

2 policemen killed in Lakki  
F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Two police men killed and three injured in attack on police mobile van of Pezo Police Station in district Lakki Marwat on Monday, said police. Among those who were killed, Bashir Khan and Saif Ali Khan while Asmatullah, Imdad, and Inamullah were injured in the firing. The police vehicle targeted in the attack was on a routine patrol.

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ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chairing the 4th apex committee meeting of the Special Investment Facilitation Council.

Toshakhana case

# IHC to announce judgment today

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday has reserved a verdict on Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Chairman Imran Khan's plea seeking suspension of sentence by the trial court's Additional District and Sessions Judge (ADSJ) Humayun Dilawar in the Toshakhana case.

A two-member bench, comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, conducted the hearing, with Election Commission of Pakistan's lawyer, Amjad Parvez, who wasn't able to appear before the court due to ill health at the last hearing on Friday, presented his arguments in the case. The IHC will announce the verdict today (Tuesday) at 11am.

Last week, the court had adjourned the hearing till Monday (today) on the request of his assistant counsel and ordered the ECP counsel to present arguments today. It had also directed the electoral authority to make alterna-

tive arrangements due to the unavailability of the lawyer. PTI lawyer, Latif Khosa, completed his arguments in the last hearing. Earlier this month, a trial court had sentence Khan to three-year in prison and imposed a fine of Rs100,000 earlier this month.

Khan challenged the verdict and approached the IHC for his release and suspension of the conviction. ECP, meanwhile, had filed a private complaint against Khan in the same case. 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.

A reference was forwarded by National Assembly Speaker Raja Pervez Ashraf to the Election Commission asking it to probe the matter. In October 2022, the electoral body also declared the former premier guilty of corrupt practices and filed a complaint in an Islamabad court.

## Ministry finalizes proposal on electricity bills: Solangi

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Monday said that the Ministry of Energy had finalized recommendations related to the electricity bills.

The recommendations were finalized in a high-level meeting held at the Ministry of Energy, the minister said while posting a news release of the ministry on X (formerly known as Twitter). According to his post, the recommendations would be forwarded to the Federal Cabinet, scheduled to meet on Tuesday, for approval.

## Inflated power bills: Protests continue

KARACHI (INP): People across the country are protesting against the inflated electricity bills to assert pressure on the government for relief. The protesting masses have been demanding that the government should end the provision of free electricity to the notables and provide them relief as the bills they have been receiving are more than their salaries.

Protest demonstrations were held in several parts of Karachi. Masses carrying banners and placards along with their children criticized the government for making their lives miserable. People staged protest demonstrations in Karachi's area of Ayesha Manzil, Korangi, Five Star Chowrangi, Yaseenabad, Labour Square and others. The enraged people set their electricity bills on fire.

Pakistan People's Party (PPP) and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) have announced protest demonstrations against the inflated electricity bills. It may be noted that Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar on Sunday chaired an emergency meeting at the Prime Minister's House and discussed the issue of rising power bills.

## Qureshi's remand extended

ISLAMABAD (INP) A special court on Monday granted the Federal Investigation Agency (FIA) another two-day physical remand of PTI leader Shah Mahmood Qureshi in cipher case. Earlier, he was remanded in FIA custody for three days in the same case.

Qureshi was produced before the Official Secrets Act court. The FIA prosecutor, Zulfiqar Naqvi sought another five-day physical remand Qureshi to further investigate him in the case.

After hearing arguments from the both sides, judge Abi al Hasanat Zulqernain remarked that no more physical remand would be given if the FIA prosecution failed to make any headway in the case. Later, the judge extended the PTI leader's two-day remand.

# The Frontier Post

PTI rally organisers booked

KARACHI (INP): Seven cases were registered on Monday against those who took out a rally of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) in Karachi. The cases were registered at Malir, Korangi, Sharqi, Malir city, Khokhrapar, Tipu Sultan, Brigade, Soldier Bazaar and Bahadurabad police stations. Provisions such as violating Section 144 and spreading disorder were included in the cases.

## Special Investment Facilitation Council

# PM directs to accelerate execution of identified projects

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar on Monday directed the authorities concerned to accelerate the realisation of identified projects by capitalising enabling environment, already achieved through Special Investment Facilitation Council (SIFC).

The prime minister was chairing the 4th Apex Committee Meeting of SIFC - the inaugural meeting under the caretaker government - to continue positive impetus under the Council.

The meeting was attended by Chief of Army Staff, entire federal cabinet, chief ministers, provincial ministers and high-level government officials. The meeting was given a wholesome review of SIFC initiatives, encompassing progress in key areas and benchmarks achieved thus far in a short span of time.

Prime Minister Kakar appreciated the efficient functioning of SIFC through a collaborative "Whole of Government Approach" for achieving horizontal and vertical synergy. The Apex Committee appreciated SIFC's outreach strategy to achieve global traction and ongoing engagements with brotherly/friendly countries including productive visits of high-

level delegations from the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Islamic Organization for Food Security (IOFS).

The Apex Committee expressed confidence on SIFC initiatives and displayed its resolve and support in maintaining positive trajectory towards the revival of country's economy. The body also endorsed the projects, approved by the previous government, for attracting investments in key sectors of agriculture, livestock, mining, minerals, information technology and energy. The Army Chief reaffirmed Pakistan Army's all-out support to the caretaker government for continuity of policies in a bid to revive country's economy and steer Pakistan towards progress and prosperity.

PM, Lord Aamer Saifraz discuss ways to enhance Pak-UK ties:

Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar held a meeting with Member of House of Lords of British Parliament Lord Aamer Saifraz and discussed matters of mutual interest. They discussed ways to expand cooperation between the two countries in trade, investment, developmental planning and other fields.

The prime minister appreciated the services of Pakistanis living in Britain, particularly their contribution

to the British political system. He said the Pakistanis residing in Britain were playing an important role in further improving ties of Pakistan and the United Kingdom (UK). Lord Aamer Saifraz congratulated the prime minister for assuming the office and assured full cooperation from the British political leadership and the Pakistanis living in Britain.

Kakar rejoices Pakistan's first-ever silver medal clinch at World Athletics Championship: Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar expressed gratification over Pakistan's first ever silver medal clinch by Arshad Nadeem at the World Athletics Championship, 2023.

"What a day! What a moment of joy for Pakistan. Arshad Nadeem you've made the nation happy and proud for your excellent sportsmanship that won you-and the country-a silver medal at the World Athletics championship," he said on his social media account X (formerly known as twitter). Pakistan's javelin ace Arshad Nadeem won a silver medal in the Javelin Throw competition of the World Athletics Championship on Sunday in Hungary's capital Budapest. Nadeem made his best throw of 87.82m in his third attempt and secured the medal, a private news channel reported.

# IHC again orders sisters' meeting with PTI chief

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Monday heard the petition filed by the sisters of former prime minister and PTI Chairman Imran Khan for their meeting with their brother who is currently serving three-year prison term at District Jail, Attock in the Toshakhana reference since August 5.

Both Aleema Khan and Uzma Khan appeared before the court along with their lawyers Advocate Shiraz Ahmad Ranjha and Barrister Umair Niazi. Counsel for Imran's sisters, on the occasion, told the IHC Chief Justice (CJ) Justice Aamer Farooq that contrary to his order, dated August 18, 2023, that the PTI chairman should be allowed to meet with his sisters, no such meeting had been arranged so far.

The CJ, in reply, said that now he again ordered that both sisters should be allowed to meet their brother in the jail. Three days ago, on August 25, 2023 (Friday), both Aleema and Uzma, the sisters of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan, had moved the Islamabad High Court to meet their brother.

Aleema and Uzma had made the federation respondent in the petition They pleaded to the court to issue directives to the Federation to allow them to meet their brother. "We went to meet our brother in Attock jail on Thursday, but the superintendent did not allow us to meet him," the petitioners stated, praying to the court to issue directives to the superintendent in this connection. Talking to the media outside the IHC, Aleema said that four cases had been registered against her and six against Uzma. "We have packed our bags ... put us in jail also." But remember, she said, the PTI chief will not bow. "He has got time. He is reciting the holy Quran."

BHC disposes of lawyer murder case against Imran: Balochistan High Court has disposed of the lawyer murder case against PTI chief and former prime minister Imran Khan. A division bench consisting BHC Chief Justice Naem Akhtar Afghan and Justice Gul Hassan Tareen pronounced the ruling on a plea of the PTI chief against the case on Monday. The high court also quashed the FIR against Imran Khan also declared arrest warrants issued against him as "illegal".

Judicial Magistrate-I had issued non-bailable arrest warrants for Imran Khan in connection with the murder case of senior advocate Abdul Razzaq Shar while was lodged by a citizen on 5 March, 2023. Insaf Lawyers' Forum (ILF) lawyers had challenged the case and the arrest warrants in the Balochistan High

Court. Lawyer Abdul Razzaq Shar was on his way to the Balochistan High Court complex in Quetta when he was shot dead more than 10 times in his car by unknown gunmen. He had died instantly. Shar's son, Siraj Ahmed, filed the complaint against the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) leader, accusing the ex-premier of abetting murder, saying he believed his father was killed in connection with the case he had filed against Imran Khan. "My father filed a case against Imran Khan under Article 6, and I am certain this is why [Imran Khan] and his PTI people killed my father and spread terror," Ahmed said in the statement issued when he filed the case, adding that his father had received death threats after filing his petition against Imran Khan.

Before his death, Shar had filed a petition with the Balochistan High Court, seeking proceedings against the former prime minister under Article 6 of the Constitution, which is connected to charges of high treason. In his petition, Shar had argued that Imran Khan should be tried for treason due to his decision to dissolve the National Assembly in April last year to avoid a no-confidence motion meant to remove him as the prime minister.

# Imaan Mazari gets bail in sedition case

ISLAMABAD (INP): An Anti-Terrorism Court (ATC) in Islamabad on Monday granted post-arrest bail to human rights lawyer, Iman Mazari, in a case related to "interference in state affairs".

The ATC Judge Abu Al-Hasanat Zul-Qarnain, presided over the hearing and granted bail to human rights lawyer, Iman Mazari – in a sedition case related to the controversial speech against the state institutions – against surety bonds of Rs30,000. During the proceedings, the court read out the script of a speech given by Iman Mazari at a rally, which was a key point of contention in the case.

Meanwhile, the prosecution opposed it, highlighting that the report of the USB (Universal Serial Bus) containing the speech had not yet been received, and forensic examination

of the speech needed to be conducted. This case has garnered significant attention, and further developments are expected as the investigation continues.

Earlier to this, An anti-terrorism court (ATC) in Islamabad has sent human rights lawyer Imaan Mazari to Adiala Jail on judicial remand after rejecting a plea to extend her physical remand. The ATC heard the case against former federal minister Shireen Mazari's daughter and human rights lawyer Imaan Mazari related to the interference in state affairs.

Police produced Imaan Mazari before the court. The prosecutor apprised the court that they conducted voice matching and photogrammetry tests of the accused. He added that they are due to recover the transcripts of her written speeches. Later, the court rejected the plea for an

extension in physical remand of the accused lawyer and sent her to the Adiala Jail on judicial remand.

LHC bench hearing bail petitions of Khadija Shah, Alia Hamza dissolved: The Lahore High Court bench hearing the bail applications of Khadija Shah, Alia Hamza and others has been dissolved on Monday. The accused were arrested in connection with the May 9 incidents.

The LHC bench comprising Justice Waheed Khan and Justice Sultan Tanveer was set to hear the bail application of the women including Khadija Shah and Alia Hamza and others. Owing to dissolution of the bench, the bail applications of the accused women could not be heard. The court adjourned the bail applications proceedings for an indefinite period.

## IHC bars arrests of Afridi, Shandana

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) issued an order on Monday instructing authorities to refrain from arresting PTI leaders Shehryar Afridi and Shandana Gulzar within the premises of Islamabad.

On August 16, the high court permitted PTI leaders Shehryar Afridi and Shandana Gulzar to return home as it entertained their pleas against their prolonged detentions under the Maintenance of Public Order (MPO) ordinance. The two leaders had been arrested by the police in connection with the violence that occurred on May 9.

The court stated that it would charge Irfan Nawaz Memon, the Deputy Commissioner (DC) of the city, and a senior superintendent of police (SSP) with contempt of court. On Monday, the court put a stop to the arrest of both leaders within the premises of Islamabad and extended the suspension of the MPO order until September 6.

During the proceedings, the State Council requested an adjournment of the case for today. Justice Babar Sattar remarked that he only has jurisdiction within Islamabad and wouldn't be able to intervene if anything happens outside of it. He further added that the chief commissioner and IG would also not be held responsible.

Irfan Nawaz Memon, the DC of Islamabad, informed the court that there are orders from various courts, hence the details are not presently available. He assured that the report would be submitted shortly. Subsequently, the court postponed the indictment proceedings of DC Islamabad and SS operations until September 7.

## Moonis Elahi calls for reconciliation

LONDON (Agencies): Moonis Elahi son of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf President Pervez Elahi has said reconciliation with the PTI chief is the way to move Pakistan forward from current political and economic turmoil.

This he said in an informal interaction with the journalists in London. The former MNA said Shehbaz Sharif had the opportunity to serve the masses but failed to deliver. Replying to a question, Moonis Elahi said former prime minister Shehbaz Sharif and former finance minister Ishaq Dar remained successful in their 'goals'.

# Court vacates' contractors bail pleas in BRT scam

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Accountability Court Peshawar Judge Safi Ullah Jan has vacated interim bails of two contractor-brothers allegedly involved in embezzlement in Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project, on Monday.

Special Prosecutor National Accountability Bureau (NAB) Rooh Ullah Jan informed that Amir Lateef and Imran Lateef had made practices in the BRT project while the bureau has initiated an inquiry against them in this regard.

The petitioners approached for interim bail while honorable court accepted their plea on 21st June 2023 and stopped NAB from their arrest as well as directed to appear in the inquiry. The applicants also obtained relief from Peshawar High Court, stop-

ping their arrest till 25th September.

However, NAB special prosecutor Rooh Ullah opposed their plea and argued for vacating the interim relief while Accountability Court has turnaround bail plea.

PHC transfers PTI's members cases to Mingora bench: PHC has transferred former MPA Fazal Hakeem and City Mayor Shahid Ali interim bail pleas to Mingora bench for hearing, on Monday. The counsel Muhammad Inam Khan advocate argued that First Information Report was registered against petitioners for holding rally on 14th August in accordance with Independence Day celebration.

Additional Advocate General Danyal Asad Chamkani argued that section-144 was imposed on 14th August and holding of

gathering and rallies were banned. PHC has stopped arrest of former MPA Fazal Hakeem and City Mayor Shahid Ali till 6th September while ordered to appear before Mingora Bench on next hearing.

Similarly, PHC has adjourned hearing due to unavailability of record in former Advisor Abdul Kareem plea seeking to obtain his two mobiles from Anti-corruption custody.

The counsel Shah Faisal Ottomankhel advocate argued that Anti-corruption has took vehicle and two mobiles from former Advisor into their custody while the car has returned but the cell phone wasn't returned to the petitioner. However, PHC has ordered Anti-corruption to produce records regarding cell phones on the next date to be fixed.





**ISLAMABAD:** The United States Institute of Peace (USIP), in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy's Office of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INLE), proudly announces the successful culmination of the three-year \$3.5 million Police Awam Saath Saath Program.

## First Lady for creating awareness on health issues

KARACHI (APP): First Lady Begum Samina Alvi on Monday called for creating awareness on health and socio-economic issues, particularly the high mortality rate due to breast cancer, the neglected issue of mental health, and well-being and the rights of persons with disabilities.

She urged teachers, students, mediapersons, and health professionals to play their proactive role in that regard which would help create an equitable and inclusive society, she added. The first lady was speaking at an Interactive Dialogue on Breast Cancer, the

Rights of Persons with Disabilities (PWDs) and Mental Health Issues, organized by the World Health Organization (WHO) at Hamdard University.

Besides experts from the fields of Oncology, Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and faculty members and students of Hamdard University, Technical Advisor from WHO, Head of WHO-Sindh, Chancellor Hamdard University, Vice Chancellor Hamdard University, Leading Medical Oncologist, and Head of Department (HoD) of

Psychiatry Dow University also attended the event. Begum Alvi said Pakistan had a high mortality rate in the South Asian region due to breast cancer, and numerous lives could be saved by diagnosing the disease at an early stage.

She stated that breast cancer was curable, provided it was diagnosed early. Besides having a balanced and healthy lifestyle, women must adopt the habit of a five-minute self-examination every month to detect the disease at early stages and seek medical help if they notice any lump or unusual change in their bodies, she added.

# Police Awam Saath Saath Program in Pakistan: a milestone in promoting gender equity within law enforcement

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: The United States Institute of Peace (USIP), in collaboration with the U.S. Embassy's Office of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement (INLE), proudly announces the successful culmination of the three-year \$3.5 million Police Awam Saath Saath Program. This program, aimed at enhancing the recruitment, retention, and empowerment of women police officers in Pakistan, is a milestone in promoting gender equity within law enforcement.

Throughout the event, attendees had access to informative exhibits showcasing the program's impact on increasing women's representation in the police force and making policing more citizen-centric. Notable accomplishments of the Police Awam Saath Saath Program include the revision and upgradation of training courses at the National Police Academy, an increase in women's representation in police force by over 20% in both KP and Balochistan through extensive support and training for women police aspirants, establishment of Women Police Councils, training of 1800 women police officers in Punjab as victim support officers, training of trans-victim support officers from 35 districts in Punjab on trauma-informed policing, and development of gender-sensitive policies and support mechanisms for women officers.

Addressing the audience, USIP's Country Director, Imran Khan, expressed his

satisfaction with the progress made through the program. "There is a pressing need to make substantial strides in women's empowerment within the policing domain. By empowering women within the police force, we are not only advancing gender equality but also enhancing the overall effectiveness of law enforcement."

Deputy Chief of Mission Andrew Schofer, representing the U.S. Embassy, reiterated the commitment of the United States to support efforts that promote inclusivity and justice. "To all of Pakistan's champions of women in policing, the United States stands with you. We will continue to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with you to increase the number of female officers, elevate their status, and to champion our common cause of peace, security, and justice for all." The event allowed USIP, INLE, local partners, various law enforcement agencies, and the Government of Pakistan to share lessons and

best practices over the last few years that played a piv-

otal role in integrating gender perspectives, mainstreaming

gender, and enhancing citizen-centric policing.

## اکرم خان درانی کالج بنوں

### داخلہ 2023-24

**ایف ایس سی فرسٹ ڈیویژن (پری میڈیکل، پری انجینئرنگ اینڈ کمپیوٹر سائنس)**

☆ آن لائن اپدائی کے لئے نیچے دیئے گئے لنک پر کلک کریں۔ یا داخلہ فارم کا پُر کرنا ہے۔ 600 روپے میں حاصل کر سکتے ہیں۔

☆ Manual پر مشتمل داخلہ فارم کے ساتھ 400 روپے کا پُر کرنا ہے۔ جس میں پیش قدمی کی جاتی ہے۔

☆ اپدائی کی آخری تاریخ 11 ستمبر 2023 ہے۔

☆ فرسٹ ڈیویژن کے طلباء کے لئے ہاسٹل کی سہولت ہے۔

☆ امیدواروں کا تحریری ٹیسٹ 14 ستمبر 2023 کو صبح 9 بجے کا پُر کرنا ہے۔

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PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Rasool Arif Khatrik with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Nazira citizen number 1420169504276 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Gul Khajhan (Son) 2. Muhammad Rasool Arif Khatrik (Son) 3. Mahmood Khan (Son) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Rasool Arif Khatrik with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Nazira citizen number 1420245139570 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Muhammad Irshad Khan (Daughter) 2. Aisha Bibi (Daughter) 3. Muhammad Ishaq (Son) 4. Muhammad Sadiq (Son) 5. Muhammad Saira (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Rasool Arif Khatrik with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Nazira citizen number 1420245139570 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Muhammad Irshad Khan (Daughter) 2. Aisha Bibi (Daughter) 3. Muhammad Ishaq (Son) 4. Muhammad Sadiq (Son) 5. Muhammad Saira (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Rasool Arif Khatrik with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Nazira citizen number 1420245139570 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Muhammad Irshad Khan (Daughter) 2. Aisha Bibi (Daughter) 3. Muhammad Ishaq (Son) 4. Muhammad Sadiq (Son) 5. Muhammad Saira (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA KARAK-SFU	INCHARGE SFU, NADRA KARAK-SFU	INCHARGE SFU, NADRA CHARSADDA-SFU	INCHARGE SFU, NADRA HARIPUR-SFU

PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE	PUBLIC NOTICE
Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Asif with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Bibi Zahira citizen number 1420242098464 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Shuaib Ur Rehman (Son) 2. Amna Bibi (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Asif with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Bibi Zahira citizen number 1420242098464 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Sarwat Yasmin (Daughter) 2. Muhammad Asif (Son) 3. Muhammad Imran Khan (Son) 4. Muhammad Rehman Khan (Daughter) 5. Sidra Tul Muntaha (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Asif with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Bibi Zahira citizen number 1420242098464 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Sarwat Yasmin (Daughter) 2. Muhammad Asif (Son) 3. Muhammad Imran Khan (Son) 4. Muhammad Rehman Khan (Daughter) 5. Sidra Tul Muntaha (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Asif with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Bibi Zahira citizen number 1420242098464 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Sarwat Yasmin (Daughter) 2. Muhammad Asif (Son) 3. Muhammad Imran Khan (Son) 4. Muhammad Rehman Khan (Daughter) 5. Sidra Tul Muntaha (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
INCHARGE SFU, NADRA KARAK-SFU	INCHARGE SFU, NADRA DI KHAN-SFU	INCHARGE SFU, NADRA ABBOTABAD-SFU	INCHARGE SFU, NADRA KARAK-SFU

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F.P. Report

TANDO JAM: Former Information Minister, Sharjeel Inam Memon, met with constituents at Rawal House Rahuki, Tando Jam.

During the meeting, the constituents thanked the former provincial minister Sharjeel Inam Memon for initiating and completing various development projects.

On this occasion, the

area's residents informed former provincial minister Sharjeel Inam Memon about the challenges they were facing.

Sharjeel Inam Memon assured the people that their issues would be resolved as soon as possible.

He stated that the People's Party would achieve success in the upcoming elections as well, as it's the only party capable of meeting the people's expectations.

## Governor Punjab for preserving cultural heritage of Uch Sharif

LAHORE (APP): Punjab Governor Muhammad Balighur Rehman has called upon the government and non governmental organizations to play their role in preserving, protecting cultural heritage of historic Uch Sharif besides promoting tourism in the city.

The Governor Punjab was talking to Chairman Bahawalpur Heritage Organization Engr. G. A. Farooq and Niaz Hussain Lakhwera who called on him at the Governor's House here on Monday.

Balighur Rehman

hailed services of Bahawalpur Heritage organization in promoting cultural heritage of Uch Sharif.

Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman further said Uch Sharif is home to one of the ancient cultures in the country, and it must be preserved. He said Uch Sharif is full of prospects of religious tourism for its affinity with Alexander the Great and a seat of Sufis and Saints between the 12th and 15th century.

Earlier, a delegation of All Pakistan Crockery Importers Association called on Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman.

During the meeting, the delegation apprised the Governor about various problems faced by them. Speaking on this occa-

sion, Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman said despite difficult conditions, the business community is playing an active role in the country's economic development.

The Governor Punjab said all businesses are very important even if it is a small shop. He said that business not only leads to socio-economic development but also provides employment opportunities to millions of people. He further said the government is well aware of the problems of the business community, and steps are being taken to provide them with a conducive environment.

On this occasion, the representatives of Crockery Association told the Governor Punjab that Pakistan Customs has increased the customs duty on crockery by 110%, due to which the smuggled goods are being sold at half price in the market. He said due to this, the government is losing billions of rupees annually in tax collection.

The Governor Punjab assured the delegation that he would draw the attention of the federal government towards this matter. President Ansar Saeed Butt, Vice President Malik Imran, Abid Khan, Sheikh Arsalan and Khawaja Wasif and others were present in the meeting.

