to ensure nothing significant changes. For instance, in clear contravention of the EU sanctions regime, last May municipal elections were postponed due to a supposed lack of the \$12m needed to cover administrative costs. Only weeks later, Parliament approved an injection of \$400m to raise civil servant salaries - another self-serving move given that Lebanon's dysfunctional state institutions are the primary means by which members of the political class dole out patronage and maintain the fealty of their respective sectarian constituencies. The preservation of these patronage networks has been underwritten by the central bank, which continually issues new lira to fund the civil servant salary increases. This, in turn, has spurred massive lira depression while simultaneously allowing select central bank clientele to earn billions of dollars from currency arbitrage.

Iran's growing influence

in the Levant has doubtlessly put Lebanon's debacle on Washington's radar. Thus far, however, the US has done much less than it could do in response. The US dollar accounts for almost 70 percent of transactions in Lebanon today. In the last decade, a single US Treasury edict brought down two Lebanese banks for suspected money laundering links with Hezbollah. The recent sanctions against Salameh notwithstanding, however, the US did nothing to address Lebanon's current crisis beyond threatening widespread sanctions but targeting just a handful of Hezbollah-connected individuals. Wary of the, albeit small, potential for US sanctions, the Lebanese central bank has already set up a system whereby it can clear dollar transactions without going through correspondent US banks. This has come in concert with a ballooning informal, dollarised cash economy, now valued at a minimum \$10bn by the World Bank, or about half the post-crisis formal sector GDP. Much of this is funding elite survival and crony capitalism, with Hezbollah and their allies as notable benefactors. The Financial Action Task Force, the global money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog, meanwhile, recently granted Lebanon a one-year grace period to clean up its act or face possible repercussions.

Empty threats and selective action from Western powers will not be enough to save Lebanon. Lebanon needs the US and the EU to replicate the coordinated and targeted sanctions they imposed on Russian and Belarusian political elites following the invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. And it needs them now. Without meaningful Western sanctions, the IMF plan is dead in the water and Lebanon will be on the way to becoming a failed state, with devastating repercussions both at home and abroad. By contrast, coordinated sanctions by the US and the EU would strangle the financial lifelines Lebanon's elite depend on and, just perhaps, bring them to reason.

Concrete achievements needed to drive BRICS forward

Mohamed Chebaro

IT is a hot topic in coffee shops in the Middle East nowadays that the world is witnessing an eclipse and the end of US-Western hegemony is near. For me, it has often been nearly impossible to chip into these conversations to say that the world has always been fluid and it is difficult to reach consensus on a single worldview between its many vying superpowers and players old and new.

Yet, I have to admit that, more than ever before, not only in the Middle East but also in the wider Global South, the buzzwords about about a new century without the US and Western powers; one that promises to offer more justice and equitability championed by new players like China, Russia and whomever is orbiting within their sphere of influence.

The spotlights of those aspiring for a global recalibration have been shining on Johannesburg in South Africa this week, where the leaders and heads of governments of the BRICS countries are meeting for the grouping's 15th summit. They are discussing widening its membership and influence, pushing for a shift in global geopolitics.

It is not difficult to see why people in coffee shops across the world could be lured into thinking that the old world order is ripe for picking in South Africa, through enlarging the BRICS bloc or setting up other alliances that could magically rebalance the alleged tilt in favor of the West. The list of grievances deployed to justify the change is long and versatile, from abusive trade practices, punishing sanctions regimes and a perceived neglect of the development needs of poorer nations to residues of colonialism and an erroneous sense that nations are told how to behave, who to support and how to conduct their sovereign affairs. People repeatedly evoke the West's domination of international bodies such as the UN, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank.

In short, amid rising dissatisfaction with the prevailing world order, the pledge of current BRICS members Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa to make the grouping a leading champion of the Global South has found resonance among 40 countries that we are told have expressed an interest in joining BRICS, each for their own separate interests. Yet, opening up its membership is a thorny issue, favored by China and Russia while Brazil and India tend to want to go slowly.

Becoming a counterweight to the current alleged Western monopoly was maybe the key driver for the bloc. Yet this could only start with the de-dollarization of the world economy in favor of the use of local currencies, maybe creating a new single currency or even toying with alternatives like blockchain and bitcoin. The US dollar's share of international financial transactions remains strong at 42 percent, while the euro is at 32 percent and the Chinese yuan's share is only 2 percent.

The BRICS bloc's development bank launched in 2015, with the aim of competing with the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, but it has been hit by sanctions on Russia and its loan basket remains

limited. Potential candidates like heavily sanctioned Iran and Venezuela could only benefit from admission to a grouping that is home to 40 percent of the world's population and a quarter of global gross domestic product. But the bloc's chances of becoming a global political and economic player are limited due its lack of a coherent vision, divisions and absence of concrete results. This is reflected in the motives of the various countries that want to join the bloc. Some are seeking more visibility and a rival to their dependence on the West, or to improve their chances of gaining membership of global bodies, while candidates like Ethiopia and Nigeria are drawn by the bloc's commitment to reforms at the UN that would give Africa a more powerful voice. Others want change at the World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund and World Bank as a way to reconfigure the international financial architecture.

Along these lines, an expanded BRICS would surely look more like a bloc that resembles a grievances box, despite its members' efforts to become a counterweight to the West amid China's continued tensions with the US and the fallout of Russia's invasion of Ukraine.

Meanwhile, small countries hoping for an economic boost from BRICS membership might look to South Africa's experience. Its trade with fellow BRICS members has increased steadily since it joined, according to an analysis by the country's Industrial Development Corporation. But that growth is largely down to imports from China and the bloc still accounts for just a fifth of South Africa's total two-way trade.

What will drive BRICS forward will be concrete achievements, not mere rhetoric. In a world that appears to be at an inflection point, groupings to drive reform and deal with the adversities facing the planet, like global warming, food security, poverty and conflict, should be applauded. But attempts to engineer a radical overhaul of a world system led so far by the US and the West, as created in the wake of the Second World War, are unlikely to benefit from more groupings or alliances.

Yes, maybe the US and the West have many shortfalls that have been fueling inequality on the world stage. And they may not have been redressing aspects related to peace and justice as desired by those sitting in coffee shops mainly in the Global South. So, one can excuse some people's pontification about seeing hope in new blocs or groupings. But I invite them to look more thoroughly before embracing this or any new grouping and analyze the track record of its champions in governance, accountability and transparency. Almost fifteen years since its inception, concrete achievements for the BRICS countries are difficult to find, but it remains an important talking bloc, with hope that its agenda and actions for the common good will outweigh the empty slogans we have heard so far. Those sipping their coffee in the Global South aspire to a free refill at least, if not the full geopolitical change tabled by the bloc and its supporters.

Arab News

Remember that I love you most

Belén Fernández

loose sheets of paper - a genetic inheritance, apparently, from my father himself, whose relationship with grocery lists often bordered on the obsessive-compulsive. In the days following the news of his imminent death, my list-making became even more neurotic, perhaps out of a need to project control over the universe in the face of a fatherless future. I made lists everywhere, and then lists of all the lists I had made.

Meanwhile, the otherworldly blue of the sea provided the visual backdrop as my mind prepared itself to think of my dad in the past tense. The memories came at me as I swam: How he had taken me camping and had carved our initials into a tree. How he had rescued me from the nest of wasps in which I had landed after falling off the back of my horse. How he would scold me for conspiring to give him a heart attack by hitchhiking and

then boast to everyone else about my international hitchhiking exploits. How he could never go to the grocery store or anywhere else without acquiring a captivated audience for his animated stream-of-consciousness tales about Cuba or Spain or his genius baby grandson or Herodotus or Jimi Hendrix or Bach's Christmas Oratorio.

Fethiye, as it so happened, was one of my father's preferred destinations since he first visited me there in 2007, and he delighted in exercising his Turkish vocabulary words: "stop", "go", "iyi bayramlar" (happy holidays), "kanalizasyon" (which he learned by inspecting the sewage drain markings in the street). He would visit the local cemeteries, and report back on the number of people with the surname Kurt (his own middle name) therein. Throughout the coronavirus pandemic, my father drafted many a list with plans for an

eventual family boat excursion in Turkey during which we would, inter alia, revisit the rope swing over the water where he had once defied his 60-plus years and cannonballed into the sea. I flew to the US from Turkey on August 10 for what would turn out to be my dad's last five days of life. During this brief period of time, he stopped eating almost entirely and lost the ability to speak - a true curse for someone accustomed to emitting as many words in a day as I do in a decade.

My mother would bathe him, shave him, and carry him to the bathroom, until it was no longer possible to move him at all. He was reduced to howling in pain and my mom was reduced to acute devastation, compounded by the realisation that the US healthcare system had prematurely killed her companion of more than half a century. He himself managed one final list, which I transcribed for him. It was a

list of passengers for a 2024 boat trip off the coast of Turkey: my brother, my mother, my uncle and me, plus a few family friends.

The trip came with instructions: to scatter his ashes by the rope swing. Shortly before my father died at home in Washington, DC, I came across a letter on my mother's desk that was dated September 21, 1988. It was from my dad to my brother and me - we were three and six at the time - and had been penned during one of his periodic bouts of existential anxiety when he would convince himself for no reason that he was dying. In case he didn't get the chance to watch us grow up, he wrote, he wanted to impart some advice: "Wake up happy every morning, don't waste your lives worrying or making lists, and remember that I love you most." When my dad stopped breathing on August 16, I was by his side. And for the first time in a very long time, I felt - if not peaceful - then at least the potential for peace.

Aljazeera

Prigozhin was a useful tool - until he made a move on ‘the king’

Dominic Nicholls

IF you come for the king," says one of the gangsters in *The Wire*, "you'd better not miss." On June 24, Yevgeny Prigozhin went for the king. His Wagner mercenaries charged towards Moscow in a headlong rush up the motorway, downing Russian aircraft and reportedly killing 13 servicemen on the way. He tried to explain away his mutinous actions as an attempt to hold to account defence minister Sergei Shoigu and head of the armed forces Gen Gerasimov.

Most Kremlin insiders saw through that. One in particular, the only one that really counts, immediately saw it for the threat it was. Vladimir Putin is thought to have flown to St Petersburg as the Wagner mercenaries raced towards Moscow. It matters not if that was true - the narrative caught fire on Russian social media channels. Putin looked weak, scared and no longer in control of the reins of power. For that is what this event is all about - power. There is no verifiable evidence yet that Prigozhin was on the doomed jet - although it has been confirmed his name was on the passenger list - or what circumstances caused it to tumble from the sky, but this will be interpreted as "the boss" stamping his authority once more. There will be minimal impact directly on the war in Ukraine. If Putin could have changed the Ukraine war strategy, he would have done so already. Certainly, Putin used Wagner as shock troops, most obviously in the fight for Bakhmut. They in turn had to rely on emptying Russian jails and forcing men to run at Ukrainian guns in suicidal waves, just to get the defending troops to reveal their positions. Russia though has now largely transitioned to the defensive, for which

such requirements are lessened, so the loss of Wagner will not be felt as keenly as it might have been six months ago.

There will be minimal impact directly on the war in Ukraine. If Putin could have changed the Ukraine war strategy, he would have done so already. Certainly, Putin used Wagner as shock troops, most obviously in the fight for Bakhmut. They in turn had to rely on emptying Russian jails and forcing men to run at Ukrainian guns in suicidal waves, just to get the defending troops to reveal their positions. Russia though has now largely transitioned to the defensive, for which such requirements are lessened, so the loss of Wagner will not be felt as keenly as it might have been six months ago. However, the effect on the oligarchs - the one body of Russian society that could, possibly, unseat Putin if they acted in concert - will be huge. This action will bring them all into line and restore Putin's image of being in control. It could bolster domestic public opinion in a major way; Russians like a strong man in charge and, as Putin himself said, "traitors" are always dealt with. This is all about regaining and reinforcing domestic support and there are already signs of change in the armed forces.

However, the effect on the oligarchs - the one body of Russian society that could, possibly, unseat Putin if they acted in concert - will be huge. This action will bring them all into line and restore Putin's image of being in control. It

could bolster domestic public opinion in a major way; Russians like a strong man in charge and, as Putin himself said, "traitors" are always

dealt with. This is all about regaining and reinforcing domestic support and there are already signs of change in the armed forces.

The Institute for the Study of War, a US-based think-tank, reports that a Wagner-affiliated

source claimed that the Russian General Staff now has "carte blanche" and has purged all proteges of Army General Sergei Surovikin, the man briefly in charge of Russia's war in Ukraine and a Wagner affiliate who was reportedly ousted and placed under house arrest. Unless there is a dramatic turn of events in the next 24 hours, and Prigozhin is shown to be alive and still in favour, this event makes Putin stronger and his enemies scared.

This is likely to spell the end of the Wagner Group as a coherent entity. Remaining Wagner fighters will likely assimilate now into the regular Russian forces, the order for which was the genesis of the mutiny in the first place when Prigozhin saw his private venture being wrested from his hands. He had served his purpose - to export the brand of Russian security across Africa, securing lucrative mining rights, and probably also promises of votes in the UN General Assembly, along the way. Any lingering hope that remained in the rum of Wagnerites holding out for a separate identity, with all the trappings they had become accustomed to, went up in the flames of the jet as it impacted the open green fields, similar to those in Ukraine that they have left steeped in blood.

The other private military companies - that every single businessman of any note has in Russia these days - will stay close to their owners to keep them safe and away from trouble. At least for now. This will send a strong internal signal ahead of Russian elections next year - know your place, never think you are untouchable and, most importantly, don't make a move on the king.

The Telegraph

ME as a geopolitical alternative for Africa

Ehtesham Shahid

FAMILIAR with the ebb and flow of great power competition, Africa has often found itself caught up in superpower rivalries. Its colonial scars had barely healed when the Cold War turned it into an ideological battleground. And although the Cold War curtains drew to a close, the narrative of major powers jostling for influence did not, often leading to proxy wars and unsettling volatility.

