

5 killed in trailer-van collision

RAWALPINDI (INP): Five people were killed and six others injured in a horrific road accident in Rawalpindi on Tuesday, rescuers and police said. A trailer collided with a van near Old Toll Plaza in T-Chowk area. The dead and the injured were shifted to a nearby hospital for treatment, said the rescue officials. The deceased included four men and a woman. Four women and two men also sustained injuries in the accident.

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Toshakhana case

IHC suspends Imran's imprisonment sentence

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday suspended the imprisonment sentence of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf Chairman Imran Khan in the Toshakhana criminal case and ordered to release him on bail.

The two-judge bench comprising Chief Justice Aamer Farooq and Justice Tariq Mehmood Jahangiri, in their eight-page judgment reserved on Monday and issued today, also ordered the former prime minister to submit surety bonds of Rs 100,000 to avail the bail.

The judgment said,"As the sentence given in the case is of short duration, the court considers that the petitioner is entitled to suspension of sentence and release on bail. The trial court's sentence of 3 years imprisonment and a fine of Rs100,000 is suspended." It further stated that the trial court pronounced the sentence on the complaint of the Election Commission of Pakistan under the Election Act.

The Supreme Court's Qaim Ali Shah case reference was also included in the written decision. It said that the top court had declared that it was the high court's discretion to grant or deny bail. The order also said that by accepting the plea of the accused, the decision of the trial court of August 5 "is suspended and the petitioner should be released on bail on filing a bond worth Rs100,000".

The IHC said the jurisdiction of the trial court and other issues for



consideration were not being determined in the order. The respondents had given detailed arguments on these issues, but they would be decided in the main appeal.

The court also gave a reference of the order of the Supreme Court in an appeal against the suspension of former prime minister Nawaz Sharif's sentence in the Avenfield property case. It said that the top court had expressed its displeasure on issuing lengthy orders in decisions pertaining to the suspension of the sentences.

Additional District and Sessions Judge Humayun Dilawar had announced a three-year jail term along with fine of Rs 100,000 to the former prime minister in the Toshakhana criminal case lodged by the Election Commission of Pakistan.

IHC instructs PTI chief's lawyer

to remove objections on bail petitions: The Islamabad High Court (IHC) on Tuesday instructed the lawyer of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman to remove objections of the Registrar Office on appeals against cancellation of interim bails of former prime minister in six cases pertaining to the incidents of May 6.

Chief Justice Aamer Farooq, hearing the case, remarked that the court would issue an appropriate orders in the case. The interim bails of the PTI chief had been cancelled due to non-pursuance. At the outset of hearing, the PTI chairman's lawyer Barrister Salman Safdar said the sessions court had not viewed the merits while terminating the interim bails of his client. It could have summoned his client, who was imprisoned in the jail, he added.

The lawyer said that there was a risk of the arrest of former prime minister after being released in the Toshakhana case. The chief justice observed that the Registrar Office had raised the question that whether the same petitions for interim bails would be heard or new ones would be filed. The lawyer responded that the interim bail petitions should be considered as pending.

The court, however, ordered the lawyer to remove the objections of Registrar Office on the petitions. The chief justice also observed that the matter pertaining to the maintainability of the cases would be viewed at the judicial side.



ISLAMABAD: Ms. Ayesha Tanzeem, Head of South and Central Asia Division, Voice of America, called on Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar. Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi also present.

VOA Chief South, Central Asia calls on PM Kakar

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Head of South and Central Asia Division, Voice of America, Ayesha Tanzeem on Tuesday called on the Caretaker Prime Minister Anwaar-ul-Haq Kakar here and discussed matters relating to mutual interests.

Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi was also present in the meeting.

Polls must be held in 90 days, PPP informs CEC

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) tabled on Tuesday its concerns regarding the general elections in a meeting with the Election Commission of Pakistan's (ECP) Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) Sikandar Sultan Raja. The party has repeatedly expressed reservations regarding the polls' date, saying that they should be held within the 90-day period as per the Constitution.

"We had a meeting with the ECP in a pleasant environment during which we put all our reservations," said PPP Vice President Sherry Rehman in a post-meeting press conference. Rehman said that it is the electoral body's responsibility to conduct the elections, however, the Constitution says the polls should be held within 90 days after the dissolution of the National Assembly.

PPP leader Nayyar Bukhari said that the Constitution says elections should be conducted within the given time period, adding that it is very important to give a date for elections. "ECP heard our

stance and will inform us about the polls after a meeting. We will finalise our next action plan in the CEC meeting in Lahore," said Bukhari.

Meanwhile, the ECP is in continuous consultations with the political parties. The electoral body has invited Balochistan Awami Party (BAP) to hold discussions tomorrow (Wednesday) at 2pm while an Awami National Party (ANP) delegation — comprising Mian Iftikhar Hussain, Zahid Khan, Wakil Khushdil and Wakil Rahim — will hold a meeting at 11am. "There will be consultations with BAP on general elections," said ECP.

The ECP has already held consultations with the Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PML-N), Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf and Jamiat Ulama-e-Islam-Fazl (JUI-F). In those meetings, the JUI-F and PML-N had backed the ECP to hold general elections after the delimitation while the PTI had urged the electoral watchdog to drop the process and conduct polls within 90 days.

A day earlier, Muttahida Qaumi Movement-Pakistan (MQM-P) and Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) met CEC Raja to discuss the uncertainty surrounding the general elections. MQM-P backed the ECP in holding polls after the delimitation of constituencies while JI asked the electoral body it should have issued a poll schedule along with the delimitation to remove ambiguity. The MQM-P delegation led by the party's Senior Deputy Convener Dr Farooq Sattar informed the ECP that its decision to carry out the delimitations was "correct", adding that they had reservations about the 2017 census.

On the other hand, the JI told the electoral authority that it should have started the consultation process with political parties earlier. It added that the elections have to be held in 90 days if the assemblies are dissolved prematurely. However, it said that since the ECP has started the delimitation process it would have been better if the election schedule had been issued along with it to "remove ambiguity".

Two more ministers included in KP cabinet

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: The caretaker cabinet of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government was further expanded as two ministers were included in it on Tuesday.

The two new ministers Engineer Aamir Nadeem Durrani and Engineer Ahmad Jan were administered oath by the Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali here at Governor's House. Caretaker Chief Minister Muhammad Azam Khan also attended the oath taking ceremony.

With the inclusion of the two more ministers, the strength of the provincial cabinet has reached to 13 as nine ministers and two special assistants to the chief minister had already taken oath of their offices.

Toshakhana case: Bushra Bibi gets bail

ISLAMABAD (INP): The accountability court in Islamabad on Tuesday approved the bail plea of Bushra Bibi, the wife of former prime minister and Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) chairman in the Toshakhana case till September 12.

AC judge Abul Hasnat Muhammad Zulagrain heard the case and granted bail to Bushra Bibi till September 12 in the Toshakhana case. Bushra Bibi's bail was accepted against surety bonds worth Rs500,000.

The ex-first lady has been accused of keeping a locket, chain, earrings, two rings and bracelet from the Toshakhana gifts. She is also accused of keeping gold, diamond, necklace, bracelet, as well as gold and diamond rings, earrings and bracelet.

Inflated power bills Cabinet deliberates on ministry's proposals

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): A meeting of the interim federal cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Anwaarul Haq Kakar, was held in Islamabad on Tuesday during which the Ministry of Energy's recommendations on inflated electricity bills were considered. The meeting was convened in response to public demonstrations, where a considerable number of people took to the streets to protest against the excessively high electricity bills following a significant rise in the national average tariff.

However, a source told media that the caretaker prime minister did not preside over the meeting, and instead, asked the ministers for energy, finance, information and others to hold the meeting and come up with a solution that would

be presented before the federal cabinet Tuesday. Meanwhile, interim Information Minister Murtaza Solangi said the energy ministry had finalised a list of proposals to provide relief to the inflation-hit populace, which would be presented in Tuesday's meeting.

The energy ministry confirmed this on X, formerly Twitter. Solangi had told media the interim government intended to take measures to provide relief to the public.

"If we have taken the responsibility to run the country even for a limited time, we have to give some relief to the masses," he said. However, the minister was reluctant to give details about the relief to be given to the electricity consumers — especially those whose

deadline for the power bill was August 28 (Monday).

Separately, a source told media the interim government could convert these bills into instalments as well as adjust some of the amounts in power bills for winter months because of low power consumption during one cold season.

Similarly, some taxes may be reduced while one-slab benefit could also be extended to consumers, he said, adding that the facility of free electricity units enjoyed by Water and Power Development Authority and other institutions was also likely to be withdrawn. It was reported after Sunday's meeting that a plan was devised to withdraw subsidised electricity availed by Discos and government officers in grade 17 and above.



QUETTA: Traders burning electricity bills during a protest against hike in power tariff.

Imaan handed over to police on remand

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): Human rights lawyer Imaan Mazari, who was arrested a day earlier in a new case registered under the Anti-Terrorism Act (ATA), was handed over to the Islamabad police on a three-day physical remand.

The additional district and sessions judge, Abul Hasnat, approved Mazari's physical remand on prosecutor Raja Naveed's request, after which the police took Mazari into its custody and left the judicial complex premises. The court's decision was issued after the prosecutor and Mazari's counsels concluded their arguments.

A day earlier, Imaan's was arrested in a new terror case from outside Adiala jail in Rawalpindi soon after an ATC court approved Mazari's and Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM) leader Ali Wazir's bails in a seditious case pertaining to the controversial speech against state institutions. The Imaan's counsel had said the police did not inform them about the case in which she had been arrested.

Before ordering the remand, the judge had allowed Imaan to meet her mother Shireen Mazari in the courtroom. During his arguments Tuesday, the prosecutor maintained that the police wanted Imaan's remand now, maintaining that the trial had not been initiated yet. Right now we have to collect evidence against Imaan Mazari," the prosecutor told the court.

Meanwhile, the human rights lawyer's counsel, Zainab Janjua opposed the police request for her client's remand. It is not necessary for a suspect to be kept in custody in the kind of investigation that the police want to conduct, she said. "The Supreme Court said that it is not necessary to arrest the suspect in every case.

Apex court echoes with 'good to see you' again

ISLAMABAD (Agencies): The Supreme Court on Tuesday echoed with the pleasantry "good to see you" as it heard PTI Chairman Imran Khan's plea challenging amendments to accountability laws.

A three-member bench, comprising Chief Justice of Pakistan (CJP) Umar Ata Bandial, Justice Mansoor Ali Shah and Justice Ijazul Ahsan, took up the petition, which was filed last year in June. During Tuesday's hearing, Advocate Khawaja Haris appeared before the court as the PTI chief's counsel while Makhdoom Ali Khan represented the federal government.

Noting that the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) bill "interferes in the Supreme Court's jurisdiction" to hear the matter, CJP Bandial said he was of the view that the current bench should continue hearing the case. However, Justice Shah once again suggested that a full court be formed to hear Imran's petition against the accountability law amendments.

At the outset of the hearing, while addressing Haris,

CJP Bandial said, "Good to see you. I hope that I will not be targeted for saying this." The top judge had earlier exchanged similar greetings with former prime minister Imran Khan during the latter's appearance before the apex court on May 11. However, the PML-N had claimed that the friendly gesture was only limited to the PTI chief. During Tuesday's proceedings, the CJP noted that the apex court had already understood the argument presented by the federal government's lawyer, adding that Makhdoom Ali Khan was criticising the court proceedings.

Justice Bandial stated that the attorney general of Pakistan (AGP) had accepted that there were "defects" in the law and had asked for more time. Recalling that the AGP had informed the court that the National Assembly was to review the Supreme Court (Practice and Procedure) law, the CJP said it had not done so. He went on to say that he was unaware of the incumbent interim government's stance on the Supreme Court (Practice

and Procedure) law, and asked, "Should a suspended legislation be given this much importance that it caused other cases to be delayed?"

He asked the reason why the AGP had sought more time, to which the government lawyer replied that the AGP was not present on the occasion. Citing a past court verdict, Justice Bandial observed that an appeal against a decision made by an eight-member bench could not be heard. He said, "If you have any objection, then file a new petition." When Haris said that it was ruled in the Aitzaz Ahsan case that the legislation would "remain ineffective" and had not been declared "unlawful", Justice Ahsan noted that the government had already admitted it had enacted "poor legislation".

"Proceedings cannot be impacted by a legislation that has been suspended by a court order," the judge added. CJP Bandial then asked if the government wanted the court proceedings to be halted, to which the counsel answered that

(Continued on Back Page)

Businessmen set 3-day deadline for govt to withdraw hike in power tariff

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Backing the call of shutter-down strike against inflated power bills, business community in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa on Tuesday set a three-day deadline for the government to withdraw the exorbitant increase in electricity tariff and warned to go for protest and every extent against non-acceptance of demands.

Businessmen described the independent power producers (IPPs) as mother of all ill and asking to carry out an public audit of IPPs, what they said, an organized mafia behind the IPPs, which has caused rising circular debts and power crisis in the country.

Traders asked the interim government and prime minister to take tangible and provide relief and special

incentives to save the sinking of the national economy. They said imposition of 14 kinds of taxes in power bills was unacceptable, which should be abolished immediately.

Speaking at joint press conference today, acting president of the Sarhad Chamber of Chamber of and Industry Ijaz Khan Afridi and Industrialists Association Peshawar president Malik Imran Ishaq said that no government exists in the country, saying that no stone was remained unturned to increase miseries of business community. A sluggish growth was witnessed in business, industry, trade and exports while the interim government was yet to take corrective measures and put the national economy on the right track, Mr Afridi said.

He said the dollar rate has touched a new peak, even unavailable at high

prices in the open market. He said massive increase in power tariff and petroleum products had brought a new wave of inflation, which had hit every segment of the society. Mr Afridi who flanked by former president FPCCI Ghazanfar Bilour, SCCI's former presidents Fuad Ishaq, Engr Masood Anwar Pervaiz, Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Riaz Arshad, Malik Niaz Ahmad, Sherbaz Bilour, former senior vice president Imran Khan Mohmand, ex-vice president Javed Akhtar and others asked the interim government to sense the gravity of the situation and withdraw exorbitant hike in power bills.

Malik Imran Khan, while sharing statistical figures with the media, blamed the IPPs agreement for increasing circular debts, electricity tariff and power crisis in the country.

He said elite class, high officials and powerful people gained special incentives, perks and privileges, in which power charges waiver also included.

Similarly, he elaborated that outdated power transmission lines, distribution systems and poor recovery/thefts also contributed to the growing power crisis. He said power units have increased from Rs51 per unit to Rs80 per unit, actually it is increased by 100 per cent, by adding 48 to 50 per cent various taxes in power bills, resulting in the cost of electricity having increased manifold for the industries.

He added billions of rupees collected in the name of Fuel Price Adjustment (FPAs) in power bills, saying that collection of FPAs was open violation of the 18th constitu-

tional amendments, which should be abolished immediately. Faud Ishaq said our total consumption is 44,000 megawatts against production of 48,000 megawatt, so there should not any question about carrying out prolonged electricity loadshedding

Malik Imran said KP was producing electricity at low cost and available in surplus despite that power consumers have been faced with hours-long electricity loadshedding in the province, even supplying electricity on double cost. The IAP president revealed the power tariffs will touch at Rs90 per unit, which couldn't be accepted. He said if the government wants to promote industrialization and businesses, it should provide relief and special incentives to the business community.

Former FPCCI president

Ghazanfar Bilour said the government was seen nowhere in the country. He added an increase of Rs40 in dollar rate was witnessed since the advent of interim government, according to which, the dollar available at Rs303 and Rs305 in banks while in open market, USD rate surged by Rs320 and Rs330, compelling on to increase rate of local manufacturing items.

Ghazanfar Bilour said KP was the only province which is producing electricity on a cheap rate, despite people of the province buying electricity at the highest cost, which they sheer unjustly with them. He said if the rulers gave examples of other countries in the world regarding increasing inflation, those countries are also providing facilities and incentives to their citizens.



Jamia Masjid Al-Sadiq, Bahawalpur Zoo, Cholistan ancient Governor Punjab briefed by officers of relevant depts

LAHORE (INP): Governor Punjab Muhammad Balighur Rehman on Tuesday was briefed on Jamia Masjid Al-Sadiq, Bahawalpur Zoo and the remains of ancient civilization Ganveriwala in Cholistan by officers of relevant departments.

The briefing held at Governor House Lahore was attended by DG Walled City Kamran Lashari, Commissioner Bahawalpur Dr. Ehtisham Anwar, Additional Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur Jam Afab, Secretary Tourism Asif Bilal Lodhi, Head of Archaeology Islamia University Bahawalpur, Dr.

Khalil Ahmed, Secretary Auqaf Tahir Raza Bukhari, DG Wildlife Mubeen Elhi, Secretary Forest, Mudassar Waheed Malik, Administrator Auqaf Bahawalpur Ghulam Abbas, Principal Secretary to Governor Nabeel Awan, and Special Secretary to Governor Umar Saeed.

It was decided on the occasion that the excavation work regarding the discovery of Ganveriwala archeology in Cholistan would be started in October.

On this occasion, the Governor of Punjab said that the by discovering the ancient heritage and civi-

lization buried in Cholistan more information can be found about the ancient Indus Valley Civilization.

He expected that cities as big as Mohenjo-daro and Harappa in the ancient Indus Valley Civilization can be discovered here. This will give Pakistan international recognition and also create opportunities for tourism.

Balighur Rehman said that developing links between universities and archeology departments will give students an opportunity to learn and research more about ancient civilizations.

Governor Punjab added that the improvement of trust (waqf) properties including Jamia Masjid-ul-Sadiq and Bostan-Aziz should be well taken care of.

He instructed the concerned officers to increase the funding of Jamia Masjid Al-Sadiq and improve the maintenance of the mosque. Governor Punjab also gave instructions regarding the improvement and future plans of Masjid Bostan

Aziz which was built by Hafeez ur Rehman and given in trust.

Regarding Bahawalpur Zoo, it was decided in the meeting that its old name Sherbagh would be restored.

The Punjab Governor said that the zoo should be equipped with state of the art facilities, new animals should be brought here, and the old animals should be well taken care of. Governor Punjab further said that matters related to ticketing, parking, living conditions of animals inside cages should be improved.

Balighur Rehman said that where other model zoos are being built in Punjab, Bahawalpur Zoo would also be upgraded and improved.

It was also decided in the meeting that the Lal Suhanra National Park Bahawalpur will also be improved. The improvement of Chowk Fawarha Janazah was also discussed.

State responsible to provide quality education to every citizen
Governor Punjab

Muhammad Baligh ur Rehman on Tuesday said that the state is responsible for provision of quality education to every citizen.

Addressing the ceremony of Rashid Latif Khan University in Lahore, he said that besides education, teachers ought to pay attention on the character building and training of the youth.

He said that the universities are the best and only place for research.

Baligh ur Rehman stressed that we have to excel in the field of research as there is no progress without research and development.



KARACHI: Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab inaugurating operations of Land Management & Digital Archive System computerized land record at KMC Head Office.

Digitization of land records major challenge

KARACHI (APP): Mayor Karachi Barrister Murtaza Wahab has said that the major challenge of the city is the digitization of land records, which has been started by the Karachi Metropolitan Corporation (KMC) land department.

He said this on the occasion of inaugurating the Land Management and Digital Archive System operations at the head office of KMC's Land Department. He said that with the computerization of land records, it will not be possible to make any fabrication in this record in the future. The land department challan will be issued along with a QR code that would bring transparency in this process

while the amount of challan will be credited to the KMC's account, he added.

He said this method will prevent fake works as the fake item will not be found in the database. In the future, only valid and certified challans will be issued by KMC and this initiative will benefit KMC and all the citizens living in Karachi, he added.

Municipal Commissioner Syed Afzal Zaidi, Director Land Sabah ul Islam and other officers were also present on the occasion. Mayor said that land records are being digitized on a daily basis. Congratulations to the land department KMC for this operation. KMC is being transformed into a

transparent organization, where there will be no room for fake and wrongdoings, he said. He said that there are 1874 and 1906 maps of Karachi and other documents in the records of the KMC land department, all these details will be uploaded on the website of KMC.

Under this operation in the first phase, all registers, maps and files related to land records have been archived, while in the second phase, entries of records are being made on the computer. He said that this land management system introduced in KMC is based on a Graphics Information System, which can be further expanded in the future.

Caretaker Minister directs to send cases to NAB

KARACHI (APP): Sindh Caretaker Minister for Irrigation, Ishwar Laal, on Tuesday sought details of under investigations and pending corruption cases against employees of the Irrigation Department.

According to a handout issued by Sindh Information Department, the heads of various sections of the Irrigation Department were directed to immediately provide details of the ongoing investigations and pending cases against the employees of the Department to the National Accountability Bureau (NAB). On the instructions of the minister, all the concerned chief engineers, project directors and other sectional heads were directed to submit the details by August 30, it added.



Corrigendum

Revamping EOBI Application and Database For Strengthening the Social Security System Operated by the Institution

Employees' Old-Age Benefits Institution (EOBI)

It is hereby informed that the date of submission of tender documents, called through PPRA Website as well as print media, vide PID (K) 553/2023 dated 20.08.2023 in the following Newspapers has further been extended upto 08.09.2023, at 11:00 hours;

1. The News, 2. Dawn, 3. Jang, 4. Express, 5. Baluchistan Express

6. Frontier Post, 7. Kawish

Now Technical Bids, on the subject matter will be opened on 08.09.2023 at 11.30 am, at the same address.

Director (General Administration Department)

EOBI Head Office, 190/B/1, P.E.C.H.S Block # 2,

Near Blue Ribbon Bakery, Off Shara-e-Faisal, Karachi,

Tel No: 012-99225397

PID(K) 664/23

PAKISTAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY (PCAA)

TENDER NOTICE

HIRING OF MANPOWER THROUGH OUTSOURCING CONTRACT AT CAA SAIDU SHARIF AIRPORT

1. Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority invites proposals from reputed and experienced service providers having experience of provision of similar services, for outsourcing of the following services at CAA Saidu Sharif Airport:

S#	SERVICE REQUIRED	NUMBER OF RESOURCES REQUIRED	AGE LIMIT (MIN-MAX YEARS)	EDUCATION/ EXPERIENCE REQUIRED
1	Cook	2	25-45	• Middle • 02 Years cooking experience
2	Janitorial Staff	6	20-45	• Middle • Janitorial experience

2. The contract will be awarded to the selected service provider for two (02) years extendable for another six months only (Subject To Satisfactory Performance).

3. Firms having experience of similar nature of assignments may obtain the tender documents containing terms and conditions etc. from the address given below against payment of Rs. 1500/- (non-refundable) in shape of Pay Order favoring CAA Collection Account as mentioned below:

Chief Operating Officer / APM
Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority
CAA Saidu Sharif Airport
Telephone: (0946) 881512

A/C No. (Will be notified in due course of time)

4. This will be a single stage two envelope process. The bids should be submitted in one packet containing two separate sealed envelopes marked as "Technical Proposal" and "Financial Proposal". Proposals / Bids should be dropped in the Tender Box placed at the Reception of Chief Operating Officer / APM Saidu Sharif Airport on 19 September, 2023. The box will be sealed at 1200 Hrs and no bid shall be entertained / received thereafter. Tender shall be opened by the Tender Opening committee at 1230 Hrs on the same day in the presence of bidders / their representatives who may like to be present.

5. This advertisement is also available on CAA and PPRA websites.

Chief Operating Officer / APM
Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority
CAA Saidu Sharif Airport
Website: www.caapakistan.com
Email: usman.afzal@caapakistan.com.pk
Tele & Fax No.: (0946) 881512

PID(K) #640/23

www.caapakistan.com.pk

PAKISTAN CIVIL AVIATION AUTHORITY (PCAA)

AUCTION NOTICE

AUCTION OF 25 TREES AT CAA SAIDU SHARIF AIRPORT

1. Airport Manager Saidu Sharif Airport calls for auction for cutting of following trees to all registered and unregistered suppliers on 05th September, 2023 at 1200 Hrs in the Airport Parking.

- 03 Bottle Brush Trees
- 04 Eucalyptus Trees
- 01 Bakain Tree
- 17 Poplar Trees.

2. Following are the terms and conditions for the interested parties.

- The winning party will pay 25% of the bid to CAA on the spot.
- Airport manager is authorized to cancel the bid of any bidder without giving any reason.
- All trees must be removed with roots.
- After removing the roots, the awarded party is obliged to level up the area from which the tree is removed.
- If any tree other than the auctioned one is harmed in anyway, a fine of Rs. 25,000/- per tree will be endorsed on the respective party.
- In case of any damage to CAA property or equipment the respective party will be charged to repair the damage.
- A security amount of Rs. 30,000/- should be deposited to CAA representative by all parties before the start of auction.

3. Any interested party can contact CAA Saidu Sharif Airport during office hours on any working day on queries regarding auction.