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Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Shuaib Ur Rehman with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Ms. Bibi Zahira citizen number 1420242098464 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Shuaib Ur Rehman (Son) 2. Amna Bibi (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Asif with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Riaz Hussain Khan citizen number 1210185094177 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Sarwat Yasmin (Daughter) 2. Muhammad Asif (Son) 3. Muhammad Imran Khan (Son) 4. Muhammad Rehman Khan (Daughter) 5. Sidra Tul Muntaha (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Asif with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Riaz Hussain Khan citizen number 1210185094177 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Sarwat Yasmin (Daughter) 2. Muhammad Asif (Son) 3. Muhammad Imran Khan (Son) 4. Muhammad Rehman Khan (Daughter) 5. Sidra Tul Muntaha (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.	Application for issuance of Letter of Administration / Succession Certificate by Mr. Muhammad Asif with regards to moveable & immovable assets of deceased Mr. Riaz Hussain Khan citizen number 1210185094177 has been received. Following are declared as legal heirs. 1. Sarwat Yasmin (Daughter) 2. Muhammad Asif (Son) 3. Muhammad Imran Khan (Son) 4. Muhammad Rehman Khan (Daughter) 5. Sidra Tul Muntaha (Daughter) On the above application the objections of public at large are invited. Any aggrieved person may approach in person the undersigned for submission of objection (if any) within fourteen (14) days after publication of this notice.
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## QWP to hold protest against inflated electricity bills

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) has announced that it would hold protest demonstrations all over the province against the inflated electricity bills.

This was decided at a meeting with QWP provincial Chairman Sikandar Hayat Khan in the chair.

QWP leaders Hashim Babar, Tariq Ahmad Khan, Dr Farooq Afzal, Shakil Waheedullah Khan, Haji Fakhar Zaman and others attended the meeting at Watan Kor in Peshawar.

The meeting decided that the first protest demonstration would take

place outside the Peshawar Press Club on this Thursday followed by more rallies in the other parts of the province.

Speaking at the meeting, QWP leader Sikandar Sherpao said that the people were already facing record inflation so they were unable to pay the inflated electricity bills.

He demanded the government to provide relief to the people by lowering the power tariff and taking steps to end the line losses.

The Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) leader said that the unprecedented increase in the electricity tariff had made life a living hell for the people from the down-

trodden segments of the society.

Asking the caretaker government to provide relief to the people in the face of skyrocketing inflation, the Qaumi Watan Party (QWP) leader maintained that rising prices of the daily use items had squeezed the purchasing power of the commoners.

He said that rising US dollar rate, the unprecedented increase in POL and electricity prices had created a host of problems for the have-nots.

“The people are also facing the brunt of prolonged power cuts in the hot and humid summer days,” he remarked.

## Police arrests 12 POs F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: As many as 98 alleged culprits including 12 proclaimed offenders as well as three Afghans were arrested during last 20 in the premises of Badabheer police station.

This was disclosed by SHO Badabheer Nasir Khattak while talking to media personnel. He added that PO named Sakhawat Shah has also arrested along with weapon who is allegedly involved in land grabbing and murders.

Police has arrested 12 POs, 86 others culprits allegedly involved in crimes and three Afghan nationals for living in Pakistan without legal documentation.

Police recovered 3 rifles, 6 Kalashnikovs, more than 12 kilos Hashish & Ice-drug collectively, 26 pistols and 360 bullets.

## Earthquake jolts upper KP

PESHAWAR (APP): A 5-magnitude earthquake on International Richter Scale jolted the upper parts of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, here Monday morning.

The epicenter of earthquake was in the mountainous range of Koh e Hindukush with 184 km in depth. The tremors were felt in Chitral, Dir Lower and Upper, Bajaur, Batkhela and surrounding areas.

Stampedes also occurred in some of the schools of Dir Lower, however, no loss of life or property was reported from any area.



PESHAWAR: Central leader of Awami National Party Haji Ghulam Ahmad Bilour talking to media during a protest against inflated electricity bills. — F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

## Recycling and Tourist Awareness Initiative kicks-off

### F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The Recycling and Tourist Awareness Initiative has been kick-off across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to ensure maximum utilization of resources for fighting climate change and global warming.

The initiative is sponsored by PepsiCo, through its flagship potato chip brand Lay's which has partnered with the Kaghan Development Authority, Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to build sensitization on proper waste disposal practices and raise community awareness about sorting waste at source and the significance of recycling mechanisms among tourists. During the tourist-heavy summer sea-

son, Lay's is also collecting used packaging from the Northern areas of Pakistan and upcycling these into tote bags and sustainable fashion.

This initiative is in line with PepsiCo's pep+ (PepsiCo Positive) global sustainability agenda and is a component of the "Summer with Lay's" campaign, which combines the joy of snacking with the spirit of giving back to communities and promoting responsible tourism.

As part of this program, Lay's has installed waste collection bins in 12 key areas across mountainous regions, lakes, and tourist spots in partnership with the authority.

The discarded packaging collected in the bins is being gathered by

PepsiCo's long-standing recycling partner Green Earth Recycling and deposited with upcycling partner organization Dastan-e-Rumaan. At Dastan-e-Rumaan, artisans create woven tote bags with these cleaned wrappers, on handlooms. This upcycling effort also helps support women entrepreneurship and enables income-generating activities.

Mohammad Khosa, Senior Commercial Director Foods at PepsiCo Pakistan, said, "PepsiCo is committed to the advancing circular economy for plastics through collection and recycling efforts with our recycling partners. Our pep+ (PepsiCo Positive) agenda is focused on creating a world in which plastic never has to become waste.

## SSP for facilitating downtrodden sections of society

PESHAWAR (APP): The newly appointed SSP Operations Kashif Aftab Abbasi visited various police stations Yakka Tut Police Station, Tarnab check post and Motorway Blockade late at night and reviewed the working of police staff at various police stations and the overall security situation.

He instructed the police officials to facilitate the downtrodden sections of the society in the provision of justice, adding that the aim of his late-night visit was to motivate the police personnel to further improve the security arrangements.

He instructed the police officials deployed at different check-posts to use safety helmets and jackets in view of the current situation.

On the occasion, the SSP met with the relevant police officers and checked cleanliness and other arrangements at police stations including crime chat, personnel statement, records, Malkhana, prison, registers and CCTV cameras.

He also met with the complainants and inmates at police stations and asked about their issues and facilities at the police stations.

The SSP Operation also supervised the police checking at Motorway picket and directed the staff to remain polite with the people.

## Hot, humid weather likely in KP

PESHAWAR (APP): The Provincial Meteorological Center Peshawar on Monday predicted that mainly hot, humid and partly cloudy weather is expected over most districts of the province.

However, it said that scattered rain-thunderstorm associated with gusty winds is likely to occur over Abbottabad, Haripur, Mansehra, Kohistan, Battagram, Torghar, Shangla, Upper & lower Dir, Swat, Malakand, Buner and Chitral districts.

Isolated rain-thunderstorms associated with gusty winds are also likely to occur over Mardan, Swabi, Mohmand, Bajaur, Nowshera, Charsadda, Peshawar, Khyber, Kohat, Orakzai and Kurram districts.

During the last 24 hours, hot, humid and partly cloudy weather prevailed in most districts of the province. However, rain-thunderstorms with gusty winds occurred in Kohistan, Dir, Swat, Abbottabad and Chitral districts.

Rain recorded (in mm): Pattan 18, Kalam & Kakul 03(each) Dir & Mirkhani 02 (each), Drosh & Malam Jabba 01 (each).

The maximum and minimum temperatures recorded in centigrade at different stations of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa were Peshawar City 37/23, Chitral 32/14, Timergara 34/23, Dir 30/15, Mirkhani 36/17, Kalam 23/07, Drosh 34/19, Saidu Sharif 32/20, Pattan 35/21, Malam Jabba 21/13, Takht Bhai 35/22, Kakul 29/18, Balakot 34/20, Parachinar 29/15, Bannu 37/25, Cherat 29/16, D.I. Khan 39/27.

The highest temperature recorded in the province was 39°C in Dera Ismail Khan.



PESHAWAR: Home Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Abid Majeed meeting with Caretaker Minister Irshad Qaisar.

## Overwhelming victory of independent candidates in LG poll

PESHAWAR (APP): The independent candidates in the local government by-election in 21 districts of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) defeated the candidates of major political parties by securing an overwhelming lead in the polls, revealed the results announced by the election commission on Monday.

According to election

results, PTI candidates secured 14 seats in the by-polls followed by JUI with six seats, Jamaat Islami with five, Awami National Party with four, PPP two, and TLP one.

The elections were held on a total of 72 local body seats including 65 villages and neighborhoods of 21 districts in the province.

In Peshawar, PTI candi-

dates secured four seats out of a total of six neighborhood and village councils while JUIF and ANP candidates clinched one seat each.

The election commission had set up 256 polling stations in 21 districts of the province including 102 for males, 89 for females, and 65 joint stations.

The Election

Commission had declared 156 polling stations most sensitive, 84 sensitive, and 13 normal, however, the elections were concluded peacefully at all the polling stations.

According to the election commission, there were a total of 385,835 registered voters including 208,964 male and 176,871 female voters.

## Commissioner directs DCs to complete pending mutation cases

PESHAWAR (APP): Commissioner Malakand Division, Shahidullah Khan directed all the Deputy Commissioners to complete the pending mutation cases through the concerned Tehsildars well on time and also give them recovery targets.

He issued these directives while presiding over a meeting regarding the achievement of revenue targets and government obligations in the districts at the Commissioner's Office, Saidu Sharif, Swat on Monday.

Additional Commissioner Malakand Division

Abdul Kabir Khan along with Deputy Commissioners and Deputy Directors Computerization Land Record Swat and Shangla from the districts of Malakand Division participated in the meeting.

The meeting was briefed on the progress in achieving the revenue targets and government dues in the districts and the functioning of the Service Delivery Centres.

The Commissioner Malakand Division Shahidullah Khan appreciated the overall performance of the districts and directed the revenue officers to improve

their performance to the given targets to achieve the revenue targets. He further directed all Deputy Commissioners to complete pending land acquisition cases as soon as possible.

Commissioner Malakand Division while appreciating Deputy Director Computerization Land Records Swat and Shangla for making service delivery centres operational in time, directed the concerned DC Swat to provide staff for the functioning of the rest of the centres.

Commissioner Malakand Division Shahidullah

Khan issued orders to the DC Malakand to take steps to get permission of the Election Commission of Pakistan for the recruitment of Patwari for the settlement operation in his district so that the settlement operation could be completed on time.

## Power suspension notified

PESHAWAR (APP): Peshawar Electric Supply Company (Pesco) on Monday notified that due to maintenance work power supply will remain suspended from Abbottabad Grid Station on 29th and 31st August from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m.

Consequently, it said that consumers of Banda Pir Khan, APS, Jannah Abad, Mandayan, SIE, Comsats University, and INOR feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will also remain suspended from Balakot Grid Station on 30th and 31st August from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. resultantly consumers of Ghari Habib Ullah, Jahangai and Tanawal feeders will face inconvenience.

Moreover, the power supply will remain suspended from Haripur Grid Station on 29th August from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. resultantly consumers of Panian 1,2, Kot 1,2, Chamba, Zebpharma, PIDC, Phosphate, KTS 1,2, Swabi Mera 1,2, Town 1,2,3,4,5, SNK, Judicial Complex, SIRYA and Bakldher feeders will face inconvenience.

The power supply will remain suspended from Mansehra Grid Station on 30th and 31st August from 7 a.m. to 12 p.m. resultantly consumers of Ghazikot, Ahsan Shaheed, City 1,2, Qalandar Abad, Attar Sheeha, Shaheen Shaheed, Lasain Nawab, City 3, Murad Pur, Khaki and Shankari feeders will face inconvenience.



PESHAWAR: Vendor selling and displaying used toys to attract customers at Sahi Katha.

## Massive fraud exposed in Peshawar valley housing society

PESHAWAR (APP): Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar, Shah Fahad, unveiled a large-scale fraud within the Peshawar Valley housing society.

In a statement released on Monday, he revealed that 1,375 kanals of land had been fraudulently transferred.

Assistant Commissioner Rao Hashim conducted an

inquiry into public complaints, verifying the deceitful transfer.

The DC further announced the annulment of the fake land transfer and the suspension of three revenue officials involved in the falsified transaction.

He recommended the dismissal of officials implicated in the fraudulent

transfer and suggested legal action.

Over the last six months, 13 officials have been suspended due to corruption, while 5 others have been dismissed.

He emphasized that no leniency would be extended to officials involved in fraud, and those found guilty would face termination from their positions.





## In brief

### Chitral woman jumps in river F.P. Report

CHITRAL: A disheartened woman who could not bear the news of her husband's sudden death, ended her life by jumping in River Chitral here, police said on Monday. Police said the incident occurred in Kooghzi area where a man Barkat Ullah who was a heart patient, died in the fields after suffering a heart attack. The wife of the deceased Barkatullah, when received the gloomy news at home, could not bear the grief and ended her life by jumping in River Chitral. The rescue team, when received information, started a search for the woman's body in the river. The team later recovered the body from Joti Lasht area of Chitral Town. Body of the woman was later handed over to heirs after completion of legal formalities. Moving scenes were witnessed during the funerals when two coffins were brought out for burial.

### RPO Malakand takes charge F.P. Report

MALAKAND: Newly appointed Regional Police Officer (RPO) Malakand, Muhammad Ali Khan Gandapur on Monday took charge of his assignments at RPO office Saidu Sharif, Swat. According RPO Office, on arrival to the office, the newly appointed RPO, Muhammad Ali Khan Gandapur was presented a salute by a smartly turned out contingent of the police. On the occasion DPO Swat, Shafiullah Gandapur, SP Lower Swat Ghulam Sadiq, SP Traffic Wardens Swat, Badshah Hazrat, DSP Headquarters Swat, Naeem Khan, Office Superintendent, Amjad Ali and police officers were present. The RPO Malakand held a detailed meeting with staff and later met with C o m m i s s i o n e r Malakand Division, Shahid Ullah Khan at his office. The commissioner congratulated the newly appointed RPO Malakand on assuming his responsibilities.

### CTD arrests two terrorists

HYDERABAD (INP): The Counter-Terrorism Department (CTD) Hyderabad personnel carried an operation in Sikandarabad Colony in Jamshoro on Sunday night and arrested two alleged terrorists associated with a banned outfit. According to a CTD spokesperson, the arrested terrorists were identified as Muhammad Ameen Solangi and Ayaz Khan. He said that the arrested terrorists were planning to target vehicles of law enforcement agencies. The CTD personnel also recovered explosive material, ball bearings, detonators, batteries, one 9mm and one 30 bore pistols from their possession. Further investigation is underway.

### Shutter down strike, protests

MANSEHRA (INP): Power consumers of district Mansehra annoyed over the inflated electricity bills observed shutter down strike besides holding district wide protests and rallies. Business centres, markets and trade activities of all kind remained suspended in Mansehra city, Oghi, Lassan Nawab, Jabbori, Baffa, Shinkari, Iechrian, Dhodial, Chattr Plain, Shergarh, Garhi Habibullah, Balkot and other areas. The trade leaders, religious scholars, local bodies representatives, lawyers, political and public leaders led the protest rallies across district. The protestors termed the increase in electricity bills as unjustified and malicious.

# Emergency response training sessions for girls' schools concluded



F.P. Report

MINGORA: In a ground-breaking initiative to promote disaster preparedness and ensure the safety of girls' education, and under the directions of Deputy Commissioner Swat, the FCDO funded Sub-National Governance (SNG) programme in collaboration with the District Government Swat has successfully concluded a series of mock exercises across six schools in as many days. These exercises aimed to bridge the gap in girls' education during disasters and enhance local-level risk management.

The initiative garnered substantial support from various stakeholders, including the District Administration Swat, Rescue 1122, civil defence, education department, Red Crescent Society and the Social Welfare Department. The six-day exercise series brought together educators, students, and disaster manage-

ment experts to equip them with crucial skills and knowledge to effectively navigate and respond to emergencies. Modules covered a range of topics, including disaster risk management, disaster preparedness tailored for girls, guidance for dealing with trauma, and first aid in schools. These comprehensive sessions aimed to empower participants with the tools they need to ensure the safety and continuation of education during challenging times.

The district administration lauded the dedication and efforts of SNG, Rescue 1122, Civil Defence, education department and the Social Welfare Department in orchestrating these exercises with precision and success.

"Under the directions of Deputy Commissioners Swat and Provincial Government these initiatives are undertaken, it is inspiring to witness the commitment shown by SNG, Rescue 1122, educa-

tion department, civil defence and the Social Welfare Department in conducting these exercises," stated the Additional Deputy Commissioner Relief and HR, Mr. Ibrar Wazir. "These efforts align with our shared goal of safeguarding education and preparing our communities to face unforeseen challenges."

SNG and its partners are dedicated to fostering inclusivity and preparedness in education, and this initiative marks a significant step towards achieving that mission. By prioritising disaster preparedness, the District Government Swat ensures that every girl has the opportunity to learn and thrive, irrespective of the circumstances.

The success of these mock exercises signifies the potential for replicating the approach in other educational institutions situated in disaster-prone areas, thus amplifying the impact of this crucial undertaking.

# Jilted lover shoots dead girl, father and brother

NAROWAL (INP): A man shot dead the girl he loved, her father and brother over failure to marry her in Narowal, police said on Monday. The incident took place in Mohalla Siddiqpur, police said.

On information, a heavy contingent of police reached the spot while the accused managed to escape from the scene. The police shifted the bodies of the deceased to District Headquarters (DHQ) Hospital. "Hamza had illicit relations with Tehmina and wanted to marry her," the police said.

"Tehmina's parents, however, married her off to someone else which infuriated Hamza, and he shot Tehmina, her father and brother dead," they added. "The police have erected pickets across the district. The accused will be arrested soon," they stated. Meanwhile, the police

rounded up 16 suspects including two proclaimed offenders during an operation in Narowal district. The police also recovered a huge quantity of drugs and arms from the possession of the accused.

**Family seeks govt attention as Ravi sweeps away body of drowned boy into India:** As the body of a boy floated into Indian territory, his family is now urging the government to ensure its return to Pakistan as India's Border Security Force (BSF) confirmed the news to the Rangers.

It is reported that Hamza Khan, 15, and Hassam Ali, 14, had drowned while swimming in Baiein – rainwater drain – near Kotla Afghana village in Shakargarh tehsil on August 20. The rescuers had managed to retrieve the body of Hassam on the next day three kilometres

away from the place of drowning but could not find that of Hamza despite a three-day-long search operation.

A Rangers officer later contacted the family and obtained necessary information, including photos, for sharing the same with the Indian counterparts who said the boy had swept away into India by River Ravi flow. The rainwater drain Baiein falls into Ravi near Kartarpur, seven kilometres away from Kotla Afghana village, as the river enters India territory near Jassar and enters into a few kilometres.

But as the Indian BSF failed to hand over Hamza's body, his family has appealed to Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar and Chief of Army Staff Gen Asim Munir to take notice of the situation.

# Power bills: Traders' communities hold protest

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: Traders, area elders and civil society took to the streets against exorbitant power bills and demanded the government to immediately reverse its decision regarding the increased electricity tariff. The Lower Dir chamber of commerce and local traders' body jointly held a protest rally in front of the Timergara press club here the other day. The Participants, carrying banners and placards, chanted slogans against the government and Peshawar Electric Supply Company for sending unbearable power bills to the consumers.

Later on, speaking at a news conference, the chamber's president, Syed Noor Alam Bacha, president Anjuman Tajran Timergara Haji Anwarud Din, Liaq Zada and others com-

plained that the people were already suffering from record inflation and the government added to their miseries by increasing electricity tariff. They said the power consumers for the first time were burning their electricity bills across the country, so the government should realize the intensity and reverse its decision. The Talash Dushkhal Qaumi Islahi Jirga, a body of elders from four union councils of the area also announced to bring people onto the roads if the government did not withdraw its decision regarding increasing the power tariff on Tuesday next.

The announcement was made during a meeting held at Talash with the jirga president Ibrahim Khan in the chair. The participants asked the power consumers not to pay their power bills

until the government announced a reduction in the power tariff. The jirga also banned entry of all kinds of street vendors in the valley for a month and asked the villagers not to allow any outsider into their villages. The jirga demanded of the district police officer Lower Dir to take notice of the robbery cases in Talash and arrest the robbers soon.

The residents of Rabat also held a protest rally against the government and PESCO at Rabat here on Saturday evening. Hundreds of power consumers participated in the rally, where some of the consumers burnt their electricity bills publicly. The speakers asked the participants not to pay their bills as the poverty-stricken masses, according to them, were unable to feed their children in this situation.

## DSB in-charge embraces martyrdom in encounter F.P. Report

KARAK: District Security Branch (DSB) Karak In-charge Rahman Ullah martyred in exchange of firing with proclaimed offenders at Hakimbanda in the premises of Shah Salim police station. The martyred in-charge of District Security Branch was cremated with official honors at the police line Karak.

In the funeral, Regional Participation of police chief and district police chief. According to the details, district security branch Karak Rehmanullah Khattak was martyred in the firing of the advertisers during the encounter with the advertisers in Haki Banda area of Shah Salim Hudud police station of Karak district. Quarter Police Line Karak was performed with full official honors.

Regional Police Chief Kohat Division Sher Akbar Khan, District Police Chief Karak Sajjad Ahmed Khan, SP Investigation Asad Zubair Khan along with district administration and other senior police attended the martyr's funeral prayer. In addition to officers and officials, socio-political personalities of Karak District, Anjuman Traders and journalist community and a large number of people participated.

The body of the martyr was saluted by the armed forces of the police in the police line headquarters. Tribute to his bravery and courage by placing flower bouquets on his coffin. After the funeral prayer of the martyr was performed, the body of the martyr was sent to Dhand with official honors as his native place, where the martyr will be buried according to the regional customs. Shaheed Rehmanullah, in-charge of District Security Branch Karak, was considered among the most brave, fearless and courageous police officers who always performed his duties well and always fought against the criminal elements.

## AWKUM announces 50 scholarships F.P. Report

MARDAN: In a significant step towards empowering Afghan female students, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan (AWKUM) has announced the availability of 50 full funding scholarships for Afghan Female students, the relevant university officials told here on Monday.

These scholarships are open to female students at the intermediate (FSc/FA), and undergraduate levels. The meeting of the 7th Board of Management of the Welfare Endowment Fund was chaired by the Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Zahoar ul Haq. The session included Director Finance Dr. Shaista Irshad, Director Admissions Dr. Majid, Deputy Director Finance Afzal Humayun, and other officials.

In unanimous agreement during the session, Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan resolved to grant 50 scholarships to Afghan female students in the Fall Semester of 2023. Notably, the semester fees for these scholars will be fully waived. Vice Chancellor Professor Dr. Zahoar ul Haq stated, "This is a golden opportunity for Afghan female students to avail free education and scholarships."

Abdul Wali Khan University is dedicated and determined towards a bright future for its female students. Prospective candidates are encouraged to make the most of this scholarship opportunity and apply before the deadline. It should be noted that every fifth student at Abdul Wali Khan University Mardan is already on a scholarship, and more than 2,000 scholarships are already available.

ments had been set up to conduct fair and free elections. According to District Election Commissioner Shahid Ali, five polling stations had been established in both VCs among those three had been declared most sensitive. Two separate polling stations were also set up for the women voters, he said. Including 3827 women voters, a total of 8804 votes had been registered in two VCs, Shahid Ali said.

# Traders hold protest against rise in electricity tariffs

F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: Traders of Hafizabad staged protest demonstrations in front of Press Club Hafizabad against inflated electricity bills led by President Markazi Anjuman Tajran Sheikh Muhammad Amjad, Haji Muhammad Rafique Mughal, Hafiz Amanat Ali Ansari and General Secretary Malik Yasir Noor. The protester traders were raising slogans against unjustified increase in electricity tariff and taxes. They said that unbridled inflation has ruined our business due to purchasing capacity of consumers has ended.

They said we were going towards bankruptcies because number of consumers was decreasing day by day. They demanded the government to withdraw increase in electricity tariff and unjustified taxes otherwise they would compel to shut the business.

Meanwhile, Innocent children of a private school also taken out a rally to put off their shirts against inflated bills. Rana Maqsood Ahmad led the rally. Students said that inflated electricity bills have made our parents hand to mouth and parents unable to pay our fee and other educational expenditures. They also burnt electricity bills at Vanike Chowk.

**Anti-dengue seminar held:** District administration and district health authority Hafizabad held Anti-Dengue Seminar and taken out rally to create awareness among people to adopt preventive measures and implement on anti-dengue SOPs in the district. Deputy Commissioner Umar Farooq Warraich led the walk and presided over the seminar.

CEO health Umar Sharif Rathor, DHO Dr. Danish Sadique, DO Population Muhammad Atif Ali, officers and officials of different departments, civil society participated in the walk and seminar. While addressing the seminar, DC said that district administration and health department observed anti-dengue week in the district from 21 August to 26 August and different measures were taken to eliminate dengue larva from different places in the district during the week.