China's growing influence has added another dimension to Africa's geopolitical landscape, driving extensive economic and diplomatic ties through trade, investment and infrastructure projects. Debates have resurfaced about the implications of this involvement, raising concerns over debt traps, resource extraction and potential neocolonialism. As China invested in large-scale infrastructure projects through its Belt and Road Initiative to enhance connectivity and trade, analysts characterized the Africa-China relationship as a "form of Eastern influence."

As Africa appears on the cusp of turning its strategic resources into global influence, this offers an opportunity to reflect on the benefits and downsides of these associations and take a more measured approach. This is where greater engagement with the Middle East - a region with which it shares many commonalities - makes strategic sense.

Isaac Kwaku Fokuo Jr., principal of Botho Emerging Markets Group, aptly dubs Africa the "belle of the ball" in the intricate ballet of geopolitics. For Fokuo, Africa's emergence as a key player in geopolitics is inevitable. "Whether it's for its natural riches or as a final frontier for global alliances in flux, Africa remains pivotal," he observes. He suggests that, given the intensifying global polarization, Africa finds itself torn between Eastern and Western powers, pushing it toward potential allies like the Middle East.

The continent has the critical ingredients required

to become a long-term player - enormous natural resources and demographic dividends being the prominent ones. It will add 796 million to the workforce globally and be home to the largest and youngest population by 2050. Thankfully, the otherwise discordant and conflict-infested continent has found synergies in critical areas, such as economic integration, strategic partnerships and digital transformation. The geopolitical interests of both Eastern and Western powers still intersect in Africa, and many African nations' trajectory is toward increased global influence. In this context, there is a strategic benefit in engaging with the Middle East as a counterbalance to heavy reliance on major powers like China or the US.

The Africa-Middle East relationship is not just multifaceted; it predates the contemporary East versus West geopolitics, with historical, religious, economic and cultural dimensions. The routes that connect Africa, Asia and Europe meet in the Middle East. It is estimated that more than 250 million people in Africa speak Arabic. However, realizing this potential requires leadership, strategic investments, regional cooperation and balanced international partnerships. Despite Africa's bright prospects, intraregional conflicts, widespread poverty and growth-crippling corruption remain significant hindrances. Perhaps there is a synergy to be found in the Global South, another classification that binds the two regions.

Africa appears destined to become a pivotal player in international affairs in the coming decades, as conditions ripen for the continent to accelerate its development. A confluence of the continent's abundance of strategic resources, favorable demographics and attractive growth prospects may give it greater leverage in modern affairs. Observers also claim that the US-China rivalry and push for net-zero emissions will be criti-

cal catalysts for transforming Africa into a geopolitical fulcrum. There also appears to be a growing realization of the need to find more and more local and regional solutions. The 15th annual ASDA's Arab Youth Survey claims that nearly two-thirds of those in the Gulf Cooperation Council, North Africa and the Levant countries say they "strongly or somewhat support" US disengagement from the region.

There is also an energy interdependence dynamic at play. A South African Institute of International Affairs analysis expects a shift from fossil fuel production to extracting several "green" minerals. A significant part of these deposits is in Africa. "Several empirical studies have already investigated the potential of African economies to provide minerals for the energy transition," it says. When regions try to find synergies, they collaborate for mutual benefits that might not be possible individually. Several geopolitical theories apply in this context - realism, liberalism and constructivism being among them. Robert Keohane and Joseph Nye propounded complex interdependence in international relations to describe the global political economy's emerging nature. It entails that relations between states are becoming increasingly deep and complex, as is evident in Africa and the Middle East.

But one must remember: Africa, much like the Middle East, is not a monolith. Relationships oscillate based on historical narratives, economic motives, political alignments and leadership visions. Negah Angha of the Atlantic Council encapsulates the potential: "A cooperative Middle East and North Africa region can be a cornerstone in addressing global challenges, ensuring regional stability and prosperity." Easier said than done, one would say, but who knows where shifting geopolitical alliances will take us amid the great power competition that seems to be going nowhere?

America on trial: the charges against Trump will decide the fate of a nation

Martin Kettle

HISTORY teaches us few wider lessons. But there are rare exceptions. One of these is that for a nation to put its former leaders on trial is never straightforward. Although such cases are rare, when they do occur they frequently involve the pushing of pre-existing legal boundaries and the reshaping of constitutional norms and assumptions. The evolution of the doctrine of crimes against humanity after the Nuremberg trials in 1945 is the most significant modern example of this.

Both at the time they occur and subsequently, the arguments that surround trials of this kind are almost inescapably political to a significant degree. That was true of the trial and execution of Charles I in 1649, an event that divided England then; and some of those divisions of the 17th century can still be felt today. But it will unquestionably also be true of the trials of the former US president Donald Trump, of which the latest step is due to be taken in Atlanta on Thursday.

It is important to see that this stubborn political reality applies just as much in the Trump cases as in Charles I's. In part, this is because many will go out of their way to deny it. Trump's prosecutors - and many of his political critics - will undoubtedly argue that Trump is simply a defendant like any other, and that their cases are designed to show that no one, not even a former president and commander-in-chief, is above the law. They will be adamant that this is

not a political trial, and that it is not Joe Biden's revenge.

In some very fundamental senses, they are right about that. The law is not being altered in order to prosecute Trump. The investigations have followed long-established rules. The verdicts are not foregone conclusions. This is neither a witch-hunt nor a show trial. Yet, however true these points and however honourably such claims are made, they cannot be quite the whole story. The two cases are very different, yet in both 1649 and 2023, the indictments against the king and the president take a stand on behalf of a conception of the nation against a leader set on subverting it.

Four separate cases against Trump are now on course for trial. The first three sets of allegations cover: falsification of business records in the Stormy Daniels hush money case; withholding of classified federal documents in his Florida home; and attempting to prevent the US Congress from validating Biden's 2020 election. This week's case alleges that Trump tried to interfere with the counting and validation of Georgia's vote for Biden. All four cases are due in court in the first half of 2024, before the presidential election in which Trump aims to be a candidate.

All of these cases also contain multiple allegations. Two - the Florida document cases and the US Congress case - will be heard in federal courts. The others have

been brought at state level by New York and Georgia. All the charge sheets are extremely detailed. In the documents case, for instance, the indictment now stretches to 60 pages, with Trump facing 40 separate charges. In the 6 January case, the indictment stretches to another 45 pages, and centres on four separate charges.

Like it or not, though, these carefully crafted cases take the US into new legal territory. That is not simply because Trump is the first serving or former American president in the nation's history to face criminal charges. Nor is it even because, being Trump and still running for office, he will treat the courtroom as a political platform. It is also because a large number of the charges, and the way in which the judges and juries will be asked to test them, relate umbilically to his roles as head of state and upholder of the constitution. These cases are a test of the constitution and, in the broadest sense, of the nation.

All of these points repeatedly echo aspects of cases from the past. The Trump cases are still, in the end, an attempt to hold a past leader to account and judge him for the way he handled his office. That was also what the cases against earlier rulers were ultimately about too. The indictments against Charles I for his "crimes and treasons" or against Louis XVI of France for having "plotted and formed a multitude of conspiracies to establish tyranny in destroying

liberty" are maybe not a world away from those against Trump, after all. Nor is it a world away from the much more recent example of Marshal Philippe Pétain's trial for treason after the liberation of France in 1945. Pétain was charged with treason for his role as head of the collapsing French government in 1940, when he signed an armistice with Hitler's invaders, and then as head of the puppet Vichy regime that collaborated with the Germans until the allied victory in 1945. Pétain was tried and convicted in Paris that same summer. His death sentence was immediately commuted to life imprisonment by Charles de Gaulle.

As described in Julian Jackson's masterly recent book, *France on Trial*, the Pétain case has many differences from those facing Trump, but also some similarities. Pétain was put on trial after a war, not an election. His was an unashamedly political trial. The jury was stacked against him, and the outcome a foregone conclusion. But at the same time it was also the trial of a nation, its recent history, its dilemmas and its sense of itself. It was, in the end, a moment of catharsis for postwar France. It was a trial that had to happen, and it was vitally important for the future of France that the former leader in the dock was not acquitted. For all the many differences between the two cases, the exact same applies to the US on the eve of the Trump trials.

The Guardian

Tories have one final throw of the dice

Jeremy Warner

SOMETIMES it pays to be bold. For our beleaguered government, this is one of those moments. Having settled the ship after last year's near sinking, the public finances are again on an improving trend, or are at least looking a little bit better than was expected.

This has prompted renewed calls - with the Tories trailing badly, and very likely terminally, in the polls - for vote-buying tax cuts. The impact of rising interest rates on debt servicing costs, together with ongoing losses on quantitative easing, could yet derail all the gains now being made on deficit reduction. But then, what is there to lose? The Autumn Statement in early November would seem to be the last opportunity the Government has got to at least flag the tax cutting intention; come the Budget next spring, it may already be too late credibly to be announcing pre-election giveaways.

For now, taxes are rising strongly, not falling - as is apparent from the latest data on the public finances, with receipts for July quite a bit better than the Office for Budget Responsibility thought they would be. So far this fiscal year, borrowing is £11.3bn less than would be consistent with the OBR's projections, or enough to cut the basic rate of income tax by 2p in the pound.

But let's not get carried away; borrowing is also £13.7bn higher than the same period last year. Like a constantly receding horizon, the point at which we start to make serious inroads into the nation's debt mountain is never quite reached, and if there is a recession coming, then it will be another couple of steps back again. Downing

Street likes to frame today's rising tax burden - already set to be the heaviest since the Second World War - as a necessary corrective to the fiscal madness of Liz Truss, or a kind of purgatory that we must all suffer until credibility is fully restored. And on many measures, the position does indeed continue to look perilous. Thanks to elevated inflation, the debt interest burden is still rising precipitously, eating up precious taxpayer pounds that might otherwise be spent on better schools, hospitals, roads and defence, or - heaven forbid - letting us keep a bit more of our money. Ministers virtually bankrupted the country protecting people first from the ravages of the pandemic and then the punishment of sky-high energy prices.

Admirable though it may be to now don the hairshirt by way of penance, it doesn't poll well with the voters, who have become used to the idea that the magic money tree will always provide. Not any more. The time honoured palliative of repeated doses of monetary stimulus has been fully used up. Persistent inflation has put paid to all further relief. There is nothing left to hide behind; the UK's underlying economic weaknesses are revealed in all their ugly detail.

Yet merely contrasting the Government's supposed fiscal responsibility with the Opposition's presumed and likely profligacy is unlikely to hack it at the ballot box. Nor is lurching to the Right in today's culture wars, though this might at least save the Tory Party from the irrelevance that has befallen much of the traditional centre right on the Continent. By seeking

to appease the Left, these once mighty centre right political forces have created a void into which has stepped the likes of Germany's AfD. That could easily be the fate awaiting the UK's Conservatives, even if Britain's first past the post electoral system makes it less likely. For now, Reform - the successor to UKIP and the Brexit Party - poses little threat. Even so, something plainly has to be done to get Britain out of its slow burn economic malaise, or eventually the likes of Reform may indeed get their chance. Right now, ministers are struggling to deliver a credible way forward.

Things seem to be on the slide more or less everywhere. Some blame Brexit, an all consuming, oxygen draining process which has sucked the life blood out of almost everything else. Certainly it hasn't helped, and alarmingly, might even be the final death blow for Britain's volume car industry, which is falling perilously behind its Continental peers in the dash to go electric. The great irony here is that we already buy more EVs than any other European country bar Germany, yet it looks less and less likely that we'll be actually making them. Rules of origin make it more attractive for multinational players to focus future investment on the Continent. Turbocharged by the low cost coal fired energy that Britain has banned, the Chinese assault on the UK market also looks increasingly hard to counter. Once the petrol engine is outlawed - currently scheduled for 2030 - it's curtains for what remains.

Yet Britain's economic woes long pre-date Brexit, the vote for

which was more of a symptom of those weaknesses than a cause. Rather, we must seek explanations in an increasingly uncompetitive tax system, in oppressive and mounting levels of regulation, in the quagmire of UK planning laws, and in a hopelessly unproductive public sector. I marvel at Britain's apparently growing success in the creative and tech industries, for in large parts of the economy it's hard to get anything done at all. London, the beating heart of the UK economy, continues to thrive on its global standing, and its unmatched position at the international crossroads of commerce. Friends from overseas constantly tell me what an amazing and uniquely vibrant city it is. But for how much longer, given the mounting barriers to enterprise? Past momentum can only take you so far.

Downing Street is playing down hopes of tax cuts in the Autumn Statement for fear of giving false hope. Even a quite mild recession would at a stroke eliminate any headroom the Chancellor might have within his own already very loose fiscal rules. Hunt has made a virtue of parsimony, contrasting it with the implausible "all things to all men" flip-flopping of the Labour party. But after 13 years of going nowhere, you need something a little more uplifting as an electoral message than simply that of being not quite as bad as the other lot. When staring defeat in the face you've got nothing to lose by taking risks, even when it comes to the public finances. There are ways of doing it which are not going to upset the entire apple cart. It's time to throw caution to the winds and roll the dice. As I say, what have they got to lose?

Logical progression

Ding Long

CHINA and Arab states enjoy a long history of friendly exchanges. Although separated by vast distances, the two ancient civilizations have been connected through the land Silk Road and the maritime Spice Route for thousands of years. Trading goods and exchanging knowledge, the two sides have been significant participants and contributors to the splendid history of the Silk Road.

When China proposed the Belt and Road Initiative a decade ago, Arab states were among the first to respond. The deep historical ties and evident economic complementarity have brought China and the Arab world together as partners in building the Belt and Road. First, China and Arab states have kept close policy interaction. The past 10 years have borne witness to frequent high-level exchanges, higher level of political dialogue, as well as the vital role of head-of-state diplomacy. President Xi Jinping has visited Arab states multiple times, delivering keynote speeches at the headquarters of the Arab League and attending the China-Arab States Cooperation Forum ministerial meetings.