Chief Operating Officer / APM
Pakistan Civil Aviation Authority
CAA Saidu Sharif Airport
Email: usman.afzal@caapakistan.com.pk
Tele & Fax No.: (0946) 881512

PID(K) #641/23

www.caapakistan.com.pk

IN THE COURT OF SPECIAL JUDGE (CUSTOMS & TAXATION), KARACHI

Special Case No. 33/2019
FIR# ASO-18/2019-HQ
P.S. CUSTOMS, KARACHI

The State.....Versus.....Muhammad Qasim & Others
PROCLAMATION REQUIRED THE APPEARANCE OF TWO (02) ACCUSED PERSONS UNDER SECTION 87 Cr. PC.

Whereas, complaint has been made before me that accused person namely (i) Muhammad Qasim S/o Hawas Khan, having CNIC No. 21506-1085285-1 R/o Anghar Kill Miran Shah District North Waziristan Agency & (ii) Sultan Mehmood S/o Wali Waz Khan having CNIC No. 21506-7303875-3, R/o. Unghar Kila Wazi Khail Miran Muhammad Shah South Waziristan Agency, have committed an offence of smuggling and it has been returned to a warrant of arrest issued thereupon that the said accused person cannot be found and whereas it had been shown to my satisfaction that the above mentioned accused person absconded to avoid the service of the said warrant.

2. Proclamation is hereby made that the said accused is required to appear on 31.08.2023 at 09:00 am before his Hon'able Court to answer the said complaint.

--sd--

Special Judge

Special Court (Customs & Taxation)
Karachi

PID(K) 633/23

Government of Pakistan NATIONAL DATABASE AND REGISTRATION AUTHORITY (Regional Head Office Peshawar - Khyber Pakhtunkhwa)

RENTAL OFFICE SPACE REQUIRED FOR NADRA Offices, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

(Tender/Re-Tender Notice No. 2023/Estate/4 x NRCs)

OFFICE ACCOMMODATION WILL HAVE FOLLOWING FEATURES:

- Office Accommodation should be in the below mentioned locations: -

S No.	NADRA Registration Center	Required Covered Area
1.	Kalam (Tehsil Bahrain, District Swat)	2500-4000 sq ft
2.	Baghdheri (Tehsil Khwazakhele, District Swat)	2000-3500 sq ft
3.	Kabalgram (Tehsil Martlung, District Shangla)	2000-3500 sq ft
4.	Patrak (Tehsil Shiringal, District Dir Upper)	2000-3500 sq ft

- Space measuring of total covered area mentioned against each with public and staff washrooms.
- Prominent, having independent entrance and proposed building should not be in residential area.
- Security wise viable location and easily accessible by public transport.
- Dedicated 3 Phase Electrical Meter/ Connection
- Preference will be given to the building in which dedicated transformer is installed.
- Tap Water facility along with overhead tank.
- Ramp for wheel chair for disable citizens.
- Space, NOC for installation of direction board, sign board and heavy generator.
- Roof top for satellite dish antenna installation.
- Sufficient space for maintaining the public queue & parking area.
- Tenancy for a longer period (Preferably 10 years).

Note: - Interested parties / owners can purchase the bidding documents on submission of a written application at a cost of Rs. 100/- from below mentioned address or from concerned offices between 09:00 am - 03:00 pm hours (except gazette holidays). The bids / proposal should be submitted duly completed in all respects by 19th Sep, 2023 at 11:00 am hours (under Single Stage-Two Envelope bidding procedure). The envelopes shall be clearly marked as Technical and Financial proposals. Technical bids / proposals will be Opened on 19th Sep, 2023 at 11:30 am hours at NADRA Regional Head Office, EOBI Building, Plot No. 31 Sector B-1, Phase-V Hayatabad Peshawar in presence of bidders/their nominated representatives. Bid / proposals must include the following documents in addition to any other information that the bidder may find necessary: -

Technical Bid (Separate Envelope):

- Photocopy of property ownership documents [Fard-e-Jaidad/Allotment letter/Relevant Certificate by concerned authority (where settled revenue record is not available)].
- Photocopy of valid CNIC.
- Completion and Fitness Certificate of the building
- Undertaking on Non-judicial stamp paper of Rs. 100/- certifying that owner / building is not temporary / permanently debarred from any Government agency / authority / department (without bearing any responsibility on NADRA whatsoever in this regard).
- Pictures of the building offered for lease.
- Valid Site Plan / Map of the building duly approved from concerned authority.
- In case of absence of owner, authority letter for representative duly signed by property owner, permitting him to attend tender process.

Financial Bid (Separate Envelope):

- ⇒ Owner's consent showing monthly rent & offered area of the building.
- ⇒ Quoted price shall be inclusive of all taxes.
- ⇒ No brokerage / service charges will be paid in case of real estate agent.
- ⇒ Opening date / time of Financial Proposal will be informed to all successful bidders of General Proposal Evaluation.
- ⇒ Bidding documents received after submission of due date / time mentioned above, will not be entertained.
- ⇒ NADRA reserves the right to reject all bids / proposals under PPRA Rule 33 and can cancel the bidding process before acceptance of bid or proposal.
- ⇒ Bid can also be rejected if owner of selected building fail to produce acceptable required / property documents.
- ⇒ This advertisement is also available on PPRA website at www.ppra.org.pk

For any query contact on following address:

Director (Admin)

NADRA Regional Head Office, Peshawar - Khyber Pakhtunkhwa
EOBI Building, Plot No. 31 Sector B-1, Phase-V Hayatabad Peshawar | Telephone: 091-9217840

PID(I) 1327/23



PAKISTAN ENGINEERING COUNCIL

NOTICE FOR 28th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 28th Annual General Meeting of the Council is scheduled to be held on **Sunday, October 01, 2023 (10:00 a.m.)** at Quetta. The venue will be announced in due course of time. The following business will be transacted in the AGM in accordance with the Section 5 (1) & (2) of PEC Act 1976:

- presentation of annual report;
- presentation of audited accounts;
- presentation of annual budget;
- appointment of auditors; and
- such other business as may be placed before the meeting by the Governing Body or as the meeting may decide.

Engineers having valid membership of Pakistan Engineering Council are requested to participate and send the proposals/motions to be moved in the AGM, by **Monday, 11th September, 2023** to Registrar PEC, Headquarters, Islamabad. The motions should be within the scope of functions of the Council in accordance with the PEC Bye-Laws 1976.

Engineers are requested to apply on URL (agm.pec.org.pk) for mandatory registration and subsequently acquire their admit cards online or from PEC HQ, Islamabad & Regional Offices at Quetta, Karachi, Lahore and Peshawar between 21st to 27th of September, 2023.

For any query, please contact:

• Engr. Syed Muhammad Jahanzeb, Assistant Registrar, Regional Office, Quetta. Ph: 081-2871673

• Engr. Dr. Ashfaq Ahmed Sheikh, Sr. Additional Registrar, PEC HQ, Islamabad. Ph: 051-9201612, Email: agm2023@pec.org.pk

For further details, please visit PEC website: www.pec.org.pk

Registrar/Secretary

Pakistan Engineering Council, Headquarters,
Attaturk Avenue (East), G-5/2, Islamabad

PID(I) 1338/23

Public Notice

It is Published Through This Notice That I Amna Israr Wife of Waqar Ahmad Shinwari Resident of Gula-e-Lala House no KCB-1/50 Street, 5.OTS Road District Kohat is the owner of Plot no 1375 Size 05 Marla Registration no 5882 PHA Hangu Town Ship Tehsil & District Hangu Has Appointed as Mr. Nisar Ahmad Son of Noor Muhammad Resident of Mohallah Aulia Din Sara Ghundi Thall District Hangu Through (Special) Deed no 613 Bahi no. 04 Dated 16/09/2021 which is Registered in the Office of Tehsildar/Sub Registrar Kohat The Attorney Holder now wants to Transfer The Above Said Plot If any Bank/ Institution/Firm/ Person Has Any objection About The Transfer He Should Contact The Hangu PHA office Kohat Within 15 Days in Writing with Proofs otherwise Plot will be Transfer and no objection will be Accepted (Manager RFC Kohat PHA Hangu Town Ship Phone. 0922-514515).

Public Notice

It is Published Through This Notice That I Sabana Shuja Wife of Qazi Shuja ud Din Resident of Mohallah Qazian District Kohat is the owner of Plot no 66 Size 11.1 Marla Sector IV Phase.1 KDA Kohat. He Has Requested That The Original Transfer Deed of The Said Plot Has Been Lost Some Where and now Issuance of Duplicate Papers is Desired The Plot is not Mortgaged There Has Been Appointed no Attorney and not Sold to Anybody if any Bank /Institution /Firm or Person Has any objections He/She Should Contact The Housing Officer UDA Kohat Within 15 Days of Publication of This Notice in Writing with Proof otherwise Duplicate Transfer Deed will be Issued and no objection will be Accepted (Director Urban Area KDA Kohat).



PESHAWAR: Governor KP Haji Ghulam Ali taking oath Engr Amir Nadeem and Engr Ahmad Jan as new members of provincial caretaker cabinet.

Relief Dept sign MoU with ICRC to boost disaster response efforts

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A significant step towards enhancing disaster management and fortifying emergency response efforts in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province is planned to be achieved through the formalization of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Relief, Rehabilitation and Settlement Department (RRSD) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC).

Secretary Relief, Mr. Abdul Basit, and Country Director of IRC, Ms. Shabnam Baloch, jointly

signed the MOU. This moment marks as the International Rescue Committee commits to an enhanced collaboration with RRSD-PDMA (Provincial Disaster Management Authority) across all phases of disaster management. The collaborative initiatives encompass rapid response strategies, anticipatory actions, capacity-building projects, and reinforcement of disaster preparedness programs.

The successful execution of this partnership hinges on the availability of essential resources to facilitate joint endeavors.

Throughout this collaboration, RRSD and IRC maintain their distinct missions and responsibilities, ensuring the preservation of their individual objectives.

Commenting on this development, Secretary of Relief, Mr. Abdul Basit, stated, "By harnessing the resources at our disposal, RRSD and IRC are poised to identify shared areas of interest in aiding communities affected by disasters or conflicts through targeted program interventions."

He further added, "I strongly believe in the significance of building and strengthening local capacities

in disaster preparedness and response. Additionally, we need to establish efficient mechanisms to streamline humanitarian efforts and prevent duplication of work during emergencies. I extend my gratitude to the International Rescue Committee (IRC) for their unwavering support."

This partnership signifies a substantial advancement in augmenting disaster management capabilities and establishing resilient emergency response mechanisms within Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province. The collaborative synergy between RRSD and IRC aims to leverage their unique expertise for the betterment of communities grappling with the aftermath of disasters or conflicts.

It is of paramount importance to emphasize that, while pursuing shared objectives, both RRSD and IRC remain steadfast in upholding their distinct missions and responsibilities.

This commitment ensures a seamless integration of efforts in pursuit of their humanitarian goals.

The MOU signing ceremony witnessed the presence of senior officials from the Relief Department, PDMA, and IRC.



PESHAWAR: Acting president SCCI Ijaz Khan Afridi and president Industrialists Association Peshawar Imran Ishaq addressing a press conference.

1,560 persons arrested involved in killing

PESHAWAR (APP): The Capital City Police Peshawar carried out a comprehensive crackdown against criminals arrested 1,560 persons involved in killing this year since January, said spokesman of police on Tuesday.

Acting under the directives of CCPO Peshawar Syed Ashfaq Anwar, a total of 371 cases registered due to disputes over properties, personal vendettas, domestic conflicts, and other issues. This resulted in the apprehension of 555 individuals linked to these cases. Additionally, 578

cases of assassination attempts were reported, leading to the arrest of 1,005 suspects.

4,965 cases were registered against professional criminals, resulting in the arrest of 5,269 individuals.

These criminals were involved in various activities, including aerial firing and arms possession.

Notably, a substantial amount of weapons, including more than 456 Kalashnikovs, 45 Kalakovs, 543 rifles, 283 shotguns, and 26 hand grenades and more than 5,815 pistols and over

140,000 different types of cartridges were also recovered.

CCPO, Syed Ashfaq Anwar, expressed confidence in the success of the crackdown against professional criminals during the lockdown. In efforts to maintain law and order, all available resources have been mobilized to further intensify the crackdown. The police have ramped up special checkpoints, search and strike operations, city patrolling, eagle squads, and local police mobile units across various internal and external routes.



F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Leaders of various traders organizations have staged a protest demonstration and asked government to give relief to people in power bills and extra bills. Under the leader-

ship of Muttahida Tajran Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Chief Traders Alliance Federation of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Ghulam Bilal Javed, leaders of various traders organizations, presidents of markets and traders held a protest rally at Saddar

Road and held up black flags and protest banners against this cruel price hike. Expressing great anger and also raised slogans against the economic massacre of the people by the government and burnt electricity bills in protest. The free privileges and facilities of the elite should be abolished immediately.

Traders' Alliance started a protest movement against this cruel system in the trading centers on behalf of the traders community, in the first phase by hoisting banners and black flags, it warned the government to reconsider its decisions.

Court cancels bail of brothers

PESHAWAR (APP): The judge of Accountability Court Peshawar, Safi Ullah Jan has cancelled the interim bail of two contractor brothers for their alleged corruption in the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) project.

During the hearing of corruption allegations against the two contractor brothers from Islamabad, namely Amir Latif and Imran Latif, the court was informed that both the brothers were allegedly involved in corruption in the BRT project and to avoid arrest, both had secured interim bail from the court.

Earlier, a court had granted bail to the brothers and barred the NAB from their arrest, directing the accused to be the part of an inquiry initiated against them in a corruption case.

During today's hearing, the NAB Prosecutor, Roohullah Jan argued against their interim bail and requested the court to revisit the directive.

Upon completion of the arguments, the accountability court cancelled the bail of both brothers.

Governor for collective efforts to promote peace

PESHAWAR (APP): The Governor Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Haji Ghulam Ali on Tuesday emphasized the need for collective efforts to promote the country's development, prosperity, and peace.

He said that those with intentions of weakening the state and spreading negativity, especially among the youth, cannot contribute positively.

He urged the younger generation to foster a positive mindset, uphold traditions, and promote values.

He expressed these views during a meeting at the Governor's House, where a delegation of 45 members from the district of Dir Upper, led by former provincial minister Shafiullah Khan, convened.

The delegation included representatives from various political and social circles, such as ANP, PPP, JUI, and PTI, among others.

The delegates discussed issues concerning the region's population, particularly related to notifications in Dir Central District, education, healthcare, gas supply, municipal representative powers, funds, and other challenges.

The delegates appreciated the Governor's receptive approach and thanked him for being a public servant focused solely on addressing citizens' concerns without bias.

They highlighted that this was the first time in history that a public-serving Governor was directly accessible to the province's people for dialogue and assistance.

During the conversation, the Governor underscored his commitment to resolving public issues impartially and selflessly.

ly and selflessly.

He said that serving humanity was a significant form of worship and that the provision of non-discriminatory public service was a crucial aspect of his belief.

The Governor acknowledged that engaging with the people and institutions dedicated to social service brings him immense joy.

He assured the delegates that the problems faced by local governments would be resolved soon, allowing them to initiate developmental activities in their areas.

Furthermore, Governor Ghulam Ali expressed his willingness to visit Dir shortly in response to the invitation extended by the delegation. The delegation from Peshawar Public School and College, headed by Principal Iftikhar

Ahmed, also met with the Governor.

The delegation discussed matters concerning institutional improvement and exchanged ideas for enhancement.

In a separate meeting, a delegation led by former provincial assembly member Israr-ul-Haq met with the Governor. The delegation discussed local issues, reaffirming the Governor's commitment to collaborate and assist in finding solutions.

The Governor acknowledged the provincial government's initiative to provide funds for local institutions.

In this manner, Governor Haji Ghulam Ali engaged with various delegations, highlighting his dedication to resolving public issues and fostering collaboration for the betterment of the region.



PESHAWAR: Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan chairing a meeting regarding BoDs of autonomous bodies.

Zubair inspect uplift projects

PESHAWAR (APP): The Commissioner Peshawar Division, Muhammad Zubair here Tuesday inspected Peshawar uplift projects and directed to increase pace of work.

He issued these directives during inspection of Peshawar Uplift Projects including Hayatabad Jogging Track and ongoing projects in University Town.

Project Engineer, Muhammad Adil briefed the Commissioner about progress of work and said that all the projects under Phase II would be completed within stipulated time limit.

Commissioner expressed satisfaction over pace of work and directed to speed up construction work keeping in view problems of people. He also directed to ensure transparency and quality in construction process.

KP caretaker minister chairs meeting

PESHAWAR (APP): A meeting regarding Tourism, Culture, Archaeology, and Museum was held under the chairmanship of the Caretaker Provincial Minister for Tourism, Culture, Archaeology, and Museum and Department of Information Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel here on Tuesday.

Addressing the participants of the meeting, the Caretaker Provincial Minister Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel said that new recreational parks, tourist parks, skiing, new chairlifts, new tourism tracks and other measures are being taken for the safety of tourists.

He said that the environment and trees at tourists' spots will not be harmed.

He said that a ski resort will be built at Biyun (Kalam) which will generate income to the tune of millions of dollars annually and benefit the economy. He said that the security of the tourists is being ensured through the tourism police so that there is peace in the tourist areas.

Tourists should also take care of the environment and avoid littering the tourist spots.

Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel said that the immediate impact-oriented projects should be completed as soon as possible so that the people could benefit from them.

fit from them.

We are here for good governance so that the people could benefit from it.

He said that a tourism helpline, 1422, has also been set up for tourists to call in case of any problems. Barrister Feroze Jamal Shah Kakakhel said Khyber Pakhtunkhwa accounts for 37 percent of Pakistan's total tourists' arrivals.

He said that work on the preservation of archaeological sites is being carried out on various sites in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

He invited the people to visit the archaeological sites wherein the guides will inform them about their history.



PESHAWAR: Advocate Maozam Butt of Insaf Lawyers Forum addressing a press conference. — F.P. photo by Ghulam Murtaza

Atif Sardar successfully defended his Ph.D thesis

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: An open house Ph.D thesis defense Examination of Engr. Atif Sardar, Department of Mechanical Engineering, CECOS University, Peshawar.

Engr. Atif Sardar is serving as Lecturer at Center for Advanced Studies in Energy, UET Peshawar. So far, he has published five (05) research papers in national and international reputed journals.

Mechatronics Engineering, UET Peshawar and Dr. Riaz Muhammad, Associate Prof. Department of Mechanical Engineering, CECOS University, Peshawar.

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Prof. Dr. Sahar Noor, Dean Faculty of Mechanical, Chemical and Industrial (MCI) Engineering UET Peshawar who were present on the occasion congratulated the scholar and his supervisor for successful completion of thesis and appreciated the research work carried out by Engr. Atif Sardar. He proposed the commercialization of the product as a need of the country.



'Treatment under Sehat Card continued in LRH'

PESHAWAR (APP): Treatment under Sehat Card is continued in Lady Reading Hospital Peshawar where poor patients are being provided free of cost healthcare facilities. The spokesman of LRH told APP on Tuesday that treatment under Sehat Card was underway in all departments of the hospital and refuted reports about its suspension due to shortage of funds. On the directives of the Chief Minister Muhammad Azam, he said the quarters concerned approached the management of State Life Insurance Company and assured them that their dues would be cleared within a week. Resultantly, the company has directed all empaneled hospitals to immediately resume the free treatment facilities under Sehat Card Scheme. The insurance company has, in writing, informed the high ups of Sehat Card scheme in this regard.

Session held on importance of breast feeding awareness

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Provincial Session on the Importance of Breastfeeding Awareness held in Peshawar by Nutrition International is a significant event aimed at raising awareness about the importance of breastfeeding for maternal and child health. Breastfeeding is a critical aspect of infant nutrition and plays a crucial role in promoting the health and well-being of both mothers and babies. The main objectives of these sessions are to: Promote Breastfeeding Knowledge, Empower Mothers, Address Myths and Misconceptions, Engage Policymakers, Highlight Community Support, Showcase Successful Initiatives, Raise Awareness. Event was attended by Director MNCH Program Tribal Districts Dr Anisa Afridi, DD Nutrition DGHS Dr Sumera Afridi, DD IHP Dr. Hidayat, SUN Unit Coordinator Iqbal Muhammad, Professors of Human Nutrition Department, Civil Society Organizations, Provincial Assembly Khateeb Lateefullah, Provincial Coordinator Nutrition International Darya Khan and linked stakeholders.

GHS Bashirabad secures 100% results in Matric

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: Government High School Bashirabad has obtained 100% results in matriculation exams despite poor performance of public sector across Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. According to details, as many as 11 students obtained A1 grade while 26 achieved A grade respectively. GHS Bashirabad principal Waqar Khan Umarzai appreciated school's staff for their commitment to taught students in easiest possible ways.



In brief

Protests continue in Mardan F.P. Report

MARDAN: The activists of various political parties, business community and civil society staged a protest in College Chowk against the increase in electricity, gas, petrol, diesel and food items and cruel taxes in Mardan. The participants raised slogans of rejection of inflation. In which Mayor Mardan Himayat-Ullah Mayar, Provincial General Secretary of Central Organization of Traders Zahir Shah, Ameer Ghulam Rasool of Jamaat-e-Islami, Sajjad Khan of Marble Industrial Association, Naem Anwar and others were also present. The speakers said that the struggle will be continued against inflation and free provision of electricity, gas and petrol to the elites imposed on the country. The brutal increase in electricity bills is more than the income of the people. Beyond political affiliations, the people have to come out on the streets with one voice. He said that the electricity bill has come from 30 thousand rupees to 40 thousand rupees. It is difficult for a poor laborer to earn two daily bread. Poor people are suffering from mental retardation. In such a worst inflation where the people are barely getting their daily bread. Due to inflation and the daily increase in the price of electricity and new taxes, the prices of electricity bills are skyrocketing. Oppressed by inflation, poor people are forced to commit suicide. Electricity prices should be reduced immediately and unjustified taxes and inflation should be abolished.

Three rescued in Chitral F.P. Report

CHITRAL: At least three people stranded midair in a chairlift that went out of function in Koragh area of Upper Chitral on Tuesday, Spokesman Rescue 1122 Upper Chitral, Bilal Ahmad Faizi said, the rescue team received information that three people have been stranded in a malfunctioning chairlift in Koragh. The Disaster Management Team reached the site and started rescuer operation; he said adding that the team members approached the chairlift through a railing made up of a big steel ring. After reaching the stranded chairlift, he said the chairlift was tied with another rope and pulled towards the other end of the river. The chairlift when reached the other side, all the three stranded people were offboarded safely. Faizi said the rescue operation continued for 45 minutes adding that the rescued people were coming from Kahgeer to Booni area. The incident, he said occurred due to breakage of one of the ropes of the chairlift.

'Misaq' center inaugurated F.P. Report

HAFIZABAD: On the directions of Chief Minister Punjab and Inspector General Punjab, "Misaq" Centre has been established at Hafizabad under the supervision of District Police Officer Dr. Fahad Ahmad for providing all basic facilities to minority community as like Police Tuhafiz Centre. While opening of "Misaq" Centre, DPO said constitution of Pakistan provide equal rights to minorities and we would ensure protection of minorities. The other hand leaders of Christian Community presented floral bouquet to DPO and said that "Misaq Centre would play key role in promoting human rights and interfaith harmony among people.

Inflated bills and price hike Power consumers take to streets in Dir

F.P. Report

LOWER DIR: People from all walks of life in Talash on Tuesday took to the streets against the inflated power bills, prolonged power outage and growing incidents of street crimes in the area. The Talash Dushkkel Qaumi Islahi Jirga and the local traders' body jointly organized the protest rally, which was attended by hundreds of locals. All markets in Talash remained closed for some time.

The participants, carrying banners and placards, marched on the main Grand Truck road and returned from outside of the Talash police station. The rally was addressed by former provincial minister Muzafar Syed advocate, president Anjuman Tajirran Talash dr Noor Muhammad, president of Talash Dushkkel Qaumi Jirga Ibrahim Khan Hassankhel, jirga's former president Malik Taj Muhammad, Timergara tehsil chairman Mufti Irfanudin Din and others.

The speakers said the highest ever inflation had already broken back of the masses and the increase in power tariff had added to their miseries. They said the citizens had no option other than to pour onto the roads. They demanded of the government and authorities of Nepra to abolish all other taxes in

power bills and provide relief to the poor consumers. The speakers said that extra taxes had been added to power bills just to appease the IMF. They said the nation could no longer tolerate this injustice and would continue their protest until the 'illegal' taxes were abolished. The speakers said that a 'State' should act like a mother and should not put burden on poor public.

They said that some of the power consumers were selling their ornaments and other household items to pay their utility bills but the rulers were yet to realize the fact. The protesters gave a week-long deadline to the government and announced that they would pour onto the roads again if the consumers were not provided with a relief.

Hockey ground: The Lower Dir district hockey association and hockey players on Tuesday demanded of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa government and its ministry of sports to provide them equal opportunity for displaying their talent. Talking to local journalists at Timergara the association former president malik Shah Naseem, players Yasir Waheed, Adil Khan, Atif and Anees complained that there was no hockey ground in the district while players were forced to play in streets.