He said that all departments were making concerted efforts with the cooperation of people for saving people from dengue fever. CEO Health told that district Hafizabad was dengue free district. However, health department was established special anti-dengue wards at DHQ Hospital Hafizabad and THQ Hospital Pindi

Bhattian for likely dengue patients while all necessary medicines and other treatment facilities were available in the hospitals. He also said that special teams of health departments were engaged to check dengue larva and mosquitoes to visit door to door in cities and villages in the district.

**Anti-encroachment operation launched:** On the directions of the Chief Secretary Punjab Zahid Akhtar Zaman, anti-encroachment campaign has been launched, on Thursday. In this connection, under the supervision of Administrator MC Hafizabad Imtiaz Ali Baig, the staff of MC removed encroachment in different areas while yellow lines were marked on the roadside so that vegetable and fruit vendors refrain from crate hurdles in flow of traffic.

He said that due to grabbing roadsides by the vendors, not only traffic was used to halt but pedestrians particularly women and old people could not pass through bazaars and roads. The other hand, MC Pindi Bhattian was also started action against encroachment under supervision of Chief Officer Ikram Ullah Sandhu and removed encroachment from bazaars and roads of the city for providing relief to the people.

# Mohenjo Daro Airport non-operational from years

F.P. Report

LARKANA: The historical Mohenjo Daro Airport which was started by the PIA Department near Larkana, has been non-operational for the last five years due to the suspension of flights. While the business community of Aosta Muhammad district of Balochistan, including the districts of Larkana, Qamber Shahdaddkot, Shikarpur, Jacobabad, are facing severe losses, while there is no air ambulance in the Larkana division during emergencies.

All the deaths have occurred, which may threaten the ancient heritage of Moin Jo Daro in any way. The closed PIA offices in Larkana are being demanded to be called immediately. Moin Jo Daro Airport has been inactive for the last five years while flights have been stopped continuously. In this regard, civil society representatives Mazhar Ali, Haji Shafiq, Haji Nazir Ahmed and others said that the world's wonderful civilization and domestic and Moin Jo Daro

Airport has been established to introduce Moin Jo Daro to the scene of foreign tourists, which has been suspended for the past five years due to the government's indifference.

The number of tourists is decreasing due to the lack of travel facilities and the lack of interest among the tourists, who are looking desolate along with the airport. It should be noted that all the departments and staff are fully present at Moin Jo Daro Airport, but due to a misunderstanding by the PIA officers, the airport has been closed due to some unholy conspiracy. The Director of the Archeology Department, Shakir Hussain Shah, said that it is sad to say that flights to such a large archaeology have been continuously cancelled for the last five years, while the number of domestic and foreign tourists, researchers, students and scholars has decreased.

There has been a decrease in the number of tourists contacting foreign countries, who are now silent after the suspension

of flights, while e-mails and other communications are being deliberately delayed. The offices of Larkana should be activated by taking steps to make the Moin Jo Daro Airport functional so that tourists, business community, researchers, scholars and students from domestic and foreign regions can get benefit.

**Murderer convicted for lifetime imprisonment:** The Model Trial Court of Larkana sentenced the accused to life imprisonment and a fine of 1 million after being found guilty of murder. The accused shot and killed the resident Mohammad Raza Jatoti by refusing to park the motorcycle.

The hearing was held in the court of First Additional Sessions Judge Ayand and Judge Rashid Ali Dayo of the Model Trial Court. Accused Noor Muhammad Magzi was sentenced to life imprisonment and a fine of 10 lakhs, while if the fine amount is not paid, the accused will be kept in prison for six more months. The Central Jail was shifted to Larkana.

# Equipments against diseases demanded

F.P. Report

LAKKI MARWAT: Area people have asked the health department and its partners' organisation to provide them with insecticide mosquito nets so that they could keep themselves safe from malaria and other mosquito borne diseases. Talking to this scribe, they said that the surge in malaria cases was alarming as several urban and rural areas of the district had become hotspots of the disease.

"In view of the surge in malaria cases the insecticide mosquito nets are in high demand in Lakki Marwat district", said Nooran suffering from the disease. He said that the insecticide treated nets (ITNs) were the only effective tools to kill mosquitoes at homes and protect all inmates from the vector borne disease.

Another citizen said that the malaria incidence case rate was enough to prove that the disease prevailed in several parts of the district, posing a serious threat to the health and lives of locals, especially children and pregnant women. The prevalence of the mosquito-borne disease can be judged from the fact that there is hardly a house where a malaria-hit patient is not present", he added.

Local residents urged the

health authorities to speed up the process of provision of mosquito killer nets to citizens. "Besides aggravating the situation, any further delay in this regard can also invite the wrath of people, especially thousands of those suffering from the disease", they claimed.

According to statistics compiled by the health department, a total of 8611 malaria cases were reported during the first six months (Jan-June) of this year. Health officials blamed the increasing cases on rain induced flooding, incomplete treatment and people's failure to adopt precautionary measures against the disease.

But residents said that malaria incidence had increased both in urban and rural areas due to non-provision of long lasting insecticide nets to citizens by the health department. They said that people were also unaware of the effective use of nets and the usefulness of adherence to preventions.

Frontier Primary Health Care (FPHC) district coordinator Azmat Ali Shah said that his organisation with support of the health department would soon launch a door-to-door survey to collect data of individuals for provision of insecticide treated nets to them. "Along with provision of nets the organisa-

tion will arrange awareness sessions for the general public on their effective use at homes", he added. He said that people would also be sensitised about the usefulness of preventive steps against malaria.

District health officer (DHO) DR Abdugul said that free diagnostic and treatment for malaria-hit patients was available at the health facilities across the district. He said that his department with collaboration of other stakeholders had carried out fumigation in malaria hotspots to kill mosquitoes.

## Girl bike lifter takes away motorcycle

GUJRANWALA (INP): A female bike lifter took away a motorcycle parked outside a house in vicinity of Peoples Colony police station in Gujranwala on Monday.

According to video, a girl with satchel on shoulder posing as student could be seen unlocking the motorcycles. Earlier, she kept roaming the street to grab opportunity to steal the bike. As soon, she got opportunity, she skillfully unlocked the bike, lifted the two-wheeler and sped away. The police with the help of the footage, have started a search operation to arrest the suspect.





# Protests erupt in Libya over contact with Israel

TRIPOLI (BBC): Libya's PM has suspended his foreign minister after she met informally with her Israeli counterpart. Libya does not recognise Israel, as Tripoli backs the Palestinian cause, and the meeting has sparked protests. Israel's Eli Cohen described the meeting with Najla al-Mangoush as a historic first step in establishing relations. Israel is trying to build closer ties with more Arab and Muslim-majority countries, such as oil-rich Libya.

As well as suspending Ms Mangoush, Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Dbeibah referred her for investigation. Mr Cohen said he met Ms Mangoush last week on the sidelines of a summit in Rome, and they discussed "the great potential for the relations between the two countries". He said they covered Israeli aid in humanitarian issues, agriculture, water management and the importance of preserving Jewish heritage in Libya, including renovating synagogues and cemeteries. Libya's foreign ministry said Ms Mangoush had rejected a meeting with representatives from Israel, and what had taken place was "an unprepared, casual encounter during a meeting at Italy's foreign affairs ministry". A statement also said the interaction did not include "any discussions, agreements or consultations" and the ministry "renews its complete and absolute rejection of normalisation" with Israel.

Following reports of the informal meeting, protests broke out in the capital Tripoli and some other cities. Roads were blocked, tyres burnt and demonstrators waved the Palestinian flag, though the protests appear to have been relatively small. The pres-



idential council, which represents Libya's three provinces, said it was illegal to normalise relations with Israel. The Speaker's Office in parliament has accused Ms Mangoush of grand treason and called for an emergency session on Monday. Libya has been in turmoil for years, with the country split between the interim, internationally recognised government in Tripoli and a rival one in the east. Should any deal between Israel and Libya be brokered, it would be complicated by that political division, which has existed since the overthrow of long-time dictator Muammar Gaddafi 12 years ago. Gen Khalifa Haftar of the Libyan National Army (LNA) runs the rival government in the eastern coastal city of Tobruk. Israel's charm offensive began under the 2020 Abraham Accords, which seek to get countries which are hostile to Israel to recognise its sovereignty and establish diplomatic relations. So far, Israel has done this with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain,

Sudan and Morocco. However, the government of Benjamin Netanyahu has been criticised for West Bank settlement construction and military raids on suspected militant strongholds in the occupied Palestinian territories.

Libya's Presidential Council requested "clarification" from the government over what had happened. The Presidential Council carries out the functions of head of state and is in charge of the country's military. A letter from the body said the meeting between the two foreign ministers "does not reflect the foreign policy of the Libyan state, does not represent the Libyan national constants and is considered a violation of Libyan laws which criminalise normalisation with the 'Zionist entity'". It also asked Mr Dbeibah "to apply the law if the meeting took place". Under Gaddafi, who was a strong supporter of the Palestinian cause, thousands of Jews were expelled from Libya and many synagogues were destroyed.

## UN schools in Gaza begin school

GAZA (Reuters): Gaza's students began their new school term, but it is unclear if they will be able to complete the year uninterrupted due to a funding crisis at the United Nations' Palestinian refugee agency. The UN Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA) runs 288 schools in the Palestinian territory, among 700 across parts of the Middle East region that it funds alongside 140 medical clinics.

But it is short of nearly \$200 million needed to pay for staff salaries and keep the services running until the end of 2023. "We haven't secured all the funding we need to ensure that our schools can remain operational until the end of this year, so we are working on securing the funds needed to keep schools in Gaza open," said Thomas White, Gaza director of UNRWA's affairs.

White said some donor countries would hold discussion about funding for UNRWA in September. "In the event we don't get the funding, it is 298,000 students who might not be going to school. In Gaza, it is 1.2 million people who may not have access to health care," White told Reuters during a visit to one UN-run school in Gaza City. In addition to the \$200 million to support its operational budget in the wider region, UNRWA also needs \$75 million for food aid in Gaza.

Around two thirds of Gaza's 2.3 million population are refugees, mainly the descendants of those who fled or had been forced to flee their hometowns and villages around the 1948 war which saw the birth of the state of Israel. The UNRWA schools educate a little under half of Gaza's young people, with around 300,000 students at government-run schools and others at privately owned schools. In Nusseirat refugee camp in the central Gaza Strip, Palestinian refugee Sami Abu Mallouh, 47, said his family of 12 depended on UNRWA for education, medical treatment and food aid. "Without UNRWA we are worth nothing," Mallouh said.

## Canada concerned

OTTAWA (Reuters): Canada is concerned about the overall integrity of the system that educates hundreds of thousands of international students and not just the added pressure they put on housing, Immigration Minister Marc Miller said in an interview with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Canada is on track to bring in 900,000 international students this year, Miller said in the interview aired, which was more than at any point in history and roughly triple the number who entered the country a decade ago.

The university ecosystem that brings in foreign students "is very lucrative and it's come with some perverse effects, some fraud in the system. Some people taking advantage of what is seen to be a backdoor entry into Canada," Miller said. Private and public universities generate C\$20-C\$30 billion (\$14.7-\$22.1 billion) per year in revenue on those who come to study from abroad, Miller said. Canada is a popular destination for international students since it is relatively easy to obtain a work permit. "Some people are making a lot of money out of it legitimately, some people are gaming the system, and my principal concern is with that integrity of the system," he said.

Miller said his concern was not the public universities, but "principally the private colleges that have just ballooned in different parts of Canada". The opposition Conservative Party has repeatedly attacked Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's government for failing to solve the housing squeeze.

The housing minister recently said the government is mulling whether to cap the number of students allowed in each year as a way of easing the housing crunch, but Miller was skeptical. "Just putting a hard cap, which got a lot of public play over the last few days, is not the only solution to this," Miller said.

# North Korea to allow its citizens abroad to return home

SEOUL (AP): North Korea said it will allow its citizens staying abroad to return home in line with easing pandemic situations worldwide, as the country slowly eases its draconian coronavirus restrictions. In a brief statement carried by state media, the State Emergency Epidemic Prevention Headquarters said those returning to North Korea will be put in quarantine for a week for "proper medical observation."

The statement didn't elaborate. But analysts predicted the announcement would lead to the return of North Korean students, workers and others who have had to stay abroad, mostly in China and Russia, because of the pandemic. The workers are a key source of foreign income for the country. North Korea banned tourists, jetted out diplomats and severely curtailed border traffic and trade after the pandemic began.

The lockdown has further worsened the North's chronic economic difficulties and food insecurity. Earlier this month, South Korea's spy agency said

North Korea was preparing to further reopen its borders gradually in a bid to revive its economy.

A North Korean commercial jet landed in Beijing in what was the North's first such commercial international flight known to leave the country in about 3½ years. The plane returned from Beijing later in the day, but it wasn't known who was aboard it. Earlier in August, a group of North Korean taekwondo athletes and officials traveled by land to Beijing and then took a flight to Kazakhstan to participate in an international competition. The group of around 80 men and women wearing white track suits with the North Korean flag on the front were seen in the departure hall of Beijing's international airport. It was the first time such a big delegation from North Korea made an international trip since the pandemic began.

Cheong Seong-Chang, an analyst at the private Sejong Institute, said the return of workers from abroad will mean the loss of a rare source of foreign

currency for North Korea, so the government will likely push to send other workers to replace them in China and Russia. Accepting new North Korean workers would violate a UN Security Council resolution that required member states to repatriate all North Korean laborers from their territories by late 2019. Given that North Korea intends to quarantine returnees for one week, Cheong said it seems unlikely North Korea would resume receiving Chinese and other foreign tourists anytime soon. He said North Korea is expected to allow foreigners to enter the country next year if the return of its nationals does not cause any coronavirus outbreaks. In August 2022, North Korea made a highly dubious claim to have overcome the COVID-19 pandemic. In the following month, the North resumed freight train service with China, its biggest trading partner and economic pipeline, but much of its restrictions on border crossings by individuals have remained in effect.

# ‘China’s behaviour in Sea must be challenged’

MANILA (Reuters): China's "aggressive behaviour" in the South China Sea, including the use of water canon by its coast guard against a Philippine vessel, must be challenged and checked, the commander of the US Navy's Seventh Fleet said. Vice Admiral Karl Thomas assured the Philippines of US backing in the face of "shared challenges" in the region, saying: "My forces are out here for a reason."

The largest of the US Navy's forward-deployed fleets, the Seventh Fleet, headquartered in Japan, operates as many as 70 ships, has around 150 aircraft and more than 27,000 sailors. It operates over an area of 124 million square km (48 million square miles) from bases in Japan, South Korea and Singapore. "You have to challenge people I would say operating in a grey

zone. When they're taking a little bit more and more and pushing you, you've got to push back, you have to sail and operate," Thomas told Reuters.

"There's really no better example of aggressive behaviour than the activity on 5 August on the shoal," he added. On Aug. 5, a Chinese coast guard ship used water cannon against a Philippine boat carrying supplies to troops aboard a warship Manila intentionally grounded on a shoal in the South China sea, a fault line in the rivalry between the US and Beijing in the region. Thomas said he had had discussions with Vice Admiral Alberto Carlos, the head of the Philippine Western Command overseeing the South China Sea, "to understand what his challenges are to find opportunities to be able to help him". "We certainly shared challenges. So I

wanted to better understand how he views the operations that he's responsible for. And I want to make sure that he understood what I had available," said Thomas who was in Manila for a port call. Thomas said he joined a flight from Manila "to go out and check out the South China Sea".

The Philippines won an international arbitration award against China in 2016, after a tribunal said Beijing's sweeping claim to sovereignty over most of the South China Sea had no legal basis. China has built militarised, manmade islands in the South China Sea and its claim of historic sovereignty overlaps with the exclusive economic zones of the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Brunei and Indonesia. The Chinese Embassy in Manila did not immediately respond to a request for comment.

# Sudanese paramilitary force backs ceasefire

CAIRO (Reuters): Sudan's paramilitary Rapid Support Forces said it was open to a long-term ceasefire with the army and presented its vision for a "Sudan Reborn", an initiative that could revive efforts to hold direct talks between the warring parties. The statement came as fighting between the RSF and the army enters its 20th week with no side claiming victory while millions have been driven from their homes in the capital and other cities.

The United Nations has warned of a "humanitarian catastrophe of epic proportions", with rising hunger, collapsing healthcare, and wrecked infrastructure. The RSF and allied militias have also been accused of ethnic cleansing in West Darfur. The two sides blame each other for starting the war on April 15, after weeks of tension over the integration of their troops into a single force as

part of a transition to democracy. The two sides led the country together since toppling Omar al-Burhan arrived in Port Sudan on his first trip outside the capital since fighting broke out.

Government sources say he will travel to Saudi Arabia and Egypt for talks.

Pro-democracy politicians warned Burhan against announcing a new government, saying it would prompt the RSF to form a parallel authority. Regional mediators have appeared to accept a future role for soldiers in a transitional government. But, the ambassador of the United States, one of the main sponsors of the post-Bashir transition, wrote on X that "the belligerents, who have demonstrated they are not fit to govern, must end the conflict and transfer power to a civilian transitional government".

# Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan resume negotiations over a disputed dam

CAIRO (AP): Egypt, Ethiopia and Sudan resumed their years-long negotiations over the controversial dam Ethiopia is building on the Nile River's main tributary, officials said. The resumption of talks came after President Abdel Fattah el-Sissi and Ethiopia Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed said last month that they aim to reach within four months an agreement on the operation of the \$4.6 billion Grand Ethiopian Renaissance Dam on the Blue Nile. The Blue Nile meets the White Nile in Sudan's capital of Khartoum, before winding northward through Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea.

Egypt fears a devastating impact if the dam is operated

without taking its needs into account. It called it an existential threat. The Arab world's most populous country relies almost entirely on the Nile to supply water for agriculture and its more than 100 million people. About 85% of the river's flow originates from Ethiopia. The Egyptian Irrigation Ministry announced the new round of talks in Cairo. Irrigation Minister Hani Sewilam said Egypt wants a legally binding agreement on how the giant dam is operated and filled. Sewilam said there are many "technical and legal solutions" for the dispute, without elaborating.

Tensions have heightened between Cairo and Addis Ababa after the Ethiopian

government began filling the dam's reservoir before reaching an agreement. Key questions remain about how much water Ethiopia will release downstream if a multi-year drought occurs and how the three countries will resolve any future disputes. Ethiopia has rejected binding arbitration at the final stage of the project.

Ethiopia says the dam is essential, arguing that most of its people lack electricity. Sudan wants Ethiopia to coordinate and share data on the dam's operation to avoid flooding and protect its own power-generating dams on the Blue Nile, the main tributary of the Nile. The dam is located just 10 kilometers (6 miles) from the Sudanese border.

## Gang in Haiti opens fire on crowd

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP): A powerful gang opened fire on a large group of parishioners led by a pastor as they marched through a community armed with machetes to rid the area of gang members. The attack was filmed in real time by journalists at the scene, and several people were killed and others injured, Marie Yolène Gilles, director of human rights group Fondasyon Je Klere, told The Associated Press.

She watched online as hundreds of people from a local church marched through Canaan, a makeshift town in the outskirts of the capital of Port-au-Prince founded by survivors who lost their homes in the devastating 2010 earthquake. It wasn't immediately clear how many people were killed and injured in the attack. Canaan is controlled by a gang led by a man identified only as "Jeff," who is believed to be allied with the "5 Seconds" gang.

Gangs have grown more powerful since the July 2021 assassination of President Jovenel Moïse, and they are estimated to control up to 80% of Port-au-Prince. Gédéon Jean, director of Haiti's Center for Analysis and Research in Human Rights, told the AP that he also watched the event unfold online and planned to ask the Ministry of Justice to investigate. He accused the pastor of being irresponsible because he "engaged a group of people and put them in a situation like this." The parishioners who clutched machetes and yelled "Free Canaan!" were no match for gang members armed with assault rifles. "Police should have stopped them from going," Jean said. "It's extremely horrible for the state to let something like this happen." A spokesperson for Haiti's National Police did not return a message for comment.

From Jan. 1 until Aug. 15, more than 2,400 people in Haiti were reported killed, more than 950 kidnapped and another 902 injured, according to the most recent United Nations statistics. Fed up with the surge in gang violence, Haitians organized a violent movement in April known as "bwa kale" that targets suspected gang members. More than 350 people have been killed since the uprising began, according to the UN. In October, the Haitian government requested the immediate deployment of a foreign armed force to quell gang violence. The government of Kenya has offered to lead a multinational force, and a delegation of top officials from the eastern African country visited Haiti recently as part of a reconnaissance mission.

## Emmerson wins 2nd term as Zimbabwe president

HARARE (BBC): Zimbabwe's President Emmerson Mnangagwa has been elected to a second term with 52.6% of the vote, the electoral commission says. But the opposition also claimed to have won, saying there was widespread vote-rigging, and observers said the vote fell short of democratic standards. Mr Mnangagwa is only Zimbabwe's third president. A 2017 coup against veteran ruler Robert Mugabe put him in charge.

Zimbabweans still face high inflation, poverty and a climate of fear. When he first became president, Mr Mnangagwa - known as "The Crocodile" for his ruthlessness - promised a new start for his country's people. But Zimbabwe had one of the highest inflation rates in the world last month - prices in July had rocketed by 101.3% since the previous year. Unemployment also remains rife, with only 25% of Zimbabweans holding formal jobs. Mr Mnangagwa's vow to guarantee human rights also appears hollow, with little changing in this regard since Mr Mugabe's departure. Critics say the 80-year-old silenced dissent and clamped down on the opposition in the run-up to the vote, which he had been widely-expected to win. The Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) said Mr Mnangagwa's main

challenger, Citizens' Coalition for Change (CCC) candidate Nelson Chamisa, secured 44% of the vote. Mr Mnangagwa received more than 2.3m votes, while Mr Chamisa took 1.9m, according to the ZEC. Voter turnout in the country of almost 16m was 69%, the electoral body said.

But Mr Chamisa said that the opposition had the "real results" and that there had been many irregularities. "We have won this election. We are the leaders. We are even surprised why Mnangagwa has been declared a leader," he told journalists in Harare. Despite the opposition claims, the constitutional court has upheld the result. A spokesperson for the CCC posted on X - formerly known as Twitter - that the party rejected "any result hastily assembled without proper verification". Observer missions from the EU, Commonwealth and 16-nation Southern African Development Community (SADC) said they had a number of concerns with the vote, including the banning of opposition rallies, issues with the electoral register, biased state media coverage and voter intimidation. "The elections were fraught with irregularities and aggrieved the people of Zimbabwe," political analyst Rejoice Ngunya told AFP. The run-up to the

election was largely free of violence, but CCC members were convicted on what they describe as fabricated charges aimed at weakening the party. The party says the police have banned several of its meetings since July, and nearly 100 gatherings since it was formed in January last year. Earlier this month, 40 CCC members, including a parliamentary candidate, were arrested while campaigning in the capital Harare.

The recent killing of a CCC backer, allegedly by supporters of Mr Mnangagwa's Zanu-PF party, further raised concerns about rights. Critics continue to be arrested and taken to court for insulting the president - an offence punishable by one year in jail or a fine or both. A man in Harare was charged in April after allegedly being overheard by a police officer saying that Mr Mnangagwa would lose the next election. "The Crocodile", as he is known, has a fearsome reputation that was cemented after independence during the civil war that broke out in the 1980s between Mr Mugabe's Zanu party and the Zapu party of Joshua Nkomo. As national security minister, Mr Mnangagwa was in charge of the Central Intelligence Organisation (CIO), which worked hand in glove with the army to suppress Zapu.

## Boris Johnson: ‘Prigozhin’s last thought was Putin’

LONDON (Agencies): Former UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has alleged that Russian President Vladimir Putin "must have killed" Wagner boss Yevgeny Prigozhin and said there can be no peace negotiation with Putin on Ukraine. Writing in a Daily Mail op-ed, Johnson speculated about Prigozhin's last moments, just days after a plane believed to be carrying the Wagner boss crashed in a field northwest of Moscow while en route to St. Petersburg.

It is not clear yet what caused the plane crash, but US and Western intelligence officials that CNN has spoken to believe it was deliberate. "It can't have been more than a few seconds between the explosion aboard the otherwise reliable Embraer Legacy 600 executive jet, and the moment the Russian thug blacked out in his vertiginous acceleration to earth; and yet in that instant I am certain that he knew with perfect clarity what had happened," Johnson wrote. "He knew whose hidden hand was sending him 28,000 ft down, to be immolated with the rest of

his Wagner group companions in a fireball in the countryside of the Tver region north of Moscow - and then on downwards, of course, for the shade of Prigozhin: down, down to Hades and the Tartarean pit below." He went on to say that the man allegedly "behind the killing of Prigozhin" was "the very same man who authorised, for instance, the poisonings in the UK of Alexander Litvinenko and Sergei Skripal."