A historic milestone in China-Arab states ties, the inaugural China-Arab States Summit advanced the strategic alignment for jointly constructing the Belt and Road and marked the start of a new phase featuring comprehensive and deepened strategic cooperation. As of now, 21 Arab states and the Arab League have signed cooperation documents with China under the framework of the Belt and Road Initiative. Second, the bilateral trade volume has doubled. China is the top trading partner for the Arab states. In 2022, the total import and export volume between China and the 22 Arab states exceeded \$431.4 billion, twice as much as five years ago. Arab states are the world's largest oil and gas producers. Nearly half of China's imported oil comes from Arab states.

Third, bilateral investment has accelerated growth. From 2004 to 2020, China's direct investment in Arab states has increased

from \$18 million to \$2.83 billion; cumulative investment has grown from \$76 million to \$21.29 billion. Chinese investment in Arab states has become increasingly diversified. In addition to traditional oil, gas and petrochemical industries, Chinese enterprises are now investing in emerging sectors such as new energy, aerospace, high-end manufacturing, telecommunications and the internet, as well as the digital economy. Following the China-Arab States Summit, Arab states enjoyed a surge of interest to invest in China. Industrial enterprises such as Saudi Aramco and sovereign wealth funds such as Abu Dhabi Investment Authority from the United Arab Emirates have accelerated expansion in China. Saudi Aramco launched new petrochemical projects in Liaoning and Fujian provinces, and acquired Rongsheng Petrochemical. China's capital market has become a new investment target for Arab sovereign wealth funds. Entities such as Abu Dhabi Investment Authority and Kuwait Investment Authority have made into the top 10 shareholders in over 40 Chinese listed companies.

Fourth, infrastructure cooperation has grown rapidly. Chinese companies have actively participated in infrastructure projects in various sectors in Arab states, including transportation, public facilities, clean energy, information communication and industrial facilities. They have undertaken major projects such as the Mecca Metro in Saudi Arabia, the East-West Highway in Algeria, the Central Business District of Egypt's new administrative capital, the main stadium for the Qatar World Cup and the Benban Solar Park in Egypt. Chinese companies are also involved in large-scale infrastructure projects such as Saudi Arabia's future city of Neom, contributing to the development and people's livelihoods in Arab states. Moving forward, both sides should focus on the following areas to deepen and substantiate their Belt and Road cooperation.

First, enhance policy communication and strategic cooperation. China and Arab states play crucial roles in upholding multilateralism and building a multipolar world. Both parties should continue to strengthen policy communication and coordination under China-Arab cooperation mechanisms, and take part in global governance by collaborating more closely in international organizations and multilateral forums such as the United Nations and the G20. Future efforts should be focused on creating cooperation mechanisms to facilitate the building of the Belt and Road. Both sides should work toward the completion of negotiations for the China-Gulf Cooperation Council Free Trade Area and initiate negotiations with other Arab states for free trade agreements at an appropriate time. Mechanisms for trade facilitation, investment encouragement and protection should be established.

Second, develop a new pattern of energy cooperation. Energy cooperation is and will remain the cornerstone of China-Arab economic and trade collaboration for a long time. Under the framework of "oil and gas plus", China and Arab states should not only expand oil and gas trade, but also work together across the entire industry chain, from the exploration, extraction and storage of petroleum, to the innovative utilization of hydrocarbon energy and new energy. Third, explore new cooperation opportunities. Arab states are promoting advanced technologies such as the digital economy, cloud computing, artificial intelligence and aerospace, where China has significant advantages. The rapid development of cooperation between China and Arab states to build the Belt and Road has its inherent logic and motivation. The Arab states' economic transformation strategies are aligned with the Belt and Road Initiative. Empowered by the efforts to co-build the Belt and Road, China and Arab states have found new complementarities at a higher starting point and will lay the foundation for deepening the Belt and Road Initiative in the Arab world.

The China Daily



75th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Pak, USA

SBP issues Rs75 commemorative coin

F.P. Report

KARACHI: The State Bank of Pakistan (SBP) issued a commemorative coin of 75 rupees during a ceremony held in Islamabad on Thursday to mark the 75th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Pakistan and the USA. The Honorable Foreign Secretary for Pakistan, Muhammad Syrus Sajjad Qazi, graced the occasion as Chief Guest. US Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Donald Blome, dignified the ceremony as Guest of Honor.

In his welcome address, Governor SBP, Mr. Jameel Ahmad thanked both the Foreign Secretary and the US Ambassador to Pakistan for their participation in the event. He said that the issuance of the commemorative coin is a manifestation of the importance both the countries attach to their relationship, and the design

of the coin signifies how independent nations join hands to work together for the progress of their people. He highlighted the important economic ties between the two nations, encompassing trade, Foreign Direct Investments, finance and remittances, and lauded the deep people-to-people connection between the countries in various walks of life, particularly in the field of education.

He hoped that given the promising future of fintech sector in Pakistan and SBP's multiple initiatives for supporting the same, US fintech firms would explore and invest in the opportunities provided by these emerging businesses.

Foreign Secretary Mr. Syrus Sajjad Qazi praised the beautiful commemorative coin, remarking that the national symbols of Pakistan and the United States of America on the coin highlight the democratic roots of both countries.

The Foreign Secretary paid tribute to the mutually beneficial relationship between the countries, acknowledging the efforts of Ambassador Blome in injecting a new vigor into this relationship.

Delineating the multidimensional relationship between the two countries, encompassing trade & investment, defense, counter-terrorism, education, energy, climate and health, he said that the high-level bilateral visits between the two countries have helped to further cement the relationship. Reiterating the importance of the Pak-US relationship for Pakistan, the US and the region, the Foreign Secretary said that the coin would continue to stand as an enduring symbol of our commitment to this long-standing association.

He thanked the Governor SBP for holding a historic ceremony to commemorate the importance of the Pak-US relationship.

US Ambassador to Pakistan, Mr. Donald Blome, in his address said that the coin represents the shared values, ideals and common ties between the two countries, as well as their commitment to a brighter future. He thanked the State Bank of Pakistan for the meaningful gesture of issuance of the commemorative coin, and expressed his hope of working closely with the Government of Pakistan.

He was confident that new initiatives such as the US-Pakistan Green Alliance would help both countries to jointly address their shared challenges.

The coin shall be issued through the exchange counters of SBP Banking Services Corporation from August 25, 2023.

The coin is in round shape milled with serrations on the edge, diameter of 30.00 mm, weight 13.5 grams and has Cupro-Nickel metal contents.



ISLAMABAD: Uzbekistan's Ambassador Aybek Arif Usmanov meeting with Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce & Industries Dr. Gohar Ejaz to discuss mutual trade interest.

Gohar assures enhanced economic cooperation

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce and Industries, Dr. Gohar Ejaz here on Thursday assured possible facilitation in enhancing bilateral trade and economic cooperation with Uzbekistan.

The minister was talking to Ambassador of Uzbekistan, Aybek Arif Usmanov who met him here, according to press statement issued by the commerce ministry.

The statement added, they discussed matters of mutual trade interest and expressed optimism about the potential for increased trade partnerships and cooperation in various sectors.

It was pertinent to mention, the meeting marked a significant step towards fostering closer relations and harnessing shared opportunities for growth, the statement added.

Ambassador Usmanov extended his warm congratulations to Dr. Gohar Ejaz for assuming the role of Caretaker Federal Minister.

He also conveyed heartfelt well-wishes from the President and Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, highlighting the importance of nurturing strong ties between the two nations.

Tokyo stocks end higher

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Tokyo stocks ended higher Thursday on the back of a retreat in US bond yields, although investors were cautious ahead of a speech by Federal Reserve chief Jerome Powell.

The benchmark Nikkei 225 index was up 0.87 percent, or 276.95 points, to end at 32,287.21, while the broader Topix index rose 0.42 percent, or 9.54 points, to 2,286.59.

The dollar stood at 145.05 yen, against 144.80 seen Wednesday in New York.

US equities were buoyed by a drop in yields of the 10-year US Treasury note, which have hit multi-year peaks in recent sessions.

A key survey, meanwhile, indicated Wednesday further weakness in the eurozone economy, with the purchasing managers indexes for manufacturing and services both pointing to a contraction in the sectors.

But encouragingly for traders, the prospect of "lower interest rates on the back of the worsening of PMI data led to major US and European shares rallying across the board", IwaiCosmo Securities said.

Coupled with blockbuster earnings results from chip giant Nvidia, this boosted investor sentiment in Tokyo.

Still, caution reined ahead of Powell's speech at a keenly followed annual gathering of central bankers and business leaders at Jackson Hole, Wyoming, on Friday.

Among major shares in Tokyo, chip-making equipment manufacturer Tokyo Electron climbed 3.25 percent to 21,750 yen and chip-testing equipment maker Advantest rose 1.60 percent to 19,660 yen.

SoftBank Group surged 2.68 percent to 6,780 yen while Sony Group gave up 0.29 percent to 12,015 yen.

PSX turns around to bullish trend, gains 332 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) Wednesday turned around to bullish trend, gaining 332.14 points, a positive change of 0.70 percent, closing at 47,750.77 points against 47,418.63 points the previous trading day.

A total of 251,691,469 shares were traded during the day as compared to 188,680,077 shares the previous day.

As many as 318 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 175 of them recorded gains and 115 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 28 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were Faysal Bank with 21,922,419 shares at Rs23.94 per share; Nishat ChunPow with 15,282,500 shares at Rs23.82 per share and Gul Ahmed with 14,664,132 shares at Rs18.82 per share.

Mari Petroleum witnessed a maximum increase of Rs18.86 per share price, closing at Rs1,655.82, whereas the runner-up was Bal Wheels with an Rs11.17 rise in its per share price to Rs160.07.

Nestle Pakistan witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs107.17 per share closing at Rs7,097.83; followed by Bata (Pak) with Rs9.00 decline to close at Rs1,760.00.

Rupee on losing streak; sheds 59 paise against US Dollar

Pakistani rupee on Thursday witnessed 59 paise devaluation against the US dollar in the interbank trading and closed at Rs300.22 against the previous day's closing of Rs299.63.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs314 and Rs317 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs1.87 to close at Rs326.16 against the last day's closing of Rs324.29, according to the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP).

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and stood at Rs2.06, whereas an increase of Rs1.50 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs381.52 as compared to the last closing of Rs380.02.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 16 paise and 32 paise to close at Rs81.73 and Rs80.03 respectively.

Turkish delegation holds meeting with Chairman



F.P. Report

KARACHI: Turkish delegation comprising Cemal

SANGU, Turkish Consul General, Eyyup YILDIRIM, Commercial Attache and Ms. Kausar Ahmed, Com-

mercial Secretary hold a meeting. The meeting presided by Chairman ABAD Muhammad Altaf Tai.

SCCI lashes out at interim govt over enforcement of anti-business policies

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Backing the ongoing protest of traders' community against increasing inflation, prices of electricity, gas and petroleum products, the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) asked the interim government to revise its decision in the best interest of economy of the country and warned if not do so, extreme steps would be taken against it.

Ijaz Khan Afridi, acting president of the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) in a statement issued here on Thursday, said the government was virtually unseen in the country wherein economy and matters were deteriorating with each passing day.

We don't know who is running the country? Ijaz Afridi said economic, trade and commercial activities had adversely affected owing to frequently increasing electricity, gas tariffs, high dollar and petroleum prod-

ucts prices.

However, he criticized the incumbent interim government for keeping a complete mum in this regard and busied in endorsement policies of the previous coalition government which had departed by leaving the national economy in an extremely dangerous situation, which is highly deplorable.

Afridi made it clear that the country's economy, businesses and sustainable progress cannot come until the resolving issues of the businessmen and provision of facilities and incentives to them.

The Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI)'s chief asked the interim government to restrain from enforcement of anti-business and trade hostile initiatives and frame business-friendly policies in consultation with chambers, traders' bodies and relevant stakeholders to put the national economy on a path of sustainable growth.

He questioned: "How

the economy, trade, exports, business and exports could flourish when dollars were unavailable and its rate surged up over Rs300?"

Ijaz Afridi warned that if the interim government didn't realize the gravity of the situation, the national economy would completely collapse and Pakistan may face Sri Lanka-like situations.

Pakistan is economically currently unstable while industries, business, trade and exports are also plunging down with each passing day, the Sarhad Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) chief remarked.

Therefore, he asked the interim government to take pragmatic steps to resolve issues being faced by the business community and to revive the country's ailing economy.

He furthermore asked that independent economic policies should be framed to free the country from the clutches of foreign financial lenders/institutions forever.

Graana.com, Al Huda Residencia: Pioneering a paradigm shift in luxury living in Quetta city

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The Graana.com, Pakistan's distinguished real estate platform, proudly unveils an exclusive and visionary partnership with Al Huda Residencia, marking a monumental step forward in realizing the goals of modern living as outlined in Graana's Vision 2047. This groundbreaking collaboration is set to redefine the landscape of luxury community living in Quetta, establishing a new standard for opulence, comfort, and community.

Nestled within a serene and naturally picturesque setting, Al Huda Residencia - Quetta stands as a testament to innovation and sophistication. This transformative project introduces an exceptional concept of prestigious luxury apartments and bungalows, seamlessly blending urban accessibility with the tranquility of a suburban retreat. It epitomizes a new benchmark for community living within the city.

Key aspects of transformative partnership:

The partnership between Graana.com and Al Huda Residencia - Quetta is a strategic alignment towards Graana's Vision 2047-a forward-looking approach to modern living that envisions creating innovative, sustainable, and community-centric spaces.

Strategically located near New Hanna Road, the development seamlessly



combines the convenience of city amenities with the serenity of a suburban haven, promising residents the best of both worlds.

Emphasizing safety and structural integrity, the project prides itself on state-of-the-art earthquake-resistant structures, ensuring residents can enjoy their opulent living spaces with complete peace of mind.

Recognizing the pragmatic needs of families, Al Huda Residencia - Quetta's strategic proximity to esteemed educational institutions and major healthcare facilities further enhances its appeal as an ideal residential destination for families.

Amenities that elevate living:

This pioneering partnership introduces an array of unmatched amenities that redefine the art of living at

Al Huda Residencia. **Sprawling Park:** The development boasts an exclusive green space, offering residents a serene outdoor haven for relaxation and leisure, fostering a sense of tranquility amid nature.