They said the hockey

association on its own had struggled hard to revive the national game in the district but due to unavailability of hockey ground the players' talent was being vanished. They said that a sense of deprivation prevailed in hockey players as the government gave more attention to other games. They said the Bajaur district had an Astro Turf ground but the Lower Dir district still lacked it.

Award show: The Jamiat Tulba Islam (JTI), a students' wing of the Jamiat Ulema Islam Fazl on Tuesday arranged a students' award show at Chakdara. The outgoing district cabinet members and brilliant students were awarded with shields and prizes. The function was addressed by the JUI-F provincial deputy chief Mufti Fazal Ghafoor, district chief Sirajud Din, general secretary Javed Iqbal, Timergara tehsil chairman Mufti Irfanudin Din, JTI provincial president Rehmat Shehzad and others.

The students were informed that elders of the JUI-F had rendered great sacrifices during the Pakistan movement. The speakers said that the Jewish and American lobbies were raising the issue of PTI chief Imran Khan's arrest by presenting it an international issue of human rights' violation. They said the JUI-F and JTI workers would never let those lobbyists to succeed.



SAKHAKOT: People holding a protest rally against inflation and rise in electricity tariff. — F.P. photo

Resident demands protection Sahibzada Afridi

KOHAT: A resident of Kohat named Muhammad Luqman alias Mathu requested Chief Justice of Pakistan and Inspector General of Police (IGP) Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to provide protection from Deputy Superintendent of Police (DSP) Sadat Khan, Station House Officer (SHO) city Fazal Muhammad because the officials had nominated in manipulated cases.

This he requested while addressing press conference at Kohat press club and claimed that SHO city Fazal Muhammad along with another SHO named Islam-u-Din and Sub Inspector Rauf Khan misusing their powers and creating problems and threatening with for bad consequences. He claimed that DSP Sadat Khan along with SHOs Fazal Muhammad and Islam-u-Din as well as Rauf Khan using the tactics to grab money from him because as property dealer.

The resident claimed that DSP and SHOs had sent him behind bars without any offense under section 3 of Maintenance of Public Order in Bannu jail. The speaker added he facing life threats from them (DSP Sadat Khan, SHOs Fazal Muhammad & Islam-u-Din and SI Rauf Khan) while requested for provision from policemen.

Lawyer shot dead, protest held

SARGODHA (INP): Unidentified armed men gunned down a lawyer here on Tuesday. Lawyer community held protest demonstration against the incident. According to details, unknown miscreants sprayed vehicle of Advocate Chaudhary Anwar Advocate near Salam area of Sargodha while he was on his way to Bhalwal.

As a result of firing, Chaudhary Anwar Advocate was killed on the spot and attackers fled the scene. The body was shifted to hospital for post-mortem. The lawyer community held protest demonstration against the incident and demanded to arrested the murderers.

Join ANP to secure Pashtun rights: Farooq

Anees Takar

MARDAN: Farooq Akram Khan, a member of the Awami National Party Provincial Working Committee, addressed media representatives in Mardan, stressing the importance of Pashtuns joining the party for the protection of their rights. He highlighted how in the 2013 elections, promises of "Change" and a better future were misleading for Pashtun youth, leading them astray from their goals.

Akram emphasized that mistakes are a natural part of growth and success lies in learning from them. He extended an invitation to the youth to join the

Awami National Party, asserting that the party's doors are open to all who want to contribute towards achieving the rights of Pashtuns.

Akram pointed to the accomplishments of the Awami National Party, particularly under the leadership of former Chief Minister Haider Khan Hoti. He mentioned various development projects, such as medical colleges, schools, technical colleges, and infrastructure projects that were completed due to the party's efforts. He urged the youth to reflect on the positive impact the party has had on Mardan and the province as a whole.

He criticized the 2013

elections, claiming that the mandate of Pashtuns was stolen, resulting in the imposition of rulers who marginalized the province and exploited its resources. Khan pledged that the Awami National Party would continue to raise its voice against oppression faced by Pashtuns and work tirelessly to achieve their rights.

Khan also pointed out that the party which ruled Khyber Pakhtunkhwa for a decade failed to provide employment opportunities and easy business prospects for the youth. He urged support for the Awami National Party as a means to safeguard the province's future and empower its people.

Malaria medicines sold in open market

F.P. Report

LARKANA: The malaria medicines provided by government available in open market while District Health Officers and shopkeepers had also confirmed its availability in the market with unfair means.

The news of malaria drugs with DHO side being sold at private medical stores in Larkana when a video was made viral on Facebook by a local social activist in Larkana, which was also confirmed by two medical store owners.

According to the information in this regard, the video of DHO's malaria medicines being sold at the medical stores located at Ghanti Pahatk, a suburb of Larkana, when social activist Faqir Arslan Chandio went viral on Facebook, in which a person is selling malaria medicines with titled "Not for sale" was found written on these medicines, which were sent by WHO to the health department of the Sindh government for the eradication of malaria, the store owners killed the wholesaler located in Larkana city.

Sheikh's shop told Karachi medics to buy

medicines, on the other hand, after the video of the anti-malarial medicines sent by W.H.O went viral, the Director General of Health Services, Sindh, issued a warning to the illegal sellers of anti-malarial medicines. Orders were issued to "seal" the stores and a three-member committee headed by Director Health Larkana has been constituted to investigate the matter further and has been mandated to submit a report within 24 hours while the DHO himself. Health Larkana has also confirmed this.

Reinstatement of employees demanded: A protest demonstration was held in front of the press club for the reinstatement of the dismissed employees of Sindh Solid Management Board in Larkana, in which the dismissed drivers and helpers Sajid Domki, Niaz Ali, Muhammad Yusuf Domki and others protested.

While doing this, he said that some time ago, the Sindh government entrusted the cleaning contract in Larkana to a private company, Sindh Solid Management Board, which is responsible for cleaning the suburbs of Larkana, Bandar Road,

Lahori Mohalla, Nazar Mohalla and other neighborhoods and areas, were performing their work, but despite this, the administration of Sindh Solid Management Board, former admin officer Iftikhar Ahmed Narejo, operation manager Naveed Khalidi and other officers were not allowing them to release their salaries, who have so far received three Monthly salaries were not released.

The protestors also demanded release of salaries a month ago, now they have also dismissed us from our jobs, which is a complete abuse and injustice to us, while in this period of difficulties, our children it is becoming difficult to feed the stomach while we have repeatedly sent petitions to the officers but no one is listening, so we demand the government to take legal action against the officers of Sindh Solid Management Board and suspend them for three months. It should be made mandatory to release salaries otherwise we will be forced to take extreme measures, the responsibility of which will be the administration of the Sindh government and the Sindh Solid Management Board.

From disaster to healing hands: Afghans' quest for medical care

Dr Rabia Noor

AS Afghanistan is facing several difficulties in every single region caused by the wars of nearly four decades and Afghanistan is still not self-reliant. About 250,000 Afghan refugees have reached in Pakistan since August 2021, but a refugee crackdown has left several of them in fright of being imprisoned or deported from the country.

In January, more than 600 Afghans have been deported from Pakistan in only three days, and hundreds new of them face eviction in a renewed crackdown on refugees. Due to some reasons 605 people were sent back to Afghanistan from Sindh province, including 63 women and 71 children. Furthermore, 800 people were likely to be deported in the coming months. (According to guardian global development)

Last summertime, authorities began deporting Afghans for illegally entering the country, but arrests and detentions have increased since October. Nearly 1,400 Afghans, including 129 women and 178 children, have

been detained in Karachi and Hyderabad alone, the largest number of arrests made to date in Pakistan, say lawyers.

The people of Afghanistan still do not have access to basic services in many areas such as clean water, food, health, education, electricity and so on. Due to the deficiency of good and proper health facilities, Afghan people have to go to other countries for the treatment of diseases, most of them go to Pakistan. People suffering from different diseases tries for treatment inside Afghanistan, but lack of qualified doctors, medical staff and sometimes the unavailability and poor quality of most medicines doesn't let them get cured on time. Secondly, there are no advanced diagnostics and medical equipment for treatment. Therefore, patients are required to go to another country, specifically Pakistan, to save their lives. In this process they face countless difficulties.

First is getting a passport now. It is difficult for a poor Afghan to get a passport. They have to take for more than people. The cost of a passport is at least 12,000 Afghanis, and only those who are economically better are able

to take passport. Making a passport is time consuming process, even it can take months. Treatment on time is less expected in such circumstances.

Second, anyone who has a passport cannot get a visa for Pakistan on time, because I have seen the situation, two years ago I wanted to get a Pakistan visa for the patient and myself, so I faced with lot of problems, according to Professor Mohammad Jan. "Early morning at 4:00 AM, we went to the embassy premises and waited there in severe cold weather with my sick mother, while the doors of the embassy opened at 10:00 AM. But we were allowed to enter in evening because there were so many people. The police hit people by sticks and everyone have to wait for the whole day. Even they stay for night there. It becomes very difficult and hopeless when the patient is in a critical condition and waits for days, and don't get visa. If you are lucky and enter the embassy, they give you 15 days or a month to come back, then you will get the visa. So, what will be the condition of the patient after one month and how severe will the disease be? Getting visa quick

requires lots of money, so patients who don't have money can't get a visa on proper time".

Crossing border, medical care seekers face many problems. According to Jan If anyone don't go early, they may not be able cross the border until the end of the day. At the border, sometimes some situations leads to violence. It is becomes more difficult for the patients. When a patient goes to Pakistan, usually is unfamiliar there, getting good qualified doctors is a challenge too. If there is someone who could cooperate with them to find a good doctor, otherwise they are deceived by quakes and illegal traders.

"Patients usually plan to go to Peshawar or another city for treatment, they often face problems there, and for example, they are sometimes deceived by fraudsters, like take their money". Jan said. Many cases are reported that people suffering from diseases like cancer, are deceived by fraudsters, usually bring money on debt but unfortunately aren't able to do treatment. Then they don't even have money to rent a car to go back to Afghanistan. Most of the patients coming for treatment,

suffer from chronic diseases, traumas, and gunshot injuries have to go to Pakistan many times. They can't get to doctor on time or they are blocked due to political conflict.

The government of Afghanistan should pay attention to domestically equipped hospitals, on one hand, it will have a positive effect on economy of Afghanistan, and patients will not face as much serious problems while traveling to Pakistan and during treatment there. Most patients go to Pakistan and India for treatment, so these countries, especially Pakistan, should provide a series of facilities for Afghan patients, such as ease of travel, visa-free travel, and guidance for patients in Pakistan to find well qualified doctors and so on. On the one hand, it would have sympathized with humanity and it would benefit the economy of Pakistan in many ways.

So that patients do not face problems and patients get treated on time, some suggestions are as follows:

1. The government of Afghanistan should build such well-equipped hospitals inside the country so that all kinds of diseases can be diagnosed and

treated. Medications imported should be checked and controlled.

2. Both the governments of Afghanistan and Pakistan should make an agreement so that patients can go to Pakistan for treatment on urgent visa.

3. The government of Pakistan should established facilities at the borders.

4. Now a days Afghans can travel between Afghanistan and Pakistan only on Torkham and Chaman routes if they have visa. Allow traffic on other roads such as Khost Ghulam Khan Routes.

5. Ambulances should be considered for emergency patients in border.

6. In order to help patients in Pakistan, such committees should be formed to guide patients to well qualified doctors and protect them from commercial doctors.

If the government of Pakistan provides the above facilities for the patients of Afghanistan, on the one hand, it will be a humanitarian action and on the other hand, it will also benefit the economy of Pakistan, because these patients spend millions of dollars to Pakistan for treatment.



Faculty member fatally shot in University of North Carolina building

CHAPEL HILL, N.C. (AP): A shooter killed a faculty member in a science building at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, police said after a lockdown that paralyzed the campus community as authorities searched for the suspect. Police arrested the suspect over three hours after the initial reports of shots fired came in from Caudill Labs, officials said at a news conference. Charges were pending, and the suspect was not immediately identified.

University officials also did not immediately identify the staffer who was killed and said it was too soon to offer a possible motive. "This loss is devastating, and the shooting damages the trust and safety that we so often take for granted in our campus community," Chancellor Kevin Guskiewicz said. Emergency sirens sounded about two minutes after a 911 caller reported gunfire around 1 p.m. at the laboratory in the heart of the flagship campus, UNC Police Chief Brian James said. Students and faculty barricaded themselves in dorm rooms, offices and classrooms until the lockdown was lifted around 4:15 p.m.

No other injuries were reported. Adrian Lanier, a sophomore computer science major, told The Associated Press that he and others sat against a wall in a gym, trying to

stay as far away as possible from doors and windows as rumors spread. "No one really felt safe enough to leave. I didn't," Lanier said. Oliver Katz, an exchange student from Copenhagen Business School in Denmark, said some students crowded into gym locker rooms to get away from windows while others crouched in corners and sat on the floor, he said. "This never happens where I'm from," Katz said. "It was intense. But I was a little surprised that other people weren't panicking that much."

Katz, who has only been on campus for two weeks, said he's worried his home university will bring the exchange students back early. "I don't want to leave. I like it here, and I do still feel safe." During the news conference, Guskiewicz apologized to students who are "feeling uncertain about your safety right now." James, the campus police chief, said it was unclear if the suspect knew the victim. He also said the weapon has not been found.

"We are looking for a firearm. It is too early to determine if the firearm was legally obtained," he said. During the lockdown, the university repeatedly sent alerts urging campus community members to remain sheltered in place. About two hours after the first alert went out, officers were still arriving in droves, with about 50 police vehi-

cles at the scene and helicopters circling over the school.

It took about an hour and a half to lift the lockdown after the arrest because authorities were making sure they had the right suspect in custody, James said. Police also had received calls around campus about other potential victims and gunshots that needed to be checked out, he said. "We had to ensure that the entire campus was safe," James said. The building where gunfire broke out is a stone's throw from the school's iconic Bell Tower and just doors down from the store that sells student books and other merchandise.

Classes started at UNC, the nation's first public university, a week ago. The university, with about 20,000 undergraduate students and 12,000 graduate students, canceled Tuesday classes. During the lockdown, a student told TV station WTVD that she had barricaded her dormitory door with her furniture. Another student, speaking softly, described hiding in fear with others in a dark bathroom. Noel T. Brewer, a professor of health behavior and a 57-year-old married father of two, told the AP by phone - as he hid with colleagues in his locked office during the lockdown - that he was once held at gunpoint in his mother's jewelry store, but that events were "far more stressful."

Sudan army chief makes defiant speech

KHARTOUM (AFP): Sudan's army chief Abdel Fattah al-Burhan told troops in Port Sudan time has come to "end the rebellion" by paramilitaries, promising victory four months into a brutal war. The paramilitary Rapid Support Forces led by Burhan's deputy turned rival Mohamed Hamdan Daglo had besieged the army chief inside military headquarters in Khartoum for the past four months.

But last week, Burhan made his first public foray outside the headquarters to review troops in parts of the war-scarred country. That led to speculation in the local media that Burhan and Daglo had negotiated a deal -- a move the army chief staunchly denied in his defiant speech to soldiers in Port Sudan. "No one helped me out of the army headquarters. I did not come as a result of any agreement. It was a successful military operation," Burhan said in the Red Sea port city. Port Sudan -- where government officials and the United Nations have relocated operations - is the site of Sudan's only functioning airport. "We are mobilising everywhere to defeat this rebellion, defeat this treason, by these mercenaries who come from all over the world," Burhan told cheering troops.

"There is no time for discussion now, we are concentrating all our efforts on the war, to put an end to the rebellion," he said. His comments come a day after Daglo released a statement detailing a 10-point "vision" to end the war and build "a new state". The plan calls for "civilian rule based on democratic norms" and "a single, professional, national military institution" -- the very sticking point which turned the former allies into rivals.

Before they fell out, Burhan, backed by Daglo, became Sudan's de facto ruler in a 2021 coup that derailed a fragile transition to civilian rule. The RSF "started this war by saying 'this is the army of the old regime and the Islamists,' this is a lie," Burhan said. Conservative estimates from the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data project show that nearly 5,000 people have been killed in the conflict. But the real figure is thought to be much higher, and the UN says more than 4.6 million people have been displaced by the fighting both inside and outside Sudan.

Fighting meanwhile continued in Khartoum, where residents reported street battles as fighter-jets flew overhead.

Haiti police launches operation to recover bodies

PORT-AU-PRINCE (Reuters): Haiti's police chief, Frantz Elbe, said he would launch an operation to recover the bodies of followers of an evangelical minister who led a deadly protest against a heavily armed gang controlling a suburb of the capital.

At least seven people were killed when gang members opened fire using machine guns in the northern suburb of Canaan, according to local rights group CARDH, which said the death toll may be as high as 20, though investigations are ongoing and the area is not currently accessible. Haiti's national police - which has struggled to battle the country's powerful gangs - said in a statement it condemned the protest of several hundred people led by Marc Corel Zidor, known as Pastor Marco, of the Evangelical Piscine de Bethesda church.

Many Haitians since April have joined civilian self-defense groups known as "Bwa Kale," to protect communities against violent gangs that now control large parts of the country and whose frequent turf wars have driven a devastating humanitarian crisis. The movement has inspired hope but also sparked retaliation against civilians and stirred fears that the groups are spurring on the violence. Police had tried to stop protest, but demonstrators managed to get around the security detail, the PNH said in a statement, adding that some of that organizers wore olive-green uniforms and carried assault rifles and machetes.

The gang, led by a man known as Jeff, was armed with an "arsenal of



war," the PNH said. Videos circulated on social media showed some protesters carrying sticks or machetes, though many were unarmed. Zidor defended the protest in an interview with Mega Radio, saying those who were shot at had lost faith.

"Those who died are those who went to hide in the houses," said Zidor. "Ninety-five percent of my parishioners were being shot at, none of them got hit," he said. CARDH said Zidor's lawyers had requested a meeting with the local prosecutor be delayed due to health reasons, while the prosecutor called on victims' families to lodge reports. "I'll do it again," Zidor said, when asked if he would do so despite the death toll. Unverified videos on social media showed people being shot at in the street, bodies lying on the ground and

people who appear to be hostages saying they thought the march was peaceful and had no idea it was about taking on the gang. Some of the bodies seen in the videos were lying outside dressed in yellow and white shirts with "Pastor Marco" logos.

In a statement, rights group FJKL said that encouraging violence in pastoral speeches is punishable by three to 15 years imprisonment under Haitian law. "Those who provoked this massacre as well as those who acted it must answer for their actions," the group said. "It is time to enforce the law." The organization pointed to another protest by followers of a religious leader known as Pastor Edrice, which had looked to confront the gang led by Vitel/Homme Innocent, though they were prevented by police.

Ukraine says captured Robotyne, eyes breakthrough in south

KYIV (AFP): Ukraine announced it had recaptured a village on the southern frontline where its forces are hoping for a breakthrough in their grinding offensive against entrenched Russian positions. Kyiv launched its pushback in June after stockpiling Western-supplied weapons, building up assault battalions and attacking Russian positions.

But officials in Kyiv have acknowledged that progress has been slow and Moscow says Ukrainian forces are running out of resources. "Robotyne has been liberated. Our forces are advancing southeast of Robotyne and south of Mala Tokmachka," Deputy Defence Minister Ganna Malyar said on television. Both settlements are in the southern region of Zaporizhzhia, one of four that the Kremlin claimed to have annexed last year despite not having military control over any of them. Ukraine's limited advances on the southern front have spurred a political debate in

Western capitals over political and military support for Kyiv. Compared to previous offensives in the Kherson and Kharkiv regions, Ukrainian forces are crashing into Russian defensive lines of trenches and minefields that are kilometres deep. But experts say that the capture of Robotyne is evidence that Ukrainian forces can puncture Russian lines as they move towards the Black Sea. The US-based Institute for the Study of War said Russia had "committed a considerable amount of materiel, effort, and manpower to hold the series of defensive positions that Ukrainian forces are currently penetrating".

Apart from clawing back several hamlets in the south, Ukrainian forces have pressured the flanks of Bakhmut, a war-scarred eastern town captured by Russia in May. Malyar said that Ukrainian troops were advancing south of Bakhmut and that they had recaptured one square kilometre (around one-

third of a square mile) there over the last week of fighting. She also acknowledged a Russian push to take back territory in the northeast of Ukraine, describing fighting in the Kharkiv region as very intense over the past week. Ukrainian officials have estimated that Russia has committed around 100,000 additional troops to frontlines in the northeast to pressure defensive lines. British intelligence services have said Russia could try to divert Ukrainian military resources by solidifying their positions in Kharkiv.

While movement on the frontline has been stilted, both sides have pursued aerial assault campaigns. A Russian missile strike overnight on an industrial facility in the central region of Poltava left three dead and five wounded, the police said. Images released by Kyiv showed law enforcement officials standing next to a large blaze engulfing part of a factory with plumes of black smoke

billowing into the sky. Presidential chief of staff Andriy Yermak said on social media that Russian forces had hit an oil facility in the town of Gogoleve and that two employees were killed. The air force said Russia had launched six cruise missiles and that air defence systems had downed four of them.

Russia's defence ministry said those strikes had targeted a weapons depot and that the assigned targets had been hit. It also said it had scrambled two fighter jets to intercept two US reconnaissance drones near Crimea, which Moscow annexed Crimea in 2014. The head of Russia's election commission, Ella Pamfilova, announced that early voting in local elections in the four newly annexed territories as well as Crimea would begin this week. Previous ballots in occupied territories have been dismissed by Kyiv and its Western allies. Russia is holding local elections on September 10 for various regional officials.

Japan suspends H-IIA rocket launch

TOKYO (Reuters): Japan's space agency suspended a planned launch of a rocket carrying what would be the country's first spacecraft to land on the moon, with operator Mitsubishi Heavy Industries (MHI) citing high winds. Although the H-IIA rocket, the Japanese flagship launch vehicle, has a 98% launch success rate, unsuitable wind conditions in the upper atmosphere forced a suspension 27 minutes before the planned liftoff.

"High-altitude winds hit our constraint for a launch... which had been set to ensure no impact from debris falling outside of pre-warmed areas," said MHI H-IIA launch unit chief Tatsuru Tokunaga. Strong winds of nearly 108 kph (67 mph) were observed at an altitude of 5,000-15,000 metres (16,400-49,200 ft), Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) safety manager Michio Kawakami said. Multiple typhoons around Japan could have affected the wind conditions, he added.

The new launch date has not been decided, but will be no sooner than because of necessary processes such as re-fuelling. Tokunaga said, MHI and JAXA have said a launch could take place as late as Sept. 15. The rocket was to be launched from JAXA's Tanegashima Space Center in southern Japan; it had already been postponed twice since last week because of bad weather. It will mark the 47th H-IIA Japan has launched. The rocket is carrying JAXA's Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM), which would be the first Japanese spacecraft to land on the moon. Tokyo-based startup ispac's Hakuto-R Mission 1 lander crashed on the lunar surface in April.

JAXA was planning to start SLIM's landing from lunar orbit in January-February 2024 after launch, aiming to follow the success of India's Chandrayaan-3 moon exploration mission this month. Dubbed the "moon sniper", the SLIM mission

seeks to achieve a high-precision landing within 100 metres of its target on the moon's surface - a technological leap from conventional lunar-landing accuracy of several kilometres, according to JAXA. The rocket is also carrying an X-Ray Imaging and Spectroscopy Mission (XRISM) satellite, a joint project of JAXA, NASA and the European Space Agency. H-IIA, jointly developed by JAXA and MHI, has been Japan's flagship space launch vehicle, with 45 successful launches in 46 tries since 2001. However, after JAXA's new medium-lift H3 rocket failed on its debut in March, the agency postponed the launch of H-IIA No. 47 for several months to investigate the cause. Despite its goal to send astronauts on the lunar surface in the late 2020s, Japan's space missions have faced recent setbacks, with the launch failure of the Epsilon small rocket in October 2022, followed by an engine explosion during a test last month.

Mexico sends 1,200 troops to Michoacan state

MEXICO CITY (AP): The Mexican government said it sent 1,200 more troops to the cartel-dominated western state of Michoacan after a weekend of violence. State prosecutors said three convenience stores and five trucks and cars had been set afire, a tactic often used by drug cartels in the state to block roads and enforce extortion demands. Prosecutors said three men and three youths aged 16 and 17 were arrested in the attacks.

A Defense Department statement said the soldiers and National Guard members were deployed over the weekend. It said they were ordered to prevent cartels from blocking any more roads, "so that people can go about their business normally." Soldiers are stationed in every Mexican state, but the army did not say how many already were in Michoacan before the weekend deployment. President Andrés Manuel López Obrador said that "peace and tranquility" had been restored to the region and called the weekend violence acts of "propaganda and publicity." Life in the cities affected by the violence - Apatzingan, Buenavista and Uruapan - is anything but normal. Lime growers and farmers in the township of Buenavista complained in recent weeks of widespread drug cartel extortion, and in Apatzingan most basic goods cost almost double their normal price because the cartels takes a slice of most purchases.