"As the detonation sucked the air out of the aircraft's cabin, I would wager that the last thought in the doomed dome of Prigozhin's skull was 'Putin!', preceded by one of the many profanities in which the former jailbird and hotdog salesman was so fluent," Johnson wrote. The plane crash thought to have killed Prigozhin came exactly two months after the Wagner boss launched a short-lived rebellion in Russia. Experts have questioned whether the Wagner group can survive without Prigozhin.

The Kremlin said that all necessary examinations, including genetic testing,

were underway to determine whether Prigozhin was killed in crash. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov vehemently denied claims that Russian authorities might have been involved. "All this is an absolute lie," he said. Putin said he had known Prigozhin "for a very long time," and called him "a talented man, a talented businessman." In his op-ed, Johnson called it the "height of conceit" for Prigozhin to think Putin would forgive him for contesting his government. "As we watch the chilling footage of that plane spiraling to earth, we are witnessing something historic. This is the violent liquidation - on TV - of his enemies by an existing head of state. I cannot think of another example of such ostentatious and uninhibited savagery by a world leader - not in our lifetimes," Johnson wrote. "The mask is now fully off. Putin stands exposed as a gangster, and his absurd televised 'tribute' to the dead Wagnerites is straight from the pages of 'The Godfather,'" Johnson concluded.



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# Blockage of major roads in Pakistan

THE nationwide protests continued over the third consecutive day in most parts of the country, multiple political parties, religious and ethnic groups and civil society joined the demonstrations initially launched by the common citizens, as all segments of the society equally hurt from unbelievable hikes in electricity rates and unjustified imposition of government taxes aimed at collection of funds from the general public. JI Chief has announced countrywide protests from September 2 if the government does not withdraw those anti-poor tariffs. The PPP, JUI-F, the ANP and other civic groups are also considering joining the public on this grave issue ahead of a crucial general election despite the fact they have played a pivotal role as coalition partner in making up for such a catastrophic situation in the country.

A very awful situation has emerged in over 230 million strong nuclear nation, where people are on the road for the past several days to protest anti-public policies and bad governance of the rulers who not only squeezed space for the public but shaped this country an unlivable place for its inhabitants by thrashing them with unrestricted inflation, heavy taxation, scarcity of food, non availability of healthcare, no affordable education and afterall blocking the supplyline of their chicken heating and lightning. Several people committed suicide out of frustration and greif because their monthly income became unsufficient to payoff electricity bills what to say about other home expanses ranging from food staples to gas bill, and education fees to healthcare budget. How will the world, including China, perceive this situation that its first door neighbor, major investment destination and longstanding ally is passing through? People are not on the streets to support Imran Khan but the public came to roads out of grief to protect themselves, their kids, family and households as a grave risk confronts their survival. People are forced to either come to the streets, block the major highways and take their basic rights from the rulers or sit at home or office without electricity, gas or water.

The conditions are so bad that a father called emergency helpline 15 requested some food for his kids. The concerned authorities were nice and they delivered the family some food to eat but can the 15 fulfill the food needs of every household in Pakistan? This news made international headlines, that is not only painful and embarrassing but shameful for all Pakistanis living in the country and abroad. As expected, the emergency meeting called by the caretaker Prime Minister ended without any conclusion. No government official, even the information Minister, dared to face the media to brief them about the reasons leading to the quandary and government policy regarding the issue. Surprisingly, why is the PM giving fake hopes if he can't offer any relief? The situation is worse and rapidly becoming a fatal problem for the South Asian Nation.

Ironallically, the leaders who ruled the country over the past year, handed over the government to caretaker leaders with clean hands, after creating havoc with the nation. The previous government not only tied the hands of the interim setup but all future governments to drag on the country's commitment with the IMF. What are the choices left for Pakistan and Pakistanis? Let's focus on the events that happened in the last one year and the issue of holding transparent elections to elect public representatives as early as possible. The problems of this country are not going to be resolved simply by keeping Imran Khan in jail and managing the country through Mr Kakar. Who thinks so, is living in fools' paradise. The reality is bitter and can be seen in the streets and roads of Pakistan. What should the public demand from the rulers, whether people ask for cheaper food, cost effective kitchen heating, clothing, schooling, or doctor fee? Afterall they must ask for mercy from cruel rulers who feel no pain for their public.

## China-US hostility is increasing

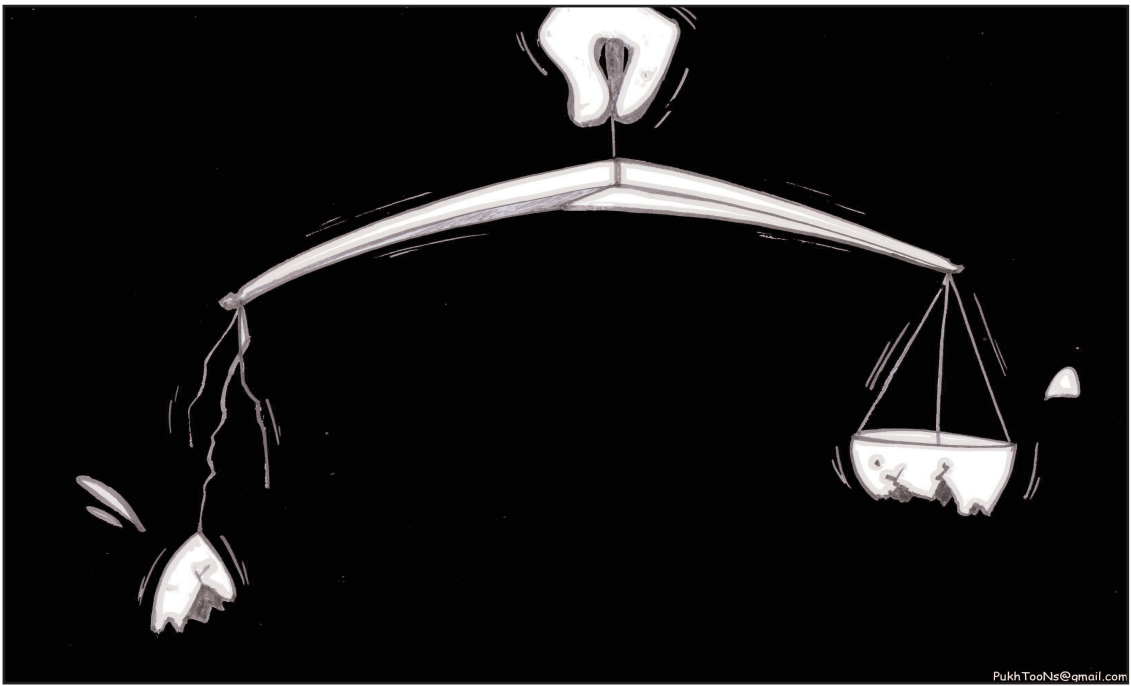
A senior US Navy Officer has recently called on regional allies to challenge and check China's aggressive behaviour in the South China Sea, including the use of a water cannon by the Chinese coast guard against a Philippine vessel in regional waters. Commander US seventh fleet, Vice Admiral, Karl Thomas assured the Philippines authorities of US support in the face of shared challenges from their common foe in the adjoining South and East China Seas and entire Indo-Pacific regions. According to the American Admiral, Philippine should challenge the Chinese boats operating in the grey zone, pushing Filipinos deep into their own territory. The American general urged the Philippines Navy to push Mandarrians back to their waters if it intends to govern in that area.

The tension remained high in the South China Sea due to the continuous standoff between the Chinese People's Liberation Army Navy and Philippines Navy over the past months. Multiple border skirmishes occurred between rival forces in the disputed sea contested by assertive Beijing and Manila. The United States had long been in search of allies and partners in far Asia to contain ever growing Chinese influence that became more threatening after Being constructed numerous man made Islands that are being used as military outposts by the Chinese military. After the reelection of the President Bongbong Marcos Jr, has tried his level best to reset his country's ties with Beijing, but decades long territorial disputes remained a major hurdle between normalization of relations between the two neighbors. Meanwhile, persistent assertiveness of Chinese coast guards against the Philippines Navy also the kept the water boiling between Manila and Baijing throughout this period.

Currently, US Navy 7th fleet is the most powerful war-machine in the Far East which is based in Japan and comprises over 70 warships, 150 fighter jets, countless boats and other lethal weapons. However, American generals neither dare to challenge offensive patrols of Chinese submarines and warships in Indo-Pacific waters nor interdict Chinese fighter jets overflight in disputed territories. However, American Strategists motivate poor Filipinos to challenge and check ruthless Chinese who often portray a brutal behavior to their neighbours. Hence, it would be better that Americans themselves deal their worst enemy with persuasion and tact instead of scapegoating poor Piliphinos in the ongoing tussle between two elephants.

### Important Notice

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## Algeria and BRICS - dream or eventuality?

Hafed Al-Ghwell

AS Algeria aspires to join BRICS - a coupling of the leading emergent economies of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa - questions arise whether this North African nation is prepared for such an endeavor. Its exclusion from the list of countries invited to join the bloc in January next year hints that it may be too soon for Algiers. However, it is a curious gambit that warrants an assessment of whether BRICS membership would actually yield strategic advantages for Algeria, or merely usher in a set of new complications.

After all, becoming a BRICS member constitutes a major foreign policy reorientation that carries significant ramifications for Algeria's national trajectory. It also puts a fascinating spin on the emerging global scenario, with profound implications for the Maghreb region. In Algiers' view, signaling the intent to join an agenda aimed at empowering emerging and developing countries - as demonstrated by a willingness to invest up to \$1.5 billion in the New Development Bank - caps off a new strategy of international engagement. In a way, the bid comes at a strategic moment when Algeria is re-evaluating its economic model, pivoting from an energy-based economy to promote diversification and modernize its industries.

Besides, Algeria has yet to fully capitalize on a sudden elevated status vis-a-vis European energy security, making it quite appealing to an emerging bloc with grand ambitions of rivaling the G7, and the enhancement of South-South cooperation. Yet, a continued dependence on fossil fuel revenues and a persistent stance on some geopolitical rivalries will limit, and may even hamper, Algeria's BRICS dream.

The horizons of this ambition must confront the immediacy of the challenges the Algerian economy faces, including high unemployment rates, fluctuating oil prices and protracted fiscal deficits. Perhaps before going all-in on BRICS, Algeria could instead seize the opportunity presented by an evolving macroeconomic dynamic, to modernize industries, amplify exports, create jobs and embrace digital transformations.

While Algeria currently enjoys a stable economic outlook in the short to medium-term, uncertainty looms over the longer term, leading the country to

actively seek foreign investments as a catalyst for its diversification and modernization efforts. The dramatic increase in pensions, public wages and retirement benefits in Algeria's 2023 budget is indicative of the country's troubling reliance on hydrocarbon revenues. It leaves Algeria vulnerable to price fluctuations that often bring fiscal headaches and social unrest. Needless to say, a strong economic foundation is vital to Algeria's recent foreign policy pivots to raise its regional profile, protect its national security and project influence in the near-abroad as well as on the African continent. Since President Abdelmajid Tebboune began his tenure in December 2019 after the ousting of Abdel Aziz Bouteflika, he has worked to decouple Algeria's foreign policy from isolationism that characterized its diplomacy in the 1990s and 2000s. In just three years, the Algerian Foreign Ministry has since made several surprising shifts and demonstrated uncharacteristic initiative, underscoring the North African country's efforts to participate more actively in global and regional affairs.

Thus, Algeria's pursuit of BRICS membership transcends mere economic perspectives and signifies its intent to shed a legacy of cautious diplomacy to re-emerge on the global stage, in pursuit of its geopolitical aspirations. Currently, the country enjoys relative domestic political stability and near-term economic strength, primarily driven by higher energy revenues and increased demand for Algerian gas following the war in Ukraine. Since the government can concentrate on foreign policy and has room to maneuver until the presidential elections in 2024, it is well-positioned to address internal sociopolitical challenges, and pacify the populace through expanded benefits and subsidies, thus reducing the risk of economically driven unrest. However, to make the most of a potential ascension, Algeria must exhibit greater flexibility in its foreign policy and adroitly navigate complex relationships among BRICS partners. The country's improved economic performance, largest-ever budget for 2023, and stable political landscape offer an opportune moment to adopt an active foreign policy and propel Algeria toward its desired influence on the international stage. In the context of geopolitical strategy, Algeria's potential

BRICS membership could provide a fresh impetus to its role in Africa. As Africa becomes progressively indispensable in global geopolitics, Algeria could leverage BRICS collaboration as a conduit for promoting South-South partnership, fostering African regional integration, and advancing its influence on the continent.

Yet, leaning toward a BRICS-oriented foreign policy might necessitate dramatic policy reorientations. BRICS, a coalition rooted in shared economic interests and mutual ambitions of multipolarity, will require Algeria's diplomacy to be agile, and its policy frameworks to be inclusive and flexible, capable of negotiating multifaceted interests. For instance, Algeria's long-standing affiliation with Europe could become quite complicated, especially if Algiers ventures to move beyond energy cooperation into new domains. Algeria, therefore, will have to delicately balance its growing relationship with BRICS and its existing ties to Europe, leaving it to navigate a dynamic, yet uncertain, terrain of diverse strategic interests. Closer to home, Algeria's potential induction into the BRICS could fundamentally recalibrate the power dynamics within the Maghreb region, thereby amplifying its influence and challenging its neighbors, particularly Morocco, given their shared turbulent history and contentious issues. This repositioning could intersect with Algeria's existing geopolitical strategies aimed at stabilizing its turbulent neighbors, Tunisia and Libya, through discounted gas and electricity exports. Such initiatives are part of Algiers' calculated endeavors to contain regional instability spilling into its own borders.

Elsewhere, Algeria took on a rather proactive and assertive role in brokering an agreement between rival Palestinian factions, reinforcing its commitment to the nonaligned movement, and presenting itself as a regional powerhouse alongside Mediterranean interlocutors such as Egypt and Turkey.

This projection of diplomatic influence, coupled with potential economic aid, was designed to encourage undecided fellow Arab countries to eschew normalization. The jury is still out on whether Algiers managed to achieve its aims, or merely delayed the inevitable. Nevertheless, any diversion in foreign

policy, even if minimal, exposes Algeria to heightened security risks, particularly the possibility of renewed tensions with Morocco over mutual relationships with Sahelian, sub-Saharan as well as other North African countries. A key potential flashpoint lies in Algeria's support for the pro-autonomy Polisario Front, which could potentially exacerbate geopolitical tensions beyond the Maghreb.

Simultaneously, any decision to deploy military forces abroad might attract the ire of terrorist groups linked to such conflict zones, creating a potential threat to Algeria. Therefore, while Algeria's BRICS bid could offer a platform for expanded regional influence and strategic partnerships, it also comes with an intricate web of potential risks and challenges. The real diplomatic finesse would lie in balancing these countervailing forces while navigating toward a position of regional prominence. Ultimately, Algeria's BRICS dream faces a multitude of opportunities and challenges that could precipitate a significant reshaping of its national and international narratives. On one hand, such a move might accelerate the nation's economic diversification, bolster its geopolitical ambitions, and position it as a key player in the complex dynamics of the Maghreb, hence elevating its status on the global stage. On the other hand, Algeria could find itself grappling with the delicate task of balancing its strategic alliances and adapting to new regional and international settings ensuing from BRICS membership.

To some extent, Algeria's ambition can be perceived as an endorsement of multilateral international order - an approach that might simultaneously augment its global influence yet challenge its historical ethos of nonalignment, dating back to the nation's independence. It introduces a paradox: the need for securing a place in a robust multilateral group while preserving its nonaligned foreign policy stance, which is at the heart of Algeria's global posture. Therefore, while strategically tenable, the actualization of Algeria's BRICS aspirations primarily pivots on how the country addresses its internal challenges, reconciling its policymakers' ambitions with the realities of an evolving global order. This potential leap could redefine not only Algeria's status quo but also its footprint across the African continent and beyond.

## Prigozhin has lost, but Putin is struggling to win

Ivan Fomin

PRESIDENT Vladimir Putin is extremely sensitive to disloyalty and prone to looking for traitors everywhere. Knowing this, it is easy to assume that the Russian president had a solid motive to eliminate the leader of the Wagner Group, who dared to challenge the Kremlin in an armed revolt. However, if we keep focusing on Yevgeny Prigozhin personally and on Putin's vindictiveness, we risk overlooking the fact that the problem Putin faces is not limited to a single rebellious former restaurateur and thus cannot be solved by assassination alone.

In the wake of Prigozhin's revolt in June, it became clear that the Russian autocrat would have to cope not just with one eccentric warlord and his mercenaries. He instead has to find a way to deal with a fairly broad group of people who are in favor of tougher policies and a more aggressive military campaign in Ukraine. Prigozhin in many ways emerged as a prominent spokesperson for this group. In his public statements, he vehemently lashed out against the Russian bureaucracy for insufficient patriotism and insisted on the need for a total mobilization of the country, the complete militarization of the economy, and directing the assets and business practices of the elites toward a national goal.

After the Wagner mutiny, Putin had the option of gaining the backing of supporters of total mobilization by becoming more "Prigozhinized" himself. He could adopt more uncompromising rhetoric, change his political course toward the complete militarization of the country, and launch a campaign of repression against an unpatriotic part of the elite.

However, it seems that Putin is trying to avoid this strategy. The war remains a "special operation," there are no large-scale repressions against the traitors among the elite, and the Russian people are promised that there will be no new military call-up. At the same time, the most prominent figures associated with the "total mobilization party" are being systematically eliminated from the public sphere. The crash of the airplane, presumably carrying Prigozhin, is not the first event in this series. Just a day before the crash, it became known that General Sergei Surovikin had been dismissed from his post as commander-in-chief of the Russian Aerospace Forces. Surovikin is known to have had good relations with Prigozhin. Moreover, just like the Wagner leader, he had tense relationships with Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu and the head of the General Staff, Valery Gerasimov. According to some reports, after the Wagner mutiny in June, Surovikin was arrested.

Igor Girkin, another prominent figure in the camp of supporters of total mobilization, was also repressed. Although Prigozhin and Girkin were in conflict, less than a month after Prigozhin's mercenaries marched on Moscow, the leader of the Club of Angry Patriots found himself behind bars. All these events are not just the aftermath of the Prigozhin revolt. They are also symptoms of an ongoing struggle. Although no one is marching on Moscow now, Putin is still under pressure from the part of the elite that is unhappy with the way he is

conducting the war.

Just three days before Prigozhin's plane crash, Bloomberg reported that some members of Russia's intelligence services were calling on Putin to fire Shoigu and Gerasimov. They also wanted him to switch to a more aggressive approach to warfare, to launch a full-scale mobilization, and to declare martial law. Moreover, it is not just about the Russian elite. There is also a noticeable group in Russian society who can be considered supporters of total, militarization, and "nationalization" of the elites. In particular, polling by Russian Field shows that 20% of Russian respondents sympathized with Prigozhin even after his mutiny failed. Moreover, according to the Chronicles project, 22% of Russian poll respondents can be considered core supporters of the war. These are the people who not only say they support the "special military operation," but also believe that the withdrawal of troops from Ukraine should occur only after the goals of the war have been achieved, and believe that government spending should prioritize the army. It is these people who are likely the ones most receptive to Prigozhin and Girkin-style rhetoric about the total militarization of Russian society.

Putin, however, is not making earnest attempts to win back these so-called "turbo patriots." Instead, he seeks to suppress the loudest voices from their camp. In this context, it is not so important whether Prigozhin really died in the plane crash. Moreover, it is arguably not that significant whether it was, in fact, orchestrated by Putin. What matters is that the event is likely to be perceived as Putin's revenge on Prigozhin. As a result, all sorts of "angry patriots" are likely to take Prigozhin's plane crash as a signal that Putin is ready to deal harshly not only with the liberal anti-war opposition, but also with those militant supporters of the war who think he is not decisive and tough enough.

At the same time, it is clear that Putin is still trying to get out of the Wagner crisis while still acting half-heartedly and ambiguously. So, the rebel leader was assassinated. Or, maybe not. The mutineers' main ally among the army leaders was arrested. Or, maybe not. Everything seems to be in preparation for a large-scale military mobilization. But, at the same time, there is a plan to avoid bad news in the run-up to the 2024 presidential election.

Thus, the overall outcome of the two months since the Wagner mutiny is that even though Prigozhin has already lost, Putin is still struggling to win. The Russian leader turned out to be unable to address some of the fundamental underlying causes that sparked the Wagner crisis. He failed to deal with Prigozhinism in the minds of the people and in the ranks of his own elite. Neither did he sufficiently "Prigozhinize" his own policies and rhetoric by taking a more uncompromising approach to winning the war. After Prigozhin's plane crashed, Putin will be believed by many to have demonstrated toughness. However, his more belligerent opponents will likely think that his willpower is aimed primarily at protecting his persistent weakness, indecisiveness, and half-heartedness.

The Moscow Times

## America is now Donald Trump country

Tim Stanley

PRESIDENTIAL debates used to be boring. That was the point; to show that you had the right temperament and the facts at your fingertips. Then along came Donald Trump, who growled "wrong" into the microphone and said his opponents sounded like a girl. Sometimes he didn't show up at all. On Wednesday night, when the also-rans gathered on Fox News to debate the economy and Ukraine, he opted to appear on conservative pundit Tucker Carlson's Twitter show instead.

They discussed who killed Jeffrey Epstein. Last time I checked, 164 million had watched it - a triumph for Tucker, Trump and the New Media. The Republicans are totally Donald's party now. The candidates on Fox were battling either to be the anti-Trump or the Trump proxy; both involve becoming Trump, which starts with calling

names. Do you want to vote for a truth-telling patriot like me, asked 38-year-old entrepreneur Vivek Ramaswamy - or a donor puppet like these chumps? You, sir, are a rookie! said Mike Pence. You sound like ChatGPT! observed the gargantuan Chris Christie. Ramaswamy is certainly irritating, the way accomplished young men often are, and raised eyebrows by publishing a video of himself, pre-debate, playing tennis with his shirt off. How is Christie supposed to top that? Sumo wrestling?

The rumour mill says that Ramaswamy was desperate to become famous and considered starting a podcast, until he was told running for president would be a lot easier. Now he is nudging ahead even of Florida governor Ron DeSantis - who confuses shouting for having personality - standing on a faux-Trump platform of believing climate change is fake, defunding welfare scroungers and quitting

Ukraine. Ramaswamy is the diamanté of Right-wing politics. The real thing, meanwhile, was sparkling on Twitter. Critics will say Trump chose an easy ride. Host Carlson was sacked from Fox after peddling nonsense about the 2020 election, so shares his grudge against the network (reserving particular ire for anchor Chris Wallace, a respected TV veteran who Tucker called a "b----- little man"). Tucker specialises in conspiracy by insinuation. He never quite comes out with it but asks loaded questions, such as "are you worried that they are going to try to kill you?"

"They", whoever they are, are "savagae animals", said The Donald. But if Ramaswamy is taking notes on the kind of trash talk that wins primaries, he must understand that, as well as being brutal, Trump is also very funny. The interview

could be repackaged as a Netflix comedy special. There were bits about Kamala Harris ("She speaks in rhymes") and the unreliability of electric cars ("The happiest moment in an electric car is the first 10 minutes"). A Seinfeld-esque skit, too, about Joe Biden at the beach. "He's worse mentally than he is physically, and physically he's no triathlete?.. He looks like he's walking on toothpicks." "Skinny legs," said Tucker. "He can't walk through the sand!" If only Joan Rivers had run against Trump, rather than Hillary Clinton. Their ratings would have eclipsed the Moon landing.

Back at the Republican debate, Senator Tim Scott reminded us that he had a single mother, DeSantis that he was in the army and Nikki Haley that she was a woman. Of all of them, Pence comes closest to the traditional image of a presidential candi-

date, folksy and robotic, to the point that one imagines that, if you put a coin in him, he'd recite the Gettysburg Address. Yet in a rare departure from the preprogrammed script, Mike put his finger on the generational divide in conservatism. Ramaswamy announced that it was no longer "morning in America", that we have entered a "dark moment" and a cultural "civil war". No, said Pence, I won't have that: "You are equating the American people with the failed government in Washington DC!" The old Reaganite line was that the country was good but the government bad, that conservatives could unleash the potential of America with tax cuts. But the post-Trump view, marinated on social media, is that America is actually unwell, possibly dying, and requires something closer to shock therapy to save it.

Ramaswamy, who unquestionably won this sideshow, argued that the choice is between Pence's

incremental reform and his own "revolution".