Sports Facilities: Tennis and basketball courts cater to sports enthusiasts, promoting an active and healthy lifestyle right within the premises.

Culinary Hub: A dedicated food court serves as a vibrant culinary hub, providing a diverse range of dining options for residents, enhancing their everyday convenience.

Fitness Hub: A fully-equipped gym caters to fitness enthusiasts, offering a complete solution for residents to maintain their health and wellness.

Recreational Haven: A basketball court provides

yet another avenue for residents to engage in sports and physical activities, promoting an active lifestyle.

Community Hub: The vibrant community center serves as a focal point for social gatherings and events, fostering a strong sense of community among residents.

Place of Worship: The inclusion of a mosque ensures residents have a convenient and spiritual place of worship within the community.

Family-Oriented Space: For families, a thoughtfully designed kids' play area provides a safe, engaging, and creative space for children to play and interact.

A vision for elevated living

Group Director of Graana.com, Farhan Javed, shared his insights on this partnership, stating, "This collaboration reflects our commitment to elevating the real estate landscape and offering residents a truly enriched living experience. This collaboration is a significant milestone in achieving our Vision 2047. Al Huda Residencia aligns perfectly with our vision of innovation and excellence."

The collaborative endeavor between Graana.com and Al Huda Residencia signifies the dawn of a new era in modern community living in Quetta. This partnership encapsulates a harmonious blend of timeless elegance, contemporary convenience, and a robust sense of community.

Shipping activity at PQ

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where four ships namely, MSC Santa Maria, Cosco America, Jigjiga and Maran-gas Asclepius, Scheduled to load/offload Containers, Cement and LNG, berthed at Container Terminal, Multi-Purpose Terminal and Gasport Terminal, respectively on Wednesday.

Meanwhile three more ships, Hajj Mohammad, Central Park and G Silver, scheduled to load/offload Cement and Chemicals also arrived at outer anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours. A total of 08 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of them three ships, MSC Tianping, UACC Manama and Kaisa-I sailed out to sea on Thursday morning, while another ship Ullswater is expected to sail on same day afternoon.

Cargo throughput during last 24 hours stood at 101,754 tonnes, comprising 65,090 tones imports Cargo and 36,664 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 2,804 Containers was handled at the port. There are nine ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of two ships, No 2 Ocean Pioneer and Central Park carrying Palm oil and Chemicals are expected to take berths at Liquid Cargo Terminal and Engro Terminal.

Seafood exports up by 2.2% to \$18.9m in July

ISLAMABAD (APP): The seafood exports from the country increased by 2.2 percent during the month of July 2023 as compared to the corresponding month of last year, Pakistan Bureau of Statistics reported.

The exports of fish and fish preparations during July 2023 were recorded at \$18.980 million against the exports of \$18.572 million in July 2022, an increase of 2.2 percent.

In terms of quantity, the exports witnessed 27.22 percent increase going up from 8,084 million in July 2022 to 10,284 million in

July 2023, according to PBS data.

On a month-on-month basis, the seafood exports declined by 52.12 percent when compared to the exports of \$39.644 million in June 2023, according to PBS data. In terms of quantity, fish exports went down by 45.11 percent in July 2023 compared to the exports of 18,735 metric tons in June 2023.

It is pertinent to mention here that the trade deficit witnessed a decline of 41.16 percent during the first month of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as

compared to the corresponding month of last year.

The trade deficit during the month under review was recorded at \$1.607 billion against the deficit of \$2.731 billion in July 2022, a decline of 41.16 percent. The exports during the month were recorded at \$2.057 billion against \$2.250 billion last year, showing a decline of 8.57 percent.

On the other hand, the imports witnessed a sharp decline of 26.44 percent by falling from \$4.981 billion last year to \$3.664 billion during July 2023.



KARACHI: Director General PSQCA Dr. H.U Khan meeting with delegation of Pakistan National Association to discuss healthcare issues.



In brief

John to retire from tennis

NEW YORK (AFP/APP): Big-serving American John Isner, who famously took part in the longest tennis match ever played at the 2010 Wimbledon Championships, said Wednesday he will retire from professional tennis after competing in this year's US Open. Isner -- who defeated France's Nicolas Mahut 6-4, 3-6, 6-7 (7/9), 7-6 (7/3), 70-68 in an 11-hour epic that took three days to complete at Wimbledon 13 years ago -- confirmed his retirement on social media. "After 17+ years on the ATP Tour, it's time to say goodbye to professional tennis," Isner wrote on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter. "The US Open will be my final event." "This transition won't be easy but I'm looking forward to every second of it with my amazing family," said Isner, who has four young children with his wife, Maddie. "Time to lace 'em up one last time."

Rugby World Cup tune-up

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Head coach Jamie Joseph said Thursday that Japan had "turned the page" ahead of their final Rugby World Cup tune-up against Italy after a spate of red cards and injuries. Joseph welcomed back Michael Leitch to the starting line-up to face the Italians in Treviso on Saturday after the former captain served a two-match ban for being sent off against Samoa last month. Loose forward Pieter Labuschagne is still suspended after his red card in the seventh minute of Japan's 35-12 loss to Fiji in Tokyo two weeks later. Joseph said the dismissals had put "a different spin on players' confidence" but he backed them to turn it around against the Italians. "I think we've had all of our bad luck -- it's all over, finished now," the New Zealand-born coach said. "We've got some good luck coming. In terms of the condition of the team, physically we're in really good nick. 'We've just got to start playing rugby now.' Japan kick off their World Cup campaign against Chile in Toulouse on September 10 and will also face England, Argentina and Samoa in Pool D.

Manchester City sign Doku

MANCHESTER (BBC): Manchester City have completed the signing of Belgium winger Jeremy Doku from Rennes for £55.4m. Last season's Treble winners have agreed a five-year contract with the 21-year-old, who scored 10 goals in 75 Ligue 1 appearances across three seasons. Doku, who has 16 caps for Belgium, has taken the number 11 shirt. "This is a great day for me, both personally and professionally. City are the best team in world football, so joining them is special," Doku said. Doku becomes Pep Guardiola's third summer signing after midfielder Mateo Kovacic arrived for £25m from Chelsea and defender former RB Leipzig defender Josko Gvardiol joined for £77m. West Ham, Tottenham and Chelsea had also been interested in signing Doku, who scored seven goals in 35 games last season. Doku had two years left on the five-year deal he signed when Rennes paid 26m euros (£22.3m) to sign him from Anderlecht in October 2020, shortly after he made his international debut as a teenager.

Naseem the hero again as Pakistan win thriller by one wicket

HAMBANTOTA (Agencies): Pakistan clinched a last-over epic thriller against Afghanistan to take an unassailable 2-0 lead in the ODI series, in Hambantota on Thursday. Chasing 301, Pakistan, somehow, narrowly escaped a defeat and kept their unbeaten ODI record intact against the hosts, having registered their sixth win in as many games.

The match came down to 11 runs needed off the final over and Shadab Khan going strong at 48*. Pakistan had two wickets in hand. But Fazalhaq Farooqi ran the allrounder out backing up off his first ball. Shadab was way out of the crease before Farooqi

delivered the ball and replays confirmed the run-out. The equation soon came down to six off three balls with Haris Rauf on strike. A misfield in the deep then helped Pakistan fetch three runs and with three needed off two balls and just a wicket in hand, Naseem Shah's mistimed flick over short third took the visitors home.

It meant a memorable batting performance by Afghanistan went in vain. Rahmanullah Gurbaz's epic 151 and Ibrahim Zadran's classy 80 had led the team to 300 for 5 after they were bowled out for 59 in the opening ODI. But in the end, it wasn't enough to notch up their first victory

over Pakistan in this format.

Zadran also hit out brilliantly, knocking six boundaries and two sixes.

Spinner Usama Mir broke the opening stand in the 40th over when he had Zadran caught at long off, while lanky pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi dismissed Gurbaz caught behind in the 45th over. Shaheen also had Rashid Khan out for two to finish with 2-58. Mohammad Nabi made a run-a-ball 29 before he was caught off Naseem Shah as Afghanistan piled up 73 runs in the last ten overs. Fast bowler Haris Rauf, who picked up a career-best 5-18 in the first match, went for 48 in seven overs without success.



Hafeez guides Texas Chargers to their second win

LAUDERHILL (INP): Mohammed Hafeez picked up impressive figures of 3/10 as the Texas Chargers defeated the Morrisville Unity by 34 runs in the US Masters T10 League. The Chargers restricted the Unity side to 75/8 after putting up 109/7 in their allotted 10 overs.

The Morrisville Unity found it difficult to string partnerships as they kept losing wickets at regular intervals. Shehan Jayasuriya struck two boundaries and two sixes, but fell to Fidel Edwards in the fifth over. Corey

Anderson played an unbeaten innings of 16 runs off 17 balls, however, he didn't find much support from the other end.

Earlier in the day, the Morrisville Unity won the toss and put the Texas Chargers into bat. Former Indian pacer Sreesanth got the Unity off to a fantastic start after dismissing Hafeez and Mukhtar Ahmed in the second over. Thereafter, Dane Piedt also joined the party, dismissing Thisara Perera and Texas Chargers skipper Ben Dunk in the fifth over. The Chargers were

reeling at 48/4. Thereafter, Darren Stevens came to the rescue for the Texas Chargers as he struck 4 fours and 2 sixes in his knock of 36 runs from 18 balls. But following his departure in the ninth over, Navin Stewart conceded just 5 runs in the last over to restrict the Chargers to 109/7.

Brief Scores: Texas Chargers 109/7 (Darren Stevens 36, Ben Dunk 15, Sreesanth 4/12)

Morrisville Unity 75/8 (Shehan Jayasuriya 22, Corey Anderson 16*, Hafeez 3/10).

Fifa opens disciplinary proceedings against Spanish football federation

MADRID (Agencies): World football's governing body has opened disciplinary proceedings against Spanish football federation president Luis Rubiales for his behaviour at Sunday's Women's World Cup final. Rubiales kissed forward Jenni Hermoso on the lips after Spain beat England.

He earlier grabbed his crotch as he celebrated at the final whistle.

Fifa will look at whether those actions constitute violations of article 13 in its disciplinary code, concerning offensive behaviour and fair play. "Fifa reiterates its unwavering commitment to respecting the integrity of all individuals and strongly condemns any behaviour to the contrary," it said in a statement. According to

the disciplinary code, officials are among those that must "comply with the principles of fair play, loyalty and integrity". It says disciplinary measures can be brought against anyone "violating the basic rules of decent conduct", "insulting a natural or legal person in any way, especially by using offensive gestures, signs or language" or "behaving in a way that brings the sport of football and/or Fifa into disrepute". Rubiales' celebration at the final whistle was in the VIP area of Stadium Australia, while he was standing near Queen Letizia of Spain and her 16-year-old daughter.

He then kissed Hermoso on the lips after she was presented with her winner's medal on the podium.

Rubiales apologised for the kiss on Monday, but Spain's Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez said that was "not enough" and second deputy prime minister Yolanda Diaz joined those calling for him to resign. Futpro, a union representing Hermoso, said the incident should not go unpunished, and the 33-year-old said the union would "defend my interests" in the matter.

The Pachuca player, who has earned 101 caps, had initially said on Instagram she "didn't like" Rubiales' actions but a statement released later on her behalf defended him.

The Spanish football federation (RFEF) has called an extraordinary general assembly to be held on Friday "as a matter of urgency".

Fighting League enrolls 32 Amateur schedule on Aug 26

DUBAI (INP): Following the success of the first edition of the Aturto Fighting League last year, the second edition returns only to add the highest enrolment of 32 Amateur MMA fighters who will face the ultimate thrilling fight of nights this August 26th in Arunachal Pradesh, India.

In response to the growing number of amateur talents starting with in the Northeast, Aturto was founded to cater to and

assemble all fighters of India under one roof to transform abilities for national and international participation.

With the aim of delivering a thrilling bout to more than 1500 spectators as recorded in previous edition.

The event will also ensure no fees for the combatants' lodging, catering, and hospitality assuring the greatest night in display for the second edition. With the clash of

titans, the league is notorious for bringing in a great mix of Olympiads and experienced athletes offering a one stop platform for fighters to boost their ranking.

The main fights, which are expected to be a one-day event like the last time, will pit Jowkhum Dilli Bronze medallist Gamma Asian Championship versus Franky Momin (HMMA Meghalaya) ADCC Bronze Medalist of 2022.



MULTAN: MPMC workers are busy in cleaning & washing enclosures for the upcoming first match of the Asia Cup 2023 tournament opener between Pakistan and Nepal on 30 August.

Foster joins New Zealand's World Cup staff

LONDON (INP): Former England wicketkeeper James Foster has been appointed as an assistant coach on New Zealand's World Cup staff, while former England batsman Ian Bell will also feature in the team's rotating staff in the lead-up to the tournament.

Foster, a T20 coaching expert, will link up with the Black Caps for a one-day series against England starting on Sept. 8 before rejoining the squad for the World Cup in India starting in October.

Multiple Ashes winner Bell will join as an assistant coach for the T20 series against England starting next week and remain on staff for the following ODI series against England and Bangladesh. Former New Zealand captain Stephen Fleming, who has enjoyed huge success coaching in the Indian Premier League, will also link up with the squad for the ODI series against world champions England.

US Open 2023 draw Murray to play Corentin Moutet in New York

NEW YORK (BBC): Britain's Andy Murray will play France's Corentin Moutet in the US Open first round as he starts his latest bid to go deep at a Grand Slam. Murray, 36, has not reached the last 16 of a major since 2017.

The former world number one has been drawn in the same quarter as fellow Britons Cameron Norrie and Dan Evans, who play Alexander Shevchenko and Daniel Elahi Galan respectively. Katie Boulter faces Diane Parry, while Jodie Burrage plays Anna Blinkova. Jack Draper, who retired from his second-round match at the Winston-Salem Open two days ago, has been drawn against Moldova's Radu Albot. They are the only six British players who qualified directly for the main draw in New York as a result of their ranking.