Japan PM condemns China over stone throwing at embassy, schools

TOKYO (AFP): Japan's prime minister urged China to ensure its people "act in a calm and responsible manner" after instances of stones being thrown at diplomatic missions and schools, following the release of wastewater from the Fukushima nuclear plant. Last week, China banned all seafood imports from its neighbour as Japan began releasing cooling water from the Fukushima plant in an operation that Tokyo and the United Nations' nuclear watchdog have said is safe.

Since then, Japan has urged its citizens in China to keep a low profile and has increased security around schools and diplomatic missions. Businesses in Japan have meanwhile been swamped with nuisance calls from Chinese numbers. "There have been numerous harassment calls believed to originate from China and instances of stones being thrown at the Japanese embassy and Japanese schools. It must be said these are regrettable," Prime Minister Fumio Kishida said. "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," Kishida told reporters. Japan's Deputy Foreign Minister Masataka Okano told the ambassador, Wu Jianghao, that China 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 said in a statement. Asked what action Beijing would take over the stone throwing, Beijing's foreign ministry spokesman Wang Wenbin said that China "always protects the safety and legitimate rights and interests of foreigners in China, in accordance with law". "We strongly urge the Japanese side to face up to the legitimate concerns of all parties, immediately stop the discharge of nuclear-contaminated water into the sea, fully consult with its neighbours and other stakeholders, and earnestly dispose of nuclear-contaminated water

in a responsible manner," Wang told a regular briefing.

Japan's foreign ministry urged its citizens in China to be "cautious in your speech and behaviour. Do not speak Japanese unnecessarily or too loudly". "If you need to visit a Japanese embassy, consulate general, or Japanese school, pay close attention to your surroundings," it added. "If you happen to come across a protest or other such activities, do not approach them and do not take pictures of them with your smartphones." A range of businesses in Japan, from bakeries to an aquarium, have reportedly been subjected to thousands of crank calls that have included abusive and racist language.

Social media users in China have posted recordings and videos of the calls, some of which have attracted tens of thousands of likes. Japan began releasing more than 500 Olympic swimming pools' worth of diluted wastewater from Fukushima into the Pacific,

12 years after a tsunami knocked out three reactors in one of the world's worst atomic accidents. All radioactive elements have been filtered out except for tritium, levels of which are within safe limits and below that released by nuclear power stations in their normal operations -- including in China, plant operator TEPCO says. Test results from seawater and fish samples near the plant since the start of the discharge -- which will take decades to complete -- have confirmed this, according to Japanese authorities. "Even after the ocean release, the United States, for example, expressed its position that it is satisfied with Japan's safe, highly transparent and scientifically justified process," Kishida said. "We would like to convey these voices from the international community to the Chinese government." US Ambassador to Japan Rahm Emanuel plans to visit Fukushima this week and publicly eat locally caught fish in a show of support to Japan, according to media reports.

Canada's Conservatives tout leader as family man after Trudeau separation

OTTAWA (Reuters): Less than a week after Canada's Liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau announced the likely end of his marriage, his Conservative rival Pierre Poilievre launched an ad narrated by his wife touting him as the leader the country needs. The video ad, broadcast on TV and posted online, is titled "Meet Pierre Poilievre." In it, his wife Anaida briefly sums up his childhood in the suburbs, mentions that his two young children call him "Papa," and says she knows him as the man who loves her for who she is, "a Canadian who came to call Canada home - and his wife."

Anaida, 36, was born in Venezuela and moved to Canada with her family when she was a child. She married Poilievre in 2017. "This was not a fluke that the Conservatives rolled this out basically a week after Justin Trudeau announced the separation from his wife," said Nik Nanos, founder of polling company Nanos Research. It presents Poilievre, 44, as a family man at a time when Trudeau has family difficulties, he said. Sarah Fischer, a spokeswoman for the Conservative Party, said the ad was arranged weeks before its release and has "no connection to the separation announcement" on

Aug. 2. Even if the timing is a coincidence, there is no doubt that Trudeau looks vulnerable after three elections and almost eight years in power. The Conservatives led the Liberals by seven percentage points in an Angus Reid poll from earlier this month. An election is not due until 2025, though a vote could come sooner. Trudeau came to power in 2015 with a campaign that presented him as a fresh face and a family man, though in recent years he has appeared less often in public with his family. "We really haven't seen Trudeau the loving-husband family-man narrative since election 2015," said Shachi Kurl, president of Angus Reid Institute polling company. With voter support flagging, Trudeau carried out a major refresh of his cabinet in July. Trudeau, 51, is suffering from voter fatigue, which "is probably more pronounced than it has ever been," and from the success of Poilievre's campaign to blame the Liberal government for a chronic housing crunch and high inflation, Kurl said.

During his nearly two decades in the House of Commons, Poilievre has earned the reputation of being the Conservative attack dog, lighting into Trudeau during parliamentary Question Period and

vowing to fire the central bank governor for acting too slow to tame inflation. Female voters are more likely to be put off by his combative style and "recoil" at Poilievre, Kurl said. Poilievre is seen favorably by 28% of women, compared to 44% for Trudeau, the Angus Reid survey showed. Another reason for his new video, then, is to alter his reputation as a "pit-bull," Nanos said, adding that Poilievre was trying "to humanize and soften his image" and to portray himself as a father and a husband in "a traditional family situation." Conservatives are spending well over C\$3 million (\$2.2 million) to run an ad campaign over the next several months that includes the "Meet Pierre Poilievre" video. In another ad, titled "Putting the Pieces Back Together," Poilievre says Trudeau has left Canada "broken," as he puts together a puzzle cut from a map of Canada while holding his infant son, Cruz. Trudeau said last week Poilievre was trying to rile people up instead of offering solutions to the country's problems. The Conservatives need to only marginally increase support from the previous two elections in the right geographic areas to win the next election, and voters appear thirsty for change, Nanos said.

Honduras arrests mayor accused of trafficking cocaine to US

TEGUCIGALPA (Reuters): A mayor in Honduras was arrested on charges of working with drug cartels to smuggle 90 tons of cocaine to the United States by boat and plane. Mayor Wilmer Manolo Wood of Brus Laguna, in the remote Mosquitia region that borders Nicaragua, was taken into custody, said Jorge Galindo, a spokesperson for the Honduran prosecutors' office. He is accused of working with three cartels: Los Piningos, Los Yanez and Los Amador.

Neither Wood nor his lawyers were immediately available for comment.

Galindo said that independently of the three cartels, Wood personally received 30 tons of cocaine and moved it through Honduras so it could be transported to the United States. Authorities believe Wood became involved in drug trafficking over 15 years ago and began running operations on his own account eight years ago. The public ministry said that Wood was involved in the docking of 15 boats that came from Colombia and passed through Honduras on their way to the United States. The arrest in La Ceiba, a city in northern Honduras, came amid a series

of raids and inspections along the Atlantic coast. Local authorities believe Mexican drug cartels supplying the United States bring cocaine through Central America and Mexico after it is carried from Colombia by boat or plane to the Mosquitia region and other parts of Honduras' Atlantic coast. Former President Juan Orlando Hernandez was extradited to the United States on drugs and weapons charges last year. Current President Xiomara Castro is meanwhile pushing a crackdown on crime and has repeatedly extended emergency powers across the country.

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Inhume treatment of Imran

ALMOST four weeks have passed, a popular leader and the former Prime Minister of the country was behind bars. Despite the merit and demerit of the case and indictment by the court, the treatment met by the PTI Chairman was out rightly inhumane and unjustified. A convicted murderer has some fundamental rights in the death cell including availability of clean drinking water, healthy food, freedom of worship along with the right to see his loved ones, and relatives. Media reports suggest, the PTI Chief was exempted from all those amenities, as a majority of visitors including a civil judge confirmed that the public leader was serving detention in miserable and unhygienic conditions. The grief-stricken sisters of the former Prime Minister complained at the Islamabad High Court (IHC) that jail authorities did not arrange their meeting with Imran Khan and refused to obey court's order. That did not happen for the first time during the short period of four weeks imprisonment.

The wind starts moving contrariwise, sun comes at half mast, friends becomes strangers and relatives turn unkind, it is tradition of history and a sign of downfall that the leaders face maltreatment of the minions and opponents enjoy helplessness of their adversaries. The country's history is full of such regretful incidents that leaders had been imprisoned and hanged on fake charges, but, no leader ever thought about the severity of the situation and rotten luck until bluffed by his own fate. The state atrocities had gone behind all limits and the PTI leader has been particularly made realized by the previous government and its facilitators that no populism could ever break the system or work out above the state. Over the past few months, hundreds of cases had been registered against Mr. Khan, his close relatives including sisters and their families, PTI senior leadership, supporters and close associates that cast doubts and makes this audit and accountability exercise fallacious.

There was a little hope for improvident in the situation regarding the ongoing arrest and sue campaign against the Pakistan Tahreek-e-Insaf (PTI) after the caretaker setup took over charge of the country, however things still move with the same momentum and direction and no end visible so far. Yesterday, the IHC issued order for suspension of Imran's imprisonment and bail in Toshakhana case but the government arrested him in an other case immediate after the release which not only portrays malicious intention but challenges the writ of the law and superiority of judiciary. Realistically, such type of mockery of the law and blatant denigration of the judicial system could not been seen in any other nation in the world.

Although, Khan's custody might serve interest of some individuals or groups, however it could have worst effects for country's politics and democracy. Khan's lawyer and his wife have complained about his deteriorating health, losing weight and being made to live in filthy conditions. Khan's photo with beard and wearing jail clothes was released by the authorities that might be warning to his followers, not to play with fire. It is a reality that Imran is one of the most popular stars of Pakistan since its inception in 1947, whether someone like it or not.

Every prison in Pakistan has written on the walls "hate the crime not the criminal". Every prisoner at least deserves to be treated like humans. These rules are not for influential persons but all inmates have certain rights under the constitution of Pakistan and the global law that dictates the rights of prisoners of war, transnational criminals and terrorists. Stories of what happens in prisons in Pakistan doesn't need to be repeated on these pages but dealing a public leader in such a manner and advertising his disgrace makes no sense and earns a bad name to Pakistan. Let's show some humanity and call a spade a spade. Nawaz Sharif, Saad Rafiq, Maryam Nawaz or Asif Ali Zardari none wore jail clothes and all of them had the best that a jail could offer. No need to show any leniency in legal battles against Khan, but state should at least treat him with respect and humanity in the custody.

Japan's release of toxic water

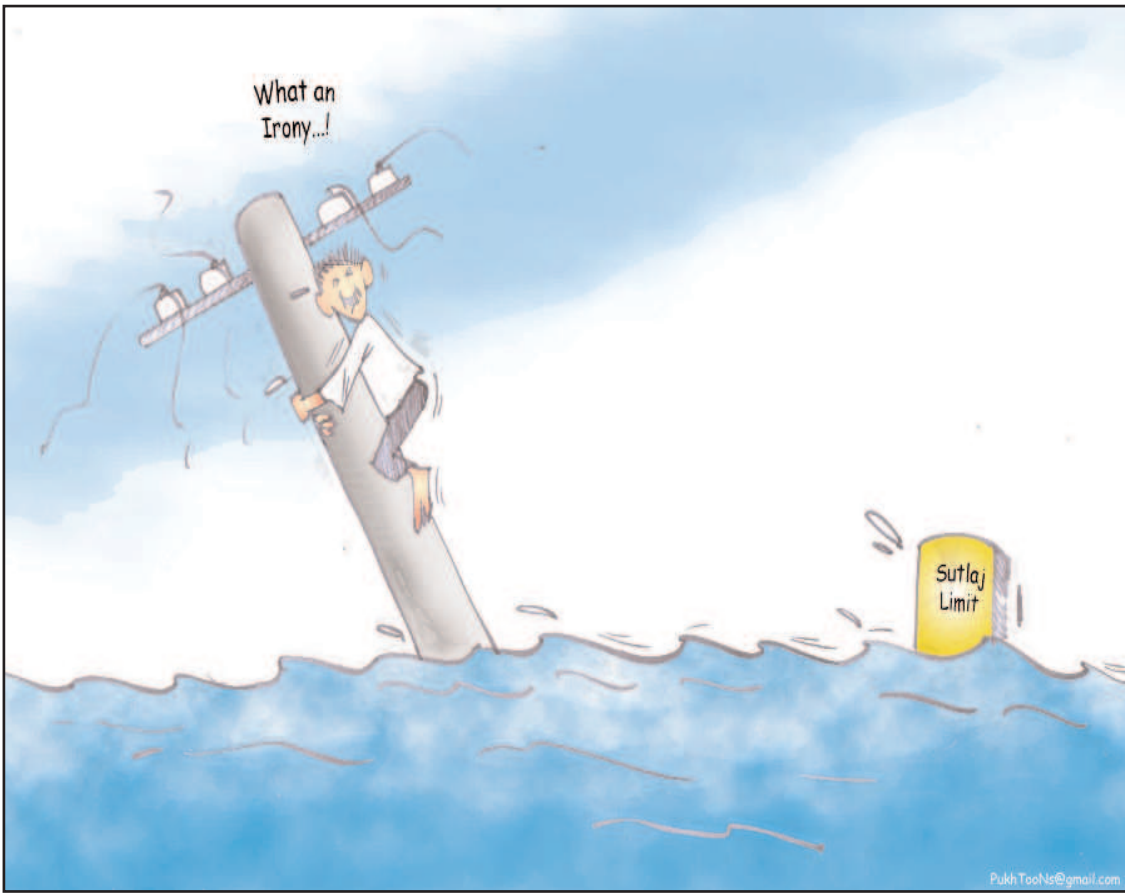
THE bilateral relations of Tokyo and Beijing witnessed a record low in recent days. Both nations accused each other of misconduct and undertook certain reciprocity measures that further intensified their tussle. Last week, China banned all seafood imports from its neighbour after Japan began releasing cooling water from the Fukushima nuclear plant into the Sea. Japan has summoned the Chinese ambassador after Chinese seafood businesses and fishery departments were inundated by 'harassment' phone calls following the release of water from the Fukushima nuclear plant, that is otherwise declared unharmful by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Japanese authorities believe the harassment calls and stones throwing into the Japanese embassy and Japanese schools in Beijing are pre planned agenda. Tokyo suspicions were further supported by Chinese social media users, who have posted recordings and videos of those calls, some of which have attracted tens of thousands of likes and comments.

China-Japan are a long standing foe and their rivalry has been rebirth by the emergence of US-China global competition that encompasses a wide range of issues from Taiwan independence to Xinjiang issue, South China Sea to Solomon Island. Interestingly, President Xi's Belt and Road Initiative and newly rising BRICS club are the new dimension of this tussle that was rapidly involving other nations in this destructive competition. The resolute Japanese gave away their ambition for global supremacy after America's little boy and Fat man entirely wiped out Heroshima and Nagasaki respectively in early August 1945. Now, Washington was the guarantor of Japan's security while keeping Tokyo's sovereignty under check.

In the current Scenario, American troops and the mighty 7th fleet is stationed in Japan from where US generals are controlling wargames against the PLA. Beijing has utmost anger and axiousty against its Eastern neighbor who already has territorial dispute with China. Thus, stone pelting and wrong calls are bulling tactic to corecie Japanese government and its people who had long laid their arms to live a peaceful life. In fact, desire for peace is not a bad intent but passivism is a bad quality that invites aggression and promotes slavery in this world.

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After Prigozhin, Russia's scramble for Africa continues

Baria Alamuddin

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

expand its West African operations.

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

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.

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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

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 Bakhmut. 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

Israel must not be allowed to divert attention from its crimes

Ramzy Baroud

ISRAELI Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his Defense Minister Yoav Gallant have a complicated and often uneasy relationship, but they agree on one thing: Iran is behind Israel's security problem. Socioeconomic polarization, the country's political and judicial crises, the settlers' pogroms in the West Bank, the repeated calls for religious war by Tel Aviv's far-right ministers - all these myriad problems are suddenly negligible. The problem is Iran.

Although Iran, as a common enemy, often unites all major Israeli political parties, the supposed Iranian threat this time around is quite different. "We are in the midst of a terrorist onslaught that is being encouraged, directed and financed by Iran and its proxies," said Netanyahu after a Palestinian attack that killed a settler and wounded another near the occupied Palestinian city of Al-Khalil (Hebron) on Aug. 21. The attack came only two days after another, which killed two Israeli settlers near the town of Huwara, near Nablus, in the northern West Bank.

Huwara, a small town of 5,500 people, was the site of an outright pogrom by large mobs of armed Israeli Jewish settlers in late February. Amnesty International described what occurred as follows: "On the night of Sunday, Feb. 26, hundreds of state-backed Israeli settlers carried out a spree of attacks against Palestinians. Settlers torched dozens of Palestinian cars, homes and orchards, and physically assaulted Palestinians, including with metal bars and rocks." Typically, every Palestinian attack on Israeli soldiers, armed settlers, or even civilians, is preceded by a string of deadly Israeli army raids or settler attacks on Palestinian communities. Not a day passes without Israeli violence in occupied Palestine. Reports by the UN, Palestinian, Israeli and international rights groups indicate that this year is the most violent in the West Bank in nearly two decades. More than 200 Palestinians and nearly 30 Israelis have been killed since January 2023, according to a statement to the UN Security Council by UN Middle East envoy Tor Wennesland on Aug. 21.

Wennesland described the violence as a "concerning trend," and said it is contributing to a "growing sense of despair about the future," UN News reported. The UN humanitarian agency OCHA had similar findings. It said that almost 600 settler-related "incidents" were reported in the occupied territories in the first six months of 2023. Settler attacks have resulted in "Palestinian casualties, property damage or both." Neither Wennesland nor OCHA mentioned Iran in their statements. Neither did the constant stream of reports on Israel's violence, incitement or, at times, outright calls for genocide by settlers and their leaders in Netanyahu's government.

As for the reason behind the "sense of despair" mentioned in Wennesland's UN briefing, the Israeli anti-settlement organization Peace Now may have an answer. In a statement on Aug. 17, the group said that Netanyahu's government is advancing a plan for "unprecedented investment" of almost \$200 million in illegal Jewish settlements in the West Bank. "There are clauses that have not yet determined the allocation amounts, so the total amount is expected to increase significantly," Peace

Now said on its website. Since a large part of the funds is described as "undefined" grants," the illegal settlements are allowed "to use the money for almost any purpose."

This can only mean expansion of illegal settlements, construction of new outposts, ethnically cleansing Palestinians and paving the way for full, de jure annexation of the West Bank. The term "ethnic cleansing" is not being used lightly here. Aside from the "incremental genocide" happening daily throughout the occupied territories, at times large communities are being expelled, en masse.

The Norwegian Refugee Council recently reported on the eviction of nearly 500 Palestinians from seven communities in the West Bank in a matter of 20 months, many of them from the Ras At-Tin Bedouin community, north of Ramallah. "Entire Palestinian communities being wiped off the map, a shameful legacy of unrelenting violence, intimidation and harassment perpetrated by Israeli settlers and, in some cases, encouraged by Israeli authorities," Ana Povrzenic, NRC's country director for Palestine commented on the findings. The list is endless, and nothing suggests that Iran is relevant to any part of this discussion.

The direct link between the Israeli occupation and Palestinian relations cannot be denied by any honest observer. But neither Netanyahu nor Gallant is expected to be honest in their depiction of what is occurring in Palestine now. As if reading from the same script, Gallant agreed with his boss on the alleged Iranian threat. "The most significant change on the ground is related to Iranian financing and intent," Gallant said, declaring that "Iran is looking for any way to harm the citizens of Israel." The irony is that the Netanyahu-Gallant political conflict since March has fueled the greatest political crisis, arguably, in the history of the Israeli state. The crisis is enduring.

Yet, both now are emerging as stalwarts of Israeli security against a supposed Iranian threat. But why would the two agree on anything? And why Iran, in particular? And why now? Both Netanyahu and Gallant stand to gain from diverting attention from the reasons behind the rebellion in Palestine. For Netanyahu, blaming Iran allows him to stoke the fire of instability in the Middle East, unite all Israelis behind their supposed defender and avoid any accountability for the human rights violations in Palestine. As for Gallant, blaming Iran elevates the military and all branches of intelligence services; instead of being seen as failing to stop homegrown Palestinian struggle, he wants to paint an alternative image of a heroic army fighting an "existential threat" hatched elsewhere.

This is not a simple case of lacking self-awareness, but a deliberate diversion of the actual problem: the Israeli occupation and apartheid. Throughout the years, Israel has insisted that Palestinians are not political actors capable of making their own collective decisions, and that some bogymen elsewhere - the Arabs, the Iranians, the communists, the Islamists, and so on - are to blame. But Tel Aviv is wrong. For Israel to understand the reasons behind the growing Palestinian resistance in all its forms, it needs to look at the devastated refugee camps of Jenin, Balata and Nur Shams - not Tehran - for the answers.

America's perspective on China has been mistaken

Xu Ying

THE complex China-US relationship sits at a historic inflection point. As strategic rivalry intensifies, voices across the world are questioning long-held assumptions underpinning Washington's hawkish turn against Beijing. On August 11th, Bloomberg's chief economist Tom Orlik argued that America's perspective on China has been profoundly mistaken. Current policies rooted in notions of containment rest on a flawed understanding of China's true ambitions. By pursuing cooperation in spheres of mutual interest, ties could regain a constructive trajectory.

Orlik contends the view of China as a threat to US hegemony is misguided. America has rallied partners to restrict China's rise,

fearing its development model as a challenge to the liberal world order. But in reality, China's goal is recovering its historic status as a leading power, not supplanting American dominance. Its ideology and domestic policies do not inherently undermine America's global standing. In fact, China's growth creates openings for win-win collaboration.

A key misperception is conflating China with the Soviet Union. Whereas the Soviets sought to export communist revolution, China aims primarily to lift its population out of poverty. Two systems can coexist peacefully without inevitable confrontation. America must abandon the 'Cold War mentality' of containment and accept China's resurgence as legitimate. Progress requires nuance, not shoe-horning

China into Western norms. Economically, the US underestimates China's resilience against technology and trade restrictions. Its vast domestic market can sustain high growth rates even while decoupling from the West. Attempts to stifle China's rise will only fracture supply chains and harm American consumers. Washington must reorient its zero-sum economic paradigm to accommodate China's rightful place in the global economy.

Orlik advises recalibrating ties based on shared interests. On climate, health and nuclear issues, China and the US have convergent priorities. But in its zeal to outcompete China, Washington disregards overlapping goals. Diplomatic coordination

on pressing regional crises can also unlock quiet progress out of the spotlight. America must recognize where mutual interests align and build goodwill through pragmatic cooperation. For progress, blind antagonism must give way to nuance and communication. America cannot impose its worldview on China. But channels exist for positive-sum engagement if Washington abandons coercive policies. Orlik suggests leaders survey ties with fresh eyes, untethered from ideological biases that see conflict as inevitable. Therein lies hope of forging a constructive modus vivendi.

Significantly, Orlik's views reflect currents within America's policy circles questioning the combative stance against Beijing. As a

Western economist breaking from the consensus narrative, his insights deserve our attention. They lend credence to China's perspective and could be referenced to realign ties. Of course, realism is needed. Structural tensions rooted in distrust and power asymmetry will persist. But Orlik's call of retuning relations away from antagonism and towards cooperation signals room for optimism. And as domestic attitudes evolve, political possibilities expand. With skillful diplomacy and messaging, both Beijing and Washington could foster a climate where stabilizing relations becomes thinkable.

Some in Washington already argue China ties need not be a zero-sum game. Avoiding Thucydides's trap requires political courage to break

old paradigms, but brings ample rewards. Handled deftly, this moment of turbulence can illuminate a path forward built on mutual respect for two great civilizations. Therein lies the kernel of a constructive relationship: not inevitable conflict between rival systems, but peaceful coexistence between equals in a multipolar world. In conclusion, Orlik's perspective provides a window into emerging fissures within America's China narrative. As Washington's policies reach their limits, more voices are questioning the logic of containment. We must actively promote alternate framings centered on engagement, not antagonism. While challenges persist, by channeling these winds of change, we could gently steer relations towards calmer seas.

The China Times

Will Europe’s centre-right parties accept defeat or sell their souls to the hard right?

THERE was a time when clear blue water separated Europe's mainstream centre-right from the Eurosceptic populists and xenophobes of the hard right. A Christian Democrat such as Helmut Kohl or Angela Merkel would have had nothing in common with - and nothing to do with - a nativist such as Marine Le Pen or Geert Wilders. No longer. In the run-up to the 2024 European Parliament elections, once-sharp lines between pro-European conservative parties and the nationalist far right are blurring as both seek to tap into public anger or anxiety over migration, the cost of living, the green transition and gender diversity.