That promise of demolition is what Trump voters want, too; that's why The Donald is 40 points ahead in the polls. But should the shadowy "they" put him in jail, Ramaswamy will be happy to take his place. On Twitter, Trump segued into a poetic lecture on the building of the Panama Canal, where the Americans lost thousands of men to mosquitos: "vicious" animals, he said, as though he'd waged a personal war against them his whole life. The Trump hyperbole-amplifier is turned perpetually up to 11, such that he can show as much righteous anger towards an insect as he does Kim Jong Un, North Korea is "not big on athletes", he said. That'll be the famine, deadpanned Tucker - and, God help me, I laughed. If politics must be horrible, let it at least be entertaining. I like some light with my shade.



# After Prigozhin, Russia’s scramble for Africa continues

**ON June 29, days after Wagner mercenary chief Yevgeny Prigozhin's failed uprising, Russian President Vladimir Putin assembled the group's leadership to ask if they would be willing to work under a different commander. Although several nodded in the affirmative, Prigozhin vigorously blocked the proposal - thereby making his appointment with death a virtual certainty.**

Paramilitary groups linked to Putin loyalists, such as Konvoi and Redut, then embarked on a recruitment drive for operations in Africa, highlighting the Kremlin's determination to sideline Prigozhin. In a last-ditch effort to forestall such maneuverings, Prigozhin spent his final days in Mali and the Central African Republic trying to shore up support. He is also thought to have received a consignment of gold from the Wagner-backed paramilitary Rapid Support Forces in Sudan. The plane crash that wiped out Prigozhin and Wagner's entire top echelon put a definitive end to these exploits. Alongside Prigozhin's swansong African odyssey, Russian officials were making parallel journeys with a very different message. A day before the crash, Russia's Deputy Defense Minister visited Benghazi to reassure allies that Wagner fighters would remain in Libya - but under Kremlin control.

These tussles for supremacy highlight Moscow's focus on its African power grab, even while Russia is supposedly consumed by Ukraine. Defense Minister Sergey Shoigu wants to fully integrate Wagner into the regular armed forces, while the GRU foreign military intelligence agency may oversee Wagner's lucrative African operations. There is much at stake in this struggle for control of Wagner's assets: monopolization of gold and diamond mines, oil wells, and mineral and agricultural

resources. Thousands of Wagner personnel and a dense network of shell companies were embroiled in economic sectors such as timber, beer, vodka, logistics and entertainment.

Overseas recipients of Moscow's largesse are probably less worried about who their Russian point man is than whether the spigot of military support will remain open. Without Prigozhin's blood-drenched Syrian intervention around 2016, Bashar Assad would not still be in power. After Wagner withdrew many of its forces from Syria, and then lost Putin's backing, anti-Assad forces perceive a moment of regime vulnerability that may be exploited to the full. Protesters have taken to the streets throughout Syria's south, chanting anti-regime slogans and decrying subsidy cuts and hyperinflation. Three post-coup West African regimes - Mali, Burkina Faso and most recently Niger - appear to have been in various stages of mortgaging their security to Wagner, while demanding the ejection of Western forces. This is already proving a disaster that has enabled the rapid expansion of ascendant jihadists. After the recent Niger coup, noisily championed by Prigozhin, troops were pulled back to protect the capital from a possible counter-coup invasion. Predictably, Daesh in both the west and east seized the opportunity to go on the offensive.

US Ambassador Linda Thomas-Greenfield warned the UN last week that the activities of Russian paramilitaries in Africa were "destabilizing, and we've encouraged countries in Africa to condemn their presence." Experts at the same Security Council meeting warned that Daesh was exploiting the instability from successive coups and Russian interference to expand its West African operations.

Baria Alamuddin

In practice, the number of Russian mercenaries deployed to these states is often very small, not capable of much more than protecting regime leaders and securing key economic assets for their own profit. Wagner frequently compensated for numerical weakness by committing widespread atrocities against unarmed civilians in naked displays of unrestrained force. In Darfur, the indiscriminate supply of Wagner munitions has precipitated wholesale genocide.

Western powers in their arrogance have consistently failed to perceive and act upon glaring symptoms of emerging crises with planet-wide ramifications throughout the developing world. The predatory and destabilizing behavior of entities such as Wagner is largely the fault of the international community in failing to actively support region-wide stability and good governance, causing a domino effect of contagious state collapse across sub-Saharan Africa. Can Russian overseas mercenaries remain a significantly potent force after Prigozhin's death? He literally had to wage war against the Defense Ministry to acquire sufficient ammunition and weaponry, even for strategically crucial operations in Bakhamut. Prigozhin's demise is furthermore predicted to have a cataclysmic impact on paramilitary morale, with his forces obliged to pledge loyalty to Putin personally. How much more difficult will it be for these troops - without a charismatic, outspoken demagogue leader - to receive sufficient weaponry to wage war in obscure corners of Africa?

Bouts of mourning for Prigozhin, particularly among ultranationalist and militia demographics, should also give Putin sleepless nights worrying where

future manifestations of dissent and revolt will emerge from. Prigozhin's troll factories and propaganda outlets championed Wagner as a force for liberation and stabilization, hence the enthusiastic Russian flag-waving and support throughout West African capitals. Russian-backed channels have unleashed a flood of self-serving propaganda in the aftermath of the Niger coup. Central African Republic presidential adviser Fidèle Gouandjika paraded for cameras in a Wagner T-shirt and eulogized Prigozhin as a national hero who had saved the country. "There will be another Prigozhin," he enthusiastically declared. "We're awaiting the next one."

While Wagner's decapitation was categorized by some as a spectacular show of strength by Putin, the media's characterization of a president allegedly blowing a plane out of the sky with the aim of killing off one of his previously most powerful warlord allies is hardly likely to inspire confidence in regime stability. This latest Russian turmoil should provoke disquiet among African citizens in considering whether Wagner and its kleptocratic successors are genuine champions of African rights, liberties and national sovereignty - or whether their arrival ushers in a new phase of imperialist oppression and all that comes with it in terms of atrocities, industrial-scale looting of resources, and colonialist subjugation.

This also offers a lesson for dysfunctional states such as Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Sudan and Libya, that foreign-sponsored militias can never be relied on to secure regime survival or social stability. These militia catalysts of chaos ultimately become Trojan horses for hostile foreign domination, and open a Pandora's box of interminable anarchy and violence.

Arab News

# Prigozhin seemed to be living on borrowed time

**WAGNER chief Yevgeny Prigozhin - who the Russian aviation agency confirmed was a passenger on board a plane that crashed on Wednesday evening - seemed to be living on borrowed time. Ever since June, when the warlord led his Wagner mercenaries in an uprising against his country's military commanders, the Kremlin's soft response had bewildered longtime Russia watchers.**

Within the span of a few hours, Russian President Vladimir Putin switched from accusing Prigozhin of "treason," and labeling his mutiny "a stab in the back of our troops and the people," to allowing Belarus' President Alexander Lukashenko to promise Prigozhin amnesty and a base for his fighters. To those familiar with Putin's vindictive streak, something did not add up. (Others who challenged Putin have wound up poisoned, imprisoned or falling out of windows.)

The details of Wednesday's plane crash are still murky. Video of the plane debris taken at the purported crash site in the western Tver region of Russia matches the plane registered to Prigozhin. Meanwhile, some are even speculating that the warlord might have faked his death in order to disappear. The true cause may not be known for some time, if ever. In his first public comments on the plane crash, Putin expressed his condolences to the families of the victims on Thursday and called Prigozhin "a man of difficult fate" who had "made serious mistakes

in life."

Whatever official version is announced, many Russians are likely to believe Prigozhin's demise was punishment for his disloyalty. To those who suspect foul play, the real puzzle will be why it took so long. Putin's tough image had taken a hit when he let the Wagner mutineers off with little more than a reprimand. Will the mercenary leader's fiery end now restore the president's reputation?

Perhaps. To some well-schooled observers, the delay made sense. In July, CIA Director William Burns told attendees at a national security conference, "I think Putin is someone who generally thinks revenge is a dish best served cold..." If Putin had a role in Prigozhin's fate - and that's far from proven - there was an argument for carefully laying the groundwork before dealing with the Wagner leader himself. The Kremlin had three urgent tasks to complete before that.

First, Putin's investigators would want to carefully assess the extent to which members of the armed forces and security services supported Prigozhin. Few local troops did anything to resist the mercenaries' advance on Moscow. Then, to avoid turning Prigozhin into a martyr, the Kremlin - if it were involved - would need to discredit and embarrass him, cutting into his popularity in right-wing nationalist circles, before acting to punish him.

Perhaps most important, Putin's men needed to gather up the con-

Daniel Treisman

trol networks of the Wagner operation in Africa. From Mali and the Central African Republic to Mozambique and Sudan, Prigozhin's agents were providing security to dictators, guarding oil wells and diamond mines, and shaping public opinion through propaganda outlets. Russia's covert presence in Africa - largely a Wagner venture - was one of Moscow's few recent foreign policy successes. Yet, if the plan all along was to strip Prigozhin of his reputation, armed supporters, and African assets before holding him to account, the actual course of events still looks dysfunctional.

Investigations were started within the armed forces, and probably within the security forces as well. A few generals have been relieved of their commands. Even General Sergei Surovikin, aka "General Armageddon," the commander of Russian aerospace forces, who was known to be on good terms with Prigozhin, was dismissed in recent days. Still, there is little evidence of any systematic purge to root out those unhappy with the military leadership. In the midst of the ongoing war in Ukraine, such a purge would be dangerous. But so is not conducting one.

Although Surovikin disappeared from public view right after the mutiny, it took the Kremlin two months to make the actual announcement that he had been removed. And rather than bring in a loyal outsider, the authorities replaced Surovikin with his own

chief of staff, Viktor Afzalov. The effort to discredit Prigozhin got off to a colorful start with pictures of Prigozhin's opulent St Petersburg mansion broadcast on state TV. Besides gold bars and millions of dollars worth of cash, the photographs showed a bizarre collection of wigs and other disguises that seemed better fitted to a "two-bit criminal" than to a selfless patriot.

But that was it. Any effort to paint Prigozhin as wealthy and corrupt stopped almost immediately, and no new financial investigations were announced. Much of the money and weapons seized from his house by police were even reportedly returned to him, according to the Washington Post, citing an anonymous St. Petersburg businessman. As for unwinding Prigozhin's control over his Africa networks, the warlord was even allowed to mingle with political and media contacts from the Sahel at the Russia-Africa summit in St. Petersburg in July. And in what might have been the last straw for Putin, Prigozhin released a video on Monday of himself standing in what looked like an African desert, boasting of his men's exploits. He claimed to be "making Africa even freer." If the goal was to destroy Prigozhin systematically while taking over his assets, the results look mixed at best. It would not be surprising if many in the Kremlin felt frustrated at the mercenary leader's seeming ability to wriggle free from any constraint. That was the context in which he apparently took his last flight on Wednesday.

CNN

# The substantial impact of global poverty on children

**GLOBAL poverty remains one of the most important, yet complicated, global issues. It is important to examine its root causes in order to effectively chart a path in tackling the underlying problem. At this stage of globalization and advanced technology, there are enough resources to address this issue. Poverty is defined as a condition of deprivation in which an individual, family or a community lacks the financial resources and basic necessities to maintain a minimum standard of living. Basic essentials in life include food, clothing, water and shelter.**

In order to measure extreme global poverty, the World Bank adopted the global poverty line, which uses factors such as purchasing power parity, exchange rates across countries, global prices and values of local currencies. The international poverty threshold was \$1 a day in 1985, \$1.90 a day in 2015, and was updated to \$2.15 in September 2022 as the cost of living increased. In other words, surviving on less than \$2.15 a day is considered to be living in extreme poverty. But it is important to point out that the poverty line in richer countries is set at higher levels due to the higher standard of living and differences in purchasing power. A person might be making more than \$2.15 a day, but his or her family still may be unable to afford basic necessities, such as electricity, clean water, education, basic healthcare and proper housing. For example, the poverty line in the US for one individual is around \$15,000 (SR56,280) a year, or about \$56 per day. Based on the updated global poverty line, almost 10 percent of the world population lives in extreme poverty, while about half survive on less than \$6.85 per person per day. On the global level, one in nine people is hungry or undernourished.

But the most important issue is that the young are disproportionately affected since almost half of people living in extreme poverty are children. This despite the fact

Dr. Majid Rafizadeh

that children comprise only one-third of the global population. An estimated 360 million children are living in extreme poverty, and roughly 1 billion children lack access to nutrition, housing, education, water, sanitation and healthcare. In other words, children are more than twice as likely to be living in poverty compared with adults. The other problem is that poor communities become trapped in a cycle of hardship that can last for generations, as they are unable to provide the resources, education, opportunities and basic necessities needed for their children to pull themselves out of poverty. In 2021, about 5 million children (roughly 16,000 a day) died before their they reached their fifth birthday, while 2.1 million children and youth aged between 5 and 24 lost their lives because of inadequate access to healthcare, according to the latest estimates released by the UN Inter-agency Group for Child Mortality Estimation. In addition to hardship, impoverishment can have long-term effects on children's mental and physical health, such as slowing brain development.

According to the US Department of Health and Human Services: "Childhood poverty is associated with developmental delays, toxic stress, chronic illness and nutritional deficits. Individuals who experience childhood poverty are more likely to experience poverty into adulthood, which contributes to generational cycles of poverty. In addition to lasting effects of childhood poverty, adults living in poverty are at a higher risk of adverse health effects from obesity, smoking, substance abuse and chronic stress." One of the main factors in global poverty is inequality when it comes to distribution of resources. Other reasons include inefficient systems of governance at the state level; corruption; discrimination against ethnic and racial groups; social barriers; inadequate access to healthcare; lack of access to education, food, clean water and sanitation; poor infrastructure; high

unemployment rates; lack of social services and welfare offered by government; and gender inequality; as well as climate change and environmental degradation leading to droughts, storms and flood.

We should bear in mind that conflicts have a substantial impact on poverty. Conflicts and wars can inflict damage on infrastructure and, more importantly, disrupt production and manufacturing processes. Some people may point out that poverty has existed throughout human history, but I would argue that there exists one difference in the 21st century: The world has enough resources, technology and wealth to tackle this critical global issue and make sure that people meet at least their basic needs regarding food, clothing, water, education, adequate healthcare and shelter. This will require coordination on individual, national, regional and international levels to ensure accessibility of technology to everyone, availability of basic resources, education, food, healthcare, clean water, sanitation, shelter, and addressing poor governance and corruption. Cooperation between the private sector, private philanthropy and the government's developmental programs is critical as well to channel resources to poor communities. The role that the wealthiest in the world can play should not be underestimated. The wealth of some individuals and philanthropists has grown larger than that of some national economies and government budgets. As economist Homi Kharas, of the Brookings Institute, wrote: "There are 2,755 billionaires in the world today, with an estimated wealth of \$13.2 trillion. Even just 1 percent of this wealth would yield a flow of \$130 billion per year. This can be compared with annual official aid of roughly \$160 billion from all countries and multilateral institutions combined." In summary, the impact of global poverty on children is substantial. We have all of the resources and technology necessary to tackle this global issue.

# The global order’s triple policy challenge and the tasks ahead

**THREE upcoming international gatherings - the Group of 20 Leaders' Summit in September, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank annual meetings in October and the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in the United Arab Emirates in November - will focus on devising strategies to sustain global growth and tame inflation.**

With public and private debt at record levels, political leaders face the monumental task of maintaining financial stability while simultaneously allocating resources to address critical challenges such as global warming and pandemic preparation. With increasingly frequent and more intense extreme weather events underscoring the urgent need for decisive action, much of the attention will rightly be on the debt crisis currently engulfing much of the developing world. Given that many middle- and low-income countries lack the necessary resources to invest in adaptation and mitigation measures, global leaders will undoubtedly be pressured to narrow the climate-finance gap.

But the collapse of the traditional Paris Club-based renegotiation process and the ongoing failure of the G20's Common Framework for Debt Treatments have hindered efforts to establish a more efficient policy framework to reduce low- and middle-income countries' debt burdens. Moreover, developing countries' debt woes have been exacerbated by the sharp increase in global interest rates and the decrease in private capital inflows to emerging markets economies. Several recent initiatives seek to tackle the triple challenge of sustaining economic growth, ensuring financial stability and mobilizing the resources needed to address global threats like climate change. All of them, including the roadmap outlined by policymakers at the June Summit for a New Global Financing Pact in

William R. Rhodes & John Lipsky efforts.

Moreover, there are already effective models of cooperation that underscore the potentially transformative impact that risk sharing could have on private capital inflows and debt-restructuring deals. Such models, including partial guarantees, public-private partnerships and certain cofinancing measures, could reduce credit risk and extend the protective umbrella of preferred creditor status to private investors partnering with official entities. The Sovereign Debt Working Group's analysis suggests that contractual standards, market-based initiatives and national legislation could all improve global debt management. Moreover, by drawing the right lessons from previous debt-restructuring arrangements, policymakers and economists could develop a best-practices framework.

But first, the official sector must treat the private sector as a partner and ally and shift its focus to mobilizing private capital. If adopted, this approach would mark a significant departure from today's ineffective policy frameworks. The Global Sovereign Debt Roundtable, established by the IMF, the World Bank and the G20 presidency (currently held by India), is a step in the right direction. This high-level committee, which includes both official and private-sector representatives, could reconcile existing discrepancies and forge a new consensus on how to manage sovereign debt. Similarly, the World Bank's recently announced Private Sector Investment Lab, which brings together global policymakers and senior financial-sector executives, could make significant strides toward removing the barriers currently impeding private capital flows to developing and emerging economies. If policymakers are genuinely committed to scaling up global climate investment, they must embrace such initiatives and take further steps to enhance private-sector engagement.

The Japan Times

# Will we ever see real climate action?

**WHILE the world's attention was focused on the Maui wildfires in Hawaii, and rightly so given the high death toll (115 with about 1,000 people reported missing) and scale of devastation (economic loss of about \$6 billion), the Canadian, Greek and Spanish governments were also struggling to control wildfires in different parts of their countries. The wildfires in Canada (about 1,000 in number) are especially destructive, having already scorched more than 15 million hectares in Quebec, Ontario and other regions. And while Spain has evacuated thousands of people from the island of Tenerife to save them from the wrath of raging infernos, Greece has seen 35 people falling victims to conflagrations.**

Blame the wildfires, if you will, on El Nino, which according to the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration is likely to remain strong for the next six months because of sizzling ocean temperatures in the east-central tropical Pacific in July. The world, except for the climate skeptics and vested interests, knows why the east-central tropical Pacific has been sizzling. As a consequence of global warming, more than half of the oceans have become greener in the past two decades, the peer-review science journal Nature reported in July.

The warming of the Earth, however, is not only about heat waves,

melting glaciers and drying water bodies, which, not to be mistaken, are more than alarming. Global warming also results in erratic and unusually heavy rainfall, and floods. China has experienced both forms climate-related devastation this year. While June and July saw many parts of China in the grip of extreme heat, with temperatures reaching record highs in Beijing, early August saw the opening up of the sky, with Beijing experiencing the heaviest downpour in 140 years and parts of Hebei province encountering devastating floods. True, Typhoon Doksuri in late July was responsible for the deluge, but typhoons rarely were so destructive earlier. By the way, July was the hottest month on record. This month has also seen the mountainous Indian province of Himachal Pradesh being battered by record downpours and landslides. With rain continuing to wreak havoc in Himachal Pradesh, comes the latest weather forecast of more, heavier downpours, posing flooding threats to the neighboring province of Punjab, which has already suffered two major floods in the past month. The tragedy which has already claimed 238 lives in Himachal is being blamed on melting glaciers, shrinking snow cover and increasing rain, all because of climate change.

If the developed countries and emerging market economies are struggling to adapt to climate

change, we cannot even imagine what the condition of the least-developed and Pacific island countries is like. The least said about the people native to these countries the better. Their plight is manifested in the waves of refugees making their way to Europe's coasts, braving dangerous currents in decrepit ferries and steamers. These people, exploited by human traffickers, are not only fleeing poverty and wars in African countries; they are also trying to escape the wrath of climate change. They are, first of all, climate refugees. And yet world leaders, especially leaders of the developed world, continue to pay lip service to climate action. They are, it seems, guided, if not controlled, by big business, which in turn is guided by the profit mantra. As long as the dollars keep flowing, it will be business as usual. The world leaders are expected to meet at the 28th United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, from Nov 30 to Dec 12, and resume from where they left in Sharm el-Sheikh in Egypt in 2022. They will again, like they did at COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland, in 2021, reaffirm the Paris Agreement goal of limiting the average increase in the global temperature to well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5 C. The same commitments will be made, the same negotiations will

reverberate in Dubai Expo City, the venue of the conference, and the same hopes will be raised only to be forgotten.

Had our world leaders been even half as serious as they pretend to be, they wouldn't have allowed \$1.4 trillion of public money, according to the International Institute for Sustainable Development, to be pumped into fossil fuels last year. Or, if you believe the International Monetary Fund, allowed fossil fuels to enjoy subsidies worth \$13 million per minute in 2022, which adds up to an astronomical \$7 trillion for the whole year. Perhaps a better way of fighting climate change is the one chosen by six Portuguese children and young adults. The young guns have moved the European Court of Human Rights against 32 European countries, accusing their leaders of not doing enough to combat climate change. Such is their determination and so strong is their case that the ECHR has referred the matter to the 17-judge Grand Chamber. For the record, the ECHR has referred only 0.03 percent of the cases to the Grand Chamber in its history. If the six young climate activists are successful, the 32 European countries will be legally bound to ramp up emissions cuts as well as reduce their overall contribution to climate change including their exports, especially fossil fuel exports. The world belongs to young activists, and only they can save it from doom.

The China Daily





# Pakistan Stock Exchange loses 192 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) shed 192.61 points on Monday, showing negative change of 0.40 percent, closing at 47,478.61 points against 47,671.22 points the previous trading day.

A total of 184,138,134 shares were traded during the day as compared to 192,036,691 shares, whereas the trading value of shares was recorded at Rs6.465 billion against Rs6.528 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 313 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 90 of them recorded gains and 202 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 21 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were K-Electric Ltd. with 19,236,327 shares

at Rs2.02 per share; Bankislami Pak. with 16,660,625 shares at Rs15.25 per share and Kohinoor Textile with 10,481,500 shares at Rs63.07 per share.

Pak Tobacco witnessed a maximum increase of Rs24.75 per share price, closing at Rs718.00, whereas the runner-up was Al-Abbas Sugar with Rs18.50 rise in its per share price to Rs500.00. Rafhan Maize XD witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs75.00 per share closing at Rs8300.00; followed by Sanofi-Aventis with Rs56.69 decline to close at Rs711.00.

**Rupee sheds 99 paisa against US Dollar**

Pakistani rupee on Monday witnessed a 99 paisa devaluation against the US dollar in the inter-bank trading and closed at Rs301.99 against the previ-

ous day's closing of Rs301.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs316 and Rs319 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs1.34 to close at Rs326.15 against the last day's closing of Rs324.81, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and stood at Rs2.06, whereas an increase of 80 paisa was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs379.67 as compared to the last closing of Rs378.87.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 28 paisa and 26 paisa to close at Rs82.22 and

Rs80.49 respectively.

**Gold rates decrease by Rs1,500 to Rs233,000**

The per tola price of 24 karat gold decreased by Rs.1,500 and was sold at Rs233,000 as compared to its sale at Rs234,500 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also decreased by Rs1,286 to Rs199,760 from Rs201,046 whereas the rate of 10 gram 22 karat went down to Rs183,113 from Rs184,292, the All Sindh Sarafa Jewellers Association reported.

The price per tola silver and that of ten-gram silver remained unchanged to close at Rs2,850 and Rs2,443.41 respectively.

The price of gold in the international market, however, increased by \$1 to \$1,915 from \$1,914, the Association reported.



SIALKOT: President Chamber of Commerce Abdul Ghaffoor Malik presenting a shield to Chairman Intellectual Property Organization of Pakistan Farrukh Amil.

# PBS: Pakistan earns \$947m from travel services' export

ISLAMABAD (APP): The country earned US \$947.040 million by providing different travel services in various countries during the fiscal year 2022-23.

This shows a growth of 74.68 per cent as compared to the US \$542.170 million worth same services provided during the corresponding period of the last fiscal year 2021-22, the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS) reported.

During the period under review, personal travel services increased by 74.11 per cent, from US \$539.120 million last year to US \$938.670 million during July-June 2023.

Among the personal services, the exports of health-related expenditure surged by 36.01 per cent to US \$4.570 million from US \$3.360 million while the education-related expenditure also rose by 7.70 per

cent from US \$ 10.780 million to US \$11.610 million.

Meanwhile, the PBS data revealed that the exports of business services grew by 174.43 per cent, from US\$ 3.050 million to US\$ 8.370 million.

It is pertinent to mention here that the exports of services from the country, witnessed a decrease of 8.09 per cent during the first month of financial year (2023-24) as compared to

the corresponding period of last year, it added.