Liam Broady, Harriet Dart and Lily Miyazaki hope to join them by coming through three rounds of qualifying, while Emma Raducanu is missing as she continues her recovery from wrist and ankle surgeries. The main draw of the US Open, which is the final Grand Slam event of the year, starts at Flushing Meadows on Monday.

Murray has been nursing an abdominal injury which forced him to pull out of recent events in Toronto and Cincinnati. However, the 2012 champion has continued to train and practised in New York on Thursday. Murray, who is ranked 37th in the world, narrowly missed out on a seeding for the US Open, leaving him open to a tough draw against a seeded player. Instead, the Scot was pitted against Moutet, who is ranked 71st and reached the

fourth round in New York last year. If Murray beats the Frenchman, he could play Bulgarian 19th seed Grigor Dimitrov in the second round - who he practised with on Thursday. Evans, 33, could potentially play world number one Carlos Alcaraz in the third round.

The 20-year-old Spaniard starts his title defence against Germany's Dominik Koepfer, while second seed Novak Djokovic - who returns to Flushing Meadows after missing last year's event because he was not vaccinated against Covid-19 - faces France's Alexandre Muller. The pair are widely considered the joint favourites to win the title and cannot face each other until the final. Poland's world number one Iga Swiatek, 22, starts the defence of her women's crown - and a bid for a fifth major title - against Sweden's Rebecca Peterson.

PCB Women Cricket trials for U19, Emerging, Senior Teams in Peshawar on Aug 29: Hajra

PESHAWAR (APP): Pakistan Cricket Board Level-III Coach and Cricket Coordinator for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Hajra Sarwar Thursday said that the open trials to select women cricketers in three different categories including U19, Emerging, and Senior would be held on August 29 here at Maazullah Khan Cricket Academy, inside Qayyum Sports Complex Peshawar.

Hajra Sarwar, the only female qualified coach who did her Level-III from Australia and is now associated with Pakistan Cricket Board for Peshawar Region, said that all arrangements in this connection have been made. She said a request has been made to Director General Sports Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Khalid Mehmood to ensure hostel facilities for those women cricketers coming from Dera Ismail Khan to Chitral for the opening trials to be conducted under the aegis of Pakistan Cricket Board in Peshawar like other big cities across Pakistan.

She said it is golden opportunities for women cricketers to be part of the trials and do their efforts to select. She said the Pakistan Cricket Board is not giving central contracts even at the District and Regional levels which would also boost women cricket in Pakistan.

It is a good chance for the women cricketers to appear in the trials for the selection of Under-19

and Senior teams as well from Peshawar Region.

She said, the Pakistan Cricket Board, as part of its continuous effort to unearth women cricketers at the grassroots level, will hold a nationwide women's cricket trials, across eight cricket academies from 23 to 31 August.

These trials will provide an exceptional platform for talented female cricketers from various age categories to showcase their skills and progress to the higher levels of the game, Hajra Sarwar added.

The trials, she said, would be conducted by the National Selection Committee, which comprises chairperson and former Test cricketer Saleem Jaffar, former international cricketers Asmavia Iqbal and Marina Iqbal. The trials will be conducted for three age groups including U19, in which players who are born on or after September 1, 2004 are eligible, an Emerging Team and Seniors categories respectively, Hajra Sarwar said.

About the trials, she said, it would help the selectors identify talent and select squads for Pakistan Emerging and Pakistan U19 teams. Pakistan Emerging side will compete against West Indies Emerging team at home in October this year, while Pakistan U19 will feature in a triangular event involving Bangladesh and Sri Lanka in Bangladesh in January 2024.

She disclosed that Pakistan Cricket Board have recently awarded first-ever domestic contracts to 74 women cricketers among them three players hailing from Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, setting the tone for a brighter future in women's cricket. With the nationwide trials, we are eagerly poised to bring in a new wave of talented individuals forward, Hajra said.

"We have a great and exciting amount of women's cricket events ahead, and these trials will help us identify splendid talent that the selectors can consider for the national teams' squads," Hajra Sarwar, hailing from District Swabi, said.

About the schedule of the trials issued by the Pakistan Cricket Board Domestic Cricket, the trials, she said would be organized in eight academies including Maazullah Khan Cricket Academy, Peshawar, Qayyum Sports Complex.

She said besides Peshawar, the trials will also be organized in Mohammad High Performance Centre, Karachi, Inzamam-ul-Haq High Performance Centre, Multan, Women Sports Stadium, Bahawalpur, Kinnaird College for Women, Lahore, Pindi Cricket Stadium, Rawalpindi/Islamabad, Abbottabad Stadium, Abbottabad, Bugti Stadium, Quetta and Qayyum Stadium, Peshawar.

Pakistan Shaheens squad for Asian Games announced

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Cricket Board on Thursday appointed all-rounder Qasim Akram to lead Pakistan Shaheens in the 19th Asian Games, set to take place in Hangzhou, China. The event will be played in a T20 format from 28 September to 7 October.

20-year-old Qasim, has till date featured in 20 first-class matches and 40 T20 matches and also captained Pakistan U19 in the ICC U19 World Cup in 2022. In the 15-member squad, there are eight players who have already represented the Pakistan men's team at the international level.

The players who have represented Pakistan at the international level are Aamir Jamal (2 T20Is), Arshad Iqbal (1 T20I), Asif Ali (21

PAKISTAN SQUAD					
ASIAN GAMES 2023					
					
Qasim Akram (c)	Asif Ali	Muhammad Akhlag (wk)			
Omar Yousuf (vc)	Haider Ali	Rohail Nazir			
Aamer Jamal	Khushdil Shah	Shahnawaz Dahani			

ODIs, 55 T20Is), Haider Ali (2 ODIs, 33 T20Is), Khushdil Shah (10 ODIs, 24 T20Is), Mohammad Hasnain (9 ODIs, 27 T20Is), Shahnawaz Dahani (2 ODIs, 11 T20Is) and Usman Qadir (1 ODI, 23 T20Is).

Also, eight players in the 15-member squad, Aamir Jamal, Arafat Minhas, Arshad Iqbal, Omar Bin Yousuf, Qasim Akram, Rohail Nazir, Shahnawaz Dahani and Sufiyan Muqem have

been associated with the Shaheens side recently. Since May 2023, Pakistan Shaheens have toured Zimbabwe, Sri Lanka and Australia.

In Zimbabwe, Shaheens whitewashed Zimbabwe A in the two four-dayers, but lost 4-2 in the 50-over matches to Zimbabwe Select. Shaheens later won the ACC Men's Emerging Asia Cup in Sri Lanka in July, beating India A by 108 runs in the final. However, they finished as runners-up in the six-team Top End T20 Series in Darwin, Australia earlier this month. As per the tournament's rule, Shaheens will feature in the event from the quarter-finals stage scheduled to take place on 3 and 4 October.



In brief

56 FIRs, registered for violating dengue SOPs

RAWALPINDI (APP): District Health Authority (DHA) had lodged 56 FIRs and sealed 18 premises on violations of anti-dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours. District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood said that the health department, in collaboration with allied departments, had issued tickets to 12 and imposed a fine of Rs 3,000 on violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours. Presently, the health officer informed that 28 patients having positive symptoms were admitted to different health facilities in the district while the district total tally had reached 124 cases. The health officer informed that eight more patients were reported during the last 24 hours. Among the new cases, three patients had arrived from Potohar town urban area, two of each from Chaklala Cantonment and Municipal Corporation area and one from Potohar rural area. Dr Sajjad further informed that most of the cases were reported from the Rawalpindi Cantonment and Potohar town areas where required response activity was being carried out to eliminate larvae. However, he urged the residents to remove stagnant water, especially after rain in outdoor and household settings to stop mosquitoes from breeding.

Nine drug peddlers, bootleggers netted

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers, bootleggers and other law-breakers here on Thursday arrested nine accused besides recovering over three kg charras, 19 liters & two bottles of liquor and other items from their possession. According to a police spokesperson, Dhamial police held 1800 grams charras and two bottles of liquor from his possession. Kalar Syedan police rounded up Mazhar Iqbal for having 510 grams charras. Sadiqabad police netted Saleem with 501 grams charras while Race Course police nabbed Samiullah for having 500 grams charras and Danish for possessing 10 liters liquor. Airport police also arrested Arslan on recovery of five liters liquor. Sadiqabad held an accused namely Gilgas for possessing four liters liquor. Rawat police rounded up Waseem with 400 grams charras. Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations are underway.

ICT admin clears encroachments

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) administration held five persons hampering pedestrian movement during its ongoing anti-encroachment drive across the city, said its spokesperson here on Thursday. He said all the assistant commissioners were directed to clear pathways in markets and public places following Deputy Commissioner Irfan Nawaz Memon's direction for hassle-free movement of visitors into the markets. Meanwhile, in another action against profiteers, the assistant commissioners scrutinized 100 locations, resulting in fines of Rs15,500 to vendors for not displaying an official rate list and selling edible items at exorbitant rates. Similarly, the ICT teams also sealed an unauthorized LPG filling, besides confiscating 28 kg of polythene bags, the spokesman added.



ISLAMABAD: Chief Minister Gilgit Baltistan Gulbar Khan calls on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar.

Aneeq for socioeconomic, ethical issues solutions in light of Quran, Sunnah

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed on Thursday urged the religious scholars to present solutions for socioeconomic and ethical challenges through the lens of the Quran and Sunnah.

A delegation of prominent religious scholars called on the minister which resulted in insightful discussions on various national issues.

Minister Aneeq Ahmed expressed his aim to contribute positively during his tenure at the ministry, emphasizing his deep connection with the Quran and Sunnah and his respect for esteemed scholars.

He revealed that the nationwide conference on Seerat-un-Nabi (Peace Be Upon Him) would be convened this year on the 12th of Rabi-ul-Awwal, promoting religious unity and understanding.

However, the authors who would contribute significantly to the annual competition in Seerat literature, articles, and Naat to be

rewarded with accolades and recognition, he said adding that the practice of inviting scholars to write on various societal issues through the lens of Seerat continued every year.

Religious scholars highlighted that Seerat literature competitions provided valuable support for the propagation of the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) as these competitions are a commendable initiative by the ministry.

The meeting was attended by Council of Islamic Ideology Chairman Dr. Qibla Ayaz, Professor Dr. Jameela Shaikat, Dr. Ikram ul Haq Yasir, Professor Baqir Khakwani, Dr. Sahibzada Sajjad ur Rahman, Dr. Muhiuddin Hashmi, Dr. Muhammad Ilyas, Dr. Muhammad Sajjad, Professor Dr. Riaz Majeed, Dr. Junaid Mughal, and Dr. Yousuf Farooqi.

In another meeting with a delegation from the Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee, Minister Aneeq Ahmed stressed the importance of

collective efforts to promote interfaith harmony in the country.

He said, "It is indeed commendable that all minority groups in Pakistan are actively contributing to the nation's progress."

The Pakistan Sikh Gurdwara Prabandhak Committee delegates appreciated the measures taken for the Sikh community by the government of Pakistan. They said, "The land of Pakistan holds immense sanctity for Sikhs worldwide, as it marks the birthplace of Sikhism and where Baba Guru Nanak spent his final days."

The Sikh delegation included President Sardar Ameer Singh, General Secretary Sardar Vikas Singh, Former President Satonath Singh, Dr. Mampal Singh, Sarbat Singh, Raondar Singh, Baba Harmeet Singh, Anarjeet Singh, Sagar Singh, Evacuee Trust Property Board Chairman Syed Ata-ur-Rahman, and Additional Secretary Sharine Rana Shahid.

Education Minister directs to release funds to ICG F-6/2 for maintenance

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Federal Minister for Education and Professional Training Madad Ali Sindhi directed the relevant officials to immediately release funds for the maintenance of Islamabad College for Girls (ICG) F-6/2, here Thursday. During a surprise visit, the minister expressed satisfaction with the infrastructure and gave directions regarding the issuance of funds for maintenance purposes.

The minister expressed astonishment that in the same sector, the condition of one school was bad and the other was good.

Despite all the facilities, only one position in the intermediate result announced the other day was from Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) run colleges.

This college was established in 1968 but still could not achieve the required results. The minister called for a briefing from FDE officials to know the reasons and decide on a future course of action so that these issues could be resolved immediately.

Nasim Amrohvi remembered

ISLAMABAD (APP): Urdu poet, philosopher and lexicographer Nasim Amrohvi was remembered on the occasion of his birth anniversary on Thursday.

Born on August 24, 1908 in Amroha, his birth name was Syed Qaim Raza Taqvi.

In 1950, he migrated to Pakistan and settled to Karachi in 1961.

Nasim Amrohvi was a member of Urdu Lughat Board. Over several years, Nasim Amrohvi compiled an Urdu dictionary entitled Nasim-ul-Lughat. For each word Nasim-ul-Lughat provides not only its meaning, its usage, its related proverbs but also the verses containing it. Some of his major works include Khutbat-e-Mushiran, Adabi Kahaniyan, Nasim ul-Lughat, Urdu, Musaddas-i-Nasim, Farhang-i-Iqbal, Urdu Lughat-i-Tarikhi Usul Par, Marsiyah-e-Josh, Cashmah-e-Gham and Nazm-e-Urdu. Nasim Amrohvi died in Karachi on February 28, 1987.

Effective strategy adopted to combat polio in Pakistan: Nadeem

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Caretaker Federal Minister for National Health, Dr. Nadeem Jan, held a meeting with Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, at the Parliament House Thursday.

The discussion revolved around the pressing matters within the health sector.

During the meeting, the caretaker health minister provided a comprehensive overview of the health facilities currently available to the public. He highlighted the effective strategies that have been adopted to combat polio in Pakistan, emphasizing the importance of protection for polio workers during the administration of polio vaccine. In his remarks, Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani, stressed the significance of ensuring basic health facilities across all regions of the country.