The longstanding "cordon sanitaire" against cooperation with the hard right is fast crumbling, first at local and national level and now potentially in Brussels too. That matters because the European parliament must approve all the EU's net zero climate and energy legislation, and the right is already trying to water it down. In recent weeks, Spain's conservative People's party has fallen just short of victory in a general election despite declaring its readiness to govern with the anti-immigration Vox party, which has intellectual roots in Franco's fascist ideology. The leader of Germany's Christian Democratic Union (CDU) opposition, Friedrich Merz, suggested his party should work locally - though not at national or European level - with the extreme-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD), which has soared to second place in national opinion polls. However, Merz had to row back after protests from within his party. And the successor to Dutch prime minister Marc Rutte as leader of the centre-right liberal VVD party, Dilan Ye'zhigöz-Zegerius, (Rutte resigned in July triggering a snap election that will

be held in November) has ditched a longstanding refusal to work with Wilders' anti-immigrant PVV party. Mainstream conservative governments in Sweden and Finland meanwhile have taken office thanks to the support of hard-right nationalists in, respectively, the Sweden Democrats and the Finns party. In Italy, the hard right last year won power in a government headed by Giorgia Meloni of the post-fascist Brothers of Italy. In France, the conservative Gaullists of Les Républicains are vying to outdo Le Pen and her extreme-right rival Éric Zemmour in demonising Islam and proposing new ways to stop asylum seekers. Party leader Eric Ciotti wants to officially declare that the French constitution has primacy over European law in order to impose quotas of asylum seekers. That is the same assertion with which hard-right nationalist governments in Poland and Hungary are defying the EU's treaty order over the independence of their judiciary.

The reasons for this lurch to the right are clear. Europe's big-tent centre-right parties are now succumbing to the electoral fragmentation that has afflicted the mainstream left, with green and radical-left groups luring voters away from social democratic parties. In a more diverse, individualistic society, conservative voters are no longer so bound together by the church, family values or free market ideology. They differ on economic protectionism, European integration, climate action and social issues such as LGBTQ+ rights. In Germany, the CDU and its Bavarian sister party, which bestrode the country's postwar political landscape for decades, scored just 24.1% in the 2021 general election following Merkel's

retirement. Even with its current 26% rating, the centre-right has no hope of forming a conservative government without the AfD, which is polling above 20%. Yet cooperating with the nativists has hitherto been taboo, not least because of the long shadow of Germany's Nazi past. But all over Europe, mainstream conservatives face the same dilemma as they struggle to win back lost chunks of their electorate among blue-collar, rural and middle-class voters, and to attract younger people tempted by a far-right protest vote or abstention.

Marginalising and demonising the radical right has failed to staunch the losses. Adopting part of the populists' vocabulary and policy on issues such as migration and identity has not worked either, except perhaps for Denmark's Social Democrats. Other options include seeking to engage and moderate the far right through coalitions, or making targeted pitches to discontented voter groups such as farmers and suburban motorists who fear that the EU's Green Deal, pushed by a European Commission led by German Christian Democrat Ursula von der Leyen, will take away their cars and ruin their livelihoods. Manfred Weber, leader of the European People's party (EPP) centre-right umbrella group, is experimenting with both approaches as he seeks to reposition the long-dominant political family before next June's EU-wide vote. In January, he met Meloni to explore a possible alliance between the EPP and the nationalist European Conservatives and Reformers (ECR) after next year's elections. The EU legislature is currently dominated by a three-way centrist pact between the EPP, the Socialists and Democrats, and

the market-liberal Renew Europe group.

The ECR includes Poland's rightwing ruling Law and Justice party (PiS), Spain's Vox, the Sweden Democrats and the Finns party. Yet Weber has repeatedly declared that the EPP would not work with "far-right extremists", explicitly naming Le Pen, the AfD and PiS. In July, he made an unsuccessful attempt alongside the ECR and the far-right Identity and Democracy (ID) group to defeat the EU's nature restoration law, a key environmental protection measure that he said would burden farmers and force up food prices. Weber is trying to project the EPP as the farmers' and motorists' friend without embracing the hard right's denial of climate science. It is a precarious balancing act, especially when it pits him against Von der Leyen from his own party. A formal alliance with the ECR seems unlikely, not least because it would require the support of liberals including French president Emmanuel Macron's Renaissance party. If such a pact did come about, it would probably push back against ambitious European Green Deal targets, take a tougher line on asylum and migration policy, and resist any erosion of national sovereignty.

More plausible is that Weber is trying to lure Meloni's rising party into joining the centre-right EPP, which would strengthen its hand with its current partners. While EPP officials say this is just about tactics and responding pragmatically to public concerns, Weber and his political family face a fundamental choice. In deciding whether to ostracise, imitate or forge alliances with the nationalist hard right, Europe's mainstream centre-right parties must choose between potentially losing voters and losing their souls.

The Guardian

Russia will struggle to salvage Wagner empire

Dimitar Bechev

IT took Russian President Vladimir Putin some 24 hours to break his silence on the reported death of Yevgeny Prigozhin, the Russian businessman behind the notorious Wagner Group. Putin described him as "a talented businessman" who "worked not only in our country, and worked with results", but who had made some "serious mistakes in life".

While the Kremlin still refuses to officially confirm the death of the mercenary boss in an August 23 plane crash, to the Russian president, he is clearly dead: He spoke of the man once known as "Putin's chef" in the past tense.

Prigozhin had it coming. After all, he challenged his patron by starting a mutiny that exposed the fragility of the Russian security state. In late June, Wagnerites took over the Rostov-on-Don headquarters of the Southern Military District, the command centre of Putin's "special military operation" in Ukraine. They also marched on Moscow, making it within 200km of the capital city and encountering little opposition. The squabble ended in a truce, with Wagner bending the knee and ostensibly moving its forces from Ukraine to Belarus.

Having called the mutiny "an act of treason", Putin appeared to "forgive" Prigozhin, personally meeting with him and Wagner commanders and having him attend the Russia-Africa Summit in St Petersburg. Reflecting on the Wagner chief's demise, Russian commentator Alexander Baunov evoked parallels with the 1970s film classic, The Godfather. He pointed out that whenever mafia bosses would decide to eliminate a challenger, they would first reach out and make peace with him.

Over the past two decades, Putin seems to

have also embraced another mantra of the criminal world: You either demonstrate strength or you fall prey. Prigozhin's fate sends a message to the whole Russian elite. Whoever dares to mount a direct challenge to Putin's authority will most certainly pay the highest of prices. The regime tolerates no challenge, much less an armed mutiny.

It mattered little that Prigozhin's quarrel was not with the Kremlin, but with the defence ministry, one of his clients. The ministry had generously paid for contracts with his companies, helping him amass wealth and influence. Even Wagner, his mercenary force, was an extension of the GRU, Russia's military intelligence. But as Putin's full-scale invasion of Ukraine did not go according to plan, tensions between Prigozhin and defence ministry officials grew.

The mercenary boss lashed out at the bad boyars, not the good tsar. His social media antics were often aimed at soliciting the Kremlin's intervention against his adversaries in the military bureaucracy. Arguably, the mutiny had the same purpose, too. Except that Putin did not see it that way, took it as a challenge to his rule, and ultimately took the side of Defence Minister Sergey Shoigu and Chief of Staff Valery Gerasimov, his loyal servants. Prigozhin's death, however, does not solve the Kremlin's many problems. Putin will likely still struggle to recoup his street credibility as a strongman. Yes, you can imprison, poison or destroy rivals and critics with ease, but that would not ease the growing discontent of the elites and general population. Prigozhin's exit would also not erase the fact that the mutiny occurred in the first place and exposed the

weakness of the regime. Nor that the war in Ukraine is, at best, a botched affair, a fact that the Wagner chief loved to hammer back home whenever he had a chance.

Nor that Putin was compelled to act in the crudest of ways to neutralise Prigozhin. The Russian president clearly can no longer manage his entourage, including their fights and rivalries, through the judicious application of carrots and sticks. Russia's global adversaries, and also fellow travellers and partners, gathered recently at the BRICS summit will not fail to notice all this. The mutiny made Putin look weak and Prigozhin's death is unlikely to fix that. Furthermore, it is not certain whether the Russian state or another proxy agent will be able to fill the gap in sub-Saharan Africa left behind by Wagner's crumbling empire. Replacing the mercenary group will not be a straightforward affair.

Much hinged on Prigozhin's informal ties to local leaders in places like Mali or the Central African Republic and it is not entirely clear if Russian defence officials will be able to replace him. The Russian government will also have to assume a more visible position in Libya, which could restart frictions with other powers involved, including Turkey, Egypt and the UAE. If Putin successfully manages the transition and Russia retains its role across Africa, that could earn him back some respect on the world stage. If he fails, the Kremlin will sustain further damage to its reputation. In his early days, Putin prided himself on being an effective manager, skillfully steering the so-called power vertical. But as of now, he increasingly appears to his own population and the world as a weak autocrat who is struggling to manage a crisis of his own making.

US visa waiver system raises questions of equal treatment in Israel

FOR all the genuine and, indeed, feigned international condemnations, Israel's National Security Minister Itamar Ben Gvir was spot on in his statement about Jews having greater freedom of movement than Arabs in the West Bank: "My right, my wife's right, my kids' right to move around freely on the roads is more important than the right of movement of Arabs."

The US and others condemned his comments, but Ben Gvir only highlighted the apartheid reality and the ideology that underpins it. It existed before his rise to power and, in all likelihood, will survive his political demise. Palestinians, or Arabs, as the likes of Ben Gvir refer to them, simply do not have equal rights, and not just in freedom of movement. A whole infrastructure of checkpoints, obstacles to movement and a discriminatory permit system see to that. Palestinians even have to drive cars with different colored number plates to mark them out from Israeli yellow-plated cars.

Palestinians also lack the same rights on entry and exit to their own country. But is this now being called into question for the first time? The US has challenged this, if only for its own citizens. On this narrow issue, Israel has conceded and, in theory, American citizens with Palestinian IDs will now enjoy privileges their fellow Palestinians can only dream of. About 12,000 have apparently benefited from this since June when the system was piloted. For years, Israel has treated Palestinian ID card holders, even those who are dual nationals, as being solely Palestinian. Palestinians are typically subjected to horrendous levels of abuse traveling to Israel or the occupied Palestinian territory.

Chris Doyle

Many say they refuse to go because they cannot stand the humiliation it involves.

Yet, Israel has now reached an agreement with the US to allow US citizens, including Palestinian ID card holders and passport holders of enemy states, to obtain a 90-day tourist visa. In return, Israeli citizens can travel to the US visa free, a huge political prize for Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu. Critics point out that Israel has been given special treatment, its application accelerated without the usual intense scrutiny. If all goes to plan, Israel will be a full member of the program in September. A key test will be if and when Israel does not adhere to the agreement, will the US respond? The implications of this are manifold. According to Israeli estimates, tens of thousands of Palestinians with US citizenship live in the West Bank. If the US can achieve this for its citizens, why cannot other states? Israel has also essentially confirmed this by agreeing that its security concerns are not that dominant and can be addressed. But the most dramatic element of the US-Israel deal is that the US insisted that all its citizens should be treated equally on entry and exit. Equal treatment will revolutionize the experience for American citizens with Palestinian ID cards. One has to question whether this will be implemented in practice and how it will be monitored? How do you establish what equal treatment is?

As it stands, equal treatment was not applied even during the pilot program that kicked off in June. How come? Israel still insisted that Palestinian-Americans residing in the West Bank could not enter Israel in a car and had to

enter by foot. Entering and exiting Israel and the territories it occupies has rarely been a simple, hassle-free process. Ben Gurion Airport has become synonymous with long, drawn-out and intrusive interviews. If you are Palestinian or Muslim, it is typically an horrific ordeal. In fact, more than one diplomat from embassies in Tel Aviv has said that non-white people get far worse treatment. Aid workers and human rights activists can recount endless stories about petty questions and confiscations. One aid worker told me how she had her flute confiscated, another how her keyboard, not the computer, was taken. In fairness, for non-Palestinian, white visitors to Israel, the process improved considerably during the 1980s and 1990s. Israeli security officials do have genuine security concerns which are understandable, although many of the questions appear unrelated to any legitimate worry.

Israel, on the other hand, has become tougher in terms of rejecting entry. It has the sovereign right to do this on its own territory, of course. Yet, in 2017, the Israeli Knesset passed legislation empowering the interior minister to deny entry to anyone who supports Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions against Israel, including against the illegal settlements. In October last year, Israel introduced highly restrictive rules on foreign nationals working in the West Bank, for example at universities or in the humanitarian sector. This will also affect Palestinians trying to visit their families in the West Bank. Of course, this does not apply to Israeli Jews wanting to visit illegal settlements in the West Bank, but then again, none of

the restrictions do. This raises another question. Considering a large portion of US citizens of Palestinian heritage support some form of BDS, especially against the settlements, what will happen if Israel starts denying Palestinian Americans entry on these grounds? The agreement also allows Israel to check an entrant for any links to "terrorism." On paper this might seem as fair and unsurprising, not least as, in theory, Israel cannot do this differently to any other US citizen. Yet, Israel's interpretation of this can be so broad as to snare many who have no genuine direct link to violence. After all, Israeli authorities have proscribed Palestinian human rights groups, but have notably failed to provide any evidence whatsoever to back such a charge.

This will get tested even more next month. From Sept. 15, American citizens from Gaza, not just from the West Bank, will also be included in the deal. Their numbers are measured in the hundreds. This agreement raises far broader issues. Why have the US and other major states done so little, and so late? It is pointless condemning Ben Gvir for his statement. It was ugly, but it was the ugly reality. Why should the US bother to promote the rights only of its own citizens, and not speak out and take action to ensure its major ally abolishes its discriminatory system? Other states can at least follow the American path and adopt the same approach as the bare minimum. Challenging Israeli treatment of Palestinian movement, entry and exit is vital. But, in doing so, change runs up against the apartheid system. The US has started that process in a timid fashion. Equal rights and justice, the dismantlement of systemic discrimination will require far more.

Road to 2024 for Donald Trump marked by uncertainty

AS the race for the US Presidential election heats up, the million dollar question that everyone is asking is this: Can Donald J. Trump even contest the 2024 polls? The legal debate has been thrown wide open with two prominent legal scholars making the case that the former President would in fact be disqualified from contesting as per the US Constitution because he tried to overturn the results of the last election. He is facing charges for the same.

In an article in 'The Atlantic', liberal law professor Laurence Tribe and former federal judge, J. Michael Luttig, who is a well known conservative, have argued that the 14th amendment bars Trump from even being on the ballot. The post Civil War amendment excludes from future office anyone who, previously, as a sworn-in public official, "engaged in insurrection or rebellion ... or [had] given aid or comfort to the enemies" of the government. In the article, the two experts have written that "the former president's

efforts to overturn the 2020 presidential election, and the resulting attack on the US Capitol, place him squarely within the ambit of the disqualification clause, and he is therefore ineligible to serve as president ever again."

Professor Tribe has said it is up to officials in each state, called the Secretaries of State, to now determine whether Trump's name should be put on the ballot. Whatever happens, the issue is likely to end up in the US Supreme Court as a decision either way would be legally challenged. Professor Tribe and Justice Luttig are not the only ones making this argument. Only days earlier, two members of a conservative legal group called the Federalist Society also published an article making the same argument.

Writing for the University of Pennsylvania Law Review, Law Professors William Baude and Michael Stokes Paulsen have said that "on the basis of the public record, former President Donald J. Trump is constitutionally disquali-

Nidhi Razdan

fied from again being President (or holding any other covered office) because of his role in the attempted overthrow of the 2020 election and the events leading to the Jan. 6 attack. The case for disqualification is strong." The two scholars have cited Trump's speech on Jan. 6, 2021 to his supporters where he said the election was stolen, calling on the crowd to take immediate action to block the transfer of power, before falling silent for hours as the insurrection progressed. They write that "Trump's deliberate inaction renders his Jan. 6 speech much more incriminating in hindsight, because it makes it even less plausible (if it was ever plausible) that the crowd's reaction was all a big mistake or misunderstanding".

These pressing legal questions come at a time when Trump has been indicted four times on various criminal charges including plotting to overturn his 2020 election defeat to Joe Biden, during an inquiry into events surrounding the 6 January 2021 riot at the US Capitol. Trump has been accused of spreading lies

about election fraud for over two months in what experts are describing as the most serious case he currently faces. But with each indictment, Trump's popularity has actually soared among his own Republican base according to various polls that have been done over the last few months. At the same time, polls show that overall most Americans would not vote for Trump if the election were held today. This is a contradiction but it shows that despite most Americans viewing Trump unfavourably, most Republican voters still like him.

Trump's core base genuinely believes he has been wronged and is the target of a political witch hunt. The fact that the other Republican candidates have not really been able to make a mark with Republican voters has also helped Trump. The 2024 Presidential election looks like it may become a very messy one, with the courts ultimately deciding how things will go. This is uncharted territory in America and whatever happens will have a bearing on the future of its democracy.

Gulf News

While enlargement took center stage, Russia also stood out at the summit for its diminished presence. BRICS is important to Russia as a key vehicle for its vision of a multipolar world. But Russia itself struggles within the bloc. Because of its full-scale invasion of Ukraine, Russia has become toxic and unattractive. Despite attempts by South Africa and Russia to find an exemption for the International Criminal Court's warrant for Russian President Vladimir Putin's arrest, he did not attend the summit. Putin's address - which was delivered in a bizarre voiceover - portrayed the bloc as an emergent anti-Western alliance. But no other head of state echoed this rhetoric. In fact, South African diplomats outright rejected the notion that BRICS is a rival to the G7.

The items on Russia's agenda found little purchase. One of Putin's primary concerns at the summit was the dollar. De-dollarization has

Ivan U. Klyszcz

YEVGENY Prigozhin's sudden death took attention away from the much-hyped 15th BRICS Summit. This buzz came from the prospect of enlargement. Despite being a divisive issue within the bloc, at the 11th hour, an agreement was reached among members to invite Argentina, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates to become part of the group.

At a glance, BRICS seems mighty. Currently, it accounts for approximately one-quarter of the world's GDP and over one-third of its population. These numbers will swell even more if the accession of the six new members does in fact take place. Yet history shows how the would-be bloc has struggled to translate these figures into true influence. The original appeal of BRICS came from the fast growth rates of its economies and their growing share of world GDP. Today, this optimism has diminished, and even China's economic outlook is less promising than it was at the time of BRICS' formation. Institutionally, the bloc has developed some joint initiatives such as the BRICS Bank (today called New Development Bank) but many have emerged only to discreetly fade away, such as the BRICS undersea cable. Primarily, it acts as a discussion forum, which takes no action.

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The items on Russia's agenda found little purchase. One of Putin's primary concerns at the summit was the dollar. De-dollarization has

been framed as epoch-shifting but its aims are more practical. Trading in local currencies would help avoid, if not fully evade, international sanctions, facilitating the purchase of Russian energy for all BRICS members. Yet, the prospects of full de-dollarization remain elusive if not outright fanciful, as the dollar remains significantly more stable than the ruble and yuan. In both cases, Russia's goals are neither met by the wishes of other members, nor reality. But where do the summit's conclusions leave both Russia and BRICS? The addition of six countries would not necessarily strengthen BRICS. Enlargement will not solve the fundamental problem of translating the bloc's combined demographics and economies into hard and soft power. More immediately, enlargement can lead to further problems: the would-be six new members have widely different foreign policy objectives, ranging from outright confrontation with the US to seeking long-term security commitments from Washington as in the cases of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. Since BRICS makes decisions by consensus, its already narrow scope for agreement is bound to close further.

Nor would the six potential members bring many benefits to Russia. None of them are large trade or investment partners with Moscow. Four out of the six voted in favor of the March 2022 United Nations Security Council resolution condemning Russia's full-scale aggression of Ukraine. While they might coordinate their trade policies at times, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and the UAE are competitors of Russia's in the global oil market, vying for customers in China and India. All this considered, the announced wave of BRICS enlargement is a net positive for Russia, especially when looking in the short term. Generally, Russian foreign policy is not inclined to multilateralism. Moscow tends to prefer bilateral engagements where it can leverage the situation to its advantage as much as possible. In this sense, Russia primarily sees BRICS as a way to enhance its access to strategic partners., Thus the expanded bloc could pro-

vide new opportunities for bilateral co-operation.

All six countries can already be considered strategic partners of Russia. Out of these, only Egypt and the UAE have introduced any restrictions on Russia, which don't amount to sanctions. Most countries joining share a view of multipolarity which regards the rise of China as a transformative event in world politics. That said, these countries do not necessarily share Russia's messianic understanding of multipolarity. The benefits the new members could bring Russia are varied. Iran has supplied weapons to Russia. The United Arab Emirates provides an environment where Russia allegedly evades sanctions. Egypt is a committed partner of Russia in multiple spheres, notably cooperating over nuclear energy, importing Russian grain, and as a popular tourist destination. In April, Cairo was accused of allegedly planning to deliver weapons to Russia. Ethiopia is at the forefront of Russia's African diplomatic efforts, especially when it comes to the initiatives involving the Russian Orthodox Church. However, relations with Argentina and Saudi Arabia are less straightforward. Argentina is on the brink of a change of government where a new far-right, pro-US candidate is most likely to win. Buenos Aires' bid to join BRICS could thus be withdrawn or otherwise watered down. Then, while Saudi Arabia has at times partnered with Russia, especially concerning the oil markets and Middle East politics, Riyadh also hedges its loyalties with the West. Hosting China alongside Western nations for discussions about achieving peace in Ukraine shows this.

The 15th BRICS Summit should be seen in that light as well. Overall, BRICS enlarged membership might help to enhance Russia's access to some of its strategic partners. In the realm of messaging and propaganda, an enlarged BRICS adds weight to Moscow's rhetoric that Russia is standing against the "world majority" parting against the West. Whether Putin's new BRICS partners see the world on the same terms is secondary to Russia's beligerent leader. As long as BRICS continues to at least superficially resemble an alternative to the current world order, Moscow will be satisfied.

The Moscow Times



Enhancing regional trade: Afghan bound China cargo termed good omen

PESHAWAR (APP): President Frontier Custom Agents Association (FCAA), Zia-ul-Haq Sarhadi while welcoming crossing of first ever China cargo for Afghanistan via Khunjerab border, has termed it a good omen for enhancing trade in the region.

In a press statement issued here on Tuesday, the President FCAA said that it was really heartening to know that Afghanistan bound China goods had started crossing through Pakistan.

This development, Zia added, will not only increase volume of trade at regional level, but will also create a large number of livelihood opportunities for

people associated with customs clearance, goods transportation, fuel business, daily wagers etc.

It merits an insertion here that Pakistan Customs has recently facilitated the first ever cargo from China to Afghanistan via Khunjerab border under the Transports Internationaux Routiers (TIR) Convention, which provides an easy and economical route for trade between countries across the world.

The first consignment started its journey from Kashgar, China and after crossing over to Pakistan via the Khunjerab pass, it will reach Kabul in Afghanistan. This transit route will reduce the travel

time to almost 70% and is also economical as it is expected to reduce the logistics costs by more than 30 percent, Zia opined.

He said that presently, the flow of bilateral and transit trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan was not up to mark and inclusion of China cargo in the business would improve commercial activities in the region.

A large number of custom clearing agents who have lost their earnings due to shrinking of business will get new opportunities to revive its lost glory, he added.

Zia Sarhadi who also holds the office of Director Pak-Afghan Joint Chamber of Commerce and Industry

(PAJCCI), said that the utilization of silk route by China for transportation of its cargo goods to Afghanistan would also be beneficial for early operationalization of gigantic CEPC project.

He appreciated the efforts made by Pakistan Customs for facilitating clearance of Afghanistan bound China good through Sost border under Transports Internationaux Routiers (TIR) Convention.

The operationalization of TIR along with QTTA and other regional transit and trade arrangements like OBOR and CAREC corridors can help Pakistan become a major hub of trade and transit, he hoped.

OGDCL hosts workshop on energy in collaboration with LUMS



F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD, August 29, 2023: The Oil and Gas Development Company Limited (OGDCL) on Tuesday hosted a dynamic workshop on energy in collaboration with the Lahore University of Management Sciences (LUMS).

The workshop, held at the OGDCL headquarters, provided a platform for industry experts and thought leaders to convene and deliberate on the current landscape, future

prospects, and collaborative initiatives within the energy sector.

The workshop was graced by the presence of Mr. Ahmed Hayat Lak, the Managing Director of OGDCL, alongside all Executive Directors of OGDCL, and other senior officers.

The gathering facilitated constructive exchanges of insights and perspectives on the advancements in the energy domain, fostering a deeper understanding of ongoing projects, chal-

lenges, and emerging opportunities.

The three-session workshop was enriched by presentations from esteemed speakers, prominently featuring Energy Institute (LEI) luminaries - Dr. Fiaz Ahmad Chaudhry, Prof. Nauman Ahmad Zaffar, and Dr. Naveed Arshad. The sessions encompassed a

diverse range of topics, spanning the power sector's challenges and prospects, the significance of advanced batteries in national energy security,

and the role of Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Disruptive

Technologies. These discussions not only expanded horizons but also underscored the potential for innovation-driven solutions to shape the future of energy.