The exports of services during July (2023-24) were recorded at US\$ 2,068 million against the exports of US\$ 2,250 million during the same month of last year.

The imports of the country witnessed a decline of 25.62 per cent, falling from US\$ 4,981 million last year to US\$ 3,705 million during the month under review.

# Meat exports grew by 37.22% in first month

ISLAMABAD (APP): Meat and meat preparations exports from the country during the first month of the current financial year increased by 37.22 per cent as compared to the exports of the corresponding period of last year.

In July 2023, about 8,910 metric tons of meat and meat products valued at \$9.926 million were exported as compared to 5,705 metric tons worth \$25.408 million in the same period last year, according to the data of the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

Meanwhile, 10,284 metric tons of fish and fish products valued at \$18.980 million were also

exported during the period under review as compared to the exports of 8,084 metric tons worth \$18.572 million in the same month of last year.

During the first month of the current financial year, seafood exports grew by 2.20 per cent, whereas the exports of fruits increased by 4.61 per cent.

In July 2023 food commodities valued at \$329.156 million were exported as compared to the exports of \$356.073 million of the same month last year, which was down by 7.56 per cent.

It is worth mentioning here that the trade deficit witnessed a decline of

41.16 per cent 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 per cent. The exports during the month were recorded at \$2.057 billion against \$2.250 billion last year, showing a decline of 8.57 per cent.

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

# Tokyo stocks rebound over Wall Street gains

TOKYO (Xinhua/APP): Tokyo stocks rebounded to close higher on Monday, bolstered by the upward momentum in the US stock market amid gains in Shanghai and Hong Kong.

Japan's benchmark Nikkei stock index, the 225-issue Nikkei Stock Average, gained 545.71 points, or 1.73 percent, from Friday to end at 32,169.99.

The broader Topix index, meanwhile, finished 33.41 points, or 1.47 percent, higher at 2,299.81.

During the final hours of trading, the Nikkei Average experienced a widening of its gains, led by activity in stock index futures. In the previous week, the market witnessed significant losses ahead of US Fed Chair Jerome Powell's speech.

The US Federal Reserve is "prepared to raise rates further" to bring down inflation toward the 2 percent target, but will "proceed carefully," Powell said on Friday, leaning toward a hawkish stance that favors monetary tightening, and gains in Wall Street at the end of the previous week led short-term investors to engage in buybacks of futures in the Tokyo market.

As uncertainties loomed over the future course of US monetary policy, many investors here adopted a wait-and-see approach, anticipating volatile market movements in the short term leading up to the September meeting of the US Federal Open Market Committee.

On the Prime market, gainers were led by machinery, oil and coal products, and iron and steel shares.

Issues that rose outpaced those that fell by 1,508 to 276, while 50 ended the day unchanged.

The turnover for the day came in at 2.89 trillion yen (19.74 billion US dollars), below the 3-trillion-yen mark for the seventh consecutive trading day.

HONG KONG (AFP/APP): Shares in troubled Chinese property giant Evergrande plummeted nearly 80 percent in Hong Kong on Monday after the end of a 17-month trading suspension.

The resumption of trading came after the company said in a filing on Friday that it had met guidelines set out by the bourse, including belatedly publishing its financial results and complying with other listing rules.

Once China's largest real estate firm, Evergrande defaulted in 2021 and is saddled with more than \$300 billion in liabilities, becoming a symbol of the nationwide property crisis that many fear could spill over globally.

Its shares plunged as much as 87 percent during morning trading, slashing

its market value from a peak of more than \$50 billion in 2017 to less than \$600 million.

It finished the day down 79.4 percent.

The company on Sunday reported fresh losses for the first half of the year amounting to 33 billion yuan (\$4.53 billion) -- an improvement on the 66.4 billion yuan in losses reported in the same period last year.

But its cash assets fell from \$2 billion last year to \$556 million, reflecting its dwindling liquidity.

China's property market "cooled down significantly" in the first six months of the year and saw new defaults in the sector, "further exacerbating the volatility in the market", Evergrande said.

"Based on the principles of respecting international restructuring practices and treating the rights and claims of all creditors in a fair and equitable manner, the Company steadily pushed forward the work related to the restructuring of its offshore debts," the firm

added.

In March 2022, the Hong Kong stock exchange suspended trading in Evergrande shares after it failed to publish its 2021 financial results.

Its earnings for 2021 and 2022 were published last month, showing a net loss of more than \$113 billion over the two-year period.

The company risked being delisted if its shares were suspended from trading for 18 months, according to Hong Kong stock exchange rules.

# China's internet users total 1.079 billion

BEIJING (Xinhua/APP): China's internet users totaled 1.079 billion by June 2023, an increase of 11.09 million since December 2022, alongside steady growth in digital infrastructure and internet applications, a report revealed Monday.

China's internet penetration reached 76.4 percent, according to the statistical report on China's Internet development released by the China Internet Network Information Center.

Regarding digital infrastructure improvements, the report disclosed that by June 2023 China had 30.24 million registered domain names, 767 million active IPv6 users and broadband access points totaled 1.11 billion.

The country's total length of fiber optic cables reached 61.96 million kilometers.

Regarding internet applications, as of June 2023, the user scale of instant messaging, internet video, and short video stood at 1.047 billion, 1.044 billion, and 1.026

billion, respectively.

The report highlighted that the number of users for online ride-hailing, online travel booking, and web literature has witnessed significant growth compared to December 2022, with an increase of 34.92 million, 30.91 million, and 35.92 million, respectively. This translates to growth rates of 8.0 percent, 7.3 percent, and 7.3 percent, respectively, making them the applications with the fastest user growth.

**Chinese yuan strengthens last week**

The Chinese yuan strengthened against a basket of currencies last week, according to the China Foreign Exchange Trade System (CFETS). The CFETS yuan exchange rate composite index, which measures the yuan's strength relative to a basket of currencies, gained 0.14 points from the previous week to 97.33, according to the CFETS.

The index compares the yuan's value with the value of 24 currencies, including the US dollar, the euro, and the Japanese yen.

Last week also saw an index measuring the yuan against the Bank for International Settlements currency basket edge up 0.12 points from the previous week to 92.53.

The index measuring the yuan against the Special Drawing Rights basket rose 0.45 points week on week to 92.53.

**China's central bank conducts 332-blm-yuan reverse repos**

China's central bank conducted 332 billion yuan (about 46.2 billion US dollars) of seven-day reverse repos at an interest rate of 1.8 percent Monday.

The move aims to keep liquidity in the banking system stable at the end of the month, the People's Bank of China said in a statement.

A reverse repo is a process in which the central bank purchases securities from commercial banks through bidding, with an agreement to sell them back in the future.

# PNSC collaborate with ICAP for uplift of youth



F.P. Report

KARACHI: The Pakistan National Shipping Corporation (PNSC) having contributed towards the National Economy of the Pakistan, has now collaborated with the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan (ICAP) for the development of the youth of Pakistan and showcase their talent at the Global Stage by enabling them with a unique opportunity to represent and learn in an Organization which is the sole flag bearer in the

Industry of the National Economy.

PNSC is now a registered organization under ICAP Training Organizations Out of Practice CA training Scheme. The ceremony was organized on August 28, 2023 at PNSC where registration certificate under the said program was issued by the President (ICAP) M. Ali Latifand Vice President (ICAP) Arsalan Khalid to the Chairman (PNSC) Rear Admiral Jawad Ahmed HI, (M) and Executive Director (Finance) / Chief Financial

Officer (PNSC) Syed Jarrar Haider Kazmi.

This significant development confirms PNSC's commitment towards contribution to the Country both financially and socially. Pakistan National Shipping Corporation would like to thank the Institute of Chartered Accountants of Pakistan for the swift and smooth registration process and would like to reaffirm its commitment to the partnership by providing valuable and trained professional resources by the end of the tenure.

# Markets rally on Powell comments, China boosted by duty cut

PARIS (AFP/APP): Asian and European stock markets advanced Monday as investors welcomed the latest signals from central bankers regarding monetary policy and Chinese stimulus measures.

In a much-anticipated speech Friday, US Federal Reserve chief Jerome Powell left the door open to further interest rate hikes but repeated his pledge that decisions would be dependent upon progress in bringing inflation to heel.

Powell's comments suggested borrowing costs would be held at a 22-year high of 5.25-5.5 percent next month, though investors remain concerned more could come before year's end.

While inflation is coming down, a strong run of economic data -- particularly on jobs -- has been seen by markets as putting pressure on the Fed to keep hiking interest rates.

"If the data continues to show an ease in labour market tightness and price pressures, then the Fed is likely

done with its tightening cycle," said National Australia Bank's Rodrigo Catril.

"If the data doesn't play ball, then further tightening should be expected. Thus, upcoming key market data releases (inflation and labour market) are likely to set the tone for markets over coming months."

Analysts said the focus on data meant this week's inflation and jobs figures take on even more significance. Powell's remarks sent US stocks lower initially before they bounced back to end Friday on a positive note.

And Asia followed suit Monday, with Tokyo, Hong Kong, Shanghai, Sydney, Singapore, Seoul, Taipei, Mumbai, Bangkok, Jakarta and Wellington all enjoying a strong start to the week.

Paris and Frankfurt both rose in midday trading. London was closed for a holiday.

Shanghai was boosted by China's decision to slash the tax paid on stock trades for the first time since 2008 as authorities battle to sup-

port the world's second-largest economy.

Officials also said they would slow the pace of new listings, which usually suck up market liquidity, and followed a series of pledges from the authorities that have failed to lift optimism.

Analysts at China International Capital Corp said the latest measures beat expectations.

"The increasing force of the policy tools will lift market confidence, amplifying the positive signal for the market," they said.

But Stephen Innes at SPI Asset Management was more sceptical about their potential impact.

"While the emergence of more accommodative measures is encouraging, the reality remains that these interventions seem somewhat fragmented, particularly within the broader context of the substantial property market downturn," he said.

The moves came as shares in troubled Chinese property giant Evergrande resumed trading in Hong

Kong after a 17-month suspension for not publishing its financial results.

They plunged more than 80 percent after it released its earnings Sunday that showed losses of \$4.53 billion in the first half of the year and just \$556 million in cash assets.

Once China's largest real estate firm, Evergrande defaulted in 2021 and is saddled with more than \$300 billion in liabilities, becoming a symbol of a nationwide property crisis that many fear could spill over globally.

Investors were also keeping tabs on US Commerce Secretary Gina Raimondo's talks with Chinese counterparts in the latest bid to ease trade tensions between the world's two largest economies.

Raimondo's visit -- which lasts until Wednesday -- is the latest in a series of high-level trips to China by US officials in recent months and could culminate in a meeting between presidents Joe Biden and Xi Jinping.





## In brief

**'Arshad makes entire nation proud'**

LAHORE (APP): Adviser to Chief Minister Punjab on Sports and Youth Affairs Wahab Riaz said on Monday that the whole nation was proud of ace javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem feat. He said this in a message issued here while congratulating Arshad Nadeem for winning a historic silver medal in the World Athletics Championship javelin throw event held in Budapest, Hungary. Wahab Riaz said that all the Pakistanis are quite upbeat that Arshad will clinch the gold medal in the Paris Olympic Games. "In the shape of Arshad, Pakistan has got a new ray of hope of winning a coveted gold medal in the Olympics," he added. He said that Pakistan Arshad fought well with the Indian opponent till the last throw. "The national hero will be accorded a grand welcome on his return home". Wahab Riaz also congratulated the national Blind cricket team for winning the World Blind Games cricket title. "The national blind cricket team has made the whole nation proud by defeating arch-rivals India in the final.

**Singpho defeats Franky Mommoin**

DUBAI (INP): In the first-ever Aturto 1.2 Knockout main event, Jowkhum Dilli Singpho defeated Franky Mommoin to win performance of the night title. The action-packed night at Aturto 1.2 saw some of the most exciting and skilled fighters gathered under one roof to promote the finest fight show of the evening rewarding the select few untapped winning talents who came prepared to ace their combat game. Jowkhum Dilli is renowned for writing history as the fighter from Arunachal Pradesh who won battles in Indonesia in addition to winning bronze at the Global Association of Mixed Martial Arts (GAMMA) Asian Championship in Kyrgyzstan. Tachi Karda and Johnny Darlong, who won the title Match of the Night at the second Aturto Fight event, were the night's other big attraction. The Knockout of the Night prize went to Diyo Rimo, and Prakamya Gogoi was honoured with the extraordinary Submission of the Night winning award. The league attracted over more than 1000 spectators for the clash of the giants because to the exceptional combination of Olympians and seasoned athletes who offered fighters a one-stop platform to elevate their status.

**Biles wins record 8 US all-around title**

NEW YORK (BBC): Simone Biles broke a 90-year record by winning her eighth all-around title at the US Gymnastics Championships. Her win comes less than a month after the four-time Olympic champion returned to competition, following a two-year break to work on her mental health. The 26-year-old's floor routine earned a score of 15.400, giving her an all-around total of 118.450, with Shilese Jones 3.9 points back in second. Biles moves ahead of Alfred Jochim, who claimed his seventh US title in 1933. She was the only competitor to finish the two days of competition in San Jose with two scores of 15 or higher, having taken control of the event with 15.700 on the vault on Friday. Biles first became US all-around champion in 2013 and matched Jochim's record in 2021. Later that year she took a break from gymnastics after pulling out of five of her six finals at the delayed Tokyo Olympics.

## PCB Unveils Star Nation Jersey for ICC Cricket World Cup 2023

LAHORE (APP): The Pakistan Cricket Board unveiled the Star Nation Jersey on Monday at a grand ceremony here at Gaddafi Stadium.

The ceremony, led by Zaka Ashraf, Chairman of the PCB Management Committee, marked a significant step as the national team prepares for the forthcoming ICC Cricket World Cup 2023.

The Star Nation Jersey signifies more than a mere piece of apparel; it embodies the profound connection between Pakistan's cricketing heroes and their steadfast supporters. Drawing inspiration from celestial bodies, each star symbolises brilliance, aspiration, and the radiant glow of cricketing achievements.

This design philosophy encapsulates the spirit of cricketing excellence, resonating deeply with every Pakistani cricket enthusiast.

Zaka Ashraf, Chairman of the PCB Management Committee said: "The Star Nation Jersey bears witness to the enduring bond between our cricketers and the passionate fans who stand by them through every match. This jersey encapsulates our rich cricketing heritage and the luminous future that awaits."

Usman Waheed, Director – Commercial said: "The Star Nation Jersey isn't just a uniform; it's a canvas woven with stories, sacrifices, and triumphs. Each star on this jersey represents

the unwavering support of our fans and the radiant legacy of our cricketing heroes. Every detail has been meticulously crafted to ensure that donning this jersey will instill profound pride in every Pakistani."

Interested individuals can view the official reveal video by visiting the link <https://youtu.be/k2gNETWlsW0>. Fans can pre-order the Star Nation Jersey on the PCB's official online store, [shop.pcb.com.pk](https://shop.pcb.com.pk). By proudly wearing this jersey, fans can show their support for the cricketing heroes and unite under a single banner as Pakistan embarks on its quest for glory in the ICC Cricket World Cup 2023.

## Cricket greats congratulate Arshad Nadeem for winning silver in World Athletics C'ships

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan's cricket greats Monday took to social media to congratulate javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem for winning silver medal in he World Athletics Championships in Budapest, Hungary on late Sunday. The 26-year-old Arshad, who finished second in the event, became the very first athlete from Pakistan to claim a medal in the history of the competition.

Arshad, the reigning Commonwealth Games champion, made the nation proud with his season-best throw of 87.82m in his third attempt, which immediately saw him take the second position. India's Neeraj Chopra won gold medal with a big throw of 88.17m. Czech Republic's Jakub Vadlejch secured bronze with his best throw of 86.67m.

Former Skipper Wasim Akram commended Arshad for his feat and termed it "worth more than a gold."

"Take a bow Arshad Nadeem... the whole Pakistan is celebrating your silver medal... worth more than a gold... in World Athletics Championship."

"Why I said it's worth more than a gold is that you don't get the top level facilities other athletes get, but you still excelled. So pleasing that we are celebrating achievement other than in cricket!," Wasim said on the social media messaging platform X, previously known as twitter.

Former captain Shahid Afridi hailed Arshad for his remarkable show. "Congratulations to ArshadNadeem on securing the silver medal at the World Athletics Championship! Your exceptional performance and dedication have earned you a well-deserved place on the podium. Pakistan celebrates your incredible achievement!," he said in a message on X.

Former pacer Wahab Riaz lauded Arshad for clinching silver medal despite suffering injuries in the recent past.

"Despite the injuries and with limited resources, Arshad has once again proven what a superstar he is. Our first ever medal at the World Athletics Championships. Pakistan is super proud of you," he

said in his congratulatory remarks on X.

Fast bowlers Shaheen Shah Afridi and Haris Rauf in a video message, congratulated Arshad on his achievement. "Arshad, congratulations on winning the medal," said Shaheen. "It's a proud moment for Pakistan. You deserve all the recognition. I congratulate you on this incredible achievement," Haris said.

Star cricketer Shadab Khan said the entire nation was proud of Arshad. "I just want to say that I am your fan," Shadab wrote on X. Pakistan's woman cricketer Javeria Khan lauded Arshad for putting in sheer hard work to earn the medal.

"People like Arshad remind us and the system time and again that if we invest where it is needed, then there is no one stopping us," she said in her message on X. "Arshad is a league of his own. Time to give him, what he deserves. Thank you for raising Pakistan's flag high and higher," she added. "You are our pride. You prove it time and again," former Shoaib Akhtar wrote on X.

## China on Basketball World Cup brink after stunning loss

MANILA (AFP/APP): China head coach Aleksandar Djordjevic urged his players to show more "spirit", with their Basketball World Cup hopes hanging by a thread after a stunning loss to South Sudan on Monday.

China went down 89-69 to the World Cup debutants in Manila for their second defeat of the tournament, following an opening-day monstrosity by Serbia.

China must now beat Puerto Rico in their final group game on Wednesday and hope that other results go their way to avoid a first-round exit.

Djordjevic said his players would have to have more fire in their bellies and accused them of lacking "aggressiveness" against South Sudan.

"In moments of difficulty, you have to find your

spirit to respond on the floor," he said.

"It cannot be everything on paper -- you have to find it. Those moments are making winning teams."

China, ranked 27th in the world, fell behind early and could find no way back against 62nd-ranked South Sudan.

They finished the first quarter trailing by eight points and fell short when it mattered, being outscored by 10 points in the final quarter. China's Zhao Rui said he and his teammates "didn't have the same desire as our opponents".

Djordjevic said South Sudan's 15 successful three-point shots made the difference. "Those are the killers, they're just cutting your legs," he said.

"When you work so hard and you know what is coming and they shoot in your

face and just make it happen." American-born Li Kaier led China in scoring with 22 points.

Li, also known as Minnesota Timberwolves power forward Kyle Anderson, made headlines when he signed up for China's national team after obtaining citizenship last month. His performance against South Sudan marked an improvement on his tournament debut against Serbia, where he failed to score a single point.

China are now in danger of missing out on the Paris Olympics qualification spot awarded to Asia's highest-placed team at the tournament. Japan beat Finland for their first win on Sunday night and could qualify for the next round if they beat Australia on Tuesday.

## New Zealand give Williamson two weeks to prove World Cup fitness

WELLINGTON (INP): New Zealand have given Captain Kane Williamson a two-week deadline to prove his fitness for the one-day World Cup starting in October, head coach Gary Stead said Monday.

The batsman tore the cruciate ligaments in his right knee playing for Gujarat Titans in the Indian Premier League in April. The 33-year-old has recovered well and is batting in the nets, with a place in New Zealand's 15-man squad now in sight.

"We've got about two weeks from now until we name that side," Stead told New Zealand media. "We're going to give him every chance to use that full amount of time."

He's in full rehab mode, he's back batting in the nets again, which is great to see.

"He's progressing really well, but there's a lot of work for him still to do to make sure he gets where we need

him to be."

Williamson has scored more than 6,500 runs in one-day international cricket and led New Zealand in their nail-biting defeat to England in the 2019 World Cup final.

New Zealand play England in their opening game of the World Cup in Ahmedabad on October 5. As part of his recovery bid, Williamson is with the squad on their white-ball tour of England.

"Of course, we want him at the World Cup, but there is that bigger picture that we want Kane Williamson fit for the rest of his career," added Stead. "There will be honest conversations that Kane and I will have around exactly where he is at."

All-rounder James Neesham has withdrawn from the Twenty 20 squad for the series against England, which starts Wednesday, to return home ahead of the birth of his first child.



KARACHI: President Dr. Arif Alvi, accompanied by the Begum Samina Arif Alvi, speaking at an interactive session with Special Olympics Pakistan delegation World Summer Games Berlin 2023 at Governor House.

## Asia Cricket Cup to start in Pakistan, Sri Lanka on August 30

PESHAWAR (APP): The most awaited Asia Cricket Cup is commencing simultaneously in Pakistan and Sri Lanka under the aegis of the Asian Cricket Council with Pakistan being the host finalising all arrangements for the smooth conduct of the prestigious event.

Pakistan is going to face arch-rival India on September 2 at Kandy, Cricket fans from all over the world, including Pakistan and India, are watching and a large number of fans are eagerly waiting to see them face the toughest battle, as expected.

The biggest match of the Asia Cup is going to be played between India and Pakistan with cricket fans waiting for the actual battle. The entire Asia Cup was to be played in Pakistan but due to India's stubbornness, only four matches were played in Pakistan and nine matches in Sri Lanka. On August 30, Pakistan will play its first match against Nepal in Multan (Pakistan). On August 31, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka will face each other at the Kandy ground.

There will be a match against Afghanistan and Bangladesh on September 3, on September 4, India will play its second match against Nepal in Kandy and on September 5, Afghanistan will play against Sri Lanka in Gaddafi Stadium in Lahore. One match of the Super Four will be played in Lahore and the remaining

matches will be played in Colombo.

The final will also be played in Colombo. India has won the Asia Cup (One Day) six times and the T20 Cup once. Sri Lanka has won the Asia Cup six times while Pakistan has won the Asia Cup twice. Sri Lanka is the only team that has participated in all the previous Asia Cups.

India, Pakistan and Bangladesh have participated in the Asia Cup cricket tournament 14, 14 times. Sri Lanka has participated in almost 50 matches, out of which Sri Lanka has won 34 matches and lost 16 matches.

India has won 31 matches out of 49 matches and 16 matches have been lost. In third place is the Pakistan team which has won 26 matches out of 45 matches while Pakistan had to face failure in 18 matches. Sri Lanka's Jayasuriya has made the most 1220 runs in batting. Jayasuriya scored 1220 runs in 25 matches at an average of 53.04. He scored six centuries and 3 half-centuries in the Asia Cup. The best batting was 130 runs. In second place is Kumar Singara of Sri Lanka who scored 1075 runs at an average of 48.86. His best innings is 121 runs.

The third number is India's Sachin Tendulkar, who has scored 971 runs at an average of 51.10. The best batting is 114 runs. The fourth number is Sri Lanka's Ranatunga. He has made 741 runs from Sri Lankan

Jayawardene who has scored 674 runs at an average of 29.33. In bowling, Sri Lanka's Muralidharan is the most successful bowler with 30 wickets. He got these 30 wickets by playing 24 matches. His best bowling performance is five wickets for 31 runs. Sri Lanka's Malinga is in the second position with 29 wickets at an average of 20.55. His best bowling is 5 wickets for 34 runs.

Sri Lankan bowler Ajantha Mendis is also in third place in bowling. Mendis has taken 26 wickets at an average of 10.42 in just eight matches. Saeed Ajmal of Pakistan is in third place, he has taken 25 wickets at an average of 19.40 in 12 matches. He is also in fifth place. The Sri Lankan bowler is Chaminda Vas Brarman who took 23 wickets in 19 matches.

The national selection committee, which includes Inzamam-ul-Haq, team Director Mickey Arthur and head coach Grant Bradburn, has finalized the team after consulting with Captain Babar Azam.

Captain Babar Azam, Abdullah Shafiq, Fakhr Zaman, Imamul Haq, Salman Ali Agha, Iftikhar Ahmed, Tayyab Tahir, Mohammad Rizwan, Mohammad Haris, Shadab Khan (Vice Captain), Mohammad Nawaz, Saud Shakeel, Osama Mir, Faheem Ashraf, Haris Rauf, Mohammad Wasim Junior, Naseem Shah and Shaheen Afridi are included.

## SSU to hold 1st police extreme handgun shooting championship

KARACHI(APP): Special Security Unit (SSU) in collaboration with the International Police Organization - Pakistan is organizing '1st Police Extreme Handgun Shooting Championship 2023', scheduled to be held on September 9th at Chowkandi SSU Headquarters. The players will compete in six stages by using 150 rounds, said a news release on Monday.