He expressed the view that the state has a responsibility to provide adequate healthcare services to its citizens. The chairman also called for concerted efforts to address health disparities, particularly in the underdeveloped areas like Balochistan. The eradication of polio remained a central theme of the discussion, with both parties reaffirming their commitment to working collaboratively to

eliminate this debilitating disease. Chairman Senate Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani underscored the urgency of this mission and urged for effective measures to tackle polio. The meeting also highlighted the need for a proactive approach to prevent the spread of diseases such as dengue. Chairman Senate emphasized the importance of devising an effective strategy to control and treat dengue, especially in areas affected by recent rains and flooding.

Both the caretaker health minister and Chairman Senate concurred on the critical importance of ensuring the availability of essential medicines in hospitals. They expressed hope that the caretaker government would prioritize providing basic health facilities to the people.

The commitment to making Pakistan a polio-free nation was echoed throughout the meeting. Chairman Senate praised the Upper House's role in enacting legislation to curb the spread of polio and assured continuous support for such initiatives. Both pledged to allocate all necessary resources to safeguard children from lifelong disabilities caused by preventable diseases.

Uzbekistan's Ambassador holds fruitful talks with Commerce Minister

ISLAMABAD (NNI): Uzbekistan's Ambassador, H.E. Aybek Arif Usmanov, met Dr. Gohar Ejaz, the Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce & Industries. He discussed matters of mutual trade interest in Islamabad.

The Minister assured the Ambassador every possible facilitation in enhancing bilateral trade and economic cooperation. Both sides expressed optimism about the potential for increased trade partnerships and cooperation in various sectors.

The meeting marks a significant step towards fostering closer relations and harnessing shared opportunities for growth.

The Ambassador Usmanov extended his warm congratulations to Dr. Gohar Ejaz for assuming the role of Caretaker Federal Minister.

He also conveyed heartfelt well-wishes from the President and Prime Minister of Uzbekistan, highlighting the importance of nurturing strong ties between the two nations.

Police ensures robust security measures in high security zone

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Police is ceaselessly dedicated to preserving law and order within the federal capital and has ensured robust security measures in high-security zones. In a dedicated effort to bolster security within the high-security zone, a police spokesperson said that personnel stationed at the Margalla Road checkpoint diligently carry out their duties. They carefully verify the credentials of individuals seeking access to the high-security zone and meticulously record vehicle information.

The high-security zone encompasses critical government and private institutions, diplomatic missions, and other vital assets, emphasizing the need for unwavering protection. Government employees entering this zone are now required to visibly display their departmental identification cards. Furthermore, individuals with business interests within this area are strongly encouraged to carry their neces-

sary documentation and cooperate fully with the on-duty personnel.

Senior officers have issued directives to the personnel on duty, emphasizing the importance of upholding the highest standards of diligence and professionalism while fostering positive interactions with citizens. A sincere appeal is made to all citizens to promptly report any suspicious activities or individuals to the "Pukar-15" helpline, a police spokesperson added.

Meanwhile, Islamabad capital police have initiated a massive crackdown against professional beggars and their handlers in the city to curb this menace, a public relations officer said. He said that the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, ordered the all zonal DPOs to take action against professional beggars and handlers in their respective areas adding that cases should be registered against them.

PMD forecasts rain for various parts of country

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Meteorological Department (PMD) Thursday forecast rain-wind/thundershower for Potohar region, Islamabad, Upper and Central Punjab, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Gilgit Baltistan and Kashmir during the next 24 hours. Heavy falls may also occur at isolated places in Potohar region, Islamabad, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Kashmir and Upper Punjab during the period.

Hot and humid weather is expected in other parts of the country. According to the synoptic Situation, monsoon currents from Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal are penetrating in upper parts of the country. A westerly wave has started affecting upper and central parts.

During the last 24 hours, the weather remained hot and humid in other parts of the country.

However, rainfall occurred in Punjab was Islamabad (Saidpur 37mm, Golra 23, Zero Point 17, Airport 16, Bokra 03), Rawalpindi (Shamsabad 37, Chaklala 22), Mangla

20, Murree 04, Attock 03, Jhelum 01, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa: Saidu sharif 18, Balakot 16, Dir (Upper 14, Lower 08), Kakul, Buner, Pattan 08, Bannu, Malam Jappa 02, Cherat, Chitral 01, Gilgit-Baltistan: Bagrote 18, Gupis 10, Gilgit 02, Kashmir: Kotli 13, Muzaffarabad (AP 08, City 07), Garhi Dupatta 04 and Rawalakot 01 mm.

The highest maximum temperatures recorded in Turbat 44C and Dalbandin 42 C during the last 24 hours.

ANF recovers 445 kg drugs in seven operations

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) while conducting seven operations across the country managed to recover 445 kg of drugs and arrested seven accused including an Afghan national, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Thursday. He informed that 10.8 kg opium and 36 kg hashish were recovered from an ambulance intercepted near Ring Road Peshawar. During the operation, three accused including an Afghan national, resident of Hangu were also arrested.

Over 2.7 kg Ice drug was recovered from the possession of a Qatar-bound passenger netted at Bacha Khan International Airport. The accused, resident of Peshawar was going on flight number QR-601. In another operation, Narcotics Act and further investigation has been started.

hashish was recovered from the possession of a local resident. 180 kg of hashish was recovered from a vehicle intercepted in Chin Ka Qila of Gujranwala area. During the operation, the accused resident of Gujranwala was arrested. On the pointation of the accused, 36 kg of opium was recovered from another vehicle parked in a house. 600 grams of heroin was recovered from a local motorcyclist arrested in Faisalabad.

In the seventh operation, 67 kg of opium and 103 kg of morphine concealed for smuggling were recovered near Kuchlak bypass Quetta.

Separate cases have been registered against the accused under the Anti-Narcotics Act and further investigation has been started.



ISLAMABAD: US Congressman Darlin Lahood accompanied by US Ambassador Donald Blome exchanging views with Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani.

UNICEF labels Afghanistan

KABUL (Agencies): The UNICEF has announced that Afghanistan is one of the most weapons-contaminated countries in the world with all kinds of weapons, mines and unexploded ordnances, and children make up 85% of the victims of explosions in this country. According to UNICEF, experts of this institution along with the EU in Afghanistan teaches children to recognize and avoid unexploded ordnances, using practice settings like this at a child-friendly space.

One dead in road accident

PARWAN (Khaama Press): Two road accidents occurred in Nuristan and Parwan, killing one person and injuring eight others on Thursday. Two separate accidents unfolded in Nuristan and Parwan provinces. In Nuristan's Nogram district, a car overturned due to reckless driving, resulting in one death and four injuries. In Parwan's Salang district, a bus driver's loss of control led to another accident, leaving four injured, including some in critical condition.

Dujarric urges Kabul to carefully look at UNAMA report

KABUL (TOLOnews): Following the release of UNAMA's report on human rights violations in Afghanistan, the UN secretary-general's spokesman Stéphane Dujarric asked the Islamic Emirate to very carefully look at this report.

Dujarric asked the current Afghan government to uphold their obligations under international law. "Our reaction is really to support and echo what Volker Türk has said on this issue, which is for the de facto authorities to very carefully look at this report, consider the findings, and to uphold their obligations under international law, and to hold those people who've committed what could potentially be these crimes, to be held to account," the spokesman noted.

In the meantime,

UNAMA's chief of human rights in an interview with Al Jazeera TV, said that based on Afghanistan's agreement with the UN, human rights violations should be prevented in this country.

"The state of Afghanistan has... obligations that it has signed up to UN treaties on human rights. Now the de facto authorities have the responsibility to ensure the protection for the people who live within this country," Fiona Frazer, the Representative of the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Afghanistan, added.

This comes as Abdul Qahar Balkhi, the Foreign Ministry's spokesman, said that the UNAMA report lacks documentation and corroboration. "The instances have not

been shared with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which is the point of contact for UNAMA and others. They have not been corroborated with the relevant departments," he said. "If we look at the overall picture in the theme of the report, this actually shows an improvement in the situation in Afghanistan because we have to have a yardstick by what you measure. You cannot measure or compare Afghanistan to a country that has had peace for centuries and decades. Afghanistan is a country that has come out of 50 years of war. And we, if we compare to 2019, there was 3,403 civilian extra judicial killings... if we compare that to 2022, which is only 70, I mean this is a drastic reduction."

Takhar shopkeepers irked by 5% tax hike



TALOQAN (Pajhwok): Restaurants and shops owners in northern Takhar province have expressed concerns over five percent increase in tax saying current business condition did not suit tax hike.

Haseebullah, the owner of one of the restaurants told Pajhwok Afghan News, in the past their business was doing well, the tax percentage was five and they paid up to 20,000 afis in four months but now there is five percent increase in the tax which unfair.

"Now we have to pay 250,000 afis when the condition of our business not well and the market is down," he said.

Syed Naseer, the owner of another restaurant in Takhar, termed the increase in the tax backbreaker and said: "In current condition

they were unable to pay for their workers so increase in the tax amount was backbreaker"

He said a large part of the collected net income is spent on expenses, and the government wants to pay taxes without considering these expenses, while the expectation of the shopkeepers is that the tax will be collected from the net income taking into account the expenses.

He asked the government to put an end to their worries.

Syed Ahmad, one of the shopkeepers, said: "Tax has increased recently while the market condition is down and there is no demand."

Abdul Manan, head of the Shopkeepers Union, said they shared their concerns with the Finance Ministry and hoped that the five percent increase will be

dropped to two percent.

He, however, said in current condition the payment of two percent tax would be difficult for shopkeepers.

Mawlawi Abdul Bar Asari, head of the Takhar Revenue Department, said there was no exact plan for revenue collection during the past government, adding that now the tax increase is based on a proper plan, budget and the level of income.

He said according to the law, five percent tax is charged on restaurants, companies, private hospitals the net income of which is over 750,000 in a quarter. He said business with less than 750,000 net income are charged two percent tax.

He assured efforts were under way to address the problems and worries faced by restaurants owners.

Girls enrolment in seminaries up 50%

KABUL (TOLOnews): Instructors at seminaries say that the number of girls attending seminaries has recently increased by 50% as the schools for female students in grade 7-12 remain closed since the Islamic Emirate came to power.

According to officials, the numbers of students increased in the seminaries after the Islamic Emirate closed schools for female students.

"The number of students has increased. We are happy that we can at least provide them with this much service," said Shabana, a university instructor.

"After the schools closed for girls, the number of female students surged up to 50 percent. There are no restrictions for the girls to study in the seminaries," said Tariq, an instructor in a seminary.

TOLOnews interviewed some of the students who are attending the seminaries after their schools were closed.

Angila, who was in grade 6 of a medical faculty, is now studying at the seminary. "Education is compulsory for every Muslim, both men and women. The schools and universities should be reopened for the girls so that they can continue their education," she said.

Meanwhile some of the students urged the interim government to reopen their schools. "School is a place where you learn science subjects, religious subjects and seminary is a place where you cannot study anything else but religious studies," said Muqadas, a student.

"We call on the Islamic Emirate to reopen the doors of the schools for the girls," said Marriam, a student.

The Deputy Minister of Education, Karimullah Akhundzada, said that there are more than 14,000 seminaries across the country, where 330,000 students including boys and girls are studying. "In total, 14,000 seminaries have been registered within the education ministry," he said.

Meanwhile, women's rights activists criticized the Islamic Emirate's dual policy towards men and women in Afghanistan, saying that the obstacles ahead of women should be removed.

"The Islamic Emirate should allow the women and girls to study modern education beside religious education. The doors of the schools and universities will be reopened," said Suraya Paikan, a women's rights activist.

'Govt should provide education to everyone'



KABUL (Agencies): Sher Mohammad Abbas Stanekzai, deputy foreign minister, has said that women's education is a collective right while observing the hijab in accordance with Sharia and that the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan should provide education to everyone.

Speaking at the scientific and research seminar under the name of "Women's role in Khair ul-Quran" at the Academy of Sciences, Stanekzai said that women have Sharia rights regarding inheritance, education, work and other aspects to life that have not been given to them yet.

Stanekzai says that before the time of Islam, women did not have rights within other religions, women were buried alive, burned and sold. But Islam gave rights to men and women, and under Sharia law, the right to inheritance and the right to education have been defined.

"Opening a school for girls, teaching, educating girls, all these are legitimate... It is obligatory on the Islamic government to provide education for women, and it is permissible to educate women in hijab," said Stanekzai.

Fazaluddin Mahmood, the president of the

Academy of Sciences, said: "We must have women who can solve women's scientific problems."

Stanekzai also said drafting the constitution and entrusting it to its people was the key point for the survival of the system.

He also said that for the survival of the system, affairs must be carried out within the framework of a constitution.

"The system must have a constitution in the light of Sharia law and in order for the people to move forward according to it, and to gain the trust of the people, the government and the system must be among the people, and the ruler must deal with

problems and the people can see the ruler whenever they want and share their problems with him," Stanekzai added.

At the same time, the Acting Minister of Industry and Trade also said that no one can deny the role and importance of women in society, therefore the Islamic Emirate is committed to ensuring women's rights.

"Almost 50,000 women are engaged in business with the Ministry of Industry and Trade. I have never witnessed the Islamic Emirate say anything or opposing these women. In our society, the best people we respect are our parents and the female, and this is

known to the whole world, and if we go under Western propaganda and social media, we will never be able to live," said Nuruddin Azizi, Acting Minister of Industry and Trade.

Abdul Baqi Haqqani, head of the National Examinations Department, said at this seminar that learning science is obligatory for everyone and that Afghanistan is lagging behind the world in the field of science and more efforts should be made in the field of scientific development in the country.

Although this seminar about women was held in the Academy of Sciences, no women were present.

IEA stops 100 girls from flying to Dubai on university scholarships

KABUL (Agencies): The head of a Dubai-based conglomerate said Afghanistan's Islamic Emirate authorities had stopped around 100 women from traveling to the United Arab Emirates where he was to sponsor their university education.

Khalaf Ahmad Al Habtoor, founding chairman of Al Habtoor Group, said in a video posted on X social media platform, formerly known as Twitter, that he had planned to sponsor the female students to attend university and a plane he had paid for had been due to fly them to the

UAE.