Speaking at the event, Mr. Ahmed Hayat Lak, MD/CEO OGDCL, expressed his enthusiasm about the collaborative potential between OGDCL and LUMS and said, "This workshop signifies a remarkable opportunity to bridge industry and academia, paving the way for innovative partnerships. By synergizing efforts, we can collectively drive the energy sector towards sustainable growth and resilience."

A dedicated segment of the workshop was dedicated to exploring avenues of collaboration between OGDCL and LUMS. The workshop echoed the commitment of OGDCL to continuous learning, growth, and shared success in the dynamic energy landscape.

LCCI for addressing exporters grievances regarding SBP scheme

LAHORE (APP): Lahore Chamber of Commerce and Industry (LCCI) on Tuesday urged Caretaker Federal Minister for Commerce Dr. Gohar Ejaz to immediately resolve the grievances of exporters regarding new guidelines communicated to banks about SBP Refinance Scheme.

"New guidelines are bound to hit the exporters hard besides adding to the miseries of the already dwindling economy," according to LCCI spokesman here, the Lahore Chamber's President Kashif Anwar stated this in a letter addressed to Federal Minister for Commerce after receiving various complaints from LCCI members.

The LCCI President said that LCCI member firms representing export sector were facing serious issues with regard to new guidelines communicated to banks about SBP Refinance Schemes. The exporters were economic backbone of

the country and their issues must be addressed on priority basis particularly at the moment when they were facing quite tough time.

He said that the commercial banks were informing the exporters about the information circulated by SBP which was binding them to reduce the released funds to exporters against the export limits exposure for refinancing on August 31, 2023 at the time of rolling-over the extended credit limits. By virtue of this act, they were asking either to pay back funds before above-mentioned date or commercial banks would provide them from their own sources at the rate of 25 percent (22 percent KIBOR + 3 percent Banker Spread), he maintained.

Kashif Anwar apprehended that this act would seriously damage the country's export sector which was already under huge burden. It could be impossible for the exporters, who

were already meeting the criteria set by the State Bank, to follow the new instructions on a such short notice.

He added that at the same-time, most of the exporters had not received their approved EE Statements which were still in process with the State Bank. So would it be fair enough to curtail their limits without considering their performance even in such miserable economic conditions. He said that refinancing rate for exporters had been increased from 3 percent to 19 percent gradually within last two years with the arguments of inflation based increment, somehow exporters were still trying to manage this massive increase but this new policy of curtailment would do severe damages to their working capital capabilities and cost of doing business to compete with international suppliers.

"This would disrupt the slight leverage available to the export sector. We are of the concerted opinion that such policy shifts ought to be taken through due deliberation and consensus of the private sector stakeholders," the LCCI President said and urged the Federal Minister for Commerce Dr. Gohar Ejaz to reconsider this policy change and find a more balanced approach that takes into account the challenges faced by exporters.

The LCCI President believed that a fair and supportive policy would not only help exporters but also contribute to the overall economic growth of the country.

Toyota factories hit by massive glitch

TOKYO (AFP/APP): Toyota said Tuesday it halted operations at 12 of its 14 factories in Japan due to a system glitch, but that it did not appear to be a cyberattack.

The world's biggest automaker refrained from discussing other details of the incident, which began Tuesday morning.

"Twelve vehicle factories, affecting 25 lines, are not able to process orders for parts due to a system glitch... At this point, we believe it is not a cyberattack," a Toyota spokesman told AFP.

"We will continue to investigate the cause of the matter and will restore it as soon as possible."

It was not immediately clear exactly when normal production might resume. It did not say whether factories abroad were affected.

The Toyota factory in the southern Kyushu region and subsidiary Daihatsu's factory in Kyoto remained operational, the spokeswoman said. The news sent Toyota's stocks into the red, trading 0.64 percent lower at 2,421.0 yen.



PESHAWAR: A vendor roasting grams at his workplace.

Shipping activity at Port Qasim

KARACHI (APP): Shipping activity was reported at the port where three ships namely, MSC Shay, MS Freesia, and Okyro, carrying Container, Palm oil and Mogas, berthed at Container Terminal, Liquid Terminal and Oil Terminal, respectively on Monday.

Meanwhile five more ships, Sea Hazel, Nymph Thetis, Marlen, Cetus Cachalot and Bochem Pegasos, scheduled to load/offload Fuel oil, Palm oil, Coal and Chemicals also arrived at outer anchorage of the Port Qasim during last 24 hours.

A total of 07 ships were engaged at PQA berths during the last 24 hours, out of a bulk cargo carrier 'Al-Karamu' sailed out to sea on Tuesday (today) morning, while two more ships, container vessel MSC Shay and Gas carrier Calypso gas are expected to sail on same day afternoon.

Cargo throughput during last 24 hours stood at 116,851 tonnes, comprising 59,006 tonnes imports Cargo and 57,845 tonnes export cargo, including containerized cargo carried in 3,210 Containers (330 TEUs Imports and 2,880 TEUs export) was handled at the port.

There are nine ships at Outer Anchorage of Port Qasim, out of them two ships, Cetus Cachalot, FSM & two more ships, Maersk Denver and Maersk Brooklyn carrying Coal, LPG and Containers are expected to take berths at Bulk Terminal, Engro Terminal and Container Terminal respectively on Tuesday, 29th August, while two more containers ship, MSC Madeleine and Maersk Pelepas are due to arrive at Port Qasim on Wednesday.

PSX's 100-index loses 192 points

ISLAMABAD (APP): The 100-index of the Pakistan Stock Exchange (PSX) witnessed bearish trend on Tuesday and shed 708.19, showing negative change of 1.49 percent, closing at 46,770.42 points against 47,478.61 points the previous trading day.

A total of 217,852.268 shares were traded during the day as compared to 184,138.134 shares, whereas the trading value of shares was recorded at Rs8.280 billion against Rs6.465 billion on the last trading day.

As many as 328 companies transacted their shares in the stock market; 62 of them recorded gains and 244 sustained losses, whereas the share price of 22 companies remained unchanged.

The three top-trading companies were WorldCall Telecom with 27,409,040

shares at Rs1.20 per share; K-Electric Ltd with 14,731,834 shares at Rs2.00 per share and Dewan Motors with 9,549,974 shares at Rs16.32 per share.

Sanofi-Aventis witnessed a maximum increase of Rs 48.00 per share price, closing at Rs759.00, whereas the runner-up was Al-Abbas Sugar with Rs17.99 rise in its per share price to Rs517.99.

Rafhan Maize XD witnessed a maximum decrease of Rs45.00 per share closing at Rs8255.00; followed by Systems Limited with Rs34.44 decline to close at Rs430.89.

Rupee extends losses against dollar

Exchange rate of Pakistan rupee weakened by Rs 1.06 against the United States dollar in the interbank trading on Tuesday and closed at Rs303.05 against the previ-

ous day's closing of Rs301.99.

However, according to the Forex Association of Pakistan (FAP), the buying and selling rates of the dollar in the open market stood at Rs319.5 and Rs322.5 respectively.

The price of the Euro increased by Rs1.41 paise to close at Rs327.56 against the last day's closing of Rs326.15, according to the State Bank of Pakistan.

The Japanese Yen remained unchanged and stood at Rs2.06, whereas an increase of Rs2.43 was witnessed in the exchange rate of the British Pound, which traded at Rs382.10 as compared to the last closing of Rs379.67.

The exchange rates of the Emirates Dirham and the Saudi Riyal increased by 29 paise each to close at Rs82.51 and Rs80.78 respectively.

SM Tanveer reviews uplift works in BIE

LAHORE (APP): Caretaker Provincial Minister for Industries and Commerce SM Tanveer visited Bahawalpur Industrial Estate (BIE) and reviewed the progress on the developmental works there.

Punjab Industries Department spokesman told media here on Tuesday that Bahawalpur Chamber of Commerce and Industry (BCCI) President Zulfiqar Ali Khan, Vice President Chaudhry Jabbar, Deputy Commissioner Bahawalpur

Zaheer Anwar Jappa and other relevant officers were also present.

The Provincial Minister directed the authorities concerned to gear-up developmental works in the BIE and to complete this task by the end of this year.

He was of the view that industrialization would reduce economic problems and create employment for the people, adding that BCCI should give suggestions regarding speeding up the process of industrialization.

Later, Provincial Minister visited the flood-affected areas of Bahawalpur district to review the flood situation, rescue operations and relief activities for the flood victims.

He also visited health relief camp and a tent village and inspected the facilities being provided to the flood victims.

The Provincial Minister also gave necessary instructions to the district administration about the rescue and relief activities.

Palm, soybean oils import reduced by 5.40%, 6.82% in 1st month

ISLAMABAD (APP): Imports of edible oil including palm and soybean into the country during the first months of the current financial year decreased by 5.40 percent and 6.82 percent respectively as compared to the imports of the corresponding month of the last year.

During the month of July 2023 about 12,575 metric tons of soybean costing \$14.955 million were imported as against the import of 11,000 metric tons valuing 15.809 million of the period last year, according to data of the Pakistan Bureau statistics.

Over 277,801 metric tons of palm oil worth

\$278.939, million was also imported in the first month of the current financial year to fulfill the local requirements of cooking oil and vegetable ghee as compared the imports of 194,081 metric tons valuing \$299.395 million of the same month last year.

However, during the period under review, imports of sugar into the country grew by 20.09 percent as 574 metric tons of sugar costing \$593,000 were imported as against the imports of 550 metric tons valuing \$449,000 of the same month last year.

It is worth mentioning here that during the first month of the current finan-

cial year food group imports into the country decreased by 18.13 percent as food commodities worth \$624.804 million were imported as compared to the imports of \$763.134 million in the same month of last year.

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 percent.

Meanwhile, the trade deficit witnessed a decline of 41.16 percent during the first month of the current fiscal year (2023-24) as compared to the correspon-

ding month of last year.

The trade deficit during the month under review was recorded at \$1.607 billion against the deficit of \$2.731 billion in July 2022, a decline of 41.16 percent.

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

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

Gold rates increase by Rs500

ISLAMABAD (APP): The per tola price of 24 karat gold increased by Rs500 on Tuesday and was sold at Rs233,500 as compared to its sale at Rs233,000 the previous day.

The price of 10 grams of 24 karat gold also increased by Rs429 to Rs200, 189 from 199,760 whereas the rate of 10 gram 22 karat went up to Rs183,506 from Rs183,113, 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 \$2 to \$1,917 from \$1,915, the Association reported.

IPO Chairman visit SCCI

SIALKOT (APP): Chairman Intellectual Property Organisation (IPO) Farukh Amil along with his team visited Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI). President Sialkot Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCI) Abdul Ghafoor Malik welcomed the honorable guests.

While addressing, the President SCCI said that Sialkot was the export oriented city of Pakistan, which by producing international quality products had played pivotal role in strengthening national economy by earning US \$ 2.5 billion annually.

Malik said that Sialkot exporters had set unique examples of self-help by completing several mega projects on self-help basis including Sialkot international Airport Limited (SIAL), Sialkot Dryport, Provision of interest free loans through Khud Kifalat

Rozgar Trust and own private airline namely AirSial Airline. He said that Intellectual Property Organisation of Pakistan was providing its services regarding Copyrights, Trademark, Brand Registration and Patents for beloved country.

President SCCI requested Chairman IPO Farukh Amil to provide us guidelines in the light of his vast experience on how to utilize Copyrights, Trademark, Brand Registration and Patents to enhance our exports.

Chairman IPO said that World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) was UN body established in 1967 and under WIPO Convention, Pakistan was member since 1977.

He said that it was the global forum for intellectual Property (IP) service, policy, information and cooperation saying that it was self-funding agency of

United Nations with 193 members.

Chairman IPO said that the business community of Pakistan was very much concerned with the development of IP in the country especially to create an investment friendly atmosphere demonstrated by accession to relevant international treaties and enhancement of laws.

This would greatly help in securing FDI. Foreign investors and companies were concerned about brand identity since so much had been invested in their products and businesses, he added.

Chairman IPO Farukh Amil shared the important information regarding Trademarks, Copyrights, Brand, Patents and IP Enforcements. The meeting was attended by Senior Vice President SCCI Wahab Jahangir and Sialkot business community.



In brief

'Shaheen to emerge leading wicket-taker'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Former West Indies captain, Sir Viv Richards Tuesday believed that Pakistan left-arm pacer Shaheen Shah Afridi would emerge leading wicket-taker in the 2023 ODI World Cup, slated to be held in India from October 5 to November 19. Expressing his views in a video featured on the official Instagram account of the International Cricket Council (ICC), the legendary cricketer noted the significant progress Afridi had made. "The leading wicket-taker in the World Cup will be Shaheen Afridi as I have seen him in Pakistan. I have spent some time in the PSL and I have seen his massive growth. He is a highly determined individual. He is my man," he predicted.

Pakistan Baseball League

ISLAMABAD (APP): The inaugural edition of the Pakistan Baseball League (PBL) will roll into action from September 6 in Islamabad. Two men's teams and as many women's teams will feature in the event, being held under the auspices of the Pakistan Federation of Baseball (PBF), Finance Secretary PBF and Tournament Director Tahir Mehmood told media here. He said that the men's matches would be between Quetta Kings and Peshawar Eagles. Quetta Kings will be led by Inayat Niazi, while Peshawar Eagles will be led by Fazal Khan. The women's matches will be between Islamabad Stars and Lahore Royals. Shazia Javed will lead Islamabad Stars while Sudra Dogar will be the captain of Lahore Royals. According to Tahir, all top-notch national and international (men and women) of Pakistan will showcase their skills in the event. He said said Pakistan Sports Board was giving full support to the federation for holding the event in a befitting manner. "We are grateful to the Director General of PSB Shoaib Khoso for facilitating us to hold the event," he said. The training camps for men and women players involved in the league are already underway at Pakistan Sports Complex Islamabad, he said.

Boxing Ch'ship held

ISLAMABAD (APP): The opening ceremony of the 1st Commander Karachi and 2nd Inter Departmental Elite National Boxing Championship 2023 was held on late Monday at Naval Physical and Sports Centre Karachi. According to a media release issued, the events are being organised by Pakistan Navy. Pakistan has a brilliant past record of achievements in all categories of international boxing. Our players in the past have brought enough laurels to our country and we cherish its memories. To regain our pride in the field of boxing, Pakistan Navy is organizing the 1st Commander Karachi and 2nd Inter Departmental Elite National Boxing 2023 at Karachi, the media release said. It is a milestone for revival and promotion of boxing in Pakistan. In order to excel in boxing or any other game, it is a pre-requisite to give the players right opportunities. Boxing tournaments will continue in the coming years and play their role in promoting boxing as a sport in Pakistan under one umbrella of Pakistan Boxing Federation (PBF), the media release added.

No.1 ranked Pakistan play Asia Cup opener tomorrow

MULTAN (APP): The much-anticipated Men's ODI Asia Cup 2023 is finally here which will begin on Wednesday, tomorrow with Pakistan, the top-ranked One-Day International side, taking on Nepal in the Group-A clash at the Multan Cricket Stadium.

The contest marks many firsts as Nepal, as a team and Multan, as a venue, make their debuts in the continental tournament. It is also a maiden contest between Pakistan and Nepal at the top level.

The atmosphere in the picturesque Multan Cricket Stadium promises to be electrifying for the Wednesday clash. Both teams will receive tremendous support from the cricket-loving Multan fans. The fans will be treated with an absorbing opening ceremony before the match, which begins at 1430 PKT time.

Pakistan's last outing in Multan in the format was in June last year and the home side enjoyed resounding

success over the West Indies by thrashing them 3-0 in the three-match series. The team has played 10 ODIs here and won seven.

"It is always a great feeling to play in front of the passionate Multan crowd and we all are very excited that the Asia Cup is beginning from this city," Pakistan captain Babar Azam said on the eve of the contest. "I want to congratulate Nepal for qualifying for the Asia Cup and I hope that their participation will give a boost to the development of the sport in the country. We are looking forward to playing Nepal and I am sure it will be a good contest."

Pakistan entered in the Asia Cup with momentum on their side. They topped the ICC rankings for ODI teams on Saturday after securing a 3-0 whitewash over Afghanistan in Sri Lanka. This is the second instance of the team surmounting the chart since April. Pakistan also boasts the best win/loss ratio of 2.750 with 22 wins in

31 matches since in this World Cup cycle.

The team has enjoyed success across formats at home and away recently. In April-May, they leveled the T20 International series 2-2 and won the five-match ODI series 4-1 against New Zealand, whitewashed Sri Lanka in Sri Lanka in the two-Test series in July and defeated Afghanistan 3-0 in ODIs in Sri Lanka, this month.

Reflecting on whether there is an added pressure for being the top-ranked side, Babar said, "I would not say that there is a pressure. Rather, we enter this tournament with more confidence. This team has put in a lot of hard work and effort over the last few years and we achieving the top spot is a testimony of it. The job, however, is not done as we want to win the Asia Cup and the World Cup. We have some competitive and exciting next few months lined up and we are eager to do well for our country."

"Every player in this side wants to win matches for his country and raises their hand. They are always ready to put in the hard yards and never shy away from tough and difficult situations. We have had some amazing last few months and now it is time to build on the momentum."

Pakistan will fly to Sri Lanka on 31 August to play India in the second Group-A match on 2 September at Kandy. The venue will also host the third and final match of the group between India and Nepal on 4 September.

Pakistan squad includes Babar Azam (captain), Shadab Khan (vice-captain), Abdullah Shafique, Faheem Ashraf, Fakhar Zaman, Haris Rauf, Iftikhar Ahmed, Imam-ul-Haq, Mohammad Harris (wk), Mohammad Nawaz, Mohammad Rizwan (wk), Mohammad Wasim Jnr, Naseem Shah, Salman Ali Agha, Saud Shakeel, Shaheen Afridi and Usama Mir. Traveling reserve: Tayyab Tahir.

Pak judokas win gold medals in Iran

ISLAMABAD (APP): Pakistani judokas have displayed stunning performance in the Peace and Friendship Cup in Zahedan, Iran as they secured gold medal by outshining their opponents in the final on late Monday.

According to information made available here by Pakistan Judo Federation (PJF), the Pakistan team was comprised of Sher Khan Kakar (-60kg), Qudratullah (-73kg), Junaid Khan (-81kg) and Haseeb Mustafa (-90Kg).

The four-member Pakistan outfit edged passed Iran's five-member team 3-2 in the final to



claim the gold medal, Mansoor Ahmed, vice president of PJF told APP.

Earlier in the group matches, Pakistan had outplayed Iran B and Afghanistan. Haseeb also

participated in the Kure for Pakistan, winning his final bout to earn a gold.

Syed Muhammad also claimed an Individual Judo gold on Sunday when he won the final of the 60kg bout.

KL Rahul ruled out of Asia Cup match against Pakistan

NEW DELHI (Agencies): Indian wicketkeeper-batter KL Rahul has been ruled out of group stage matches of the upcoming ACC Men's Asia Cup, against arch-rivals Pakistan and Nepal in Pallekele, as he failed to achieve full fitness.

India's head coach Rahul Dravid during India's pre-departure press interaction in Bengaluru confirmed that KL Rahul is "progressing really well" however he won't be ready to participate in the games against Pakistan and Nepal.

The 31-year-old Rahul has not played any competitive cricket since he was injured during the Indian Premier League in April-May. He has developed an injury niggle unrelated to

the original thigh problem. "KL has had a good week here [at India's conditioning camp] with us. Trained well and done a lot of things. He's progressing really well on the route that we want to take. But he will be unavailable for the Kandy leg of the trip," Dravid said. "The NCA [National Cricket Academy] will be looking after him for the next few days while we are traveling. We will reassess on September 4 and take it from there. But signs are looking good and he's progressing really well."

KL Rahul will hopefully be fit in time for the Super 4 stage games of the Asia Cup, meanwhile, Ishan Kishan is expected to keep wickets in the group stage

matches in Rahul's absence. India will kick off their Asia Cup with the much-anticipated clash against Pakistan on September 2 in Kandy.

The arch-rivals Pakistan and India will come face to face again on September 10 in Colombo if both manage to qualify for the Super 4s.

India's Squad : Rohit Sharma (captain), Shubman Gill, Virat Kohli, Shreyas Iyer, KL Rahul, Suryakumar Yadav, Tilak Varma, Ishan Kishan, Hardik Pandya (vice-captain), Ravindra Jadeja, Axar Patel, Shardul Thakur, Jasprit Bumrah, Mohammed Shami, Mohammed Siraj, Kuldeep Yadav, Prasidh Krishna.

Travelling reserve: Sanju Samson.



MULTAN: Pakistan Cricket team captain Babar Azam examines the pitch ahead of the first cricket match of Asia Cup 2023 at Multan Cricket Stadium.

'I'm happy for Arshad Nadeem': Neeraj Chopra's mother shuts Indian journalist

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan's star javelin thrower Arshad Nadeem became the first-ever athlete to win a silver medal at the World Athletic Championships 2023 held in Budapest, Hungary while Neeraj Chopra became the first Indian to win a gold medal at the event.



However, the two countries are the world's biggest sporting rivals, be it cricket or any other game and the fans of both sides often become fierce in support of their country. Recently, an Indian

journalist tried to reduce the sportsmanship to the Pakistan-India rivalry despite Nadeem and Chopra showing mutual respect to each other.

The journalist asked Neeraj's mother, Saroj Devi, an inflammatory question. However, she schooled him by replying to his question positively, winning the hearts of the social media users.

"How big of an achievement it was for Neeraj to defeat the Pakistani?" the reporter asked, to which she replied: "There is no division of countries on the field all players are equal."

"In the field, everyone is an athlete, and someone has to win; it doesn't matter if they are from Pakistan or from Haryana," Saroj said.

She further said: "It is a matter [Neeraj's victory] of joy for me and I am happy for the Pakistani

athlete as well."

Despite being fierce competitors on the field, both Neeraj and Arshad Nadeem's off-field camaraderie is exemplary.

During the Tokyo Olympics final in 2021, Neeraj jumped to his Pakistani counterpart's defence after Arshad was caught in a controversy for practicing with Neeraj's spear and accused of "tampering" with the Indian's gold medal-winning spear.

"There was nothing wrong with Arshad Nadeem using my javelin to prepare. It is within rules, and please do not use my name to push a dirty agenda," Neeraj Chopra said.

Even at the Budapest World Championships, the Indian player urged Nadeem to join him for a photo-op. Their heartwarming scenes won over social media and sent a message of unity to both countries.

FIFA lifts ban on Sri Lanka after election pledge

COLOMBO (Agencies): FIFA has lifted the suspension on Sri Lankan football following assurances that there will be no political interference in the sport in the country, the local federation said Tuesday.

The Football Federation of Sri Lanka (FFSL) said it received a letter from FIFA removing the ban that was imposed in January.

In its letter, football's global governing body said it took note of moves to hold fresh elections at the FFSL next month and assurances from the sports ministry to allow the FFSL to function without government interference.

"FIFA and the AFC (Asian Football Confederation) will continue to monitor the situation until the elections on September 29, 2023," the local board was told.

The world governing body of rugby also suspended Sri Lanka in May after alleging political interference in the administration of the game.

FIFA suspended Sri Lanka's national federation, back in January, a month after issuing it with a "red notice" over governance issues.

That warning came after the Ministry of Sports introduced a raft of regulations that reportedly compromised the autonomy and independence of national sports bodies, including the Football Federation of Sri Lanka (FFSL).

The FFSL held an election, which reportedly fell short of standards agreed upon with FIFA and the Asian Football Confederation (AFC), in which an ally of the sports minister became chair.

In a letter, FIFA said the FFSL was suspended "until further notice".

Sri Lanka's men's team are ranked 204th in the world and the women's 153rd.

NEW YORK (Agencies): Novak Djokovic will replace young rival Carlos Alcaraz as the men's world number one after a routine win on his US Open return.

Serbia's Djokovic, who lost the Wimbledon final to Alcaraz, won 6-0 6-2 6-3 against France's Alexandre Muller in Monday's night session in New York.

Djokovic, 36, was not allowed to play in the United States last year because he was not vaccinated against Covid-19.

He has returned knowing another title will be a record-equalling 24th major. Matching Australian Margaret Court's all-time tally is Djokovic's target and he made a statement start by breezing past 84th-ranked Muller.

"I started tremendously well, we started quite late but nevertheless I was excited to go out on the court - it has been a couple of years," said Djokovic, who will spend a record-extending 390th week at the top of the ATP rankings.

"In the second and third sets I dropped the level of my serve and I had to work for the points a bit more. Nevertheless I played great and I liked the level."

Having not started until 23:00 local time, the three-



time US Open champion showed he did not want to hang around and only dropped eight points in a 23-minute opening set.

A smiling Muller raised both arms in celebration when he finally got on the scoreboard for 2-1 in the second set but the 26-year-old could not stop Djokovic from moving further ahead.