During the press briefing held at SSU Headquarters, DIGP - Security & Emergency Services Division Dr. Maqsood Ahmed said there are three categories in the competition which includes law enforcement personnel and civilians. Shooters from all over the country can participate in their relevant categories.

He added that SSU is providing an ample opportunity to the citizens, women and personnel of forces, especially those who are interested in shooting, therefore, citizens should take advantage of this opportunity.

## US Open 2023 Iga Swiatek cruises into second round but Maria Sakkari out

NEW YORK (BBC): Iga Swiatek began her defence of the US Open title with an emphatic first-round victory at Flushing Meadows as eighth seed Maria Sakkari crashed out.

World number one Swiatek breezed to a 6-0 6-1 win over Sweden's Rebecca Peterson in 58 minutes. Sakkari had a day to forget on Court 17 as she was knocked out by world number 71 Rebeka Masarova of Spain.

The Greek had been 4-1 up in the first set but Masarova responded in thrilling fashion as she claimed a 6-4 6-4 win.

Swiatek has won both previous meetings with world number 86 Peterson and came through this encounter on Arthur Ashe Stadium in imperious fashion. The 22-year-old Pole, who is bidding to win her fifth Grand Slam title, will face Daria Saville of Australia in the second round. Swiatek said: "I wanted to start the tournament with everything I was focusing on. I was happy to play a great game, with the pressure and expectations, I was happy on the court. "I feel like everything that is going on around us is taking away our attention and what we want to achieve with our games and careers."

"I want to remind myself that I want to develop as a player. The numbers and stats don't really matter to me. I'm just trying to focus on my performance."

There were routine wins for other seeded players on the opening day. Victoria Azarenka made light work of Frenchwoman Fiona Ferro in their match at the Louis Armstrong Stadium. The 18th seed, who reached the US Open final in 2012, 2013 and 2020, wrapped up a comprehensive 6-1 6-2 victory over the world 190. Elsewhere, Czech 10th seed Karolina Muchova clinched a 6-4 6-0 win over Storm Sanders of Australia, while 15th seed Belinda Bencic of Switzerland eased passed Kamilla Rakhimova 6-2 6-4.



## Texas Chargers crowned champions of inaugural US Masters T10

LAUDERHILL (INP): The Texas Chargers held their nerve at crucial moments, and put on a fantastic performance on Sunday, as they defeated the New York Warriors, via a Super Over in the Final of the inaugural US Masters T10. The Chargers won it narrowly in the Super Over.

Batting first, the New York Warriors lost opener Kamran Akmal off the first delivery, before Tillakaratne Dilshan and Richard Levi steadied the ship. The duo put on a 30-run stand for the second wicket, playing with a risk-free approach, before Levi was knocked over for 17.

Dilshan added 18 to the cause and was the next to depart, with Misbah-ul-Haq being joined by Shahid Afridi. They could not kick on as Afridi was dismissed for 1, by Ehsan Adil, who finished his spell with 3 wickets.

The skipper could add only 5 in the

seventh over, and Abdul Razzaq (3) departed in the 8th over, with the score at 62/6. After that, Jonathan Carter teed off for the Warriors, smashing 3 sixes and as many boundaries, taking the team to 92/6 in their quota of 10 overs.

In response, the Texas Chargers lost the wicket of the in-form Mukhtar Ahmed for 6 in the second over. However, the very experienced Mohammad Hafeez had skipper Ben Dunk for company, and the duo dug in. Hafeez has been in scintillating form and along with Dunk, put on a 46-run stand to set the Chargers on the way to the finish line. Dunk was dismissed for 20 but Hafeez was looking dangerous, as the Chargers reached 60/2 at the halfway stage.

Soon after, Hafeez was dismissed for 46, and Darren Stevens was gone for 2, as the Chargers lost

their 4th wicket. In the 9th over, Sohail Khan struck a few big blows as Upul Tharanga (1), Phil Mustard (0), Thisara Perera (4) and Neil Broom (1) were all dismissed quickly. Sohail finished with a five-wicket haul as the Warriors took control.

In the final over, Shahid Afridi picked two wickets, as the Chargers were all out for 92, in their 10 overs, forcing the Final into a Super Over.

In the Super Over, the Chargers batted first with Ben Dunk and Hafeez coming out to face Sohail Khan. The Chargers courtesy Dunk and Mukhtar Ahmed hit a couple of sixers and lost one wicket on the way to posting 15 runs. In reply, the Warriors had Shahid Afridi and Jonathon Carter taking strike. The duo threw the kitchen sink at the Chargers, but fell just short, scoring 13 runs off the over.





## In brief

### Interior Minister greets Arshad

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Bugti on Monday congratulated Pakistani javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem for winning silver medal at World Athletic Championship. In his message, he said the nation was proud of Arshad Nadeem for making history by winning silver medal. The minister said, Arshad's victory once again uplifted name of the country at the world stage. Arshad despite injury and meager resources won the first medal for Pakistan in World Athletic Championship, said the minister while wishing the athlete all the best for future.

### Seven more dengue cases surface

RAWALPINDI (APP): As many as seven more dengue cases were reported in Rawalpindi during the last 24 hours, raising the tally of confirmed cases to 157 in the district. District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr Sajjad Mehmood, Monday said that, among the new cases, three cases had arrived from Chaklala Cantonment, two of each from Potohar town urban and Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi area while one patient reported from Rawalpindi rural area. He said 43 patients were admitted to Rawalpindi public hospitals, out of which 26 were confirmed cases while 119 were discharged after treatment. Dr Sajjad informed that the district administration had registered 39 FIRs, issued tickets to five, sealed five premises, and a fine of Rs 5,300 was imposed against the violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours. Giving details of the division cases, he informed that 157 cases were reported from Rawalpindi district, 14 Attock, five Chakwal and two from Jhelum so far. During indoor surveillance, the teams checked 4,498,688 houses in Rawalpindi district and larvae were found in 26,539 homes. Similarly, he added that while checking 1,757,413 places, the teams found larvae at 4,965 sites during outdoor surveillance.

### 13 drug peddlers netted

RAWALPINDI (APP): Rawalpindi police in an action against suspected drug peddlers conducted raids in different areas and rounded up 13 accused on recovery of over 20 kg charras. According to a police spokesman, Rattaamral police rounded up Raheel for having 2400 grams charras, Imran with 1600 grams charras and Sajid for carrying 1250 grams charras. Civil Lines police netted Ajmal with 1230 grams charras, Zulfiqar for having 1260 grams charras and Kamal Ahmed for possessing 1310 grams charras. Mandra police netted Samar Majeed for possessing 2500 grams of charras. The spokesman informed that Gujar Khan, Morgah, Naseerabad, Saddar Baroni, City and Waris Khan police arrested Haq Nawaz with 2200 grams charras, Faisal for having 1150 grams charras, Abid on recovery of 1250 grams charras, Muhammad Nasir for carrying 1520 grams charras, Talha with 1350 grams charras and Salman for possessing 1420 grams charras. Separate cases have been registered against all accused while further investigations are underway. City Police Officer, Rawalpindi had directed the police officers to accelerate ongoing operations against drug peddlers, bootleggers and other lawbreakers, he added.



ISLAMABAD: Dr. Muhammad Faisal, High Commissioner-designate to United Kingdom calling on Chairman Senate, Muhammad Sadiq Sanjrani at Parliament House.

## Mashal urges world to hold India accountable for rights violations in Kashmir

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Human Rights Minister Mashal Malik Monday urged that the international community should hold India accountable for human rights violations in Jammu and Kashmir. "Kashmiris must be given the right to decide for their fate like all other nations" she said while talking to a Private news channel.

"India has to respect democracy, the United Nations (UN) resolution, and the will of the people, she said, adding, that the time is not far when India will become the victim of its own agenda and aggressive policies."

She further said, "The

permanent members of the UNSC and the civilized world must play a role to ensure the smooth implementation of the UN resolutions on the Kashmir dispute." Minister said, "Kashmiris have been struggling to get their right to self-determination for the last many decades as per UN charter, adding, that this struggle will continue until and unless the Kashmiris are given the right of plebiscite."

"The International community is well aware of the importance of the Kashmir issue in the region and also aware of Indian atrocities on innocent Kashmiris," she said. "Unfortunately, the world is

hesitant to force India to stop its aggression in the occupied valley," she added. "The entire Hurriyet leadership is under house arrest, she said.

"The Kashmir valley has turned into the largest prison in the world," she added. "The world needs to take concrete measures and force India to stop its human rights violations in the valley," she said.

"Sooner or later, the Kashmiris will get their fundamental right to self-determination." Replying to a question, she said, "Pakistan will remain firm on its stand on Kashmir and will continue to support the Kashmir cause at all international forums."

### ANF seizes 75 kg drugs; arrests seven accused

RAWALPINDI (APP): Anti-Narcotics Force (ANF) Pakistan while conducting seven operations across the country, managed to recover 75 kg drugs and arrested 7 accused including a woman, said an ANF Headquarters spokesman here on Monday.

He informed that in an operation at Islamabad International Airport, 1.6 kg heroin and 344 grams Ice drug were recovered from the possession of a passenger, resident of Mustang who was leaving for Qatar on flight number PK-287. In two operations near Motorway Toll Plaza Islamabad, 2 kg hashish was recovered from the bag of a woman resident of Mirpur travelling in a passenger bus and 11 kg hashish concealed in secret cavities of a vehicle. During the operation, three accused residents of Peshawar were also arrested. In an operation at a courier office in Karachi, Ice drug adsorbed in pillow covers was recovered. The parcel weighing over 24.3 kg was booked for Saudi Arabia. A drug smuggler, resident of Qilla Abdullah was netted from Hazar Ganji Chowk, Quetta and ANF recovered 26 kg hashish from his possession.

In seventh operation, 9 kg hashish concealed in a deserted area of Zakha Khel in Khyber for smuggling was recovered.

### RWMC to book smog SOPs' violators

RAWALPINDI (APP): Chief Executive Officer of Rawalpindi Waste Management Company (RWMC) Rana Sajid Safdar on Monday directed strict action against the violators of smog Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), saying no one would be allowed to burn the chemicals and waste in the garrison city.

According to the RWMC spokesman, the Secretary of Local Government had authorized the RWMC and Metropolitan Corporation of the city to register FIRs against those found involved in the burning of waste in the city. He said that on the instruction of the Secretary Local Government Punjab, immediate measures were being taken to combat the looming threat of smog this year.

## Brazilian ambassador calls on Health Minister

ISLAMABAD (APP): Brazilian Ambassador to Pakistan, Olyntho Vieira called on Caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan and discussed matters of mutual interest and bilateral relations on Monday.

The Brazilian ambassador congratulated the minister on assuming this responsibility. He said the appointment of a world-renowned public health expert is a positive development for the health sector.

Dr. Nadeem Jan said that Pakistan and Brazil have deep and strong relations and added trade relations and cooperation between the two countries are commendable. The minister said, "We are determined to eradicate polio from the country and will work on an emergency basis for the eradication of polio. We are ensuring

all measures to strengthen the global health security system."

He said that effective measures are being taken to ensure universal health coverage. An integrated strategy has been formulated to protect against epidemics, he added. Dr. Nadeem Jan said that health facilities in hospitals are being developed on modern lines. He said that Border Health Services are being strengthened to deal with epidemics. "We are ensuring compliance with the recommendations of the International Health Regulations."

He said that it is my mission to pursue the agenda of development and prosperity under the leadership of the caretaker Prime Minister of Pakistan.

Secretary Health Iftikhar Ali Shallwani was also present on the occasion.

## Aneeq urges Saudi govt to increase Pakistan's Hajj quota as per new census

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony Aneeq Ahmed, in a bid to accommodate the growing population of Pakistan, on Monday called upon the Saudi government to expand the Hajj quota for pilgrims. In an exclusive conversation with APP, he highlighted the discrepancy between the current Hajj quota and the country's population figures. "Presently, Pakistan's allocated Hajj quota stands at 179,210 pilgrims, a number that falls short of accurately representing the nation's population. The recently conducted census revealed that Pakistan's population has surged to 241.49 million, with an annual growth rate of 2.55 per cent," he added.

Minister Aneeq took the opportunity to discuss this

matter during a recent visit from his Saudi counterpart, Dr. Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah. Dr. Al-Rabiah, acknowledging the concern, assured him of an increase in the Hajj quota, subject to the completion of necessary procedural formalities.

Highlighting the success of the 'Road to Makkah' project, which significantly streamlined the pilgrimage process during Hajj 2023, the minister proposed extending the initiative to encompass multiple airports across Pakistan, including Lahore and Karachi. This expansion would undoubtedly facilitate pilgrims embarking on the sacred Hajj journey, he added. Furthermore, he advocated for exempting individuals aged 65 and above from mandatory biometric verification for the

Hajj pilgrimage as this move would alleviate the inconvenience faced by senior citizens, who often encounter difficulties with fingerprint recognition during the verification process.

Addressing another crucial aspect, he recommended exploring alternative locations for the Pakistan Houses in Makkah and Madina adding that the structure had been dismantled to pave the way for the expansion of Haram Sharif particularly in Madina.

Minister Aneeq emphasized that the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony was actively working on a range of plans aimed at reducing the cost of the Hajj pilgrimage and enhancing facilities to ensure the ease and comfort of all pilgrims.

## Dolphin Squad playing crucial role in crime prevention

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Dolphin Squad of the Islamabad Capital Police has become a formidable force in the fight against crime and this elite unit is operating within the centralized Safe City Islamabad system to ensure law and order.

Under the guidance of Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, the Dolphin Squad has been stationed across various city areas to bolster patrolling and deter criminal activities.

Over recent months, a police spokesman said that the Islamabad Capital Police Dolphin Squad has been actively engaged in combating criminal

elements. During routine checks, the squad has screened more than 10,000 individuals, inspected over 3,000 vehicles, and scrutinized nearly 7,000 motorcycles. These efforts have resulted in the recovery of 12 firearms with ammunition and the retrieval of a stolen vehicle.

In addition to these accomplishments, the Dolphin Squad has successfully tracked down 21 snatched vehicles and apprehended 24 individuals involved in car and motorcycle theft activities. They have also detained two individuals on suspicion of criminal activity and one drug dealer, all of whom have been handed over to the concerned police stations for further legal action.

## Railways upgrades over 167 unmanned crossings in one year

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistan Railways has upgraded over 167 vulnerable un-manned level crossings to manned level crossings across the country in collaboration with respective provincial governments.

The sources said that there were two types of level crossings over the Pakistan Railways network, unmanned and manned level crossings, adding that the unmanned level crossings were without gate leaves.

"There are a total of 1,565 unmanned level crossings over the entire railway network and as per railway policy in vogue, the up-gradation of any unmanned or

manned level crossing is the responsibility of road owning authority," they added.

The sources said that a joint survey of Pakistan Railways and the Provincial Government was also conducted in 2013-14 to identify accident-prone/vulnerable un-manned level crossings across the country.

They said that it also mentioned Section 12 of the Railway Act of 1890 that the district administration or road authority should bear the expenses for the upgradation of these unmanned level crossings.

## 'Issues of police employees to be addressed on priority'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP), Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan on Monday said that the Islamabad police would leave no stone unturned to ensure protection to the lives and property of the citizens and all issues of its employees would be addressed on priority to boost the morale of the force.

He convened a significant gathering at the Police Line Headquarters. This gathering, known as the "police darbar," saw the active participation of male and female police officers, as well as employees representing various divisions of the Islamabad Capital Police.

During the Darbar, attended by Chief Police Officers (CPOs), Assistant Inspector Generals (AIGs), Senior Superintendents of Police (SSPs), Superintendents of Police (SPs), Deputy Superintendents of Police (DSPs), and Station House Officers (SHOs), officers had the opportunity to raise both personal and official concerns before the police chief Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan.

Immediate resolutions were provided for some of the issues presented during the gathering, underlining the commitment to swiftly address the challenges faced by the police force.

Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan emphasized the importance of maintaining high morale among the police force and reminded officers of their unique responsibility as chosen individuals, stating, "Allah has chosen

you out of millions to serve the people. You should use these powers for the pleasure of Allah and the protection of your citizens." Islamabad police chief also highlighted ongoing measures taken to enhance the welfare of police employees. These include agreements with various institutions to provide top-notch educational and medical facilities to the families of police personnel.

Additionally, modern facilities are being introduced at the police lines headquarters, and the construction of the National Police Hospital is underway.

Promoting a fair and efficient promotion system, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan assured that all pending promotions would be expedited, as he reaffirmed, "Promotion is your fundamental right. If you face any challenges, please do not hesitate to contact me. My office doors are always open for you." In closing, Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan encouraged officers and young recruits to work diligently and with dedication. He vowed to continue supporting their efforts and reminded them of their pivotal role in enhancing the city's well-being.

He said, "If you are strong, your commander will be strong. You represent an excellent force. Treat your uniform as your pride and wear it with honor." The gathering concluded with a group photo, highlighting unity among the officers and Jawans.



ISLAMABAD: Heavy machinery being used for expansion work of Club Road during development work in Federal Capital.



Afghanistan begins exportation

KABUL (Agencies): The spokesman of the Islamic Emirate, Zabihullah Mujahid, has said that Afghanistan started the exportation of domestically manufactured products to France and Turkey on Monday. According to Mujahid, the items are entirely manufactured by domestic enterprises, with the Pamir-Cola Company taking the lead. These products are of great quality, and the initial shipment came from the Pamir-Cola Company.

Sub-standard oil rejected

KABUL (Agencies): Afghanistan's National Standards Authority (ANSA) has sent back 45 tankers of sub-standard oil imported from Iran through Farah port, officials said. ANSA in a statement said that 45 tankers of substandard oil which was imported from Iran through the port of Farah, returned after its investigation found it unacceptable. This department takes practical measures to prevent the import of sub-standard oil to the country, said the statement.

Residents want imported power project completed

SHARANA (Pajhwok): Residents and businessmen in southeastern Paktika province have urged the government to complete the extension of imported electricity to the province.

Paktika Chamber of Commerce president Silab Sahil told Pajhwok that people and businessmen face many problems due to lack of electricity.

He said private power generating companies sold electricity at high rate and the lack of government-supplied electricity had prevented businessmen from investing in the province.

Sahil said: "There were six factories in Paktika a few years ago, but now three of them have been closed due to lack of electricity. Private electricity is expensive."

He asked the government to complete the remaining works of the extension of imported electricity to Paktika.

Nasibullah, a resident of Sharana, said in today's life electricity was an important necessity and they were

deprived of it.

He said work on extending the imported electricity to Paktika was started in the previous government, but it was stopped after the political change in the country.

He asked Da Afghanistan Barishna Shirkat to pay attention to the problems of Paktika people and businessmen and solve the electricity problem as soon as possible.

Mateen, a shopkeeper in Sharana city, also complained about lack of electricity and said private companies provided electricity to the city at a high rate.

"There is no government-provided electricity in this province. One kilowatt of privately produced electricity is 60 afghanis."

Mateen said his shop's refrigerator had no regular electricity and thus many perishable items spoiled.

He asked the government to pay serious attention to the extension of imported electricity to the province.

Paktika electricity officials accept people's complaints but say they lack enough budget to complete the imported electricity extension project.

Abdul Rahman Hashemi, the electricity department head, said that 22 percent of the imported electricity extension project had been completed, but work on the project had been stopped due to lack of budget.

He added: "The work on the Asian Development Bank-funded project to connect imported electricity to Paktika was stopped after the regime change in 2021."

He said they were trying to activate diesel power system in Sharana city until the imported electricity was connected to the province.

He said the diesel electricity project was started with financial support of the Ministry of Interior and it was estimated to cost six million afghanis and it would provide 400 kilowatts of electricity.

Afghani strengthens against US dollar

KABUL (TOLOnews): The value of Afghan currency has recently increased against the US dollar in the Kabul market.

Some money exchangers in Sarai Shahzada in Kabul said that the reason for the increase is the increased use of the afghani and the increase in exports.

On Sunday, one dollar sold for 81 Afs in Sarai Shahzada, the country's biggest money market.

"Twice a week, the central bank auctions dollars in the markets. Sales from private banks are also ongoing," said Faisal Rahman Naseeri, an exchanger.

The Union of Sarai Shahzada Money Exchangers in Kabul said that in order to keep the value of the afghani stable against other currencies, especially the dollar, it is necessary to auction the dollar in the country's markets in a sustainable manner and to prevent the smuggling of dollars outside the country.

"Most of the business is done in Afghani, and the Central Bank of Afghanistan also auctions on the basis of necessity," said Abdul Rahman Zirak, a spokesman for the Union of Sarai Shahzada Money Exchangers.

Meanwhile, some residents of Kabul said that although the price of the dollar has decreased, there has been no change in the price of some imported items in the country.

"The dollar value has decreased but the shopkeepers did not lower the price of food materials," said Ghazizgul, a Kabul resident. "When the dollar goes down, the shopkeepers have to make the price for materials cheaper. When the dollar goes down and the prices are high, this is unfair," said Habib Rahman, a resident of Kabul.

Earlier, DAB said that in the past year, the currency of Afghanistan was listed among the currency of nine countries that have good stability.

Iran appeals for int'l aid to refugees

KABUL (Khaama Press): Hassan Kazemi Qomi, the special representative for Afghanistan affairs, has strongly called upon the international community to support the Afghan refugees in Iran.

During a conversation with UN representative Stefan Priesner, Qomi appealed for aid on behalf of Afghan refugees. He highlighted the need for diplomatic collaboration and a clear roadmap to garner global support, underscoring Iran's commitment to the cause.

"The development of diplomacy with the United Nations in the framework of the national development plan and the definition of a specific road map to attract international support for Afghan refugees is one of the important issues pursued by Iran," Qomi tweeted on Sunday.

Qomi revealed the signing of a memorandum of understanding between Iran and the UN Population Fund to train Afghans in healthcare.

Qomi said that Sathya Doraiswamy, UNFPA Representative in Iran, and Abolfazl Bagherifard, Deputy Minister for Education at the Health Ministry, signed the memorandum.

Afghanistan railway team heads to Iran for talks



KABUL (Agencies): Afghanistan Railway Authority said on Monday its general director Mullah Bakht-ur-Rahman Sharafat has left

for Iran, along with his accompanying delegation.

The ARA says that Sharafat will meet with Iranian railway officials to

discuss issues related to the Khaf-Herat railway line, the launching of short-term technical training courses for ARA employees, and

strengthening bilateral railway cooperation.

During his visit, Sharafat will also meet with various other Iranian officials.

Herat hospitals make 'good progress' in health services

HERAT (Agencies): Doctors say good progress has been made in the medical sector in Herat and about 90 percent of patients are treated in private and government hospitals of this province.

Mehraban Hospital is one of the private hospitals in Herat, where doctors have made progress in orthopedics, urology and laser surgeries.

The hospital officials say up to 500 patients visit this health daily for diagnosis and treatment.

"The work we do is currently close to or at the same level as many services that are done in neighboring countries; we intend to be able to do more by getting funding and economic investment," said Abdul Basir Seddiq, general manager of Mehraban Hospital.

"Knee joint replacement and hip joint replacement [surgery], as well as fractures that happen to the pelvis, are performed at Mehraban Hospital," said Bashir Ahmad Ahmadi, an orthopedic specialist. In addition, some of

these hospitals have established major specialty and subspecialty departments, and doctors perform complex operations.

Herat Public Health Department officials meanwhile say their goal is to develop health services so that all people may have access to these services.

According to them, medical services have improved recently and private sectors are equipped with good facilities and capacities.

"A series of problems that existed in the past was

the issue of specialized services, where some patients actually went abroad for specialized services in order to solve their health problems. Today, great steps have been taken in the field of providing super-specialized services in Herat province," said Mohammad Asif Kabir, deputy public health of Herat.

According to reports, around 100 private hospitals and clinics are providing health services in Herat along with government hospitals.

Taloqan residents want health centre upgraded

TALOQAN (Pajhwok): Inhabitants of Turma Bai area and other remote villages of Taloqan complain of inadequate health services and want the government to address their problems.

Turma Bai area is 12 kilometer from the provincial capital, has only one health centre which cannot cope with needs of 32 neighbouring villages, where nearly 20,000 families live. Some residents told Pajhwok Afghan News they spent a full day taking patients to the health centre. After hours of wait, they return home without getting medicine for their patients.

Gulshan said: "My child is sick, I walked an hour and a half from Parchab village to this health centre. Whenever I come here, I find no health services or care for patients.

"With no money to get

health services at private hospitals, I ask the government to address our problems," the man remarked.