"Taliban (IEA) government refused to allow the girls who were coming to study here – a hundred girls sponsored by me – they refused them to board the plane and already we have paid for the aircraft, we have organised everything for them here, accommodation, education, transportation, security," he said in the video.

Spokespeople for the IEA administration and Afghan foreign affairs ministry did not immediately respond to Reuters requests for comment.

Al Habtoor included

audio of one of the Afghan students who said that she had been accompanied by a male chaperone but airport authorities in Kabul had stopped her and others from boarding the flight.

The IEA administration has closed universities and high schools to female students in Afghanistan.

They allow Afghans to leave the country but usually require Afghan women travelling long distances and abroad to be accompanied by a male chaperone, such as their husband, father or brother.

Meanwhile, Amnesty International has con-

demned the IEA's decision for prohibiting female students from traveling to Dubai to start their university courses.

"This preposterous decision is a flagrant violation of the right to education and freedom of movement and demonstrates the continued gender persecution against women and girls in Afghanistan. The Taliban de-facto authorities (IEA) must immediately reverse their decision and allow these female students to travel and study," the organization posted on X social media platform, formerly known as Twitter.

Kunar's Chapa Dara haunted by lack of potable water

ASADABAD (Pajhwok): Residents of the Chapa Dara district of eastern Kunar province complain about the lack of clean drinking water and the use of contaminated water that result in diseases.

Abdul Hakeem, a resident of Gulsalk village, told Pajhwok Afghan News there were only two clean drinking water networks in the district and more than half of its population had to consume impure water.

He said: "People of this district have been using stream water and they thus contract various diseases."

He urged the government to raise public awareness about the hazards of using stream water. He also asked for the supply of potable water.

Sher Alam, an inhabitant of Waatly village, said more than 1,200 families were living in the district and all of them did not have access to clean drinking water.

He said the government should address the issue as soon as possible and pre-



vent people getting sick due to consumption of unhealthy water.

Maulvi Abdul Hakeem Muhajir, deputy administrative chief for the district, said: "There are 75 large and small villages in Chapa Dara, which has a population of over 100,000. More than half of the people had no access to clean drinking

water," he acknowledged.

He said he had shared the issue with provincial authorities and they had promised to sort out the problem.

Chapa Dara is located in a mountainous area and digging deep wells there costs a lot. Most people could not afford to do so.

Ayaz Safi, spokesman

for the public health department, said: "A number of people from, Chapa Dara have contracted diarrhea. Awareness has been raised among 300 residents about avoiding the use of unhealthy water."

He said chlorine, hygiene kits and soaps had been distributed to district residents.

Hamidullah supports his family of six

TALOQAN (Pajhwok): Hamidullah served as a soldier in the Ministry of Defense (MoD) in the previous government for nearly a decade until 2017 when he lost both his legs to a blast and has been supporting his family.

The 33-year-old ex-soldier from northeastern Badakhshan province has been living in Takhar since many years. In 2008 he joined the army due to economic problems.

Hamidullah said: "After serving for about nine years in 2017 when Nad Ali district of Helmand province fell into the hands of the then militants, I was sent on a mission from Kabul to Helmand. It was night when we reached Nad Ali district and on the way, I stepped on a roadside bomb that exploded and severed my both legs."

He recalled it was the hardest moment when he lost his legs. The blast disabled him and he was in a coma for about one and a

half months and now with his legs amputated, supporting a family is the most difficult responsibility.

He said he was struggling economically to support a family of six. He lives in a rented house.

Pajhwok Afghan News reporter Mohammad Yasin Joya in Takhar talked to Hamidullah riding a wheelchair on road in Talqan city. With a weak body and amputated legs, sweat shone on his forehead. He has disheveled hair and a smiling face. His laughter, however, hid a world of pain and suffering he inherited from the war.

Joya said: "After completing a news story for Pajhwok, I was walking on one of the roads in Talqan city when I saw a man crossing a crowded road. Passing this road was not an easy task for him."

"I called him that I would like to talk to you for a moment, he said yes with a big smile. Hamidullah

said he felt he knew me. I asked him what conditions he was facing, he sank into deep thought for a moment and said: "The war has taken away my youth and my beautiful body, that's the story of my life."

At that moment, Hamidullah was not ready to give an interview: "Now the weather is hot, I will call you and I have stories for you."

Pajhwok reporter says: "After four days, Hamidullah telephoned me that he was ready for an interview. We went to his house in Sheikhabad area, which is located a few kilometers from Talqan city. Hamidullah's four children were waiting for their father to arrive. This time he was not alone and I was with him. He first asked his children if they went to school today or not, then he introduced me to them and said that your uncle has come to interview me."

He says: "Seven years have passed since I was

injured, moments that are not pleasant for me and every minute is spent with difficulty. During the previous government, I was paid 200,000 afghanis annually, which could solve a part of my life's problems; But after the political change in the country, my allowance has been reduced from 200,000 afghanis to 60,000 afghanis, it is not paid on time and I cannot provide for the expenses of a family of six."

According to Hamidullah, now his biggest wish is permanent peace in the country so that no one becomes a victim anymore. This war victim is deprived literacy, but one of his dreams is the education of his four children. He said he spared no effort to present his children to the society as useful citizens.

Hamidullah doubted transparency in the distribution of aid by aid organizations, saying the aid should reach needy and deserving people.

the assistance of aid organizations in Afghanistan, adding that for economic progress, it is necessary to build up infrastructure.

We welcome the help of the international community, but the aid can be effective when it is used in infrastructure. At the same time, aid should take a developmental aspect to play an important role in creating employment and reducing poverty.

Hamidullah welcomed the assistance of aid organizations in Afghanistan, adding that for economic progress, it is necessary to build up infrastructure.

5.6 million Afghans given aid in July

KABUL (TOLOnews): The World Food Program announced it provided food and cash to more than 5.6 million people across Afghanistan in July.

Wahidullah Amani, the spokesperson of the World Food Program in Afghanistan, said that the assistance of the organization includes 35,000 tons of food and \$9 million in cash, which was distributed to the citizens of Afghanistan

in July. "WFP in Afghanistan this July was able to provide food aid to more than 5.6 million people across Afghanistan. Among these, 3.8 million people were those who benefited from emergency humanitarian aid," said Wahidullah Amani.

Meanwhile, some economists said that for transparency in the distribution of aid, it is necessary to create a committee to super-

vised the process of providing aid and emphasize that Afghan citizens will need help more than ever in the coming winter.

"In order to reduce the level of poverty in Afghanistan, it is necessary to change the way of aid and to spend it in ways that can create a basis for employment for the poor families of the country," said Seyar Qurishi, an economist. The Ministry of Economy has welcomed

the assistance of aid organizations in Afghanistan, adding that for economic progress, it is necessary to build up infrastructure.

We welcome the help of the international community, but the aid can be effective when it is used in infrastructure. At the same time, aid should take a developmental aspect to play an important role in creating employment and reducing poverty.

KABUL (TOLOnews): The office of the deputy PM for economic affairs said that efforts are underway to resume practical work on major transit and energy projects between Central Asia and South Asia through Afghanistan.

The office said the projects were CASA-1000, TAP, TAPI Pipeline and the Turkmenistan-Uzbekistan-Tajikistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan (TUTAP) Power

Project. This comes as the spokesman for the Ministry of Energy and Water (MoEW), Matiullah Abid, said that the CASA-1000 and TAP are important economic projects in the energy sector.

"The CASA-1000 project, which starts from Kyrgyzstan to Tajikistan and then to Afghanistan and Pakistan -- it conveys electricity. This is one of the important projects. Most of

its work has been developed in Afghanistan. Afghanistan can also earn 300 megawatts of power from it," said Matiullah Abid, a spokesman for the MoEW. The former head of Da Afghanistan Breshna Sherkat meanwhile said that the implementation of these projects will benefit Afghanistan's economy.

He said that 60 percent of the work on CASA-1000 has been finished.

"Regarding the regional projects of TAP, TUTAP, CASA, and TAPI Pipeline, I must say that these projects have benefited in various ways. A major part of the power demands will be ensured," said Amanullah Ghalibi, the former head of DABS.

However, international development aid to Afghanistan has been suspended since the Islamic Emirate came to power.

Toshakhana verdict IHC adjourns hearing on Imran's plea till today

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) has adjourned the hearing on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's petition challenging his conviction in the Toshakhana case till 11.30pm today (Friday).

After lawyer Khawaja Haris parted ways with the PTI chief's legal team, advocate Latif Khosa represented the PTI chief in the IHC. Two-member IHC bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Tariq Memmood Jahangiri conducted the hearing on the PTI chief's plea against the Toshakhana verdict on Thursday. At the outset of the hearing, Khosa implored the court to suspend the PTI chief's conviction on three grounds, one of which he said that the trial court lacked jurisdiction to hear the Toshakhana case.

He claimed that the sessions court did not have the jurisdiction to hear ECP's appeal. "It [ECP] should have sorted out the jurisdiction matter first," he said that the electoral body could authorise one of its officers to file a complaint. In this case, the ECP secretary asked the district election commissioner to file a complaint, he added.

The counsel added that ECP did not seek permission before filing a complaint. At this, ECP lawyer Amjad Parvez maintained that the ECP's permit to file the complaint was on record. However, Khosa replied that this permission had been given by the election commission secretary, which was not lawful. The

high court sent the petition to the trial court for a new decision, he said, adding that the complaint cannot be sent directly to the sessions judge because it is supposed to be sent to the magistrate first.

"The sessions court cannot hear the complaint directly," he contended. The PTI chief's counsel pointed out "flaws" in the trial court's verdict and added that the court the petitioner's constitutional rights were violated as he was not allowed to present witnesses in his defence before the court. On Tuesday, the IHC bench had adjourned the plea's hearing on Thursday while turning down the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) request for granting them two weeks to get the record.

On August 5, the former prime minister, who is currently incarcerated in Attock jail, was found guilty of corrupt practices in the case of misdeclaration of state gifts. The trial court in the federal capital had sentenced Khan to three-year in prison upon conviction, a move which is likely to bar him from standing in elections due later this year. However, the PTI filed an appeal in the IHC challenging the trial court's verdict and sentence against the party chief, requesting that the court declare the judgment "illegal" earlier this month.

On Wednesday, the Supreme Court (SC) which heard a petition challenging IHC's decision to remand the case back to the trial court judge who had convicted him, observed that

the trial court had hastened Toshakhana verdict. It acknowledged the "procedural defects" in Khan's conviction, but opted to wait for the IHC's decision on the former premier's plea seeking suspension of the three-year sentence. "Prima facie the decision by the additional sessions judge (ASJ) contains defects, but we will not intervene at this stage; rather [we will] wait for the outcome of the high court decision," Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial observed.

Challenging the trial court's verdict in IHC, the PTI sought the suspension of his conviction by Additional District and Sessions Judge (ADSJ) Humayun Dilawar. "It is most respectfully prayed that the Hon'ble Court may graciously be pleased to set aside the impugned judgement dated 05.08.2023, and declare the conviction, sentence imposed upon the Appellant to be illegal and without lawful authority and to acquit the Appellant of the charges framed against him," the petition read.

Besides the sentence of incarceration, the additional district and sessions judge also imposed a fine of Rs100,000 after finding Khan guilty of graft in the Toshakhana case. Following the arrest of the PTI chief, it was the third petition the party had filed. A day earlier, PTI also announced to move Supreme Judicial Council (SJC) against IHC CJ Chief Justice Aamer Farooq for not suspending Khan's sentence.

Imran challenges cancellation of his bail pleas

LAHORE (PPI): Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman Imran Khan on Thursday challenged the cancellation of his interim bails in seven cases, including the Jinnah House attack case in Lahore High Court (LHC).

The PTI chairman has challenged the cancellation of his interim bails through his lawyer Barrister Salman Safdar. A two-member bench of the Lahore High Court will hear the petitions of the PTI chairman today at 11 am. The petition maintained that the PTI chairman was being victimised and the cases were politically motivated. The petitioner has sought a court order for hearing of his interim bail pleas on merit by the relevant court.

It is pertinent to mention here that the anti-terrorism court had rejected the bail pleas of PTI chairman in the May 9 cases and allowed the arrest of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf chairman. The court was informed that the PTI premiere was convicted under the Election Act and is currently under arrest. The ATC accepted the plea and granted permission to police to conduct the inquiry and arrest of the former prime minister in Jinnah House attack case. It is pertinent to mention here that PTI Chairman Khan was arrested from his Lahore residence on August 5 after he was slapped with a five-year disqualification and a three-year prison term in the Toshakhana criminal case.

Engineer, accountant abducted in Tirah Valley

F.P. Report

TIRAH VALLEY: Engineer and a private accountant (Munshi) were kidnapped at gunpoint in Peer Mela area of Tirah Valley district Khyber on Wednesday night. Security forces and locals said that last night unknown armed persons entered the guest house, abducted engineer Amir Khattak and Azmat Afridi and shifted them to an undisclosed destination. Station House Officer (SHO) Tirah police station Muslim Khan Afridi while confirming the incident said that the kidnapped engineer and his colleague were residing in a private property when they were kidnapped. He went on that the area was mountainous and located at the border and could not avoid the threat of presence of militants however efforts had been initiated to trace the whereabouts of the abductees.

The engineer Amir Khattak, resident of Karak and Azmat Afridi were assigned duty to construct a cricket ground in the area that was approved in 2016 and in 2021 a fifty million rupees fund was allocated for the sports project. It is to be mentioned here that due to militancy in Tirah Valley four forces operations have been conducted from 2014 to 2017 in the Valley to purge the militancy.

SC allows girl to go with husband

ISLAMABAD (PPI): The Supreme Court (SC) Thursday allowed an 18-year-old girl to go with her husband. A two-member bench headed by CJP Justice Umar Ata Bandial took up the plea of the alleged kidnap and marriage of a girl named Farzana Bibi. At the outset of the hearing, the investigation officer of the case presented the medical report of the girl, which showed that Farzana Bibi is about 18 years old.