Muller offered more resistance in the third set before Djokovic won the final four games to wrap up victory in one hour and 34 minutes. Djokovic, who won the Australian Open and French Open earlier this year, is aiming for a fourth title at Flushing Meadows and will play Spain's Bernabe Zapata Miralles in the second round. He will return to world number one after the tournament.

Top seed Alcaraz, 20, won his first major at the US Open in Djokovic's absence last year and starts the defence of his crown against Germany's Dominik Koepfer on Tuesday.

Alcaraz and Djokovic are the joint favourites for the men's singles title having developed a fascinating rivalry over the past 12 months. It was bubbling at the start of the season but without both present at key tournaments there was little chance for the pair to go toe-to-toe on the court.

Now the match-up has ignited over the past few months following three compelling contests in the French Open semi-finals, the Wimbledon showpiece and this month's Cincinnati final. Alcaraz and Djokovic cannot meet at the US Open until the final as a result of being the top two seeds.

PCB announce central contracts for women cricketers

KARACHI (Monitoring Desk): Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Tuesday awarded central contracts to 20 women cricketers, divided into four categories A, B, C and D being an emerging category.

The uncapped trio of Anosha Nasir, Eyman Fatima and Shawaal Zulfiqar are among the four players who are awarded central contracts for the first time. Umm-e-Hani, who made her debut last year against Ireland, is the fourth player to earn her maiden central contract.

The 20 players were offered central contracts last week for a duration of 23 months, commencing from 1 August 2023 to 30 June 2025. The performances of players will be assessed after a year. The contracts were signed by 19 players in Karachi during the series camp for South Africa. Eyman Fatima, who is not part of the white-ball series against South Africa, signed the contract in Lahore.

Captain Nida Dar and experienced Bismah Maroof have been retained in the A

category, which sees a 19 per cent increase in their retainers. Sidra Amin, who is currently second in the list of top run-getters of ICC Women's Championship 2022-25 with 535 runs from nine matches has jumped to the A category from C.

The B category, which sees an increase of 32 per cent in players' retainers, is occupied by four players. Muneeba Ali, who scored a century in this year's ICC Women's T20 World Cup, has been promoted from C to B category. Fast bowler Fatima Sana, who also captained Pakistan's emerging women's team in this year's ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup 2023 has been retained in the B category along with left-arm spinner Nashra Sundhu. Aliya Riaz has been demoted from A to B category.

In the C category, wicket-keeper-batter Sidra Nawaz has retained her position, while spinners Ghulam Fatima and Sadia Iqbal have been promoted from the D to the C category. Diana Baig, who missed out on most of the last year due to a

shoulder injury and later a finger injury has been demoted to C from B category. Omaima Sohail has been placed in the C category compared to the B category she was in last year's central contracts list. The C category has a 19 per cent increase in player retainers.

The D category, also known as the emerging category, features a total of eight players. Leg-spinner Tuba Hassan and right-handed batter Sadaf Shamas have retained their spots in the category which will see them register a 21 per cent increase in their retainers. Left-arm spinner Anosha Nasir, right-handed batters Eyman Fatima and Shawaal Zulfiqar, all of whom represented Pakistan U19 in the inaugural ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup this year, have earned their maiden contracts.

Wicketkeeper-batter Najiha Ali and off-spinner Umm-e-Hani, both of whom represented Pakistan's emerging team in the ACC Women's Emerging Teams Asia Cup, are also part of the D category. Syeda Aroob Shah, who

captained Pakistan U19 in the ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup, makes a comeback in the central contract after missing out last year.

Anam Amin, Gull Feroza, Iram Javed, Javeria Khan and Kainat Imtiaz are the five players who have failed to retain this year's central contract. All five players have been awarded the first-ever 11-month domestic contracts. Meanwhile, Ayesha Naseem, who retired from international cricket, is the sixth player to be left out from the contract.

Meanwhile, there is a 100 per cent increase in the match fee of players involved in an ODI match (playing and non-playing both). Also, there is a 50 per cent increase in match fees of players in a T20I match (playing and non-playing both).

Tania Mallick, Head of Women's Cricket: "The extended contract duration reflects our anticipation of an action-packed international cricket calendar. We want our women cricketers to be fully prepared, physically and mentally, to face every challenge and cele-

brate every triumph that comes their way."

"The substantial increment in the monetary aspect of our women's central contracts reflects our commitment to providing an environment where players can focus solely on their game. This also acknowledges the rising standard and influence of women's cricket globally."

"Four outstanding players have earned their central contracts this year. This not only showcases the depth of talent in our women's cricket but also encourages healthy competition and a spirit of excellence within the team."

Saleem Jaffar, Chair of Women's Selection Committee: "The selection committee is pleased to announce the players who have been awarded contracts, considering the extensive cricketing calendar that lies ahead. We believe in development of emerging talent, and these new contracts aim to give confidence in these players as they prepare for the upcoming cricket season."

"Our primary focus while awarding contracts for the next 23 months has been to recognise consistent performance and dedication displayed by the players throughout the ICC Women's Championship cycle that began in 2022. The matches against Sri Lanka marked the inception of this evaluation, and we have precisely assessed each player's contribution during this cycle."

Women's Central Contracts (1 August 2023 to 30 June 2025):

Category A (3) – Bismah Maroof, Nida Dar and Sidra Amin

Category B (4) – Aliya Riaz, Fatima Sana, Muneeba Ali and Nashra Sundhu

Category C (5) – Diana Baig, Ghulam Fatima, Omaima Sohail, Sadia Iqbal and Sidra Nawaz

Category D (8) – Anosha Nasir, Eyman Fatima, Najiha Alvi, Sadaf Shamas, Shawaal Zulfiqar, Syeda Aroob Shah, Tuba Hassan and Umm-e-Hani

Pakistan's schedule in the ICC Women's Championship 2022-25:

vs South Africa (all matches in Karachi)

1 Sep – First T20I v South Africa

3 Sep – Second T20I v South Africa

4 Sep – Third T20I v South Africa

8 Sep – First ODI v South Africa

11 Sep – Second ODI v South Africa

14 Sep – Third ODI v South Africa

Oct/Nov 2023 – Pakistan tour to Bangladesh (three ODIs & three T20Is)

Nov/Dec 2023 – Pakistan tour to New Zealand (three ODIs & three T20Is)

Apr/May 2024 – West Indies tour to Pakistan (three ODIs & five T20Is)

May 2024 – Pakistan tour to England (three ODIs & three T20Is)

Additional series Sep 2023 – 19th Asian Games, China

Oct/Nov 2023 – West Indies emerging team tour to Pakistan (three T20s and three one-days)

Jan 2024 – Pakistan U19 and Sri Lanka U19 in Bangladesh (tri-series).



In brief

Health minister visits city's allied hospitals

RAWALPINDI (APP): Caretaker Provincial Health Minister, Punjab Dr. Javed Akram on Tuesday paid a visit to the allied hospitals of the city including Holy Family Hospital (HFH), Benazir Bhutto Hospital (BBH), and District Headquarters Hospital (DHQ) to inspect facilities. He took around various departments of the three hospitals in detail including Dengue Ward, Triage Room, OPD, Liver Center, Emergency, Medicine Clinic, Children Ward, Gynecology Emergency, and Surgical Wards. Dr. Javed interacted with the admitted patients and their attendants and enquired about treatment and other facilities being provided to them at the hospitals. The Provincial Minister directed the relevant officials to complete the ongoing construction work of the Gyne Emergency Block at HFH at the earliest. Dr. Javed Akram said that efforts were being made to provide the best treatment facilities to the patients in the government-run hospitals. He said that due to timely arrangements, the dengue situation was under control and fewer patients were reported so far compared to previous years, however, he urged for a need to remain vigilant as the recent rains had increased the threat of dengue larvae breeding.

CTP issued fine tickets to 39 tinted glasses vehicles

RAWALPINDI (APP): On the special orders of DIG Traffic Punjab Mirza Farhan Baig, City Traffic Police (CTP) has launched a crackdown against tinted glasses vehicles. According to a CTP spokesman, CTP also issued fine tickets to 39 tinted glasses vehicles. In this regard, Chief Traffic Officer (CTO) Taimoor Khan has formed a special squad to take action against vehicles carrying black papers and issued special orders to all DSPs of circles to take strict and non-discriminatory action against such vehicles. Terming it a security risk fine tickets must be issued to tinted vehicles. The CTO pledged that the action would be conducted indiscriminately with zero tolerance for any kind of excuse.

'Pakistan needs positive thinking for development'

ISLAMABAD (APP): Vice Chancellor of Allama Iqbal Open University (AIU), Dr. Nasir Mahmood on Tuesday said that positive thinking is such a treasure that turns the soil into gold, youth need to develop positive thinking for the development of Pakistan. While addressing the contestants of Speech and Painting competitions held at AIU, he said these competitions were organized amongst students from schools, colleges, and universities of Rawalpindi/Islamabad by the Directorate of Students Advisory & Counseling Services (DSACS) to pay tribute to the great leaders of the Pakistan Movement. Dr. Nasir emphasized youth to channel their emotions into dedication and hard work for the betterment of Pakistan. He emphasized the importance of admitting mistakes and taking responsibility for one's actions to bring positive change into their lives. Director DSACS, Syed Ghulam Kazim Ali, expressed that the purpose of these events is to honor the efforts and sacrifices of previous generations and inspire the next generation to pursue education for the development of Pakistan. It is pertinent to mention here that 36 students participated in the painting competition, while 40 students took part in the speech competition.



ISLAMABAD: Honourable Justice Supreme Court of Pakistan, Syed Mansoor Ali Shah addressing during National Conference of Service Providers Gender Based Violence: From Legislation to Implementation.

DG, ANF briefs Interior Minister on narcotics control

ISLAMABAD (APP): Director General (DG) Anti Narcotics Force (ANF) Major General Aneeq ur Rehman Malik Tuesday brief caretaker Interior Minister Sarfraz Buti regarding efforts being made for narcotics control.

All departments will have to work together to

save the nation from the curse of drugs, the minister said adding the role of ANF in this regard was very important.

He appreciated the recent raids of the force and arrests of drug peddlers along with recovery of drugs from their possession. The minister also

directed to take strict action against those involved in drugs business.

He said Pakistan would be made a drug free country while the young generation to be protected from the menace for healthy society. Sarfraz Bugti said the government would provide all kind of support in that regard.

AC conducts surprise inspection in secretariat subdivision

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Assistant Commissioner (AC) Secretariat conducted a surprise inspection in various areas of the Secretariat Subdivision on Tuesday.

The inspection was carried out in accordance with the instructions of the Deputy Commissioner (DC) Islamabad Irfan Nawaz Memon, ICT Spokesman Dr. Abdullah Tabasum said.

During the inspection, the AC Secretariat's team checked prices of essential commodities, use of plastic bags, and general hygiene

he added. The team also checked the cleanliness, firefighting equipment, and accuracy of weights and measures at petrol pumps.

In addition, the team conducted raids against illegal gas stations and filed FIRs against 14 unauthorized businesses, including those engaged in the sale of open fuel.

The team also monitored the dengue monitoring teams and SOP adherence at various locations.

Moreover, the action was also taken to evict beggars from the area. One

beggar was detained and sent to the police station.

The team also inspected vehicles with tinted windows and served violation forms to many vehicles for registration suspension.

The AC Secretariat team said that the surprise inspection was conducted to ensure that the law is being enforced and that the people of the Secretariat Subdivision are getting the best possible services.

The team also urged the people to cooperate with the authorities and to report any violations of the law.

Bridging gap between policy, laws and practice key to lessen gender based violence: Advisor

ISLAMABAD (APP): Prime Minister's Special Assistant for Human Rights and Women Empowerment Mushaal Hussein Mullick Tuesday stressed the need for bridging gap between women empowerment laws and practice for lessening the gender discrimination and violence against them in the society.

She was addressing at a national conference of service providers on gender based violence here. Representatives of different stakeholders participated in the conference and shared their valuable views on this occasion. Highlighting the deplorable condition of women of Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (IIOJK), the Special Assistant said that Indian armed forces had been committing heinous crimes especially, against women in the IIOJK for the last seven decades.

She said, rape was being used as a ferocious tool of weapon against Kashmiri women in order to demoralize them and suppress Kashmiri's just cause for the right to self-determination. Indian state authorities not only condone such condemnable acts but also encourage such

nefarious crimes as a state policy, she added. Mushaal Mullick said that being the daughter of Kashmir, she had the true realization of the state of women rights in IIOJK which led her decision to become powerful voice of Kashmiri women.

She further said that she has also been advocating for rights of children and women in Pakistan for last many years. The advisor expressed her satisfaction that a lot of progress had been made regarding women empowerment in terms of policy making and formulation of different laws, however narrowing the gap between policy and implementation was key to end gender based violence and discrimination in the society.

She said there was need to create conducive environment for women where she could exercise her rights with free will.

The special assistant also encouraged electric and print media to come forward and play their pivotal role in creating awareness among masses and society for discouraging gender based violence and discrimination especially against women in the society.

Two-day ISF pitching competition kicks off at HEC

ISLAMABAD (APP): Two-day startups pitching competition under 'Innovator Seed Fund (ISF)' programme Tuesday kicked off at the Higher Education Commission (HEC), where collectively around 65 startups would pitch their innovative business ideas in front of the jury comprising a variety of industry and business experts.

Encouraging innovation and entrepreneurship is one of the key objectives of HEC and various grants are being offered aimed at accelerating the socio-economic development of the country. Chairman HEC Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed graced the occasion as chief guest at the opening ceremony. While addressing the audience, Dr. Mukhtar said that

it was heartening to see startup-centered events like ISF frequently happening in Pakistan from HEC's platform. He congratulated all the competitors for their efforts to do something extraordinary and beyond their comfort zones to bring some positive change in society.

Dr. Mukhtar continued by saying that youth must take advantage of such opportunities and find innovative solutions to the problems surrounding them. "Keeping in view the current situation of the job market of Pakistan, it is incumbent upon youth to be job providers instead of job seekers," he added.

ISF, an initiative under Higher Education Development in Pakistan Program provides a package

of support and seed funding to early-stage startups through HEC-recognized Business Incubation Centers (BICs) at universities. ISF had initially received 205 concept notes against the available funding slots. The received concept notes were from different thematic areas including Agriculture, Transportation, Logistics, Housing, E-commerce, Digital Media, Construction, Food Resources etc.

Out of total received concept notes, 175 were short-listed and were given pitching training. Furthermore, 65 startups were shortlisted for today's pitching competition before the final award ceremony for 30 winner startups scheduled for September 1, 2023, at Pak-China Center, Islamabad.

76 new Covid cases reported in last week

ISLAMABAD (APP): Health officials on Tuesday said that 76 new coronavirus cases were reported during the last week across the country.

As per the data shared by the National Institute of Health (NIH), the case positivity ratio was 0.82 per cent while two patients were in critical condition.

No death was reported from the coronavirus last week while 9,318 Covid-19 tests were conducted.

Meanwhile, the official of the Ministry for National Health Services, Regulations, and Coordination said that the government has strengthened the role of Border and Health Services in Pakistan to deal with any sub-variant of Covid-19.

He said there was a surveillance system at all entry points of the country including airports. There will be rapid tests and screening of passengers at all airports. He added 90 per cent of the country's population already got the Covid-19 vaccine.

Crackdown against beggars

ISLAMABAD (APP): Islamabad capital police have initiated a massive crackdown against professional beggars and their handlers in the city to curb this menace.

According to police spokesperson, the Islamabad Capital City Police Officer (ICCP) Dr. Akbar Nasir Khan, ordered the all zonal DPO's to take action against professional beggars and handlers in their respective areas adding that cases should be registered against them. He reiterated that the parents who send their children with these criminals will also face action according to the law, adding that criminals in the guise of begging were found involved in different criminal activities.

During the ongoing crackdown, the Islamabad capital police Sangiani police station teams arrested six professional beggars and registered cases against them under the relevant law. Citizens are also urged to discourage these professional beggars and give their charity to the needy people. They have been also requested to inform police about any suspicious activity through Pucar-15 and join hands with police to curb this menace from the city.

Religious affairs minister, Saudi ambassador discuss upcoming Hajj arrangements

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony, Aneeq Ahmed, on Tuesday engaged in a productive meeting with Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki and discussed imminent Hajj preparations, strengthening bilateral ties, and addressing challenges within the Muslim Ummah. In the meeting, Secretary of Religious Affairs Aftab Akbar Durrani and Regional Director of Muslim World League Saad bin Masood al-Harsi, were also present.

Minister Aneeq shed light on the shared devotion, respect, and brotherhood between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia and emphasized his commitment to enhancing the experience of Pakistani pilgrims during this Hajj season. Acknowledging the strong bond between the two nations, he expressed his confidence in the Saudi Ambassador's support and cooperation.

He revealed that the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Interfaith Harmony was organizing an 'Interfaith Harmony Conference' in Islamabad, scheduled for Wednesday, where leaders from various faiths, ambassadors, and civil society rep-

resentatives would engage in dialogues.

Additionally, Minister Aneeq Ahmed disclosed plans for the upcoming National Seerat Conference, set to take place on 12 Rabi-ul-Awal. This year's theme, "Strategy of National Economic Stability in the Light of Seerat-e-Tayyaba," aimed to illuminate the world with the profound teachings of Islam, he added.

Saudi Ambassador Nawaf bin Said Al-Malki, highlighting the significance of engaging the youth, shared that the Muslim World League was gearing up for a global conference focusing on contemporary challenges.

He underscored the need to inspire the younger generation to actively contribute to resolving the issues faced by the Muslim Ummah.

Furthermore, he reminisced about the successful visit of Saudi Minister of Hajj Dr. Tawfiq bin Fawzan Al-Rabiah to Pakistan, while also expressing anticipation for the arrival of prominent Saudi personalities in Pakistan in the near future.

In a gracious gesture, Ambassador Al-Malki extended his appreciation to Minister Aneeq Ahmed for his unwavering support and affection.

September critical for dengue spread; Health Authority

RAWALPINDI (APP): District Coordinator Epidemics Prevention and Control (DCEPC), Dr. Sajjad Mehmood on Tuesday asked the residents to adopt precautionary measures as September was crucial for dengue spread.

He said that the number of dengue patients had increased gradually in Rawalpindi during the week, adding five to six patients were reported daily last week which had increased to 15 to 18 patients daily this week. If the situation persists it can increase to 70 patients daily in September.

The health officer informed that for the last two to three years, the number of dengue patients had started increasing from the end of August, which continuously increased till October 10.

He said that during the

first six months of the year, the number of dengue patients was in the hundreds and predicted that if protective measures were not adopted it would increase to thousands in the next six months.

Dr. Sajjad added that this year the number of dengue patients was less than 200 and there was a risk that the number could reach 4,000 in the coming months.

He said that the district health authority has created an integrated system for dengue control and dengue larvae were being destroyed by sweeping operations in the area and houses from where dengue patients were being reported. He said that presently most patients were being reported from the Chamanzar, Dhok Munshi and Lalazar areas of the Cantonment.

Meanwhile, giving

details of the patients reported during the last 24 hours in the district, he said that Rawalpindi's tally had reached 176 cases with the arrival of 18 new patients.

Among the new cases, Dr. Sajjad added that six cases had arrived from Potohar town urban, five from Chaklala Cantonment, one from Municipal Corporation Rawalpindi area while six patients were reported from outside the districts. Presently, he said 46 patients were admitted to Rawalpindi public hospitals, out of which 31 were confirmed cases while 130 were discharged after treatment. Dr. Sajjad informed that the district administration had registered 55 FIRs, issued tickets to 11, sealed two premises, and a fine of Rs 17,000 was imposed against the violations of dengue SOPs during the last 24 hours.

LAJA & UN Women holds National Conference of Service Providers in Justice Sector

ISLAMABAD (APP): The Legal Aid and Justice Authority (LAJA) and UN Women on Tuesday conducted the first-ever National Conference of Service Providers in Islamabad.

The event brought together a diverse network of Criminal Justice stakeholders to engage in cross-learning and exchange of best practices, with an aim to establish standards of care for survivors and to strengthen the implementation of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) laws across Pakistan, said the press note.

Addressing the audience, Ehsan Sadiq, Director General of the National Police Bureau, proclaimed the importance of this collaborative effort and said, "This Conference represents a paramount stride in addressing GBV comprehensively."

By connecting professionals across various domains, we are creating a robust network poised to build a more coordinated response to GBV, ensuring survivors receive the support they rightfully deserve," Ayesha Raza Farooq, Chairperson of the Special Committee on Anti-Rape Law at the Ministry of Law and Justice highlighted the transformative potential of the conference.

"Our commitment to enhancing GBV laws is intrinsically linked to improving mechanisms for supporting survivors. This conference acts as a cornerstone in aligning our legal

framework with the specific needs of survivors, driving a survivor-centric approach" she said.

This historic conference marks a significant step toward advancing the standards of services and response for survivors of Gender-Based Violence (GBV) in Pakistan. Sharmela Rassool, Country Representative of UN Women, emphasized the country-wide significance of this initiative: "Ending gender-based violence requires a united national effort, where every individual becomes a voice against silence. Let us join hands and work together tirelessly until every corner of our nation is free from the shadows of GBV."

The National Conference of Service Providers serves as a pivotal endeavor in fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange on a national scale, contributing to the broader international mission to eradicate GBV," she said. Supreme Court Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah lauded the efforts of all stakeholders in making the conference a reality. He said, "The quality of dialogue and the innovative approaches discussed in this conference will go a long way in facilitating survivors, ensuring they receive the support they need. To win the war against GBV, it is essential that all stakeholders of the justice sector are fully onboard and this conference provides a wonderful platform for that purpose."



ISLAMABAD: EU Ambassador Dr. Riina Kionka called on caretaker Federal Minister for Health Dr. Nadeem Jan.

Director meets delegation

KABUL (Agencies): Director AFDA Dr. Abdul Bari Omar welcomed the chairman of International Relations of Uzbekistan and his accompanying delegation in a meeting and stated that IEA desires positive relations with the world, exclusively with neighboring nations. Omar stated that after years of conflict, Afghanistan has begun to grow in several sectors and that IEA welcomes Uzbekistan's assistance in commerce, import and export of pharmaceuticals and food.

The Frontier Post

AFGHANISTAN

Saffar 12, 1445 — Wednesday, August 30, 2023

700 Afghan refugees returned

KABUL (Khaama Press): Afghan Ministry of Refugees and Repatriations has reported the return of more than 700 Afghan refugees from Iran. The Ministry said on Monday that around 774 Afghan refugees have entered Afghanistan through the Islam Qala border crossing in Herat province. Out of the 774 returnees, about 622 people have been referred to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) office for assistance, Islam Qala border post's officer said.

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

40 private clinics shut in Helmand

L A S H K A R G A H (Pajhwok): Forty private clinics have been shut over issuing code based prescriptions to the patients in Lashkargah, the capital of southern Helmand province, and some districts, an official said on Tuesday.

Public Health Director Dr. Syed Ahmad Saeed told Pajhwok Afghan News during an exclusive interview their monitoring teams had launched its work from the past five months province-wide.

He said the clinics of 40 physicians had been closed in the past one month over issuance of code bases prescriptions to the patients.

"We launched this process from the past five months, first sent official letters to all physicians,

then we gathered them and warned them against issuing code based prescriptions," he said.

Saeed said: "They did not showed compliance and last month we shut the clinics of 40 physicians who violated the orders, this also included large hospitals."

He said in the first step the clinics would be closed for three days and in the second step the clinics would be shut for 15 days and for the third time if they violated their orders then they would be referred to the court.

Local residents have hailed these steps taken by the Public Health Department.

Zabihullah, the resident of Bolan area in

Lashkargah, said he welcomed the Public Health Department step to prevent code based prescriptions.

Some physicians have their own drugstores and they write code based prescriptions to the patients to force them purchase medicines from their own stores. Khan, the resident of Gerishk district, also complained that some physicians issued prescriptions to patients who could not find the drugs in general drug stores.

It is pertinent to mention that in some provinces people had complained against code based prescriptions issued by some physicians. These medicines could be only in the drug store owned by the same physician.

IEA not allow anyone to use Afghanistan against others

KABUL (Agencies): Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, the Deputy Prime Minister for Political Affairs, stated at a meeting with a delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran that the Islamic Emirate will not allow anybody to use the territory of Afghanistan against others or intervene in his domestic affairs.

According to a statement issued by the Prime Minister's Office, Mawlawi Abdul Kabir, Deputy Prime Minister for Political Affairs, met with a delegation from the Islamic Republic of Iran today at Sepidar Palace.

During the meeting, which was also attended by Iranian diplomats in Afghanistan, the Iranian delegation expressed satisfaction with the security in Afghanistan, saying, it is important that the conflict in Afghanistan is over and the Islamic Emirate has eradicated narcotics in the country.

The delegation stressed the need to expand Afghanistan-Iran relations as well as increase commerce and investment.

The Deputy Prime Minister said that the Islamic Emirate desires constructive cooperation with the whole world, particularly Iran.