Shaida Gul, another attendant, said: "My husband has passed away, I'm living a tough life, with my child suffering from malnutrition.

"I have visited this health centre many times. There are neither medicines nor other facilities. Each time, I return home frustrated," she deplored.

Qari Qudratullah, head of the Turma Bai local council, confirmed the lack of services at the clinic. He stressed the centre must be equipped to serve all the 20,000 families.

Facilities at the health centre are in-sufficient and Turma Bai area alone had 7,000 families. Most of the residents are poor and cannot afford to take their

patients to Taloqan.

Dozens of patients were brought to the centre on a daily basis, but they returned without receiving medical care, he lamented.

The local council leader said the health centre had received 90 different syrups and 200 strips of tablets over the past three months, supplies that could not meet the needs of all people.

People of these areas are deprived of everything, they need — specialist doctors and diagnostic facilities. Nurses and medicine available at the clinic do not satisfy the needs of residents.

Haji Khuda Bakhsh, a resident of this area, said: "There are no medical facilities at this health centre, it is my fifth visit along with an ailing grandchild. Once again, I am returning empty-handed."

Abdul Jamil, in charge of Turma Bai Health Centre, acknowledged the problems and said they received around 90 to 100 patients daily from the surrounding villages.

Jamil revealed most children of the were suffering from diarrhea and malnutrition due to lack of potable water. More facilities were needed to address the issues, he added.

In addition to medicine shortages, the centre had few medicines who could not address the problems of patients, he admitted.

Dr. Atiqullah Qanit, deputy director of public health, said there were 84 small health centres in Takhar, built according to the needs of residents 18 years ago. But the population of these areas has now grown considerably and people have to face problems.

Kunar: Dangam families end 17 years of hostilities



ASADABAD (Pajhwok): About 30 enmities have been resolved in eastern Kunar province over the past two years with mediation from tribal elders and religious scholars.

Engaged in enmity for 17 years, two rival families in Dangam district reconciled six months ago and have since been living a peaceful life.

The dispute between the households happened over a Kalashnikov assault rifle. As a result, four people were killed from the two sides.

Lal Pacha, 42, a resident of Dangam, told Pajhwok Afghan News he and his cousins had left the village due to the enmity and spent abroad 17 years full of hardship and suffering.

He recalled the verbal clash turned violent and, killing four individuals from both sides.

But six months ago, the families reconciled following mediation from a tribal jirga appointed by the government. Subsequently, he said, they returned to their homeland from Pakistan.

According to him, he spent difficult days abroad. "Let the enmity disappear. It rendered us homeless. We would live in constant fear."

After reconciliation, he remarked, they had started a better life. The two sides have not only ended their rivalry, they have also become good friends.

Javed, a nephew of Lal Pacha, says he lost two young brothers to the enmity. He is happy that the feud has finally been resolved and they are living peacefully.

He said: "I lost two brothers in the conflict, now I am left with two widows and 12 orphans. We have done a lot and faced

many difficulties."

Mawlawi Abdullah Mansour, a religious scholar and member of the Council of Scholars, says Muslims should forgive each other, join hands and spend a happy life together.

He believed if every family exercised patience and restraint, many conflicts and enmities could be prevented in society.

Haji Bahlol Khan Jabarzai, a tribal elder, said: "Our goal is to eliminate enmities and disputes because Islam and our culture prohibit them and we all should demonstrate patience."

Director of Information and Culture Maulvi Najibullah Hanafi said: "In the past two years, we have ended 30 enmities in Kunar with the mediation of the ulema council, tribal elders, police headquarters and other institutions."

Banning of women from Band-e-Amir sparks reactions

KABUL (TOLOnews): The banning of women from Band-e-Amir National Park in Bamiyan province sparked reactions at national and international levels.

Earlier, Mohammad Khaled Hanafi, the acting Minister of Virtue and Vice, asked all religious clerics and security agencies to forbid women from visiting Band-e-Amir National Park at a meeting in Bamiyan.

Heather Barr, director of the Women's Rights Division at Human Rights

Watch, said that "Taliban" have taken the essential rights of women.

"This latest order by the Taliban instructing that women are not to go to Band-e-Amir is part of a pattern where the Taliban are step by step and quickly taking away from women everything that they need for their lives," she said.

As a protest to banning women from going to the Band-e-Amir National Park, the UN Special Rapporteur for Afghan

human rights, Richard Bennett, said online: "Can someone please explain why this restriction on women visiting Bande Amir is necessary to comply with Sharia and Afghan culture?"

"We are witnessing an increasing restriction on women. We hope the Islamic Emirate would have a motive for why women are banned from Band-e-Amir National Park," said Tafseer Siah Posh, a women's rights

activist.

Band-e-Amir National Park is one of the famous tourist areas, where thousands of national and foreign visitors go for recreation. The women's activists expressed concerns over a ban on female visitors to this area.

"As long as we see, the restrictions have been increasing on a daily basis. We call on the Islamic Emirate to bring facilities for the women," said Safa, a resident of Kabul.

ported, each family provided up to 45,000 afis to set a small business and children who are small are sent to education facilities for learning purpose," he said.

But local residents said children involved in labour are still available in Jalalabad and some districts. They demanded the relevant authorities to provide better life and education facilities for children involved in hard labour.

Sadiq Jabarkhel, the resident of Jalalabad City, said if the government provided education and vocational

training facilities for children involved in hard labour this would help improved security situation and eradicate crimes in the society.

"When children grow uneducated they become a headache for people and government, they get pistol and involved in crimes but if they get education this will ensure bright future for the society," he said.

Zahirullah, another resident of Jalalabad City, asked the government to provided education and vocational training facilities for these labour children.

He also demanded financial support to the families of these children.

Mawlawi Farid also acknowledged that some children were involved in hard labour, adding that some children known to them are supported by the government.

Dr. Mohammad Liaquat Adel, head of the Labour Union, said Covid-19, regime change and other challenges hampered the economic condition of people and families had been forced to send their children to work.





LONDON: Travellers standing near the British Airways check-in area at Heathrow Airport's Terminal 3, as the United Kingdom's National Air Traffic Services restricts air traffic due to a technical issue causing delays, in UK.

## UK air traffic issue fixed but flights remain affected

LONDON (Agencies): Britain's National Air Traffic Services (NATS) was hit by a technical problem for several hours on Monday, causing widespread disruption to flights using the United Kingdom's airspace. NATS had earlier had to restrict the flow of aircraft after the issue affected its system's ability to automatically process flight plans, with airlines and airports warning of delays and cancellations.

"We have identified and remedied the technical issue affecting our flight planning system this morning. We are now working closely with airlines and airports to manage the flights affected as efficiently as possible," NATS said in a statement later on Monday. "The flight planning issue affected the system's ability to automatically process flight plans, meaning that flight plans had to be processed manually which cannot be done at the same volume, hence the requirement for traffic flow restrictions."

The UK's Secretary of State for Transport Mark Harper said while the issue was resolved, flights were still "unfortunately affected". Earlier, Irish air traffic control provider AirNav Ireland said the issue, which struck during a public holiday in parts of Britain, was resulting in "significant delays for flights across Europe that are travelling to, from or through UK airspace".

A spokesperson for London Heathrow, the busiest hub in western Europe, said schedules would remain significantly disrupted for the rest of the day. British Airways said its flights were being severely disrupted and it had made "significant changes" to its schedule, while other airlines also said some flights to and from the UK would be delayed or cancelled.

## Dollar climbs to another historic high against rupee

ISLAMABAD (INP): The Pakistani rupee's pathetic run against the US dollar seemed not ending as the greenback soared to another historic high in interbank trading on Monday. According to the information received from currency dealers, the Pakistani rupee depreciated by 20 more paisas against the US dollar and was currently being traded at Rs301.20, a historic high.

On Friday last also, the Pakistani rupee had hit a new record low against the US dollar, as it settled at RS301 in the interbank market.

At close, the rupee had settled at Rs301 after a decrease of 78 paisas or 0.26%. In a key development, Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce and Industries Dr Gohar Ejaz had stressed the need for early operationalization of the EXIM Bank for enhancing Pakistan's exports. The enhancement of exports is critical as Pakistan struggles with low foreign exchange reserves.

## After Moon landing, India eyes the Sun

NEW DELHI (Agencies): India's first space-based observatory to study the sun is to be launched on September 2, weeks after it became the first country to land a spacecraft on the unexplored south pole of the moon. Monday's announcement by India's space agency said the Aditya-L1 probe will study solar winds, which can cause disturbances on Earth and are commonly seen as auroras.

The craft, named after the Hindi word for the sun, will be launched from the country's main spaceport in Sriharikota using the PSLV launch vehicle, which will travel about 1.5 million km (932,000 miles), the agency said. It will take the Aditya-L1 about four months to travel to its observation point, the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) said in a post on X, formerly Twitter.

The spacecraft will be fired into a halo orbit in a region of space that will

give the craft a continuous clear view of the sun. "This will provide a greater advantage of observing the solar activities and its effect on space weather in real time," ISRO said.

The spacecraft will be carrying seven payloads to observe the sun's outermost layers – known as the photosphere and chromosphere – including electromagnetic and particle field detectors. NASA and the European Space Agency have previously placed probes into orbit to study the sun, but this would be the first such mission for India.

The unmanned Chandrayaan-3, which means "mooncraft" in Sanskrit, touched down on the lunar surface last week, making India only the fourth country to land successfully on the moon, behind the United States, Russia and China. That marked the latest milestone in India's ambitious but cut-price space programme, sparking

celebrations across the world's most populous country.

India has a comparatively low-budget space programme but one that has grown considerably in size and momentum since it first sent a probe to orbit the moon in 2008. It's latest moon mission had a budget of about \$75m – less than that of the Hollywood space thriller Gravity. Experts say India can keep costs low by copying and adapting existing technology and having an abundance of highly skilled engineers who earn a fraction of the wages of their foreign counterparts.

In 2014, India became the first Asian nation to put a craft into orbit around Mars, and it is slated to launch a three-day crewed mission into Earth's orbit by next year. It also plans a joint mission with Japan to send another probe to the moon by 2025 and an orbital mission to Venus within the next two years.

## Iran says deal agreed with Iraq for disarming

TEHRAN (Agencies): Iran says it has reached an agreement with Iraq to disarm and relocate Kurdish rebels in northern Iraq within weeks. Iranian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesman Nasser Kanani said on Monday that the central Iraqi government has committed to disarm "terrorist, secessionist groups" in the Kurdish region of northern Iraq by September 19.

He also said Baghdad has agreed to shut down bases run by the Kurdish rebel groups in the semi-autonomous region and members would be relocated to other camps, the locations of which he did not disclose. "Based on the information that we have, the Iraqi government has communicated the contents of this agreement to the authorities of the Iraqi Kurdistan region. We are waiting for the full implementation of this agreement," Kanani said, adding that the deadline would not be extended.

Tehran has long bemoaned the activities of the Kurdish groups, some of which call for the secession of Iran's north-

western Kurdistan province, which borders Iraq. Kurdish populations live in the largely mountainous regions of western Iran, northern Iraq, north-eastern Syria and south-eastern Turkey. Some call for the establishment of a pan-Kurdish state.

Last year, as protests raged across Iran after the death in police custody of 22-year-old Iranian Kurd Mahsa Amini, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) launched several rounds of deadly air strikes and artillery attacks against positions of Kurdish rebel groups in northern Iraq. Tehran accused the groups of smuggling arms and men into Iraq to carry out "terrorist" operations and fan the flames of the "riots".

Since then, Tehran has been pressuring the government in Baghdad to take action. Kanani expressed assurance that it would. "Based on the friendly, brotherly and neighbourly relations that we have with the Iraqi government, we expect this dark stain to be removed from the atmosphere of mutual rela-

tions," he said.

The Associated Press cited an unnamed Iraqi official as confirming the agreement. The official told the news agency that the rebels had moved to an unspecified camp within the Iraqi Kurdish region after being disarmed. The AP also reported that an Iraqi government official had confirmed the agreement.

In March, Iran's then-security chief, Ali Shamkhani, visited Iraq to discuss the issue and signed a border security agreement dealing with the armed groups. The deal was completed one month after the Iranian Foreign Affairs Ministry summoned the Iraqi ambassador to "strongly protest" the ongoing activities of the groups. Iran's supreme leader, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, had grilled Iraqi Prime Minister Mohammed Shia al-Sudani on the issue in November during al-Sudani's first official visit to Tehran after assuming office. Security in the region also came up when Khamenei met with Iraqi President Abdul Latif Rashid in Tehran in late April.

## LHC orders NEPRA chief to decide pleas against bills

LAHORE (INP): The Lahore High Court has ordered the NEPRA chairman to decide on the applications demanding relief in inflated electricity bills within 21 days. The court was hearing applications against the massive increase in electricity prices and the resultant overcharged bills.

The court ordered the Nepra chairman to hear the petitioners and then make a decision. Justice Raza Qureshi heard the request of Advocate Mian Abdul Mateen. The hearing comes as caretaker Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar is once again set to chair an important meeting today on the issue of electricity price and

bills. NEPRA, the Power Division and Discos are expected to brief on the possible relief, theft, losses and recoveries. On Sunday, the Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar chaired the first round of the meeting in the wake of nationwide protests against the frequent hike in power tariff and inflated bills. The participants were briefed about the power ministry, Water & Power Development Authority (WAPDA), and Discos (distribution companies). They also mulled over providing maximum relief to the masses in their electricity bills.

After it concluded, the

interim premier took to his 'X' account to share details of the huddle. He said the participants decided to form a task force comprising the energy and finance ministries to come up with a plan of action to provide relief to the people.

The task force will also look into the issue of free units to government employees. Interim PM Kakar said that urgent steps will be taken to reduce electricity consumption in government offices while consultations will also be held with the provinces tomorrow. He vowed that the caretaker government will try to provide maximum relief to the people as soon as possible within its mandate.

## Sutlej in high flood; more areas submerged

BAHAWALPUR (PPI): Sutlej River has been in high flood with 1,40,000 cusecs flow submerging several areas on Monday. The flood-water has entered in Moza Bhandra, Subhanabad and other settlements and submerged dozens of houses. Over four feet water standing in the vicinity. People stranded at rooftops of their homes at several places.

India released water into Sutlej River yesterday as hundreds of homes and roads and embankments at several places washed away in the floodwater in Pakistan. The river flooding has caused devastation especially in Bahawalnagar, Hasilpur, Vehari and Luddan, Arifwala and Chishtian where roads are completely submerged, leaving hundreds of villages and towns cut off from surrounding areas. As a number of protective dykes could not withstand the strong Sutlej water currents adjacent to the town.

Flooding has wreaked havoc in the region as thousands of acres farmland has drowned and crops destroyed in Kasur, Bahawalnagar, Okara, Pakpattan, Sahiwal and Vehari districts. The area has become a mammoth lake with water everywhere to the limits of the visible landscape and dozens of settlements submerged. The emergency services recently said that around 2,50,000 people have been evacuated from flooded villages in Punjab. The monsoon rains had prompted authorities in India to release excess reservoir water into the Sutlej River, causing flooding downstream on the Pakistani side of the border.

## Wagah border-bound troller set on fire

LORALAI (PPI): Wagah border-bound troller loaded with fig was set on fire by unidentified miscreants in the wee hours of Monday near Spin Masjid area on Quetta-Dera Ghazi highway in district Loralai of Balochistan province.

According to a report, Wagah border-bound AC troller loaded with Afghan fig under Afghan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement coming from Chaman, a city bordering neighbouring country Afghanistan, was set ablaze by unidentified miscreants near Spin Masjid area on Quetta-Dera Ghazi highway in district Loralai of Balochistan province.

Gul Muhammad, driver of the troller alleged that unidentified terrorists on board in a fielder vehicle lobbed petrol bomb at the troller, resultantly, troller loaded with fig was burnt to ashes. Talking to media, Haji Abdul Ali, leader of Balochistan Goods Transport Union, while condemning the incident, demanded of the authorities to apprehend perpetrators of the crime. It is worth mentioning that the previous year unidentified miscreants had also opened fire on AC troller loaded with goods under Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement in Killa Safullah area of the province. Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement 2020, signed between Pakistan and Afghanistan, calls for facilitation in the movement of goods amongst Pakistan and Afghanistan.

## SHC seeks report from Sindh govt

KARACHI (INP): The Sindh High Court (SHC) on Monday sought a report from the provincial government and the DIG Traffic to address the issue of illegal parking across the metropolis. To address the issue of charging illegal parking fees and illegal parking, a hearing was held in Sindh High Court (SHC) where the advocate of KMC and petitioner presented before the court.

The advocate petitioner highlighted the double parking issues across Karachi, after which the court directed the petitioner to pinpoint areas where double parking is very common. During the proceedings, the lawyer claimed that both DMC (District Municipal Corporation) and KMC (Karachi Metropolitan Corporation) have been actively involved in providing parking facilities.

## Trump indictments Key court dates set in Georgia, federal election cases

WASHINGTON (Agencies): Critical court dates have been set in two criminal cases in the United States accusing former President Donald Trump of seeking to derail the results of the 2020 election that he lost. A court docket on Monday showed that Trump's arraignment on election interference charges in the US state of Georgia will take place on September 6.

Separately, a judge in Washington, DC set March 4, 2024 as the start date for the former president's criminal trial on federal charges related to his efforts to overturn his 2020 election defeat in a failed bid to keep himself in power. "The public has a right to a prompt and efficient resolution of this matter," US District Judge Tanya Chutkan said when setting the federal trial date.

The former president faces four separate criminal indictments, including two on election interference allegations, but has vehemently denied any wrongdoing. Monday's ruling by Chutkan means that Trump, the frontrunner in the Republican Party's 2024 presidential nomination race, will likely have to stand trial in at least three separate criminal cases during the thick of campaigning.

Trump took to his Truth Social platform on Monday morning before the federal trial date was set to accuse his Democratic rival, President Joe Biden, and other officials of seeking to derail his re-election bid. "It will only get worse because these deranged lunatics know no bounds. Someday, however, Sanity will again prevail," Trump wrote. Special Counsel Jack Smith, who is leading the federal prosecution of Trump on the election interference charges, had proposed a January 2 trial start date.

But the ex-president's lawyers, citing the time they say is needed to review over 11 million pages of documents received from prosecutors, had asked for the trial to begin in April 2026 – more than a year after the 2024 election. Chutkan, the judge, said on Monday that they did not need that long. "The defence's proposed date of April 2026 is far beyond what is necessary," she said. Trump's trial is due to start one day before "Super Tuesday", when more than a dozen US states will hold their presidential nominating contests.

Chutkan had said at a hearing earlier this month that she would "take whatever measures are necessary to safeguard the integrity of the case". She also warned that "inflammatory" statements about the pro-

ceedings could prompt her to move the case more quickly to trial to prevent witness intimidation or jury pool contamination.

Meanwhile, it remains unclear whether Trump would be required to appear in person at the Georgia court for his arraignment on 13 state charges next week, or if he would be allowed to be arraigned virtually. He will formally hear the charges against him and likely enter a plea during the arraignment. The hearing is scheduled less than two weeks after Trump on Friday surrendered at Fulton County Jail in Atlanta, Georgia on charges that he and 18 associates took part in a conspiracy to "unlawfully change the outcome" of the 2020 election in the state.

During his 20-minute stop at the jail, Trump was fingerprinted and became the first former president in US history to have his mugshot taken. His Georgia arraignment will mark the fourth so far this year.

The former president was arraigned in federal court in Washington, DC earlier this month as part of the federal indictment linked to his efforts to subvert the 2020 vote. He also appeared in a New York state court in April on charges connected to hush money payments made to a porn star and in a federal court in Florida in June over allegations he mishandled secret government documents. Trial dates have already been set in the New York case, which will begin on March 25, 2024, and in the federal documents case in Florida, set to begin on May 20, 2024.

Both trials are set to fall in the thick of the presidential campaign season, creating a likely logistical headache for Trump, the faraway GOP frontrunner. Meanwhile, a trial date for one of Trump's 18 co-defendants in the Georgia election interference case, lawyer Kenneth Chesebro, has been set for October 23, 2023 after Chesebro asked for the process to be expedited.

The date has raised the prospect that Trump and his allies could face a trial in the state within months, although lawyers for several defendants, including the former president, have signalled that they will seek a separate trial from Chesebro to avoid the speedy start. Under the US Constitution, a candidate can run for and become president even if he or she is charged or convicted of a crime. However, the situation marks uncharted territory for the country because Trump is the first current or former president to face criminal charges.

## Japan summons China envoy over 'harassment' calls

TOKYO (Agencies): Japan has summoned China's ambassador after business-esses were inundated by 'harassment' phone calls following the release of water from the Fukushima nuclear power plant, with the country's Prime Minister Fumio Kishida saying stones were thrown at its diplomatic missions and schools in China.

"There have been numerous harassment calls believed to originate from China and instances of stones being thrown into the Japanese embassy and Japanese schools. It must be said these are regrettable," Fumio Kishida told reporters on Monday. "We summoned the Chinese ambassador to Japan today and strongly urged him to call on Chinese people to act in a calm and responsible manner," he said.

Last week, China banned all seafood imports from its neighbour after Japan began releasing cooling water from the stricken Fukushima plant in an operation that Tokyo and the UN's nuclear watchdog have said is safe. Since then, randomly chosen Japanese businesses ranging from bakeries to aquariums have reportedly received thousands of sometimes abusive crank calls believed to be from Chinese numbers.

Social media users in

China have posted recordings and videos of these calls, some of which have attracted tens of thousands of likes and a large number of comments. Japan's embassy over the weekend urged the tens of thousands of Japanese living in China to keep a low profile and not talk loudly in public. Deputy Foreign Minister Masataka Okano told Chinese ambassador Wu Jianghao that Beijing should properly inform the public "rather than unnecessarily raising people's concerns by providing information that is not based on scientific evidence", the foreign ministry earlier said in a statement.

"Since the start of the discharge... there have been numerous phone calls and other harassment regarding the discharge that are suspected of originating from China. The situation has not improved since then," Okano told Wu. "A number of similar incidents are also happening in China against Japan-related facilities. This is extremely regrettable and we are deeply concerned," he said, according to the release.

On Monday, it said it had increased security measures outside Japanese schools and diplomatic missions in China. A spokesperson for China's foreign ministry said it was

not aware of the matter when asked about the harassment accusations at a regular briefing on Monday.

According to Japanese media, there have been several incidents of stones and eggs being thrown at Japanese schools. In China, a rock was thrown at a Japanese school in the coastal city of Qingdao on Thursday, according to the consulate-general of Japan in the city. When asked about the incident in Qingdao and the harassment calls, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Wang Wenbin defended China's record of keeping foreigners safe.

"China always safeguards the safety and lawful rights and interests of foreign nationals in China in accordance with law," Wang said. Japan has begun releasing more than 500 Olympic swimming pools' worth of wastewater from Fukushima into the Pacific, 12 years after a tsunami knocked out three reactors in one of the world's worst atomic accidents. Plant operator TEPCO says that all radioactive elements have been filtered out except for tritium, levels of which are within safe limits. Test results since the start of the discharge have confirmed this, according to Japanese authorities.

## UK could fit asylum seekers with electronic tags

LONDON (Agencies): Britain's Home Office says asylum seekers arriving undocumented to the United Kingdom could be monitored with electronic and GPS tags, according to a report by The Times newspaper. Under the Illegal Migration Act, approved by the House of Commons in April, anyone who arrives in the country on small boats will be prevented from claiming asylum, will be detained and then deported either back to their home-lands or to a third country, such as Rwanda.

But The Times reported that Home Office authorities have been tasked with ensuring that asylum seekers who cannot be detained do not abscond or disappear. "Tagging has always been something that the Home

Office has been keen on and is the preferred option to withdrawing financial support, which would be legally difficult as migrants would be at risk of being left destitute," a Home Office source told The Times.

In an interview with British broadcaster Sky News, Home Secretary Suella Braverman said: "We've just enacted a landmark piece of legislation in the form of our Illegal Migration Act that empowers us to detain those who arrive here illegally and thereafter swiftly remove them to a safe country like Rwanda." "That will require a power to detain and ultimately control those people. We need to exercise a level of control if we are to remove them from the United Kingdom. We are

considering a range of options," she added.

Kolbassia Haoussou, who fled torture in Chad and was granted refugee status in the UK, told Sky News that the electronic tagging would not have stopped him from coming to Britain. "What I am fleeing is more dangerous than electronic tagging. But it would harm my psychology," he said. Electronic tagging is a tool the UK uses regularly to monitor the whereabouts of prisoners and ensure they follow their curfew orders.

In June last year, the Home Office had proposed an electronic tagging scheme to monitor asylum seekers who were due to be removed from the UK but did not confirm if any people had been tagged, according to local media reports.