After being asked by CJP Bandial, where she is living now, the girl replied, currently she is currently living with her parents but wants to live with her husband. The top judge said whatever happened is 'sad' but now the couple is married and the decision against the husband will ruin their lives.

Justice Athar Minallah asked what will parents of the girl achieve by fighting the case as the girl wants to live with her husband. Later, the Supreme Court bench while allowing Farzana to go with her husband also ruled to hand over two children to the father.



JOHANNESBURG: A group photo of Chinese President Xi Jinping, South Africa President Cyril Ramaphosa, Brazilian president Luiz Lula De Silva, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Russian Foreign Minister Sergiy Lavrov during 15th session of Heads of Member State of BRICS.

KP CM emphasized officers to abide by principles of merit

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Azam Khan, chaired a significant meeting on Thursday with high-level civil officers to discuss the essential role of civil servants in upholding the principles of meritocracy and independence from political influence. During the meeting, the Chief Minister highlighted the timeless wisdom of Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, during his address to civil officers in Peshawar in April 1948, who emphasized the importance of civil servants in maintaining a transparent and efficient administration.

The meeting held at Cabinet room of the civil secretariat was attended by Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Additional Chief Secretary Muhammad Zubair Asghar Qureshi, Senior Member Board of Revenue and all Administrative Secretaries.

The caretaker Chief minister stressed that government officers must execute their duties without succumbing to external pressures, ensuring that decisions are made solely on the grounds of competence, fairness, and the welfare of citizens. The Chief Minister reaffirmed his commitment to providing a conducive environment for civil officers to perform their duties independently and efficiently. The meeting showcased the government's determination to foster an administration that prioritizes transparency, accountability and the public's best interests. Referring to Quaid Speech he said that "it is the responsibility of the civil servants to work with utmost dedication, integrity, and impartiality. They should serve the nation without any bias, fear, or favor."

During the meeting Chief minister shared insights into the critical function of the caretaker government in

CM assigns portfolios to ministers

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Caretaker Chief Minister of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Muhammad Azam Khan, has assigned portfolios to the caretaker ministers with immediate effect.

The portfolios have been assigned as Syed Masud Shah: Establishment & Administration and Inter-Provincial Coordination, Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakhel: Information & Public Relations, Culture, Tourism, Archeology and Museums, Justice (Retd) Irshad Qaiser: Prisons, Relief, Rehabilitation & Settlement, Zakat, Usher, Social Welfare, Special education and Women Empowerment, Ahmad Rasool Bangash: Finance, Revenue, Excise, Taxation and Narcotics, Asif Rafiq: Climate Change, Forestry, Environment & Wildlife, Livestock, Fisheries & Cooperative, Agriculture and food, Dr Naseebullah: Science, Technology and Information Technology, sports & Youth Affairs, Dr Muhammad Qasim Jan: Elementary & Secondary Education, Higher Education and Archives & libraries, Justice (Retd) Arshad Hussain Shah: Law, Parliamentary Affairs & Human Rights, Auaq, Hajj, Religious Affairs and Minority Affairs and Syed Aamir Abdullah: Tribal Affairs (Newly Merged Districts).

The two advisors and one special assistant have also been assigned portfolios as Advisor Dr Riaz Anwar: Health, Population Welfare and Labour, Advisor Dr Sarfaraz Ali Shah: C&W, P&D and PHE and Special Assistant Zafarullah: Irrigation and Housing. The portfolios have been assigned in accordance with the caretaker government's priorities, which include ensuring law and order, providing relief to the people affected by the recent floods, and preparing for the upcoming general elections.

ensuring free and fair elections. He acknowledged that the role of the caretaker government is pivotal in providing a level playing field for all political parties, safeguarding the democratic rights of citizens.

The Chief Minister emphasized upon the officers for ensuring transparency in matters particularly related to financial issues, posting/transfers and general administration. Chief Minister issued directions for prompt reporting of corruption cases to CM office and Chief Secretary Office. All irregular postings be discouraged and looked into. He said that illegal appointments made by earlier governments must be identified, reported and action shall be immediately taken. He emphasized that on complex matters, opinion of the law department and Advocate General

should be solicited. The caretaker Chief minister also directed to recover government vehicles from unauthorized persons and officials and a compliance report to this effect be submitted to CM office.

Speaking about good governance, the Chief Minister directed the Chief Secretary to hold monthly review meeting of the performance of all departments and present the same to the office of the Chief Minister. Caretaker CM Muhammad Azam Khan highlighted the caretaker government's resolve to minimize unnecessary expenses while prioritizing essential services. He directed to focus on austerity measures to optimize the utilization of public funds, ensuring that they are channeled towards projects and initiatives that yield tangible benefits for the public.

Nomination suppliers by UoP: Nepotism may embezzlement

Kashif Ullah Khalil

PESHAWAR: Assistant Treasurer Store Purchase Section at University of Peshawar (UOP) has issued a circular to all departments compelling to procure stationary from two nominated stores/suppliers/firms with its titles in the notification with the highest from the open market.

The circular stated that all concerned are informed that the Competent Authority has approved the attached and firms/suppliers for purchase of Office Stationary for period of one year from 15th May 2023 to 14th May 2024 from Global Office Product Peshawar and Imperial Office Solutions Peshawar.

As such purchases should be made from either from these firms/suppliers

or from any other supplier offering the same quality and same or below prices through procedure but the price list obtained by The Frontier Post has highest rates in the country which has created doubts regarding transparency.

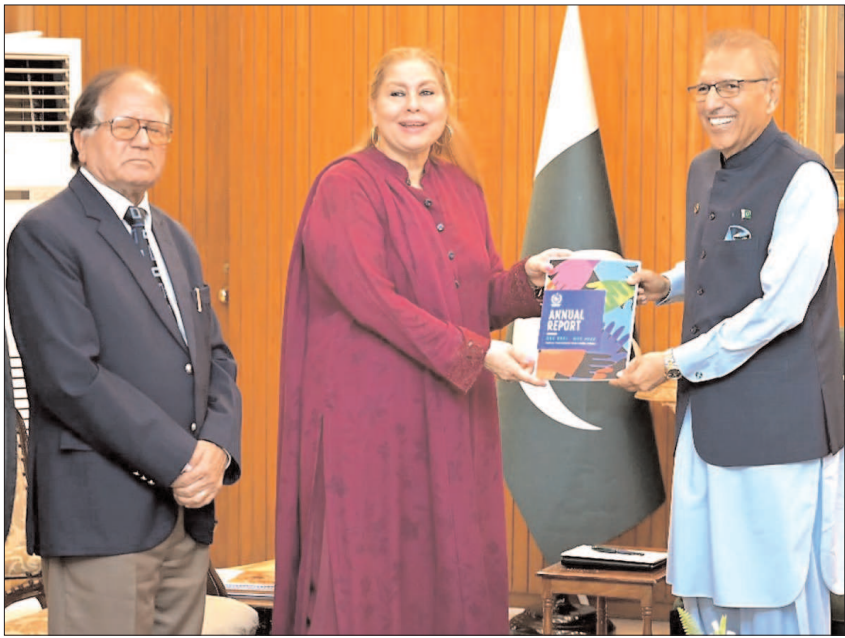
According to details, Assistant Registrar Store Purchase Section has notified Rs1790 for 70-gram A4 size local paper which is every high because *The Frontier Post* has researched in the open market and found that 80-gram A4 size paper per unit is available at Rs1160 in open market.

Moreover, price for 8-gram Glue stick fixed by Assistant Treasurer as Rs80 but it is available on Rs20 in open market. The Assistant Registrar has issued list of 84 items with

highest prices from the open market while also nominated two suppliers which made the process further objectionable.

Despite, UOP's financial crisis, Uni-ball pens should be procured for official use which most expensive pen in the market using for routine works. It is worthy to mention that maximum public offices at Peshawar are using uni-ball pens especially in the civil secretariat which shows sincerity of public servant with the state and nation.

Public Relation Officer UOP told to *The Frontier Post* that it is a good objection that why price of paper is fixed higher than market value and promised that he will contact number of Assistant Treasurer Store Purchase Section on its availability.



ISLAMABAD: Chairperson National Commission for Human Rights (NCHR) Rabiya Agha presenting annual report of 2021-22 to President Dr. Arif Alvi, at Aiwan-e-Sadr.

Imaan, Wazir sent on judicial remand to jail

ISLAMABAD (PPI): Rejecting the prosecutor's request for physical remand of human rights lawyer Imaan Hazir Mazari and former MNA Ali Wazir, an anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad on Thursday sent both of them to Adiala Jail on judicial remand.

Taking action on Imaan's bail application, Judge Abul Hasnat Zulqarnain summoned parties to the case on August 26. The judge also allowed Iman's meeting with her mother, former PTI leader Shireen Mazari in the courtroom. During the hearing, the prosecutor told the

court that voice matching and photogrammetric test had been done. "And now only transcripts of written speeches are to be recovered from the suspects," he said, and prayed to the court to grant their physical remand.

The judge asked as to what the investigation officer (IO) had done during the three-day period. On Tuesday last, Imaan was granted bail in one of two cases registered against her. A district and sessions court in Islamabad had approved her bail in the case registered against her at Tarnol

police station for interfering in state affairs and committing acts of vandalism.

The judge overruled the prosecutor's concerns and approved Mazari's bail in lieu of a surety bond worth Rs30,000. Both Wazir and Imaan had been booked under terrorism and sedition-related charges over controversial speeches they had made at Pashtun Tahafuz Movement's (PTM) public rally held in Islamabad on Friday. Imaan Mazari was arrested from her residence in Islamabad in the wee hours of Sunday morning by capital police.

Heirdom certificate's fee: PHC seeks reply

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) ordered Attorney General of Pakistan (AGP), National Database and Registration Authority (NADRA) and provincial government to submit reply regarding fee fixed at Rs10 thousand heirdom certificate, on Thursday.

The petition stated that the increase in fees for heirdom certificate is against Article 141 of Constitution of Pakistan which will increase problems of citizens because high inflation has already evoked every segment of society while the writ was filed by Salim Shah advocate.

The petition argued that the act has empower NADRA while it is unconstitutional because provincial government can't give directions to federal departments. Rs5 thousand

should be payable for duplicate certificate while Rs10 thousand will be charged on property worth less Rs1 million.

The writ further argued that Section stated; without decline certificate one's can't approach the court for the grievances which has created problems for the citizens and violating the Constitution of Pakistan. The court's jurisdiction has also certain which has further deepen the grievances of public while PHC has approached in accordance with problems facing by citizen while requested declaring it null and void.

However, PHC ordered AGP, NADRA and provincial government for submission of comments in this regard while adjourned further hearing. PHC's divisional bench comprised Justice Syed Arshad Ali and Justice Dr. Khurshed Iqbal

granted bail to former Member National Assembly (MNA) Sabghat Ullah while declared void his arrest under Section-3 of Maintenance of Public (3MPO).

The counsel Alam Khan Adenzai advocate argued that former MNA was arrested on 5th August under 3MPO from Dir following 9th & 10th May vandalism after arrested of Imran Khan by National Accountability Bureau. Similarly, PHC has confirmed interim bail of former MPA Zahir Shah Toru, while stopped his arrest and ordered submission of record of cases registered against the applicant. The counsel argued that former MPA was nominated in several cases after 9th May following arrest of Imran Khan by NAB in corruption charges while Zahir Shah Toru has nothing to do with the vandalism.

Siraj calls for constituting national commission on minority affairs

F.P. Report

LAHORE: Ameer Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) Sirajul Haq has called for the establishment of a national commission dedicated to minority affairs.

While speaking to the media after chairing a "Peace Conference" at Mansoorah on Thursday, he said that this commission's primary purpose would be to safeguard the rights of minority religious groups, including Hindus, Christians, Sikhs, and others.

Sirajul Haq said the JI plans to hold a national convention for minorities in Islamabad this coming September. The goal of this convention, he added, is to formulate comprehensive

recommendations concerning the rights of the minorities.

The event, organized by the JI's Punjab central chapter, attended by the leaders from various minority groups. They condemned the recent incidents in Jarnawala including the burning of Holy Quran, demanding transparent inquiry into all.

Emphasizing the gravity of the situation, the JI Chief labeled the incident as a deliberate plot aimed at sowing discord and disrupting peace and order. He raised concerns about the actions of both the local police and administration during the outbreak of mob violence, stressing that their handling of the situation had

been questionable at best. He further asserted that these events were orchestrated to tarnish the nation's identity. In light of the violence, he also praised the locals who provided shelter to elderly and young members of the Christian community.

Pointing to a broader perspective, Sirajul Haq highlighted the presence of Islamophobia in the Western world, which he noted was deeply hurting the sentiments of millions of Muslims globally. However, he firmly stated that no one should be allowed to inflict harm on non-Muslim communities residing within Islamic countries, especially in light of the incidents in Europe.

River Sutlej flood level may further rise

LAHORE (PPI): River Sutlej flood level may further rise as the Met Office has forecast more monsoon showers until August 27, according to a report on Thursday.

The river is in high flood at Arifwala, Burewala, Chishtian, Minchanabad, Lodhran, Bahawalpur and Bahawalnagar, flooding adjoining villages and crops. The Punjab government has extended the summer vacations in the calamity-hit areas for an indefinite time period, while the evacuation of people continues. Fifty more villages are at risk of inundation in Arifwala, where hundreds of homes have already been washed away and crops grown over thousands of acres of land have been inundated.

Rescue 1122 and Pakistan Army personnel continues to shift stranded people to safe places. Exodus of people at an unprecedented level has been witnessed in Bahawalnagar where River Sutlej has washed away several embankments and inundated villages and crops. So far over 100,000 people have been shifted to safe places. Hundreds of villages and hundreds of acres of agricultural land have been flooded at Chishtian as 90,000 cusecs of water in River Sutlej has left a trail of destruction behind. Roads have also been washed away due to which people have been left stranded and completely cut off from their surrounding areas.

Faced with food shortage, people have been forced to shift to safe areas on their own as nobody from the administration has so far come to their rescue. Residents have complained that while their homes have been destroyed, cattle have been killed and they have lost all their belongings as well, the administration is acting like a mute spectator.