Afghanistan and Iran have a lot in common and good relations need to be improved in various sectors, he said, adding that the Islamic Emirate believes in dialogue for solving issues. He also encouraged Iranian industrialists to invest in Afghanistan.

The Deputy Prime Minister thanked the Islamic Republic of Iran for hosting Afghan refugees and sought Iran's support for providing needed services for the Afghan migrants in that country. He added that the Islamic Emirate does not allow anyone to use Afghan territory against others or interfere in its internal affairs.

Afghanistan, Uzbekistan sign MoU

KABUL (Agencies): The Office of Administration Affairs signed a memorandum of understanding with the Uzbekistani delegation for the establishment of a joint workshop for the repair of civil and military vehicles.

According to a statement from the Office of Administrative Affairs, Mawlawi Saifuddin Taeb, Deputy Head of Supervision and Policy of the Office, met with Yadgar Shadmanov, the Ambassador of the Republic of Uzbekistan to Afghanistan, and Kholmurodov Nozimjon, the Deputy of the deputy minister of Investment, Industry, and Trade of that country.

The Uzbekistani envoy praised the efforts of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan for enhancing commercial and diplomatic cooperation with his country and assured of comprehensive support to the Afghan people when needed.

During the meeting, the two sides signed a memorandum of cooperation in order to the establishment of a joint workshop for the repair of civil and military vehicles of the Afghan government.

Afghan, Iran railway team meet in Tehran



TEHRAN (Agencies): The Afghanistan Railway Authority's general director Bakht ul Rahman Sharafat and his accompanying delegation met with Seyed Miad Salehi, head of the Islamic Republic of Iran Railways in Tehran, Iran on Monday night, ARA said Tuesday.

Afghanistan railway special adviser, Mirwais

Ghafouri; deputy director of the department of economic relations of the ministry of foreign affairs, Abu Bakr Zadaran; chief of ceremonies of the Afghan embassy in Tehran, Mohammad Aleem Noorani; and the spokesman of the Railway Authority, Abdul Sami Durrani, accompanied the general director.

According to the statement, Salehi welcomed the Afghan delegation, and said: "We are glad to host you and we hope that this meeting will lead to the development of bilateral cooperation."

Sharafat said: "Iran has paid special attention to the start of transfers through the Khawaf-Herat railway."

Discussions also centered around the speed of transfers via the Khawaf-Herat railway line. The Iranian side said they were trying to increase the volume of cargo on the route.

Both sides noted that the Khawaf-Herat railway line was important for the economic development of both countries.

Free education provided for orphaned girls in Herat

HERAT (TOLOnews): A charity organization in Herat province has provided free education for hundreds of orphaned girls by building a school.

Over 500 girls from all over the western region are included in the school and study up to the sixth grade.

"More than 500 female students are engaged in learning in the charity organization, most of them are poor," said Ahmad Shoyeb Faqiri, an official of the school.

The students who have been provided an education from the charitable institution are happy that their dreams are coming true.

"I am so happy, and I will study and be a doctor in the future," said Muslima.

"Every girl has a dream that with learning it becomes true, and I want to become a doctor in the future," said Marwa, a student.

Meanwhile, some female students asked for

the reopening of schools above grade six for all girls.

"In other countries, schools are open for girls, and they are learning, but we cannot, and that is disappointing," said Eidma Rahmani, a student.

"We call on the government to reopen schools for girls so our country can progress," said Isra Jahani, a student.

The school is ready to educate girls up to the 12th grade, but due to the banning of classes above the

6th grade, girls are only educated up to the 6th grade.

"The schools prepared all the educational facilities required by the education system for the students, including student uniforms, stationery required for students, and books," said Sahiba Momen, an official of the school.

Despite domestic and international reactions, it is still unclear when schools will be opened to girls from the 7th to 12th grades.

No school building in Ghazni's Ajristan district

GHAZNI (TOLOnews): There are no buildings for schools in Ajristan district of Ghazni province, where thousands of students must study in tents or disclosed areas. Based on official statistics, around 5,000 students are studying in 13 schools in Ajristan.

"We have 13 schools. None of them have a building. They are living in tents and the tents are also not even enough," said Mohammad Hanif Hanafi, head of the district department of education.

TOLOnews' reporter Nazir Shinwari went to the district and interviewed residents. According to the principal of Sultan Mohammad Khan high school, the students are also struggling with a shortage of notebooks, books and other facilities.

"We have nearly 600 students in this high school. There are between four to five tents. No one has helped us," said Abdul Jalil Jalal, the principal.

"There is rain in the month of Hamal (March 22



to April 22). We are changing our location to continue studying," said Abdulhudo, an instructor.

"We call on the government to build us a compound and solve all of our problems. Give us books, notebooks," said Shamsullah, a student.

"We cannot go to the school while it's raining

because our school doesn't have a compound," said Arafatullah, a student.

The provincial governor, Hafiz Mohammad Amin Omari, said that the efforts are underway to address the challenges for students in Ajristan.

"There are challenges about the schools. We have shared these challenges

with the education department," he said.

Based on figures from the Ajristan department of education, there are at least 13 schools, 60 local classes, one major seminary and 12 local seminaries. There are a total of 7,000 students including boys and girls who are studying at these education centers.

'24 mothers die daily from maternal mortality'

KABUL (Khaama Press): The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued a clear warning about the situation in Afghanistan. Every day, around 24 mothers lose their lives due to preventable maternal causes. This tragic loss of life directly results from these mothers not receiving the necessary health assistance. This problem has been further exacerbated by a shortfall in funding, making it imperative to address these challenges promptly.

The WHO warned on a social media platform X, "Estimated 24 mothers die each day of preventable maternal mortality causes under the current funding."

The organization added, "This number is projected to rise dramatically if the

current funding shortage continues."

The WHO has issued a recent warning regarding Afghanistan with a severely compromised health system. The report underscores the grave risks to millions of lives due to food insecurity and malnutrition, amplified by infectious diseases, ongoing outbreaks, and a harsh drought.

The report reveals a shocking increase in the demand for humanitarian assistance, soaring to 28.8 million people in 2023 from 18.4 million before the Taliban assumed power in August 2021.

This alarming escalation underscores the urgent requirement for intensified support and relief efforts in the affected region.

Within the health sector, the report indicates that a surprising 14 million individuals (encompassing 7.5 million children and 3.1 million women) are now set aside for health aid.

However, the report highlights a concerning disparity, with only 8.4 million people receiving assistance during the initial half of 2023. This shortfall emphasizes the need for enhanced efforts to bridge the gap and provide vital health support to vulnerable people.

The WHO's funding for 2022-2023 amounts to US\$480 million, with US\$355 million implemented or available. Yet, a funding gap of US\$125 million remains to uphold essential health needs for the remainder of 2023.

Press News Agency that the crucial matter is continuing the learning process, whether done from home or through formal educational channels.

According to Ms. Karimian, "Ignorance makes humans fearful and brings poverty. I urge Afghan girls not to stay silent and to seek knowledge and awareness from the resources they have."

The Cosmic Society's project was selected as the "Best Project" at the 16th International Olympiad on Astronomy and Astrophysics (IOAA) among 52 countries worldwide.

Amina Karimian, the founder of this society,

states that despite Poland's refusal to issue visas for their team, Afghanistan participated in the 16th edition of this competition held in Krakow, Poland.

Ms Karimian adds that she established the Cosmic Astronomy Society in 2018 and engaged in relatively modest activities solely through social media channels.

About the society, she said, "This society has 150 members and operates in various committees. 75% of the society's members are young ladies, as they have shown more interest than boys."

The International Astronomy Olympiad takes

place annually, involving elite students from different countries in theoretical, observational, and astronomical data analysis sections. The competition lasts for ten days, from August 10th to 20th.

However, this year, despite the scattered presence of the Afghan team members in different countries and their lack of visas, only Ms Amina Karimian could participate in this competition by winning the first prize in the project category, representing Afghanistan.

Karimian emphasized that in the "Afghan Project," they depicted the story of girls in

Afghanistan over the past two years who have been deprived of the right to education, living with an uncertain fate and fear. This contrasts with other countries, where girls are provided facilities and engaged in learning and research.

The head of the organization said that the major problem is the lack of financial support. They did not get help from any organization despite being active. They had problems like paying for travel and working together, and some team members' families were against them.

She said, "We are a scientific entity and have no

relationship with politics or the government, nor do we want to." According to the official, they plan to be better prepared for competitions next year and attract new members to introduce astronomy to the people of Afghanistan more effectively.

It is worth mentioning that with the resurgence of the Taliban in August 2021 in Afghanistan, the country's educational system has suffered a significant setback. As a result, girls have been deprived of access to education, and seminaries or religious schools have gradually filled the void left by schools and universities.



‘Is there a timeframe to restore special status of held Kashmir’

NEW DELHI (Agencies): India’s Supreme Court has asked the Narendra Modi-led government if there was a “timeframe” and a “roadmap of progression” to restore the special status of held Kashmir, Indian media outlets reported on Tuesday.

The remarks were passed by a five-member bench headed by Chief Justice of India (CJI) D.Y. Chandrachud during a hearing on a batch of petitions challenging the reading down of Article 370 of the Indian constitution, which bestowed special status on India-held Jammu and Kashmir. The move allowed people from the rest of the country to have the right to acquire property in

occupied Kashmir and settle there permanently.

Kashmiris, international organisations and critics of India’s Hindu nationalist-led government had termed the move an attempt to dilute the demographics of Muslim-majority Kashmir with Hindu settlers. During the hearing Tuesday, The Indian Express quoted the CJI as asking Solicitor General Tushar Mehta: “We understand that these are matters of national security... the preservation of the nation itself is the overriding concern. But without putting you in a bind, you and the attorney general may seek instructions on the highest level— is there a timeframe in view? Is there a roadmap?”

According to the publication, Mehta is representing the Indian government and the administration of held Kashmir. In his arguments, Mehta touched on the reorganisation of states and told the bench about decisions taken with regard to held Kashmir in the aftermath of the Article 370 changes.

“As we see the creation of UTs, you have on one hand, examples like Chandigarh, carved out of Punjab and remained a UT. Then you have a progression where certain areas become UTs... you can’t immediately make them states.” The Indian Express quoted the CJI as saying. Justice Chandrachud also asked if the Indian parliament should not be permitted to

convert a state into a union territory for a limited period of time in view of national security needs.

“Why was it not possible for the union to say that right now in the case of a state, we have such an extreme situation in terms of national security, that we want for a certain period that a UT should be created? But this is not permanent and this shall be back as a state... can a union not do that for a certain period, to bring stability? Because let’s face it, whether it’s a state or UT, all of us survive if a nation survives. “Should we not permit parliament to postulate that for a certain period, in the interest of the preservation of the nation itself, we want for a certain period that this par-

ticular state shall go in fold of UT — on the clear understanding that this shall revert back to a state,” the CJI was quoted as saying.

He added that “the government also has to make a statement before us that progression has to take place. It can’t be a union territory permanently”. Mehta, the Indian publication said, told the bench that a similar statement was made by a minister in the parliament as well. Separately, the Hindustan Times reported the solicitor general as saying that there was “enough material to show that the constitution of held Kashmir is subordinate to the constitution of India and the constituent assembly of [held] Jammu and Kashmir was in reality a

legislative assembly making laws”.

“On November 21, 2018, the legislative assembly of the state was dissolved but there was no contemporaneous challenge by any political party or any citizen or leader. “Till, today there is no challenge to the dissolution of the assembly,” Mehta said, further adding that the Governor’s rule was imposed in the held Kashmir due to the failure of constitutional machinery in the state and only one petition was filed against it after 14 months. The Indian Express reported that after the arguments, the CJI said “we take your point that progression has already begun” and, rising shortly before the lunch break, asked Mehta to explain the roadmap.

Out-of-turn promotion PHC classify petitions into eight categories

Humayun Khan

PESHAWAR: Peshawar High Court (PHC) has issued detailed judgment in out-of-turn promotion in police by categorizing the petitions into eight groups while declared the promotion of Cadet and Instructors in accordance with the law while Gallantry upgradation and Chief Secretary Standing Orders null and void.

The petitioners categorized as per nature of their elevation including legally promoted, illegal promotions, remand-back to the department, elevation for trainings on extra seats, posting/transfers of officers from other provinces and incorporation Class-IV employees as constable.

The judgement was authored by Justice Ijaz Anwar while Justice SM Attique Shah was also part of hearing because the petition was place before PHC’s divisional bench for hearing. The police officers who were declared as Cadet and Cadet Instructors pursuant to the provisions of police Rules and duly protected under the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Validation of Standing Orders Act 2005,

they are not hit by the judgement of Supreme Court relating to out of turn promotions and as such demotion orders.

However, the petitioners obtained promotion on gallantry acts are illegal or hit by judgement of Supreme Court. All such upgradation made on gallantry account or allegedly as they stood fast in the performance of duties during the wave of terrorism are not protected and all such writs are dismissed.

The elevation of cadets declared as legal while Gallantry promotions were decided as illegal. However, women officers case remand backed to department regarding elevation for trainings. The cases of women police officers send for courses and allowed promotions are remitted back to the respondent (police) department to reconsider their position in terms of Supreme Court of Pakistan decision.

Moreover, PHC has accepted elevation procedure of police’s officers for training on extra seats as well as transfers and postings from other provinces. Police officers nominated for training on additional

seats are considered as not hit by the SCP’s judgement and as such, their writ petitions are allowed and the impugned orders of demotion is set aside.

However, officers transferred from other provinces and absorbed in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa police or transferred from other provinces and absorbed within the same police from other cadre are also considered to be in accordance with law and not hit by SCP’s decision and the impugned repatriation orders are set-aside.

PHC has also remand-backed incorporation Class-IV employees as constables to the department. The cases of absorption of Class-IV employees against the post of constables are disposed of and their cases are remitted back to the department to reconsider its decision in accordance with detailed reasons given in the judgement. PHC’s divisional bench comprised of Justice Ijaz Anwar and Justice SM Attique Shah dispose of Contempt of Court (COC) petitions as well as Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa’s orders as null& void in the detailed judgment.

Caretaker govt has nothing to do with election date: Solangi

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Information and Broadcasting Murtaza Solangi on Tuesday said that the caretaker government had nothing to do with the election date which was a mandate of the Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP) under the new amendments in the Election Act.

Talking to a private channel, the minister said the government was committed to assist the ECP in holding the election in line with its schedule. It was the legal and constitutional responsibility of the caretaker government to assist the ECP in holding the election, he added. He said the ECP had issued its schedule for the delimitations of the constituencies following the approval of a fresh census by the Council of Common Interest which was subsequently notified during the previous government’s tenure.

Solangi said it was imperative to give 54 days to all the political parties after delimitations for election campaigns in line with the Constitution. He said according to Article 218 (3) of the Constitution, it was the responsibility of the ECP to hold free, fair and transparent elections.

To a query, he said the Federal Cabinet today deliberated over the recommendations of the Energy Ministry on the issue related to inflated electricity bills. Some proposals were discussed during the meeting, he said, adding it was imperative to take the International Monetary Fund on board in this regard.

He said Minister of Finance Shamshad Akhtar was in contact with the IMF and soon the government would be in a position to announce its decisions over the issue related to the bills. The minister said the decisions would be made after reviewing primary surplus and circular debt data.

BoD meeting of autonomous bodies held

F.P. Report

PESHAWAR: A meeting regarding Boards of Directors (BoDs) of autonomous bodies was held here at Chief Minister’s House here on Tuesday with Caretaker Chief Minister Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Muhammad Azam Khan in the Chair.

Legal matters related to the functions of the BoDs were reviewed in the meeting with special focus on the decisions taken in the 34th board meeting of Provincial Housing Authority. Caretaker provincial minister for law, Justice (retired) Arshad Hussain Shah, Chief Secretary Nadeem Aslam Chaudhry, Secretary Law, Advocate General and other concerned high ups attended the meeting.

It was decided in the meeting to review the new policy regarding allotment of plots under Provincial Housing Authority, and the Chief Minister directed the Chief Secretary Khyber Pakhtunkhwa to look into the decisions taken in the 34th Board meeting of PHA regarding allotment of plots.

It was decided in the meeting that a committee comprising provincial law minister, advocate general and other relevant authorities will look into the decisions of the 34th board meeting of PHA and submit its recommendations to the Chief Minister.

Addressing the participants, the chief minister said that caretaker provincial government, within its mandate, will take every possible step for the welfare of citizens.



ISLAMABAD: Sister of Imran Khan leaving the court after attending hearing in PTI chief’s plea.

ECP emphasizes posting, transfers of officers, officials

F.P. Report

ISLAMABAD: Chief Election Commissioner Mr. Sikandar Sultan Raja on Tuesday chaired two important meetings with Chief Secretaries and Inspector General (IGs) of Sindh and Balochistan regarding upcoming general elections held at EC Secretariat Islamabad.

The members of the Election Commission, Secretary ECP, Provincial Election Commissioner Sindh and Balochistan, and other senior officers of ECP also attended the meetings.

During the meeting, the Chief Secretary and IG Sindh briefed the Election Commission on preparations for the upcoming general elections and assured full cooperation. The Election Commission emphasized on the Chief Secretary and IG Sindh that conducting transparent and impartial elections are fundamental

responsibility of ECP. In this regard, the first step is the transfer and posting of all officers and officials who are important in the perspective of impartial elections.

The Election Commission has issued directives in this regard, because transfer/posting is the first step towards transparency. After that, there will be appointments of District Returning Officers, Returning Officers, Assistant Returning Officers, and Monitoring Teams will be made. Commission have very limited time, the Election Commission expressed its concern and issued directives for the prompt submission of proposals for transfers/postings so that remaining steps for the elections can be taken as soon as possible. Election Commission assured full support and cooperation to Chief Secretary and IG Sindh.

In the second meeting,

the Chief Secretary, IG Balochistan, and Provincial Election Commissioner Balochistan briefed the Election Commission on preparations for the upcoming elections. The Chief Secretary informed that recommendations for postings/transfers of different officers, Deputy Commissioners, and Additional Deputy Commissioners have been sent to the Election Commission. This recommendation highlights officers’ performance and merit, and other postings/transfers will also be conducted in accordance with the Election Commission’s directives.

Furthermore, the Chief Secretary Balochistan informed that the maintenance of flood-affected polling station buildings has been ensured. The IG Balochistan briefed the Election Commission on the security situation in the province.

‘PTI chief mastermind of May 9 vandalism’

ISLAMABAD (APP): Caretaker Minister for Interior Sarfraz Bugti on Tuesday said that Chairman Pakistan Tehreek e Insaaf (PTI), was the ‘mastermind’ of the May 9 mayhem against security institutions.

“May 9 was the black day in the history of Pakistan,” he said while talking to a private television channel. Those found guilty of criminal acts against State Television, and national security institutions would be rewarded with punishment as per law, he remarked.

Commenting on delay in general elections, he said delimitation is imperative for holding transparent polls across the country. The Election Commission of Pakistan (ECP), he said would announce the date for general elections after the completion of the delimitation process.

In reply to a question about the resurfacing wave of terrorism, he said that terrorists have hideouts in Afghanistan. We have completed the fencing of more than 645 kilometers bordering the area with Afghanistan. About the smuggling of dollars, he said, it is a challenging task to control dollar smuggling.

To a question about illegal Afghans residing in different parts of Pakistan, he said a comprehensive mechanism was being evolved for restricting unregistered and illegal Afghans to this part of the region. To another question about rising inflation, he said that Pakistan is rich in agriculture, and mineral resources, stating all-out efforts were being ensured to bring foreign investment to Pakistan.

Asad’s bail extended in cipher case

ISLAMABAD (INP): Special court hearing cases under the Official Secrets Act on Tuesday extended bail granted to former secretary-general of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) Asad Umar in cipher case.

Asad Umar along with his lawyer Babar Awan appeared before the court of Judge Abu Al-Hasnat Zulqarnain. The bail of Asad Umar was extended by the special court until September 14. In his statement after getting bail extension, Asad Umar said cipher is a classified document, that cannot come out of the foreign office.

The former prime minister has given his response to the Federal Investigation Agency about the cipher. On last Tuesday, it was reported that Asad Umar had been arrested in a cipher probe, but he refuted the news and appeared on the scene to secure bail in the case after the arrest of party leaders.

Body takes action to reinstate over 500 daily wage teachers

ISLAMABAD (INP): Chairman Standing Committee on Education and Vocational Training, Senator Irfan Siddiqui while chairing an important meeting of the committee on Tuesday passionately articulated that the abrupt dismissal of teachers with years of dedicated service amounts to criminal offense. He emphasized that even a household maid, who has worked diligently for fifteen years, should not be subjected to such unfair treatment.

Senator Siddiqui continued to advocate for fairness, highlighting that long-serving teachers, deserve better than sudden terminations without proper justification. During the meeting, actions of Director General and Director of Federal Directorate of Education (FDE) misleading the Senate Standing Committee came under scrutiny. Consequently, the matter was referred to the Senate Privileges Committee for thorough investigation and appropriate action.

The committee’s meeting was marked by Senator Irfan Siddiqui’s strong assertion that the sudden dismissal of teachers without valid reasons is an unacceptable criminal act. He passionately expressed that these actions should not be tolerated under any circumstances. He drew attention to the fact that even a domestic worker with a decade or more of service should not be subjected to such unjust treatment. The Senator also criticized the arbitrary interpretation of court decisions that led to the dismissal of over 500 teachers, a move that disregarded established legal principles.

In light of the incident, it was revealed that 551 teachers teaching in Islamabad’s model colleges were instructed to cease their duties from August 10 without proper justification. Concerned about the sudden turn of events, the affected teachers sought the intervention of the committee’s chairman, Senator Irfan Siddiqui. Subsequently, the matter was included in the agenda of the ongoing committee meeting.

Efforts were made by the Director General and Director of FDE to validate their actions by referring to court orders. However, they failed to provide concrete evidence supporting their claims. The Ministry of Law’s opinion was also invoked, but representatives of the Law Division clarified that it was a standard response and was not a specific query from the Ministry of Education.

The committee was informed that Secretary Education is currently attending a cabinet meeting, Committee chairman

directed the ministry officials to contact the secretary. Meanwhile a brief ten-minute break was observed in the committee meeting. Education Secretary Waseem Ajmal joined the committee meeting following this brief pause. Meanwhile, committee members expressed strong dissatisfaction with the Ministry of Education’s unwarranted dismissal of teachers with over fifteen years of experience.

Rabia Waheed, a female teacher representing the affected educators, provided a comprehensive account of the situation and presented relevant court decisions. After extensive deliberation, Senator Irfan Siddiqui gave a ruling in favor of the immediate reinstatement of all 551 teachers to their positions as of August 9.

Education Secretary informed that a committee has already been setup chaired by Dr. Niaz Ahmed, Vice Chancellor of Quaid-e-Azam University, to address the matter. Senator Siddiqui directed to include the affected teachers in the committee’s proceedings. The committee acknowledged the Education Secretary’s understanding of the matter and expressed hope for a satisfactory resolution.

In strong disapproval of the conduct of two ministry officials, DG FDE and Director Colleges, the committee referred the matter to the Senate Privileges Committee for misleading the standing committee. The committee meeting also encompassed discussions on the dismissal of Montessori teachers, with assurances from the Secretary of Education of their prompt reemployment. The issue of promotion of teachers and vice-principals of grades 17 and 18 within federal educational institutions was addressed, with ministry officials assuring the committee of imminent and appropriate action.

During the committee session, various bills concerning the establishment of new higher education institutions were under consideration. However, proceedings were adjourned due to the absence of the bill proposers. The committee engaged in an in-depth conversation about the prolonged vacancy of Pakistan chairs abroad. After due consideration, the Chairman of the Committee tasked the Chairman of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) to collaborate with the Ministries of Education and Foreign Affairs to address appointments to these international chairs. A comprehensive report is expected to be submitted within ten days.

Head Sulemanki is 98,878 cusecs and the outflow is 85,014 cusecs while inflow and outflow at Head Islam is 82,916 cusecs. He said relief activities continue in flood-affected areas.

Meanwhile, flood in the Sutlej river has breached the dyke protective embankment of Jalalpur, inundating hundreds of acres of land and triggering evacuations of the affected people and their livestock.

According to the rescue

officials, people trapped in the Sutlej river are being transported by 14 boats. The flash flood wreaked havoc in the riverine belt of Ahmedpur Sharqia, destroying standing crops on thousands of acres of land. Similarly, dozens of establishments were also inundated in Bahawalnagar. Monsoon rains are likely to continue till Sep 4 and heavy rains are expected in the upper parts of all major rivers.

Flooding moderate at 3 points in Sutlej River

F.P. Report

MULTAN: Provincial Disaster Management Authority (PDMA) Punjab has stated that there is moderate level flood at Ganda Singh, Head Sulemanki and Head Islam in Sutlej River.

In a statement, the Spokesperson of the authority said water level is decreasing at Ganda Singh Wala with the inflow and outflow is 108000 cusecs. He said inflow of water at